

Original Paper

Analysis of Social Support Network for Orphaned and Disabled Children

—Taking Tashan Love Home Welfare Home as an Example

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Abstract

The social support of orphans and disabled children is very important for the harmonious development of society. In order to meet their diverse needs welfare homes should integrate social relations and resources while providing social support to improve their welfare security level. Based on the perspective of social support, this paper discusses the support of orphans and disabled children in Tashan "Love Home" welfare home. By defining the needs of orphans and disabled children and the subjects and types of social support, this paper analyzes the problems of enterprises, families and social workers in the current support system, and puts forward some countermeasures to strengthen departmental cooperation, enhance material support and promote the improvement of the work force, so as to improve the social well-being and personalized development of orphans and disabled children.

Keywords

Orphans and disabled children, Social support, Welfare home, Social well-being

1. Theoretical Analysis and Frame Diagram

1.1 Theoretical Basis

The concept of social support originated from social etiology in 1970s. Social support can buffer pressure, cultivate individuals' adaptability, and help individuals to adopt positive strategies to cope with adversity (Shumaker & Sally, 1984). A strong social support network helps to establish solid interpersonal relationships and overall mental health (Dada, 2020). Social support plays an important

role in promoting the overall well-being and resilience in all areas of life. At present, the concept of social support is often classified and understood from different dimensions. The following is a typical division of social support in academic circles.

In terms of structure and function, structural social support refers to the organizational connection between individuals and others, which can be measured by the scale of social network, the composition of network, the frequency of contact with network members and the diversity of the relationship between individuals and network members. Functional social support focuses on the actual exchange of support in these networks, emphasizing the type and quality of support provided (Tengku Mohd, 2019).

In terms of classification, the most frequently cited types of social support in current academic circles are instrumental support, information support and emotional support (Cohen et al., 1985). Instrumental support includes tangible help, information support includes knowledge, facts, suggestions or feedback information, and emotional support refers to the expression of empathy, understanding and care.

In terms of function division, Shumaker and Sally (1984) divided the functions of social support into two categories: one is the health maintenance function of social support, which includes the satisfaction of ancillary needs, the maintenance and enhancement of self-identity and the improvement of self-esteem; The second is the decompression function of social support, including cognitive evaluation, cognitive adaptation and social support and coping.

On the source division, it can be divided into formal social support and informal social support. Formal social support refers to the material and spiritual assistance provided by formal organizations according to relevant policies or laws, including the government, communities, institutions and social organizations; Informal social support refers to the help provided by informal organizations or individuals, including family, relatives, neighbors and friends (Hihet & Nicole, 2002).

1.2 Literature Review

At present, the main research areas of social support for orphans and disabled children include the following aspects:

1.2.1 Research on Material and Social Psychological Support

Focus on the adequacy and effectiveness of social psychological and material services provided by welfare homes for orphans and disabled children; At the same time, the effect of psychosocial intervention measures to strengthen the mental health and overall well-being of these children has also attracted much attention (Disassa & Getachew Abeshu, 2021). The social support stress buffer model proposed by House (1980) provides a basic framework for understanding the influence of social support on the psychological resilience of orphans and disabled children, and is a classic example to explore the relationship between social support and social mental health.

1.2.2 Education and Medical Support Research

Research shows that children with disabilities encounter obstacles in accessing basic health services and educational opportunities compared with their peers without disabilities (Zajacova & Anna, 2018). It has become the focus of research to evaluate the existing policies, systems and support measures

aimed at improving the health and educational environment of children with disabilities and create an environment conducive to their all-round development and well-being.

1.2.3 Family and Community Support Research

Research shows that the family structure composed of parents and guardians is the main source of emotional, economic and practical assistance for orphans and disabled children (Berger & Fonts, 2015). In addition, the community helps to create a nurturing environment for orphans and disabled children by providing additional support and resources, including guidance, access to education and entertainment opportunities (Bedell, Coster, Law, et al., 2013). By cultivating strong family and community ties, orphans and disabled children's adaptability and sense of belonging are enhanced.

