

Orphanage Home and Child's Personality Development: A Case Study of Selected Orphanage Homes in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The orphanage home as an institution for less privileged children has been faced with challenges such as limited resources, unstable relationship, overcrowding which influences the personality development of children. This study examined the relationship between orphanage home and child's personality development in Akwa Ibom State. A descriptive survey research design was adopted to collect data from sections of both the caregivers and the orphans. A multi stage sampling technique was employed in this study. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire designed in line with the objective of the study. The primary and secondary data are the sources of data collection. The data collected were analyzed using frequency tables, simple percentages and chi-square test of independence served as the statistical tool for this study. The sample size of 400 was gotten from the population of the study which was 2,095. The Attachment Theory by John Bowlby served as the theoretical framework for the study. The findings of this study revealed that self-esteem, limited resources and overcrowding have an effect on the child's personality development. In conclusion, there is need for the orphanage institution to provide essential services and a safety net for vulnerable children. The study recommended, among others that, government should invest in the various orphanage homes in Akwa Ibom State by providing them with adequate resources to address each child's unique needs and boost their self-esteem, the caregivers in the orphanage institution should be given specialized training which focuses on child psychology and development.

Keywords: *Orphanage Home, Personality, Development, Child, Child's Personality Development*

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Background to the Study

Orphanage home is an institution dedicated to caring for children who have lost both parents, or, for a variety of reasons, cannot be cared for by their biological parents (Dozier et al., 2012). There are millions of orphans and abandoned children globally living in various orphanage homes. The orphanage in this case plays a vital role in providing basic care and shelter for vulnerable, displaced and motherless children but yet concerns about their impact on the personality development of the child.

The orphanage environment is different from that of a family household consisting of the father, mother and siblings. The difference existing could have an effect on a child's personality development. Early childhood experiences shapes personality traits, emotional well-being, and social skills. Lack of parental care and institutionalized settings in orphanages raise concerns about potential negative impacts on these crucial developmental domains. The society is expected to offer these orphans sufficient opportunities for their proper physical, mental, social and moral growth as well as personality development and education (Abro, 2012). The families are the best place for the socialization of children while the state provides social services and social protection, and ensures the integrity of the family.

Parents are responsible for caring and supporting of their children and sometimes in the absence of parents, grandparents or other close relatives willingly take responsibilities for the care of their grandchildren. Just as strong foundations provide the basis for positive and healthy adaptations, weak foundations create physiological disruptions that can affect subsequent learning, behaviour, and lifelong physical and mental health. This shows how the absence of nurturing and supportive relationships can bring about adversity which can create a toxic environment that undermines all aspects of a child's subsequent development, creating significant, physically based, and long-term obstacles to positive outcomes for these children (Shonkoff, 2010).

Majority of the children brought up in the orphanage home cannot cope effectively with the outside world because most of them tend to be introverts and always want to keep to themselves in few cases and this tends to make them backward in speed and verbal intelligence. Sigmund Freud (1945) was of the view that children who grew up in the orphanage homes are likely to be affected in their culture, tradition, and religion and equally in their interests, belief ambition, ideas and these affect their personality development as their behaviour are not only more indiscriminate but more immature than the children who are with their natural parents. The absence of biological parents most times affects the child's socialization process; most children socialize more and feel free with the presence of their parents.

Again, the social environment of a child can have an effect on the child's morals and attitude as everyone tends to be influenced by the attitude of his or her parents. so also, as children, they are greatly influenced by their environment. Then a child's guardian has an influence on self-confidence of a child. Children who are brought up in the orphanage home are equally members of the society but are viewed in relation to the background of their up- bringing. One's background has a lot to do to his or her personality development. The understanding of

the various influence of orphanages on children's personality is important for the implementation of policies and practices that prioritize children's well-being and long-term development.

