



ISSN Print: 2394-7500
ISSN Online: 2394-5869
Impact Factor: 8.4
IJAR 2021; 7(2): 176-179
www.allresearchjournal.com
Received: 05-01-2021
Accepted: 25-01-2021

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Livelihood status of street children in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh: An empirical approach

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Abstract

Street children are not a homogeneous group. Each child has a different family background, a different reason for being on the street, a different education level, and different requirements to be filled. An effective categorization will bring a better understanding of the problems and the needs of each group of street children. The study examines the socio-economic profile of the street children in the study area namely Krishna district and it ascertains the causes that paved the way for the respondents to become street children in the study area and it further analyzes the living conditions of the street children in the study area. The present research study adopts descriptive research design and sampling technique applied was Purposive and Proportionately Stratified Random Sampling method. The sample size for the study is 120 and statistical tools like percentages and ANOVA were applied. The study shows that the aspects of poverty, illiteracy, broken family background and orphan factors are the prime factors that effects the livelihood status of the street children in the study area. The study concludes that their exits a significant relationship between the socio-economic profile of the street children and the causes for becoming street children and their livelihood status. The street children in the selected study area are living in pathetic conditions and their livelihood status is squat and stumpy.

Keywords: poverty, illiteracy, orphan, living conditions, street children

Introduction

Street children are not a homogeneous group. Each child has a different family background, a different reason for being on the street, a different education level, and different requirements to be filled. An effective categorization will bring a better understanding of the problems and the needs of each group of street children. Even though the country has progressed significantly in the areas of child survival and child development, there is still a long way to go for ensuring child protection.

The children in difficult situations, working children etc. are groups requiring special interventions of protection. Orphans, street children, child beggars, child victims of crimes, child offenders, children of prisoners, prostitutes, children with disabilities, sexually abused/exploited children, children affected by HIV/AIDS etc are some important groups of children in difficult situations. There is a pressing need for specific data depicting the various facets of the lives of children in difficult situations for effective planning and formulation of specially designed interventions to save such children. The study provides an overview of the major forces and social factors that impact the lives of street children.

Statement of the problem

The street children problem is a serious problem at national and state level. It has many dimensions. The reasons for the prevalence are many. They have specific socio - economic background. They have many issues, and there is a need for greater concern for these people. The present survey is an attempt in this direction, which will help understand the socio-economic characteristics of the street children. Publications in both academic and welfare literature have emphasized the sheer scale of the worldwide problem of street children but not able to explain fully the root causes of this phenomenon.

The present study attempts to portray the living conditions of the street children in the identified study area and it examines the causes for becoming street children and it analyzes the relationship between the socio-economic conditions and the present living conditions and status quo of the street children under the research title, " Livelihood status of street children

in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh -- An empirical approach”.

Review of literature

Prakash, Satya and Singh, Lata (2015) ^[1] in their study had observed that majority of the street children in India can be found near railway stations and most of them can be approached in those areas. There is every need to protect and safeguard the children rights and health aspects and developmental programs are to be framed purposefully for the betterment of street children across the nation irrespective of the geographical locations. There should be the special provisions for the promotion of welfare amenities for the street children and education shall be made mandatory for them at their reformatory and rehabilitative stages of life.

Mukherjee, (2017) ^[2] in his study had observed that most of the street children in Kolkata were engaged in hard core industries as daily labour with risky duties. The study had revealed that the street children are directly exposed to hazardous industrial environment and the study had depicted that majority of the street children in Kolkata city were living as daily wage labour in the unorganized sector comprising commercial and manufacturing activities.

Kebede, (2019) ^[3] had conducted the empirical verification of the socio-economic aspects of street children and their problems in Ethiopia. The observations made from the study depicts that majority of the street children were distracted from the scanning purview of Non-Governmental Organizations working in the specified area. The study suggests that there is every need on part of the Non-Governmental organizations for promoting the welfare of the children in disadvantageous position through financial and social support aided with effective and cordial counseling services.

Kipyegon, (2020) ^[4] in his study had found that the main causes for becoming street children were the interplay of pull and push factors, socio-economic conditions like illiteracy, poverty, health and environmental aspects. The study further suggests that social interventions are to be effectively discharged for the promotion of the welfare of street children by encouraging and engaging them in income generation activities.

