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Education and Skills for Orphans: Evaluating Social Society Village Multan's Approach to Achieving Sustainable Development Goals

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ABSTRACT

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This study examines the role of social society village Multan in achieving sustainable development goals by observing children living in the Village. Every nation recognizes their children as its future; the study intends to assess the educational and capacity-building programs available to these children in the institution. The current research consisted of several SDGs, which were presented by the United Nations Organization in 2015, including poverty reduction, quality education, reduced gender discrimination, decent employment, and the promotion of a peaceful society. The investigation is conducted by using qualitative research methodology and purposive sampling. The researchers engaged 41 respondents, encompassing 36 residents, 3 employees, and 2 alumni of sos village. Information was gathered through focus group discussions, observation, in-depth interviews, and firsthand data from key informants. Results reveal that children are receiving inclusive variety of educational opportunities, from playschool to university-level programs, along with language learning courses, computer diplomas, and youth enabling initiatives. Further, the sympathetic environment which is adopted by SOS mothers plays a fundamental part in the development of children's personalities. While village demonstrates noteworthy commitment to contributing to the achievement of the SDGs. The study also identifies gaps such as a lack of individualized attention and unequal access to opportunities.



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Introduction

A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18, according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Sustainable development cannot be achieved without children because they are central to the achievement of sustainable development goals. The early well-being and education of children significantly shape their future capabilities and their ability to confidently participate in society. Providing healthy opportunities during early childhood is especially important, as this period is critical for brain development. Therefore, it is our paramount priority to ensure that all children can thrive by 2030 (Global Sustainable Development Report, 2019). According to estimations which were taken at the beginning of the 21st century, it denoted that nearly 200 million kids worldwide were orphans, lost one or both parentages. And this number consists of not only children existing in orphanages, but also those displaced in conflicts and disasters, forced to become child soldiers, or surviving on the streets without a home. That's why the real focus today is on making sure vulnerable children can grow up in stable, loving families. Therefore, it is important to develop healthy conditions in orphanages and institutions. This kind of environment is essential for helping them heal from trauma. Children like orphans, those living on the streets, or kids facing other serious hardships are often grouped under the term Orphans and Vulnerable Children, or OVCs. According to UNICEF, there are about 153 million orphans' children worldwide who have lost one or both parents. The highest numbers are in Asia, but Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rates compared to its child population. One of the most heartbreaking drivers of this is the HIV/AIDS crisis, which has left an estimated 17.9 million children without one or both parents. These children require urgent support, protection, and opportunities to rebuild their lives (Maureen et al., 2016).

Research shows that childhood experiences differ greatly around the world. While the majority of

kids grow up in nuclear or extended families, many end up in places like streets, juvenile detention centers (for those who breach the law) or orphanages (for children who've lost one or both parents). In the year 2015, there were about 140 million orphans globally: 61 million in Asia, 52 million in Africa, 10 million in Latin America & the Caribbean, AND 7.3 million in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. And this count includes children who still have one parent but have lost the other. More often these kids face tough challenges in life, and they need extra assistance to boom (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, 2017). As per the data collected, many children spend most or even all their lives on the streets. This situation makes them vulnerable to exploitation by terrorist groups, involvement in criminal activity, and diseases like HIV. By referencing several studies which highlight the effectiveness of using arts-based education to help vulnerable children learn and heal, many specialists highlight the urgent need to teach life skills to these children. During tough economic times and hardship conditions social protection programs such as food assistance, access to healthcare, cash transfers and education are needed for supporting children and families to cope with this situation. In the year 2012, UNICEF multiplied these projects across 104 countries, with approximately one-third of them being large-scale cash support programs. These efforts reached hundreds of thousands of children, comprising orphans and households headed by children. These programs offer more than just temporary relief, they give helpless families a real chance to not only get by but to foster a decent future (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, 2013).

In Colonial America, communities took responsibility for poor, neglected, or orphaned children. At first, towns and counties handled their care, but later, specialized institutions called almshouses were established to support society's most vulnerable. Many children also ended up in indentured servitude. By 1875, New York began placing abandoned or orphaned children with

trustworthy families or in newly built orphanages. Over time, this system of child welfare expanded, shaping the foundation of modern orphan care institutions still in use today (New world encyclopedia, 2019). Rapid developments in organic and behavioral research show initial childhood as a time of marvelous brain development. It is during a child's first some years that the neural contacts that form physical, social, mental, and emotive capability develop most quickly and show the highest ability to familiarize and change. Connections and capabilities formed in initial childhood form the basis of the following development. As a result, provided the right conditions for fit early growth is probable to be much more operative than treating problems later in the future (Centre on the Developing Child Report, 2007). Children are the ultimate assets and the future of a nation. Society should deliver them adequate opportunities for their appropriate physical, psychological, social, and moral development as well as character development and education (Abro, 2012).

