

Assessment of Self-esteem among 11-15 Years Old Orphanage Children in Kanchipuram District, Tamil Nadu

Ranjith Kannan¹, Niramathi Kuppuswamy², Nijesh Edward³, Preetha E Chaly⁴, Shalini Purushothaman⁵, Sathish Gunasekaran⁶, Selva Kumar⁷

¹Senior Lecturer, Department of Public Health Dentistry, Asan Memorial Dental College, Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu, India, ²Associate Professor, Department of Dental Surgery, Chengalpattu Government Medical College, Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu, India, ³Reader, Department of Public Health Dentistry, Meenakshi Ammal Dental College, Maduravoyal, Tamil Nadu, India, ⁴Professor and Head, Department of Public Health Dentistry, Meenakshi Ammal Dental College, Maduravoyal, Tamil Nadu, India, ⁵Senior Lecturer, Department of Public Health Dentistry, Meenakshi Ammal Dental College, Maduravoyal, Tamil Nadu, India, ⁶Reader, Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeries, Asan Memorial Dental College, Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu, India, ⁷Professor, Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeries, Asan Memorial Dental College, Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu, India

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Orphanage children comprise a deprived and isolated population, deserving special attention. Researches indicate that orphaned children undergo hardships which may affect psychological and emotional balance in turn affecting their self-esteem. The aim of the study was to assess the self-esteem of 11-15 years old orphanage children and to compare the data obtained with other school going children in Kanchipuram district of Tamil Nadu.

Materials and Methods: An epidemiologic survey was conducted among 11-15 years old orphanage children and obtained data was compared with other school going children in Kanchipuram district of Tamil Nadu. A cluster random sampling methodology was used for the selection of orphanage children. Stratified random sampling methodology was used to select schoolchildren according to the age and sex to match the orphanage children. The final sample size was 221 orphanage children and 221 school going children. Data were collected using the self-esteem questionnaire developed by Rosenberg in 1965. Statistical analysis was done using Pearson Chi-square test and Student's *t*-test.

Results: High level of self-esteem was seen more among school going children compared to orphanage children and it was statistically significant.

Conclusion: The results of this study indicated that orphanage children had low self-esteem score and high level of self-esteem score was more in school going children.

Key words: Orphanage children, Self-esteem, Schoolchildren

INTRODUCTION

Orphans have been referred to as those children who have lost one or both parents because of death.¹ As a whole in the continent of Asia, the total orphan population forms a turgid number of 5,72,20,000 accounting to 5.8% of the total child population. The total number of orphanage children in India is estimated to be 2,32,46,000 in the year 2010 which accounts for 6.8% of the total children population.²

Orphanage children comprises a deprived and isolated population, deserving special attention to become robust citizens, physically fit, mentally alert and morally healthy and they should be endowed with the skills and motivation needed

by society. Moreover, orphanage placement puts young children at increased risk of serious infectious illness, delayed language development, and mental health problems.³ A study of Ahmad *et al.*, it was found that orphans were more likely to be anxious, depressed and to display anger and showed significantly higher feelings of hopelessness and suicidal ideation.⁴ Poor care giving, lack of stimulation and the absence of a consistent caregiver have been implicated in the negative outcomes among institutionalized children.⁵ Researchers have clearly reported that orphaned children undergo hardships which may affect psychological and emotional balance affecting their self-esteem.⁶ Hence, this study was undertaken to assess the self-esteem among 11-15 years old orphanage children and

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Dr. Ranjith Kannan,
Department of Public Health Dentistry, Asan Memorial Dental College, 13/4 K K St, Chinna Natham,
Chengalpattu - 603002, Tamil Nadu, India. Phone: +91-7200604847.
E-mail: dranjith84@gmail.com

Submission: 10-2016; Peer Review: 11-2016; Acceptance: 12-2016; Publication: 02-2017

to compare the data obtained with other school going children residing in Kanchipuram district, Tamil Nadu.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cross-sectional study was conducted to assess the self-esteem of 11-15 years old orphanage children and to compare the data with other schoolchildren in Kanchipuram district, Tamil Nadu. A self-esteem questionnaire, translated in the local language was used to collect the data. The questionnaire was developed by Rosenberg 1965.⁷ It consisted of 10 questions with options based on Likert scale like strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. The scores were calculated by summing up the scores on a continuous scale. The scale ranges from 0 to 30. Scores ≥ 25 and above suggest high self-esteem. Scores between 15 and 25 suggest normal range; and scores below 15 suggest low self-esteem.

The source of data was primary. The ethical clearance was obtained from the institutional review board. The nature and purpose of the study was explained to the orphanage and school authorities and prior permission was obtained to conduct the survey. Approval for conducting study in these schools was obtained from additional educational officer of the same place.

A cluster sampling method was used to select the samples. The list of taluks was obtained from District office in Kanchipuram. Of the 11 taluks only in 7 taluks, there were 21 orphanage homes present. About 574 children were present in the orphanage between the age group of 6-15 years. From the pilot study, it was observed that children below 10 years were not able to understand and answer the questions. Therefore, 221 children between the age group of 11-15 years were included in the study.

