

The Impact of Religiosity on Social Exclusion of Orphans in Pakhtun Society

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Abstract

The present study is designed with the aim to analyze the impact of religiosity on the association of socio-economic status with social exclusion of orphans in Pakhtun society. A total of 90 respondents were purposively surveyed through questionnaire.

Chi square and Gamma tests were applied to measure association and direction of relationship between dependent and independent variables. For finding impact of religiosity, a multivariate analysis was carried out where religiosity is taken as controlled variable. At bi-variate level of analysis, a highly significant ($p=0.000$) and negative association is found among sufficient number of clothes ($\gamma =-0.911$), availability of medical treatment ($\gamma =-0.818$), affordability to celebrate special occasions ($\gamma =-0.820$), sufficient pocket money given by a caregiver ($\gamma =-0.842$) and social exclusion.

At multivariate level, the relationship is non-spurious. There is no considerable difference in attitude of families towards orphans with high religiosity and moderate religiosity.

At union council level, data regarding orphans may be kept to be utilized for any future project inclined towards the wellbeing of orphans.

In this article we have tried to explore the impact of religiosity on social exclusion on orphans in Pakhtoon society.

Key words: Orphans, Social exclusion (SE), Socio-economic status (SES), Religiosity, Pakhtun society

1. Introduction

A society could easily progress if the socio-economic environment provides equal chances to different groups to perform roles in it (Schaefer and Lamm, 1992). However, it is observed that most societies of the world are failed so far in providing such environment. The fragile group(s) in such societies could not easily find ways to be included in the

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mainstream and contribute productively to the overall progress of society. On the other hand, it may result into feelings of deprivation, marginalization, discrimination, alienation and exclusion. Various studies show that such weak groups include women, children, minorities, and orphan (Rose, 1951; Schaefer and Lamm, 1992; Ali, Muhammad, 2014; Ullah and Shah, 2014). The present study aims to find out the impact of religiosity on the social exclusion of orphans in Pakhtun society by examining the socio-economic status of the family. This analysis is taken place through a quantitative approach of research. In next section of the paper, we define the term orphan.

2. Definition of Orphan

Islamic jurisprudence use the word *Yateem* for orphan and define it as a pre-pubescent boy or a girl who lost his/her father (Ali, 1996). It originates from an Arabic word *ya-ta-ma* (Bazna and Hatab, n.d.) meaning “to be alone, to be left alone” and referring to the singleness of the objects. According to Kavak (2014) the child who lost his father is called *yateem* as he is left alone. The word *yateem* has limited application that is only to children not yet reached to puberty and lost their father. In English language, the term orphan is used which cover children who lost either of the parents (George, 2011). For the present study alone which has no religious implications and consequences, we use the word orphan for the child up to 18 years of age whose father or mother or both died. After defining the term, in coming section world statistics about the orphans are given.

3. Statistics about Orphans

Children are the most vulnerable individuals affecting due to crises and conflicts happening around them. Out of 7 billion population, 2.2 billion are children in the world where 143-210 million are orphan. Pakistan is among the top ten countries of the world having maximum number of orphans. India has 31,000,000 orphans, China 20,600,000, Nigeria 12,000,000, Bangladesh 4,800,000, Ethiopia 4,800,000, Indonesia 4,700,000, Congo 4,200,000, Pakistan 4,200,000, Brazil 3,700,000 and South Africa has 3,400,000 number of orphans (Naqshbandi, Sehgal, and Hassan, 2012; Kavak, 2014).

According to this data Pakistan is at number eight in the list. In the next sections, the study variables are defined and explained with the help of previous scholarly literature.

4. *Social Exclusion*

Social exclusion is a multi-faceted and multi-dimensional concept, resulting from societal and institutional marginalization, discrimination, and prejudices (Turner, 2006). There are categories which sociologists refer to as minority, discriminated, marginalised, deprived, and or dominated ones which are systematically excluded from the mainstream of society (Horton and Hunt, 2010; Schaefer and Lamm, 1992). The term social exclusion is defined by different scholars and organizations differently.

DFID (2005) defines it as a process by which certain groups are systematically disadvantaged because they are discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, caste, descent, gender, age, disability, HIV status, migrant status. Similarly, European Foundation (1995) and De Haan (1998) refer to it as a process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society in which they live. In other words, social exclusion is the social incarceration of individuals and groups in a society by dominant group. It is also expected that socially excluded segment of the society could be a potential threat to the law and order situation of the country (DFID, 2005; Department of Social Security, 1999).