Fortunately, some orphans get a chance to spend a good life with their kins, but many of these family members are already living with a shortage of resources. So, they need some community backing to provide orphans with reasonable food, education, health care, psychosocial support, and clothing. The prerequisite for public backing varies by country's condition on the number of orphans, the socioeconomic situations and native decisions about the sort of provision to deliver. And the better way to make available this support (Stover et al., 2006). Every child requires fundamental needs to have a healthy life and this is the obligation of the state and public to deliver these facilities for every child. Residential care institutions RSI (adding orphanages and children care homes) can be seen as the solution to the orphan's needs, and many other institutes with the best of intents. However, some childcare centers or orphanages are working as industries, where the children are treated as a source of income in the form of donations. In emerging countries, many reasons but poverty is the main cause that children

live in orphanages. Blood relations or other relatives may have faith that an orphanage will provide their children with food, accommodation, and good education, which they will be unable to provide. These supposed 'pull factors' rise the number of kids located in children's residential care unreasonably. But it is also a fact that no orphanage can offer the care, attention, and nurture of a loving, like supportive family members (Koker, 2017, p. 3).

In Pakistan, an orphan is a vast phenomenon, a higher rate of emotive and psychological shock; the result on the lives of orphans is critical. People, mainly children, are affected by a large amount in the days of political variability, economic pressure, and natural misadventures. They became displaced, parentless as well as underprivileged from all the basic requirements of life. It is very hard for many families to bear the expenditures of education and medical services, and they are forced to send their offspring to earn their source of revenue (Ali, 2010). According to a United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund's report, Pakistan is home to 4.2 million orphaned kids. Though the formation of the wellbeing fund is a well-meant step, the problem of orphans in Pakistan is greatly bigger. The present adoption procedure in Pakistan dismays the taking in of orphans, who are left to the sympathy of the state, or private donations ("Pakistan's Orphans", 2016).

It is tragedy that Pakistan lacks a national policy or shielding laws to protect orphans. In the 1970s, provincial governments specifically focused more on administration than human welfare, leaving critical needs like healthcare, education, and state support neglected. In 2004 Punjab government introduced the Punjab Destitute and Neglected Children Act (2004), to address this issue. Nevertheless, the law fails to differentiate between orphans and street children even though their battles differ. For instance, an orphan living with extended family may face prejudice, while a street child contracts with wholly different hazards. Furthermore, law does not guarantee orphans their basic rights, leaving

them helpless to manipulation, forced labor, and even recruitment by terrorist groups. Roughly 4 million orphans in Pakistan, needed urgent action. As like other countries Pakistan required to implement orphan-focused policies on priority basis. The first step? Accurate data collection on orphaned children. Without these measures, real progress is unattainable. The situation demands immediate reforms to protect these vulnerable children and secure their future (Sayyid, 2015).

The understanding and protecting children's fundamental rights forms the foundation for sustainable development and the realization of all human rights. This realization is very important that entire society bears the consequences, when children get hurdles in attaining education, and healthcare facilities. On the other hand, when children's rights are promoted, they flourish in safe environment and society gains long-term advantages through better stability, economic improvement, and human development. Yet, millions of children worldwide suffering from the devastating effects of poverty, unsafe living conditions, and systemic neglect, which hinder their growth and future opportunities. Their cheap situation makes them particularly vulnerable to lifelong disadvantages when their basic rights such as protection, education, and healthcare are left unfulfilled. By acknowledging children's rights is not just a moral obligation but a strategic necessity for sustainable progress. There is necessity to invest in their well-being today, to ensure a more equitable, thriving, and stable tomorrow. The governments and civil societies should prioritize these rights to pause cycles of poverty and build a brighter future for all humans (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], 2017).