1.3 Frame Diagram of Case Analysis

From the perspective of overall development practice, Tashan "Love Home" welfare home can be used as an independent social support subject to provide emotional, information and tool assistance to orphans and disabled children; At the same time, as an intermediary platform for the construction of social support network, it plays an active role in coordinating and integrating social relations and social resources for orphans and disabled children, including governments at all levels, communities, social organizations, social workers, families, neighbors, relatives and friends. The "Home of Love" welfare home has built a social support system for orphans and disabled children with its own core platform, with multi-subject participation and various support measures in parallel, which can improve the attention and support of all social subjects to orphans and disabled children from multiple levels, meet the social psychological needs of orphans and disabled children, and enhance their social well-being and social adaptability.

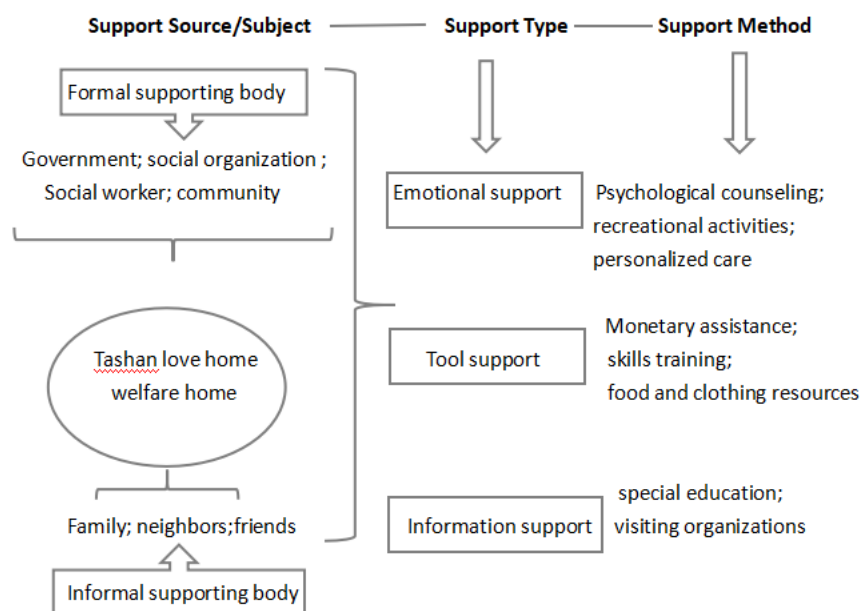


Figure 1. Social Support Framework for Orphaned and Disabled Children

Source: Made by the Author

2. The Research Design

2.1 Case Selection

This case selects Tashan "Home of Love" welfare home in Jiaocheng District, Ningde City, Fujian Province as the research case. As a non-profit unit, the "Home of Love" welfare home was officially incorporated by the government in 2020. Since the 1990s, it has helped more than 600 children. After nearly 30 years of hard work, most of the children have been adopted, and some of them have successfully graduated from college and taken up jobs. Now it has become a comprehensive child welfare institution integrating adoption, care, medical treatment, rehabilitation, education and resettlement. While providing support for orphans and disabled children in our hospital, it absorbs multi-level and multi-type support resources from local governments, enterprises, foundations, families, villagers and social volunteers, and has formed a clear social support network for orphans and disabled children, so the selection of cases is typical.

2.2 Data Sources

This case is supported by abundant data. The first-hand data include: in-depth interviews with Dean Xu, parents of orphans and disabled children, staff of the Home of Love and orphans and disabled children for several times, and audio recording. The recording time is about 16 hours, and the recorded words are about 100,000 words. Second-hand data include: Baidu news information and more than 40 media reports.

2.3 Research Methods

This case adopts the methods of literature research and case study. At the beginning of the research, we did a lot of literature reading and combing, obtained English literature through Google Scholar, web of science and other channels, and obtained Chinese literature through China HowNet and Wanfang Database. Based on the snowball-style literature search method, select the highly cited excellent literature in authoritative journals in the fields of orphan and disabled children's rearing and social support to read, sort out and summarize the theories in the literature, clarify the current theoretical development status, and dig out the limitations and research gaps of the existing research, so as to lay a solid foundation for theoretical extension. Based on the case study method, this paper studies the social support of orphans and disabled children in welfare homes in the development stage, and comprehensively considers multi-source data to obtain detailed and multi-dimensional first-hand and second-hand data, so as to improve the data richness and credibility.

