

***NO PLACE CALLED HOME:
QUALITY OF LIFE AND MEANING IN LIFE
OF HOMELESS YOUTHS***

Catherine Bearsley

B.A./B.Sc.

***Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the
Bachelor of Science (Honours in Psychology) Degree***

***School of Psychology
Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences
Deakin University***

October 1997

Deakin University
School of Psychology
Honours Candidate Certificate

I am the author of the thesis entitled

*No Place Called Home:
Quality of Life and Meaning in Life of Homeless Youths*

submitted for the degree of

Bachelor of Science (Honours).

**and I agree to grant the Honours Co-ordinator of the School of Psychology
permission to make this thesis available for consultation, loan or
photocopying, in whole or in part.**

Signed: *Colin Bearley*

Date: *30/10/97*

Deakin University
School of Psychology
Ethics Summary Statement

Project Number: DSC-H22/97

Project Title: No Place Called Home: Quality of Life and Meaning in Life of Homeless Youths

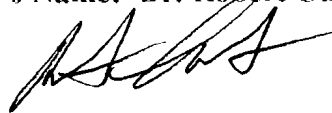
We the undersigned declare that the above-named research project has been completed as described in the Application for Ethics Approval and in accordance with the ethics guidelines of Deakin University.

Researcher's Name: Catherine Bearsley

Signature: 

Date: 30/10/97

Supervisor's Name: Dr. Robert Cummins

Signature: 

Date: 30/10/97

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The number of people to whom I owe a great debt of gratitude this year is quite phenomenal. Firstly, my appreciation must go to Dr. R. Cummins who has been a continuously encouraging and guiding force for me throughout the year, and always such a valuable source of perspective. Huge thanks must particularly go to my family who have so supportively and unwaveringly journeyed with me throughout this year. The same must also be said of my closest friends, Lisa Hardman and MaryAnn Fernandez, who have remained understanding and magnanimous despite my long absences from them. I also wish to sincerely thank the many other people who have so generously contributed their time, efforts and support for this project: Tim Dalton, Fiona Howse, Catherine Hamilton, Nathan Sterling, Henry Nisson, Peter Nixon, Dr Howard Mould, Dr. Chris Chamberlain, Dr Phillip McLeod, Penny Reader, Scott Fewkes, Annelis Brewer, Chris Astley, Stuart Andrews, Keith Muller, Kerry Moy, Steve Carol, Libby Beadle, Dorus Petrevic, Wendy Lever, Tony Rodgers, Birsin Reynolds, Fr. Peter, the Holy Family Presbytery, Nick Jones, Paula Marsh, Sue Seally, Mick Emslie, Jason Craig, and the many other important behind-the-scenes forces. My thanks must lastly, but most importantly, go to the many youths who have provided the fundamental contribution of sharing their views on life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
ABSTRACT	1
1. INTRODUCTION	2
1.1 Homeless Youths	2
1.1.1 Extent of the Problem	2
1.1.2 Defining Homeless Youths	3
1.1.3 Complexity of Categorisation	4
1.1.3.1 ‘At Risk’ of Homelessness	5
1.1.3.2 Non-homeless Community School Students	5
1.1.4 Negative Consequences of Homelessness	6
1.1.5 Disparity in Youth Homelessness Research	6
1.2 Quality of Life	7
1.2.1 Defining Quality of Life	7
1.2.1.1 Objective versus Subjective Quality of Life	8
1.2.1.2 Domains of Quality of Life	8
1.2.1.3 Normative versus Individual Values	9
1.2.1.4 Definition of Quality of Life	9
1.2.2 Consistency of Subjective Quality of Life research	10
1.2.3 The Gold Standard for Subjective Quality of Life	10
1.2.4 Homeless Youths and Subjective Quality of Life	11
1.2.4.1 Inadequacy of Subjective Quality of Life Research Regarding Homeless Youths	11
1.2.5 What Causes SQOL to be set so Predictably?	13
1.2.5.1 Situational Accounts	13

1.2.5.2 Personality Accounts	14
1.2.5.3 Interactive Accounts	15
1.2.6 Summary	16
1.3 Meaning and Purpose in Life	16
1.3.1 Measuring Meaning and Purpose and Related Constructs	17
1.3.2 Disaffiliation, Meaninglessness and Homelessness	19
1.3.3 Summary	20
1.4 Social Desirability	20
1.5 Summary	21
1.5.1 Hypotheses	22
1.5.1.1 Subjective Quality of Life	22
1.5.1.2 Meaning and Purpose in Life	22
1.5.1.3 Subjective Quality of Life and Meaning and Purpose in Life	23
1.5.1.4 Education and Employment and Outlook	23
1.5.1.5 Social Desirability	23
2. METHOD	24
2.1 Subjects	24
2.2 Materials	25
2.2.1 Comprehensive Quality of Life Scale for Adolescents	26
2.2.2 The Life Attitude Profile - Revised	27
2.2.3 The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale Form C	28
2.3 Procedure	28
3. RESULTS	30
3.1 Data Screening	30
3.2 Descriptives	31

3.3 Data Analyses	35
3.3.1 Subjective Quality of Life: Hypothesis 1	35
3.3.2 Meaning and Purpose in Life: Hypothesis 2	37
3.3.3 Meaning and Purpose and SQOL: Hypothesis 3	41
3.3.4 Education, Training, and Employment: Hypothesis 4	45
3.3.5 Social Desirability: Hypothesis 5	46
3.3.6 Additional Analyses	46
3.3.7 Summary	46
4. DISCUSSION	48
4.1 Homelessness and SQOL: Hypothesis 1	48
4.1.1 Comparison with youths 'at risk' of homelessness	50
4.1.2 Comparison with non-homeless community school youths	50
4.2 Meaning and Purpose in Life: Hypothesis 2 and 3	51
4.3 Presentation of a Model Regarding Maintenance and Erosion of SQOL	53
4.4 Education, Training, and Employment: Hypothesis 4	56
4.5 Social Desirability: Hypothesis 5	57
4.6 Limitations and Conclusions	58
5. REFERENCES	60
6. APPENDICES	74

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Domain and Total Group Means and Standard Deviations for Importance, Satisfaction, and SQOL (Imp x Sat) Expressed as Percentage of Scale Maximums.	33
Table 2: Group Means, Standard Deviations, and Percentage of Score Maximum Values for LAP-R Variables and Social Desirability	34
Table 3: Summary Table for Multivariate Analysis of Covariance Examining Group Differences in ComQol SQOL Domains with Adjusted Means	36
Table 4: Summary Table for Multivariate Analysis of Covariance Examining Group Differences in LAP-R Domains with Adjusted Means	39
Table 5: Summary Statistics for the Standard Multiple Regression of LAP-R Domains and Social Desirability on SQOL Involving the Total Adolescent Sample	42
Table 6: Summary Statistics for the Standard Multiple Regression of LAP-R Domains and Social Desirability on SQOL for Homeless and 'At Risk' Youths	43

LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1: Percentage of Score Maximums for Choice and Responsibility, Personal Meaning and Overall SQOL for each Group 40
- Figure 2: Path Coefficients Between Personal Meaning, Choice and Responsibility, and SQOL 45
- Figure 3: Model of the Proposed Relationship Between Primary Control Beliefs, Secondary Control, and Threat to SQOL 54

ABSTRACT

Subjective quality of life (SQOL) has been reported to display remarkable resilience to objective circumstances. However, it was hypothesised in the current study that the circumstances of homeless youths would represent an exception. Personal meaning was also predicted to be low amongst homeless youths and to strongly predict SQOL. Comparisons were made between youths who were (1) homeless, (2) 'at risk' of homelessness, (3) non-homeless and attending a community school, or (4) non-homeless and attending a public secondary school. Using the Comprehensive Quality of Life Scale for Adolescents (ComQol-ST), homeless and 'at risk' youths reported significantly lower SQOL than the control group for seven of the eight domains. These youths also reported lower levels of personal meaning than the control group, and higher existential vacuum and death acceptance, measured with the Life Attitude Profile - Revised (LAP-R). Results of non-homeless community school youths typically fell intermediately between these groups. No group differences were noted for choice and responsibility, goal seeking, and social desirability. Personal meaning provided the strongest prediction of SQOL of these variables, challenging theories which would predict choice and responsibility to provide the predominant contribution. Involvement in education or employment was not related to differences in outlooks amongst homeless and 'at risk' youths. The results have implications for the development of coping mechanisms amongst youths, and suggest that subjective difficulties may precede homelessness rather than stem from it. A model is proposed to describe the possible factors involved in the maintenance and erosion of SQOL, and to provide a framework for future research.

1.1 HOMELESS YOUTHS

'By 1990 there will be no Australian child living in poverty.' With these famous words, the Australian Prime Minister of 1983, Mr Bob Hawke, effectively startled much of the Australian public and highlighted his own ignorance of the issues involved in such areas as youth homelessness.

Youth homelessness, a significant form of child poverty, cannot be classified as simply an economic issue resolvable by top-level government decisions. The causes of this social problem, and its impact on individuals, includes an elaborate interaction of familial, interpersonal and societal factors. As noted by various authors, running away is a reactive response of a minority of youths to a typically stressful environment (Brann, 1996; Brennan, Huizinga, & Elliott, 1978), which is usually concurrent with the collapse of internal and external support structures (Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare, SSCSW, 1982). There is general consensus about the sources of stress contributing to youth homelessness. Those cited by a wide range of community organisations and State and Commonwealth departments include conflict, poverty, rejection, lack of affection or caring, death or divorce of parents, physical, mental and sexual abuse, parental and youth substance abuse, sexuality, school and peer problems, and mental illness (Dadds, Braddock, Cuers, Elliott, & Kelly, 1993; House of Representatives Standing Committee on Community Affairs, HRSCCA, 1995; Powers, Eckenrode, & Jaklitsch, 1990; SSCSW, 1982).

1.1.1 Extent of the Problem

The number of youths who leave or are forced from their homes each year has been reported to be a significant and increasing problem in Australia (MacKenzie & Chamberlain, 1994). The full extent of this problem is often argued to be under-estimated as a result of significant methodological difficulties, such as limitations of cross-sectional studies and logistical difficulties of accessing this divergent, transitional and often alienated population

(Fopp, 1993; Yates, Benzies, Fonte, & Fawcett, 1988). The most thorough and commonly cited statistics come from an investigation by MacKenzie and Chamberlain (1994) who combined information from a national census of homeless school students with inferences of wider youth homelessness drawn from an official census of people using Supported Accommodation Assistance Programs (SAAP) in one week in May, 1994. They concluded there were 21,000 homeless young people at this time aged 12 to 18 years in Australia. This group comprised 8,900 homeless students, and 12,000 young people who were mainly unemployed or outside the labour force.

1.1.2 Defining Homeless Youths

The uncertainty regarding the true nature and extent of youth homelessness is compounded by definitional inconsistencies and debate. The length of time away from home necessary to constitute homelessness widely varies between studies, ranging from over-night (Englander, 1984; Robertson, Koegel & Ferguson, 1989) to a week or more (Chamberlain & MacKenzie, 1995; Dadds et al., 1993). Age criteria also vary. Though definitions typically specify an age limit of under 18 years (e.g. HRSCCA, 1995; Rotheram-Borus, et al., 1996), which will be the targeted group in this study, studies have included youth aged up to 22 years (e.g. Feitel et al., 1992).

Rather than literally lacking shelter, many homeless young people move through various forms of temporary accommodation. The Salvation Army define youth homelessness, according to the broad National Youth Coalition for Housing definition (cited in HRSCCA, 1995), as 'the absence of secure, adequate and satisfactory shelter as perceived by the young person'. Though this definition may be of value within the field of welfare, for the purposes of research objective standards are required in which to categorise these youths. The HRSCCA (1995) provided such a definition of homelessness, to be adopted in this study, which they argue reflects an emerging community consensus:

'Young people are homeless if they are living without family assistance in the following circumstances:

- (a) no accommodation at all (e.g. streets, squat, car, tent, etc.)*
- (b) only temporary accommodation (with friends, relatives, or moving around between various forms of temporary shelter)*
- (c) emergency accommodation (refuge or crisis accommodation, etc.)*
- (d) other long term supported accommodation for homeless people (e.g. hostels, youth housing programs, transitional accommodation) '.*

1.1.3 Complexity of Categorisation of Homelessness

The chronically homeless, often known as street kids, have been the most prominent homeless youths in the media, and have come to typify the public image of youth homelessness. This group of youths are generally described as being enculturated in the lifestyle of homelessness; possessing their own sense of camaraderie and identity, and often rejecting conventional standards and services (Jordan, 1995; Open Family, 1996). However, this extreme form of alienation from conventional society cannot be generalised to the wider population of homeless youths.

As noted by Adams and Gerald (1987), homeless youths 'are *not* a homogeneous group, despite the large body of literature and research which treats them as such' (p.282). The common characterisation of homeless youth as a discrete group overlooks the fact that the causes and experiences of homelessness are diverse (Brennan, et al., 1978; Tait, 1992). The conceptual dichotomy between the extremes of homeless and non-homeless youths needs to be broken down by the inclusion of other groups of youths experiencing intermediate problems.

1.1.3.1 'At Risk' of Homelessness

Difficulties in classifying homelessness in part arise from the often dynamic or episodic nature of its occurrence. It has been widely recognised that many youths, often under-represented in cross-sectional design studies, leave home but return again, usually within two weeks. This group have been described as 'in and outers' (Kufeldt, Durieuz, & Nimmo, 1992) or 'at risk' of homelessness (Chamberlain & MacKenzie, 1994). MacKenzie and Chamberlain (1994) estimated, in a national study of homelessness, that 25,000 to 30,000 Australian students could be classed in this group during 1994. Fors and Rojek (1991) state that these youths experience low parental support, low self-esteem, inadequate coping mechanisms, and school troubles, as do homeless youths. However, they do not support this statement with evidence.

The essential distinction between homeless youths and those 'at risk' of homelessness has been proposed by Chamberlain and MacKenzie (1994) to involve a personal transformation of identity, coined the 'permanent break' from the family. This break is operationalised as occurring at 28 days, despite likely variations among youths in reality. In the present study, further qualification will therefore be placed on the previous definition of youth homelessness, with homeless youths being distinguished from those 'at risk' of homelessness if they report having lived out of home for one month or longer.

1.1.3.2 Non-homeless Community School Youths

A further important intermediate group between prototypical homeless and non-homeless youths involves non-homeless youths attending community schools. Mainstream education typically has not been able to cater for this group. These youths are noted for their compounded emotional, behavioural, family and school problems, and consequently share backgrounds with similar complexity and life stress to homeless youths, though presumably less acute (Collingwood Community School, 1997).

1.1.4 Negative Consequences of Homelessness

After leaving a typically distressing family environment, youths who become homeless must support and protect themselves in a difficult environment, often with minimal external aid (HRSCCA, 1995; Rotheram-Borus et al., 1996). Homelessness has been reported by numerous authors to introduce further significant life stresses and negative outcomes for these youths. These may include further social alienation (Klinger, 1977), victimisation (Fischer, 1992), health risks, including HIV infection (Jordan, 1995; Rotheram-Borus et al., 1992; Yates, et al., 1988), lack of educational and employment opportunities (Jagg, 1982; Rotheram-Borus et al, 1996), delinquent and criminal behaviour (Inciardi, Horowitz, & Pottieger, 1993; Fischer, 1992), substance abuse and prostitution (Forst, 1994; Jordan, 1995; McCarthy & Hagan, 1992) and suicide (Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Health, 1995; Kermond, 1997). Though these relationships may be argued to be functionally rather than causally related in many cases, it is nevertheless likely that homelessness may often precipitate these problems.

1.1.5 Disparity in Youth Homelessness Research

It must be noted that research into youth homelessness has been plagued by methodological limitations and inconsistencies, making generalisations and comparisons often problematic (Robertson, et al., 1989). Much research in the area is based only on those individuals using available services (e.g. Feitel et al., 1992; Fors & Rojek, 1991; Powers et al, 1990; Rotheram-Borus et at., 1991; Zimet et al., 1995), though Open Family (1996) argue that a further group, namely street kids, specifically reject formalised help. In other studies, service providers, rather than adolescents themselves, provide the information about these youths (e.g. Powers et al., 1990). Some studies fail to report their response rates (e.g. Fors & Rojek, 1992) or to address the issues of varying youth literacy in this group (e.g. Rosenthal, Moore, & Buzwell, 1994). Research in this area has also been divided in use of

reference terms, with many researchers not distinguishing between 'runaways' and 'homeless' (e.g. Feitel et al., 1992; Fors & Rojek, 1991; Forst, 1994; Powers et al., 1990).

Despite such difficulties, the weight of evidence strongly supports the view that school-age youths who make a permanent break from their parents come from troubled backgrounds, face consistent personal and situational difficulties, and often have little opportunity to break from the cycle of poverty. It could be expected that these youths, with frequently complex problems, may experience among the lowest levels of quality of life in Australia. The current study will examine how various groups of youths, including both homeless, those at risk of homelessness, those attending community schools, and non-homeless youths attending suburban secondary schools, differ in terms of perceived quality of life, attitudes related to meaning and purpose in life, and their relative tendencies to present themselves in an improbably favourable light.

