



A Grounded Theory Approach to Proposing an Intervention for Rehabilitating Street Children in Pakistan: A Focus on Mental Health

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Abstract

This study examines the complex social processes underpinning the rehabilitation of street children in Pakistan, with a particular focus on mental health. Using a Constructivist Grounded Theory methodology, data were collected through in-depth interviews with a diverse group of stakeholders, including street children, their parents, police officers, child welfare officials, schoolteachers, NGO representatives, and members of the public in Pakistan. The interview schedules were developed from existing literature, refined through theoretical sampling, and translated using Brislin's back-translation method to ensure cultural and linguistic accuracy. The resulting analysis followed Charmaz's integrative coding approach, progressing from open coding to focused and theoretical coding. The findings culminated in the development of the **Theory of Multidimensional Framework for Understanding and Supporting Street Children**. This framework highlights three interconnected dimensions: (1) resilience, vulnerability, and child welfare perspectives; (2) societal and institutional influences on child welfare; and (3) culturally responsive and sustainable interventions. The study reveals that the needs of street children extend beyond immediate concerns such as shelter and food, encompassing long-term educational, psychological, legal, and social support. Importantly, the results underscore the significance of collaborative action among government bodies, welfare agencies, NGOs, educational institutions, and communities. By centring the voices of street children and other key stakeholders, this research provides an evidence-based foundation for policy development and intervention design. The multidimensional framework offers a holistic, adaptable, and culturally sensitive model capable of guiding sustainable change and improving the well-being of one of Pakistan's most underserved populations, with implications for other developing countries.

Keywords: Street Children, Constructivist Grounded Theory, Rehabilitation Intervention, Pakistan, Child Welfare