

UNDERSTANDING THE BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STREET CHILDREN IN HYDERABAD KARNATAKA REGION



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Short Profile

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ABSTRACT:

The phenomenon of street children has drawn the attention of various disciplines and professionals, beginning with social workers, sociologists, educationalists and journalists street children's life and their plight have provided background for many novels and films. The famous one being Charles Dicken's "Oliver Twist" and Mira Nair's "Salaam Bombay" and Hector Babenco's "Pixote". Street children are widely photographed and described. They make good copy for newspapers, with powerful images evoking pity at their plight and envy of their freedom.

Keyword: *street children , Directive Principles , sociologists, educationalists and journalists street children's life .*

INTRODUCTION

In the Constitution of India, the Directive Principles of State Policy provides that the state shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing opportunities and facilities for the children to develop in a healthy manner in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation as well as moral and material abandonment (Article 39, Clause [1]).

The National Policy for Children (1974) seeks to provide adequate services to children before and after birth and through the period of growth to ensure their full physical, mental and social development.

OBJECTIVES:

The present study makes an attempt with the following objective:

1. To understand the general background of the street children;

METHODOLOGY:

To satisfied and meet objectives of the study qualitative methodologies as well as quantitative technique were employed. Further, participatory approach is practiced in order to get valid facts. The study is exploratory cum descriptive in nature. Exploratory design was chosen in order to gain familiarity with the situation of street children. Descriptive design was picked up for portraying accurately the characteristics of street children and for determining its association with the socio-economic factors.

PRIMARY DATA:

The primary data were collected over face to face to interviews with street children, personnel of NGO and GO by using structured interview schedule and focus group discussion with detail checklist. Further, participant and non-participant observation method was used to triangulate the facts.

SAMPLE:

It was very difficult to go for the random sampling as the street children have no specific location and it is difficult to have structured base as they keep on moving. Hence, purposive and accidental sampling method is adopted for the study. It was interviewed the street children as and when met to the researcher at the identified locations of the studied area. The children were met at the public places like, railway station, bus stand, market, and important streets of the city. This method of sampling was confirmed to be more appropriate in existing conditions as there is no authentic data available on the number of street children in studied area so far.

The geographical coverage for the sample was restricted to Gulbarga city as it is the central point to the region having good infrastructure in terms of railway and road transports. The children from all the districts of Hyderabad Karnataka region and to some extent from boarder districts of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra also float to Gulbarga city. Further, the experience and learning of the pilot study and discussion with the existing NGOs also confirmed the same understanding. This was the major reason, made the researcher to stick to Gulbarga city for collection of primary data.

In Gulbarga city four locations were selected for drawing the samples. The locations are station area, bus stand area, darga area and market area. From each area a sample of 60 is covered to have equal representation of the universe. Further, from the each area out of 60 again three classifications of the street children were covered equally of 20 (16 males and 4 females). The classifications were, street children having regular contact with family, children having occasional contact with family and the children have no contact with the family. The sample of 240 street children was totally covered in the study.

RESULTS:**Table 1. Educational Status**

Sl.No.	Educational Status	Frequency	Percentage
1	Illiterate	60	25.00
2	Primary	121	50.41
3	Middle	52	21.67
4	High School	07	2.92
	Total	240	100

The above table deals with the education of the respondents 121 (50.41%) were taken primary education, 60 (25%) were illiterate, 52 (21.67%) were from middle school and 07 (2.92%) were from high school. It is clear that primary educated respondents are in higher number

Table 2. Relationship with Parents :

Sl.No.	Relationship with parents	Frequency	Percentage
1.	N.A.	12	5.00
2.	Cordial	138	57.50
3.	Not cordial	90	37.50
	Total	240	100

According to above table it is clear about relation with parents. A majority i.e. 138 (57.50%) were not cordial relationship with parents and remaining i.e. 12(5%) are not applicable.

Table 3. Relationship with Siblings

Sl.No.	Relationship with siblings	Frequency	Percentage
1.	N.A.	12	5
2.	Cordial	143	60
3.	Not cordial	85	35
	Total	240	100

The above table represents relationship with siblings. A majority i.e. 143(59.58%) respondents were have cordial relationship with their siblings, 85(35.42%) were not have cordial relationship with siblings and remaining 5% were not applicable.

Table 4. Locality of the Respondents

Sl No.	Native	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Rural	102	42.50
2.	Urban	138	57.50
	Total	240	100

The above table describes about native place of the respondents, 138 (57.50%) respondents were from urban, 102(42.50%) were from rural. It is clear that, urban respondents are more than rural.

Table 5. Occupation of The Street Children :

Sl.No.	Occupation of the Street Children	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Rag picking	129	53.75
2.	Shoe-polish	9	3.75
3.	Mechanic	17	7.08
4.	Begging	35	14.58
5.	Hotel	19	7.92
6.	Coolie	12	7.92
7.	Other	19	7.92
	Total	240	100.00

The above table show about, the occupation of the street children. 129(53.75%) respondents were Rag-Picker, 35(14.56%) were, occupation has a begging, 19(7.92%) each were has a hotel and other occupation, 17(7.08%) were mechanic, 12(5%) were coolie and 9(3.75%) were doing shoe-polish. It is clear that a rag picking respondents are more than other respondents and it is major occupation of street children.

Table 6. Reasons for coming to the street

Sl.No.	Reasons for coming to the street	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Alcoholic parents	75	31.25
2.	Uncared	55	22.92
3.	Poverty	33	13.75
4.	Violence	7	2.92
5.	Hate study	4	1.6
6.	Forced to work	28	11.67
7.	Death of parents	5	2.08
8.	Peer influence	14	5.83
9.	Other	19	7.92
	Total	240	100.00

The above table deals with reasons for coming to the street 75 (31.25%), respondents were comes to street because of alcoholic parents, 55(22.92%) were because and uncared 33(13.75%) were because of poverty, 28(11.67%) were forced to work, 14(5.83%) were peer influence 7(2.72%) were because of violence and 5(2.08%) and 4(1.66%) were come to street because of death of parents and hate study respectively. It is clear that a majority respondents were comes to the street because of

alcoholic parents than the others.

CONCLUSION:

Children in India, especially in lower classes and rural areas are the most ill-treated, ill-cared and neglected ones, childhood passes through many stresses and strains. A majority of the children in the age group of 5-16 years are engaged in earning a living. The income accruing from child labour may be a small amount, but it helps save the family from being overtaken an economic crisis. Poverty and child labour go hand-in-hand.

Children in rural areas are engaged in tending cattle, domestic works and looking after infants and toddlers. In urban areas they work as boot polishers, suppliers of tea/ coffee in hotels, bidi makers, beggars and rug pickers, etc. Such children are subjected to many sufferings and handicaps during their childhood. To substantiate, child labour deprives children of educational opportunities minimizes. Their chances for vocational training, stunts their physical growth and hampers their intellectual development. The present paper made an effort in understanding the background characteristics of the street children in selected area with a view to provide more insights for the field engagement.