

Survival Strategies of Street Children Using the Urban Space: A Case Study at Sealdah Railway Station Area, Kolkata, West Bengal, India

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Abstract : Developing countries are facing many Social problems. In India, too there are several such problems. The problem of street children is one of them. No country or city anywhere in the world today is without the presence of street children, but the problem is most acute in developing countries. Thousands of street children can be seen in our populous cities like Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi, and Chennai. Most of them are in the age group of 5-15 years. The number of street children is increasing gradually. Poverty, unemployment, rapid urbanization, rural-urban migrations are the root causes of street children. Being deprived from many of their, they have escaped to the street as a safe place for living. Street children always related with the urban spaces in the developing world and it represents a sad outcome of the rapid urbanization process. After coming to the streets, these children have to cope with the new situation every day. They also adopt or develop many complex survival strategies and a variety of different informal or even illegal activities in public space and form supportive social networks in order to survive in street life. Street children use the different suitable urban spaces as their earning, living, entertaining spot. Therefore, the livelihoods of young people on the street should analyze in relation to the spaces they use, as well as their age and length of stay on the streets. This paper tries to explore the livelihood strategies and coping situation of street children in Sealdah station area. One hundred seventy-five street living children are included in the study living in and around the railway station.

Keywords : strategies, street children, survive, urban-space

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