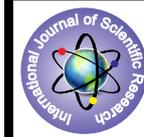


Children's Attitude; A case Study of Slum Dwellers in Dharwad, Karnataka (Anthropological perspective)



Social Science

KEYWORDS : Slums, Relationship, Parent, Addiction, Malnutrition and Children.

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ABSTRACT

Normally parent-children relationship is very close and love binds them together. Especially the mothers bestow their love on the children so much that even if the children disobey them or start cultivating bad habits, they are still not corrected.

Introduction

Normally parent-children relationship is very close and love binds them together. Especially the mothers bestow their love on the children so much that even if the children disobey them or start cultivating bad habits, they are still not corrected. Mothers especially having infants carry them in their sarees or on their back to the work place or while begging alms in and around Dharwad city. They are also constantly breast fed and taken care against many diseases. The mothers undertake extra work when the children need good food. Thus the mothers are very much affectionate towards children.

Slums are the most incompetent areas of the city. They have become an indissoluble part of city life. A majority of cities in India have a sizable number of slums. Unfortunately, slums are increasing in terms of size and in terms of population. Owing to high land value, many urbanites are not in a position of building their own homes. Due to low wages and high rent, people are facing the problems of housing. A majority of city dwellers are residing in single roomed houses. There is a shortage of residential dwellings in urban areas. The continuous invasion of migrants have generated the problem of housing. It has increased the number of slums in cities.

Methodology

Anthropology directly plunges into the field work, Since Danu Nagar was very close at hand and I knew the people and children earlier, thus to frame this article academically to get authentic information. I went to each home personally and collected the information. The secondary source of data was collected by referring to and by studying books, journals, Gazetteers and write ups on the research topic. Apart from these reference works at libraries data was also collected from Gram panchayat records maintained by authorities.

Parent- Children Relationship

Normally parent-children relationship is very close and love binds them together. Especially the mothers bestow their love on the children so much that even if the children disobey them or start cultivating bad habits, they are still not corrected. Mothers especially having infants carry them in their sarees or on their back to the work place or while begging alms in and around Dharwad city. They are also constantly breast fed and taken care against many diseases. The mothers undertake extra work when the children need good food. Thus the mothers are very much affectionate towards children. Mothers also do lot of sacrifice for the sake of their children even taking care of them at night when they are ill. Children are also much attached to mothers than the fathers. Men are not that affectionate and are only busy working and feeding the family. But one observation which I have seen among them is that the parents look after the children until they attain the age of 9 or 10 years, after that they are left alone for themselves and are not corrected even when they go wrong. This behaviour may be because the children are too much pampered by the mothers.

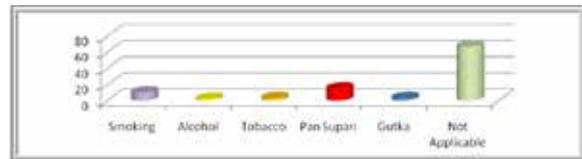
Addictions among children

Children are addicted to many bad habits like smoking, drinking, eating gutkha etc. children, following the examples of the elders they have taken into smoking the leftovers of bidi and with the money got from begging in and around the city they eat

pan, supari, and gutkha. They also drink the local arrack in hiding. They are also very much fancied by the Telugu or Kannada movies and watch TV in the neighbourhood and try to imitate the actors and involve in fighting with the local Hindu or Muslim boys. They have also mastered abusive language and hurl it on the people who do not treat them properly when they go to beg.

Table - 1
Addiction to smoking and Drinking

Sl. No	Addiction	No.of respondents	Percentage
1.	Smoking	30	10
2.	Alcohol	7	2
3.	Tobacco	10	3
4.	Pan Supari	44	15
5.	Gutka	9	3
6.	Not Applicable	200	67
	Total	300	100



With the above table we can make out that about 10% of the children were addicted to smoking. About 2% of them were addicted to alcohol and 3% for tobacco, 15% for pan supari, 3% for Gutka. So we can make out with the given data how the children are falling prey to bad habits and are ruining their life.

Case of Malnutrition

Cases of malnutrition are also high among the slum children because they do not get the nutritious food in the house nor the parents are in a position to provide with the modern and sophisticated nutritious food.

Case No. 1

Karishma Tambe, who lives here, is the only one from her family left to prepare lunch. Her mother is a domestic worker and her baby brother and sister, are both in hospital. They were among seven of the children from that area admitted to hospital for severe malnutrition. The hospital refused to admit that it was a case of malnutrition. There has been a steep rise in the number of deprived children being admitted to hospitals, but the government refutes the fact that malnutrition is becoming increasingly common among slum dwellers.

"When we first admitted them, hospital put protein Intake Malnutrition on the form. But they later cancelled it and changed it to some other ailment," said Samantappa, a neighbour.

Denying the fact the local doctor said, "I do not accept that these are cases of malnutrition. There are many other factor in this slum, like unhygienic conditions, bad water supply, and bad medical facilities." But looking at the children we know the real story of malnutrition.

Case No 2:

Mada, the eldest son among the four children belong to Kulikap-pa, suffers from severe malnutrition. The children of his age are grown very strong and healthy but he remained lean and without strength because his parents were not employed when he was born and even later he was neglected because the attention was given to the other children. Now he has become very introvert and does not mix easily with other children for the fear of fights. He does not go out of the house.

Struggle for survival

Children of Sudgads have not seen the good society or a peer group who are helping in one another's growth so these children think often that they have been deprived of something by the society so they have come to believe that they can survive in society only when they live as their parents lived or are living so they also go for the same job which their parents are involved. They see their parents fight after drinking alcohol, rob the belongings of others, involve in the fight with the neighbours, go to jail etc. so it is a constant struggle for them for survive in this fast moving world.

Peer Group

Sudgads children form groups of two or more friends who move and loiter together during the day (who are school drop outs). They fight with one another and are eventually sucked in to bigger robberies. They often form gangs and slowly start distanc-

ing from the family. During the survey the children were asked questions about the number of friends they had. Some said they had 1-4 friends, some said just 2. Hardly few said they are without a close friend. The local school teacher said that though the Sudgad children study together with the other Hindu or Muslim boys and girls yet it is interesting to see them never mix with them. Because they have their own close friends belong to their own caste and beat the other children during the games hours if the teachers do not monitor. The basic and fundamental problem of these children is that they do not see anybody as their role model to whom they can look up to in their locality.

Conclusion

The children of Danu Nagar, who cannot afford to go to good schools outside Danu Nagar are educated in two schools. One at the entrance of the slum and the other at the end of the slum which was recently built by the government. In both of these schools the teachers complain saying that the Sudgad children are not interested in studies at all, they create lot of noise during class hours and even disturb others. But they are good at telling stories, singing film songs, dancing, acting and in sports. A teacher who had the experience of teaching in Danu Nagar for five years said, "sudgad children cannot remember any lesson that is taught on the previous day, nothing makes them learn; neither the scolding's not the beatings." "May be this is the main reason why there is increase in the school drop outs" said another teacher.

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