In the present study, we measure social exclusion through different attributes selected from literature including non-participation in social activities, feeling disrespect from others, representation from low cast, poverty, deprivation, child labour, poor aspirations for future life, left out by people due to unwanted personality and poor access to contacts (Ullah and Shah, 2014; Horton and Hunt, 2010).

5. *Socio-economic Status*

Socio-economic status (SES) refers to an individual's position within a hierarchical social structure. SES is commonly conceptualized as the social standing or class of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education (Kasoll, 2007), income (Valenzuela, 1997) and occupation.

Examination of SES often reveals inequities in access to resources, plus issues related to privilege, power and control (Ullah and Shah, 2014; Bynner, 2000).

SES provides a corresponding social network. It is reported that higher SES may correspond to a stronger, viable and supportive social network which can be a potential shield against the social evils of society (Chirwa, 2002; Case, Paxson, and Ableidinger, 2004; Osborn and Millbank, 1987). Here in our research study, the variable socio-economic status of the orphans' family is limited to the statements based in literature that include enrolment in school (Kasoll, 2007), education of caregiver (Osborn and Millbank, 1987), living in own house, availability of meal three times in a day (Valenzuela, 1997), sufficient pocket money is regularly given by caregiver (Ullah and Shah 2014a; Propper and Rigg, 2007), having sufficient number of clothes, availability of medical treatment, sports facilities (Barnett, 1990; Isenberg and Quisenberry, 1988), and affordability of celebrating special occasions (Bynner, 2000; NICHD, 2005; Vinson, Graham, Brown, and Stanley, 2009).

6. *Religiosity*

In any society, people could be identified as more religious or less religious on the count of being observing religious belief and practices. The level of the commitment of people towards their religious rituals is referred to as religiosity (Holdcroft, 2006; Bergan and McConatha, 2000; Hill and Ralph, 1999). In Pakhtun society, it is believed that all the members are practicing Muslims. The Pakhtunwali is considered to be a synonyms to Islam (Rahman, 2015:50). In this context, the present study is designed to investigate the impact of religiosity on the relationship of SES with social exclusion of orphans in Pakhtun society.

Although, religiosity is a complex concept as explained by people from different discipline differently (Cardwell, 1980; Holdcroft, 2006), however for the present study, we measure it through a five questions scale with three options which resulted into high religiosity, moderate religiosity, and no religiosity. However, we could not find families those could be placed in a group of no religiosity in the present study. The scale consists of, offering five time prayer regular, recitation of Holy Quran a

regular feature of the family, dressed as prescribed by clerics, no cultural or traditional event allowed in marriage ceremony, females are not allowed to visit bazaar alone to buy needed things.

7. Methodology

The present study is carried out in three union councils of two adjacent districts namely Mardan and Nowshera. The districts, union councils and respondents are purposively and conveniently selected for data collection. From all the three union councils, total 90 respondents, who are orphans, residing in home environment with close relatives, with in the age limit of 12 to 18 years, are selected. Neither data regarding the total number of orphans is available with government nor with NGOs in the study area. Therefore, non-probability sampling technique is used in selection of respondents which is appropriate in the present circumstances. A questionnaire in Likert scale format with two options was used for data collection. It covers all the three variables namely socio-economic status (SES), social exclusion (SE), and religiosity. The collected data was analysed at bivariate and multivariate levels.

For measuring association of SES with SE, variable SE was first indexed. However, for multivariate analysis, all the three variables namely SES, SE and religiosity are indexed for analysis on SPSS.

8. Bi-variate Analysis:

Association between socio-economic status and social exclusion

According to table-1 a non significant ($p=0.787$) and negative relationship ($\gamma =-0.089$) is detected between enrolment in school of orphan and social exclusion. Enrolment in school reduces the feelings of social exclusion as evident from the results. School provides chances of interaction with other children and facilitate ideas sharing in cooperative and responsible environment. In such environment, the orphans feel about their acceptance in the society along with considering themselves a valuable member of the society. The findings are in line with Ksoll (2007). Moreover a non-significant ($p=0.573$) and negative association ($\gamma =-0.130$) is observed between an

educated caregiver and social exclusion. The result suggests that educated caregiver could look after the orphans in better and responsive way. The present result is in accordance with Osborn and Millbank (1987) as they stated that an educated caregiver has contribution in child education career.

