



Orphan Children and their issues: A Study of at Jammu & Kashmir

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Abstract

The destiny of a kid is completely and entirely dependent on the mindset, conduct, and assets of their parents. It is possible for a family with solid economics to raise children who are well-rounded in all aspects of life. Sadly, an orphan lacks this important protector, i.e. his or her parents. Thousands of families saw the breadwinners they relied on disappear, including their breadwinners' children. It's amazing how well an orphan manages to make it in this difficult and costly world. There is a lot of stress on the orphans in Jammu and Kashmir¹ because of the ongoing war that has been going on for the past two decades, with Kashmir being the most hit. Some of the country's most significant institutions have suffered infrastructure damage as a result of the war, including the loss of human resources. The number of orphans in this state is much higher than the national average. The purpose of is to shed light on the plight of orphans in the Kashmir area, as well as the obstacles they face. The government's involvement in reducing orphans and rehabilitating conflict-affected people is also mentioned.

Key words: Orphan, Children, government's, conflict etc.

Introduction

Since the end of the 1980s, when hostilities began in Kashmir, many people have lost their lives. Either a breadwinner died or people were injured, tortured, or vanished, affecting every segment of society. Most households in Kashmir² are middle-class, with the major breadwinner being a professional or skilled worker. If the earner gets sick, it becomes difficult for a family to maintain a living. Most people, including children, were subjected to harsh treatment, humiliation, and torture. Women, after children, are the most common victims. Most families in this country, particularly middle-class ones, had a spouse who worked as a trained professional or in manual labour and therefore provided for the family financially. To assist the family get through a tough time if he lost his job or hours worked, his wife may perform a menial job. Nonetheless, his death would very likely leave his wife penniless and their children orphaned if he had a wife and children.

Definition of Child

Most people believe that a kid is anybody less than 18 years old when defining it as such. It was raised to a maximum of 21 years in a few instances. The responder, on the other hand, is of primary concern. Early adulthood is defined as the years between 18 and 20. Children in India are those who are under the age of 14 according to the latest census. A kid is defined as any human being

¹ "SP Bhavan (2000) National Human Rights Commission Annual Report 1998-99: New Delhi. National Human Rights Commission."

² "B Adil (2010) Traditional Rehabilitation and Care of Children without Parental Support, Kashmir: Journal of Kashmir Studies Kashmir."



under the age of 18 who has not yet³ reached the age of majority, as defined by the legislation applicable to children. This is why kid has been employed in different laws as a phrase signifying the connection and as an indicator of the capability of.

Definition of Orphan

“According to the online Encyclopedia Britannica and Merriam-Webster dictionary on orphan is:-

- *A child deprived by death of one or usually both parents.*
- *A young animal that has lost its mother and*
- *One deprived of some protection or advantages e.g”.*

Orphans of the conflict.

Children in Kashmir live in one of the world's most militarised regions, and as a result, they face many challenges to their social, psychological, and emotional well-being, which impedes their entire development. Because of the scarcity of resources, they are forced to deal with a wide range of issues, many of which worsen every day. Armed warfare has devastating effects on children, who are seen as society's most vulnerable and future leaders. Disturbances in their social, educational, and psychological well-being result in mental health issues. There have been numerous dangers and transformations at the micro and macro levels due to armed conflict. These hazards and transformations have a significant impact on children's⁴ well-being and survival. A sociological study on orphans and widows in Kashmir, written by Bashir Ahmad Dabla, discusses the difficulties children in the region experience, including social upheaval, lack of access to services, poverty and civil and political breaches, as well as shifts in roles and duties. When it comes to care, socialisation, and emotional support, children are totally reliant on their families. When a member of the family is injured or killed, the whole family suffers. In Kashmiri⁵ culture, families were dispersed as a result of the continuous conflict, leaving youngsters orphaned or serving as household leaders. The war has severely limited people's ability to access basic services including civic amenities, health care, and education. Due to a decrease in capital, income, and employment as a result of numerous causes such as the physical devastation of agricultural resources, reduced investment, and mass eviction, the armed conflict has impoverished Kashmiri society.

Challenges to Orphans in Kashmir

A rise in Kashmir's population has had an effect on the limited resources available to the region's orphans, resulting in a slew of problems that are only becoming worse with time. Here's how to think about the difficulties:

1. Constraints on Accommodations:

³ “CRC (1998) The Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Alternate Report: India, New Delhi.”

⁴ “B Dabla (1999) Report on the Research Project Impact of Conflict Situations on Women and Children in Kashmir. SCF. North-West India.”

⁵ “BA Dabla (2010) A Sociological study of Widows and Orphans in Kashmir. Srinagar: Jay Kay Publishers Srinagar, J&K.”



Orphans who have lost both parents are vulnerable in this way. Because Kashmiri culture permits widows to remarry, orphans are disgraced and deprived of mother care. As a result, orphans only had the choice of orphanages to care for them. Secondly, the lack of assistance from family, friends, and community members leads to children approaching institutions. Another aspect that makes orphans more susceptible to being taken in by orphanages is their financial dependence.

