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PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS AMONG CHILDREN LIVING IN ORPHANAGES -
EXPERIENCE FROM KASHMIR

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Introduction: In the conflict torn developing countries, where adoption and foster care are little practised, orphanages remain one of the few means of survival of innumerable orphans. Critical research, however, has portrayed orphanages as a breeding ground for psychopathology.

Objectives: This study was taken up to examine this opinion.

Methods: An orphanage for girls in Srinagar was surveyed by Psychiatrists, and using DSM IV guidelines screened children were evaluated for psychopathology.

Results: Children were in the age group of 5-12 yrs. PTSD was the commonest psychiatric disorders (40.62%), easily attributable to the prevailing mass trauma state of almost two decades. Next commonest diagnoses were MDD (25%) and conversion disorder (12.5%).

Conclusions: A high psychopathology in orphanages could be an important guide for policy makers to plan for better rehabilitation and social reintegration of orphans.