In addition, a significant ($p=0.021$) and negative association ($\gamma =-0.605$) is found between an orphan living in own house and social exclusion. Notwithstanding, a significant ($p=0.045$) and negative association ($\gamma =-0.771$) is extracted between availability of meal three times to an orphan and social exclusion. Valenzuela (1997) associated children's diet with poor behavioural outcome. For example they becomes more lethargic and less able to elicit attention from the parents. Similarly, a highly significant ($p=0.000$) and negative association ($\gamma =-0.842$) is found between sufficient pocket money regularly given to orphan by a caregiver and social exclusion. The findings are in line with the results of Ullah and Shah (2014) and Propper and Rigg (2007) which suggest that pocket money contributes in feelings of financial independence and confidence.

Likewise, a highly significant ($p=0.000$) and negative association ($\gamma =-0.911$) is observed between sufficient number of clothes and social exclusion. Moreover a highly significant ($p=0.000$) and negative relationship ($\gamma =-0.818$) is observed between availability of medical treatment and social exclusion. Moreover a significant ($p=0.030$) and negative relationship ($\gamma =-0.468$) is detected between sports facilities provided by a caregiver and social exclusion. Sports provide chance of intense physical and emotional interaction and involvement with other members of society. It enhances confidence of children (Barnett, 1990). It facilitates group learning, sharing, negotiate, resolving conflicts, developing creativity, leadership and self advocacy skills (Isenberg and Quisenberry, 1988).

However a highly significant ($p=0.000$) and negative relationship ($\gamma =-0.820$) is observed between affordability to celebrate special occasions and social exclusion. Bynner (2000) considers non participation in social activities as one of the elements of social exclusion. Festivity of special activities flourish the interior of personality, developing sense of socially

responsibility, improving cooperative behaviour, galvanizing psychological wellbeing of children (NICHD, 2005). Such social skills as referred to by Vinson, Graham, Brown, and Stanley (2009) are the indicators of social inclusion.

Table No.1 Bivariate Analysis

| Socio economic Status (SES) | Attitude | Social Exclusion(SE) | | Total | Statistics |
|--|----------|----------------------|----------|----------|---|
| | | Yes | No | | |
| Enrolled in school | Yes | 23(25.6) | 55(61.1) | 78(86.7) | $\chi^2 = .073$ (.787) $\gamma = -.089$ |
| | No | 4(4.4) | 8(8.9) | 12(13.3) | |
| Your Caregiver is educated | Yes | 15(16.7) | 39(43.3) | 54(60) | $\chi^2 = .317$ (.573) $\gamma = -.130$ |
| | No | 12(13.3) | 24(26.7) | 36(40) | |
| Living in own house | Yes | 20(22.2) | 58(64.4) | 78(86.7) | $\chi^2 = 5.293$ (.021) $\gamma = -.605$ |
| | No | 7(7.8) | 5(5.6) | 12(13.3) | |
| Three times meal in a day available to you | Yes | 24(26.7) | 62(68.9) | 86(95.9) | $\chi^2 = 4.037$ (.045) $\gamma = -.771$ |
| | No | 3(3.3) | 1(1.1) | 4(4.4) | |
| Sufficient pocket money is regularly given to you by caregiver | Yes | 10(11.1) | 55(61.6) | 65(72.2) | $\chi^2 = 23.802$ (.000) $\gamma = -.842$ |
| | No | 17(18.9) | 8(8.9) | 25(27.8) | |
| You have sufficient number of clothes | Yes | 13(14.4) | 60(66.7) | 73(81.1) | $\chi^2 = 27.355$ (.000) $\gamma = -.911$ |
| | No | 14(15.6) | 3(3.3) | 17(18.9) | |
| Medical treatment available to you | Yes | 18(20) | 60(66.7) | 78(86.7) | $\chi^2 = 13.352$ (.000) $\gamma = -.818$ |
| | No | 9(10) | 3(3.3) | 12(13.3) | |
| Sports facilities provided to you by caregiver | Yes | 10(11.1) | 39(43.3) | 49(54.4) | $\chi^2 = 4.712$ (.030) $\gamma = -.468$ |
| | No | 17(18.9) | 24(26.7) | 41(45.6) | |
| You can afford celebrating special occasions | Yes | 8(8.9) | 51(56.7) | 59(65.6) | $\chi^2 = 22.047$ (.000) $\gamma = -.820$ |
| | No | 19(21.1) | 12(13.3) | 31(3.4) | |

