

Challenges and Problems faced by Orphans of Jammu and Kashmir: A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

Every individual is the indispensable unit of the society and every individual deserve equal opportunities to excel in their lives and live a virtuous life. Same are the orphans, the important unit of the society they also deserve to enjoy the equal opportunities as the normal children enjoy. But they have to face various problems the moment they become the orphan. Their journey becomes tough. If their near relatives are economically sound and can take care of the child then he/she remains within the family and they take care of his/her education and all other necessities but he/she still craves for the love and care of parents. But if the economic condition of the near ones is not good then these children are admitted to the orphanages which take care of all the needs including education, shelter, food, cloths etc. but it has been found that orphans face various social, economic, psychological, health problems in their journey of life. The orphans of Jammu and Kashmir in particular face many problems. The present study is focused on investigating the challenges and problems faced by the orphans of Jammu and Kashmir through a systematic literature review. The google scholar database was used for the literature search. PRISMA guidelines were followed in identification and screening of the papers. Total eight papers were included in this systematic review. The results revealed that orphans of Jammu and Kashmir face various challenges and problems.

Keywords: *Challenges, Problems, Orphans, Systematic review*

The children are the assets of a nation (Spohn, 1920). Well-developed and educated children of today are guarantee of nations progress. Every country gives paramount importance to the health and education of the children. National education policy 2020 also focuses on the holistic development (cognitive, physical and socio-emotional) of children. But the primary institute which plays an important role in the development of a child is his/her family (Bush & Peterson, 2008). Especially his/her parents. Parents play an important role in all round development of a child (Ceka & Murati, 2016; Lamb, 2011). They not only provide shelter and food to children but they love, care, socialize, make him/her aware about the world around him/her, give him/her language, morals, ethics, education etc for their better future. Therefore, the parent's role in development and upbringing of a child is paramount and undeniable. It is also thought that there is no

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alternative to the care and love of a parent and the impact it leaves on the life of child. But some children could not enjoy all of this due to mainly the death of the parents, these children are called the orphans. The accepted definition of an orphan is, a child who has lost both or single parents and is below 18 years of age. There are 3 crore orphans in India, being the country with highest number of orphans globally (Mohid, 2024; Prabhudesai, 2022). It is estimated that around the world one orphan die every second due to malnutrition (Mohid, 2024). Which means 15.8 million approximately die each year because of malnutrition only, think about the other causes. Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) has 215000 thousand orphans (Mohid, 2024). J&K is considered as the crown of India, notwithstanding the fact that after the freedom of India in 1947 and formulation of Pakistan as separate country Kashmir has become a reason of conflict. Kashmir is always symbolised as a place of conflict and turmoil. The insurgency and counter insurgency have taken heavy toll of lives. This has been the one of the major contributors to the increasing number of orphans in the valley.

These orphans do not enjoy the life as the normal children who have living parents and are staying with them do (Shulga et al., 2016). They face various challenges and problems in their life. Which affects their every aspect of life. However, orphanages have played an important role in providing the basic facilities which includes shelter, food, clothes and most importantly the education (Rather & Margoob, 2006). Notwithstanding the fact that orphans face many challenges and problems in orphanages also. To find out the challenges and problems faced by the orphans of Jammu and Kashmir this study is attempted. While searching the available literature it was found that various studies have been conducted on the orphans of Jammu & Kashmir. Mostly the studies were focused on the Kashmir division of the UT. However, a good number of studies have been conducted on the challenges, problems, issues of orphans of Jammu and Kashmir. But no systematic review was found on challenges faced by orphans of Jammu and Kashmir. The present study attempts to explore the challenges and problems experienced by orphans of Jammu and Kashmir through a systematic literature review.

Objective

- To find out the challenges and problems faced by the orphans of Jammu and Kashmir.

METHODOLOGY

Method

The present study is a systematic review and is conducted by following PRISMA guidelines. The Google scholar database is used for the literature search. The studies which were focused on studying the challenges and problems of orphans of Jammu and Kashmir were included in this paper. The search was conducted on 22 December 2025 on google scholar. To find out the relevant papers the keywords which were used in search were (Challenges OR Problems AND Orphans AND Jammu AND Kashmir). The first search yielded 3970 hits, after refining it was limited to 2280. Then the further screening is discussed in the proceeding headings.

Inclusion criteria

The studies which were included in the final review were screened for various criteria. The studies who fulfilled the objective of the present study were selected. The criteria on which studies were included in final systematic review are discussed below.