Statement of the Problem

The orphanages provide for the less privilege and give children without parents a place to call a home. Different members of the society have different opinion of the children who are reared in the orphanage. Their perception of these children gives us insight of what life in the orphanage home is like and possible behaviour attributed to the children raised in the orphanage homes. Most children who are brought up in the orphanage home tend to possess behaviours that are different from that of children living with parents and sometimes it becomes difficult for them to properly socialize and mingle with other children. These children tend to be introverts and usually keep to themselves because of the type of training they get in the orphanage home. The orphanage home has various effects or influences on a child's overall personality development and this encompasses the emotional, social, cognitive, and behavioural aspects.

Children are at increased risk of losing opportunities for school, proper healthcare, growth, development, nutrition, and shelter. The loss of a parent, leads to the child experiencing profound grief, anxiety, fear, and hopelessness with long-term consequences such as psychosomatic disorders, chronic depression, low self-esteem, learning disabilities and disturbed social behaviour. Despite the important role in which the orphanages play, there is still need to explore and comprehend the specific ways in which institutional living affects a child's personality development. The various challenges such as lack of attention, unstable relationship, limited resources and overcrowding etcetera have negative effects on the child's personality development.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the impact of orphanage home on the child's personality development.

Specific Objectives include:

- i) To examine how the orphanage home influences the development of self-esteem of children in the orphanage home in Akwa Ibom State.
- ii) To examine the impact of limited resources in the orphanage home on the Child's personality development in Akwa Ibom State.
- iii) To describe how overcrowding in the orphanage home affects child's personality development in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study;

1. There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and personality development of children in the orphanage homes in Akwa Ibom State.

2. There is no significant relationship between limited resources in orphanage homes and its effect on the child's personality development.
3. There is no significant relationship between overcrowding in orphanage homes in Akwa Ibom State and children's personality development.

Significance of the Study

This study on Orphanage Home and Child's Personality Development: A Case Study of Selected Orphanage Homes in Akwa Ibom State is of importance in diverse ways including;

- i. This study will be an insight to the general public on the impact of orphanage homes on a child's personality development.
- ii. The finding of the study is expected to guide policy makers on the measure to manages orphanage homes in thereby solving the problems face by children in orphanage, in Akwa Ibom State.
- iii. It will also educate us on the various social perceptions of orphanage homes and its effect on the personality development of the child.
- iv. It will be of relevance to other researchers and students.
- v. It will also add to the body of information already on this subject matter and become a reference document in the library for readers and other researchers on the topic.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is the selected orphanage homes Akwa Ibom State. Therefore, the study is centered on determining the impact of orphanage home on the child's personality development in the orphanage home in Akwa Ibom State. Children of Divine Home located at Atan Offot, Uyo, Anua Orphanage located at Anua Offot, Akwa Ibom Motherless Babies Home, Mfon Abasi Orphanage, St. Joseph Orphanage and Mbiaobong Orphanage. Hand Maids of Child Jesus located at Ifuho, Daughters' of Divine Love at Ikpe Ikot Nkon, Holy Innocent's Home which is located at Abak, Goodnews Motherless Home, Gospel Village, Abak, Motherless Babies Home, Idung Iniang, Eket,

Theoretical Explication of the Discourse

The study adopted the attachment theory. The theory was formulated by a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst named John Bowlby (1907–90). A British psychologist and the first attachment theorist. He described attachment as a “lasting psychological connectedness between human beings.” Bowlby was interested in understanding the anxiety and distress that children experience when separated from their primary caregivers”. Attachment theory to him, is a psychological and evolutionary theory concerning relationships between humans. This theory focuses on relationships and bonds (particularly long-term) between people, including those between a parent and child and between romantic partners. It is a psychological explanation for the emotional bonds and relationships between people.

This theory suggests that people are born with a need to forge bonds with caregivers as children. These early bonds may continue to have an influence on attachments throughout life. The most important tenet is that young children need to develop a relationship, with at least one primary caregiver, for their survival, and to develop healthy social and emotional

functioning. This theory is rooted in the ethnological notion that a newborn child is biologically programmed to seek proximity with caregivers, and this proximity-seeking behaviour is naturally selected. Through repeated attempts to seek physical and emotional closeness with a caregiver and the responses the child gets, the child develops an internal working model (IWM) that reflects the response of the caregiver to the child.

