

SOCIALIZATION OF CHILDREN IN PAKISTAN SWEET HOMES, ISLAMABAD: A HOLISTIC PERSPECTIVE

Farooq Abdullah¹, Muhammad Shahzad², Farhan Riaz², Summer Fatima², Imran Abbasi²

¹University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, ²PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi

Corresponding Author:

Khawaja Farooq Abdullah

Department of Sociology and Rural Development, UAJK

gemini.soc@hotmail.com

Abstract: The population of children in Pakistan is over 70 million. The environment in which the majority of these children grow up is fraught with numerous challenges and access to basic rights such as health care, education, protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation, are all compromised along with orphanage. The current security and economic crises in the country have worsened the situation. There is a palpable rolling back of gains made in the past and newer challenges are emerging. Orphan children are becoming the victims of militancy. Either through recruitment as suicide bombers, through indoctrination at unregulated and rogue madrassas, through displacement from conflict zones, or through a complete breakdown of the health and education system in militancy riddled areas. The present research was conducted in Sweet homes Pakistan, Islamabad in order to evaluate the socialization of children. The children in Sweet homes Pakistan were found satisfied in case of provision of health and education facilities while they were socialized in a better way with regard to their future. They were provided all the required facilities adequately and overwhelmingly.

Key Words: Socialization, Children, Sweet homes, Orphans, Parents

INTRODUCTION

Different states and international institutions have different criteria for determining whether a child is an orphan. *UNICEF classifies any child that has lost one parent as an orphan and estimates that approximately 143 million children are currently orphans* (UNICEF 2004). An orphan is a minor who is bereft of parental care due to death, disappearance, or abandonment by either the mother or the father, as well as situations where the parent voluntarily or involuntarily terminates the parental relationship.

A child who is below 18 years of age and who has lost one or both parents may be defined as an orphan (Alex 2011). Maternal orphan is referred to a child who has lost his/her mother and paternal orphan is referred to a child who has lost his/her father. Social orphans are children who are living without parents because of abandonment or because their parents gave them up as a result of poverty, alcoholism or imprisonment (Dillon 2008). A number of children increased because of poverty and orphanage where they are kept in residential institutions and are brought up (Apt, et al. 1998). A large number of children, 4500 orphans, were living in the institutions in Ghana (Csaky 2009). The different motives are behind the orphanage such as migration, economic pressure and specifically the

children from broken families who need to be socialized acutely (Apt, et al., 1998). Challenges are being faced by the children in developing world but legislation is working in provision of facilities, services and funding in order to support them in the transition phase to the adulthood (Tolfree 1995). The problems of children in orphanages are multivariate. Children of age group 5 to 12 years were facing depressive disorders. Children placed in special home settings at a young age and for long periods of time are at an increased rate of developing serious psychological problems. Early behavioral disturbance was strongest predictors of later problems and the family is the context within which initial relationships and understandings are developed (Rutter and Sandberg 1992). The relation between culture and personality is obvious, in that personality formation consists mostly of the internalization of the elements of a culture (Horton and Mills 1984). In a stable and integrated culture, personality is an individual aspect of culture, and culture is a collective aspect of personality (Cooley 1918).

The symptoms of care pointed are de-individualization; an individual loses or dwindles by the power of his thoughts and action and becomes dependent on the institution. The second symptom mentioned is enculturation, where the individual

gets the institutional values and attitudes which differ from his previous culture. The third symptom is the psychological issues. The children without parental support should be raised in Foster homes. A clearer picture of the multidimensional problems has been affirmed which children face in conflict situation (Shackman and Reynolds 1997). The UN Guidelines for Alternative Care therefore stipulate that all out-of-home care agencies and facilities should “*systematically aim at preparing children to assume self-reliance and to integrate fully in the community, notably through the acquisition of social and life skills, which are fostered by participation in the life of the local community*” (Assembly 2010). It has been recommended that an effective preparatory programme should have five essential elements: self-care skills, education, cultural knowledge, identity and practical skills. The most used programmes are life-skills courses that focus on teaching concrete skills such as budgeting and balancing accounts.

Mentoring strategies have also been incorporated into services preparing youth for adulthood (Baker, et al. 2000). A study of mentoring projects in the United Kingdom found that they helped youth transitioning from out-of-home care improve their confidence, self-esteem, and independent living skills. Although different programs have been developed to prepare looked-after children for adulthood, several research studies have highlighted a number of factors that impede their preparation. It has been assessed that the independent living service needs of emancipating foster youth (Loman and Siegel 2000).

General objective:

The general objective of the study was to know about the socialization of children living and studying in Pakistan Sweet Homes

Specific Objectives:

The following objectives were carried out during the assessment.