Based on the coding idea of exploratory research method, this paper is coded by several researchers. The specific coded data are as follows.

Table 1. Classification of Data Coding

Data source	Data classification		Number
First hand data	Interview with leading group	Dean Xu	X1
	Interviews with team members	Migu	M1
		Yanggu	Y1
Second hand data	Interview with social caring people	Teacher Li	L1
	Related reports	media coverage	M2
		Government report	Z1
	policy paper	policy paper	Z2

3. Case Analysis

Orphans and disabled children face both physical and psychological growth needs. In order to meet the needs of this special group and improve social well-being, it is necessary to absorb external social resources to enhance the social support of orphans and disabled children while exerting the strength of the "love house". In this process, part of the needs of this special group have been basically met. However, despite the implementation of various types of support, we still need to pay attention to the shortcomings of the support system, improve the social support network system of this group, and cultivate a supportive environment with good development trend.

3.1 Demand Analysis of Orphans and Disabled Children

At present, the needs of orphans and disabled children are mainly developed from material and psychological aspects. To meet the basic material needs of orphans and disabled children, we should pay attention to their mental health and strengthen communication with such groups. Specifically, the orphans and disabled children in the current "Love Home" welfare home mainly face the following development needs.

3.1.1 Material Support Demand

Material needs include access to health care services, professional education, auxiliary facilities and equipment, as well as tailor-made suitable living environment and monetary support. In these aspects, welfare homes actively promote their own development. Since they were officially incorporated by the government in 2020, the replacement of welfare homes, the improvement of medical and health services, the renewal of welfare facilities, the promotion of special education, and the training of professional skills all reflect that the material support needs of orphans and disabled children are constantly being met.

Table 2. Analysis of Material Support Needs of Orphans and Disabled Children

Aggregation construction	Second-order theme	First-order concept	Typical evidence citation
The needs of orphans and disabled children	Material support demand	The demand of orphans and disabled children for auxiliary facilities and equipment	"Children will say, 'What age is it? Why can't we have mobile phones?' "(X1)
		The demand of orphans and disabled children for professional education	"Some of these unhealthy children are mentally ok, but there are some physical problems. He can't go to school during adolescence. He always wants to go to school." (X1)

3.1.2 Social Psychological Support Demand

According to SADC's classification of social welfare security framework, the demand for psychological support can be analyzed from three aspects: skills and knowledge demand, emotional and mental health demand and social welfare demand.

Table 3. Social Psychological Support Services (SADC, 2010)

Social psychological field		
Skills and knowledge (cognition)	and	Including problem solving, planning and decision-making, stress management, negotiation, self-confidence, the ability to use culturally appropriate coping mechanisms, and the ability to evaluate advantages related to needs.
Emotional and mental (individual)	and	Including self-awareness and self-worth, control of behavior, realistic belief, spiritual appreciation or belief in goals, independence, security and happiness, appreciation of others and hope for the future.
Social welfare (interpersonal)		Including relationships with family members and peer groups, developing social networks, belonging to the community, communication skills, social responsibility, sympathy and participation in social and cultural activities.

Table 4. Analysis of Social Psychological Support Needs of Orphans and Disabled Children

Aggregation construction	Second-order theme	First-order concept	Typical evidence citation
The needs of orphans and disabled children	Social psychological support demand	The needs of orphans and disabled children to complete their hobbies	"And what are his hobbies? For example, I want to learn to play the piano, I want to learn to dance, and I want to learn to be a group leader." (X1)

The demand of "So sometimes when children quarrel orphans and disabled with themselves, they will say,' Who children for care in was naughty and was beaten by their family of origin mother?' It makes me feel like being beaten by my mother is also a very happy thing." (X1)

(1) Skills and knowledge needs

Although intellectually the same as ordinary people, due to physical problems, some orphans and disabled children cannot enter school like normal children. In order to meet the needs of these children for skills and knowledge, the welfare home has established a "shelter factory" to provide orphans and disabled children with opportunities to make handicrafts and enhance their ability to solve problems and plan and make decisions; In addition, by tapping the potential and specialties of these children, we will carry out targeted special education for them.

