

Problems of Orphans in Basrah (The Study of Geography of Population)

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ABSTRACT

Orphanage is one of the worldwide phenomena that involves an investigation. Therefore, this study aims at identifying needs of orphans, the problems they suffer from i.e. economic, social, psychological and the risks of exacerbating those problems.

Keywords: orphans, psychiatric, social vulnerability.

INTRODUCTION

The loss of a father is a loss of human resources. It is natural that the poor situation of most orphaned children forces them to abandon childhood, take other routes, and integrate into the labor market despite their young age. They are then subjected to various forms of violence and abuse, such as beating and insulting, which leads them to isolation, aggression, and other incorrect behaviors. Thus orphans in Basra governorate face various problems directly or indirectly.

The Problem of the Study

The study aims at answering these questions:

- 1- What are the most important needs of orphans?
- 2- What are the most significant problems that orphans of Basrah suffer from?

The Hypotheses of the Study

- 1- There are important needs that should be provided for the orphans.
- 2- The orphans suffer from various problems (i.e. economic, social and psychological ones).

The Importance of the Study

It is significant to study the most important needs of orphans who are considered as the weakest social group. The study will also contribute in diagnosing the economic, social and the psychological problems that orphans suffer from.

Aims of the Study

The study aims to shed light on the problems that orphans of Basrah suffer from, know their needs and find solutions for them, and write recommendations that will contribute in solving the problem and ensuring the orphan's needs and requirements.

The Methodology

The study follows different approaches that include an analysis, a description and a quantitative method in which data are analyzed quantitatively.

Limits of the Study

The study includes the province of Basrah, which is located between two latitudes (-05, 29°--20, 31°) north and longitudes (-40, 46°--30, 48°). It is located in the south-eastern part of Iraq. It borders Iran to the East, Maysan and Dhi Qar governorates to the North and Northwest, Muthanna governorate to the West and the Arabian Gulf and Kuwait to the South. See map (1) .

The area of the governorate is (19070) cubic kilometers and constitutes (4.3%) of the area of Iraq amounting to (435052) cubic kilometers. It consists of (16) administrative units with (10) districts and (6) areas .See map (2) .

Before identifying the most prominent problems suffered by orphaned children, it is necessary to identify the most important necessary needs that an orphaned child has, namely :-

1- The Need for Love and Sympathy

Love and sympathy are one of the psychological needs that a child seeks to satisfy. A mutual balanced love between him and his parents, brothers or friends is a necessary need for his psychological health. If the child does not satisfy this need, he will suffer or feel that he is undesirable, maladjusted and psychic person. Thus, if he lost one of his parents or both of them, he would lose the source of real sympathy and love. When The prophet Mohammed (pbuh) saw orphans, he sat them near him, pitted them. He also said that the more a person pitted an orphan, the more he is rewarded by God.



Map 1. Location of Basra Governorate in Iraq

Source-Republic of Iraq, Ministry of Water Resources, General Authority for survey, administrative map of Iraq, authority Press, Baghdad, 2021.



Map 2. Administrative divisions of district boundaries in Basra governorate for the year 2022

Source-Republic of Iraq, Ministry of Water Resources, General Authority for Survey, map of Basra administrative governorate, demarcation Department, authority Press, Baghdad, 2021.

2-The Need for Control

Many orphaned children, who enjoy good treatment and kindness, show wrong behaviors. For instance they do anything as long as there is no accountability or deterrence. They are in dire need of continuous control and accountability on the part of those who support them. It is true that they are orphans. However, our treatment of them with kindness and compassion should not become a reason for them to feel that they are capable of taking any action they want, and that no one is expecting or holding them back. The Prophet (pbuh) said (Beware of orphans and treat them as you do with your children). In other words, you should fear God in them, and consider yourselves their parents. Thus their emotions and feelings will not be betrayed⁽¹⁾.

The most problems that orphans suffer from are:

First : Economic Problems

Poverty and need are one of the most problems that orphans suffer from. Firstly, they need a good health and medical services. Since many orphan's families lose their providers .i.e. father, they are unable to satisfy life needs. As a result, the orphan lives under restricted economic conditions. Hence these families urge their children to leave school and work. Furthermore, material deprivation influence their social relations. Then certain feelings grow towards other people such as jealousy, hostility and resentment. At the same time they will suffer inferiority feelings that will consequently provide a good environment for aggressive behaviors to occur because of the challenging economic conditions. However it is noticed that there were many orphan families that live under good economic conditions. Thus poverty rate differs from one community to another in Basra governorate due to the fact that orphans live under different conditions .i.e. income and the provider of family. Similarly it is undeniable that the rate of social solidarity is high in Basra although the aids are sometimes low. However, solidarity increases in certain occasions such as before school started, during Eids and in Ramadan.

As shown in Table (1) and Figure (1), It is clear that the number of orphans suffering from poverty has reached (716) orphans, i.e. a percentage of (84%) of the total orphans in Basra Governorate. Basra has the highest number of cases of poverty among orphans, amounting to (242) cases with a percentage (33.8%) of the total numbers of orphans that suffer from poverty in the governorate. However, Al-Sadiq District has the lowest number was for i.e. (14) cases of poverty among orphans, which represented a rate of (2%) of the total cases of poverty in Basra Governorate. On the other hand, the number of orphans who do not suffer from poverty is (138), i.e. (16%) of the total orphans in the governorate, which is a small percentage compared to the number of orphans who complain of poverty and destitution. There were no cases of poverty in each of these districts (Abu Al-Khasib, Fao, Al-Midaina, Al-Haritha, Dir, Al-Sadiq), whereas it increased in the districts of (Basra, Qurna) by (73, 57) cases of poverty, with a percentage of (52.9%, 41.3%) respectively out of the total orphans who do not suffer from poverty. See map (3)

