

# An Explorative Study Of Adolescents Living In Orphanage The Role Of Stigmatization And Well-Being

Asma Javed<sup>1</sup>, Javaria Khan<sup>2</sup>, Sidra Farooq<sup>1</sup>, Sanaan Arooj<sup>3</sup>, Hasan Ghaffoor<sup>4\*</sup>,  
Muhammad Athar Bashir<sup>5</sup>

1. *Ph.D. Scholar Department of Applied Psychology, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan*
2. *M.Phil. Department of Sociology, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan*
3. *Clinical Psychologist, Shifa Foundation, Sanghar, Karachi Pakistan*
4. *Ph.D. Sociology, Department of Sociology, University of Layyah,*
5. *M.Phil. Department of Sociology, Govt College University Faisalabad*

## ABSTRACT

The current study sought to investigate the association between perceived stigmatization, locus of control, pro-social behavior, and psychological well-being of orphaned teenagers. A correlational research design was used, and a non-probability approach was used to recruit 100 adolescents aged 12 to 18 years from several orphanages. The perceived stigmatization subscale was anticipated to have a substantial association with psychological well-being. The theory also demonstrates a link between the locus of control and psychological well-being, as well as a link between pro-social activity and psychological well-being. To assess stigmatization, the Stigma Scale, the Locus of Control Measure, and the Psychological Wellbeing Scale were employed, respectively. The findings demonstrated a substantial link between perceived stigmatization (positive treatment, overcoming stigma) and psychological well-being. The results also demonstrated that the internal locus of control (Chance) has a highly substantial positive association with psychological well-being. Pro-social activity has a strong correlation with psychological well-being.

**Keywords:** Perceived Stigmatization, Locus of Control, Pro-social Behavior, Psychological wellbeing.

## Introduction

An orphan is a youngster under the age of 18 who has lost both parents by death. According to UNICEF (2019), there are 140 million orphans worldwide, 15.1 million of them have lost both their father and mother, and 10,000 children become orphans every day. The situation in Pakistan is much more alarming, with over 4.2 million orphans. Millions of orphan children are forced to live in orphanages around the world, without the affection and care of family (Mushtaque et al., 2021). Orphans are stigmatized in comparison to other children, and

this stigma has a substantial impact on their psychological well-being (Nawaz et al., 2021). Subsequent research revealed that children in orphanages are more likely to have mental and behavioral difficulties, as well as despair and anxiety. Physical abuse has also been discovered in orphans (Malik et al., 2023). Orphans are grouped into four categories: Maternal Orphans, Paternal Orphans, Single Orphans, and Double Orphans. Children who have lost their mother are known as maternal orphans, whilst children who have lost their father are known as paternal orphans. A single orphan is a youngster who has

lost one of his or her parents; a double orphan is a child who has lost both of his or her parents. Numerous studies have revealed that orphans living in orphanages face stigma not just from their families, but also from other children and members of society (Rizwan, Abbas, et al., 2021). Without parents, orphan children face a slew of issues, including bad health, emotional attachment, a lack of support, and financial difficulties, and orphanages never give them with emotional support, affection, or a sense of self.

Stigma is defined as a significant rejection of an individual by society, a group, or an individual (Mushtaque et al., 2022). It is assumed that discussing Stigma is crucial for orphans, and individuals tend to avoid disclosing their sentiments and conditions to others in the hope of avoiding discrimination. Stigma is described as a bad label. Stigma is a mark of shame, degrade, sully, or infamy that others shun or reject. Stigma is classified into four types: enacted stigma, associated stigma, perceived stigma, and internalized stigma (Hassan et al., 2022). Enacted stigma, also known as self-stigmatization, relates to sentiments of shame toward others, and the person refrains from discussing his experiences and problems with others. Others are treating the individual unfairly (Hassan et al., 2022).

Associative stigma can be investigated as it relates to family members, which involves personal and cultural elements from both the individual and the family member (Waqas, et al., 2021). Perceived stigmatization is a strong unfavorable labeling and disapproval by society expressed through an individual or a group. Internalized stigma is defined as a person who has internalized unfavorable views; it occurs when a person begins to believe cognitively and emotionally in stigmatizing assumptions and stereotypes about mental illness and applies them to himself (Nawaz et al., 2021).

Perceived Stigmatization is an internal stress imposed on an individual by other members of society based on his perceived position, which separates him from the rest of society (Zhao et al., 2022).