The meaning of SOS is "Save Our Souls,". SOS Children's Village is an international organization that provides family-based care for orphaned and abandoned children. This organization founded in 1949 by Hermann Gmeiner in Austria, and this program came to Pakistan in January 1977 under the support of the country's president Mr. Zulfikar

Ali Bhutto. Nowadays SOS villages are located across 18 Pakistani cities including Lahore, Karachi, Rawalpindi, and Multan. All SOS villages are designed as an inclusive facility, typically containing 15 family homes where children live under the care of enthusiastic caregivers, along with crucial facilities like a mosque, community hall, administrative offices, medical dispensary, and leisure spaces. The innovative model founds a supportive family atmosphere where children receive love, education, and life skills to help them grow into well-adjusted adults. By incorporating trained caregivers, social workers, and volunteers into a structured community, SOS Children's Villages offer susceptible children the stability and opportunities they need to flourish (SOS Children's Village Pakistan, 2018).

Objectives of the study

- To understand the nature and utilization of capacity building activities offered by (SOS) children village to orphans (both male & female children) in Multan.
- To explore the role of SOS village in construction of Personhood among orphans.
- To know the contribution of SOS children village in achieving Sustainable Development Goals.

Methodology

This research is conducted by using qualitative methods to explore educational activities and life skills in Social Society Children's Village Multan. Researchers have utilized rapport building, observation, participant observation, key informant interviews, purposive sampling, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), field notes, voice recordings, and photography, during field. The investigators established their rapport through interaction with staff and children in local languages (Urdu, Punjabi, Saraiki). The researchers used participant observation by being involved in daily activities (e.g., tutoring, online sessions, and sports), while structured observation

used to document behavior and institutional dynamics. The village's insights were gathered through triangulation from three key informants, including 2 staff members and 1 former resident. Research members have applied purposive sampling and engaged 41 participants, including 36 children in care, 3 employees, and 2 SOS Village's alumni, for semi-structured interviews using separate interview guides for children and staff. To understand collective viewpoints, investigators have organized two Focus Group Discussions separately, one with 8 girls, and one with 7 boys. Field notes and voice recordings were used to ensure data accuracy, while photography was used for capturing contextual details visually. These methods and tools mutually helped to increase the reliability and strength of findings.

Statement on use of AI: In the writing of this paper, the author(s) employed the services of DeepSeek to enhance language and paraphrase literature reviews. Following the use of this software, the author(s) revised and edited the text as required, and they are fully responsible for the resulting content. AI-generated text does not exceed 4% of the total text in the manuscript.

Findings

Educational Programs and Skill Development Initiatives at SOS Children's Village: Implementation and Impact

It is widely acknowledged that education serves as a fundamental social institution. And basic education is as necessary to human growth as food is to physical survival. This requirement extends equally to orphaned children, who often lack the support systems which are available to others. As Miller (2008) highlights, educating orphans plays an important role in both upgrading their social welfare and crushing the cycles of poverty. Education can significantly empower these vulnerable youths by contributing to their psychosocial development and equipping them with knowledge, awareness, and practical life skills. By understanding this perspective, SOS Children's Villages has adopted education as a core mission. And supporting the goal that

learning opportunities should be universally accessible. By allocating significant funds to support children's education throughout all levels, from primary school to university the SOS Village Multan is also exhibiting this responsibility. The SOS village also expands academic coaching with comprehensive life skills training, awareness programs, and professional conferences. All these activities are designed to address the specific needs of orphaned and vulnerable children. This inclusive approach to education aims not simply at literacy but is an effort toward preparing active and healthy participants for society.

Educational Practices at SOS Village Multan

The findings show that SOS Village Multan has developed effective and ample educational system, from basic to higher and technical levels. This structure is created for SOS children as well as poor students, with a significant focus on gender equality. This education system is structured into three main levels: school, college, and university.

- **School Level:** Most important ethical and formal education starts right after the admission at village. The Hermann Gmeiner School, established in 2006, offers quality education from playgroup to matriculation. This school also enrolls underprivileged local students, by adopting social incorporation and academic excellence.
- **College Level:** The SOS Multan Institute of Technology established in 2015, for higher education which provides pre-engineering, pre-medical, and vocational diploma programs. These include Associate Engineering (3 years), Electronics, Computer IT, Vocational Trades, Electrician, Mobile Repairing, AutoCAD, Plumbing, Welding, Tailoring, AC Repair, and Beautician courses. These are technical courses that help in skill development for male and female students.
- **University Level:** Sponsorships are provided to those students who display excellence in college to pursue higher education in recognized institutions such as Bahauddin

Zakariya University in Multan. With such a systematic approach, SOS Village Multan is helping in the academic and vocational development of children and marginalized youth to ensure a brighter future.

