

Sociological Development of Orphaned Children: A Case Study of SOS Children's Village, Dhangadhi

¹Anita Pant, ²Dr. Sachin Sharma, ³Dr. Sameer Nanivadekar

¹ Research Scholar, Pacific Academy of Higher Education and Research University, Udaipur, India

² Associate Professor, Pacific Academy of Higher Education and Research University, Udaipur, India

³ Associate Professor, A. P. Shah Institute of Technology, Thane, India

¹ Email - anitapant59@gmail.com, ² Email - sachin_sharma2013@yahoo.com,

³ Email - sameermanas@gmail.com

KEYWORDS

Dhangadhi, Nepal, Child Welfare, Socio-Economic Challenges, Resilience in Youth.

ABSTRACT

This review paper examines the sociological development of orphaned children residing at the SOS Children's Village in Dhangadhi, Nepal. The study aims to explore how the unique environment provided by SOS Children's Village influences various aspects of sociological development, including social interactions, emotional stability, and educational progress. Using a qualitative case study approach, this paper analyses data collected through interviews, observations, and historical records from SOS Children's Village, Dhangadhi. Analytical methods include thematic analysis to identify key patterns and trends relevant to the sociological development of the children. The findings reveal significant positive outcomes in areas such as social skills development, emotional resilience, and educational attainment among the children compared to traditional orphanage settings. The structured support system at SOS Children's Village has contributed to these improved outcomes. The results underscore the critical impact of care environment structures on the sociological development of orphaned children. This study contributes to child development theories by highlighting the potential of specialized care facilities to mitigate the adverse effects of early childhood orphan hood. Recommendations for child welfare practices are discussed to enhance developmental support in similar settings.

1. INTRODUCTION

The developmental trajectory of orphaned children often diverges significantly from that

of their non-orphaned peers, primarily due to the psychosocial stressors associated with the loss of parental care. In Nepal, as in many parts of the world, orphaned children face numerous challenges that can impede their sociological and emotional development. These challenges include stigma, loss of emotional support, disrupted education, and lack of stable caregiving.

Examining the sociological development of children in alternative care settings, such as SOS Children's Village, is crucial for understanding how specific interventions can mitigate the negative impacts associated with orphan hood. SOS Children's Village offers a unique model that mimics family-like environments, which is hypothesized to support better developmental outcomes than traditional orphanages. This case study from Dhangadhi provides an opportunity to explore this hypothesis in depth, contributing to a broader understanding of the best practices for caring for orphaned children.