For comparison schoolchildren of the same age and gender were taken. The list of schools was obtained from the District Office in Kanchipuram. From the list, one primary school, one upper primary school (middle school) and one secondary school were selected randomly for the study. Using stratified random sampling, the number of schoolchildren required was selected according to the age and sex to match the orphanage children.

The data collected were analyzed and tested for significance using statistical software packages, SPSS 17.0 software. For continuous variables, the descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were estimated. For comparing percentages, Pearson's Chi-square test was used. For comparison of 2 groups, Student's test was used.

RESULTS

A cross-sectional study was conducted to assess the self-esteem of 11-15-years-old orphanage children and to compare the data with other school going children in Kanchipuram district, Tamil Nadu.

The total study subjects between 11 and 15 years were 221 children, of which 137 (62%) were boys and 84 (38%) were girls. For comparison 221 schoolchildren of the same age and gender were chosen (Figure 1).

The results showed that among the orphanage children about 3.2% boys and 9% girls had high self-esteem. Nearly, 44.8% boys and 28.5% girls had normal self-esteem and the

difference noted between them was statistically significant ($P < 0.05$). Only about 14% boys and 8.6% girls had low self-esteem (Table 1).

Among schoolchildren, only 5% boys and 1.4% girls had high self-esteem. The difference noted was statistically highly significant ($P < 0.01$). About 52% boys and 35.7% girls had normal self-esteem. Only 5% boys and 9% girl had low self-esteem (Table 2).

On comparing the obtained results, high self-esteem was present among 4.1% of orphanage children and 6.3% of schoolchildren. The difference noted was statistically significant ($P < 0.05$). Normal self-esteem was present in about 73.3% of orphanage children and 87.8% of schoolchildren. Low self-esteem was present in 22.6% of orphanage children and 5.9% of schoolchildren. The differences noted were statistically very highly significant ($P < 0.001$) (Table 3 and Figure 2).

DISCUSSION

Self-esteem has become a common word and is used in our daily conversation. It is an attitude about the self and is related to personal beliefs about skills, abilities, social relationships, and future outcomes. In our study, assessment of the self-esteem was considered as one of primary objective, since orphanage children are the neglected group of individuals living in our society.

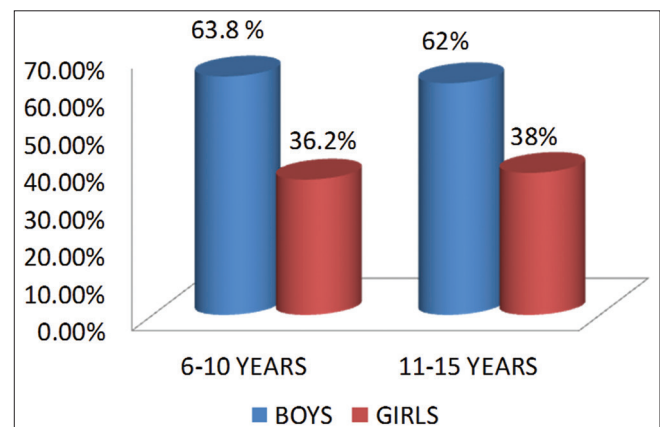


Figure 1: Age and gender

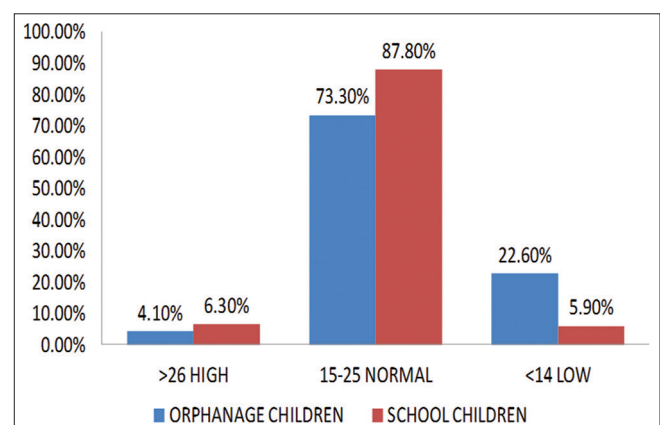


Figure 2: Levels of self-esteem

Table 1: Distribution of orphanage children based on the self-esteem score

Scores	Boys n=137 (%)	Girls n=84 (%)	P
>26 (high)	7 (3.2)	2 (9)	0.60
15-25 (normal)	99 (44.8)	63 (28.5)	0.007**
<14 (low)	31 (14)	19 (8.6)	0.80

**P<0.01 is highly significant

Table 2: Distribution of schoolchildren based on the self-esteem score

Scores	Boys n=137 (%)	Girls n=84 (%)	P
>26 (high)	11 (5)	3 (1.4)	0.008*
15-25 (normal)	115 (52)	79 (35.7)	0.090
<14 (low)	11 (5)	2 (9)	0.08