1.2 QUALITY OF LIFE

1.2.1 Defining Quality of Life

As a result of its perfuse nature and relevance to all human beings, the concept of 'quality of life' (QOL) has been widely adopted both publicly and academically. Perhaps as a consequence of its broadly applicable, yet elusive character, little consensus has been reached regarding an acceptable definitional standard for this construct, either between or within various disciplines (Cummins, McCabe, Gullone, & Romeo, 1994). As noted by Cummins (1996), operational definitions and models of QOL exceed 100 in the research literature, both reflecting and resulting in significant variation in approach towards QOL. Establishment of a standard definition and method of operationalising QOL is a necessary goal in this area. This first requires consideration of a number of issues regarding this construct.

1.2.1.1 Objective vs. Subjective

Originally the concept of QOL was treated by researchers as referring to the objectively definable circumstances of people's lives. Measures such as the Gross National Product, rate of unemployment, or cost of housing were given as standards by which various groups could be compared (Campbell et al., 1976). However, it has since become accepted that QOL can be more informatively represented as a subjective experience reliant on a person's evaluation of their own circumstances (Andrews, 1991). This subjective measure, variously termed subjective quality of life (Cummins, 1993, 1996), subjective well-being (Andrews, 1991), psychological well-being (Chamberlain & Zika, 1992), happiness (Goldings, 1954; Brickman, Coates, & Janoff-Bulman, 1978), positive and negative affect balance (Bradburn, 1969), and satisfaction (Campbell, 1981), typically demonstrates minimal correlation to objective life circumstances (Cummins, 1995). This finding indicates that these two dimensions need to be conceptually discriminated.

1.2.1.2. Domains of Quality of Life

A further level of distinction between various approaches to the measurement of the QOL construct involves the level of generality that is adopted. While single-item global life-as-a-whole measures of subjective quality of life have been utilised, and provide highly consistent results (Andrews, 1991; Andrews & Withey, 1974; 1976), the nature of this measure is inherently restricting. Campbell et al., (1976) have alternately presented and supported the view that 'a sense of well-being can be meaningfully seen as a composite of feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a variety of specific domains of life' (p.95). Such measures provide greater information regarding the construction of QOL, and have since been widely applied.

Choice of the domains to be included has varied between studies, however considerable overlap in content has been reported (Felce & Perry, 1995). Based on prevalence in the literature, variance accounted for, and reported importance levels, Cummins (1997, in press) argues the case for seven QOL domains, identified as health, intimacy, material well-being, productive activity, emotional well-being, safety and community. These are argued to encompass 68 percent of 173 domain names derived from over 1,500 articles concerning QOL, and account for 83 percent of these reported data (Cummins, 1997, in press).

1.2.1.3 Normative vs. Individual Values

The domains have been reported to differ in the strength of influence they have for respondents' overall subjective life quality (Campbell, et al., 1976; Diener, 1984). To account for idiosyncrasies regarding domain relevance, relative weights, in the form of importance scores, may be placed on the domains by respondents. Domain priorities measured in QOL research have shown remarkable consistency world-wide, with intimacy predictably ranked as the most important domain (Andrews & Inglehart, 1979; Heady, 1988).

1.2.1.4 Definition of Quality of Life

Encompassing these considerations, Cummins (1996) has defined QOL as 'both objective and subjective, each axis being the aggregate of seven domains: material well-being, health, productivity, intimacy, safety, community, and emotional well-being. Objective domains comprise culturally-relevant measures of objective well-being. Subjective domains comprise domain satisfaction weighted by their importance to the individual' (p.20). This definition, to be adopted in the present study, provides the further advantage of being operationalised in the form of the Comprehensive Quality of Life Scale (Cummins, 1993).

1.2.2 Consistency of Subjective Quality of Life Research

A remarkably consistent finding in the QOL literature is that people rate their subjective quality of life (SQOL) as higher than midpoint almost irrespective of the measuring instrument, population sample, or nationality (Cummins, 1996). This finding has been presented as evidence that reported well-being owes more to internal dispositions than to external conditions (Felce & Perry, 1995). As all subgroups display this negatively skewed distribution, it appears that midpoint of the satisfaction scale maximum is not a valid standard with which to make relative judgements of SQOL. For years, a specific 'goal standard' has been lacking with which empirical studies could be adequately compared (Cummins, 1995).

1.2.3 The Gold Standard for Subjective Quality of Life

In a breakthrough for QOL research, Cummins (1995) compared 16 unrelated SQOL studies and reported that, despite very different methodologies, the combined data yielded a mean of 75.02 percent of score maximum (SM.) for life satisfaction with a standard deviation of only 2.74 percent. This stable and narrow range for SQOL may be utilised as a standard population reference (Felce & Perry, 1995). Levels of SQOL within this normative range have been reported for a number of population sub-groups facing difficult objective circumstances, including organ transplantation survivors, people with a mild or moderate level of intellectual disability, and people with a chronic medical condition (Andrykowski, et al., 1972; Cummins, 1995, 1997 in press).

However, evidence also exists that objective circumstances can impinge on SQOL of life. SQOL has been reported to fall below this normative standard for people with advanced arthritis (Germano and Cummins, 1997), parents caring for an intellectually disabled child (Browne & Bramston, 1996), people with a low income (Andrews, 1991; Cummins, 1997), and adolescents high in fear or anxiety (Gullone & Cummins, 1997 in press). Results falling

outside of this normative range may demonstrate serious social issues requiring policy attention (Felce & Perry, 1995).

1.2.4 Subjective Quality of Life of Homeless Youths

The factors which may impinge on the SQOL of homeless youths are manifold. The experience of a stressful family environment, loss of one's home, followed by consequences of homelessness have all been implicated in psychological trauma (Goodman, Saxe, & Harvey, 1991; Jerusalem & Mittag, 1995). In addition, psychological needs, such as needs for safety, love, self-esteem, affection and belonging have been reported to be predictably deficient or threatened in the lives of these youths (Feitel, 1992; Robertson et al., 1989; SSCSW, 1982), which may exacerbate the social isolation experienced by this group.

Researchers have argued that many homeless youths develop, or already possess, resilience through a quality of toughness and resourcefulness (Adams & Gerald, 1987; Fors & Rojek, 1992). However, Fors and Rojek (1992; p.24) base this conclusion on the view that the high levels of drug abuse 'may be one of the central realities in the survival repertoire' of this group. This does not suggest a functional approach to homelessness. In a study of 30 'runaways', Roberts (1982) reported that 83 percent used maladaptive coping mechanisms to deal with life stresses, compared to 80 percent of non-homeless youths who used problem-solving strategies.

1.2.4.1 Inadequacy of Research Regarding SQOL of Homeless Youths

Strong generalisations regarding the subjective outlooks of homeless youths have been largely hindered as a consequence of the pervasive methodological variations and limitations evident in this research area.

Wolk and Brandon (1977), in a study of 47 runaway adolescents, voluntarily utilising suburban runaway houses, argued that these youths reported 'much less favorable perceptions' (p.183) of themselves than non-runaway youths. However, of thirteen indices investigated, five significantly differed between the groups. Runaways reported lower levels of favourable attributes generally, personal adjustment, and affiliation, and higher levels of defensiveness and counselling readiness, the latter of which need not entail low self perceptions. As no significant differences were noted for factors such as self-confidence, self-control, achievement, unfavourable items, or abasement, implications regarding differences in SQOL between these groups are uncertain.

Powers et al. (1990) accessing youths from Runaway and Homeless Youth programs (R&HY) in America, reported that depression and poor self-image were the most commonly identified problems for these youths, above such things as alcohol or drug abuse, or learning disabilities. However, conclusions from this study are limited for a number of reasons. Firstly, staff typically completed these forms, upon youths' first contact with the program, without directly interviewing the youths, introducing the possibility of staff bias, misclassification, and under-reporting. Secondly, distinction was not made in the results between homeless youths or youths in 'crisis', although the latter group comprised 52 percent of the sample. Thirdly, a control group was not included against which relative measures could be made. Consequently, the prevalence of characteristics such as depression and poor self-image amongst homeless youths is not clear. However, the nature of these limitations would suggest that the problems of homeless youths may have been underestimated rather than artificially inflated in this study.

Further researchers, such as Brennan et al. (1978), have reported runaways score significantly higher than other groups for variables such as powerlessness, and social estrangement, and significantly lower for self-esteem. However, without the provision of ranges, standard deviations, or effect sizes, interpretation of mean differences between these groups is questionable.

The common usage of the term 'runaway' in these studies, in comparison to 'homeless', is itself problematic, dividing the research in this area in relation to adopted terminology. With the limited methodological virtues of many studies in this area, and conflicting specifications regarding this target population, conclusions regarding the SQOL of homeless youths remains uncertain.

1.2.5 What Causes SQOL to be set so Predictably?

Researchers have struggled to explain how SQOL can be maintained at such apparently high levels in the face of 'social pathology' (Heady & Wearing, 1986; p.1). Numerous theories have been suggested based on the recognition, as noted by Diener (1984), that objective situations are usually subjectively encoded. Theorists are divided as to whether these processes are best explained in terms of situational or personality characteristics.

1.2.5.1 Situational Accounts

The extensive research concerning QOL following significant life events attests to the fact that environmental influences are viewed as important influences on life quality by many researchers (Heady & Wearing, 1989). Situational models of SQOL maintenance aim to account for findings that humans adjust to major life events, usually within the time frame of less than a year (Felce & Perry, 1995; Campbell et al., 1976). The most influential of these theories argue that a person's SQOL closely reflects the individual's perceptions of their current situation relative to some adaptable standard/s. Details of this standard differ between theories, which include Cantril's (1965) 'self-anchoring striving scale', Campbell et al.'s (1976) aspiration theory, Goldings' (1954) social expectation, and Michalos' (1985) Multiple Discrepancy Theory (MDT).

The most thorough of these theories, Michalos' (1985) Multiple Discrepancy Theory (MDT), describes satisfaction as related to a person's perceptions of (1) what the person

has, (2) what relevant others have, (3) what one has previously had, (4) expectations one had three years ago, and (5) expectations of the next five years (Michalos, 1985). This model accounts for 53 percent of global satisfaction, which is substantial, but indicates that subsidiary explanation for the maintenance of SQOL is required. State models also fail to account for findings that levels of domain satisfaction tend to be correlated, suggesting underlying personality factors may influence responses (Heady, 1981; Heady & Wearing, 1989). Campbell et al. (1976) noted this limitation of their aspiration theory and included the 'notion of individual taste' to explain individual variations in satisfaction given equal circumstances (p.482).

1.2.5.2 Personality Accounts

The role of personal characteristics in SQOL has been most strongly argued by Costa and McCrae (1989). These researchers propose that personality, particularly the highly stable attributes of extroversion and neuroticism, act as regulators of well-being. However, correlations of personality, measured using the NEO Personality Inventory (McCrae & Costa, 1983), and affective and cognitive measures of well-being, accounted for less than 25 percent of the total variance. Additionally, the two components of neuroticism most strongly correlated with well-being across all scales were anxiety and depression, and the strongest correlation with extroversion was the component of 'positive emotions'. It is plausible that levels of these affective measures may also be related to changes in well-being which are exogenously induced. Consequently, the relationship of extroversion and neuroticism to measures of well-being, particularly affective measures, is likely to have been overstated. This theory also fails to account for changes evident in SQOL. If presented as having strong predictive validity, Costa and McCrae's (1989) trait models has the further danger of implying that the lower SQOL of particular groups, such as Blacks relative to Whites (Campbell et al, 1976), may be attributed to neurotic personalities, rather than social inequities. It is evident that aspects of both situation and personality models are necessary to account for both SQOL changes and maintenance.

1.2.5.3 Interactive Accounts

Various models of perceived QOL have attempted to include both of these factors. Headey and Wearing (1989) presented the Dynamic Equilibrium Model, extending from Costa and McCrae's (1980, 1984) view regarding the regulating, equilibrating function on SQOL of neuroticism and extroversion, and adding that life events have additional influence. A hierarchical multiple regression presented as evidence for this theory revealed significant contribution to the Life Satisfaction Index (LSI) (Headey, Holmstrom, & Wearing, 1983) of both personality and life event factors. However, the model accounted for only 17 percent of the variance in total. The predictive power of this theory may be low as a result of the limited range of personality factors, and the questionable validity of life event scales (Schrodener & Costa, 1984).

A theory has been developed by Rothbaum, Weisz, and Snyder (1982), known as the *two-process model of perceived control*, which provides promise as a method to unite a broad range of empirical findings and theories into one conceptually coherent account. Though the theory essentially focuses on perceived control, the mechanisms and outcomes involved are directly applicable to SQOL, with which the construct of perceived control has been substantially correlated (Bandura, 1995; Diener, 1984). Rothbaum et al., (1982) argue that maintenance of perceived control may be achieved according to two approaches to a situation. The preferred approach is that of *primary control* over one's circumstances, entailing influencing the external environment to fit the needs and desires of the individual. However, in the event of uncontrollable circumstances *secondary control* is necessary, in which control is targeted at internal processes, serving to change the individual's needs and desires to fit with the external world. This mechanism acts to buffer the psyche against the loss of primary control, helping the individual to cope with failure, and protecting emotional well-being and self-esteem (Rothbaum et al., 1982). Examples of secondary control include downward social comparisons, drug use to change mood, attributions of negative events to external causes, optimism, and deriving meaning from otherwise uncontrollable events

(interpretive control) (Felce & Perry, 1995; Heckhausen & Schultz, 1995). It appears that individual differences in cognitive appraisal, representing a human 'filter of perception', may mediate a person's experience of objective hardship (Campbell et al., 1976; p.15; Dowd & Pace, 1989; Felce & Perry, 1995).

1.2.6 Summary

Research suggests that the experience of difficult circumstances alone is not always sufficient to decrease a person's SQOL. However, in the presence of chronic stress or pain, SQOL has been reported to fall below 70%SM. This indicates that the relationship between subjective and objective QOL, though often not strong in the normative range, should not be categorically described as independent. Despite inadequacy of research in the area, reports of substantial life strains of homeless youths suggests the SQOL of this group may fall below the normative range, with intermediate levels expected for 'at risk' youths, and youths from community schools. Rothbaum et al.'s (1982) two-process model of perceived control may provide a theoretical framework in which the maintenance or decrease in SQOL may be explained both in terms of situational and psychological factors, such as a sense of meaning and purpose in life.

1.3 MEANING AND PURPOSE IN LIFE

With the evolution of symbolic and interpretative reasoning and understanding in humans, we have developed the unique capacity to question the reason for our existence and the occurrence of events in our lives. A number of authors have argued that a need for this higher interpretative framework, in the form of a need for meaning in life, is a significant, inherent and universal human motive (Frankl, 1978; Maddi, 1970; Yalom, 1980). This claim is supported by reports that all known cultures have attempted at some level to address issues relating to the human place in the universe (Barnhouse, 1986). The most notable exponent of this view is Frankl (1963, 1978), who argued that having a sense of meaning and purpose in life 'are what makes us human'.

A number of authors have noted that, as constructs of meaning and meaninglessness have often been perceived as theological and philosophical concepts, these have largely been overlooked in psychological research and practice (Reker et al, 1987; Ruffin, 1984). Despite the scarcity of research in the area, a clear relationship has been established between attainment of meaning and emotional health (Chamberlain & Zika, 1992; Reker & Wong, 1988; Ryff, 1989). People who have experienced a traumatic event, such as paralysed accident victims (Bulman & Wortman, 1977), rape victims (Burgess and Holmstrom, 1979), and people who have been severely burned (Andreasen & Norris, 1972), have characteristically been reported to exert considerable effort to make sense of what has happened to them, and to benefit from the resultant sense of meaning. Heady (1981) reported that a sense of purpose and meaning in life, examined through a 6-item Self-Fulfilment Index, accounted for over 50 percent of Andrews and Withey's (1976) Life-as-a-whole Satisfaction variance, with a correlation of .73. Smallest Space Analysis revealed that this index was of greater central importance to Life-as-a-whole measures than any of the 12 life domains. It appears that a sense of meaning may be a fundamental method of psychological resilience, necessary for successful living and coping. Consequently, the general absence of research in this area is surprising.

1.3.1 Measuring Personal Meaning and Related Constructs

Originally, the most common measure of the attainment of meaning and purpose in life was the Purpose in Life test, developed by Crumbaugh and Maholich (1969), based on Frankl's (1963) theorising. Subsequently, Crumbaugh (1977) developed the Seeking of Noetic Goals (SONG) test, to measure the motivation to find meaning and purpose in life. Factor analytic studies of these scales have demonstrated their multidimensional and complementary nature (Chamberlain & Zika, 1988; Reker, 1992). Reker (1992) has since developed a Life Attitude Profile - Revised to incorporate this combination of life attitudes which variously relate to existential concerns. Included in this aggregate are the constructs

defined as personal meaning, existential vacuum, personal choice and responsibility, goal seeking and death acceptance.