At the level of administrative units, it is observed that poverty cases is increased in each of (Al-Midaina, Al-Haritha, Dir, Al-Sadiq) by (100%), Figure (2). On the other hand there are no orphans complaining of poverty and destitution in (Abu Al-Khasib, Fao, Al-Medina, Al-Haritha, Dir, Al-Sadiq). Rather it is limited to some administrative units. Zubair District recorded the highest percentage of (38.8%) of the total orphans who suffer from poverty in Basra Governorate, followed by Basra District with a percentage of (23.2%), Figure (2). This is due to the reason that these orphans have a source of monthly income, such as a place for rent, a simple property, or a salary of the deceased father. This in turn helps in providing a monthly resource for the orphan's family that helps him meet the necessary life necessities. Whereas we find orphans who complain of poverty and destitution do not have a monthly income, as a result of the deceased father being either unemployed or engaged in irregular (earning) work. In addition, cases of poverty and destitution increase when the mother does not work, especially with the existence of customs and traditions that prevent the widow from practicing work. Even if they were simple, it provides important resources for the family. The work of mothers, who are not employees in government departments, is often simple and can be done at home, such as (bakery, seamstress, barber), and with a few income. However, many mothers of orphans are prohibited from doing these jobs due to the customs and traditions of their families and society.

Table 1. Number and Percentage of Distribution of Orphans Living under Poverty, According to Administrative Units in Basra Governorate, 2022

Districts	Suffer	%	Not Suffer	%	At the level of administrative units	
					Suffer	Not Suffer
Basrah	242	33.8	73	52.9	77	23.2
Abu Al-	105	14.7		0.0	100	

Khaseeb						
Zubair	90	12.6	57	41.3	61	38.8
Qurna	82	11.5	5	3.6	94	5.7
Fao	26	3.6			100	
Shatt Al-Arab	21	2.9	3	2.2	88	12.5
Al-Midaina	54	7.5			100	
Al-Hartha	24	3.4			100	
Dir	58	8.1			100	
Al-Sadiq	14	2.0			100	
Total	716	100	138	100	84	16

Source - The work of the researcher that is based on the 2022 questionnaire .

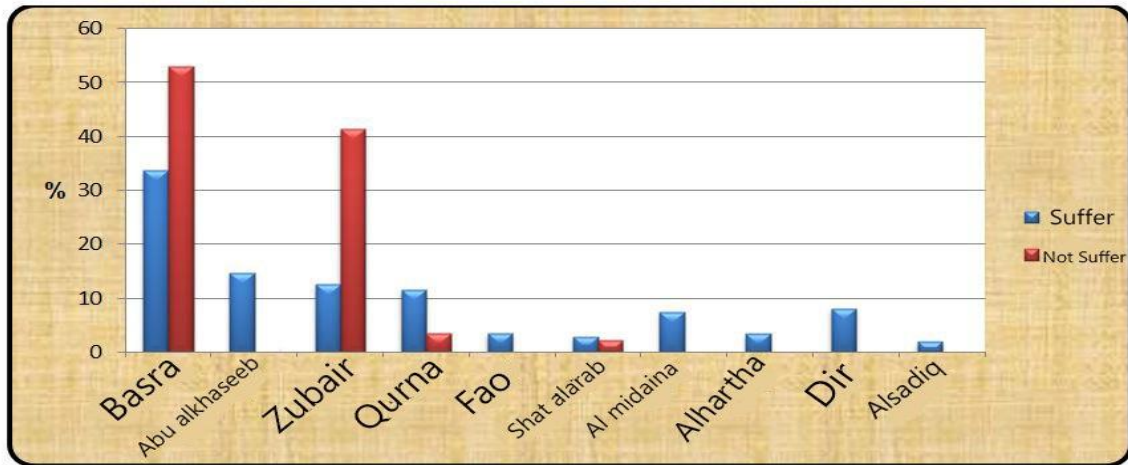
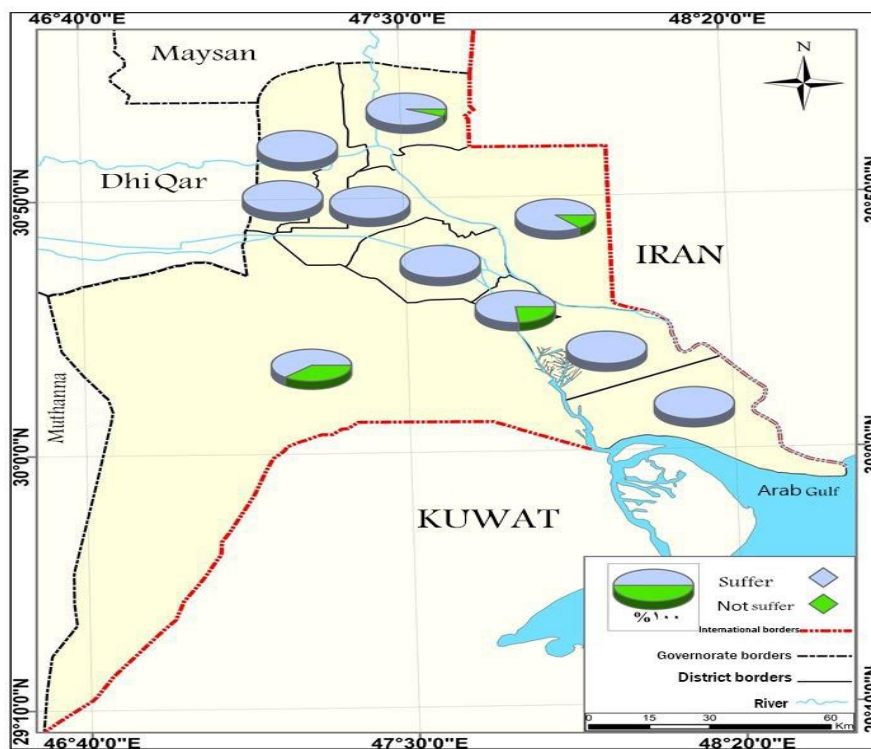


Figure 1. Percentage of Distribution of Orphans Suffering from Poverty according to Administrative Units in Basra Governorate for the Year 2022

Source - based on Table (1).