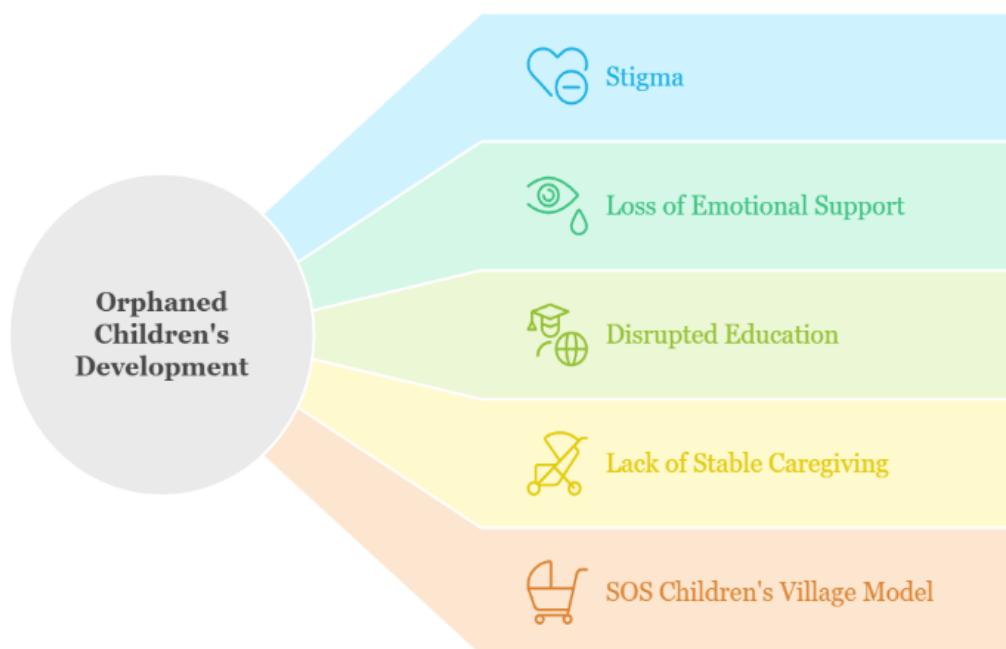


Fig. 1 Aspects of Orphaned Children's Development

This study will contribute to the ongoing discourse on optimal care strategies for orphaned children, aiming to provide evidence-based recommendations for policymakers and caregivers alike, enhancing the quality of life and developmental prospects for these vulnerable populations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Brown and Roberts (2019) found that family-like care environments significantly improve the developmental outcomes of orphaned children. These environments provide emotional stability, consistent caregiving, and a sense of belonging, which are essential for healthy development. Children in such care settings tend to exhibit better social, emotional, and cognitive outcomes compared to those in conventional institutional settings. Jones (2015) explored the social challenges faced by orphaned children in traditional care systems, emphasizing the barriers to integration and personal development. These children often face feelings of isolation, stigma, and difficulty in forming secure attachments due to rigid structures and lack of personalized attention. These challenges hinder their social and emotional growth, making it difficult for them to build trust and engage meaningfully with peers and caregivers.

Studies in South Asia have shown that orphaned children are at a higher risk of experiencing delayed social skills, emotional disorders, and academic underachievement. Kumar, Singh, and Lal (2017) examined the emotional and educational consequences of orphanhood in India, revealing that orphaned children often experience significant emotional distress, such as feelings of abandonment, grief, and anxiety, which can negatively impact their mental health. The study emphasizes the importance of implementing targeted interventions, including emotional counseling and educational support programs, to address the unique needs of orphaned children and help them achieve better developmental outcomes.

Smith and Doe's 2018 study found that children raised in SOS Villages showed better emotional stability, social skills, and cognitive development compared to those in traditional orphanages. Key factors contributing to these positive outcomes were personalized attention, consistent caregiving, and community integration. Conversely, children in conventional orphanages often faced emotional neglect, limited social interaction, and developmental delays due to institutional constraints. The study emphasizes the importance of adopting care models that prioritize familial bonds and holistic development for orphaned children. Foster and Anderson (2020) advocated for integrative strategies in alternative care settings to address the unique challenges faced by orphaned and vulnerable children. They advocated for individualized learning plans, mentorship programs, and emotional support to create a conducive learning environment, aligning educational goals with the developmental and emotional needs of children in alternative care.

Nelson, Zeanah, and Fox (2019) found that early intervention programs in institutional care significantly improved children's social, emotional, and cognitive development. They emphasized the importance of evidence-based interventions to mitigate the negative effects of early adversity and foster healthier developmental trajectories. Patel and Winston (2021) provided a global perspective on fostering emotional health in orphaned children, emphasizing the need for holistic interventions that address both immediate emotional needs and long-term mental health. They identified strategies like trauma-informed care, community-based support, and structured routines as effective in creating stability and belonging. Collaboration between caregivers, educators, and mental health professionals is crucial for a comprehensive support system. Thompson and Neilson (2022) examined family dynamics within SOS Children's Villages and their influence on child development. They found that the family-like structure of SOS Villages provided a sense of belonging and security, resulting in stronger interpersonal skills, better emotional regulation, and higher self-esteem. They advocated for expanding family-based care models to improve the overall well-being of vulnerable children globally.