Personal meaning has been presented by Reker (1992) to encompass the concepts of meaning and purpose, often treated as synonymous. This measure is defined as comprising a sense of direction, a coherent understanding of existence, and the experience of fulfilment related to meaningfulness. Personal meaning may be viewed as conceptually aligning with Rothbaum, et al.'s (1982) construct of 'interpretative control', which they did not operationalise. These authors argue that interpretative control is a central secondary control mechanism in which 'the individual seeks to understand and derive meaning from otherwise uncontrollable events in order to accept them' (p.5). In the current study, personal meaning will subsequently be conceptualised as a fundamental secondary control mechanism. Existential vacuum may be viewed, not only as an inverse of personal meaning, but as comprising additional issues of indifference and lack of optimism regarding the future (Reker, 1992). Heckhausen and Schultz (1995) argue that such frameworks act as dysfunctional secondary control mechanisms to erode an individual's long-term sense of control, and subsequently well-being. Consistent with this view, existential vacuum has been associated with anxiety, depression, hopelessness, physical decline, alienation, emotional and psychosocial maladjustment, alcohol and drug use, and suicide (Crumbaugh & Maholick, 1964; Klinger, 1977; Ruffin, 1984).

A sense of personal choice and responsibility has also been argued to have a clear relationship with a sense of meaning and purpose in life. This is based on the view that the individual should ideally recognise their freedom to shape their own existence and purpose (e.g. Frankl, 1978). Reker (1992) describes this variable as representing 'the operational index of the degree to which a person perceives to have personal agency in directing his/her life' (p.16), and this variable has been significantly correlated with internal locus of control, $r = .47$ (Reker, 1992). A sense of choice and responsibility appears to equate with a person's perceptions of their primary control. It is argued by Rothbaum et al., (1982) that

secondary control should benefit SQOL via increasing an individual's perceived control. In this context, personal meaning, as a form of secondary control, should benefit SQOL via increasing a sense of choice and responsibility.

Death acceptance and goal seeking are two further constructs originally theorised to reflect characteristics of existential transcendence (e.g. Frankl, 1963). In relation to Reker's (1992) LAP-R scale, this theory has not been supported. Neither variable have been positively correlated with personal meaning, life satisfaction, belief in a positive after-life, or strength of commitment (Reker, 1992; Reker et al., 1987). Death acceptance has since been interpreted to reflect indifference, or lack of fear, regarding death, while goal seeking is reported to encompass a desire for new experiences (Reker, 1992). Goal seeking has in fact been positively correlated with existential vacuum. However, this correlation may reflect an artefact of the age range of respondents included in these studies, from 16 to 89 years, as existential vacuum and goal seeking have been documented to decrease across the lifespan (Reker, et al., 1987). As youths under 18 years age have not been specifically targeted in studies involving the LAP-R, the relationship of this variable to adolescent well-being is uncertain. These variables will be included in the current study as exploratory adjuncts to the issues of adolescent subjective experience.

1.3.2 Disaffiliation, Meaninglessness and Homelessness

The literature in this area converges to suggest that meaning is particularly attained from commitments, achievements, and relationships (DeVogler & Ebersole, 1983; Goodman et al, 1991; Klinger, 1977). Meaninglessness may therefore represent a significant problem for youths for whom these sources of meaning may be particularly lacking. Strained relationships with family, widely reported amongst homeless and 'at risk' youths, may indicate a fundamental threat to attainment of personal meaning of these youths. Furthermore, a sense of achievement or productivity has been reported to be one of the most importance domains of life, both for SQOL (Campbell et al, 1976), and as a central

source of life meaning (Frankl, 1978). Without stable accommodation, homeless youths are often unable, if not unwilling, to remain in school or to find employment (Jordan, 1995), suggesting cause for further social isolation.

1.3.3 Summary

Research suggests that the psychological resilience provided by a sense of meaning and purpose, and related outlooks, may be significantly lacking amongst homeless youths. Breakdown of these positive outlooks may be closely related to below average levels of SQOL, and is predicted to be most evident in those youths alienated from their families and from education or employment opportunities.

1.4 SOCIAL DESIRABILITY RESPONDING

The reliance on subjective measures raises the concern that results may be unduly influenced by subject response biases, such as socially desirable responding. This bias represents a tendency of the respondent to present themselves in an improbably favourable light (Holden & Fekken, 1989; Paulhus, 1991).

Two fundamental issues related to social desirability response tendencies warrant concern in the current study. Firstly, not only individuals, but also groups, have been reported to vary in their tendency to respond with a socially desirable bias (Paulhus, 1991). Campbell et al., (1976) have reported that poorly educated people have a greater tendency to respond in such a manner. There is the concern that homeless youths may manifest such a tendency relative to the control group, rendering group comparisons problematic. Research regarding the social desirability response tendencies of homeless youths is limited. Englander (1984) argued that runaways reported higher socially undesirable personal traits and lower socially desirable interpersonal traits than a non-runaway control group. However, neither means, standard deviations, nor effect sizes were provided to illustrate the size of these differences.

Furthermore, neither group comprised a representative sample. Runaway subjects included 52 white girls, from lower-middle-class homes, voluntarily staying at a local emergency shelter or detained by the juvenile justice system. The control group comprised 51 white upper-middle-class Protestant girls from local youth groups, and their friends. Differences in social class and religious backgrounds alone may account for social desirability response differences between these groups. Closer consideration of this response tendency needs to be accounted for if group comparisons are to be confidently made.

Secondly, the correlation between dependent variables such as SQOL and personal meaning may be argued to be inflated if both variables share a significant degree of variance with social desirability response tendencies. However, authors such as McCrae and Costa (1983) and Strosahl, Linegan, and Chiles (1964), contest that social desirability shares partial valid variance with SQOL and related measures of psychological adjustment. Given this postulate, social desirability tendencies may not demonstrate a unique contribution to total SQOL when other factors, such as personal meaning, are accounted for.

1.5 SUMMARY

Consistent evidence suggests that finding or retaining a sense of personal meaning in life is an important factor in the maintenance of SQOL. Youths isolated from important sources of life meaning, such as close family relationships or experiences of productivity, may be expected to present low levels of both personal meaning in life and SQOL relative to a control group. Rothbaum et al.'s (1982) two-process model of perceived control may provide a theory by which cognitive processes, such as personal meaning and choice and responsibility, may contribute to the overall maintenance of SQOL. The effect of social desirability response style tendencies also needs to be accounted for to ensure valid group and variable comparisons.

1.5.1 Hypotheses

From consideration of the previously cited research, the following hypotheses have been proposed for the current study.

1.5.1.1 Subjective Quality of Life: Hypothesis 1

It has been widely argued that SQOL can often demonstrate resilience in the face of objective hardships. However, it is hypothesised that, as numerous and recurrent non-normative life strains are faced by homeless youths, this group will report significantly lower levels of SQOL than a control group. Levels of SQOL intermediate between these groups are expected for youths 'at risk' of homelessness, followed by non-homeless youths from community schools.

1.5.1.2 Meaning and Purpose in Life: Hypothesis 2

Though a sense of meaning has been reported to represent a framework allowing an individual to maintain coherent life picture, this mechanism may not be impervious to situational stresses. Particular groups, such as homeless youths, are likely to experience continual threat to many factors in life typically associated with life meaning, such as close family relationships. Youths 'at risk' of homelessness, non-homeless youths attending community schools, and non-homeless youths from public schools are predicted to report respectively higher levels of personal meaning, and choice and responsibility and lower levels of existential vacuum than homeless youths. The nature of group differences for death acceptance and goal seeking in relation to the adolescent population are unknown. These are included in the current study on an exploratory basis.

1.5.1.3 Subjective Quality of Life and Meaning and Purpose: Hypothesis 3

The well reported positive relationships of perceptions of personal meaning and choice and responsibility to SQOL, and the inverse influence of existential vacuum, were hypothesised to be demonstrated in the current study. Given the argument of Rothbaum et al., (1982), choice and responsibility should mediate between personal meaning and SQOL, and subsequently be the only variable providing a unique contribution to SQOL. Social desirability is not predicted to uniquely contribute to SQOL when the LAP-R variables are simultaneously accounted for. Death acceptance and goal seeking are not expected to contribute to prediction of SQOL variance.

1.5.1.4 Education, Training and Employment and Meaning and Purpose: Hypothesis 4

A sense of achievement and productivity in life have been widely recognised to be important sources of life meaning, and influential factors regarding SQOL. It is hypothesised that homeless youths of those 'at risk' who are involved in education, training or employment may report a greater sense of personal meaning and SQOL than those youths not involved.

1.5.1.5 Social Desirability: Hypothesis 5

Negative self-reports given by homeless youths in previous research suggest that protection of social image may not be a strong need in this group. It is hypothesised that those youths will not differ from other groups in terms of social desirability responses.

2. METHOD

2.1 Subjects

The current study involved a total of 524 adolescents ranging from ages 14 to 17 years, with a mean age of 15.79(± 1.01), 57.2 percent of whom were female. The sample comprised four groups, including, (1) homeless youths, (2) youths 'at risk' of homelessness, (3) non-homeless public secondary school students, and (4) non-homeless community school students.

The homeless group comprised 67 youths (58.2 percent female) living independently from their parents in temporarily accommodation, long-term supported accommodation for the homeless, or in no fixed address, for a period equalling or exceeding one month. The mean age of this group was 15.82 (± 1.01) years, with length of time out of home averaging 27.37 (± 27.60) months. Present accommodation included temporarily living with friends or relatives (19.4 percent), temporary accommodation such as youth hostels (31.3 percent), long-term supported accommodation (20.9 percent), community placements (9.0 percent), or no fixed address (19.4 percent). Thirty-six percent of the homeless sample were not involved in schooling, training or employment.

Youths classed as 'at risk' of homelessness included 38 respondents (50 percent female), with a mean age of 15.68($\pm .99$) years, who reported living temporarily with their parents (89.5 percent), or who were living independently of their parents, yet had been out of home for less than one month (10.5 percent). Average previous length of time out of home was reported to be 8.12 (± 20.49) months, though 64.7 percent reported no previous time out of home. Eleven percent of this group were not involved in education, training or employment. Homeless and 'at risk' youths were attained from a wide variety of sources, including the Open Family Foundation, nine youth refuges, five community schools, two food vans, four training programs, the Melbourne Frontyard support service, and two public high schools (see Appendix A for details).

The third group, the controls, comprised 337 non-homeless students (56.7 percent female) recruited from two secondary schools in year levels 9 to 12 in metropolitan Melbourne. This large number of youths was included to enhance the robustness of ungrouped analyses, such as the confirmatory factor analysis. The mean age of these students was 15.91(\pm 1.01) years. Subjects were classed as 'non-homeless' if they reported living permanently with one or both parents. To address the concern that issues other than homelessness may distinguish homeless youths from these controls, a further group of 82 non-homeless youths (61.6 percent female) from five community schools was included in the study. Similarly to homeless youths, community schools youths are reported to often have confounded emotional, behavioural, learning or family problems. The mean age of this group was 15.36(\pm .92) years.

2.2 Materials

A questionnaire was constructed titled *Youth, Life and Attitudes in the 90s*. The appropriateness of the demographic questions (Appendix B), design complexity and literacy levels were assessed by Peter Nixon, an experienced Open Family streetworker, Chris Chamberlain, a senior sociologist from Monash University who co-conducted the 1994 National Consensus into Youth Homelessness, Howard Mould, a literacy expert from Deakin University, and two high school students, aged 15 and 16 years. These consultations resulted in the language level of one instrument (LAP-R) being simplified. One ComQol domain was changed from, 'doing things with people outside of your home' to 'your sense of belonging in the community'. This wording was based on factors argued to underlie this domain, such as community integration and involvement (Cummins, 1996), and was made in consultation with the original author of the scale. The final literacy level of the questionnaire was determined to be at Grade 4 level, using Fry's extended readability graph, which is a 'readability measure...suitable for all age levels' (Harrison, 1980; p.73). The conceptual complexity was determined to be at age 12 level by Howard Mould.

2.2.1 *The Comprehensive Quality of Life Scale for adolescents (ComQOL-ST)*

Many scales designed to measure QOL have targeted a narrow population. In contrast, the ComQol scale, developed by Cummins (1993), includes a comprehensive range of domains demonstrated to have broad population applicability to personal well-being, and allowing comparison between diverse samples (see Cummins, McCabe, Romeo, & Gullone, 1994; Cummins, 1996). A version of this scale, known as the Comprehensive Quality of Life Scale for Adolescents (ComQol-ST), has also been designed and validated for use with youths aged 12 to 18 years (Cummins, 1993).

Though objective and subjective components of QOL may be measured using the ComQol-ST scale, only the latter dimension has been included in the current study. This is based on the subjective focus of the current study, and recommendations by Nathan Sterling, National Director of the Open Family Foundation, Peter Nixon, Chris Chamberlain, and Howard Mould, that the questionnaire be kept to its minimum length to attain an adequate completion rate. Furthermore, many of the objective measures, such as frequency of going to restaurants, appear inappropriate in relation to homeless youths, whose lifestyles have been reported to often be less conventional (Open Family, 1996).

The 16-item subjective dimension of ComQol-ST is calculated through multiplication of importance and satisfaction scores for each domain. These are respectively measured according to a five-point Likert scale, from one, representing *not important at all*, to five, *could not be more important* (Cummins, 1994) (Appendix C), and Andrew and Withey's (1976) 7-item Delighted-Terrible scale (Appendix D). Satisfaction scores provide measures which can be directly compared to Cummins (1995) 'gold standard' in which life satisfaction of adult populations predictably falls within the narrow range of 75 ± 2.5 percent of score maximum (%SM). The domain item examining intimacy was separated into two domains looking at intimacy with family and intimacy with friends, in line with previous researchers (e.g. Fogarty, 1995), as substantial differences in these were expected, particularly amongst homeless youths.

The psychometric validity reported for the ComQol-ST has been promising. Internal consistency of the importance and satisfaction SQOL scales has been supported for ComQol-ST, with respective Cronbach alphas of .76 and .80. One week test-retest reliability has been established to be good, at $r=.74$ and $r=.73$, for importance and satisfaction measures respectively (Cummins, 1993).

2.2.2 *The Life Attitude Profile - Revised (LAP-R)*

Based on factor analyses of previous scales, Reker (1992) has developed a single instrument to measure the multidimensional nature of attitudes related to searching for and attaining a sense of meaning and purpose in life. This 48-item scale, the *Life Attitude Profile - Revised (LAP-R)* (Reker, 1992), comprises six domains, with items measured on a Likert scale from 1, *strongly agree*, to 5, *strongly disagree*. Domains include Purpose, measuring a sense of direction in life; Coherence, measuring integrated understanding of self, others and life; Existential Vacuum, referring to lack of meaning and direction in life; Choice and Responsibility, referring to perceptions of personal agency; Death Acceptance, measuring transcendence of fear of death; and Goal Seeking, measuring the desire for new challenges. Concurrent validity has been established to be adequate for each of the LAP-R subscales (Reker, 1992).

Reker's (1992) principal components factor analysis revealed the subscales of purpose and coherence loaded on a single factor, labelled personal meaning. These are subsequently treated as one variable in the current study. Data from this factor analysis also reveals that six of Reker's (1992) items loaded greater than .35 positively on two factors. Double-loading items have been reported to have negative implications for the interpretation and independence of the factors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). Following recommendations that the test be kept to a minimum length, double-loading items were removed. These items, and the final 42-item LAP-R scale, are indicated in Appendix E.

The psychometric validity of this scale has been well established. Alpha coefficients of internal consistency of the LAP-R subscales, for ages 17 to 24 and both genders, have been reported to range from .77 to .87. Short-term reliability has also been demonstrated with test-retest estimates of 200 subjects over a four to six week interval ranged from .77 to .90 (Reker, 1992).

2.2.3 *The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale Form C (M-D SDS-C)*

Among a number of measures of social desirability, the 33-item Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960) has been one of the most commonly utilised (Reynolds, 1982). This scale is reported to measure the tendency for an individual to demonstrate improbably favourable response tendencies (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). Well-established construct validation and psychometric validity have been reported (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960; Reynolds, 1982). To provide a more economical form, Reynolds (1982) developed a number of shorter forms of this scale, based on factor analysis with a factor loading criteria of .40. Of these, the 13-item scale (M-D SDS-C) demonstrates the greatest psychometric strength. Internal reliability has been established to be .76, and Pearson's product-moment correlation with the full M-C SDS is reported to be .93. Items are scored along a Likert Scale ranging from one, *Strongly Agree* to five, *Strongly Disagree*. As the items comprised both 'assert good' and 'deny bad' style questions (Campbell et al., 1976), the former items were reverse coded following data entry to ensure high responses reflected high social desirability. These items were integrated with the LAP-R items in Section 3 of the questionnaire (Appendix E).

2.3 Procedure

Following approval from the Deakin University Ethics Committee and the Directorate of Education (Appendix F), informed consent for access to subjects from all included sources was sought and attained. Subjects were informed that the study involved looking at the life

attitudes of various groups of youths and that their questionnaires would be completely anonymous.

Subjects obtained from schools and training programs were administered the questionnaire in a class situation. Youths from other sources were individually administered the questionnaires. Questionnaires were read to those who preferred, to allow for variations in literacy levels (Jordan, 1995; McCarthy & Hagan, 1992).