Map 3. Percentage Distribution of Orphans Suffering from Poverty according to Administrative Units in Basra Governorate for the year 2022

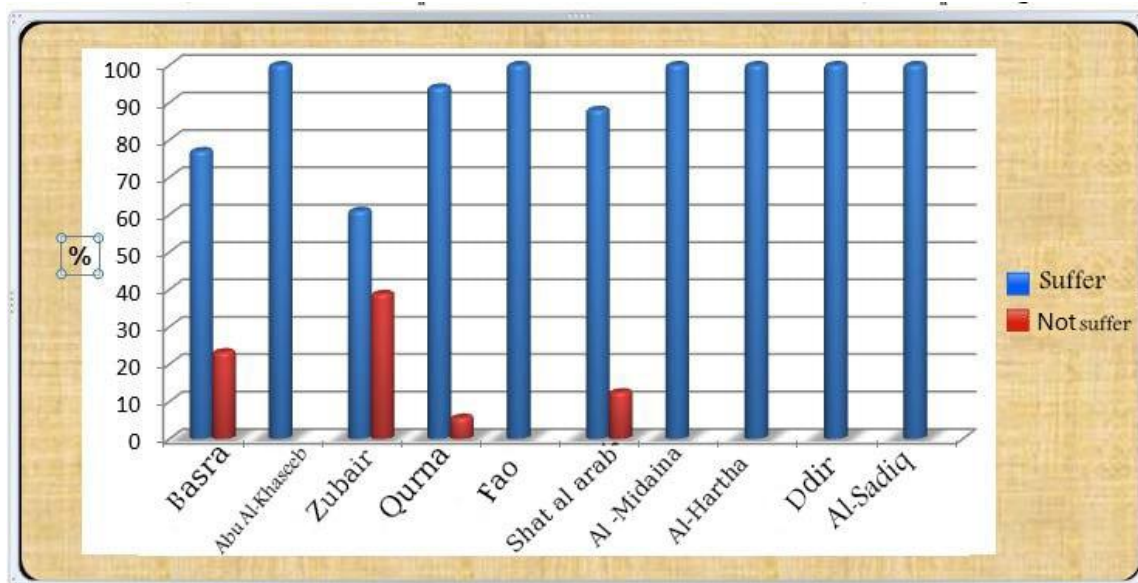


Figure 2. Percentage Distribution of Orphans Suffering from Poverty in Each district in Basra Governorate for the year 2022
Source - based on Table (1).

According to the Table (2), Figures (3-4), and Map (4), it became clear that the highest percentage was for orphan families receiving aid from religious institutions, amounting to (517) families (60.5%) of the total families of orphans in Basra Governorate. The highest number of assistance provided by religious institutions amounted to (192) families, at a rate of (37.1%), while the lowest amount was for Al-Hartha District, with a number of (14) families, at a rate of (2.7%) of the total assistance provided to the families of orphans by religious institutions in Basra Governorate. This shows the importance of the role played by these religious institutions in providing aid, especially to orphans who are continuing their studies, as well as gifts for orphans who excelled academically.

The aid provided to the families of non-relative orphans came in second place with a number of (218) families, representing (25.5%) of the total aid provided in Basra Governorate. Basra District had the highest number of (86) families, representing (39.4%) of the total families of orphans in the governorate. The lowest was for Al-Sadiq district, with (3) families, representing (1.4%) of the total families of orphans in the governorate.

Table 2. Numerical and Relative Distribution of orphan families according to the Aid they Receive in Basra Governorate for the Year 2022

Districts	Relatives		Non Relatives		Civil institutions		Religious institutions	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Basra	25	25.8	86	39.4	12	54.5	192	37.1
Abu Al-Khaseeb	5	5.2	21	9.6	---		79	15.3
Zubair	42	43.3	64	29.4	10	45.5	31	6.2
Qurna	7	7.2	12	5.5	0		68	13.2
Fao	1	1.0	7	3.2	0		18	3.5
Shatt Al-Arab	5	5.2	4	1.8	0		15	2.9
Al-Midaina	3	3.1	9	4.1	0		42	8.1
Al-Hartha	5	5.2	5	2.3	0		14	2.7
Dir	2	2.1	7	3.2	0		49	9.5
Al-Sadiq	2	2.1	3	1.4	0		9	1.7
Total	97	100	218	100		100	517	100
%	11.4		25.5				60.5	