Source: Field Survey, 2016

Note*Values presented in the above table indicate frequency while values in the parenthesis represent percentage

9. **Multivariate Analysis:**

Association between socio-economic status and social exclusion (Controlling Religiosity)

The relationship between independent and dependent variable is worked out by controlling religiosity as back ground variable in order to probe if the relationship at bivariate level is spurious or non-spurious. In other words to investigate the impact of religiosity on the association of the SES with SE. It is evident that the influence of religiosity on the respondents attitude regarding SES and social exclusion shows that respondents with moderate religiosity has negative and highly significant relationship ($\gamma = -.820$); ($p < 0.000$) with the variables. Similarly, respondents with high religiosity were also negatively and significantly associated with the SES and social exclusion ($\gamma = -.832$; $p < 0.000$).

It is evident from the findings at multivariate level that relationship of the variables is non-spurious as variation in result is negligible. The categorization of religiosity in moderate and high level does not affect the attitude of society towards orphans. In other words, the respondents' feeling of inclusion remains same even if they belong to a family with high or moderate religiosity.

Table No.2 Association of SES with social exclusion (Controlling Religiosity)

| Religiosity | SES | Attitude | Social Exclusion | | Total | Statistics |
|-------------|--|----------|------------------|----------|----------|--|
| | | | Included | Excluded | | |
| Moderate | Socio-economic status of the respondents | Yes | 71(78.8) | 10(11.1) | 81(88.8) | $\chi^2 = 14.25$ (.000) $\gamma = -.820$ |
| | | No | 6(6.6) | 3(3.3) | 9(10) | |
| High | Socio-economic status of the respondents | Yes | 63(70) | 7(7.7) | 70(77) | $\chi^2 = 22.75$ (.000) $\gamma = -.832$ |
| | | No | 12(13.3) | 8(8.8) | 20(22) | |

Source: Field Survey, 2015

*Note** Values presented in the above table indicate frequency while values in the parenthesis represent percentage

10. Conclusions, Recommendations and Limitations

This research was focused on findings association of socio-economic status with social exclusion of orphans. The data was collected from 90 respondents who were selected from three union councils purposively from two districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa namely Nowshera and Mardan.

Social exclusion of an individual or group is the social murder or incarceration which is not only harmful for the victim but also for the society at large. Inclusion or exclusion of individuals or groups in a society shows the characteristics of dynamism and fundamentalism of that society. The socio-cultural landscape of society determines the social milieu which results into inclusionary or exclusionary effects for people. The overall SES shows significantly negative association with SE in Pakhtun society. Orphans from higher socio-economic status families do not develop feelings of social exclusion which confirms the positive role of the status of family in children outcome and well-being.

It is also concluded that religiosity has no considerable impact on the relationship of SES with SE in Pakhtun society. Pakhtun society is a traditional one where close and emotional interpersonal relationship still exists. The societal norms and values are not affected greatly by the individualism of the developed society. Therefore, orphans are treated like sons and daughters by close relatives and mainly kept in homes rather than left to other state or non-governmental institutions by most members of Pakhtun society. This is the demand of *Pakhtunwali* (a code of life), therefore, no substantial difference was found in attitude and treatment with orphans by families with high and moderate religiosity.

In conducting the present research work, the researchers found that no data of any type was available regarding the number and status of orphans at union council and or district level. It is suggested that each union council may be facilitated and directed to keep data about orphans. Further, the data may also be classified in such a way to show orphans' relationship

with the caregivers, the status of socio-economic environment of the family where they live.

Such data may be open to the researchers for use in order to plan for the nurture and wellbeing of the orphans.

We do not claim that the measurement scale used in the current study is irrefutable, conclusive and exhaustive one. Hence, the categorization of the respondents on the basis of the scale could be subjected to limitations. Religiosity one of the variables could be calculated through multidimensional measurement scale. We have similar stance regarding SES and SE. Further, we could not find respondents to be placed in the category of no religiosity. Future research may try to find out the impact of no religiosity on the association of SES and SE. Furthermore, we did not try to look for impact of affiliation with any of the sub-sect of various Islamic school of thoughts. It is suggested that it may be investigated in any future research by identifying the different sub-sects within Muslims for its impact on the result of the study variables.

The respondents of the present study are those orphans who reside in homes under supervision of close relatives. Similar study with orphans staying in institutions and or with other than close relatives needs to be carried out for analysing their feeling of social exclusion in Pakhtun society or any other society.

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