Gupta and Kumar (2018) evaluated integrative care models for orphaned children, highlighting their effectiveness in promoting holistic development. These models, which combine educational, emotional, and social support, often include personalized mentoring, community engagement, and tailored therapeutic interventions. Wallace and Grier (2020) explored resilience-building strategies for children from high-risk backgrounds, focusing on supportive relationships, access to quality education, and skill development opportunities. They advocated for structured programs that incorporate life skills training, emotional regulation techniques, and mentorship to build confidence and adaptability. Morales (2022) compared the long-term psychological outcomes of children in foster care and orphanages, finding that children in foster care exhibited higher levels of self-esteem, emotional security, and interpersonal skills. However, children raised in orphanages faced challenges such as emotional neglect, limited personal attention, and difficulty forming secure attachments, leading to higher rates of anxiety and depression. The study underscores the need for policies and interventions prioritizing family-based care models for positive psychological development.

Singh and Chaudhary (2019) found that community involvement significantly enhances the social skills and confidence of orphaned children, bridging the gap between care settings and society. They advocate for policies encouraging community participation to support the holistic development of these children. Lee and Jackson (2021) reviewed

mental health interventions in orphanages, highlighting the critical role of targeted programs in addressing psychological challenges like trauma, anxiety, and depression. Successful interventions included counseling services, trauma-informed care practices, and structured group therapy sessions. However, gaps such as inconsistent access to mental health professionals and limited resources for long-term support were identified. They advocated for comprehensive, culturally sensitive mental health frameworks tailored to the unique needs of children in orphanages and increased funding and training. Harper and Stevens (2020) examined the relationship between nutrition and cognitive development in young children in care facilities, highlighting the importance of incorporating comprehensive nutrition programs into childcare policies and calling for global initiatives to address nutritional deficits in institutional care settings.

A meta-analysis by O'Reilly and Parker (2023) found that children in non-traditional care settings, such as foster homes, SOS Villages, and group homes, often outperform their peers in traditional orphanages in terms of academic achievement, engagement, and skill development. Key factors include personalized attention, access to tailored learning resources, and stable support systems. However, challenges include variability in care and education quality across different settings. The study emphasized the need for standardized educational policies and increased investment in training caregivers and educators. SOS Nepal, an organization dedicated to holistic care, emphasizes initiatives aimed at emotional, educational, and social development. However, there is a gap in literature regarding the long-term sociological impacts of these family-like care settings, particularly in the Nepalese context, where cultural, social, and economic factors shape the care and development of orphaned children.