Stigmatization is the social rejection and disapproval of a stereotype based on mental differences formed by society for a person, which results in social disgrace and unjust treatment of that individual (Zhao et al., 2022). People who are subjected to stigma have detrimental consequences on their health and education (Fatima et al., 2022). According to research, psychological disorders in orphans can be overcome after controlling perceived stigmatization. Orphans have expressed their experiences of perceived stigmatization in society, according to a qualitative research report (Fatima et al., 2022). Mushtaque et al. (2022) discovered that orphans frequently indicate that members of society approach them differently than other youngsters. Another factor that displays both negative and positive directions is stopping oneself. Stopping oneself means stopping oneself for any initiative, task, or anything else. Reasons differ from person to person and situation to scenario. For example, if a person refuses to enroll in college due to prejudice or a lack of confidence, his psychological well-being will suffer; however, if the person refuses to enroll in college because he want to study overseas, this does not imply that he has poor psychological well-being. In this situation, he was psychologically fine.

Prosocial behavior is defined as social activity that benefits other people and society as a whole, such as cooperating, assisting, sharing, contributing, and volunteering. Hassan, Malik, et al. (2022) discovered that young girls were more prosocial, emotional, and altruistic than boys. Similarly, Hassan, Malik, et al. (2022) believed that role taking, prosocial conduct, and locus of

control were linked. The effect of internal and external locus of control on the psychological well-being of orphans has been studied; external locus of control were more likely to develop clinical depression, high state anxiety, and negative mood, whereas internal locus of control were better able to manage mood tantrums and aggression. Another study discovered a significant difference in locus of control between orphans and other youngsters. When compared to other youngsters, orphans have a lower locus of control. Also, orphans have a strong external locus of control, whereas other children have a strong internal locus of control (Ahmad et al., 2022).

Psychological well-being can be defined as an individual's reaction to life. Loss of parents creates a black void in a child's later life, and without a father and mother, the child suffers from a variety of psychological disorders. The impact of parental mortality resulted in atypical experiences, indicators of poor psychological well-being, and orphan stigmatization. According to Hermenau et al., (2015), those who have been stigmatized have a lower level of psychological well-being than people who have not been stigmatized.

Feeling good encompasses not only the positive sentiments of joy and contentment, but also emotions such as curiosity, engagement, certainty, and warmth. Orphanages provide the needs of life, but can never provide the care that only a loving and caring father and mother can provide. As a result, orphanage placement is stressful and has a negative impact on children's psychological well-being (Gavan et al., 2022).

## **Method**

The Correlational Research Design was utilized to investigate the relationship between variables in the current study. The association between locus of control, perceived stigmatization, prosocial conduct, and psychological well-being in orphanage teenagers was investigated using a correlational methodology. The current study employed a Non-Probability Purposive Sampling Method. G-Power Analysis was used to determine sample size, which resulted in a sample size of (N = 100). The orphans in orphanage centers were the study's population. The adolescent age range of 12-18 years was chosen as the study's target demographic because it is difficult for researchers to study the entire population due to time constraints. The data source was quantitative data. A systematic questionnaire was used to collect data.

## **Assessment Measures**

### **Stigma Scale**

In this research Urdu version translated scale DISC-12 translated was used. This scale comprised of 31 items with a 5-point Likert scale. The Cronbach's alpha reliability of this questionnaire in current study comes out to be ( $\alpha = .79$ ) which indicates high reliability.

### **Locus of Control scale**

This scale was developed by Levenson (1973) to measure the internal and external Locus of control in participants. The scale was based on 24 items including internal and external LOC. It is measured on 5-point Likert scale. The scale was divided into three segments categorized as internal locus of control, powerful others and chance. The Cronbach's alpha reliability of this questionnaire in current study was comes out to be ( $\alpha = .83$ ).

### Psychological well-being scale

The scale was developed by Carol Ryff to measure the happiness, psychological relief, care, affection this scale has been used to measure the well-being of a person. It contains 14 items. It has been measured on 6-point Likert scale. The Cronbach's alpha reliability of this questionnaire in current study was ( $\alpha = .87$ ).