Capacity Building Training and Activities at SOS Children's Village Multan

Results demonstrate that SOS Children's Village Multan is dedicated to the thorough development of orphaned and helpless children through a configured approach. Which involves education, vocational training, emotional support, and recreational activities. It combines traditional and modern technologies in an integrated manner.

- The **Rosetta Stone Language Program** is a leading, advanced computer-assisted language learning tool. The software is highly effective in enhancing English proficiency through its combination of visual and auditory methods. The program has proven particularly effective for children; for example, Ikram Wazir (respondent) gained significant fluency and confidence after participating in the course.
- There is another significant program is the **Child Counsel Protection Training (CCPT)**, which specifically designed for teenage girls. This course trains them with essential skills to identify and prevent abuse, negligence, and exploitation while also promoting a strong sense of domestic responsibilities. Due to this training many girls maintain lifelong connections with the institution and continuing to support younger children even after leaving SOS village.
- **Scout Training Program** is also running for children, that conducted in collaboration with the Pakistan Boy Scouts Association. This program focuses on leadership skills, disaster

preparations, and environmental preservations. Through activities like hiking, first aid training, and community service, children develop resilience, teamwork, and a sense of social obligation.

- The series of regular **awareness seminars** is conducted to educate children on vibrant topics such as self-awareness, emotional intelligence, environmental protection, and health issues. These interactive sessions are critical for enhancing communication skills and social awareness in children. Such seminars are effective in preparing children to navigate real-world challenges.
- Beside these seminars, the **Edkasa Online Learning Program** provides virtual workshops on many essential subjects to SOS children. The topics include freelancing, communication, character building, and conflict resolution. This efficient use of the internet helps bridge the gap between traditional education and modern digital skills. Many students, like Asif, have been inspired to pursue digital careers after participating in these sessions.
- Another step that SOS Village is taking to modernize its children's classroom education is to use **Smart Board Learning**. Smart Board Learning is an interactive technology that increases student engagement through digital media such as videos and interactive activities. The teachers have noted there has been a significant improvement in children's retention after using this technology.
- One of the exceptional activities is **Evening Storytelling** in a simulated garden setting, enriching children's verbal confidence, creativity, and problem-solving abilities. These sessions, which include games like next line and guessing, make learning enjoyable while reinforcing cultural and moral values.



Figure 1. *Storytelling activity for children at SOS Village, promoting literacy and engagement.*

- **Children's Festivals and Fun Fairs** in SOS village are offering recreational and social development prospects to the children. These festivals feature numerous activities like face-painting, theatre, music, and team games. Several senior SOS children also got a chance to appear in 'Youth Festival' in Lahore, where they gained exposure to attend motivational programs and social interactional events.
- Various research indicates that routine **exercise** improves stamina, memory, learning, and problem-solving skills while dropping anxiety and boosting resistant personality. **Sports and Physical Activities** play a crucial role in promoting physical health, cognitive development, and emotional well-being. The administration of the SOS village is aware by these facts and has provided playgrounds. Where children can play cricket, football, badminton, and other outdoor games.
- SOS village is strongly committed to providing children with real-world experiences, by organizing **monthly trips to hotels, museums, and cultural festivals**, which built confidence and adaptability in the children. As one respondent, Muqadas described how visiting Ramada Hotel Multan boost her confidence to navigate sophisticated environments. Debate Competitions, held on monthly basis from grade six to onwards, these contests are very crucial to refine critical thinking, public speaking, and research skills. Several students who were initially struggled with the stage anxiety have transformed into confident speakers. Which showcasing the program's success over SOS village?
- Eventually, the **Microsoft Office Management Course** enabling students with essential digital skills. These training are offering to the students of post-9th grade. Focusing in MS-Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and internet

applications prepare them for professional environments. Further these

learning opportunities increasing their employability and career enthusiasm.