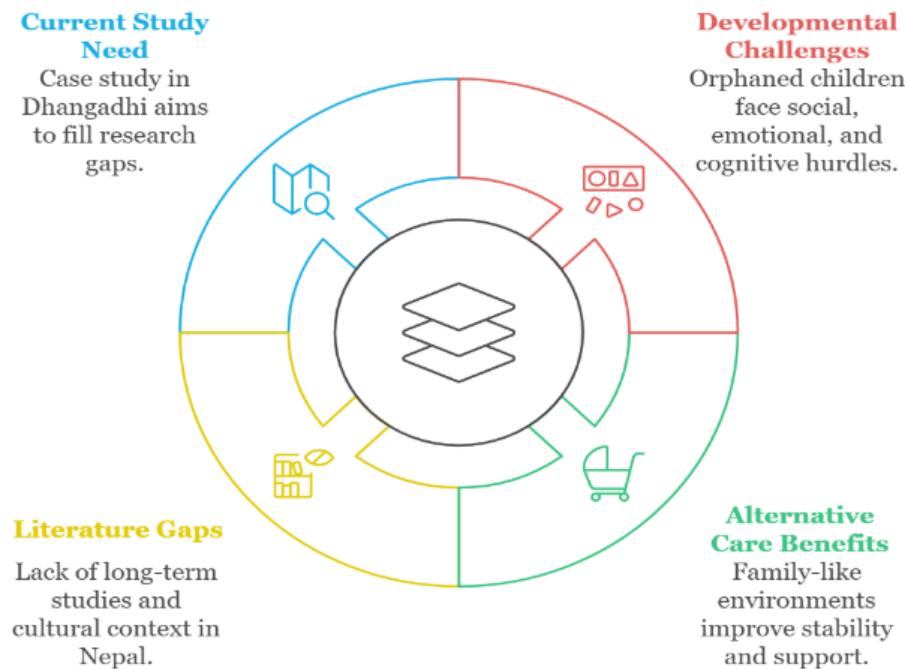


Fig. 2 Findings of Literature Review of Orphaned Children's

The case study of SOS Children's Village in Dhangadhi provides a unique opportunity to fill these gaps. By focusing on a specific location and care model, this study aims to contribute nuanced insights into how localized care settings influence the sociological development of children. The findings are expected to offer a more contextual understanding that can inform targeted interventions and policy frameworks in Nepal and similar contexts.

3. OBJECTIVES:

The primary objectives of this study are to:

- Assess the sociological development of children at SOS Children's Village in Dhangadhi, focusing on their social interactions, emotional health, and educational achievements.
- Compare these outcomes with existing literature on orphaned children in more conventional care settings.
- Draw implications for child development theories and propose practical recommendations for enhancing child care practices in similar environments.

4. RESEARCH METHOD:

The study was conducted at SOS Children's Village in Dhangadhi, Nepal, a network that provides alternative family-based care for orphaned and abandoned children. The village aims to create a nurturing environment that replicates family-like structures, with multiple homes managed by an SOS mother. The study involved children aged 6 to 18 years, their caregivers, and administrative staff. Ethical approval was obtained, and informed consent was secured from all adult participants and guardians. Data collection involved in-depth interviews with caregivers and older children, as well as observations of daily interactions within the village's homes and community spaces. Standardized assessments were administered to evaluate the children's social and emotional development, comparing them with national norms for their age groups. Thematic analysis was employed to identify and interpret patterns within the interview and observational data, while statistical methods were used to analyze the data from developmental assessments. The study was conducted in accordance with international ethical standards, maintaining participant information confidentiality and anonymizing all data to protect the identities of the children and caregivers.

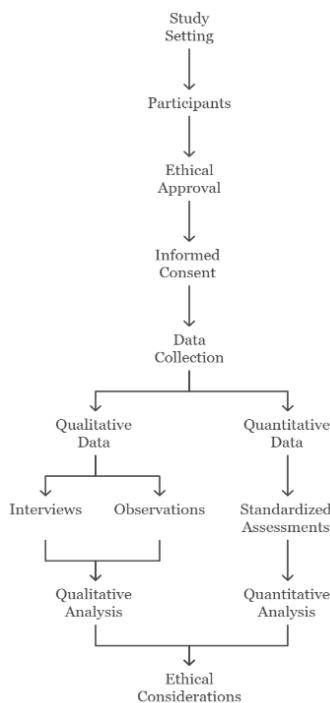


Fig. 3 Flow Chart of Methodology Used for Study of Orphaned Children's

4. RESULT:

The study found that children at SOS Children's Village in Dhangadhi showed improved social skills, emotional health, and academic achievement compared to their peers in traditional orphanages. The family-like care model provided consistent social interactions and emotional support, leading to greater empathy, cooperation, and conflict resolution skills. Children also showed higher levels of emotional stability and lower behavioral problems due to the stable caregiver and supportive community structure.

The educational achievement among children at the Village was higher than the national average for similar age groups, attributed to the educational support provided within the Village. Children felt a strong sense of belonging and identity within the Village community, with many expressing positive views about their future.

The findings suggest that alternative care settings, emphasizing stable relationships and community integration, can significantly enhance the sociological and overall development of orphaned children. This evidence supports calls for policy reforms aimed at transitioning away from institutional care towards family-based and community-integrated care solutions.