According to Bowlby, attachment provides a secure base from which the child can explore the environment, a haven of safety to which the child can return when he or she is afraid or fearful. Bowlby's colleague Mary Ainsworth identified that an important factor which determines whether a child will have a secure or insecure attachment is the degree of sensitivity shown by their caregiver. A sensitive caregiver responds socially to attempts to initiate social interaction, playfully to his attempts to initiate play. She picks the child up when he seems to wish it, and puts him down when he wants to explore. When he is distressed, she knows what degree of soothing he requires to comfort him – and she knows that sometimes a few words or a distraction will be all that is needed (Ainsworth et al, 1978).

Attachment in children is “a biological instinct in which proximity to an attachment figure is sought when the child senses or perceives threat or discomfort. Attachment also describes the function of availability, which is the degree to which the authoritative figure is responsive to the child's needs and shares communication with them. Childhood attachment can define characteristics that will shape the child's sense of self, their forms of emotion-regulation, and how they carry out relationships with others. Bowlby saw nurturance and responsiveness as the primary determinants of attachment. (Bowlby, 1980). Attachment theory has led to a new understanding of child development. Children develop different patterns of attachment based on experiences and interactions with their caregivers at a young age. Four different attachment classifications have been identified in children which are: secure attachment, anxious-ambivalent attachment, anxious-avoidant attachment, and disorganized attachment. Attachment theory has become the dominant theory used today in the study of infant and toddler behaviour and in the fields of infant mental health, treatment of children, and related fields.

This theory developed by John Bowlby (1969), suggests that early relationships with primary caregivers form the basis for future emotional and social development. In orphanage homes, inconsistent caregiving can lead to insecure attachments, adversely affecting a child's personality development, including their self-esteem, social skills, and emotional regulation (Zeanah et al., 2005). To address these issues, the theory recommends stable, nurturing caregiver relationships to foster secure attachments. This can be achieved through caregiver training, consistent caregiving practices, and creating smaller, family-like environments within orphanages.

Research Methodology.

Research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure (Kothari, 2012). In this study, the researcher employed descriptive survey research design. This

is due to the nature of the study whereby the opinions and views of respondents are sampled. The design described the characteristics of the population under study.

This research contains data of both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were generated from the administration of structured questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion while the secondary source of data include library, scholarly literature from texts, journals, official gazettes and reports. while the sample of the study strictly focus on the children and caregivers of orphanage homes in Akwa Ibom State. The researcher adopted Taro Yamane's formula to arrive at the sample size. Taro Yamane's formula provides a simple and efficient method of determining a statistically valid sample size, ensuring representativeness while accounting for potential errors in the population.

The formula for Taro Yamane is:

$$N = \frac{N}{1 + n(e)^2}$$

Where;

n = Sample size
N = Population of study
e = Level of significance (0.05)
1 = Constant

To determine the sample size

$$\begin{aligned} N &= \frac{2095}{1 + 2095(0.05)^2} \\ n &= \frac{2095}{1 + 2095(0.0025)} \\ n &= \frac{2095}{1 + 2095 \times 0.0025} \\ n &= \frac{2095}{5.24} \\ n &= 399.8 \\ \text{Approx.} &= 400 \\ N &= 400 \end{aligned}$$

Thus, the calculated sample size is approximately 400 participants, which will adequately represent the target population.

Sampling Technique

The researcher employed a multi stage sampling technique with stage one being the stratified random sampling and stage two involves the simple random sampling. This was to ensure the equal representation of both orphans and caregivers in the sample, to enhance the reliability and depth of the findings.

1. **Stratification:** The population was divided into two strata—orphans and caregivers. This stratification allows the study to capture the unique perspectives and experiences of each group.
2. **Random Selection:** From each stratum, participants were randomly selected. For the orphans, 360 individuals were randomly chosen, ensuring diverse representation in terms of age, gender, and other relevant characteristics. For caregivers, 40 individuals were randomly selected, ensuring that their perspectives were adequately captured in the sample.