Figure 2. *Children are participating in a computer literacy program at an SOS Village.*

Personhood Development Among SOS Children: A Holistic Approach

In anthropology, personhood is the process by which individuals are made into fully recognized members of society, acquiring psychological, social and cultural competence. In SOS Children's Village Multan this development is systematically nurtured in a planned environment with family care, education and socio-emotional training. The institution is founded on the notion of personhood as an acquired rather than inherent quality, obtained through stages of life, with rites of passage, duties and social integration. A key element in the building of personhood in SOS children is the family-like organization of the village. SOS village is literally providing the sense of village; there are 7 to 8 houses in this facility. Every house consisted of 9 to 10 children and each household, supervised by a trained SOS mother. These houses simulate a nuclear

family where children develop bonds resembling those of siblings. This concept is very appealing to create a sense of belonging and identity toward children. As well as this kinship pattern is vital for emotional strength, as it provides the sense of security and affection necessary for healthy development. Which is described by Maslow, in his Hierarchy of Needs pyramid. In houses children refer to each other as brothers and sisters, and the absence of biological parents is mitigated by the presence of SOS Mother who offers constant support. The village's director also assumes a paternal role, ensuring that male children receive balanced guidance.

- **Capacity-building programs:** Besides the parental care, SOS village is strengthening personhood by equipping children with professional skills and self-awareness. To support this cause vocational trainings, language proficiency courses and digital literacy

initiatives are playing vital role. These all programs preparing them for economic independence additionally ensuring that each child develops confidence and a sense of purpose in life. For instance, career counselling workshops are very helpful for adolescents to articulate their future goals. It is much critical aspect of personhood to aligning personal aspirations with societal expectations.

- **Social interactions:** The interaction with peer group, opposite gender, and young or old fellows within the village play an equally vital role. The organized events like debate companions, sports activities, and festivals teach teamwork, empathy, and leadership skills. Leisure trips and exposure to cultural events provide the chance to learn broader social norms, which are vital to enhancing children's adaptability. Further Village also emphasis on respectful communication (e.g., using the honouring words like "Aap" instead of "Tu"). These acts encourage moral values among children, by aligning their behavior with communal standards. Such socialization

confirms that SOS children assume the ethics required for societal recognition.

- **Psychological well-being:** It is the priority of SOS Village to ensures psychological well-being of every child through its counselling and inclusive policies. The village particularly works on the gradual reintegration of traumatized children into social life through peer support and therapeutic activities. The village's safe environment allows them to forget their past while building resilience, a requirement for achieving full personhood. As Rao et al. (2025) argued, *the SOS Village's model demonstrates a replicable proposal for the development of personhood in institutional settings. Their results revealed that with sufficient emotional, educational, and moral support, children can achieve full social personhood as identified by their cultural context. This evidence has extensive inferences for reimagining orphan care structures in developing nations shifting the focus from basic needs provision to the holistic cultivation of personhood.*

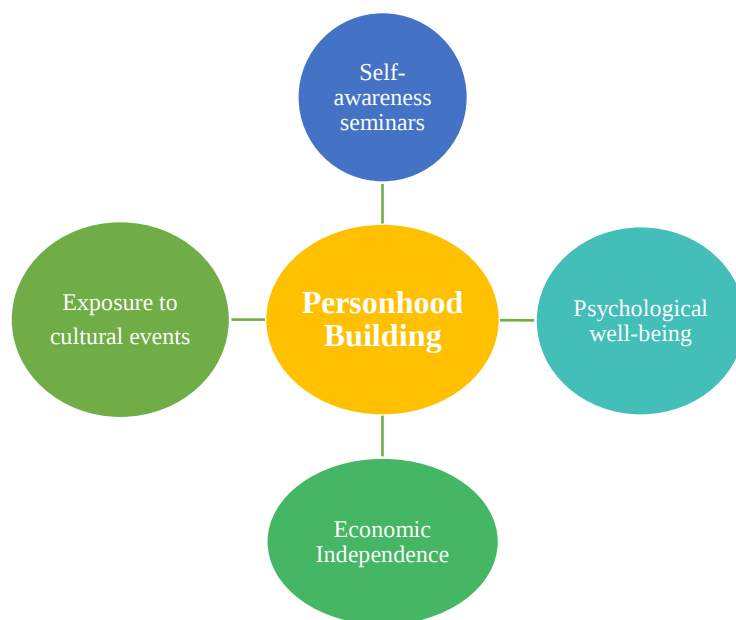


Figure 3. Four critical elements of personhood building: self-awareness seminars, psychological well-being, economic independence, and exposure to cultural events.