*P<0.01 is highly significant

Table 3: Distribution of study subjects based on the self-esteem score

Scores	Orphanage children n=221 (%)	School children n=221 (%)	P
>26 (high)	9 (4.1)	14 (6.3)	0.02*
15-25 (normal)	162 (73.3)	194 (87.8)	0.08
<14 (low)	50 (22.6)	13 (5.9)	0.000**

*P<0.05 is significant, **P<0.001 is very highly significant

As there was scarcity in the literature on self-esteem of orphanage children efforts have been made to compare the results of this study with similar population wherever possible. As all the orphanages were situated in rural areas comparison has been made with studies carried out in the rural children.

In the total study population, 4.1% of orphanage children and 6.3% of schoolchildren had high self-esteem. The difference noted was statistically significant. 73.3% of orphanage children and 87.8% of schoolchildren had normal esteem. The difference noted was statistically very significant. 22.6% of orphanage children and 5.9% of schoolchildren had low self-esteem. The overall results showed that schoolchildren had high self-esteem than orphanage children. This is in accordance to a study conducted by Nagy Fawzy and Amira,⁸ which reported that 45% of orphanage children had low self-esteem due to high rate of emotional and developmental disorders coupled with strongly inter-related sociodemographic characteristics. In this study, there was no statistically significant difference between the genders with regard high and low self-esteem. A research done by Farooqi⁹ among 150 children in Lahore city of Pakistan, also reported that all the orphan children had lower self-esteem as compared to the schoolchildren living with their parents. In a meta-analysis done by Juffer and Van Ijzendoorn¹⁰ it was found that higher levels of self-esteem were present in adoptees than in nonadopted institutionalized children. Another study done by

Ntozi in Uganda¹¹ also showed that orphans had markedly less self-esteem and were more depressed; but these differences mainly existed in boys.

Orphan children self-esteem can be affected by various factors such as the environment in which they are raised, the risk of being abused in orphanages, health issues, lack of social exposure, lack of parental care, and affection.

CONCLUSION

From this study, it can be concluded that orphan children have comparatively low self-esteem than schoolchildren who are under parental care. Future research should develop and establish an official system to address the orphans problems in the community and enhance social support services for these children to lead a better life.

REFERENCES

- Ojahanon PI, Akionbare O, Umoh AO. The oral hygiene status of institution dwelling orphans in Benin City, Nigeria. *Niger J Clin Pract* 2013;16:41-4.
- Kumar DA, Varghese RK, Chaturvedi SS, Agrawal A, Fating C, Makkad RS. Prevalence of malocclusion among children and adolescents residing in orphanages of Bilaspur, Chattishgarh, India. *J Adv Oral Res* 2012;3:21-8.
- Children of Brink 2002: A Joint Report on Orphan Estimates and Program Strategies. Washington, DC: TVT Associates; 2002. Available from: http://www.data.unaids.org/Topics/YoungPeople/childrenonthebrink_en.pdf. [Last accessed on 2013 Mar 23].
- Ahmad A, Qahar J, Siddiq A, Majeed A, Rasheed J, Jabar F, et al. A 2-year follow-up of orphans' competence, socioemotional problems and post-traumatic stress symptoms in traditional foster care and orphanages in Iraqi Kurdistan. *Child Care Health Dev* 2005;31:203-15.
- Lamia T, Aziz MT, Sajida AH, Panos V. Mental health problems among orphanage children in the Gaza Strip. *Adopt Fostering* 2007;31:54-62.
- Gatumu HN, Gitumu, MW, Oyugi EO. Orphan students' self-esteem and their relationship between socio-economic status among secondary school students in three districts of central Kenya. *J Soc Psychol Anthropol Pract* 2010;2:1-8.
- Rosenberg M. Rosenberg self-esteem scale. *Society and the Adolescent Self-Image*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; 1965.
- Fawzy N, Fouad A. Psychosocial and developmental status of orphanage children: Epidemiological study. *Curr Psychiatry* 2010;17:41-48.
- Farooqi YN. Comparative study of suicide potential among Pakistani and American psychiatric patients. *Death Stud* 2004;28:19-46.
- Juffer F, van Ijzendoorn MH. Adoptees do not lack self-esteem: A meta-analysis of studies on self-esteem of transracial, international, and domestic adoptees. *Psychol Bull* 2007;133:1067-83.
- Ntozi JP. Effect of AIDS on children: The problem of orphans in Uganda. *Health Transit Rev* 1997;7 Suppl:23-40.

HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Kannan R, Kuppaswamy N, Edward N, Chaly PE, Purushothaman S, Gunasekaran S, Kumar S. Assessment of Self-esteem among 11-15 Years Old Orphanage Children in Kanchipuram District, Tamil Nadu. *Int J Prevent Public Health Sci* 2017;2(5):1-3.