Use of incentives for homeless youths was advised by Nathan Sterling, and Peter Nixon, and has been employed in previous studies (Robertson et al, 1989; McCarthy & Hagan, 1992). Consequently, homeless youths were offered a McDonald's Big Mac voucher and a games pass or a Village Roadshow movie pass for completion of the questionnaire. This valuable contribution was provided by Fiona Howse, Marketing and Administration Manager of McDonalds, and by Catherine Hamilton, Acquisitions and Reporting Manager for Village Roadshow Distributed.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Data Screening

The plausibility of the data set was first examined and affirmed via consideration of the means, standard deviations, and range of all variables. Missing values were noted for 207 of the possible 38,160 cases (0.5 percent of cases). Lack of mean differences between dummy groups containing missing values and those without, revealed that these values were randomly distributed across variables. Missing values were replaced with the variable group means. Eighteen subjects were removed for responding in a consistently patterned or acquiescent fashion, or returning incomplete questionnaires (see Appendix G for subject details). The resulting groups sizes were 337 for the control, 82 for the community school youths, 38 for the 'at risk' group, and 67 for the homeless group.

Data screening was conducted both for the grouped and ungrouped data, as analyses would involve the data set in both forms. LAP-R items were also screened prior to calculation of LAP-R composite scores, to meet the assumptions of the confirmatory factor analysis. Across all analyses, SQOL scores and goal seeking were found to be negatively skewed. These distributions were expected and deemed valid. As transformations (inverse and square) were found to have minimal statistical value, and to decrease the power and interpretability of the data, transformations have not been reported. Univariate outliers ($Z > 3$, $p < .001$), for ungrouped and grouped analyses, were respectively recoded to three standard deviations of the variable mean or the group variable mean. Mahalanobis Distance revealed an absence of multivariate outliers amongst ComQol variables, $\chi^2(8) < 26.125$, $p > .001$, and LAP-R and social desirability variables, $\chi^2(6) < 22.458$, $p > .001$. Random bivariate scatterplots revealed adequate linearity between the non-skewed variables in the grouped and ungrouped data. No variance ratio between groups exceeded 4:1 for any variable, indicating acceptable homogeneity of variance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996).

Residuals scatterplots for multiple regression analyses revealed adequate linearity and homoscedasticity. Correlation matrixes and conversion of the programs indicated multicollinearity and singularity were not violated for any analysis.

3.2 Descriptives

Response rates were respectively 99, 92, 64, 98, 98 and 96 percent for non-homeless high school students, Kensington, Collingwood, and, Sydney Road community schools, Open Family, and the LINK bus. For youths accessed via third parties, response rates were not available. Independent t tests comparing mean differences of Collingwood community school youths, reporting a lower response rate (64 percent), to other community school populations revealed a lack of significant differences, at the .01 level.

Prior to examination of hypotheses, analyses were conducted to determine the generalisability of results across all dependent variables between: (1) non-homeless community schools samples, (2) non-homeless high school samples, (3) 14 and 17 year olds, (4) males versus females, and (5) youths preferring questionnaire items to be read to them versus those who read the questionnaire.

A series of independent t tests were conducted to compare non-homeless community schools samples ($n = 5, 11, 13, 17, 36$) for all dependent variables. With a Bonferroni style adjustment of the alpha criteria, to .005 for ComQol variables and .01 for LAP-R variables (.05/no. of variables, see Equation 9.11, Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996), no significant differences were noted between these samples. Multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAs) revealed no significant differences between non-homeless students from the two suburban secondary schools for ComQol, LAP-R, and social desirability variables. However, MANOVAs examining age and gender differences revealed 14 year olds reported significantly lower levels of personal meaning ($M = 37.63 \pm 10.35$) than 17 year olds ($M = 41.33 \pm 8.66$), $F(1,223) = 8.857$, $p = .003$, $\eta^2 = .038$. Females scored significantly higher for SQOL with friends ($M = 78.22 \pm 16.14\%SM$) than males ($M = 72.14 \pm 15.66\%SM$),

$F(1,526)=19.023$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2=.035$; higher in goal seeking ($M=25.15\pm 3.34$ versus 24.09 ± 3.73), $F(1,526)=12.247$, $p=.001$, $\eta^2=.023$; and lower in death acceptance ($M=20.58\pm 5.89$ versus 22.23 ± 4.97), $F(1,526)=12.254$, $p=.001$, $\eta^2=.023$. Independent t tests, comparing the five subjects who had their questionnaires read to them with the overall sample who did not, revealed a lack of significant differences for all dependent variables. Findings of non-significant differences justifies the amalgamation of subjects into composite groups for the purposes of the current study. Age and gender differences were accounted for in subsequent group comparisons by including these as covariates in the appropriate analyses.

Homeless youths ($n=67$) and youths 'at risk' of homelessness ($n=38$) were found not to differ statistically in any analyses. Consequently, they were combined, forming a composite group with a sample size $n=105$, and increasing the power of the analysis (McLeod, personal consultation, 17/9/97).

To overcome sample size discrepancies between groups, a random sample of 96 subjects was chosen (mean age = 15.85 ± 1.03 years; 51 percent female) to represent the 337 subjects in the control group. The maximum sample size discrepancy of 1:1.28 was within the acceptable range of 1:1.5 for grouped comparisons (Coates & Steed, 1996). A series of MANOVAs comparing the full and abridged control samples for demographic and dependent variables revealed no significant differences between these groups.

Descriptive statistics of group ComQol, LAP-R and social desirability means are provided in Table 1 and Table 2 (see Appendix H and I for means for complete control group, and 'at risk' and 'homeless' groups independently). As shown in Table 1, no domain satisfaction scores for the control group fell below Cummins' (1995) 'gold standard' of 75 ± 2.5 percent of satisfaction scale maximum (SM). In contrast, the majority of domain satisfaction scores for non-homeless community school youths and for homeless and 'at risk' group fell below 70% score maximum (SM), with the domain of friendship as the one consistent exception.

Table 1: Domain and Total Group Means and Standard Deviations for Importance (Imp), Satisfaction (Sat), and SQOL (Imp x Sat) Expressed as Percentage of Scale Maximum.

Domain	Non-homeless high school control (n=96)			Non-homeless community school youths (n=82)			Homeless and 'at risk' youths (n=105)		
	Imp	Sat	IxS	Imp	Sat	IxS	Imp	Sat	IxS
Material	66.93 (±)18.32	78.99 (±)13.94	74.37 (±)10.94	65.70 (±)21.02	71.90 (±)20.17	69.86 (±)13.40	70.95 (±)24.05	63.02 (±)24.02	64.54 (+)20.74
Health	77.08 (±)17.27	71.88 (±)18.78	71.55 (±)16.84	57.85 (±)24.33	58.14 (±)26.29	59.46 (±)19.62	61.67 (±)29.23	58.89 (±)24.25	61.38 (+)18.40
Productivity	78.39 (±)16.47	72.22 (±)17.38	72.67 (±)15.50	69.48 (±)24.37	65.50 (±)22.27	65.73 (±)18.68	66.90 (±)27.63	56.83 (±)25.18	60.73 (±)20.70
Family	72.66 (±)22.68	73.44 (±)19.28	72.86 (±)15.48	65.12 (±)28.77	66.09 (±)26.87	67.01 (±)20.99	52.86 (±)35.24	46.10 (+)30.07	54.46 (±)22.39
Friends	72.40 (±)19.36	77.43 (±)16.22	75.00 (±)13.47	70.64 (±)22.42	71.12 (±)21.30	70.96 (±)16.68	76.67 (±)22.54	76.03 (+)21.92	77.22 (±)18.63
Safety	70.67 (±)21.76	73.78 (±)14.46	72.18 (±)10.44	70.64 (±)23.39	67.83 (±)21.51	67.75 (±)16.17	61.90 (±)30.24	67.30 (±)25.20	65.66 (±)19.49
Community	54.43 (±)24.60	70.49 (±)16.13	66.31 (±)11.81	50.87 (±)27.51	61.05 (±)22.08	61.11 (±)14.92	42.14 (-)32.02	56.83 (±)27.12	57.84 (±)16.49
Emotion	78.65 (±)18.13	72.22 (±)18.20	72.34 (±)15.60	68.90 (±)27.37	66.47 (±)23.78	67.59 (±)17.99	69.29 (±)28.22	57.46 (±)27.73	61.08 (±)22.92
Total	71.22 (±)12.05	73.57 (±)10.86	71.91 (±)9.09	65.37 (±)15.55	67.76 (±)12.49	67.16 (±)9.47	62.52 (±)18.72	60.34 (±)17.13	62.37 (±)12.88

Note: All figures expressed as percentage of scale maximum = $(\text{score}-1) \times 100 / (\text{number of scale points}-1)$.

Table 2: Group Means, Standard Deviations, and Percentage of Score Maximum Values for LAP-R Variables and Social Desirability

Variable	High School Control (n=96)		Community School Youths (n=82)		Homeless and 'at risk' (n=105)	
	Mean±SD	%SM	Mean±SD	%SM	Mean±SD	%SM
Personal Meaning	41.28±7.59	61.00	37.43±9.73	52.99	36.62±10.96	51.31
Existential Vacuum	13.79±4.08	43.95	16.61±4.82	58.05	17.11±4.76	63.55
Choice/Responsibleness	30.35±5.23	69.84	29.79±5.08	68.09	31.59±5.56	73.72
Goal Seeking	24.42±3.33	76.75	24.29±3.80	76.21	24.69±3.69	77.88
Death Acceptance	20.48±4.93	62.33	20.29±5.83	59.54	22.66±5.62	69.42
Social Desirability	37.48±7.14	47.08	35.96±7.47	44.15	35.72±6.72	43.69

Note: Total possible range for personal meaning is 12 to 60
 Total possible range for existential vacuum is 5 to 25
 Total possible range for choice/responsibleness is 8 to 40
 Total possible range for goal seeking is 6 to 30
 Total possible range for death acceptance is 6 to 30
 Total possible range for social desirability is 13 to 65

As shown in Table 2, the mean scores of non-homeless community school youths fell between the homeless or 'at risk' and the control group, with exceptions of goal seeking and death acceptance.

3.3 Data Analysis

3.3.1 *Subjective Quality of Life: Hypothesis 1*

To test the hypothesis that homeless youths would report the lowest SQOL (importance x satisfaction), two analyses were conducted. These included a multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) with the ComQol domains as the dependent variables and gender as a covariate, followed by an analysis of variance (ANOVA) for total SQOL scores.

In addition to the usual assumptions of MANOVA, MANCOVA assumes reliability of covariates and homogeneity of regression. Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) note that assumption of reliability of variables such as sex and age 'can usually be justified' (p.329). The assumption of homogeneity of regression was confirmed, Wilk's Approximate F (16,540)=.697, $p=.798$. Gender was included as a covariate to account for findings from previous comparisons that females scored significantly higher than males for the domain of intimacy with friends. Pillais Approximate F (16,544)=1.189, $p=.272$, revealed gender did not significantly influence the multivariate results. Though Box's M indicated multivariate heterogeneity, $\chi^2(72,202253)=274.93$, $p<.001$, this measure has been reported to be highly sensitive to departures from normality (Norusis, 1988), as is standard in SQOL research. Pillais Approximate F(16,548)=5.45, $p<.001$, $\eta^2=.14$, revealed a significant global difference between the groups at the .001 level. Groups differed significantly for all domains other than friendship at the .05 level, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary Table for Multivariate Analysis of Covariance Examining Group Differences in ComQol SQOL Domains with Adjusted Means

Variable	Groups			F(2,279)	p	η^2	Power
	Control Group (n=96)	Non-homeless Community School (n=82)	Homeless and 'at risk' (n=105)				
Material	X SD	74.48 (±)10.96	70.55 (±)13.41	64.55 (±)20.80	10.08	.000	.07 .98
Health	X SD	71.49 (±)16.84	60.62 (±)19.62	61.37 (±)18.42	10.45	.000	.07 .99
Productivity	X SD	72.75 (±)15.50	67.47 (±)18.68	60.74 (±)20.70	11.68	.000	.08 .99
Family	X SD	72.83 (±)15.44	68.08 (±)20.99	54.46 (±)22.39	23.11	.000	.14 1.00
Friends	X SD	75.23 (±)13.47	71.60 (±)16.68	76.24 (±)18.68	2.09	.126	.01 .42
Safety	X SD	72.23 (±)10.44	69.74 (±)16.17	65.67 (±)19.49	4.91	.008	.03 .80
Community	X SD	66.40 (±)11.81	62.07 (±)14.92	57.85 (±)16.49	8.83	.000	.06 .97
Emotional	X SD	72.28 (±)15.64	69.67 (±)17.99	61.07 (±)22.97	9.87	.000	.07 .98

Post-hoc Scheffe analyses revealed that the homeless group and 'at risk' youths scored significantly lower than non-homeless youths for productivity, intimacy with family, and emotional well-being. This group also scored significantly lower than the control group for material well-being, health, safety, and sense of belonging in the community. Non-homeless community school youths scored significantly lower than the control group for perceived health (see Table 3 for mean values).

Group differences in total SQOL scores were examined using a one-way ANOVA. Gender was not included as a covariate as this variable resulted in heterogeneity of regression, $F(3,282) = 9.02, p < .001$, and had not significantly impacted upon ComQol group differences in the preceding MANCOVA. Significant group differences in total SQOL were noted, $F(2,280) = 10.689, p < .001, \eta^2 = .10$, with Scheffe analyses revealing higher total SQOL amongst the control group ($M = 71.91 \pm 9.09\%SM$) than the homeless and 'at risk' youths ($M = 60.34 \pm 17.13\%SM$) or non-homeless community school youths ($M = 67.16 \pm 9.47\%SM$).

As hypothesised, SQOL of homeless, and 'at risk' youths, fell significantly lower than the control group for the majority of SQOL domains. The extent of these differences was less evident in relation to the non-homeless community school youths.

3.3.2 Meaning and Purpose in Life: Hypothesis 2

A confirmatory factor analysis was carried out for the overall sample to establish whether the data fitted the predicted factor solution. Initial analyses revealed that items 6, 13, 20, 40 and 42 did not significantly load ($< .32$) on their corresponding factors, with the loading criteria based on recommendations by Tabachnick and Fidell (1996). These items were removed, improving the five factor solution (see Appendix E for removed items). t values indicated that all remaining items were related to their factors at the .01 significance level. The chi-square value for the confirmatory factor analysis was significant, $\chi^2(619) = 1904.57, p < .001$, suggesting an inadequate fit of the model. However, Tabachnick and Fidell (1996; p. 748) note that 'assessment of fit is not always as straightforward as assessment of χ^2 '. Problems of inaccuracies exist for both large and small samples. Therefore a number of other measures were investigated.

The absolute goodness of fit (GFI) of the five factor solution, at .857, approximated the recommended .90, indicating a 'marginal fit' (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996; p. 749). The adjusted GFI, at .817, exceeded the preferred minimum criteria of .80. The root mean

square residual of .057 indicated an acceptably low average residual correlation, falling below the recommended maximum criteria of .06 (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1995). Reliability of all the resultant factors was found to be good to very good, with respective Cronbach alpha correlation coefficients for personal meaning, goal seeking, death acceptance, choice and responsibility and existential vacuum of .89, .69, .83, .75 and .74. The confirmatory factor analysis was repeated on the control group only, and the homeless and 'at risk' youths only, to determine whether the combined group solution would match these samples. No noteworthy differences existed between the solutions. Consequently Reker's (1992) five factor solution was confirmed for use in this study.

A one-way MANCOVA was conducted to test Hypothesis 2 that homeless youths would report the lowest level of personal meaning and choice and responsibility, and highest existential vacuum of the three groups. With age and gender included as covariates, homogeneity of regression was established, Wilk's Approximate $F(20,896) = .758, p = .766$. Pillais revealed age and gender significantly impacted on the combined dependent variables, $F(10,550) = 2.84, p = .002, \eta^2 = .05$. The higher levels of goal seeking, $F(1,279) = 10.07, p = .002, \eta^2 = .035$, and lower levels of death acceptance in the females, $F(1,279) = .674, p = .01, \eta^2 = .024$, significantly impacted on the MANCOVA results, though age differences did not. Box's M test for homogeneity of regression was non-significant, indicating this assumption had not been violated. Examination of Pillais Approximate $F(12,448) = 3.81, p < .001, \eta^2 = .08$, revealed a significant global difference among the groups. Univariate differences between groups, shown in Table 5, were noted at the .05 level for personal meaning, existential vacuum, and death acceptance.

Table 4: Summary Table for Multivariate Analysis of Covariance Examining Group Differences in LAP-R Domains with Adjusted Means

LAP-R Variables	Groups			F(2,287)	p	η^2	Power
	Control (n=96)	Non-homeless Community School (n=82)	Homeless and 'at risk' (n=105)				
Personal Meaning	X SD	41.25 ±7.59	38.37 ±9.73	36.62 ±10.96	5.95	.003	.04 .88
Existent. Vacuum	X SD	13.79 ±4.08	16.28 ±4.82	17.11 ±4.76	13.61	.000	.09 1.00
Choice/Respons.	X SD	30.35 ±5.23	30.18 ±5.08	30.59 ±5.56	.17	.847	.00 .08
Goal Seeking	X SD	24.49 ±3.33	24.27 ±3.80	24.70 ±3.69	.22	.806	.00 .09
Death Accept.	X SD	20.40 ±4.93	20.49 ±5.83	22.65 ±5.62	5.99	.003	.04 .87

Note: Total possible range for personal meaning is 12 to 60
 Total possible range for existential vacuum is 5 to 25
 Total possible range for choice/responsibleness is 8 to 40
 Total possible range for goal seeking is 6 to 30
 Total possible range for death acceptance is 6 to 30

Post-hoc Scheffé analyses revealed that the homeless and 'at risk' group reported significantly lower personal meaning and higher existential vacuum and death acceptance than the control group. Non-homeless community school youths also reported significantly higher existential vacuum than the control group (see Table 5 for mean values). The results support Hypothesis 2 in relation to group differences for personal meaning and existential vacuum. However, the lack of group differences for choice and responsibleness was unexpected.