This approach ensures that both strata are proportionately represented, enhancing the study's ability to generalize its findings across the diverse characteristics of the orphanage population. The stratified random sampling technique was chosen for its effectiveness in dealing with the heterogeneous population orphans and caregiver, where roles and characteristics differ significantly. By dividing the population into distinct strata, this method minimizes bias and allows for detailed analysis within and between groups, making it particularly suitable for educational and social research contexts. The combination of calculated sample size and stratified sampling technique ensures that the findings are credible, and reflective of the broader population dynamics within the orphanages in Akwa Ibom State.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher made use of primary and secondary data in carrying out the research. The primary source of data was the questionnaire which was distributed by the researcher to respondents.

Methods of Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, simple percentage and frequencies are used as statistical tools. Chi-square (X^2) test of independence was used to test the research hypotheses. Thus, the formula for calculating chi-square is:

$$X^2 = \frac{\sum (fo - fe)^2}{fe}$$

Where;

X^2	=	Calculated Value of Chi-square
fo	=	Observed Frequency
fe	=	Expected Frequency
\sum	=	Summation

The level of significance is put at 0.05

The degree of freedom is given as $(r-1)(c-1)$

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of Findings

This chapter focuses on the presentation, analysis, testing of hypotheses, and summary and discussion of the findings.

General Description of Data

Data are any numerical facts or information which can be measured or given a numerical qualification. This chapter focused on data presentation, analysis and discussion of findings. The result of the data gathered from the questionnaire administered were presented and analyzed below:

Table 1: Analysis of Questionnaire Administered

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Returned	392	98
Not returned	8	2
Total	400	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The table above indicates that out of 400 copies of questionnaire administered to respondents, 392 copies representing 98% were returned, while 8 copies representing 2% were not returned.

Testing of Hypotheses

The chi- square statistical method was used in testing the hypotheses. In calculating the chi-square, the level of significance is given as 0.05

The degree of freedom (df) is calculated as;
 $df = (R-1)(C-1)$

To calculate the chi square, the following formula is used;
$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$$

Where X^2 = chi square
fo = observed frequency
fe = expected frequency
 \sum = summation

The expected frequency is calculated as
$$E = \frac{\text{Row total} \times \text{column total}}{\text{Grand total}}$$

Rules of Decision

Where the calculated Chi-square value is less than critical table value, null hypothesis will be accepted and Alternative hypothesis rejected. Where the calculated Chi-square value is greater than the table values, Alternative hypothesis will be accepted while the null hypothesis will be rejected. The hypothesis tested in this study is hypothesis 1, II and III as obtained in chapter one of this research work. Data used for testing the hypotheses are obtained from the responses to the questionnaire distributed to the respondents.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between low self-esteem and personality development of children in the orphanage homes in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 2: Responses from Question 1 was used to test hypothesis one

Responses category	S/A	A	S/D	D	Total
Male	48	86	15	4	153
Female	106	119	8	6	239
Total	154	205	23	10	392

Source: Field survey, 2024.

To calculate for expected frequency

$$fe = \frac{\text{Row total} \times \text{Column total}}{\text{Grand total}}$$

$$\text{Cell a} = \frac{153 \times 154}{392} = 60.11$$

$$\text{Cell b} = \frac{153 \times 205}{392} = 80.01$$

$$\text{Cell c} = \frac{153 \times 23}{392} = 8.98$$

$$\text{Cell d} = \frac{153 \times 10}{392} = 3.90$$

$$\text{Cell e} = \frac{239 \times 154}{392} = 93.89$$

$$\text{Cell f} = \frac{239 \times 205}{392} = 124.99$$

$$\text{Cell g} = \frac{239 \times 23}{392} = 14.02$$

$$\text{Cell h} = \frac{239 \times 10}{392} = 6.10$$

Table 3: Chi-square Distribution Table

Cells	fo	fe	fo - fe	(fo - fe) ²	$\frac{(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$
A	48	60.11	-12.11	146.6	2.44
B	86	80.01	5.99	35.8	0.45
C	15	8.98	6.02	36.2	4.03
D	4	3.90	0.1	0.01	2.56
E	106	93.89	12.11	146.6	1.56
F	119	124.99	-5.99	-35.88	0.29
G	8	14.02	-6.02	-36.2	2.58
H	6	6.10	-0.1	0.01	1.64
					$\chi^2 = 15.55$