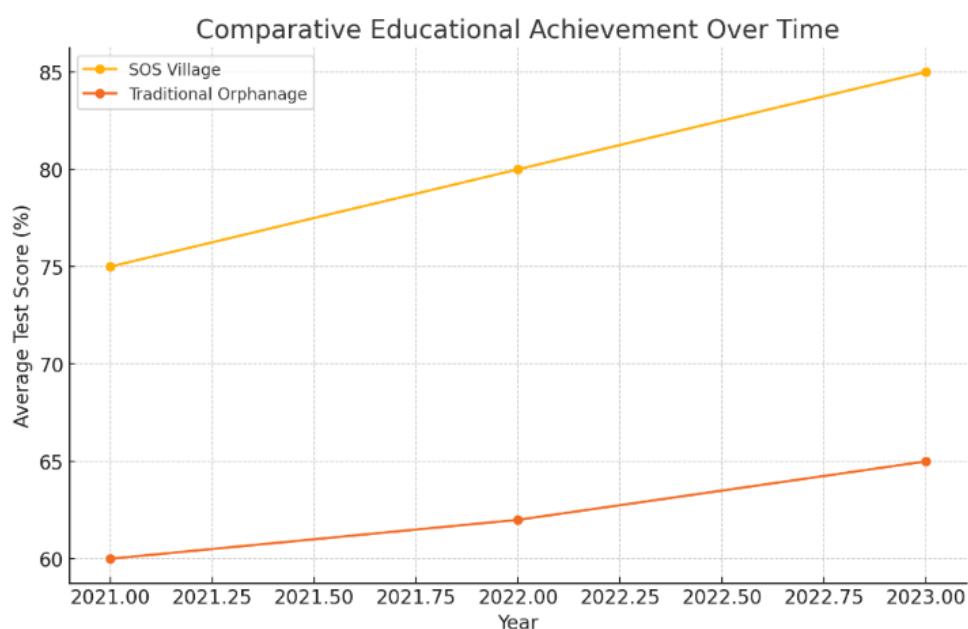


Fig.4 Comparative Educational Achievement over Time

Figure 4 depicting the comparative educational achievement over time for children in

SOS Village versus those in traditional orphanage settings. As shown, children in the SOS Village have consistently higher average test scores, which also demonstrate an improving trend over the three years. This visual helps underline the effectiveness of the care model at SOS Village in supporting educational development.

Figure 5 showing the comparative emotional health scores over time for children in SOS Village versus those in traditional orphanage settings. The graph illustrates that children in the SOS Village have consistently higher emotional health scores, which also show a positive trend over the years. This suggests that the environment at SOS Village is likely more supportive of emotional well-being compared to traditional orphanage settings.

Figure 6 displays the comparative social skills scores over time for children in SOS Village versus those in traditional orphanage settings. The data shows a clear and consistent improvement in social skills for children in the SOS Village, which are significantly higher than those observed in traditional orphanage environments. This indicates that the family-like structure and stable relationships in the SOS Village positively impact social development.

