

Status of Institutionalised Street Children

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Abstract: *The present study status of institutionalized children was taken up with objective of studying the personal profile of the street children. The paper discusses the age at which the children came out of home, reasons for streetism and also their nutritional and health status.*

Keywords: street children, institutionalized, age of leaving, reasons for leaving home

1. Introduction

Street children is emerging as a burning problem in today's world. The contributing factors for this problem are, poverty and unemployment, family problems like marital disharmony, family tensions financial problems, large families death of parents and maltreatment by step parents, divorce of parents etc., due to lack of integration and co-ordination of services and programmes by Government and non-government organizations. The street children and the family which are prove to produce street children could not be benefited. Unless the problem of street children is tacked seriously, it may lead to growing number of unhappy and development children which can be social burden.

Objective: To study the personal profile of the street children

2. Locality of the Study

The study was conducted in Tirupati; urban, mandal for the reasons:

Tirupati is a one of the biggest pilligrim city, with a floaty population of around one lakh. Tirupati has a large number of street children next to Hyderabad and Vijayawada more over Tirupati is located in the border district of Chittoor, which has to metropolitan cities next to it Chennai and Bangalore.

Sample Selection:

The investigator collected information about the institutions rendering services to street children in Tirupati and has identified two such institutions Shehalaya and Premnivas run by NGOs. All the children were residents in these two homes. Although the children reside in Snehalaya they take one meal that is dinner in premnives. Hence only information on Snehalaya was collected. Thus the sample comprised of Thirty five (35) children

Reasons For Child Streetism

The causes of streetism was gathered from each child, in order to arrive at causes for child streetism. The responses of children were recorded. They are under.

Age at which the child care away from home

Table 1: Distribution of street children according to their reasons streetism

S. No	Age of which the children came away	No. of children	Percentage
1.	<5	0	0
2.	6-9	4	11.4
3.	10-14	14	40
4.	15-18	17	48.6
Total		35	100

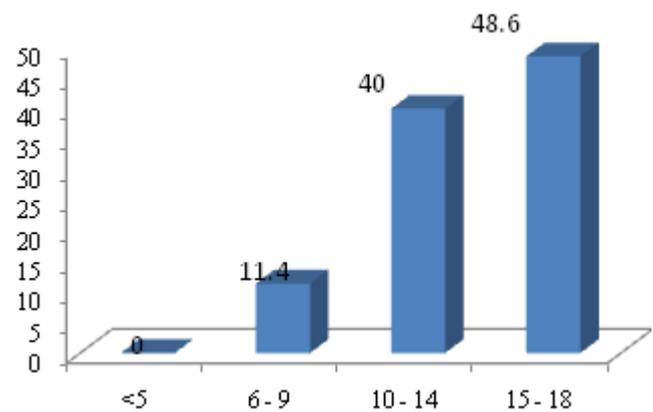


Figure 1

The table No. 1 shows that majority 48.6 percent of children understudy left their homes at the age of 15 to 18 years. A good percentage of 40 children given to streetism at the age of 10 to 14 years, only 11.4 percent of children of left their homes at the age of 6 to 9 years. The study reveals that majority of the sample given to streetism during adolescence.

Reasons for Streetism

The responses of the children to a question "what are the reasons for coming away" was recorded and presented in the table 2. Reasons of children expressed parents street disciplines as reasons for streetism.

Table 2: Distribution of street children according to their Reasons for coming away from home

S. No.	Reasons for coming away from home	No. of children	Percentage
1.	School environment	3	8.6
2.	Family conflicts	12	34.2
3.	Discipline by parents	13	37.2
4.	Abusive or alcoholic fathers	7	20

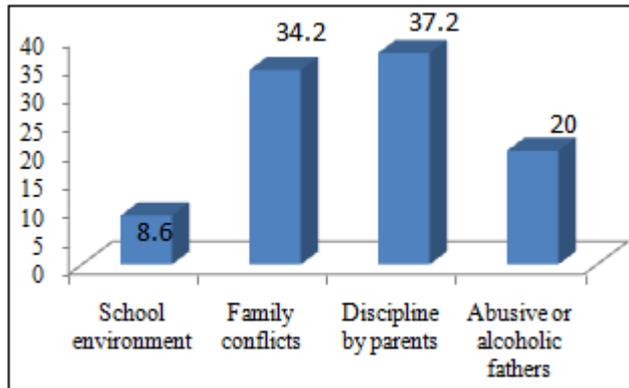


Figure 2

Table no.2 shows that child abuse by alcoholic fathers were found to be the main reason expressed by 37.2 percent of children around 34.2 percent of children indicated family conflicts as reason for streetism. A 20 percent attributed abusive or alcoholic father and 8.6 percent come away due to unpleasant school environment.

Back to Home

The response of street children to question “Do you like to go back to your home” was gathered, which showed that 40 percent did not want to go back only 60 percent stated that they like to go back to their home.

In response to a question “Can you recognize your parents and, family members 65.8 percent of the children felt that they can recognize their parents where as 20 percent the children did not feel confident about recognizing their parents.

It was found that 14.2 percent made an effort to go back to their parents, which include sending word through their relatives, friends and writing letters, making phone calls.

3. Health and Nutrition Profile of Street Children

Street children suffers from numerous health problems such as cold, cough, fever, allergies, head ache, eye problems, stomach ache etc. These health problems may be due to lack of a clean safe residence to take rest and attend to call of nature.

Health problems of Street children

The prevalence of health problems and their frequency of occurrence was collected as shown in the Table – 3

Table 3: Distribution of street children according to their health problems

S. No.	Age in years	No. of children	Percentage
1.	Daily	3	8.6
2.	Weekly	2	5.8
3.	Monthly	8	22.8
4.	Occasionally	22	62.8
Total		35	100

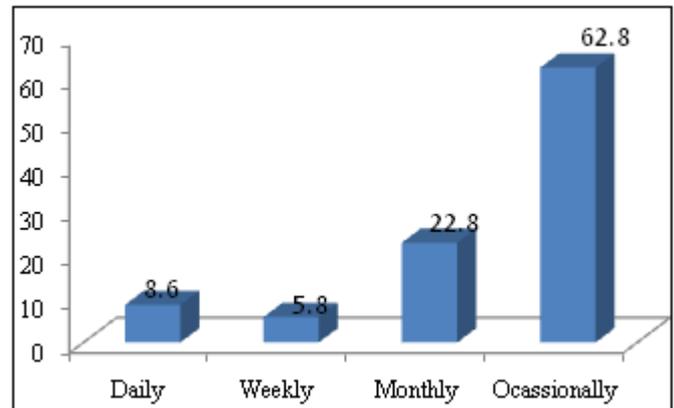


Figure 3

Which indicates that a good percentage of childrens suffered from health problems every month and 62.8 percent of children are occasionally suffered from health problems. Monthly 22.8 percent and weekly 5.8 and daily 8.6 percentage.

4. Conclusion

The present study allows to conclude that very basic physical need like food, health, shelter and other amenities are also inadequate. The street children need regular and consistent institutionalised services, which provides them safety and security from exploitation, a clean shelter to keep themselves hygienic and to rest. In addition the institutions should be able to provide education, vocational training and other facilities to improve their skills to increase their livelihood opportunities in near future. The involvement of local community, public and government departments as stakeholders of these institutionalised services is also necessary. Such an effort makes the communities and government committed to the cause of street children.

References

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