

A Study on Effect of Duration on Personality Dimensions of Institutionalized School Going Children

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Abstract: *The present research study was aimed at investigating the selected personality dimensions of institutionalized school going children. The sample consisted of 50 girl children in the age range of 6-12 years with one-year minimum duration of institutionalization. Purposive sampling procedure was adopted in selecting the institution and children. Research outcome indicates that the Duration of institutionalization had significant difference in personality dimensions (Mental health and Sensitivity). The study clearly points out that institutionalized children who have been staying for less than three years had better mental health and sensitivity than those who have been staying for more three years.*

Keywords: Institutionalized children, Duration, Personality, Institutionalization

1. Introduction

According to research, family is a very important determinant of children's achievement because it is where the child spends most of his time and where all his physical and emotional needs are met (Burt, 1961).

Children deprived of the family and its support experience a new kind of environment like orphanages, destitute homes and short stay homes. Hence, institutions in which they are staying will become a primary supportive care system to these children. The available facilities and the personnel working in these institutions are the prime factors, which will have an impact on the personality development of orphan children. Hence, institutionalization of the child, no matter at what age, represents a pathological element in the development of the personality (Fernandez, 1974).

Naqshbandi *et al.* (2012) examined the effect of institutionalization on orphans and aimed to find out the psychological impact on orphans. Study pointed that most of the orphans face psychological problems and almost all agreed that their adjustment in conventional society would be difficult after they leave institutions.

Bough (2008) found that children brought up in institutions might suffer from severe behavioral and emotional problems, such as aggressive or antisocial behaviour, have less knowledge and understanding of the world, and become adults with psychiatric impairments.

Kelly (2006) found that orphans had greater risk of anxiety, depression, anger, fear, stigmatization, stress, irritability, fugue, offending and hyperactivity. Orphans were also more likely to perceive themselves as not having any good friends, reflecting symptoms such as detachment, avoidance and difficulties in forming close relationships.

2. Research Method

A sample of 50 girl children who are inmates of government run orphanages called Children's Home (Department of Women and Child Welfare) yousufguda, Hyderabad were selected for the present study. MAP series Children form was used to assess the personality dimensions. MAP form C- (children form) measures 20 traits covering adaptability, academic performance, boldness, competition, creativity, curiosity, enthusiasm, excitability, general ability, guilt proneness, individualism, independence, leadership, maturity, mental health, morality, self-control, sensitivity, self-sufficiency, social warmth, and tension. Out of 20 personality dimensions only 12 dimensions were selected for the present study. The data was tabulated and analysed by using frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviation and F ratios.

3. Research Findings and Discussion

Table 1: Differences in the personality dimensions based on duration of stay at the institution

S. No	Personality Dimensions	Duration of Institutionalization				t value	P value
		1-3yrs		3.1-6yrs			
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1	Adaptability	7.22	0.359	6.7	0.87	1.406	0.08
2	Achievement motivation	5.77	2.59	6.33	2.57	1.69	0.42
3	Competition	4.5	1.79	5.3	2.56	2.022	0.168
4	Creativity	6.611	2.78	6.733	2.85	1.688	0.865
5	Enthusiasm	4.33	2.58	3.5	2.63	2.03	0.27
6	Excitability	5.44	1.61	5.2	2.16	2.02	0.72
7	General ability	5.72	0.97	5.23	1.15	2.03	0.39
8	Independence	5.8	2.02	6.74	2.26	2.01	0.21
9	Mental health	8.52	1.48	7.12	2.31	2.01	0.04*
10	Self-control	4.42	2.2	4.09	1.3	1.67	0.28
11	Sensitivity	5.7	1.3	4.09	1.7	3.655	0.0002**
12	Social warmth	4.03	2.31	4.09	1.7	2.002	0.905

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$P < 0.05$; level of significance; $P < 0.01$, level of significance, r tab value at 5% level of significance = 0.2500; r tab value at 1% level of significance = 0.3248.

impact of a structured 90-minute play session on development of children in an orphanage .*child: care, health and development*. 28 (1): 95-100.

The above table shows the detailed analysis of differences in personality dimensions based on duration of institutionalization. The results indicated that the duration of institutionalization had significant difference on mental health and sensitivity. The institutionalized children who have been staying for less than three years had better mental health and sensitivity than those who have been staying for more than three years. It might be because of the fact that there were limited provisions to play, go outside and less frequent exposure to outside social environment. Moreover, they experienced deprivation of parental care and affection. On the other hand, there was also selective attention of caretakers and lack of conducive environment. Similar study by Suman *et al.* (1986) studied mental health status of institutionalized children and found that as the duration of the institutionalization increases the mental health of the children was decreasing. Study by Taneja *et al.* (2002) also revealed the same and stated an intervention programme was developed to accelerate psychosocial development in the institutionalized children.

4. Conclusion

The present study showed significant difference between the selected independent variable of the sample i.e duration of institutionalization at the institution with few dimensions of personality. As the duration of the stay at the institution increased, the mental health and sensitivity of the children decreased. The findings of the study clearly point that administrators and policy makers need to upgrade the facilities in the institutions by increasing adult care givers, taking quality caretakers and giving them appropriate training so that children are not deprived of the familial bonding in early stage and considering other options like sending them for adoption. These can reduce the negative effects of institutionalization on children and help them form sound personality.

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