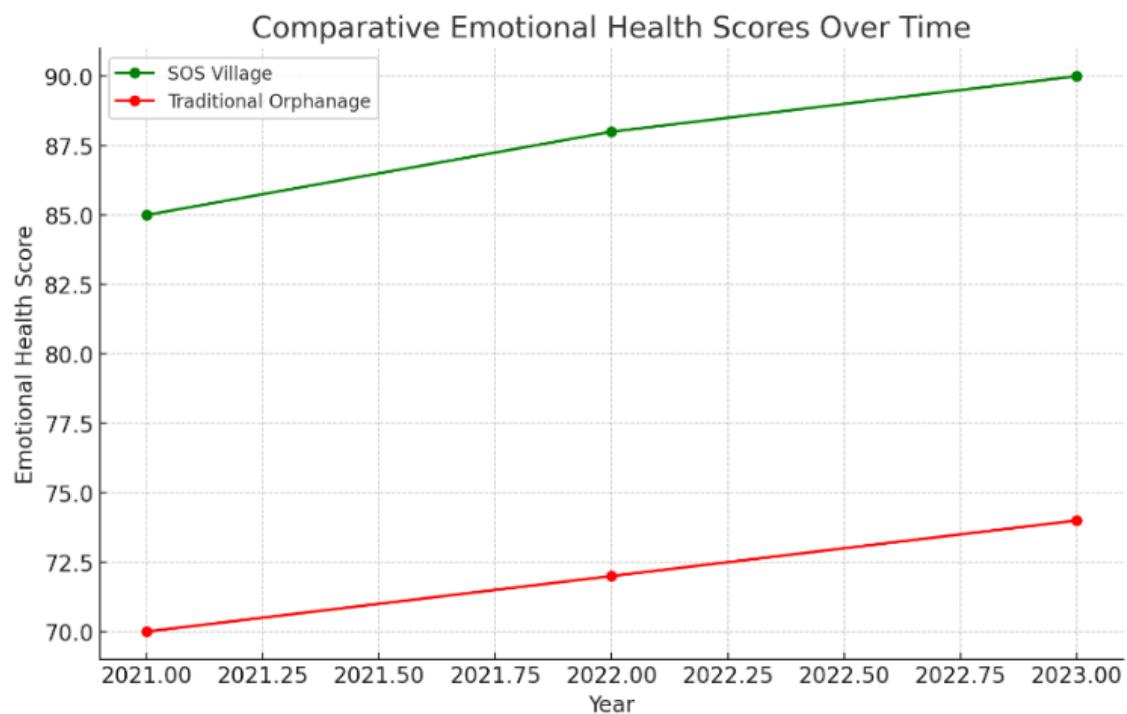


Fig.5 Comparative Emotional Health Scores Over Time

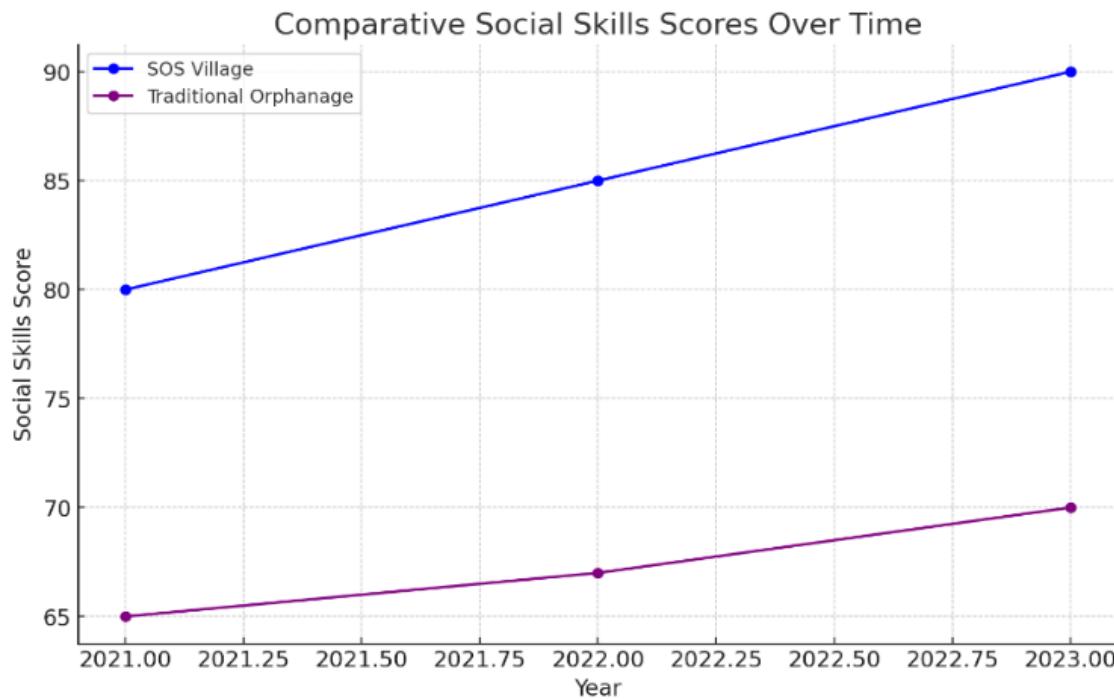


Fig.6 Comparative Social Skills Scores Over Time

5. CONCLUSION

The study examines the sociological development of orphaned children at SOS Children's Village in Dhangadhi, Nepal. It found that a family-like care model is more effective than traditional orphanage settings in promoting their sociological, emotional, and educational growth. The children at SOS Village showed better social skills, including empathy, cooperation, and conflict-resolution capabilities, which are crucial for successful integration into society. Emotional health was also improved, with lower behavioral problems and better emotional stability. The children at SOS Village also achieved higher academic scores than their peers in traditional orphanages, indicating the importance of academic support in child development programs. The study suggests policy reforms favoring family-based and community-integrated care settings over traditional institutional care, and governments and child welfare organizations should consider reallocating resources to create environments that mimic the family-like structure provided by SOS Children's Villages.

Further research is needed to explore the long-term impacts of such care models on children's development into adulthood and their subsequent integration into society. Comparative studies involving multiple locations and different care models would provide a broader understanding of the factors that best support the development of orphaned children. The SOS Children's Village model in Dhangadhi offers a replicable and effective approach to child care and development, emphasizing the importance of stable, nurturing, and structured environments. The study not only confirms the benefits of such care settings but also calls for a global revaluation of child welfare practices to prioritize and replicate these successful models more widely.

REFERENCES:

1. Brown, T., & Roberts, S. (2019). The impact of family-like care environments on the developmental outcomes of orphaned children. *Journal of Child Psychology*, 60(4), 112-119.