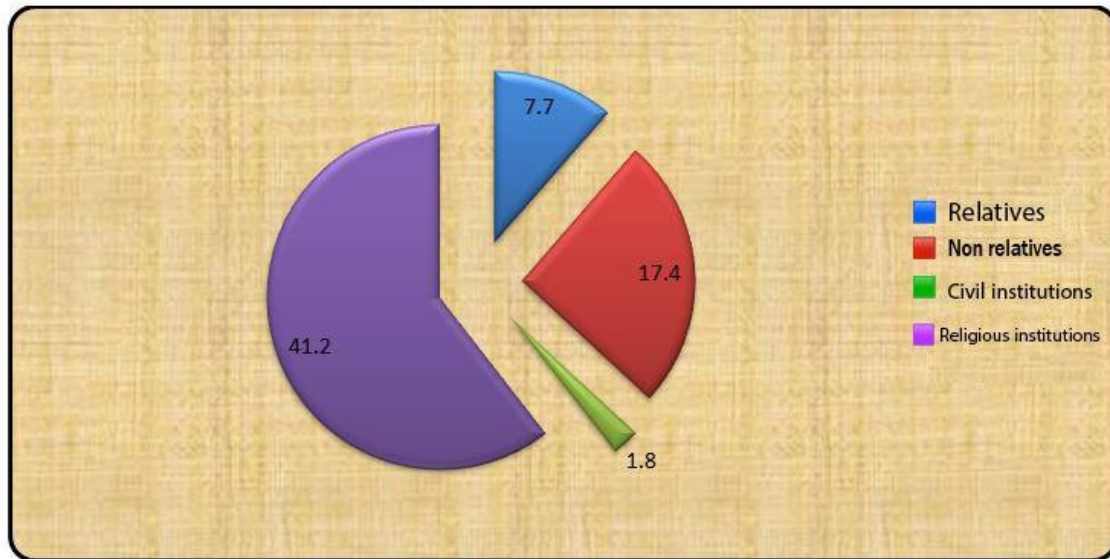


Figure 3. Percentage Distribution of Orphan Families according to the Aid they Receive in Basra Governorate for the year 2022
Source - based on Table (2).

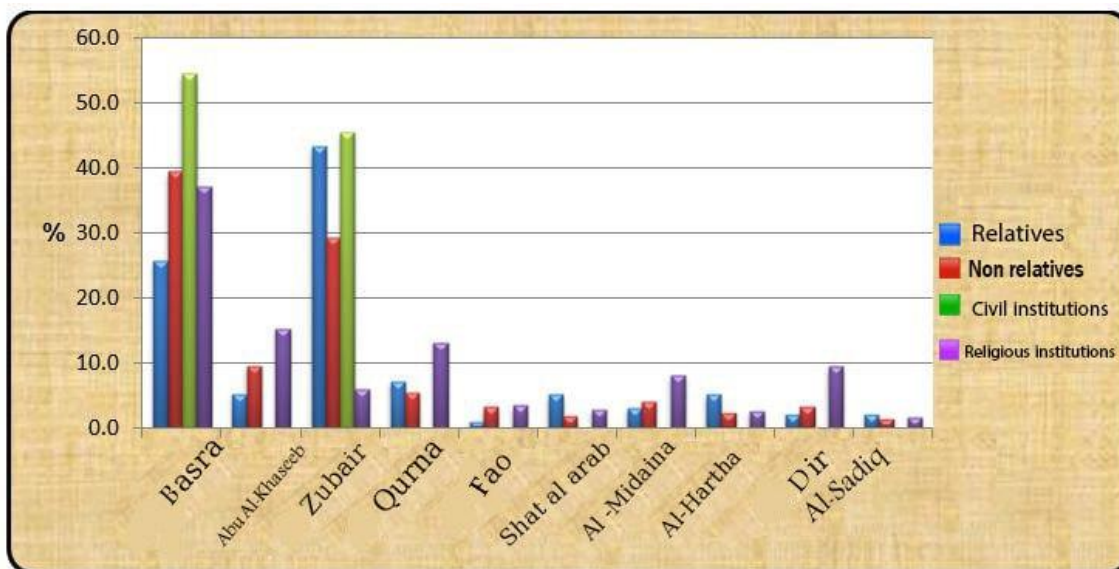
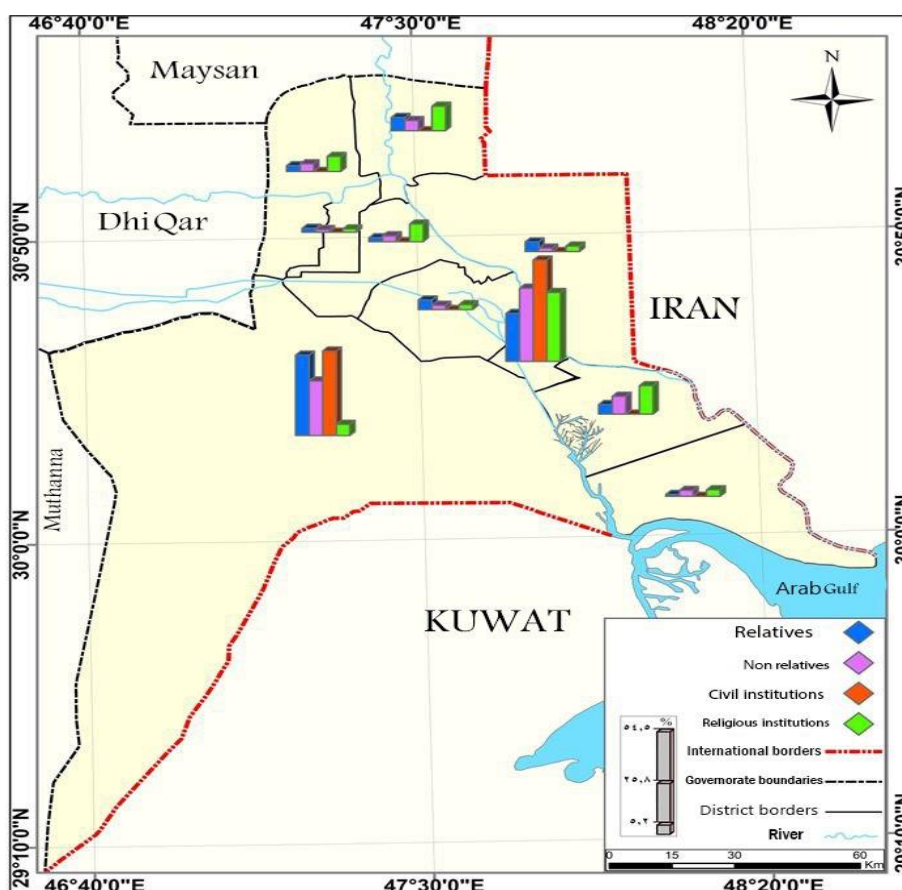


Figure 4. Percentage distribution of orphan families according to the aid they receive by administrative units in Basra Governorate for the year 2022
Source - based on Table (2).