1. To know the socialization of the children in PSH
2. To analyze the potential problems faced by children in PSH Islamabad

Rationale for the Assessment

The focus of study was to know the life of children at PSH Islamabad. This is a pilot study on the socialization of children in PSH Islamabad which is important for the institution itself and also for those who visit this institution and would be desirous to contribute through cash and kind for the better living of children.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research embraced quantitative paradigm by using the probability sampling technique, random sampling, in enumerating the children. The children of higher age were focused and taken from the higher classes (three to five Grades) and hence enumerated. The questionnaire was designed according to the capabilities of the children to understand and respond easily and the enumerators were students of M.Phil Sociology, from PMAS-Arid Agricultural University Rawalpindi, trained students in having the results by establishing rapport. The data was collected and analyzed through SPSS version (16.00). Thus the data was tabulated along with graphical presentation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table. 1: Distribution of Demographic and Background Variables

Sex	Responses	
	Frequency	Percent
Male Children	120	100.0
Education		
Primary	120	100.0
Reasons		
Orphanage	120	100.0
Age of Children		
5-10	68	56.7
11-16	52	43.3
Total	120	100.0
Better Standard of Living		
Strongly Agree	79	65.8
Agree	41	34.2
Total	120	100.0
Provision of Nutritional and Hygienic Food		
Satisfied	79	65.8
Neutral	41	34.2
Total	120	100.0
Safe from Abuses and Bad Company		
Strongly Agree	77	64.2
Agree	43	35.8
Total	120	100.0
Identity of Children is Ambiguous		
To Some Extent	68	56.7
To Great Extent	52	43.3
Total	120	100.0

A child who is below 18 years of age is defined as an orphan. The standard while ages of respondents in PSH were falling in the 5-10 and 11-16 years because Sweet Homes socialize and educate children up to five grades (Alex 2011). Among the 120 respondents, 56.7% were found in (5-10 Years) of age where as 43.3% were found in (11-16 Years).

Overhead table 1 shows that children have comparatively greater ages in Sweet Home as per school requirements and the reason behind is the broken families (Apt, et al. 1998). The above table illustrates the sex, education and reason of living in the PSH (Dillon 2008). Maternal orphan is referred to a child who has lost his/her mother or father while PSH consisting of male children where education is given up to the primary level and the only reason for living in PSH is orphanage because it is entitled and mandatory to be orphan and especially not having one or both parents and mostly children were found under the supervision of mother. In response to better living standard in the PSH, all the children were agreed and satisfied regarding the provision of better standard of living. Among the respondents 79 (65.8%) strongly endorsed the proper and adequate living standard in the PSH where 41 (34.2%) appreciated the provision of better living standard in PSH. Resultantly, it is accredited that PSH provides better standards of socialization in more comprehensive way. Among the 120 children 79 (65.8%) were found extremely satisfied with the food and hygienic conditions whereas 41 (34.2%) children did not show their preference in food stuff with the hemming of better food and hygienic Facilities. The food stuff and hygienic conditions were found very adequate in PSH and dually checked by the authorities. Children in the sweat homes are safe from the abuses and bad company. The children agreed unanimously that they are more comfortable in the PSH and did not come across such phenomenon. The above data indicate that 77 (64.2%) children were found safe and sound whereas 43 (35.8%) endorsed the disappearance of abuses and bad company in PSH. It depicts that all the children in the PSH are more protected and safe even their company is adequately monitored. It is a good sign to keep the children in compact for their better growth and nourishment. The children had a view that they are not treated as orphans. The staff treats them just like their own offspring and cared.

Table. 2: Distribution Regarding the Facilities and Problems

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Adequate Facilities		
Strongly Agree	80	66.7
Agree	40	33.3
Total	120	100.0
Provision of Educational and Health Facilities		
Teachers, Aids etc.	120	100.0
Doctors, Medicines	120	100.0

etc.		
Proper Place for Living of OVC's		
Strongly Agree	80	66.7
Agree	40	33.3
Total	120	100.0
Personality Development		
Strongly Agree	34	28.3
Agree	86	71.7
Total	120	100.0
Problems		
No	120	100.0
Recreational Facilities		
Games and Funfairs	120	100.0
Co-curricular Activities		
Debates, Speeches Interactive Sessions	120	100.0
Psychosocial Support		
Off and On	35	29.2
Often	85	70.8
Total	120	100.0

The provision of facilities that are mandatory for the Children are made possible in all circumstances and they are provided a house hold environment so that they couldn't feel alienated. The above data is advocating the argument that a huge proportion 80 (66.7%) favored the statement that they are provided a good environment while 40 (33.3%) appreciated the provision of facilities in PSH. The provision of educational and health facilities were found adequate. The data is encouraging that the healthy environment is maintained in PSH. The children always require intensive care and the environment affect the socialization process at any age level. The above data indicated that a better living environment is guaranteed in PSH because 80 (66.7%) were strongly agree that this is a good place for living and 40 (33.3%) showed their interest that they don't want to leave this place. Children were more profound that they were provided a household environment and treated as sons and did not feel alienated. PSH is a forum where personality development is made possible and the child's hidden qualities are polished for the sake of productive endeavors of society and social capital of country. The data shows that 34 (28.3%) are strongly agree with the statement while the rest of the children 86 (71.7%) out of 120 appreciated the personality development mechanism at PSH. The above representation of given date assures the 100% provision of recreational facilities in sweet home. Recreation is much important for better educational output because only a fresh mind guarantees this. PSH is a forum where the Children are provided acute facilities of games, competitions, tours and funfairs.