### Results

The aim of the study was to investigate the relationship between perceived stigmatization, locus of control, prosocial behavior, and psychological well-being of adolescents living in

orphanages. The data was collected from the orphan adolescents who were living in orphanage centers. First and foremost, data was screened. Then a reliability analysis was carried out to obtain Cronbach's alpha for the scales. The reliability analysis explained the internal consistency of the instruments that were used in the study. The data was further analyzed using descriptive statistics, in which mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentages of demographic variables were calculated and reported. Then, results yielded from Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis have been reported, which are followed by a summary of findings.

**Table 1 Psychometric Properties of Perceived Stigmatization, Locus of Control, Prosocial Behavior and Psychological Wellbeing and Subscales (N= 100)**

Variables	n	M	SD	A	Range		Skew
					Potential	Actual	
Stigma							
Unfair Treatment	20	55.04	18.01	.79	1-5	21-116	.53
Locus of Control							
Internal LOC	18	50.41	6.31	.76	1-6	33-66	-.01
Welbeing	14	62.17	14.15	.87	1-6	32-84	-.30

Note. n= Number of items in the scale, M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation,  $\alpha$  = Reliability Co-efficient,

According to Table 1, the Discrimination and Stigma Scale consists of four subscales, including Unfair Treatment, Self-Stoppage, Stigma Overcome, and Positive Treatment. Cronbach's for the Unfair Treatment subscale was 0.79, which is above average (high reliability). It was also discovered that the Stopping Self subscale had a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.67, indicating its reliability. Cronbach's alpha = 0.82 indicates that the Overcoming Stigma is extremely reliable. Cronbach's alpha = 0.68 indicated that Treatment also had a high degree of dependability. Internal

locus of control is one of three subscales that form locus of control. LOC's (Internal Locus of Control) Cronbach's alpha reliability is = 0.76, which is above average. It was also found that the LOC (Chance) had high reliability on Cronbach's alpha = .71, which is good dependability, and that the Powerful others had high reliability on Cronbach's = .79, which is good reliability. This study's third scale was the Helpful Attitude Scale, which showed a strong alpha reliability Cronbach's = 0.78. Cronbach's alpha = 0.87 demonstrated that the fourth scale of the

Psychological Well-being Measure utilized in the present study had high reliability.

**Table 2 Pearson Product Moment Perceived Stigmatization, Locus of control, Prosocial Behavior and Psychological wellbeing in Orphans (N=100).**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Unfair treatment	--	.38**	.29**	.20*	.11	.04
2. Stopping Self	--	--	.44**	.06	-.03	.11
3. Overcoming Stigma	--	--	--	-.11	.31**	-.20*
4. Internal Locus of control	--	--	--	--	.67**	.52**
5. Chance	--	--	--	--	--	.41**
6. Psychological wellbeing	--	--	--	--	--	--

Note, \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ ,

A Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis was performed to establish the relationship between variables and their sub-scales. Orphans residing in an orphanage have an association between Perceived Stigmatization, Locus of Control, Prosocial Behavior, and Psychological Well-Being, as shown in Table 2. Perceived Stigmatization (Positive Therapy and conquering stigma) was anticipated to have a strong association with Psychological Wellness. Positive treatment was found to have a favorable correlation with psychological wellbeing, according to the findings. Yet, Overcoming Stigma has a substantial negative correlation with Psychological Wellbeing. Positive treatment is the positive behavior and attitude of others towards a person, as suggested by the findings. It brings a person joy, happiness, and contentment.

Thus, orphan teenagers who have been positively treated by others and in society are likely to have a healthy psychological state. Moreover, in overcoming stigma, an individual attempts to deal with the rejection, discrimination, and labeling he has received from society and others. As a result of conquering stigma, an individual's psychological health should improve as he strives to eliminate discrimination and self-comparison. However, it is also plausible that the elimination of stigma could have a negative impact on psychological health in certain circumstances. Second, it was expected that perceived stigmatization (unfair treatment and self-restraint) will have a substantial association with psychological health. The study's findings are consistent with the proposed hypothesis. Unfair treatment is the bad behavior of society or