In conjunction with observed group differences in total SQOL, the finding that the groups did not differ in perceived choice and responsibility, as illustrated in Figure 1, challenges predictions, based on Rothbaum et al.'s (1982) two-process model, that choice and responsibility should mediate the relationship of personal meaning and SQOL.

% of Score Maximum

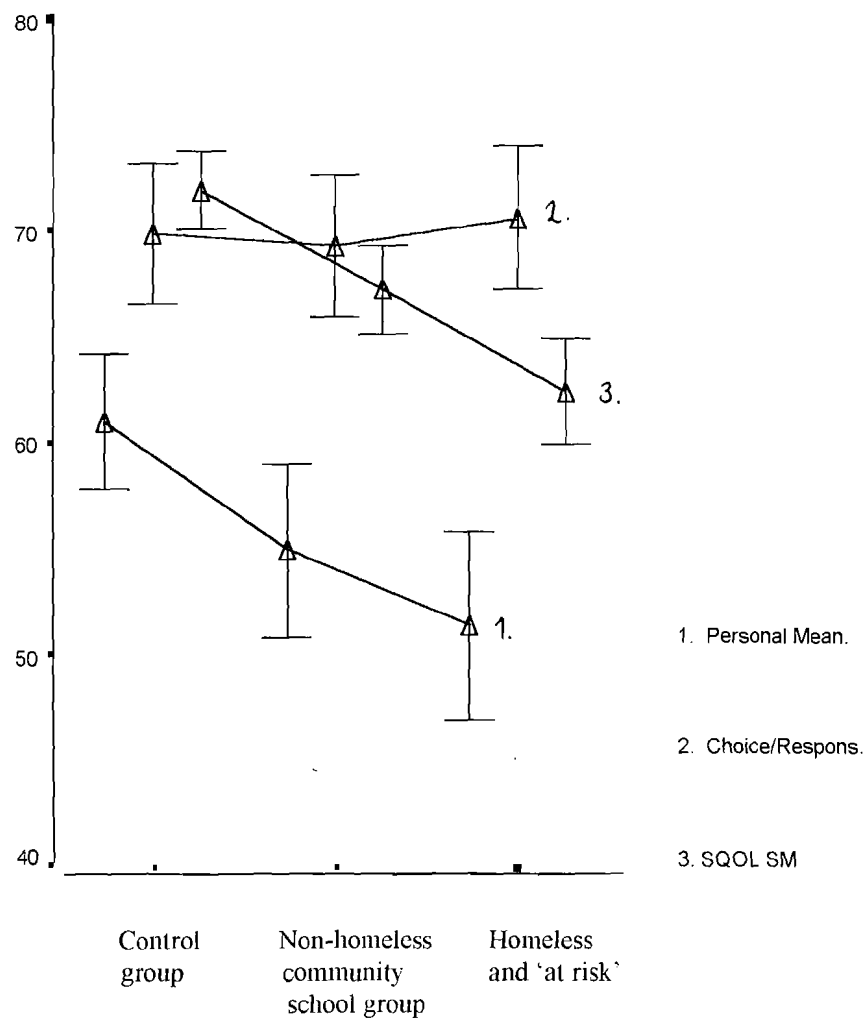


Figure 1: Percentage of Score Maximums for Choice and Responsibility, Personal Meaning, and Overall SQOL for each Group.

3.3.3 *Subjective Quality of Life and Meaning and Purpose: Hypothesis 3*

A standard multiple regression analysis (MRA) was conducted, with LAP-R variables entered simultaneously as independent variables, to compare the respective contribution of these variables to the prediction of total SQOL. Social desirability was included as an independent variable, to examine whether this variable would provide unique variance to SQOL. The cases to independent variables ratio exceeded the recommended 20 cases per independent variable (six IVs and 524 cases).

The analysis revealed that the independent variables predicted approximately 43 percent of the SQOL variance, as shown in Table 5. Personal meaning, followed by existential vacuum, provided the strongest beta coefficients and the largest proportions of unique variance. Choice and responsibility provided a smaller, yet significant, contribution to total SQOL, at the .001 level.

Table 5: Summary Statistics for the Standard Multiple Regression of the LAP-R Domains and Social Desirability on SQOL Involving the Total Adolescent Sample (n=548)

Variables	SQOL (DV)	Social Desir.	Death Accept.	Goal Seek	Choice/ Respon.	Exist. Vacuum	Personal Meaning	β	sr ² (unique)
Personal Meaning	.605	.287	.048	.238	.516	-.486		.38*	.084
Existent. Vacuum	-.476	-.350	.099	.053	-.244			-.24*	.043
Choice/ Respons.	.448	.255	.117	.261				.18*	.024
Goal Seeking	.164	-.077	.061					.04	.001
Death Accept.	-.011							-.03	.001
Social Desirab.	.287							.02	.001
Means	60.09	37.48	21.28	24.70	30.52	14.91	39.78	R ² =.437	
SDs	10.44	7.15	5.42	3.47	5.15	4.78	9.24	R ² -adj=.432	
								R=.661	

* $p < .001$

These findings support hypotheses regarding the direction of the LAP-R bivariate relationships with SQOL. However, the results run contrary to predictions, based on Rothbaum et al.'s (1982) theorising, that choice and responsibility would provide the only unique variance to SQOL, and the largest relationship with SQOL. Social desirability, as hypothesised, did not provide a unique contribution to SQOL in the presence of the other LAP-R variables.

As the homeless and 'at risk' had been combined to form an aggregate group in the current analyses, the sample size of 105 allowed a multiple regression to be conducted on this group alone. This analysis was included to determine whether the previous results would generalise to this select population.

Table 6: Summary Statistics for the Standard Multiple Regression of LAP-R Domains and Social Desirability on SQOL for Homeless and 'At Risk' Youths

Variables	SQOL (DV)	Social Desir.	Death Accept.	Goal Seek	Choice/ Respons.	Exist. Vacuum	Personal Meaning	β	sr^2 (unique)
Personal Meaning	.640	.311	-.061	.379	.614	-.582		.40*	.128
Existent. Vacuum	-.517	-.223	.105	-.192	-.402			-.21	.049
Choice/ Respons.	.529	.113	.067	.400				.21	.044
Goal Seeking	.251	.253	-.048					-.02	.001
Death Accept.	-.011	-.016						.01	.000
Social Desirab.	.204							.01	.000
Means	60.09	35.72	22.66	24.69	30.59	17.11	36.62	$R^2 = .468$	
SDs	10.44	6.72	5.62	3.69	5.56	4.76	10.96	$R^2\text{-adj} = .441$	
								$R = .684$	

* $p < .001$

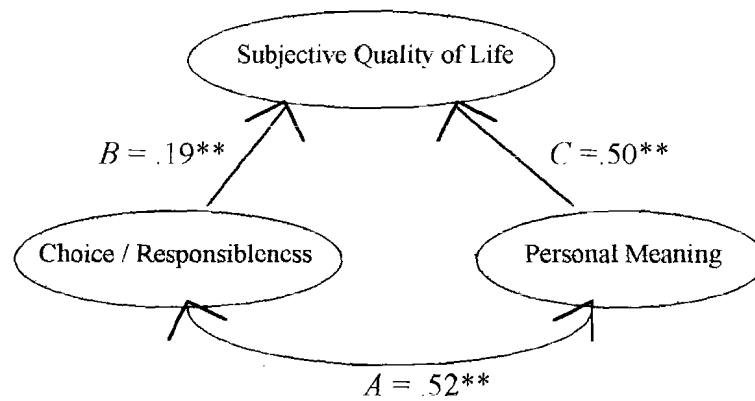
Personal meaning was the only LAP-R variable for which the β value reached significance at the .001 level. However, lack of significance of existential vacuum and choice and

responsibleness most likely reflects the lower sample size of this analysis ($n=105$), compared to that of the total sample ($n = 524$). The proportion of total SQOL variance predicted between these analyses appears similar. The results of these two regression analyses are therefore argued to be generalisable across these groups

As a large degree of variance from the regression analyses was shared between LAP-R variables (28 and 24 percent respectively), a path analysis was conducted to determine the degree of the causal relationship between personal meaning and choice and responsibleness in relation to SQOL, when the other is held constant. These results take the form of path coefficients (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black, 1995). Causal in this sense represents 'the assumption that a change in the variable at the tail of the arrow will result in a change in the variable at the head of the arrow...with all other variables in the diagram held constant' (Loehlin, 1987; p.4). Calculations of these coefficients are based on bivariate correlations and simultaneous equation formulae outlined by Loehlin (1992) and Hair et al., (1995). The causal relationship between choice and responsibleness and personal meaning to SQOL is presented according to the formula, $Y = b_1X_1 + b_2X_2$, in which $Y =$ total SQOL, $X_1 =$ choice and responsibleness, $X_2 =$ personal meaning, and b_1 (or B) and b_2 (or C) represent the respective path coefficients. The relationship, for example, between personal meaning and SQOL takes into consideration the direct causal path, C , added to the compound path, $A \times B$ (see Figure 2). The bivariate correlation of personal meaning and SQOL ($r_{pm-sqol}$) is presented as equalling $C+AB$. The value of A is known ($A=.52$), representing the bivariate correlation of X_1 and X_2 . The causal path of choice and responsibleness to SQOL involves the relationship, $r_{chresp-sqol} = B + AC$. With these equations, and the three bivariate correlations known from the previous regression analyses, the values of B and C are calculated via the simultaneous equations. Solving these equations:

$$\begin{aligned} .60 &= C + .52B && + .52^2 \\ .45 &= B + .5C && + .5^2 \end{aligned}$$

B and C respectively equal .19, and .50 (see Figure 2).



** $p < .001$

Figure 2: Path Coefficients Between Personal Meaning, Choice and Responsibleness and SQOL

Comparison of the path coefficients indicates that personal meaning ($b_2 = .50$) exhibited a stronger unique relationship with SQOL than did choice and responsibleness ($b_1 = .19$). Figure 2 illustrates that personal meaning does not primarily act on SQOL via increasing perceived choice and responsibleness.

3.3.4 Education, Training and Employment and Meaning and Purpose: Hypothesis 4

One-way MANOVAs for ComQol and LAP-R scales, and an ANOVA for social desirability, were conducted to investigate the hypothesis that involvement in education, training or employment would be related to differences in subjective outlook in homeless and 'at risk' youths. Box's M revealed that homogeneity of variance was not significantly violated in any of the analyses. Contrary to Hypothesis 4, no significant differences were noted between homeless and 'at risk' youths involved in education, training or employment ($n=76$) and those who were not ($n=29$) for ComQol variables, Pillais Exact $F(8,96)=1.33$, $p=.240$; LAP-R variables, Pillais Exact $F(5,101)=.701$, $p=.554$; or social desirability, $F(1,103)=1.216$, $p=.304$.

3.3.5 *Social Desirability: Hypothesis 5*

The hypothesis that group differences would not be found for social desirability responding was examined using a one-way ANOVA. Levene's statistic, $(2,279) = 2.413$, $p = .091$, revealed homogeneity of variance was not violated. No significant group differences were noted for social desirability, $F(2,279)=1.216$, $p=.304$, supporting Hypothesis 5.

3.3.5 *Additional Exploration of Homeless Compared to 'At Risk' Group*

Following the finding of a lack of significant differences between homeless and 'at risk' youths, it was hypothesised that these results may have been confounded by previous experiences of homelessness amongst some 'at risk' youths. With these youths removed ($n=16$), a series of independent t tests were conducted comparing the remaining 'at risk' ($n=22$) and homeless youths ($n=67$). With a Bonferroni adjustment of the alpha criteria for the ComQol variables to .005, and .01 for LAP-R variables (see Equation 9.11, Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996), 'at risk' youths who had not experienced homelessness reported significantly lower levels of perceived choice and responsibility than homeless youths, $t(84)=-2.687$, $p=.009$. No other group differences were significant.

3.4 *Results Summary*

As hypothesised, homeless youths reported significantly lower levels of SQOL and personal meaning, than the control group, and higher levels of existential vacuum. Significant differences between the homeless and 'at risk' group and the non-homeless community school youths were restricted to three ComQol domains and death acceptance. Social desirability did not differ between the groups, as hypothesised. However, a number of findings were unexpected. Most notably:

1. subjective outlooks did not differ between homeless and the complete sample of 'at risk' youths;
2. a sense of choice and responsibility did not mediate between personal meaning and SQOL;
3. involvement in education, training or employment was not related to subjective differences amongst homeless or 'at risk' youths;
4. 'at risk' youths who had not previously experienced homelessness reported significantly lower levels of choice and responsibility than homeless youths.

4. DISCUSSION

The primary conclusions to be drawn from the current study are two-fold. First, significantly lower levels of both perceived life quality and personal meaning were reported by homeless youths, and youths 'at risk' of homelessness, relative to the control group. As these variables are shown to be strongly correlated, it appears that personal meaning is an important human need, and one which is inadequately met in the lives of youths without stable family homes. Second, the results present important implications for theories regarding the general resilience of SQOL. It will be argued that the adequate or functional role of mechanisms involved in this maintenance may be largely impeded amongst homeless and 'at risk' youths. Results from the current study, in conjunction with previous research and theory, are combined to form the basis for an alternative model regarding the maintenance of SQOL.

4.1 Homelessness and Subjective Quality of Life: Hypothesis 1

As predicted in hypothesis one, the current results indicate that homeless youths represent a rare exception to the standard finding that SQOL is maintained relatively independently of objective experience. Significantly lower levels of SQOL were reported amongst this group for the domains of material well-being, health, productivity, intimacy with family, safety, community, emotional well-being, and overall SQOL. This finding corresponds with the objective stress reported for each of these domains in the lives of homeless youths (e.g. Jordan, 1995; McCarthy & Hagan, 1992; Rotheram-Borus et al., 1996), and is consistent with common findings of high levels of depression and suicide amongst homeless youths (e.g. Kermond, 1997; Powers et al., 1990). However, it has been concurrently argued that the human SQOL displays a remarkable resilience, and adaptation, to objective circumstances (e.g. Cummins, 1995; Felce & Perry, 1995).

The essential implication of the current finding is that the psychological or homeostatic mechanisms which may be implicated in the maintenance of SQOL appear to be functionally inadequate to override the objective hardships faced by homeless youth. This is consistent with reports that homeless youths often possess insufficient or maladaptive coping mechanisms (e.g. Fors & Rojek, 1992; Roberts, 1982). It is conceivable that negative developmental experiences faced by these youths may be implicated in this finding. For, as noted by a number of researchers (e.g. Browne & Bramston, 1996; Germano & Cummins, 1997), chronic stress has been associated with substantial and prolonged decreases in SQOL relative to the general population.

This argument should not, however, be generalised to include the SQOL domain of friendship, as group differences were not evident in relation to this domain. This finding challenges research, reviewed by Brennan et al., (1978), that personal qualities of homeless youths hinder their ability to maintain close relationships. As asserted by the SSCSW (1982) and Open Family (1996), close peer relationships experienced by homeless youths may provide the essential intimacy on which these youths may rely for a sense of camaraderie, self-esteem, respect, and connection to others.

Homeless and non-homeless youths cannot be represented as composing neatly bifurcated categories. It is widely reported that homeless youths typically face a compound and diverse series of life strains, ranging from problems of shelter and poverty (Rotheram-Borus et al., 1996) to those of behavioural and emotional disorders (Dadds et al., 1993). To yield conclusions more closely indicative of the relation of homelessness and adolescent SQOL, two intermediate groups were included in the current study.

4.1.1 Comparison with Youths 'At Risk' of Homelessness

Authors such as Goodman et al., (1991) have reported that homelessness itself may lead to erosion of coping capabilities. Similarly, behavioural and subjective differences between long- and short-term homeless youths have been predicted by Zimet et al., (1995) and Chamberlain and MacKenzie (1994). However, hypothesised differences in subjective outlook between homeless youths and youths 'at risk' of homelessness were not supported in the current study. The striking implication of this finding appears to be that leaving the family home may not represent the central cause of deficient subjective well-being reported by homeless youths. Rather, it may be hypothesised that negative developmental experiences, prior to homelessness, may erode the SQOL of these youths. This argument is consistent with reports that social disaffiliation and development of poor coping strategies may precede homelessness (e.g. Fischer et al., 1986; Fors & Rojek, 1991). It appears that intervention strategies may be of particular benefit by targeting the issues faced by youths 'at risk' of homelessness.