Students at PSH are not made book worm in the light of given data because it may lead to stress and boredom. They are appreciated to participate in co-curricular activities. The above table 2 illustrates that psychological support is provided to children in a friendly environment. The children are devoid of their parents and sometimes these harsh realities create a mental stress to them so psychological supportive mechanism is available at PSH. The children endorsed that psychiatrist regularly visit sweet home and the children call them “uncle”. The above provided data indicated the proportion of problems faced by children at sweet home, 60 children had a view that they do not have any problem here while the rest of the children highlight their problems in the form of punishment and strict attitude of teachers with them (Shackman and Reynolds 1997). Some of the children also complained that sometimes they do not like the meal which is provided to them while overall proportion of children was satisfied in sweet home.

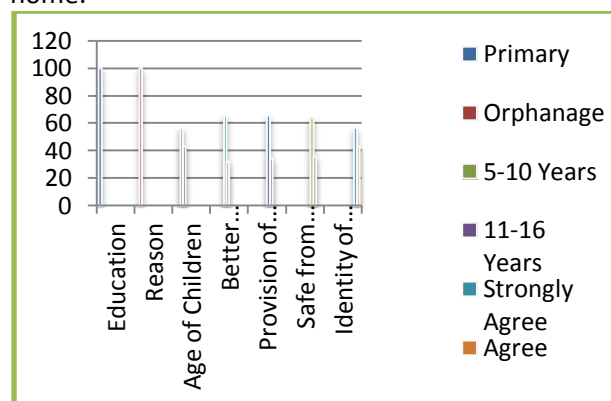


Figure 1: Distribution of Demographic and Background Variables

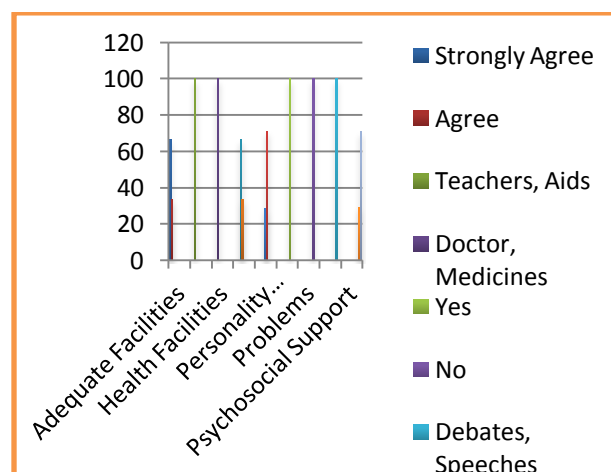


Figure 2: Distribution of Facilities and Problems

RECOMMENDATION

The study examined the role of Pakistan Sweet Homes in making children more socialized and sensitized through education, development and career building. The staff in the PSHs has its great

role in making possible the access and information because the information in the only source to sensitize the people and bring them in the mainstay of development. The PSH Islamabad has adequate building fully furnished, equipped with furniture and all the necessary gears provided for the children. The contribution of PSH in bringing the children is admirable which was started with an idea to serve the children who have either one or both parents and are coerced to child labor and other hazards for their economic and social survival. Categorically, all the necessary facilities were provided in the PSH and for strengthening the institution succeeding recommendations are recorded:

1. There are enough available unplanted surfaces to extend the building as per requirements. The people should come forward and must take the responsibility to contribute for the healthy environment in cash and kind on the other hand government should also allocate some reasonable amount for the PSHs across the country.
2. There is available site of PSHs but unfortunately not even a single document is provided updating the events and other functions which is greater source of instant information like newsletters and reports. The administration should include the provision necessary information.
3. Educational facilities are provided in the PSHs more acutely and there is need to keep updating the syllabus and include the modern facilities to the existing system.
4. There is adequate provision of health facilities but needed to update the facilities and also the provision of medicines should be ensured along with nurses, especially medical doctors and medical assistance to all.
5. In PSH the balance and nutritional diet is provided but there is further need to contain the nutritional levels at their best. The food must have adequate nutritious level required.
6. Recreational facilities play vital role in the child development. The children in PSH should be provided adequate recreational facilities.
7. Religious teaching is provided as ‘Daras’ and Quran at PSH regularly but there is need to teach Quran to the students with translation. The ‘Fiqa’ should also be included in the syllabus.

8. Co-curricular activities as speeches, debates and other things must be included in order familiarize the children with the dynamic world and changing attitudes across the country.
9. The activities of children must be monitored carefully so that they could come to avoid bad company and abuses.
10. Psychosocial support is very important to keep children away from the stresses and depression along with the other manias so the children should be provided psychosocial support efficiently.
11. Adaptation is allowed by the Islam and if someone wants to be adopted or someone wants to adopt any child, both parties should be allowed to approach their rights at their ends but the integrity of child should be regarded.

Through this document, potential donor agencies and individuals would access along with the NGOs and other people because this is such a wonderful job and need more attention of international donor agencies, NGO's, Associations, Philanthropists and Governments as well, to seek funds and make Pakistan Sweet Homes more alleviated.

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