(2) Emotional and mental health needs

Welfare homes actively rely on the strength of psychologists to communicate with children, understand the psychological state of orphans and disabled children in time, and provide them with psychological relief work to help them establish realistic beliefs and sense of self-worth; At the same time, Dean Xu will communicate with these special children once every two weeks to keep abreast of their current difficulties and inner needs and care for their mental health; In addition, orphans and disabled children have improved their sense of self-worth by selling handicrafts.

(3) Social welfare demand

Miao Yi, a student in the welfare home, is a blind child. While taking care of herself, she carefully observes the physical health of her younger brothers and sisters and takes the initiative to take care of them. Children who have graduated from welfare homes or become married often return to welfare homes to visit their homes, and Dean Xu has always kept these children's rooms to give them a sense of belonging. At the same time, Dean Xu actively promoted these children to play their own strengths to participate in social and cultural activities and strengthen their integration with society.

3.2 Analysis of Social Support Construction

The formal social support subjects involved in this case include the local government, such as the Civil Affairs Bureau; Social organizations, such as foundations and charitable organizations, social workers working in welfare homes, and communities where welfare homes are located; The subjects of informal social support include the public, neighbors, family and friends. As an independent social support subject, Tashan Love Home Welfare Institute also plays a unique role.

The types of social support can be divided into three categories: emotional support, information support and instrumental support. Emotional support refers to expressing sympathy, caring and accepting this person, which can take the form of sharing activities, such as talking regularly with orphans and

disabled children in welfare homes, eating and shopping together; Information support refers to providing knowledge, facts, suggestions or information about specific service needs to help individuals better understand the reality or make more informed decisions, such as providing targeted special education for children in welfare homes; House and colleagues (1988)⁰ called tangible and financial support instrumental support, in which tangible support refers to providing various kinds of help for orphans and disabled children in their daily activities, such as cooking, cleaning and shopping, and economic support refers to providing basic material support for orphans and disabled children through monetary assistance.

3.2.1 Social Support of the Welfare Home of Love

As an important social support subject, the welfare home of love plays a key role. It provides professional services, pays attention to training and improving the quality of staff, and introduces professional psychological counselors to provide psychological counseling for orphans and disabled children. For each child, welfare homes provide personalized care, formulate nursing and rehabilitation programs, and cooperate with medical institutions to provide basic medical services. In addition, the welfare home also organizes recreational activities to improve the quality of life and social skills of orphans and disabled children. As an intermediary and coordination platform, welfare homes have also promoted social support for orphans and disabled children.

Table 5. Social Support of Tashan Love Home Welfare Institute

Aggregation construction	Second-order theme	First-order concept	Typical evidence citation
Social Support of Tashan Love Home	Emotional support	Dean Xu talks with the children.	"I don't receive any guests on Sundays and Saturdays. Every child takes turns. If you need anything, if you have any questions, I will talk to you." (X1)
		Dean Xu gives companionship to adolescent children	"For example, the child is now in adolescence, especially abnormal, and we will accompany him. Take him to climb the mountain, or go out for a walk, or have a snack and talk with him in the street, so that he can tell his own problems or things. " (X1)
	Information support	Dean Xu's team took the children to visit the disabled factory.	"Take them (orphans and disabled children) to Tianjin, Hong Kong, Xiamen, and visit factories for the disabled." (X1)
		Dean Xu leads the	"Keep an eye on these factories. When you

	children back to see the Special Olympics.	come back, give him the film of the Special Olympics and let him see it." (X1)
	Dean Xu gives his children pocket money every month.	"We should give our children pocket money every month according to their needs and difficulties, and give them 5 yuan or 10 yuan every week. This is her private money." (X1)
Tool support	Dean Xu's team tapped the children's specialties and sent them to school in time.	"But we see that he has special sports potential, touches the ball well, swims well, plays badminton well, and skates well ... Seeing that he has this specialty, then we will send this piece to (learn) quickly." (X1)