Degree of freedom	=	(R-1)(C-1)
	=	(2-1)(4-1)
	=	1 x 3
	=	3
The level of significance	=	0.05
Calculated value	=	15.55
Critical table value	=	7.82

Decision: Since the calculated chi-square value of 15.55 is greater than the critical table value of 7.82 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the Alternative hypotheses (H1) is accepted and the null hypothesis (HO) is therefore rejected. From the above, it is observed that there is a significant relationship between low self-esteem and personality development of children in the orphanage home.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between limited resources in orphanage homes and its effect on the Child's personality development

Table 4: Responses from Question 3 was used to test hypothesis Two

Responses category	S/A	A	S/D	D	Total
Male	12	17	41	83	153
Female	18	23	80	118	239
Total	30	40	121	201	392

Source: Field Survey, 2024

To calculate for expected frequency

Cell a	=	$\frac{153 \times 30}{392}$	=	11.71
Cell b	=	$\frac{153 \times 40}{392}$	=	15.61
Cell c	=	$\frac{153 \times 121}{392}$	=	47.23
Cell d	=	$\frac{153 \times 201}{392}$	=	78.45
Cell e	=	$\frac{239 \times 30}{392}$	=	18.29
Cell f	=	$\frac{239 \times 40}{392}$	=	24.39
Cell g	=	$\frac{239 \times 121}{392}$	=	73.77
Cell h	=	$\frac{239 \times 201}{392}$	=	71.94

Table 5: Chi-square Distribution Table

Cell	fo	fe	fo - fe	(fo - fe) ²	$\frac{(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$
A	12	11.71	0.29	0.08	6.83
B	17	15.61	1.39	1.93	0.12
C	41	47.23	-6.23	-38.81	0.82
D	83	78.45	4.55	20.70	0.26
E	18	18.29	-0.29	0.08	4.37
F	23	24.39	-1.39	1.93	0.08
G	80	73.77	6.23	38.81	0.53
H	118	71.94	46.06	2121.52	29.49
					$\chi^2 = 42.5$

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Degree of freedom} &= (R-1)(C-1) \\
 &= (2-1)(4-1) \\
 &= 1 \times 3 \\
 &= 3
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{The level of significance} = 0.05$$

$$\text{Calculated } \chi^2 \text{ value} = 42.5$$

$$\text{Critical table value} = 7.82$$

Decision: Since the calculated Chi-square value of 42.5 is greater than the critical table value of 7.82 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis (H₀) is therefore rejected and the Alternative hypotheses (H₁) is retained. From the above, it is observed that there is a significant relationship between limited resources in orphanage homes and thus affected the personality development of children in custody of the orphanages.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between overcrowding in orphanage homes in Akwa Ibom State and children's personality development.

Table 6: Responses from Question 6 was used to test hypothesis Three

Responses category	SA	A	S/D	D	Total
Male	11	19	53	70	153
Female	14	31	89	105	239
Total	25	50	142	175	392

$$\text{Cell a} = \frac{153 \times 25}{392} = 9.76$$

$$\text{Cell b} = \frac{153 \times 50}{392} = 19.51$$

$$\text{Cell c} = \frac{153 \times 142}{392} = 55.42$$

$$\text{Cell d} = \frac{153 \times 175}{392} = 68.30$$

$$\begin{aligned}
\text{Cell e} &= \frac{239 \times 25}{392} = 15.24 \\
\text{Cell f} &= \frac{239 \times 50}{392} = 30.48 \\
\text{Cell g} &= \frac{239 \times 142}{392} = 86.58 \\
\text{Cell h} &= \frac{239 \times 175}{392} = 106.70
\end{aligned}$$