Sustainable Development Goals and SOS Children's Villages: A Partnership for Change

The United Nations' strategies for alternative care of children are the result of a five-year collaboration among several non-governmental organizations. In which SOS Children's Villages International and the International Social Service (ISS) are participating as a vibrant agent. Their strategies served as a primary framework for social work, specifically concerning children's rights and the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. These organizations have provided parameters for designing policies and practices for human welfare. Which is aimed at safeguarding the fundamental human rights of children and adolescents who have lost parental care or are at risk of losing it.

Ms. Salma, the Assistant Director of SOS Village Multan, emphasized their commitment to implementing childcare strategies. She stated that *"SOS Villages and its partners believe these strategies present a significant opportunity to enhance the quality of institutional care. However, SOS village Multan requires sufficient funding, specific regulations, and professional standards to govern childcare practices"*. She also emphasized the provision of professional training, improved preparation and monitoring, and the assurance of specialized education in children's rights, development, and protection for those working with vulnerable children. As a member of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) initiative, SOS Children's Villages has drawn on its experience of supporting vulnerable youth. The organization is building on its decades of work for children under the age of ten, acknowledging that the next stages of their lifecycle are just as critical. SOS Villages involves young people in decision-making processes, such as innovation workshops, so they can gain the education, skills and confidence they need. A challenge to reach the most vulnerable children and youth would be a well-trained and committed workforce.

The Contribution of SOS Children's Villages to Sustainable Development

SOS Children's Villages is a global orphanage network that works with governments and other organizations to achieve SDGs. The core focus of village is advocating wellbeing of disadvantaged youth and children. With seventy years of experience in advocating children's rights, SOS Children's Villages is committed to building a sustainable future for young people. The researchers observed that SOS Village Multan is dedicated to helping children who are deprived of parental care or are likely to lose parental care. These children often experience inequality and are deprived of their basic rights. SOS Villages recognize that the quality of childhood lays the foundation for future societal progress.

As stated by Mr. Rajab, the Assistant Director of SOS Youth Home for Male, *"as a childcare institution, their mission is to ensure access to equal opportunities for all children. These opportunities consist of growing up with dignity, security, and respect. Through these opportunities, the staff of SOS village plays a very important role in serving society and the achievement of SDGs"*. Internal capabilities of SOS Villages allow for monitoring program quality, undertaking advocacy activities, and engaging children, youth, and former SOS beneficiaries in decisions making processes. Their capabilities are enhanced by improved leadership and gender balance, which makes women, SOS mothers, family assistants, and social workers as agents of social progress.

The researchers found out that SOS Children's Village Multan works toward achieving the following five key SDGs:

1. SDG 1: No Poverty - ending poverty in all forms;
2. SDG 4: Quality Education - ensuring inclusive and equitable education;
3. SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth - reducing youth unemployment;

4. SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities - promoting social, economic and political inclusion;

5. SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions - protecting children from violence and exploitation.



Figure 4. Five Sustainable Development Goals addressed by SOS Children's Villages programming.

Thus, by addressing those goals, SOS Villages make sure that children without family care are counted in global development efforts.

1. Countering Poverty: A Home for Every Child

Poverty is one of the main reasons behind family instability and separation among children. Families suffering from economic problems have high chances of breaking apart, particularly due to inadequate social welfare systems. SOS Children's Village Multan assists struggling

families to develop resilience against poverty so that family separation can be avoided. This agency offers temporary shelter to children to reduce the financial burden on the parents and support family stability in the long run. In addition to providing immediate solutions to poverty, SOS Villages enable families to become self-reliant by helping them earn money, offering access to health facilities and counseling services. However, if children cannot stay with their parents, SOS Villages give them appropriate care and prepare them for their independent future lives.



Figure 5. SOS Children Village provides shelter, care, food, security, and clothes, contributing to the minimization of poverty.

It is a multifaceted problem, but SOS Villages seek to alleviate its effects on children through comprehensive assistance. Imran, an SOS child, says, *"I have all the assistance I need within the SOS Village. If I were with my family, I could never take advantage of all the facilities due to my father's financial incapability. Currently, I am happy and look forward to the future."*

2. Quality Education for All

SOS Children's Villages consider education an important tool to break out of poverty, violence, and discrimination. Since many children cannot afford to attend school because of lack of funds, and equitable educational access is very important. In the SOS Village Multan, each child gets support throughout his/her schooling from nursery up to university level. Guidance counselors help

children get higher marks while encouraging those who excel to further their education. Sponsors cover the cost of the education without making it known to anyone. Mothers working for the Village have at least a secondary education.