4.1.2 Comparison with Non-Homeless Community School Youths

Comparisons between homeless or 'at risk' youths and the non-homeless adolescent population are confounded by group differences beyond those of family relations. Additional dimensions include a greater prevalence of emotional, behavioural, social, and educational difficulties (Fischer, 1991; Inciardi et al., 1993). Non-homeless community school youths represent a population approximating homeless youths in relation to these problems (Collingwood Community School, 1997). In the current study, subjective outlooks of non-homeless community school youths typically fell intermediately between homeless or 'at risk' youths and the control group, as hypothesised. However, significant differences to both groups are noted. Lower levels of total SQOL, and SQOL for health, were reported by these youths in comparison to the control group. This finding supports reports that community school populations face substantial life difficulties relative to the wider adolescent population (Kensington Community School, 1996). Lower SQOL for health may prove predictive of high levels of drug-taking behaviour, reported to be a problem amongst community school youths (Collingwood Community School, 1997).

Issues other than lack of a stable home may therefore be implicated in decreases of adolescent SQOL. However, the subjective difficulties faced by this group do not equate with those of homeless and 'at risk' youths. The latter group report significantly lower SQOL for intimacy with family, productivity, and emotional well-being than the non-homeless community school youths. These domains may prove to be uniquely vulnerable in the lives of youths without stable homes, and subsequently require specific attention in relation to youth homelessness and the risk factors of this.

4.2 Meaning and Purpose in Life: Hypotheses 2 and 3

Theories seeking to explain the consistent and predictable human tendency to balance life satisfaction at a high and constant level, despite external fluctuations in fortune, have included situational (e.g. Campbell et al., 1976), personality (e.g., McCrae & Costa, 1983), and interactive accounts (e.g. Rothbaum et al., 1982). The common conjecture of these theories is that psychological processes involved in encoding information underlie the subjective experiences of individuals.

A sense of meaning has been presented to represent an important example of a framework for positively interpreting experience. Areas of psychology in which this has been purported include existential psychology (e.g. Frankl, 1978; Yalom, 1980), trauma research (e.g. Andreasen & Norris, 1972), social psychology (e.g. Eckersley, 1996), QOL research (e.g. Heady, 1981), and perceived control theory (e.g. Rothbaum et al., 1995). Results of the multiple regression analyses in the current study support this argument, demonstrating a strong, significant, and unique relationship between personal meaning and adolescent SQOL.

As hypothesised, homeless and 'at risk' youths also reported significantly lower levels of personal meaning than a control group. This finding fuels speculation that negative developmental experiences may encourage the erosion, not only of SQOL, but of the underlying functional mechanisms with which this outlook is maintained. Supporting this

proposition, authors such as Klinger (1977), Yalom (1980), and Janoff-Bulman and Frieze (1993), argue that disaffiliation from conventional sources of human meaning, such as family intimacy, may undermine the adaptivity of this psychological mechanism.

Existential vacuum also significantly varied between the groups, as hypothesised, with homeless and 'at risk' youths, and non-homeless community school youths, reporting higher levels of this variable than the control group. Concurrently, as predicted, existential vacuum was found to negatively contribute to adolescent SQOL. These findings have important implications in relation to adolescent psychology, as this construct has been related not only to a lack of personal meaning, but also to indifference, lack of optimism, drug abuse, emotional and behavioural disorders, and suicide (Maddi, 1970; Reker, 1992; Yalom, 1980). Existential vacuum may prove predictive of the greater 'social pathology' documented amongst homeless youths and community school youths. High levels for this variable amongst non-homeless community school youths suggests that factors other than family stability appear important in the development of this variable, opening important directions for future investigation.

Control beliefs have also been reported to demonstrate a fundamental relationship to human SQOL (e.g. Bandura, 1995; Headey et al., 1984; Thompson & Spacapan, 1991). In the current study, the LAP-R variable perceived choice and responsibility is argued to tap such an outlook. Unexpectedly, no group differences were reported for this variable. This finding conflicts with Goodman et al.'s (1991) speculation that homeless people develop a sense of learned helplessness as a consequence of lack of actual life control. However, they do not provide data for this statement or cite previous research. Additional analyses in the current study in fact indicated a contrary finding to that proposed by Goodman et al. (1991). When the 'at risk' group was restricted to those who had not previously experienced homelessness, this group reported significantly lower choice and responsibility than homeless youths. Though longitudinal studies are needed, it may be hypothesised that leaving home may be related to maintenance or restoration of a sense of choice and responsibility. This finding provides a critical challenge to the commonly

accepted and cited arguments by Leventhal (1963, 1964) that 'it is obvious that runaways manifest more uncontrol in every area than do the comparison cases' (1964; p.173).

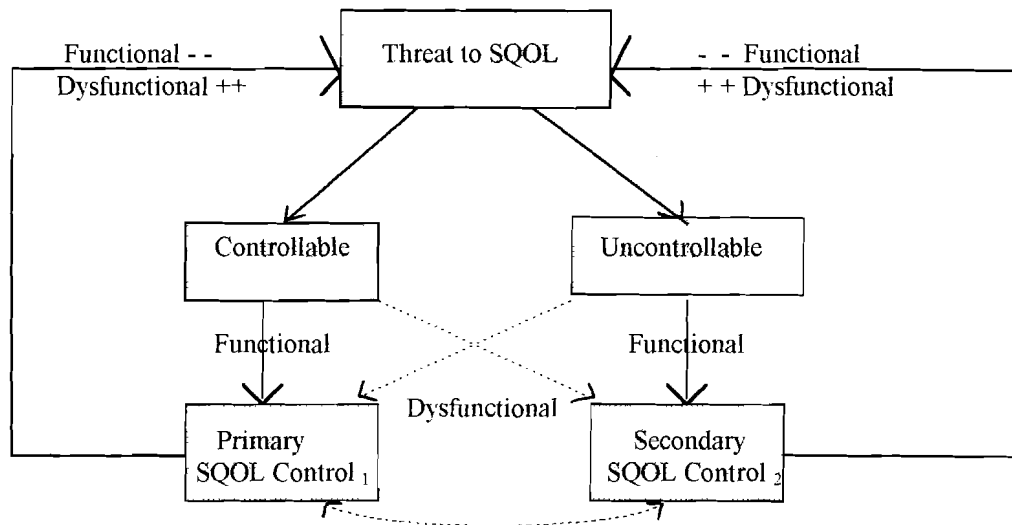
Death acceptance and goal seeking are two LAP-R variables which were included in the current study on an exploratory basis. The current findings indicate that neither death acceptance, nor goal seeking provide a unique contribution to adolescent SQOL. Higher levels of death acceptance reported by homeless and 'at risk' youths than either non-homeless group may suggest greater apathy amongst homeless and 'at risk' youths, either generally or in relation to death. If supported by future research, this finding would form an enlightened context in which issues of greater drug- and risk-taking behaviour amongst this group may be investigated (e.g. Forst, 1994; Jordan, 1995).

The lack of group differences for goal seeking may suggest that this variable reflects a standard desire for stimulation amongst adolescents. Consistent with this view, experimentation, for example in tobacco and alcohol use, is reported to be typical during adolescence (e.g. Rotheram-Borus et al., 1996; Sheldler & Block, 1990). However, future research should investigate whether youths differ in their manifestation of this desire. For example, the engagement of homeless youths in high risk taking behaviour (e.g. Robertson, 1991; Rotheram-Borus, Koopman, & Ehrhardt, 1991) may reflect, not only lower fear of mortality, but also a means by which this group may vent a standard adolescent desire or need for stimulation.

4.3 Presentation of a model regarding the maintenance and erosion of SQOL

Implications from the current results, in conjunction with arguments from previous theorising, can be combined to provide a united framework with which the processes involved in the maintenance of SQOL may be conceptualised. Essentially, it will be contested that secondary control mechanisms, such as personal meaning, directly relate to SQOL, without mediation via control beliefs. A model for this relationship is proposed in Figure 3.

This model contrasts with arguments of Rothbaum et al., (1982) that inwardly directed coping mechanisms fundamentally act to sustain a perception of control, rather than SQOL per se.



¹ For example, choice and responsibility as perception of primary control

² For example, personal meaning (+), and existential vacuum (-)

Figure 3: Model of the Proposed Relationship Between Perceived Control, Secondary Control and Situations of Threat to SQOL

The current model is essentially based on four principles. 1. Rothbaum et al.'s (1982) proposition has been adopted that primary and secondary control mechanisms, when functional, work conjointly to protect SQOL. Personal meaning is argued to be equivalent to Rothbaum et al.'s (1982) interpretative control, presented as a central secondary control mechanism with which meaning is derived from circumstance. Choice and responsibility is presented here as reflecting an individual's perception of primary control. Though these relationships must be directly confirmed in further research, the construct validation of each variable (see Reker, 1992) suggests that this supposition is valid.

The argument that control beliefs do not mediate the relationship between personal meaning and SQOL is supported by a number of findings in the current research. Firstly, choice and responsibility did not vary between the groups despite parallel differences in SQOL and personal meaning. Secondly, in both regression analyses, the largest beta coefficients relating to SQOL were contributed by personal meaning ($\beta=.38$ and $.40$), followed by existential vacuum ($\beta=-.24$ and $-.21$), rather than choice and responsibility ($\beta=.18$ and $.21$). Furthermore, personal meaning provided a substantially larger proportion of unique variance to SQOL (8.4 and 12.8 percent) than did choice and responsibility (2.4 and 4.4 percent). Thirdly, path analyses revealed that the causal relationship between personal meaning and SQOL remains strong when choice and responsibility is held constant. Strong support is therefore given for arguments, also purported by Compass et al. (1991), that 'emotion-focused coping' appears to be unrelated to control beliefs in adolescents.

2. The second principle follows arguments by Heckhausen and Schultz (1995) regarding issues of controllability of a situation. In the current model, secondary control, or 'emotion focused coping' (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), mechanisms are presented as being most functional in response to situations which cannot be externally changed. This argument is consistent with assumptions of adaptation theories that internal standards are best altered when the circumstance cannot be (e.g. Campbell et al., 1976). Control beliefs are argued to be most adaptive in controllable circumstances, yet represent dysfunctional responses when these outlooks are 'seriously unrealistic' (Colvin & Block, 1994; p.17; Weisz, 1983). Though situations of controllability have not been directly investigated in the current study, this aspect of the model is included to illustrate the complementary applicability of these psychological mechanisms. This principle indicates that high levels of perceived control need not equate with high SQOL if functional resources to deal with uncontrollable circumstances are not concurrently sufficient. This interpretation clearly concurs with results of low SQOL and high choice and responsibility amongst homeless and 'at risk' youths in the current study.

3. Individuals may also choose inherently dysfunctional forms of response (Heckhausen & Schultz, 1983). These may benefit short-term SQOL, but essentially hinder SQOL in the

longer term. Such responses may be argued to represent a particular problem amongst homeless and community school youths. Salient examples of dysfunctional SQOL mechanisms prevalent amongst these groups include drug abuse (e.g. Fors & Rojek, 1983, 1991; Forst, 1994; Collingwood Community School, 1996), risk-taking behaviour (e.g. Rotheram-Borus, 1993; Yates et al., 1988), and even suicide (Kermond, 1997). Existential vacuum presents the fundamental example of a dysfunctional secondary control mechanism in the current study; a variable for which homeless, 'at risk', and non-homeless community school youths reported comparatively high levels.

4. Lastly, this model recognises that control beliefs and secondary control mechanisms often share common variance. This finding is particularly noted in the high bivariate correlations of choice and responsibility and personal meaning ($r=.52$) in the current study. It is at this stage which environmental and personality factors should be taken into consideration. Examples of such factors, which may interdependently underlie the functionality of these processes, include traumatic experiences (e.g. Brickman et al., Goodman et al., 1993), consistent pain or stress (e.g. Browne & Bramston, 1996), and optimism or neuroticism (Costa & McCrae, 1983). These may account for correlations between different forms of response, such as primary and secondary control.

This model has aimed particularly to provide a theoretical framework in which outlooks of control are presented as important, yet do not blanket other primary human needs. The importance of functional and dysfunctional mechanisms in the maintenance of SQOL has also been highlighted, suggesting guidelines for interpretation of group differences in SQOL and related subjective outlooks.

4.4 Involvement in Education, training and employment: Hypothesis 4

Sense of connection to family and to schooling have been reported to be two factors highly predictive of functional adolescent adjustment (Brennan et al., 1978; Inciardi, et al., 1993; Resnick et al., 1993). A sense of productivity or achievement has also been argued to be a central source of life meaning and satisfaction (Campbell et al., 1976; Yalom, 1980). On

the basis of such theory, the subjective outlooks of homeless and 'at risk' youths may be predicted to be higher amongst those involved in education, training, or employment, compared to those who are not. This was not found to be the case.

Lack of differences between these groups indicates that reappraisal is required of the role conventional institutions of education, training and employment play in the immediate subjective experience of youths without stable homes. It is conceivable that these youths may develop a hostile outlook on life based on previous negative developmental experiences, and subsequently bring this to other areas of life. Factors limiting the positive value of education may also include 'negative labelling' by teachers, inadequate provisions for needs of homeless youth, embarrassment at illiteracy and innumeracy, emotional, behavioural or familial problems and lack of emotional support limiting academic consistency (Brennan et al, 1978; HRSCCA, 1995; Jordan, 1995; SSCSW, 1982). For many of these youths, schools, education or training may provide the only significant and constant influence they experience (HRSCCA, 1995). The community would benefit from recognising the opportunity these institutions may have to foster a supportive environment and the development of functional coping mechanisms amongst these youths (Corbitt, 1993).

4.5 Social Desirability: Hypothesis 5

Little unambiguous evidence has previously been available to demonstrate whether homeless youths display a greater tendency than non-homeless youths to present themselves in an improbably favourable light. In the current study, group differences in social desirability were not found. This result contrasts with reports by Campbell et al., (1976) that those with lower education typically respond in a socially desirable manner.

Two factors may account for this finding. First, homeless youths have been reported to largely reject conventional social norms (Open Family, 1996), and therefore may have little motivation to falsely present themselves in line with standard societal values. Second, positive self-deception is argued to be a component of social desirability (Paulhus, 1991).

However, there is little evidence to suggest the presence this outlook amongst homeless youths, as this group consistently report high levels of depression and low self-esteem (e.g. Brennan et al., 1978; Powers et al., 1990).

The second concern regarding social desirability in the current study was the possibility that this response bias may artificially inflate the correlation between personal meaning and SQOL. This was not found to be the case. When included in the multiple regression analyses, social desirability did not provide a significant contribution to SQOL. This may support reports by McCrae and Costa (1983b) that individuals scoring high on the Marlowe-Crowne SDS 'were in fact better adjusted, friendlier, and more open to experience than those who scored low', as measured by NEO Scales and independent spouse ratings of the individuals (p.886). Future research appears to be required to confirm the value of social desirability as an independent measure of a response bias. However, the total evidence regarding social desirability indicates that this construct has not confounded the results of the current study.

4.6 Limitations and Conclusions

To avoid the limitations to generalisability of 'exclusive' criteria for youth homelessness, an inclusive approach to attaining subjects was taken in current study. Issues raised from this approach include concerns regarding the 'aggregate fallacy' (Brann, 1991; p.33) and 'errors of reductionism' (Brennan et al., 1978; p.144). To counter such limitations, substantially higher sample sizes would be needed to allow accurate identification of subgroups in future studies.

A further limitation in this study results from the development of Reker's (1992) LAP-R in virtual isolation from mainstream psychological literature, rendering comparisons between areas difficult. This research field, and the LAP-R scale, would benefit from receiving greater construct validation in relation to a broader field of psychology. Future investigation of age and gender differences noted in the current study is also required.

Despite the presence of unresolved issues, the current study has highlighted the striking subjective inequalities faced by homeless and 'at risk' youths relative to a non-homeless control group. The results converge to suggest that psychological processes involved in the maintenance of SQOL, such as a framework of life as meaningful, appear inadequate at meeting this task amongst homeless and 'at risk' youths. Furthermore, it appears that this erosion of subjective outlooks may precede, rather than result from, youth homelessness.

In a statement which shall not soon be forgotten, the Prime Minister of 1983, Mr Bob Hawke, pledged both to target and to conquer the salient symptom of youth homelessness which is poverty. Though of noble intent, and requiring necessary attention, this objective would appear to be of possibly secondary consequence for many youths. It is the underlying and interconnected problems, such as a lack of sufficient family environment and failed ability to maintain subjective quality of life, which must be addressed if a lasting difference is to be made in the lives of these youths.

REFERENCES

Adams, P.R., & Gerald, R.A. (1987). Intervention with runaway youth and their families: theory and practice. In P.R. Adams & G.R. Adams (Eds.) Working with Troubled Adolescents. Academic Press: London.

Andrews, F.M. (1991) Stability and change in levels and structure of subjective well-being: USA 1972 and 1988. Social Indicators Research, 25, 1-30.

Andrews, F.M., & Withey, S.B. (1974). Developing measures of perceived life quality: Results from several national surveys. Social Indicators Research, 1, 1-26.

Andrews, F.M., & Withey, S.B. (1976) Social Indicators of Well-Being. New York: Plenum Press.

Andreasen, N.J.C., & Norris, A.S. (1972). Long-term adjustment and adaptation mechanisms in severely burned adults. The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, 154(5), 352-362.