3.2.2 The Formal Support of the Main Social Support

Formal support subjects provide important resource support in the growth of orphans and disabled children. In 2020, the welfare home was officially incorporated by the government, the identity of orphans and disabled children was legalized, and the work team and facilities were continuously improved; Secondly, with the support of various enterprises, other welfare homes and social charitable organizations, more resources are shared among orphans and disabled children, and their material life is richer; Thirdly, social workers provide professional rehabilitation and nursing support, and comfort orphans and disabled children with family-like daily care.

Table 6. Social Support of Formal Support Subjects

Aggregation construction	Second-order theme	First-order concept	Typical evidence citation
Social support of formal support subjects	Information support	Other institutions provide help for children in welfare homes.	"I have visited Japan and Hong Kong, and we have also learned. Later, when we visited other institutions, it also gave us a great help." (X1)
		Our Home provides rehabilitation help for children.	"The teacher of 'Our Home' taught us the method, and I gave my children rehabilitation. The progress of my children is more obvious than that of my own learning. I feel that learning from them is particularly beneficial." (Y1)
	Tool support	Professional rehabilitation institutions help	"Before, our side was not very professional, and there were fewer staff. The morning light side was willing to help, so the dean sent Jing Yong,

disabled children do training.	Xiaohui and Tian En to the morning light side to let them do training there. They are a professional rehabilitation institution there." (Y1)
The government provides legal residence, identity and policies for orphans and disabled children.	"The government helped us to legalize this place, legalize the house first, and then incorporate the children. Also give us all the good policies above." (X1)

3.2.3 Social Support from Informal Subjects

Informal support subjects also play an important supporting role. The daily help of neighbors and the public provides valuable emotional and tool support for orphans and disabled children; Some parents will also visit their children regularly to make up for their children's emotional lack of family of origin; The interaction formed in school provides important instrumental and emotional care for orphans and disabled children; The help of orphans and disabled children has also become an important force of support.

Table 7. Social Support of Informal Support Subjects

Aggregation construction	Second-order theme	First-order concept	Typical evidence citation
Social support of informal support subjects	Emotional support	College student volunteers provide companionship care for orphans and disabled children.	"Many students come here to take our children for a walk outside, play with them and tell a story." (X1)
		Some children can be cared for by their mothers.	"We have a place where we can put her baby here. Mom can also come to see and do some responsibility. We also helped her. I think this is a very good thing." (X1)
		Neighbors and the public will provide some material help.	"Some people come with a bag of rice and a bag of oil. This kind of help is often there." (X1)
	Tool support	Volunteers provide some basic help for children.	"Of course, we sometimes have to take our children out to participate in activities, and we need volunteers to help coordinate cars, wheelchairs and other aspects. These aspects are very needed." (X1)

3.3 Analysis of Social Support Problems

Although orphans and disabled children in welfare homes have received various subjects and social support, their social support system is still not perfect and needs to be continuously optimized.

3.3.1 Weak Enterprise Support: The Material Support Channels are Single and Insufficient

At present, most of the material support for orphans and disabled children in welfare homes comes from government financial allocation, and the government lacks material subsidies for docking enterprises, and the material support of other support subjects is scattered. Although children working in sheltered factories can get some pocket money by selling handicrafts, due to the single product and limited output, they have not cooperated with outside enterprises at present and cannot get more material support. The weak material support makes some needs of orphans and disabled children unable to be met to a certain extent. Due to the lack of funds, it is difficult to achieve a "home of love" for every 18 children in the information age, and some children are dissatisfied with this.

3.3.2 Insufficient Family Support: Emotional Support Needs to be Improved

Due to long-term separation from family of origin, they may accept emotional neglect in the early stage, and may have more psychological problems, such as depression, anxiety and inferiority, compared with their peers; Although one of the characteristic operating modes of welfare homes is "family as a group", and family-like parenting mode is implemented to give orphans and disabled children family-like care, some children in the development period are still unwilling to communicate and choose to close their hearts, resulting in weak sense of self-worth and unstable realistic beliefs. At the same time, due to the special circumstances of orphans and disabled children, they may face social isolation and peer rejection when they get along with their peers, which further aggravates their emotional distress.