Figure 6. *The model suggests that access to quality education, when combined with Guidance and counsellor's help, contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.*

In 2015, the number of children not enrolled in schools globally was 263 million. SOS Villages implement over 2,600 programs helping a million children and their families. They work with communities to promote public education and create safe learning environments during disasters. The organization's program incorporates academic, social-emotional, and vocational education for holistic development.

3. Decent Work and Economic Growth for Youth

The global youth unemployment rate stood at 71 million in 2016. Care leavers often face challenges in finding stable employment due to a lack of educational qualifications and skill set. SOS Villages equip youth with the necessary skills to achieve independence by offering mentorship, internship opportunities, and vocational education. The "YouthCan!" project involves private sector volunteers to provide career counseling workshops. In addition, "Youth Links" is an online portal that links young adults to mentors and peers while supplying

information about employment and leaving care services. According to Ms. Salma, unemployment amongst parents' increases child vulnerability. Thus, SOS Villages assist mothers and fathers to attend vocational training for better employment opportunities and financial stability.

- **Youth Programs for Independence**

SOS youth programs prepare young ones with skills necessary for college, work or entrepreneurship. Caregivers prepare them for an independent life where they are prepared for success. Youth can take vocational courses and hence begin their own business ventures or get employed.

4. Fostering Sustainability through Inclusion of Everyone in Development

Development needs to be sustainable and inclusive. Most children that lose parents, face discrimination and cannot access education, health services or any rights at all. The organization ensures inclusivity and advocates for protection of such children

against discrimination and other negative impacts. There is still a lot of gender inequality as there are millions of girls who are left uneducated. The structure helps to support empowerment of women and girls through education, mentorship and job creation. On the International Women's Day, they bring women to mentor the children.

- **SOS Mothers in Villages**

Most of the women hired in villages are widows or single mothers. This is because they help to nurture the children and ensure gender equality. One SOS mother shared: *"I teach my children that household responsibilities are shared, regardless of gender. These values will shape future leaders who promote equality."*



Figure 7. *Children and an SOS mother gathered around a dining table at an SOS Children's Village home.*

5. Facilitating Peaceful and Inclusive Societies

Goal of the SDGs is to end violence against children by 2030. Partnerships between SOS Villages and the UN work towards protecting children from all forms of abuse, trafficking,

and exploitation. This involves holding various campaigns to raise awareness of child rights, training caregivers in positive child discipline practices, and offering digital literacy for child safety purposes to stop online exploitation.

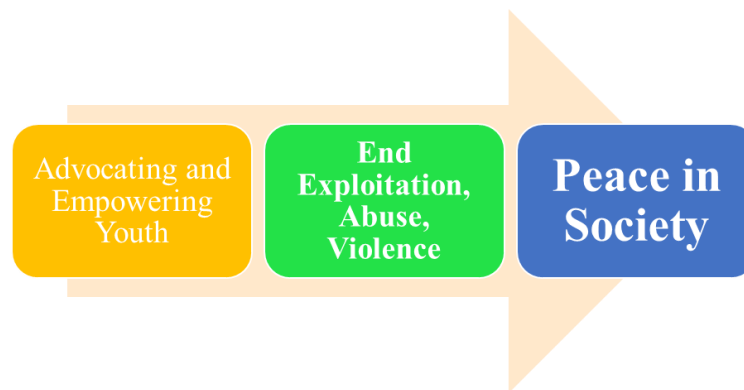


Figure 8. *Process flow linking youth advocacy and empowerment to the reduction of exploitation, abuse, and violence, leading to peace in society.*

- **Digital Hygiene for Online Child Protection**

With one-third of the Internet users being children, online abuse has increased. Children are educated in digital hygiene to keep them safe from online risks and boost their computer skills. Additionally, they utilize technology to develop the skills of parents via mobile applications.