2. Loss of Educational Opportunity:

Attacks on educational facilities occurred often, and this had a devastating effect on the education of youngsters. School buildings have been turned into barracks by security personnel, making them off-limits to the public. Since 1990, 2297 adult and non-formal education institutions have been forced to shut owing to budget cuts and a lack of qualified personnel. However, the educational situation of orphans in Kashmir⁶ is very different. As a result of their poverty and social exclusion, many orphans were unable to attend school. Furthermore, not all orphanages followed the same educational curriculum, and many solely focused on religious instruction. As a result, there is inequality and deprivation when it comes to orphan education.

3. Psychiatric Issues:

Armed strife in Kashmir destroyed most of the orphanages. This has been an unavoidable occurrence, regardless of where they reside. Stress and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are quite common among Kashmiri youngsters and orphans in particular. These orphans' previous experiences with war have left a lasting impression. Orphanages have been up in response to a pressing social need, but these orphanages are not ideal for orphans, since they are the product of armed conflict, which has left many of the children there traumatised.

4. Disorganization in Society:

In Kashmir, orphans who had lost both parents had suffered on social grounds such as family, marriage, and affinity. Orphans' early socialisation has become chaotic due to the breakdown of the family unit. Neither conventional patriarchal authority nor traditional norms and values could be created or maintained in this social context⁷. As a consequence, the value ethos and social control mechanism outside of their families suffered considerable degradation. (Jammu and Kashmir State Government, 2009)

5. Obstacles to Good Health:

Neurological, cardiological, psychiatric, and oncological illnesses have all increased as a result of the war in the Kashmir Valley. The worst part of this scenario is that orphans are unable to get adequate medical care. The health situation of orphans is further jeopardised by a lack of access to health care services. The lack of a well-balanced diet affects the health of orphans in direct ways, such as tiredness, constipation, eye burning, and other symptoms.

6. Dependence:

⁶ "K De-Jong (2000) Kashmir Heaven on Earth. Psychological Consequences of Chronic Emergency. MSF-Holland"

⁷ "R Elisabeth (2003) Social Work and human Rights: Policy and Praticce. Columbia University Press. Ibid pp. 14-188."



The majority of orphans are either fully or partly reliant on others, such as family members, friends, neighbours, and members of the community. Orphans living in various orphanages are totally reliant on the resources of the institutions. Orphanages, on the other hand, provide for the material needs of children, but they leave a huge gap in terms of psychological support.

Consequences/effects of orphanhood

- Loss of nurture and compassion
- Depression
- There is a lack of cleanliness
- a lack of direction and self-control
- Possibility of becoming involved in prostitution or another hazardous activity
- basic healthcare services are no longer available
- Worsening of the economy
- Child labour is a major issue.
- Dropout from school
- Physical growth is slowed down
- Enhanced vulnerability to psychological dangers and emotional issues.
- Social isolation and disconnection.

This part explores the lives of 31 children who were orphaned as a result of the armed war in Jammu and Kashmir⁸ and were housed in six different orphanages across the region. The orphans' life experiences may be explained using the six themes listed below: There are many factors to consider: the children's knowledge of their position, their involvement, coping methods, the role of orphanages in rehabilitation, their self-image as orphans, and their future requirements.

International interest in recognising children's social actors roles and acknowledging children's voices is increasing. It acknowledges the kid as a whole human being with the capacity to take part in society on their own terms. Children⁹ need assistance and 'informal advocacy' in order to have their views heard, since this 'helps young people take part in decision-making.' Adult collaboration, on the other hand, is very rare. When it comes to social institutions, children are often utilised for their functional purposes rather than their desires or interests. Their views may be rejected even if they are consulted because adults see children as objects of worry rather than people who can speak for themselves.

Conclusion

Violence used in armed conflict is to settle political, economic, cultural, or social differences between people or organisations on a national or worldwide level. Since conflicts are certain to occur at some point, they have become an unavoidable part of life in every community. Hundreds of armed confrontations erupted at national, regional, and local levels during the twentieth century.

⁸ "S Jayratha (2001) Trauma Reactions in Jammu and Kashmir- A Multi- Dimensional Approach."

⁹ "G Machel (2005) Impact of Armed Conflict on Children. C. Hurst & Co."



The battle in Kashmir,¹⁰ which has lasted for two decades, has used both high-tech and conventional weaponry." Civilians have been killed in large numbers as a result of this fact across the world. As a result, the causation either caused the child's death or left him an orphan. As a result of circumstances such as divorce, the death of a family member or a breakdown in relations, orphans are required by law to seek refuge at all costs. Families and kin groupings were among the first to respond to orphans' needs. However, for a large number of orphans, this kind of assistance did not stay sustainable or coordinated in any meaningful manner. As a result, the government's reaction was mediocre at best. One result of the war in Kashmir over the last two decades has been the establishment of many orphanages in that area.

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¹⁰ "AG Madhosh (2000) Effect of Mental Stress on Health in Kashmir Valley: Paradise in Trauma. Srinagar: University of Kashmir. Srinagar, J&K."