The assistance provided by relatives came as the third highest number, with 97 families accounting for 11.4% of the total assistance provided to orphaned families in Basra. This assistance varies from family to family, depending on the economic status of the parents or relatives of the orphans and their ability to provide assistance. Zubair district has the highest number of assistance provided by relatives, with 42 families, i.e 43.3% of the total assistance provided by relatives. Fao district has the lower number of assistance i.e. (1) aid and a percentage 1.1% .

The assistance provided by civil institutions estimates with 22 families i.e. 2.6% of the total aid in the governorate in which Basra and Zubair districts, took the task of helping orphans and widows.

Those institutions, through their specialized staff of specialists in psychological and educational specialties, and as for material assistance, they do not have much to offer, so what they are able to provide is limited to some assistance during the month of Ramadan or before the start of Eid.



Map 4. Percentage distribution of orphan families according to the aid they receive in Basra Governorate for the year 2022

Source - based on Table (2).

Second : Social Problems

The problems that arise from the environment surrounding the orphan cannot be denied especially when it has many effects. They lead him to behave wrongly. At the same time, the family, who lost its provider, bans some orphans from their simple rights such as playing, studying and urges them to enter into the labor market early. Then they begin carrying their families' burdens despite their young age. This has many consequences for instance psychological and intellectual conflicts that make him as a victim who is easily exploited by many ways. The most important problems that orphans suffer from are:

1- Abuse, Insult and Beat

The verbal abuse and insult are of forms of bad behavior that may cut the links of friendship or love⁽³⁾. Many orphaned children are exposed to rude words by the society or their counterparts in the school or street. This causes him/her to feel shy or humiliated. Some orphans working in certain professions are also subjected to abuse and inappropriate words that some vendors and motorists call them and which affect the future psychology of the orphan child⁽⁴⁾.

According to Table 3, Figures 4-5, and Map 5, Basra governorate has the highest number of orphans suffering from this social problem i.e. 49.7% of the total social problems in the governorate.

As for administrative units, their distribution has varied. Basra District has the highest number (195) of orphans, at 34% of the total number of orphans who complain of abuse, insult, and beat. The reason for this problem is that orphans do not have a guardian to take care of them, so they may become a burden on those who provide them with shelter and they may be treated harshly or orphans may misbehave and not obey orders. Beatings may be used as punishment for their behavior.

It was noted that boys are more likely to be beaten than girls because boys are more rebellious and disobedient to older men. In addition, there are many fights among them, making them susceptible to being beaten and for the sake of punishment and discipline. Meanwhile, the lowest number of beatings occurred in Al-Sadiq district, with 9 (1.6%) orphans, which were prominent in all the districts of the governorate in high percentages.

Table 3. The Numerical and Relative Distribution of Orphans according to Social Problems on the Administrative Units in Basra Governorate for the Year 2022

Districts	Abuse, insult, beat	%	Re-marriage of father or mother	%	Social Marginalization	%
Basrah	195	34.0	23	18.5	97	61.8
Abu- Al	86	15.0	12	9.7	7	4.5
Zubair	126	22.0	8	6.5	13	8.3
Qurna	45	7.9	32	25.8	10	6.4
Fao	20	3.5	2	1.6	4	2.5
Shatt Al-Arab	17	3.0	2	1.6	5	3.2
Al-Midaina	28	4.9	17	13.7	9	5.7
Hartha	17	3.0	5	4.0	2	1.3
Dir	30	5.2	21	16.9	7	4.5
Alsadiq	9	1.6	2	1.6	3	1.9
Total	573	100.0	124	100	157	100
%	49.7		10.7		13.6	

Source - the researcher based on the questionnaire for the year 2022.

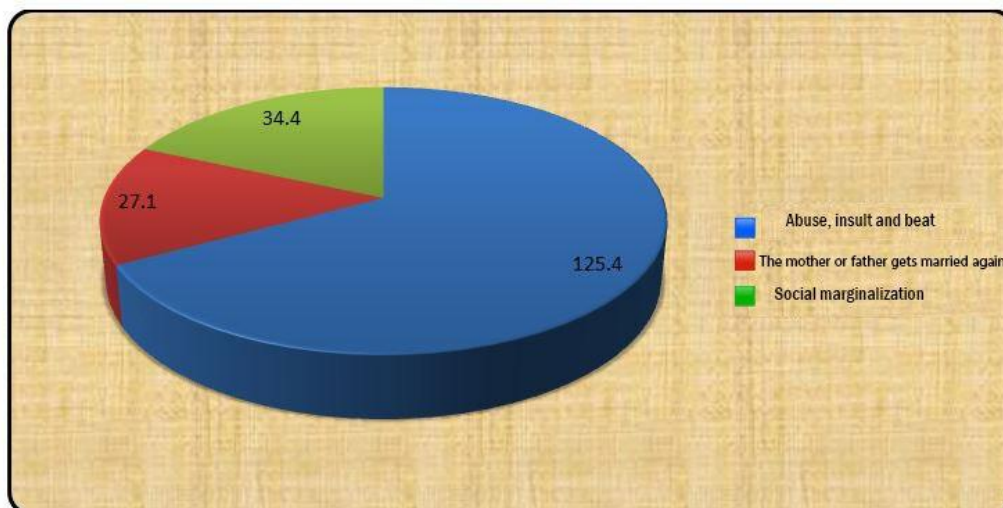


Figure 4. Numerical and Relative Distribution of Orphans according to Social problems in Basra Governorate for the year 2022
Source - based on Table (3).