individuals against an individual as a result of prejudice and discrimination, which has long-lasting detrimental impacts on mental health and Psychological wellness. Psychological well-being has a substantial association with locus of control, as indicated by the study's findings, which corroborate the hypothesis (Internal Locus of control). The results also confirm the premise that there is a substantial association between External Locus of Control (Powerful Others and Luck) and Psychological Wellbeing. People with an Internal Locus of Control can appreciate life more. He strives for self-improvement, attempts to identify his faults and improve himself for the future, and has a healthy psychological state. Here Chance and Powerful Others are the subscales of the Locus of control scale. Strong others and chance (question items) explore the external locus of control by posing questions about other individuals, the environment, and chance. But, the individual with an external locus of control always places responsibility on others and the environment. So, those with an external locus of control have a worse psychological well-being than those with an internal locus of control. In accordance with the original hypothesis, the study's findings support the notion that Prosocial conduct is significantly related to Psychological health. Findings demonstrated a strong positive association between Psychological wellbeing and Prosocial conduct. A person's prosocial activity is essentially a helping behavior. If someone adolescent engages in more prosocial activities for the benefit of others without expecting anything in return, their psychological health will also be excellent.

### **Discussion**

This study combined previous findings and concluded that progress has been achieved in understanding the impact of perceived stigmatization, locus of control, prosocial conduct, and psychological well-being on orphanage-dwelling adolescents.

The descriptive result illustrates the demographic features of the participants. Teenagers, on average, were 14 years old. 85% of respondents indicated that their father passed away six years ago. Participants were middle school, matriculation, and intermediate level students. 91% of the participants were rural residents. The proportion of adolescents living in orphanages who had living moms and were housewives was 84%. Seventy-eight percent of adolescents have satisfactory relationships with their families.

We also investigate how adolescents view their caregivers. In the current examination, it was determined that the orphanages that engaged in research have data that differs significantly from earlier studies. 68% of respondents indicated they were extremely satisfied with the orphanage's facilities. Similarly, 78% of participants expressed satisfaction with the conduct of orphanage personnel, instructors, and peers. According to 91% of orphaned adolescents, orphanage centers give timely access to food, clothing, and other requirements. Just 6% of adolescents expressed disinterest in meeting their family and relatives. 74% of participants were overjoyed and willing to reside in the orphanage, while 62% desired to return home.

In the present study, we examined the link between perceived stigmatization and psychological health. There is a very good interaction between them. This study supports the findings of Chakhssi et al. (2018) that positive emotions, cognitions, and behaviors increase the psychological well-being of orphans and minimize the symptoms of distress in the community. Past research has consistently demonstrated that behavioral therapies can promote psychological well-being. Orphans' psychological well-being is improved by community-based care, support, and positive conduct (Weiss et al., 2016). The recent study also found a negative correlation between

conquering stigma and psychological health. Orphans are stereotyped as misbehaving and receiving disproportionate amounts of humanitarian help. In an environment where orphans lack a support structure, they are targets of prejudice and stigmatization, and these factors have a negative impact on the psychological health of adolescents, many are severely marginalized (Weiss et al., 2016). The findings demonstrated a favorable link between Perceived Stigmatization (unfair treatment and self-stopping) and Psychological health. A study demonstrates that a lack of affection and stigmatization is connected with orphans' internal and external circumstances, and that they have poor psychological health. In addition, studies demonstrated that painful experience has a detrimental link with psychological health (Shafiq et al., 2020).

Internal locus of control and external locus of control adolescents had a greater impact on psychological health. This discovery is related to the discoveries made by Bachman DeSilva et al (2012). They observed that external locus of control (powerful others) is associated with excellent psychological health, but internal locus of control is associated with poor psychological health. People with an internal locus of control have a significantly more positive relationship with psychological well-being than those with an external locus of control, according to the findings of the present study. Disassa and Lamessa (2021) corroborated this study's findings.

Losing parents is a naturally terrible experience for any youngster. In addition, these occurrences have an effect on their prosocial conduct and psychological health. There is consistent evidence that orphanages and best friends influence adolescents' prosocial actions and psychological health (Lai et al., 2022). Although cooperation, sharing, and assisting are related with prosocial conduct, 67% of participants highlighted their strong good peer relationships.

This finding indicates that prosocial activity has a strong, positive correlation with psychological health.

### Conclusion

The current study found a strong link between perceived stigmatization, locus of control, prosocial activity, and psychological well-being. The findings show that if a person is treated positively, he will have good psychological wellbeing. Those who have attempted to overcome the stigma are also in high psychological health. The locus of control is related to psychological well-being. Pro-social conduct is associated with increased psychological well-being. It was discovered that if individuals were treated favourably and overcome their stigma, they had a good locus of control and pro-social conduct, which is associated with psychological well-being.

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