Study type

The studies which investigated the challenges or problems or issues of orphans who are living in Jammu and Kashmir were included. Those studies which were conducted on orphans but did not include challenges or problems were excluded. Similarly, studies investigating challenges or problems but outside Jammu & Kashmir were excluded. The studies who were available in open access mode were included.

Years of Publication

This systematic review included studies only conducted during the time period of 2015 to 2025. That means studies of last decade were included in the present review.

Language and Cultural Context

The present systematic review was also confined on the basis of language and geographical area. The studies conducted in English were included, studies in other languages were excluded. Similarly, the studies conducted on orphans of Jammu and Kashmir were included. The studies conducted outside the geographical area of Jammu and Kashmir were excluded.

Selection Procedure

The search for the present systematic review was conducted on the google scholar. Choosing google scholar as the single data bases is to avoid duplication and most of the papers on google scholar were open access. The search was conducted by using the keywords already mentioned above. The first search resulted in 3970 hits. The search was refined as per date from 2015 to 2025 which reduced the results to 2280. The studies conducted outside the selected timeframe was 1690. Then screening the studies further by tittle and abstract and the studies which were not investigating challenges or problems and studies which were conducted outsides J&K were 2156 studies, after excluding 124 studies were included for the final screening. Here studies which investigated challenges or problems but were not conducted on orphans were excluded which were 116 in number therefore, leaving eight studies for the final systematic review.

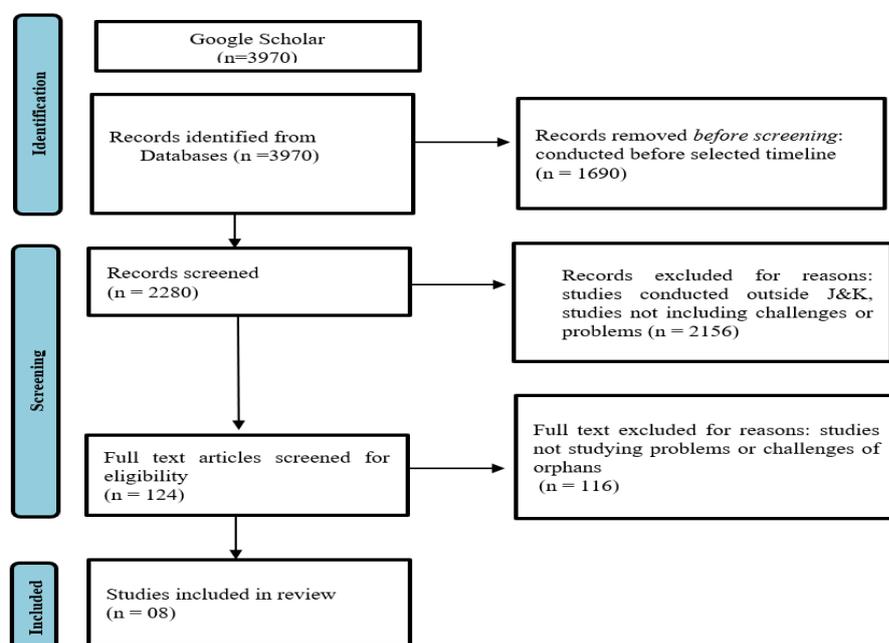


Fig 1 PRISMA flow Diagram

RESULTS**Results**

The papers which are included in the final analysis of the systematic review are presented in the Table-1. The study design used in these studies are discussed in detail and it was found that orphans face various challenges and problems inside and outside of orphanages. The challenges and problems reported in these studies are also discussed in detail. All the studies were conducted on the orphans of Jammu and Kashmir in the time period from 2015 to 2025.

Table 1. shows the authors, study design and the challenges and problems they have reported.

Authors (year)	Study Design	Challenges & Problems Reported
Ahmad & Rashid (2019)	Review	Accommodation Problems, Education Loss, Psychological Problems, Social Disorganization, Feeling of Insecurity, Health Deterioration, Total Dependence, Deviance.
Dar et al. (2016)	Cross sectional	Psychiatric morbidities
Hussain et al. (2017)	Cross-sectional descriptive study	Psychiatric morbidity, separation anxiety disorder, Depression, Obsessive compulsive disorder, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, specific phobias, social phobia
Hussain & Masoodi (2023)	Cross sectional	Mental health problems, PTSD, Separation Anxiety, panic disorder, Social Phobia, Conduct Disorder, Generalized Anxiety disorder, Dysthymia, suicidality
Irshad (2015)	Survey Method	Psychological Problems, Health Problems, Accommodation Problems, Educational problems
Lone & Ganesan (2016)	Survey Method	Nutritional, health, hygiene
Rashid et al. (2022)	Descriptive survey	Psychiatric morbidity, separation anxiety disorder, Depression, Obsessive compulsive disorder, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, specific phobias, social phobia.
Singh & Jha (2017)	Case study	Situational problems, lack of participation in activities, coping strategies, Rehabilitation problem