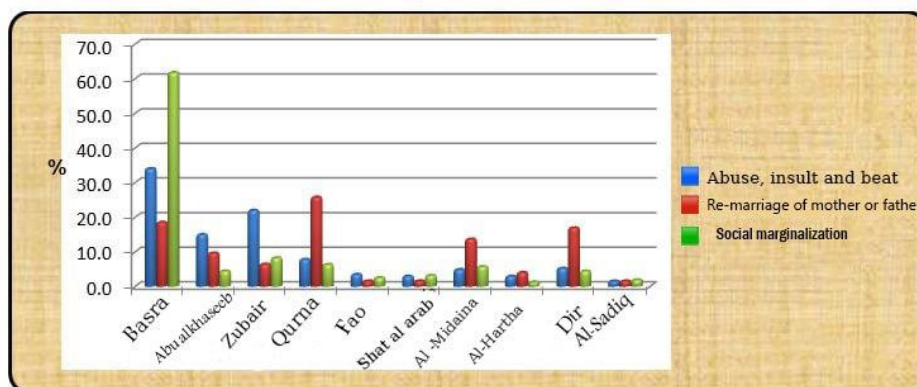
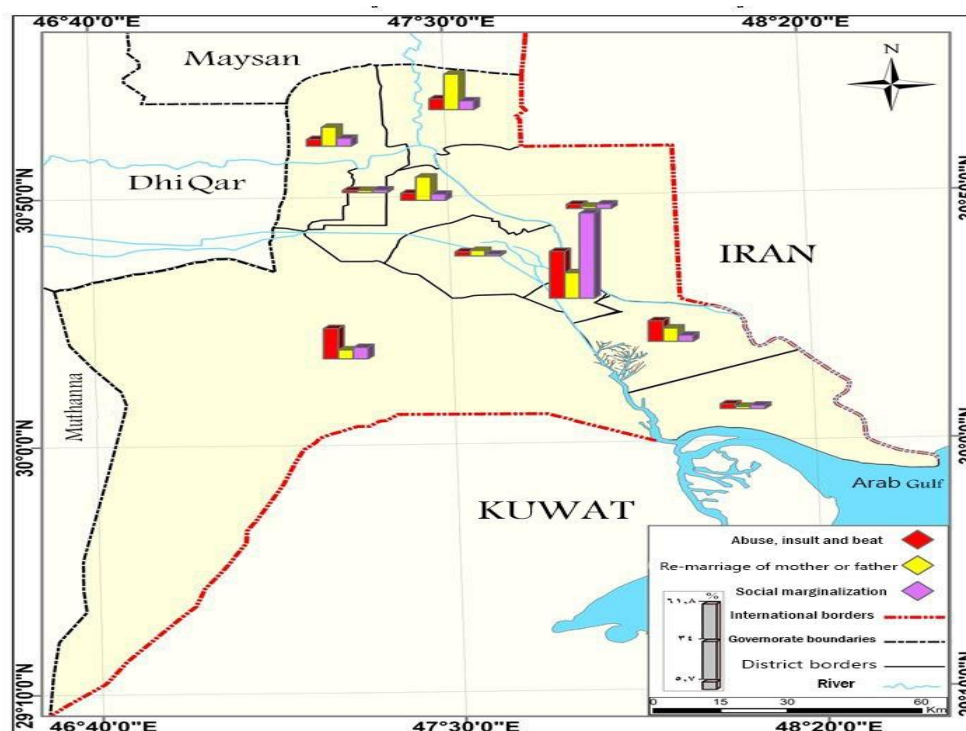


Figure 5. Numerical and relative distribution of orphans according to social problems across administrative units in Basra Governorate for the year 2022
Source - based on Table (3).

2- Remarriage of mother or father

Difficult living conditions sometimes urge orphans' mothers to remarriage in order to obtain support and ease the burdens of life. However, this marriage often results in family breakdowns resulting from fights between the stepfather and the children or from the harsh treatment followed by the stepfather. In the study sample, 124 orphans suffer from this social problem, achieving 10.7% of the total social problems faced by orphans in Basra governorate. The tendency to marry the relatives of the deceased is clear, especially from the brother's social norms, values, and customs, to maintain family ties and care for orphans. However, this problem is not often the result of violence against mothers as a result of other marriages.



Map 5. Numerical and relative distribution of orphans according to social problems in Basra Governorate for the year 2022

Consequently the child is unwilling to accept the presence of a person replacing his father. Then he/she becomes jealous and hatred. This will force many orphans to move to live with the family of his deceased father. The orphans are thus exposed to the loss of their mother, along with the loss of their father. This means that they lose tranquility and comfort due to living away from their mothers. The problem is then exacerbated for the child. Girls also complain of the ill-treatment of the stepmother, forcing her to leave school and attend to the house. On the other hand the girls, who continue studying, they face pressure i.e. especially those who are teenagers. Then they show some wrong behaviors, such as rebelling against school rules or teaching staff, in order to show that they are confident.

Al-Qurna district has the highest number of (32) remarriage cases, i.e. 25.8% of all remarriage cases in Basra governorate. Such cases are especially common in rural areas due to the prevailing customs and traditions, while in Fao, Shatt Al-Arab, and Al-Sadiq districts, this percentage has decreased by (1.6%), as compared to (2) Table (3) and Figure (35-36) .

3- The Social Vulnerability

It may also be called social exclusion. It is a form of disinterest and dispossession and it concentrates in the poor and marginalized group, as it suffers from being deprived of its most basic rights in society. Marginalization may be the result of family disintegration, the effects of which are sometimes reflected in an orphan's physiological structure and upbringing, which may show its future effects on the family that orphans form in their future.