3.3.3 Social Workers are under Great Pressure: Tool Support Needs to be Supplemented Urgently

At present, the care of orphans and disabled children in welfare homes is divided into rehabilitation group, nursing group, education group, teenagers group and small family group, and each group has specific staff and job responsibilities. Some mentally retarded children lack basic living ability, so they should rely entirely on the nursing group. Some special orphans and disabled children with normal IQ but physical problems still need the assistance of the nursing group while receiving education. The nursing group has few staff and great work pressure, and often feels overwhelmed.

At the same time, the growth of orphans and disabled children puts a high demand on the professional skills and quality of social workers. At present, there are 38 workers in Tashan Love Home Welfare Home, only 5 people under 30 years old and 20 people over 50 years old, accounting for 52.63%. The care team for orphans and disabled children is not young enough, and some older social workers may lack special training in dealing with the unique needs of orphans and disabled children.

4. The Countermeasures of Social Support

Through social support from all walks of life, the physical and mental health of orphans and disabled children has been improved obviously. However, there are still some problems in the current social

support for orphans and disabled children. Perfecting the social support system is of great significance for the individualized development of orphans and disabled children and the promotion of social welfare. At present, the problems existing in social support for orphans and disabled children in Tashan "Love Home" welfare home include weak material support, emotional support still needs to be improved, insufficient social worker support resources and lack of enterprise support.

4.1 To Strengthen Departmental Collaboration

In order to improve the social support system for orphans and disabled children in Tashan "Love Home", local civil affairs departments should play a leading role, actively promote the establishment of departmental cooperation and linkage mechanism, do a good job in comprehensive coordination, cooperate with education, human resources and social security departments, public security organs and disabled persons' federations, actively promote the coordination of all relevant parties, and do a good job in welfare protection for special children.

4.2 To Enhance Material Support

The Ministry of Finance establishes a stable funding guarantee mechanism, arranges funds through financial allocations, lottery public welfare funds and other channels, strengthens special subsidies for welfare homes, donates funds and materials, implements charitable projects, and provides professional services to better improve the basic material security of orphans and disabled children; Under the leadership of the local government, we should absorb various social forces to participate in support, actively guide social capital investment, enhance docking subsidies for local enterprises, strengthen tax incentives for local enterprises, promote the docking between enterprises and welfare homes, and effectively promote the development of welfare homes.

4.3 To Promote the Improvement of the Work Force

As an independent supporter, Tashan "Home of Love" welfare home needs to give full play to the important role of supporting orphans and disabled children, take in and raise orphans in the society in time, and at the same time strengthen the construction of the work team. On the basis of integrating the existing employees, it will enrich the work force of the organization and promote the younger development of the work team through purchasing services and socialized employment. Improving the security level of nursing staff, social workers, medical staff and special education teachers is of great significance to the social support of institutional staff as well as orphans and disabled children.

5. Concluding Remarks

The welfare of orphans and disabled children is an important part of China's social security work, and it is of great significance to create a perfect social support system for orphans and disabled children to maintain their health and relieve their pressure. Under the support system and intermediary coordination of Tashan Love Home Welfare Institute, formal social support subjects including government, enterprises, social organizations and communities, and informal social support subjects including friends, neighbors and family members promote the individualized development of orphans

and disabled children through emotional support, tool support and information support, and meet their basic material and social psychological needs. At present, there are still many problems in social support for orphans and disabled children. In terms of support types, material support channels are single and weak, and emotional support needs to be improved. On the subject of support, social workers' support resources are insufficient and enterprises' support is insufficient. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen departmental cooperation, improve the material support for orphans and disabled children in welfare homes, and establish a perfect social support work team. On this basis, establish a perfect social support system for orphans and disabled children to promote their individualized growth and welfare development.

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