Andrykowski, M.A., Altmaier, E.M., Barnett, R.L., Otis, M.L., Gingrich, R., & Hensless-Downey, P.J. (1990). The quality of life in adult survivors of allogenic bone marrow transplantation. Transplantation, 50(3), 399-406.

Bandura, A. (Ed.) (1995). Self-efficacy in Changing Societies. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

Barnhouse, R.T. (1986). How to evaluate patients' religious ideation. In L.H. Robinson (Ed.) Psychiatry and Religion: Overlapping Concerns. American Psychiatric Press: Washington.

Berk, L.E. (1994) Child Development. (3rd Ed.) Allyn and Bacon: Massachusetts.

Blazer, J. (1973) The relationship between meaning in life and fear of death. Psychology, 10(2), 33-34.

Bowlby, J. (1969) Attachment and Loss: Vol. 2. Separation. New York: Basic Books.

Bradburn, N.M. (1969) The Structure of Psychological Well-Being. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company.

Brann, P. (1996) Paths to Homelessness. Youth Mental Health Outreach Project: MaroonDAH Hospital.

Brennan, T., Huizinga, D., & Elliot, D.S. (1978) The Social Psychology of Runaways. Toronto: Lexington Books.

Brickman, P., Coates, D., & Janoff-Bulman, R. (1978) Lottery winners and accident victims: Is happiness relative? Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 36(8), 917-927.

Bulman, R.J., & Holmstrom, L.L. (1979) Adaptive strategies and recovery from rape. American Journal of Psychiatry, 136, 1278-1282.

Burgess, A.W., & Wortman, C.B. (1977). Attributions of blame and coping in the 'real world': Severe accident victims react to their lot. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 35, 351-363.

Campbell, A. (1981) The Sense of Well-Being in America. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Campbell, A., Converse, P.E., & Rodgen, W.L. (1976). The Quality of American Life: Perceptions, Evaluations and Satisfactions. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Cantril, H. (1965) The Pattern of Human Concerns New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

Chamberlain, C., & MacKenzie, D. (1992) Understanding contemporary homelessness: Issues of definition and meaning. Australian Journal of Social Issues, 27(4), 274-297.

Chamberlain, C., & MacKenzie, D. (1994) Temporal dimensions of youth homelessness. Australian Journal of Social Issues, 29(1), 1-25.

Chamberlain, K., & Zika, S. (1992). Religiosity, meaning in life, and psychological well-being. In J.F. Schumaker (Ed.) Religion and Mental Health. Oxford University Press: New York.

Coates, S.J., & Steed, L.G. (1996) SPSS For Windows - Analysis Without Anguish. Brisbane: John Wiley and Sons.

Collingwood Alternative School (1997) Review Document. Melbourne: Author.

Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Health (1995). Facts sheet. Youth Suicide in Australia: A background monograph.

Corbitt, B. (1993) Education as a solution to homelessness. Youth Studies Australia, 12(2), 39-44.

Costa, P.T., & McCrae, R.R. (1989) Personality as a lifelong determinant of well-being. In L.Z. Malatesta and C.E. Izzard (Eds.), Emotion in Adult Development. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Crowne, D.P., & Marlowe, D. (1960) A new scale of social desirability independent of psychopathology. Journal of Consulting Psychology, 24(4), 349-354.

Crumbaugh, J.C. (1977) The Seeking of Noetic Goals Test (SONG): A complementary scale to the Purpose-in-Life Test (PIL). Journal of Clinical Psychology, 33, 900-907.

Crumbaugh, J.C., & Maholick, L.T. (1969) Manual of Instrument for the Purpose in Life test. Psychometric Affiliates, Munster, IN.

Cummins, R.A. (1993) Comprehensive Quality of Life for Students (Grades 7-12) (ComQoL-ST4). (4th Ed.), Melbourne: Deakin University

Cummins, R.A. (1995) On the trail of the gold standard for subjective well-being. Social Indicators Research, 35, 179-200.

Cummins, R.A. (1996) Assessing quality of life. In R.I. Brown (Ed.) Quality of Life for Handicapped People. Chapman and Hall.

Cummins, R.A. (1997; in press) The domains of life satisfaction: An attempt to order chaos. Social Indicators Research.

Romeo

Cummins, R.A., McCabe, M.P., & Gullone, E. (1994) The comprehensive quality of life scale: Instrument development and psychometric evaluation on tertiary staff and students. Educational and Psychological Measurement, 54, 372-382.

Dadds, M.R., Braddock, D., Cuers, S., Elliott, A., & Kelly, A. (1993) Personal and family distress in homeless adolescents. Community Mental Health Journal, 29(5), 413-422.

DeVogler, K.L., & Ebersole, P. (1983) Young Adolescents' Meaning in Life. Psychological Reports, 52, 427-431.

Diener, E. (1984) Subjective well-being. Psychological Bulletin, 95(3), 542-575.

Diener, E., Emmons, R.A., Larsen, R.J., & Griffin, S. (1985) The satisfaction with life scale. Journal of Personality Assessment, 49(1), 71-74.

Diener, E., & Diener, M. (1995) Cross-cultural correlates of life satisfaction and self-esteem. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 68(4), 653-663.

Dowd, E.T. & Pace, T.M. (1989). The relativity of reality: Second-order change in psychotherapy. In A. Freeman, K.M. Simon, L.E. Beutler & H. Arkowitz (Eds.) Comprehensive Handbook of Cognitive Therapy.

Eckersley, R. (1992) Apocalypse? NO! Youth and the Challenge to Change. Australia's Commission for the Future: Victoria.

Englander, S.W. (1984) Some self-reported correlates of runaway behavior in adolescent females. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 52(3), 484-485.

Feitel, B., Margetson, N., Chamas, J., & Lipman, C. (1992) Psychosocial background and behavioral and emotional disorders of homeless and runaway youth. Hospital and Community Psychiatry, 43(2), 155-168.

Felce, D. & Perry, J. (1995) Quality of life: Its definition and measurement. Research in Developmental Disabilities, 16(1), 51-74.

Fisher, P.J. (1992) Criminal Behavior and Victimization among Homeless People. In R.I.Jahiel (ed.) Homelessness: A Prevention-oriented Approach. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.

Fischer, P.J., Shapiro, S., Breakey, W.R., Anthony, J.C., & Kramer, M. (1986) Mental health and social characteristics of the homeless: A survey of mission users. American Journal of Public Health, 76, 519-524.

Fopp, R. (1993) More Heat than Houses: Housing and young people, the debate to date. Youth Studies Australia, 12(2), 45-50.

Fors, S.W., & Rojek, D.G. (1991). A comparison of drug involvement between runaway and school youths. Journal of Drug Education, 21(1), 13-25.

Forst, M.L. (1994) A substance use profile of delinquent and homeless youth. Journal of Drug Education, 24(3), 219-231.

Frankl, V.E. (1963) Man's Search for Meaning. New York: Washington Square Press.

Frankl, V.E. (1978) The Unheard Cry for Meaning. Simon and Schuster: New York.

Golding, H.J. (1954) On the avowal and projection of happiness. Journal of Personality, 23, 30-47.

Goodman, L., Saxe, L., & Harvey, M. (1991) Homelessness as Psychological Trauma. American Psychologist, 46(11), 1219-1225.

Gullone, E., & Cummins, R. (in press) Fear, anxiety and quality of life: Adolescent self-reports.

Hair, J.F. Jr., Anderson, R.E., Tatham, R.L., & Black, W.C. (1995) Multivariate Data Analysis (4th Ed.) New Jersey: Prentice Hill.

Harrison, C. (1980) Readability in the Classroom. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hawkins, W.E., Hawkings, M.J., & Seeley, J. (1992) Depressive symptomatology in a sample of adolescents. Psychological Reports, 71, 183-186.

Heady, B. (1981). The quality of life in Australia. Social Indicators Research, 9, 155-181.

Heady, B. (1988) The life satisfactions and priorities of Australians. In J.Kelly & C.Bean (Eds.) Australian Attitudes: Social and Political Analyses from the National Social Science Survey. Sydney: Allen & Urwin.

Heady, B., Holmstrom, E., & Wearing, A. (1983) The impact of life events and changes in domain satisfactions on well-being. Social Indicators Research, 15, 203-227.

Heady, B., & Wearing, A. (1986) The Sense of Relative Superiority - Central to Well-Being. Melbourne: The University of Melbourne.

Heady, B., & Wearing, A. (1989) Personality, life events, and subjective well-being: Toward a dynamic equilibrium model. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 57(4), 731-739.

Heckhausen, J., & Schultz, R. (1995) A life-span theory of control. Psychological Review, 102(2), 284-304.

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Community Affairs, Commonwealth of Australia (1995) Report on Aspects of Youth Homelessness. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

Inciardi, J.A., Horowitz, R., & Pottieger, A.E. (1993) Street Kids, Street Drugs, Street Crime: An Examination of Drug Use and Serious Delinquency in Miami. Wadsworth: California.

Jaggs, D. (1982) Homeless Youth. A Report of Eight Community Meetings held under the Council's Auspices. The Victorian Family Council.

Janoff-Bulman, R., & Frieze, I.H. (1983) A theoretical perspective for understanding reactions to victimization. Journal of Social Issues, 39(2), 1-17.

Jerusalem, M & Mittag, W. (1995) Self-efficacy in stressful life transitions. In A. Bandura (Ed.) Self-efficacy in Changing Societies. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

Jordan, A. (1995) Displaced: Homeless Adolescent Claimants for Social Security Payments. Department of Social Security Research Paper No. 66. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Services.

Kennedy, P., Lowe, R., Grey, N., & Short, E. (1995) Traumatic spinal cord injury and psychological impact: A cross-sectional analysis of coping strategies. British Journal of Clinical Psychology, 34, 627-639.

Kensington Community High School (1996) Policy Documents. Melbourne: Author.

Keppel, G. (1991) Design and Analysis: A Researcher's Handbook. (3rd Ed.) New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Kermond, C. (1997) Homeless at higher risk of suicide. The Age. 26 Aug. p.7.

Kline, R.B. (1991) Latent variable path analysis in clinical research: A beginner's tour guide. Journal of Clinical Psychology, 47(4), 471-481.

Klinger, E. (1977) Meaning and Void: Inner Experience and the Incentives in People's Lives. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis.

Koegel, P. (1992) Understanding Homelessness: An Ethnographic Approach. In R.I.Jahiel (Ed.) Homelessness: A Prevention-oriented Approach. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Kufeldt, K., Durieux, M., & Nimmo, M. (1991) Providing shelter for street youth: Are we reaching those in need? Child Abuse and Neglect, 16, 187-199.

Lazarus, R.S., & Folkman, S. (1984) Stress, Appraisal and Coping. New York: Springer.

Leventhal, T. (1964) Inner control deficiencies in runaway children. Archives of General Psychiatry, 11, 170-176.

Loehlin, J.C. (1992) Latent Variable Models: An Introduction to Factor, Path, and Structural Analysis (2nd Ed.) London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Maddi, S.R. (1970) The Search for Meaning. Nebraska Symposium on Motivation, 134-183.

McCarthy, B., & Hagan, J. (1992) Mean streets: The theoretical significance of situational delinquency among homeless youths. American Journal of Sociology, 98(3), 597-627.

McCrae, R.R., & Costa, P.T. Jr. (1983a) Joint factors in self-reports and ratings: Neuroticism, extroversion, and openness to experience. Personality and Individual Differences, 4, 245-255.

McCrae, R.R. & Costa, P.T. Jr. (1983b) Social desirability scales: More substance than style. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 6, 882-888.

Michalos, A.C. (1985) Multiple discrepancies theory. Social Indicators Research, 16, 347-413.

Open Family Australia (1996) Streetwork: Open Family Australia's approach and methodology. [Brochure] Melbourne: Author.

Paulhus, D.L. (1984) Two-component models of socially desirable responding. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 46(3), 598-609.

Powers, J.L., Eckenrode, J., & Jaklitsch, B. (1990) Maltreatment among runaway and homeless youth. Child Abuse and Neglect, 14, 87-98.

Reker, G.T. (1992) Life Attitude Profile - Revised. Trent University: Canada.

Reker, G.T., Peacock, E.J., & Wong, P.T.P. (1987) Meaning and purpose in life and well-being: A life-span perspective. Journal of Gerontology, 42(1), 44-49.

Reker, G.T., & Wong, P.T.P. (1988) Aging as an individual process: Toward a theory of personal meaning. In J.E. Birren & V.L. Bengtson (Eds.) Emergent Theories of Aging. Springer Publishing Company: New York.

Resnick, M.D., Harris, L.J. & Blum, R.W. (1993) The impact of caring and connectedness on adolescent health and well-being. Journal of Paediatric Child Health, 29(1), S3-S9.

Roberts, A.R. (1982) Stress and coping patterns among adolescent runaways. Journal of Social Service Research, 5(2), 15-27.

Robertson, M.J., Koegel, P., & Ferguson, L. (1989) Alcohol use and abuse among homeless adolescents in Hollywood. Contemporary Drug Problems, 16, 415-452.

Rosenthal, D., Moore, S., & Buzwell, S. (1991) Homeless youths: sexual and drug-related behaviour, sexual beliefs and HIV/AIDS risk. AIDS Care, 6(1), 83-94.

Rothbaum, F.M., Weisz, J.R., & Snyder, S.S. (1982) Changing the world and changing the self: a two-process model of perceived control Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 42, 5-37.

Rotheram-Borus, M.J. (1993) Suicidal behaviour and risk factors among runaway youths. The American Journal of Psychiatry, 150, 103-107.

Rotheram-Borus, M.J., Meyer-Bahlburg, H.F.L., Koopman, C., Rosario, M., Exner, T.M., Henderson, R., Matthieu, M., and Gruen, R.S. (1992). Lifetime sexual behaviors among runaway males and females. The Journal of Sex Research, 29(1), 15-29.

Rotheram-Borus, M.J., Parra, M., Cantwell, C., Gwadz, M., & Murphy, D.A. (1996) Runaway and homeless youths. In R.F. DiClemente, W.B. Hansen, L.E. Ponton, Eds.), pp. 369-391. New York: Plenum Press.

Ruffin, J.E. (1984) The anxiety of meaninglessness. Journal of Counselling and Development, 63, 40-42.

Ryff, C.D. (1989) Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 57, 1069-1081.

Schrodener, D.H. & Costa, P.R., Jr. (1984). Influence of life event stress on physical illness: Substantive effects or methodological flaws? Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 55, 432-444.

Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare, Commonwealth of Australia
(1982) Homeless Youth. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

Shedler, J., & Block, J. (1990) Adolescent drug use and psychological health: A longitudinal inquiry. American Psychologist, 45, 612-630.

Strosahl, K.D., Linehan, M.M., & Chiles, J.A. (1984) Will the real social desirability please stand up? Hopelessness, depression, social desirability, and the prediction of suicidal behavior. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 52(3), 449-457.

Tabachnick, B.G., & Fidell, L.S. (1996) Using Multivariate Statistics (3rd Ed.) Northridge: Harper Collins College Publishers.

Tait, G. (1992) Re-assessing streetkids: A critique of subculture theory. Youth Studies Australia, 11(2), 12-17.

Thompson, S.C., & Spacapan, S. (1991) Perceptions of control in vulnerable populations. Journal of Social Issues, 47, 1-21.

Wolk, S., & Brandon, J. (1977) Runaway adolescents' perceptions of parents and self. Adolescence, 12(46), 175-187.

Yalom, I.D. (1980) Existential Psychotherapy. Basic books: USA.

Yates, G.L., MacKenzie, R., Pennbridge, J., & Cohen, E. (1988) A risk profile comparison of runaway and non-runaway youth. American Journal of Public Health, 78(37), 820-821.

Zimet, G.D., Sobo, E.J., Zimmerman, T., Jackson, J., Mortimer, J., Yanda, C.P., & Lazebnik, R. (1995). Sexual behavior, drug use, and AIDS knowledge among midwestern runaways. Youth and Society, 26(4), 450-462.

Appendix A

Source of Subjects

Appendix A: Source of Subjects

Subject Group	Subject Source	Number of subjects
Homeless Group	Open Family Foundation City Central Street worker contract/food/advice/needle exchange bus	12
	St.Kilda's Theos Youth Outreach Center Education and training course	1
	Child and Family Care Network Education and training course	4
	Frontyard Central city information and referral center	9
	Wesley 121 Short-term supported accommodation	3
	Carinya Short-term supported accommodation	4
	Oakleighs Young Women's Project Short-term supported accommodation	2
	Transmere Street Short-term supported accommodation	5
	Fusion Youth Refuge	5
	Iramoo Supported accommodation	4
	Rosanna Supported accommodation	1
	Kensington Community School	3
	Collingwood Community School	2
	Lynall Hall Community School	7

	Sydney Road Community School	2
	LINK bus	3
'At risk' of homelessness		
	Open Family Foundation City Central Street worker contract/food/advice/needle exchange bus	9
	Child and Family Care Network Education and training course	1
	Forrest Hill Secondary School	1
	Blackburn Secondary School	13
	Kensington Community School	2
	Collingwood Community School	2
	Lynall Hall Community School	6
	Sherbrooke Community School	1
	Sydney Road Community School	1
	BEAT Alternative Schooling Program	1
	LINK bus Health service, food, needle exchange, social worker	1
Non-homeless secondary school students		
	Blackburn Secondary School	294
	Forrest Hill Secondary School	43
Non-Homeless Community Schools		
	Kensington Community School	17
	Collingwood Community School	5
	Lynall Hall Community School	13
	Sherbrooke Community School	11
	Sydney Road Community School	36

Appendix B

Demographics items of 'Youth, Life and Attitudes in the 90s' Questionnaire

The Youth Life Attitudes Questionnaire

What is your Age: ___ and Sex: Male / Female

Where do you live now? (circle one response)

- (a) with parent/s (long-term)
- (b) with parent/s (temporary)
- (c) with friends or relatives (temporary).
- (d) in temporary accommodation (such as a youth hostel).
- (e) in long term supported accommodation.
- (f) in a community placement
- (g) renting
- (h) no fixed address
- (i) other: _____ (long term / short term)

I presently attend:

- (a) a government school
- (b) a private school
- (c) a community school
- (d) no school

Only for people who have left home at some stage (even temporarily):

(1) I have been out of home for a total of ___ years, and ___ months.