From the data of Table 35, Figures 35-36, and Map 55, it was found that the problem of social marginalization suffered by 157 orphans from social problems, representing 13.6% of the total social problems in the governorate of Basra. Basra governorate had a number of 97 orphans, i.e. 61.8%. While Al-Sadiq and Dir had the lowest ratios of 3.2%, or 1.9%, or 1.3%, respectively.

The impact of marginalization is evident in the behavior of an orphan in terms of hostility and hatred, as a result of being marginalized by the family in which he lives or by society.

Third: Psychiatric

In addition, most of the illnesses that orphans suffer from are the result of a low level of economic status that the family has and its inability to provide quality and comprehensive food for children. This makes them susceptible to many diseases, especially those that are young, due to their lack of resistance and immunity. The psychiatric, that orphans suffer from, are numerous a :-

1- Anxiety, Stress and Depression

It is an emotive state of fear, anxiety, negative thinking, unease about the future, negative attitude towards life, hopelessness and lack of self-esteem⁽⁷⁾. They are exacerbated when teenager orphans feel stressed, who become constantly anxious, especially among students and during exams, leading them to fear and discomfort.

Table 4 and Figures 6-7 and Map 6 show that anxiety, stress, and depression are among the psychiatric that orphans suffer from, as 459 cases were recorded. i.e. 54% of the total psychiatric in Basra governorate. Zubair district had the highest number of anxiety and stress cases, 103 cases and 22.4%. While the lowest number of cases were found in Al-Hartha district, only 8 cases (1.7%) of the total anxiety, stress, and depression, a psychological condition characterized by sadness, lack of enjoyment of anything, poor concentration, and inability to sleep. Orphans reappear without resting, and depression is a result of anxiety and discomfort. Self-Relevance and Impaired Ability to Establish Relationships with Others⁽⁸⁾.

Table 4. Numerical and relative distribution of orphans' psychological problems according to administrative units in Basra Governorate for the year 2022.

Districts	Anxiety, Stress and Depression	Psychological Isolation	Jealousy			
Basrah	99	21.6	154	52.6	62	60.8
Abu Al-Khaseeb	83	18.1	17	5.8	5	4.9
Zubair	103	22.4	31	10.6	13	12.7
Al-Qurna	70	15.3	17	5.8		0.0
Fao	12	2.6	11	3.8	3	2.9
Shatt Al-Arab	15	3.3	7	2.4	2	2.0
Al-Midaina	32	7.0	13	4.4	9	8.8
Al-Hartha	8	1.7	13	4.4	3	2.9
Dir	28	6.1	25	8.5	5	4.9
Al-Sadiq	9	2.0	5	1.7		0.0
Total	459	100	293	100	102	100
%	34.5		27.8		9.7	

Source - Worked by the researcher based on the questionnaire form for the year 2022.

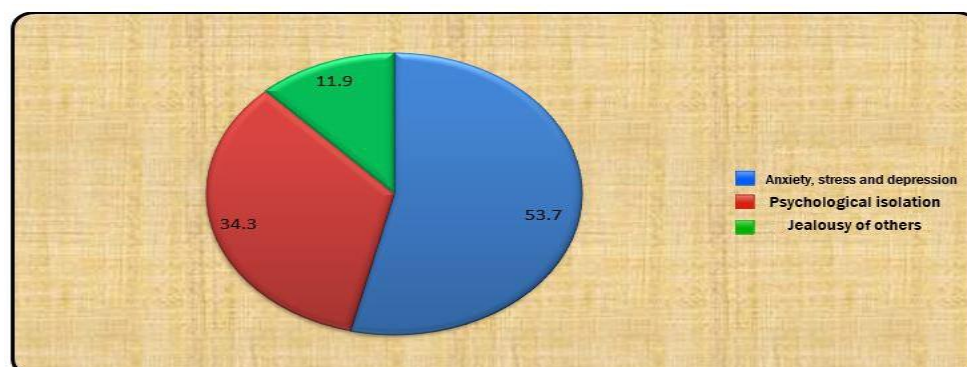


Figure 6. Percentage distribution of orphans' psychological problems in Basra Governorate for the year 2022

Source - based on Table (4).