Study Design

After analyzing the selected studies, it was found that most of the studies were descriptive in nature. Among the eight studies three studies used survey method (Irshad, 2015; Lone & Ganesan, 2016; Rashid et al., 2022). Another three studies applied the cross-sectional method research (Dar et al., 2016; Hussain et al., 2017; Hussain & Masoodi, 2023). The one study was based on the review (Ahmad & Rashid, 2019), however none of them was systematic review. And one study (Singh & Jha, 2017) utilised the case study method of research to fulfil the objective of his study.

Challenges and Problems

The selected studies were thoroughly reviewed and after analysing the results of the studies meticulously various challenges and problems faced by the orphans of the Jammu and Kashmir came to forefront. All the studies included in this review were focused on investigating the challenges and problems of orphans. One of the important findings of this study is that among the eight studies included in the review seven were conducted on the Kashmir division. Which highlights that orphans are more in Kashmir division as compared to Jammu division. Only one study (Singh & Jha, 2017) was conducted on whole Jammu and Kashmir. The prominent problem which is faced by the orphans is psychological problem which was reported in six studies (Ahmad & Rashid, 2019; Dar et al., 2016; Hussain et al., 2017; Hussain & Masoodi, 2023; Irshad, 2015; Rashid et al., 2022). Various disorders (obsessive compulsive disorder, separation anxiety disorder, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, PTSD, panic disorder, conduct disorder, generalized anxiety disorder) were reported in two studies (Hussain et al., 2017; Hussain & Masoodi, 2023). Health problem was another problem prevalent among orphans which was reported by three studies (Ahmad & Rashid, 2019; Irshad, 2015; Lone & Ganesan, 2016). Another problem which was common among orphans was anxiety, it was reported in three studies (Hussain et al., 2017; Hussain & Masoodi, 2023; Rashid et al., 2022). The three studies (Ahmad & Rashid, 2019; Irshad, 2015; Singh & Jha, 2017) reported that orphans also face shelter problems. It was reported by the two studies (Ahmad & Rashid, 2019; Irshad, 2015) that orphans also encounter various education problems. Stress and depression problems were also reported by two studies (Hussain et al., 2017; Rashid et al., 2022). Another problem which found among the orphans was psychiatric morbidity reported by two studies (Dar et al., 2016; Hussain et al., 2017). Orphans were also found having phobias like social phobia and specific phobias. There were various other problems and challenges which were reported by one or another study which include social disorganization, feeling of insecurity, total dependence, deviance, dysthymia, suicidality, mental health problems, hygiene, Nutrition, regression, fatigue, situational problems, lack of participation in activities and coping strategies.

CONCLUSION

The current systematic review meticulously analyzed the studies included in this literature review to explore the challenges and problems faced by the orphans of the Jammu and Kashmir. The findings of the study revealed that orphans indeed face various challenges and problems. The literature was found highly peaked on the Kashmir division, as seven among eight studies were conducted on the orphans of the Kashmir. This fact highlights that Kashmir division has the more orphans as compared to Jammu division and also face more challenges and problems. It could be also concluded that orphans of Kashmir division are more miserable compared to the Jammu division. Another factor that could be associated with this is that Kashmir is the conflict prone division and the turmoil over there is taking the toll of the orphans and making their lives harder and also increasing their number. It could also be inferred that more orphanages are in Kashmir division as most of the studies were conducted on the orphans residing in orphanages.

The most common problem reported in the selected literature was psychological problem. This means that there is less focus on the well-being of the orphans. There is lack of well-being interventions in the orphanages in particular. With psychological problems various disorders were also found among the orphans. They are not enjoying the environment in which they are being brought up. Therefore, psychological well-being interventions are the need of the hour. Orphans also face educational problems, which could be associated to

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economic problems as many orphans have to earn for themselves if they not institutionalized. They are also facing shelter and health problems. Which means that there is not much focus on the orphans in this region. The problems are huge in number even after being put in an orphanage orphans witness various problems. This means they are not being provided the good facilities and care. The inference we get from this is that no doubt how much facilities and alternative care we provide there is nothing parallel to the love and care of parents. The problem and challenges faced by them endorses they are longing for the love and belongingness. Keeping in view the challenges and problems faced by the orphans in Kashmir there is immediate need of psychological well-being intervention and tangible efforts by the government for betterment of the orphans in Jammu and Kashmir.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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