- **Strengthening Youth Voice**

Children and youths can have a voice regarding issues concerning them in the community. Through self-reliance that they build from childhood into adulthood, they become responsible members of society.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it can be concluded that SOS Village Multan plays an essential role in providing quality educational facilities to orphaned and poor children. These educational opportunities are crucial in helping the children to build their confidence and personality. The provision of a quality learning environment to them ensures that the children can build a better future ahead. With the provision of necessities such as food, shelter, and clothes, children get a stable environment for their growth and development. Orphaned children often feel emotionally deprived due to the absence of

parental support. They lack self-respect and feel sad and lonely. Thus, without any proper assistance, they fail to understand themselves and interact with people. To meet their emotional and psychological demands, SOS Village Multan creates an environment for them wherein each child gets special attention. The presence of SOS mothers and siblings plays a crucial role in meeting this goal. Such initiatives play an important role in making children confident and responsible. Orphaned children need opportunities that can make them self-reliant. They must get opportunities for quality education so that they can seek better employment in the future. In its efforts to resolve this problem, SOS Village provides its members with early childhood education, primary and secondary school teaching, skill training, and extracurricular activities. In addition to conventional education programs, the institution offers more advanced programs such as smart board learning, Edkasa online program, English classes, computer lessons, and confidence building courses. Specialized courses offered include childcare training for girls and scout training for boys. This helps them develop necessary skills as well as gain more confidence which will be helpful in terms of employment and financial independence.

Another important aspect that should be considered in relation to this issue is that of personhood development. It involves development of one's personality and character and consists of several dimensions such as institutional involvement, inter-personal relations, ethical development, and leisure/recreation. At the same time, SOS Village contributes to personhood development by creating a homely atmosphere where children learn about the importance of family ties, societal roles, and ethics. The efforts of SOS mothers who offer necessary guidance and education as well as discipline play an essential role in personhood development.

Apart from developing individuals, SOS Village contributes to SDGs of the UN. Since the United Nations partner with SOS Village, it contributes to several SDGs that concern children's wellbeing. First, it addresses the problem of poverty as it provides homeless children with food and money. The organization helps with the goal of zero hunger as it guarantees nutritious food for children. It promotes quality education and decent work and economic growth as it teaches children and improves their abilities. Moreover, it works on reduced inequalities as it advocates for marginalized children. Besides, it takes part in child protection initiatives as it tries to stop violence, abuse, exploitation, and trafficking. Thus, the organization is involved in protecting children's rights and raising awareness about it.

Finally, it is evident that SOS Village Multan works as a transformative entity that not only helps meet the current requirements of orphaned and disadvantaged kids but also ensures their success in the future. Through its holistic approach involving effective education, emotional support, and conformity to the global development agenda, it builds self-respect, resilience, and a robust personality in the children it takes

care of. It can be said that the efforts made by the SOS Village have shown that society is ready to build an environment in which everyone will find the opportunity to flourish and become an active member of their community.

Theoretical Implications

This study extends personhood theory by showing that orphaned children can develop full social and cultural competencies through familial institutions, and not just biological connections. Moreover, it also supports Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs because it shows how foster structures, such as SOS mothers and siblings, can be effective at fulfilling belongingness and love needs in the absence of biological parents. Lastly, this research also links together sustainable development theory and practical application through its ability to prove that one institution can help meet five SDGs, namely SDG 1, 4, 8, 10, and 16.

Practical Implications

The policymakers should consider taking lessons from the SOS Village experience while formulating a national policy on orphans in Pakistan as well as setting up a central child registry system. Childcare organizations should embrace family house living arrangements, use technology-based education like smart boards and online courses, and arrange monthly outings to help children gain confidence. SOS mothers and other caregivers should be constantly trained in issues relating to trauma-informed care and positive behavior management, since their sympathizing approach towards children is important in fostering personhood.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has several limitations. First, the study was carried out on one site alone; the

SOS Village Multan. Hence, it cannot be generalized to others. Second, the sample size for the qualitative study was relatively smaller, at forty-one participants. Moreover, the use of purposive sampling may have posed some challenges due to the introduction of biases. Third, there are various problems associated with conducting cross-sectional research. The study cannot capture longitudinal impacts of residential child homes on children. Also, social desirability may have affected children and employees' responses.

Future researchers need to carry out comparative studies across different locations. In this regard, studies need to be carried out in various SOS villages and even other models of institutions, such as kinship care and government orphanages. There should be longitudinal investigations that follow up children until they become adults and evaluate their impacts through employment, psychological well-being, and marriage. Finally, personhood and resilience among children can be quantitatively measured using appropriate quantitative designs.

Author Contributions

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Afira Arooj: Methodology (equal), Analysis, Writing –review& editing

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