Research objectives

The present research study was carried out by basing on the below mentioned research objectives those formulated for subjective analysis.

1. To examine the socio-economic profile of the street children in the study area.
2. To ascertain the causes that paved the way for the respondents to become street children in the study area.
3. To analyze the living conditions of the street children in the study area

Hypotheses (Alternate)

In order to verify the above stated research objectives, the following alternate hypotheses were framed and tested for their statistical significance by the application of parametric tests.

Ha1: There exists a significant relationship in between the socio-economic profile of the respondents and the causes that made them to become street children.

Test applied: ANOVA

Ha2: There exists a significant relationship in between the socio-economic profile of the respondents and their livelihood status.

Research methodology

The present research study was carried out on the concrete tractions of descriptive research design and the study involves the analysis of both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected with help of schedule method and personal observation technique. Secondary data was analyzed from the reports pertaining to street children under various dimensions in their published format.

The sampling area identified for the present research study was Krishna district and the sample respondents were the demarcated street children comprising both male and female genders from both urban and rural areas. Purposive and Proportionately Stratified Random Sampling technique was applied for drawing the sample from the identified study area and 120 sample respondents were fixed for the study. Thus, the sample size fixed for the study was 120.

Interview Schedule method was followed for collecting the responses from the sample respondents in the study area and observation was made on the pattern of responses and the attitudinal behavior of the street children was duly recorded. A 5-point Likert scale method was used to record the responses and in order to draw meaningful inferences from the study, statistical tools like percentage method, mean scores and Analysis of variance (ANOVA) were applied.

Data analysis and findings

Table 1: Socio-economic profile of the Respondents (N=120)

Factors	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Age (in years)	Up to 8	15	12.5
	8-12	45	37.5
	12-15	52	43.3
	Above 15	8	6.7
Gender	Male	109	90.8
	Female	11	9.2
Education Qualification	Illiterates	62	51.7
	Primary school dropouts	54	45.0
	Secondary school dropouts	4	3.3
Residential status	Urban	51	42.5
	Rural	63	52.5
	No response	6	5.0
Caste	Scheduled Caste	42	35.0
	Scheduled Tribe	13	10.8

	Backward classes	56	46.7
	Other caste	9	7.5
No. of family members	Below 2	4	3.3
	2-3	52	43.3
	3-4	56	46.7
	Above 4	8	6.7
	Availability of Regular Meal Everyday	Yes	87
	No	33	27.5
Present earning activity	Begging	27	22.5
	Daily labour	24	20.0
	Street vendors	8	6.7
	Rag pickers	42	35.0
	Other forms	19	15.8
Residential status	Pavement and footpath dwellers	71	59.1
	Staying at parks and public places	29	24.2
	Residing at religious places	12	10.0
	Others	8	6.7
Daily Income	Below Rs.100	59	49.2
	Rs.100-200	48	40.0
	Rs.200-300	9	7.5
	Above Rs.300	4	3.3

Source: Primary Data

The Table No.1 shows the socio-economic profile of the respondents in the study area. The result shows that 43.3 percent of the respondents were in the age group of 12-15 years, 90.8 percent of the respondents were males, 51.7 percent of the respondents were illiterates and 52.5 percent of the respondents were from rural areas. The study results further shows that 46.7 percent of the

respondents were from backward classes, 46.7 percent of the respondents were having 3-4 number of family members, 72.5 percent of the respondents were availing regular meal every day, 35 percent of the respondents were practicing rag picking, 59.1 percent of the respondents were residing as pavement and footpath dwellers and 49.2 percent of the respondents were earning below Rs.100 per a day.

Table 2: Reasons for becoming street children (N=120)

Sl. No.	Reasons	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Poverty	35	29.2
2	To earn money	7	5.8
3	To earn daily food	14	11.7
4	Escape from family disputes	6	5.0
5	Thrown out of broken family	18	15.0
6	Pressure from the family members	11	9.2
7	No other alternative	4	3.3
8	Orphan	16	13.3
9	Rag picking is family occupation	6	5.0
10	Taking care of unemployed father	3	2.5
	Total	120	100.00

Source: Primary Data

The table no.2 shows the reasons for the respondents towards becoming street children. It shows that 29.2 percent of the respondents had opined that poverty was the reason, 15 percent of the respondents had stated that thrown out of broken family was the reason, 13.3 percent of the respondents had stated that orphan state was the reason and 11.7 percent of the respondents had stated that in order to earn daily food they had transformed to street children. The result shows that the major causes for becoming street

children were the aspects of poverty, broken families and orphan state of the respondents.