(2) I use education, employment or training services: Y / N

Appendix C

Items comprising the importance component of the subjective ComQol-ST

Section 1 - What things matter in life to you?

Please tick the box that best describes how **important each area is to you**. Do not spend too much time on any one question.

1. How **important to you** ARE THE THINGS YOU OWN?

Could not be more important <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Important <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat important <input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly important <input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all <input type="checkbox"/>
--	---	---	---	---

2. How **important to you** is YOUR HEALTH?

Could not be more important <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Important <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat important <input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly important <input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all <input type="checkbox"/>
--	---	---	---	---

3. How **important to you** is WHAT YOU ACHIEVE IN LIFE?

Could not be more important <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Important <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat important <input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly important <input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all <input type="checkbox"/>
--	---	---	---	---

4. How **important to you** are CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR FAMILY?

Could not be more important <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Important <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat important <input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly important <input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all <input type="checkbox"/>
--	---	---	---	---

5. How **important to you** are CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR FRIENDS?

Could not be more important <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Important <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat important <input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly important <input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all <input type="checkbox"/>
--	---	---	---	---

6. How **important to you** is HOW SAFE YOU FEEL?

Could not be more important <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Important <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat important <input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly important <input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all <input type="checkbox"/>
--	---	---	---	---

7. How **important to you** is YOUR SENSE OF BELONGING IN THE COMMUNITY?

Could not be more important <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Important <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat important <input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly important <input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all <input type="checkbox"/>
--	---	---	---	---

8. How **important to you** is YOUR HAPPINESS?

Could not be more important <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Important <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat important <input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly important <input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all <input type="checkbox"/>
--	---	---	---	---

Appendix D

Items comprising the satisfaction component of the subjective ComQol-ST

Appendix E

Items comprising the Life Attitude Profile - Revised and Social Desirability Items

The domains tapped by each item are given in subscripts, though these were not provided in the original questionnaire:

pm = personal meaning;

ev = existential vacuum;

da = death acceptance;

gs = goal seeking;

cr = choice/responsibleness;

±sd = social desirability;

* = LAP-R item not included due to inappropriate factor loadings in original scale

** = LAP-R item not included due to inadequate loading in current LAP-R confirmatory factor analysis

Section 3 - Honest Reactions to Life Statements

Please react honestly to a number statements about life. Please circle the answer about how much you **agree** or **disagree** with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. My past achievements have given my life meaning and purpose. _{pm}	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have very clear goals and aims in life. _{pm}	1	2	3	4	5
3. It is very important to me that I direct my life. _{cr}	1	2	3	4	5
4. I seem to change my <u>main</u> goals in life. _{ev**}	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have found a satisfying life purpose. _{pm.}	1	2	3	4	5
6. I feel like something I can't name is missing from my life. _{ev}	1	2	3	4	5
7. The meaning of life is clear in the world around us. _{pm}	1	2	3	4	5
8. I think I am much less concerned about death than those around me. _{da}	1	2	3	4	5
9. I feel the lack of and a need to find real meaning and purpose in my life. _{ev}	1	2	3	4	5
10. New and different things appeal to me. _{gs}	1	2	3	4	5
11. My achievements in life are largely due to my own efforts. _{cr}	1	2	3	4	5
12. My life is directed by a powerful sense of purpose. _{pm}	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13. I try new activities and interests and then they soon lose their attractiveness. <i>ev</i> **	1	2	3	4	5
14. There have been occasions when I felt like smashing something. <i>gs</i>	1	2	3	4	5
15. I have never deliberately hurt someones feelings. <i>+sd</i>	1	2	3	4	5
16. I have a view of life that gives my life meaning. <i>pm</i>	1	2	3	4	5
17. I determine what happens in my life. <i>cr</i>	1	2	3	4	5
18. Sometimes I have given up something because I didn't think I had the ability. <i>-sd</i>	1	2	3	4	5
19. I believe I am totally free to make all my life choices. <i>cr</i>	1	2	3	4	5
20. I feel that there is something important that I am destined to achieve in life. <i>pm</i> **	1	2	3	4	5
21. No matter who I am with, I am always a good listener. <i>+sd</i>	1	2	3	4	5
22. I am not concerned about death. <i>da</i>	1	2	3	4	5
23. It is possible for me to live my life in terms of what I want to do. <i>cr</i>	1	2	3	4	5
24. I feel the need for adventure. <i>gs</i>	1	2	3	4	5
25. I would neither fear nor welcome death. <i>da</i>	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings. _{+sd}	1	2	3	4	5
27. In thinking of my life, I see a reason for being here. _{pm}	1	2	3	4	5
28. Since death is a natural aspect of life, there is no sense worrying about it. _{da}	1	2	3	4	5
29. I have a framework that allows me to understand or make sense of my life. _{pm}	1	2	3	4	5
30. My life is in my hands and I am in control of it. _{cr}	1	2	3	4	5
31. I am always polite, even to people who are disagreeable. _{+sd}	1	2	3	4	5
32. Some people are very frightened of death, but I am not. _{da}	1	2	3	4	5
33. I daydream of finding a new place for my life and a new identity. _{ev}	1	2	3	4	5
34. I would like a new challenge in my life. _{gs}	1	2	3	4	5
35. I feel that my life fits together into a unified pattern. _{pm}	1	2	3	4	5
36. I hope for something exciting in the future. _{gs}	1	2	3	4	5
37. I have a purpose in life that gives me a sense of direction. _{pm}	1	2	3	4	5
38. I have a clear understanding of the ultimate meaning of life. _{pm}	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39. I make my own decisions about important things. <i>cr</i>	1	2	3	4	5
40. I find myself looking at life with an 'I don't care' attitude. <i>cv</i>	1	2	3	4	5
41. I am eager to get more out of life than I have so far. <i>gs</i>	1	2	3	4	5
42. Life to me seems boring and uneventful. <i>cv</i>	1	2	3	4	5
43. I am determined to achieve new goals in the future. <i>gs</i>	1	2	3	4	5
44. I rarely think about death. <i>da</i> **	1	2	3	4	5
45. I accept responsibility for the choices I have made in my life. <i>cr</i>	1	2	3	4	5
46. I sometimes feel resentful when I do not get my way. <i>-sd</i>	1	2	3	4	5
47. I accept death as another life experience. <i>da</i>	1	2	3	4	5
48. My life is running over with exciting good things. <i>pm</i>	1	2	3	4	5
49. It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged. <i>-sd</i>	1	2	3	4	5
50. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right. <i>-sd</i>	1	2	3	4	5
51. There have been times when I took advantage of someone. <i>-sd</i>	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Undecided	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
52. I'm always willing to admit when I make a mistake. ^{+sd}	1	2	3	4	5
53. I sometimes try to get even, rather than forget and forgive. ^{-sd}	1	2	3	4	5
54. I have never minded when people expressed very different ideas to me. ^{+sd}	1	2	3	4	5
55. Sometimes I have felt quite jealous of the good fortune of others. ^{-sd}	1	2	3	4	5
56. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favours of me. ^{-sd}	1	2	3	4	5

Items not included:

57. Basically, I am living the kind of life I want to live. ^{pm*}
58. I know where my life is going in the future. ^{pm*}
59. In achieving life's goals, I have felt completely fulfilled. ^{pm*}
60. Death makes little difference to me one way or another. ^{da*}
61. I would enjoy breaking loose from the routine of life. ^{gs*}
62. I am restless. ^{gs*}
63. My personal existence is orderly and coherent. ^{pm*}

Appendix F

Letters of approval from the Deakin University Ethics Committee and the Directorate of
Education

DUEC Subcommittee - Health & Behavioural Sciences
Faculty Of Health & Behavioural Sciences
Geelong Campus, Geelong, Victoria 3217
Telephone 052 272884 Facsimile 052-272499 email barnesj@deakin.edu.au



3 June, 1997

Dr R Cummins
School of Psychology
Burwood

Dear Bob,

DSC-H22/97 The Quality of Life and Meaning and Purpose in Life of Homeless Youths

The application, submitted by Catherine Bearsley, has now been **recommended for approval**. The application is proceeding to the Deakin University Ethics Committee for ratification and, in the absence of any further advice, may commence.

I will expect copies of the letters of consent from the relevant organisations to be forwarded as the Researcher receives them. Please ensure that this is done within a reasonable timeframe.

Good luck with the project !

Yours sincerely,

Jennifer Barnes

Jennifer Barnes
Secretary,
DUEC Subcommittee - Health & Behavioural Sciences

SOS 000098

12 May 1997

Ms Cate Bearsley
8 Glasson Square
MOUNT WAVERLEY 3149

Dear Ms Bearsley,

Thank you for your letter of 14 April 1997, in which you request permission to conduct a research study in government schools entitled *Comparisons of life between homeless youths and youths from stable homes*.

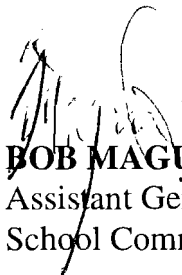
I am pleased to advise that your research proposal is approved in principle subject to the conditions detailed below:

1. You obtain approval for the research to be conducted in each school directly from the principal. Details of your research, copies of this letter of approval and the letter of approval from the relevant ethics committee are to be provided to the principal. The decision as to whether or not your research can proceed in a school rests with the principal.
2. No student is to participate in this research study unless they are willing to do so. The principal will make the decision as to whether or not the permission of parents or guardians is needed. If parental permission is required by the principal, sufficient information must be provided to enable parents to make an informed decision.

3. As a matter of courtesy, a list of the schools which you intend to approach for your research should be provided to the General Managers (Schools) of the Southern Metropolitan and Eastern Metropolitan Regions in which these schools are located. An outline of your research and a copy of this letter of approval should also be enclosed.
4. Any extensions to the research proposal, additional research involving use of the data collected, or publication of the data beyond that normally associated with academic studies will require a further research approval submission.
5. At the conclusion of your study, a copy or summary of the research findings should be forwarded to me at the above address.

I wish you well with your research study. Should you have further enquiries on this matter, please contact Dr Kevin Kee, School Community Support Branch, on 9628 4808.

Yours sincerely,



BOB MAGUIRE
Assistant General Manager
School Community Support Branch

encl.



Department of Education

KS1106
00583

NORTHERN METROPOLITAN REGION

*582 Heidelberg Road, Fairfield Victoria 3078
Locked Bag 88, Fairfield 3078*

11 June 1997

Telephone: (03) 9488 9488 Fax: (03) 9488 9440

Ms Cate Bearsley
8 Glasson Square
Mount Waverley 3149

Dear Ms Bearsley

Thank you for your letter received on 4 June 1997 advising of your research project involving schools in the Northern Metropolitan Region.

I note the approval given by the Department and that this remains conditional on further approval by the school principal. I am sure you will receive the utmost assistance with the project.

Please contact Mr Keith Sandford, on (03) 9488 9429, for any further assistance from the regional office with your project.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Victoria Triggs'.

**VICTORIA TRIGGS
ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER
NORTHERN METROPOLITAN REGION**

Appendix G

Subjects removed from analyses and reason for removal

Appendix G: Subjects Removed from Analyses and Reason for Removal

Reason for removal	Age	Gender	Accommodation Group	Schooling
Indiscriminant responding	17	male	'At risk'	High school
	16	male	'At risk'	High school
	16	male	Homeless	High school
	16	male	With parent/s	High school
	14	male	Homeless	Community school
Patterned responding	17	male	With parent/s	High school
	17	male	With parent/s	High school
	16	male	With parent/s	Community school
	14	male	With parent/s	High school
Incomplete questionnaires	17	female	Homeless	Not at school
	17	male	With parent/s	High school
	16	male	Homeless	Not at school
	16	female	With parent/s	High school
	16	male	Homeless	High school
	16	male	With parent/s	High school
	14	male	Homeless	Community school
	14	male	With parent/s	High school
-	-	[Demographics not supplied]	High school Community school	

Appendix H

ComQol scores for complete control group, and homeless and 'at risk' groups separately.

Appendix H: Domain and Total Group Means and Standard Deviations for Satisfaction (Sat), Importance (Imp), and SQOL (Imp x Sat) Expressed as Percentage of Scale Maximum for Complete Control Group, 'At Risk' Group, and Homeless Group

Domain	Non-homeless highschool school control (n=337)			'At risk' (n=38)			Homeless (n=67)		
	Imp	Sat	IxS	Imp	Sat	IxS	Imp	Sat	IxS
Material	66.69 (±)19.71	78.24 (±)15.09	73.80 (±)11.72	66.18 (±)28.12	62.25 (±)26.05	64.86 (±)21.48	73.24 (±)21.68	63.38 (±)23.17	64.38 (±)20.53
Health	75.45 (±)18.50	71.96 (±)18.34	71.69 (±)15.32	58.09 (±)31.81	57.35 (±)25.02	60.21 (±)19.19	63.38 (±)27.98	59.62 (±)24.01	61.93 (±)18.13
Product.	78.19 (±)18.07	70.23 (±)18.39	71.12 (±)15.98	65.44 (±)31.39	54.41 (±)26.05	60.91 (±)18.60	67.61 (±)25.84	57.98 (±)25.18	60.64 (±)21.76
Family	73.00 (±)22.20	74.43 (±)19.46	73.65 (±)16.70	54.41 (±)33.97	51.47 (±)29.97	59.37 (±)21.03	52.11 (±)36.04	46.48 (±)30.20	52.11 (±)22.78
Friends	76.04 (±)20.84	78.04 (±)17.32	76.62 (±)14.97	77.21 (±)19.82	73.53 (±)26.31	73.61 (±)23.57	76.41 (±)23.86	77.23 (±)19.57	77.46 (±)15.77
Safety	72.40 (±)20.66	74.83 (±)15.86	72.93 (±)13.17	61.03 (±)29.64	66.67 (±)26.91	63.31 (±)21.26	62.32 (±)30.73	67.61 (±)24.54	66.79 (±)18.64
Commun.	54.45 (±)24.06	69.83 (±)17.30	65.85 (±)12.33	49.26 (±)31.37	57.35 (±)28.78	60.06 (±)18.15	38.73 (±)31.84	56.57 (±)26.50	56.78 (±)15.66
Emotion	78.78 (±)18.86	73.29 (±)19.09	73.26 (±)15.86	60.29 (±)31.45	53.43 (±)27.15	59.52 (±)20.11	73.59 (±)25.67	59.39 (±)27.99	61.82 (±)24.25
Total	71.88 (±) 11.89	73.88 (±) 11.46	72.29 (±) 9.48	61.49 (±)21.54	59.56 (±)17.51	62.60 (±)12.91	63.42 (±)16.08	61.03 (±)16.37	62.53 (±)11.94

Note: All figures expressed as percentage of scale maximum = (score-1)x100/(number of scale points-1)

Appendix I

LAP-R and social desirability scores for complete control group, and homeless and 'at risk' groups separately.

Appendix I: Group Means and Standard Deviations for Social Desirability Descriptives for Complete High School Control, 'At Risk', and Homeless Groups.

Variable	High School Control (n=337)		'At risk' (n=36)		Homeless (n=67)	
	Mean±SD	%SM	Mean±SD	%SM	Mean±SD	%SM
Personal Meaning	41.37±8.11	61.18	36.36±12.46	50.75	36.77±10.25	51.60
Existential Vacuum	13.79±4.40	43.95	15.82±5.49	54.10	17.72±4.28	63.60
Choice/ Responsibleness	30.69±5.03	70.91	28.98±6.15	65.56	31.37±5.13	73.03
Goal Seeking	24.80±3.31	78.33	23.92±4.32	74.67	25.07±3.32	79.46
Death Acceptance	21.11±5.18	62.96	22.20±5.38	67.50	22.88±5.75	70.33
Social Desirability	38.42±7.04	48.88	35.04±8.32	42.38	36.05±5.85	44.33

*Note: Total possible range for personal meaning is 12 to 60
 Total possible range for existential vacuum is 5 to 25
 Total possible range for choice/responsibleness is 8 to 40
 Total possible range for goal seeking is 6 to 30
 Total possible range for death acceptance is 6 to 30
 Total possible range for social desirability is 13 to 65*