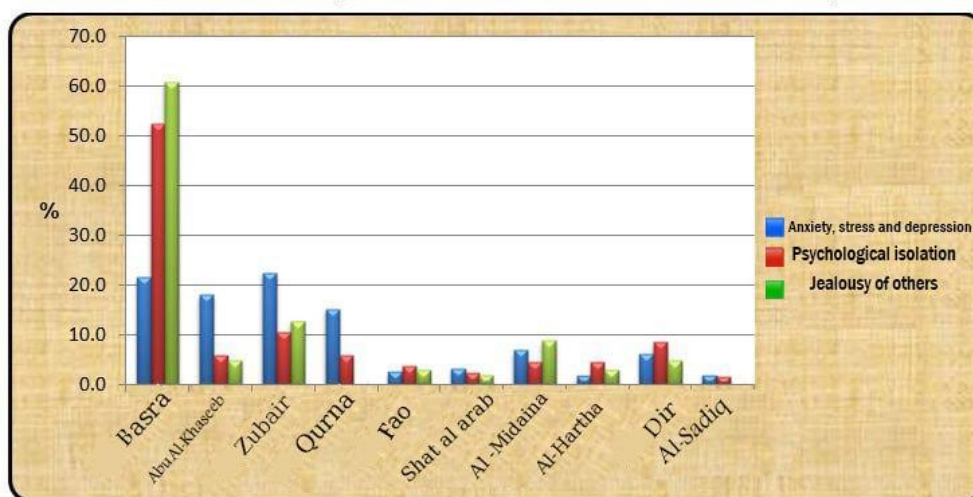
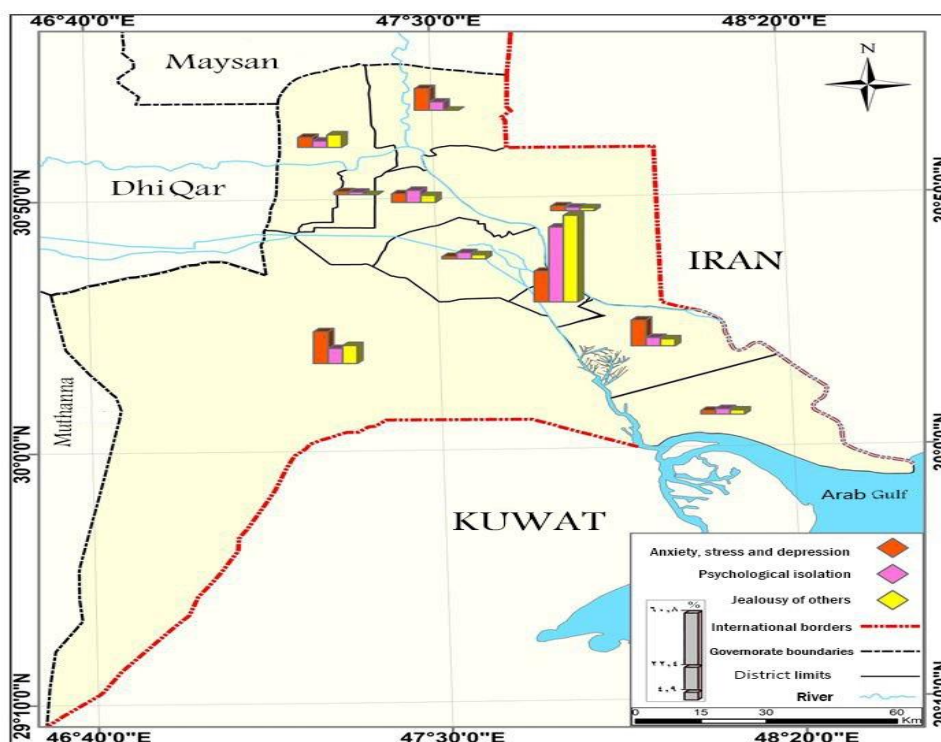


Figure 7. Percentage distribution of orphans’ psychological problems according to administrative units in Basra Governorate for the year 2022
Source - based on Table (4).

2- Psychological Isolation

Isolation means separation from others, i.e the person stays alone most of the time. Separation begins due to reasons that are not within the control of the person. It is closely related to the multitude of psychosocial problems⁽⁹⁾. It is well known that children are by their nature abundant in movement, play, discovery, learning and curiosity. However, some orphans, as well as teenage orphans, prefer to isolate and not interact with their peers, which is a natural condition stemming from a sense of deprivation and imperfection. This psychological problem has formed a number of 293 orphans, i.e. 27.8% of the psychological problems experienced by orphans in the governorate. Basra has the highest number of 154 which compares with 2.6%, whereas the average rate for (Shatt Al-Arab- Al-Sadiq) was (7, 5) orphans i.e. (2.4%, 1.7%) of the total orphans suffering from psychological isolation in the governorate of Basra.



Map 6. Percentage distribution of orphans’ psychological problems in Basra Governorate for the year 2022
Source - based on Table (4)

3- Jealousy of others

Jealousy is not the desire to have something that is owned by another person, but rather the anxiety due to the lack of something. It is one of the natural feelings that exists in humans. Moreover frequent jealousy corrupts life. Aggressive selfish behavior is only one of the effects of jealousy in children⁽¹⁰⁾. It often arises when parents compare their children with. Furthermore, it increases among teenage students, as it is an important phase of a person's life and has effects on later personality formation.

The problem of jealousy by others has (102) cases i.e. 9.7% of the total psychiatric that orphans suffer from. Basra has the highest number of orphans at the governorate level (62), i.e. 60.8%. The smallest numbers were for the Fao, Al-Haritha, and Shatt Al-Arab districts (3, 3, 2), i.e. 2.9%, and 2%. Al-Qurna and Al-Sadiq districts recorded no cases of this problem (jealousy of others)

RESULTS

1. Many necessary needs should be provided for orphans since they play an important role in building and developing their personalities. However, providing excessive need leads to adverse results, such as making them feel that there is no deterrent to their behavior.
2. A child, who lost one of his parents or both of them, is in dire need of love and sympathy especially they are essential for his mental health.
3. The absence of the family provider and challenging economic conditions urge many orphans to work though they are young.
4. Aids, that are provided to them, are few in which religious institutions has 60.5% of the total aids received by orphans in Basra Governorate.
5. Orphans are exposed to many social problems and the percentage of orphans who are exposed to beat, insult etc, increases (46.7%), as they form burdens for those who take care of them.
6. Orphans suffer from psychiatric due to various reason such as stress, depression, isolation and emotional harm.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is necessary to appoint a monthly salary for orphans that will ensure decent living standards. They should be exempted / freed of dues of educational or health foundations.
2. Education foundations have to activate the role of the educational counselor in order to educate orphans, solve their problems and enable them to overcome difficulties of life.
3. 3- Media has to contribute in disseminating the rights of orphans and a good behavior.

Footnotes

1. Anis Abdul Rahman Aqilan Abu Shamala, Asalyb alrieayat fi muasasat rieayat alaytam waealaqatitha bialtawafuq alnafsi walaijtimaeii, master's thesis, College of Education, Islamic University, Gaza, 2002, p. 63.
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