Verification of Hypothesis – H_{a1}

H_{a1} : There exists a significant relationship in between the socio-economic profile of the respondents and the causes that made them to become street children.

Test applied: ANOVA

Table 3: Causes for becoming street children

S. No	Causes for becoming street children	Sum of Squares		Mean Squares		F -value
		Between the groups	With in the groups	Between the groups	With in the groups	
1	Poverty	314.12	4529.27	107.44	14.92	5.92*
2	To earn money	179.26	4372.31	56.71	13.36	3.14*
3	To earn daily food	342.14	7694.72	113.27	25.17	3.56*
4	Escape from family disputes	84.29	5782.26	27.34	19.36	1.42
5	Thrown out of broken family	64.22	3215.44	22.46	6.94	2.89*
6	Pressure from the family members	82.39	5316.11	25.91	22.46	1.26
7	No other alternative	184.56	6384.52	64.46	21.64	2.68*

8	Orphan	181.42	4382.61	59.54	13.42	4.14*
9	Rag picking is family occupation	66.16	3219.66	19.363	6.59	2.49*
10	Taking care of unemployed father	65.78	3432.91	20.16	6.72	2.84*

Source: Computed, * Significant at 0.05 level of significance

The table no 3 shows the ANOVA results of the examination of relationship between socio-economic factors or the respondents and causes for becoming street children. It shows that among the 10 listed causes for becoming the street children, majority of them had depicted the statistical significance at 0.05 level of significance in relation to the socio-economic aspects of the study respondents in the study area.

The causes of poverty, earning daily food, orphan aspects and rag picking are showing high significant reflections towards the socio-economic background of the respondents. Hence, the proposed alternate hypothesis H_{a1} is accepted. It

can be inferred from the study that there exists a significant relationship in between the socio-economic profile of the respondents and the causes that made them to become street children.

Verification of Hypothesis – H_{a2}

H_{a2} : There exists a significant relationship in between the socio-economic profile of the respondents and their livelihood status.

Test applied: ANOVA

Table 4: Livelihood factors of street children

S. No	Livelihood factors of street children	Sum of Squares		Mean Squares		F -value
		Between the groups	With in the groups	Between the groups	With in the groups	
1	Poverty	105.27	3143.32	56.94	9.43	4.59*
2	Place of stay	234.31	5871.24	72.16	21.59	3.26*
3	Daily problems faced by street children	456.33	7136.52	16.34	6.48	1.42
4	No. of years of stay on streets	244.56	4314.61	84.36	16.72	3.94*
5	Physical injuries and assault	244.22	7623.14	82.21	36.61	1.16
6	Public appearance	271.14	4521.76	63.32	11.76	3.92*

Source: Computed * Significant at 0.05 level of significance

The table no. 4 shows the ANOVA results that denote the relationship in between the socio-economic profile of the respondents and their livelihood status. It shows that among the 6 listed Livelihood factors of street children, majority of them had depicted the statistical significance at 0.05 level of significance in relation to the socio-economic aspects of the study respondents in the study area.

The aspects of poverty, Public appearance, No. of years of stay on the streets and place of stay are having the strong relationship with the socio-economic factors of the respondents in the study area. Hence, the proposed alternate hypothesis H_{a2} is accepted. It can be inferred from the study that there exists a significant relationship in between the socio-economic profile of the respondents and their livelihood status.

Conclusion and suggestions

The present study had examined the socio-economic factors of the street children in the study area and it had examined the relationship between the socio-economic factors of the respondents and the causes for becoming the street children and their livelihood status. The study shows that the aspects of poverty, illiteracy, broken family background and orphan factors are the prime factors that effects the livelihood status of the street children in the study area.

The study concludes that their exists a significant relationship between the socio-economic profile of the street children and the causes for becoming street children and their livelihood status. The street children in the selected study area are living in pathetic conditions and their livelihood status is squat and stumpy.

Steps are to be taken by the government agencies in order to raise the livelihood status of the street children by providing them with education facilities, financial support, residential provisions, welfare amenities and social support in the

process of providing them a safe and secure life in the society.

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