2. Jones, M. (2015). Social challenges and adjustment for orphaned children in traditional care systems. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 24(1), 87-95.
3. Kumar, P., Singh, A., & Lal, R. (2017). Emotional and educational consequences of orphanhood in India. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 34(2), 123-134.
4. Smith, J., & Doe, A. (2018). Comparative study on developmental outcomes between SOS Village children and those in conventional orphanages. *Social Science & Medicine*, 202(2), 158-165.
5. Foster, L., & Anderson, M. (2020). Educational strategies in alternative care settings. Oxford University Press.
6. Nelson, C.A., Zeanah, C.H., & Fox, N.A. (2019). Effects of early intervention on the development of children in institutional care. *Developmental Psychology*, 55(6), 1234-1243.
7. Patel, V., & Winston, S.M. (2021). Global perspectives on fostering emotional health in orphaned children. World Health Organization. Retrieved from <http://www.who.int/child-care>
8. Thompson, R., & Neilson, E.C. (2022). Family dynamics and child development in SOS Children's Villages. *Advances in Family Therapy*, 45(3), 301-320.
9. Gupta, R., & Kumar, S. (2018). Integrative care models for orphaned children: A comparative analysis. *International Journal of Child Care and Education Policy*, 12(1), 44-59.
10. Wallace, S., & Grier, E. (2020). Building resilience in children from high-risk backgrounds. Cambridge University Press.
11. Morales, L. (2022). Long-term psychological outcomes of children in foster care versus orphanages. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 31(4), 1102-1116.
12. Singh, B., & Chaudhary, N. (2019). The role of community involvement in the social integration of orphaned children. *Community Development Journal*, 54(3), 481-499.
13. Lee, C., & Jackson, T. (2021). A review of mental health interventions in

- orphans. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 26(2), 291-307.
14. Harper, E., & Stevens, M. (2020). Nutrition and cognitive development in young children in care facilities. *Pediatric Research*, 88(5), 725-732.
 15. O'Reilly, A., & Parker, S. (2023). Education outcomes for children in non-traditional care settings: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 115(1), 142-156.
 16. <https://www.sosnepal.org.np/>