Table 7: Chi-square Distribution Table

Cell	fo	fe	fo - fe	(fo - fe) ²	$\frac{(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$
A	11	9.76	1.24	1.54	0.16
B	19	19.51	-0.51	-0.26	0.01
C	53	55.42	-2.42	-5.86	0.11
D	70	68.30	1.7	2.89	0.04
E	14	15.24	-1.24	-1.54	0.10
F	31	30.48	0.52	0.27	8.86
G	89	86.58	2.42	5.86	0.07
H	105	106.70	-1.7	-2.89	0.03
					$\chi^2 = 9.38$

$$\begin{aligned}
\text{Degree of freedom} &= (R-1)(C-1) \\
&= (2-1)(4-1) \\
&= 1 \times 3 \\
&= 3 \\
\text{The level of significance} &= 0.05 \\
\text{Calculated } \chi^2 \text{ value} &= 9.38 \\
\text{Critical table value} &= 7.82
\end{aligned}$$

Decision: Since the calculated Chi-square value of 9.38 is greater than the critical table value of 7.82 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the Alternative hypothesis (H1) is retained and the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected.

From the above, it is observed that there is a significant relationship between overcrowding in orphanage homes in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one (1) was tested using question one (1) from the questionnaire and it showed that the orphanage home has an influence on the self-esteem and personality development of children. The question which was used in testing the hypothesis confirmed to this as majority of respondents representing 52.3% agreed. This finding is in concord with the writing of Kernis, (2003) which emphasizes that low self-esteem can lead to social withdrawal and difficulties in forming relationships. This aligns with the findings of the questionnaire, indicating that low self-esteem may impede children's ability to initiate and maintain friendships.

Hypothesis two (2) was tested using question (3) of the questionnaire. The questionnaire which was used in testing the hypothesis confirms that majority of respondents representing 51.2% disagree that the orphanage has enough resources to meet children's basic needs. This agrees with Berens and Nelson (2015) which highlighted how limited resources in institutional care settings can lead to reduced cognitive stimulation and fewer opportunities for skill development, directly influencing personality traits such as self-efficacy and resilience. This scholarly contribution therefore led to rejecting the null hypothesis and accepting the alternative which indicates a significant relationship between limited resources in orphanages and children's personality development.

Hypothesis three (3) was tested using question (16) of the questionnaire. It shows that majority of respondents representing 44.6% agreed and 36.2% strongly disagreed that the orphanage has enough caregivers to provide individual attention to each child. The finding is in support of Van IJzendoorn et al. (2011) conducted meta-analysis which shows that children in crowded institutions were more likely to experience cognitive delays and attachment disorders compared to those in family-based care or less crowded facilities. These findings suggest that overcrowding in the orphanage has significant impacts on children's development and well-being.

Conclusion

The study of orphanages in Akwa Ibom State, revealed the impact of institutional care on child personality development. While these homes provide essential services and a safety net for vulnerable children, the institutional environment also presents significant challenges to optimal personality development. The limited individual attention, restricted social interactions, potential for low self-esteem, and educational disadvantages can have profound and lasting effects on children's psychological, emotional, and social well-being.

However, it is crucial to recognize that orphanages play a vital role in the absence of alternative care options for many children in Akwa Ibom State. The solution lies not in abolishing these institutions but in improving their quality of care and working towards more family-based alternatives where possible. Efforts should be directed towards increasing the caregiver-to-child ratio, providing specialized training for staff in child psychology and development, and implementing programs that foster individual attention and emotional support. Educational support should be strengthened, with resources allocated to create enriching learning environments that can help bridge the gap between institutionalized children and their peers raised in family settings. Ultimately, the findings of this study call for a comprehensive review and reform of the orphanage system in Akwa Ibom State. Policymakers, child welfare organizations, and community leaders must collaborate to develop strategies that balance the immediate need for child care with the long-term goal of fostering healthy personality development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

- i. The government should put in place personalized care plan which would develop

individual attention strategies to address each child's unique needs and boost self-esteem.

- ii. Investment should be made on better staff training. The caregivers in the orphanage institution should be given specialized training which focuses on child psychology and development.
- iii. The government should improve orphanages conditions by increasing fund allocated for their maintenances o as to reduce overcrowding for proper personality development of the orphans in the government custody.

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