



# Perceived Stigma and Future Life Perception of Children Living in Care Facility: A Case Study

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## Abstract

This study aims to determine the perceived stigma and future life perception of children living in care facilities, shedding light on their experiences and ambitions. Employing a qualitative case study research design, this research explores the lives of four children living in a care facility, ages fourteen to sixteen years old, chosen through purposive sampling. Through in-depth interviews, the research uncovers the perceived stigma these children face, stemming from their past experiences and influencing their present sense of self-worth. The findings reveal a common thread of low self-esteem among the participants in their past experiences. Moreover, the study highlights the profound impact of perceived stigma on their daily lives. Despite struggling with these challenges, the children in care facilities demonstrate remarkable resilience and determination when it comes to envisioning their futures. Despite the odds stacked against them, they possess aspirations of completing their education and securing stable employment. Their determination provides witness to their strength and resilience in the face of difficulty. This study underscores the importance of fostering supportive environments that nurture their dreams and empower them to realize their full potential, despite the perceived stigma they encounter.

## Subject Areas

Sociology

## Keywords

Care Facility, Children Living in Care Facility, Motivated Behavior, Perceived Stigma, Future Life Perception

## 1. Introduction

It is undeniable that the loss of a parent can deeply affect any child. It is like a big wave that hits them and changes everything. It affects how they feel, what they do, and even what they think they can achieve in the future. When kids under 18 lose one or both parents, or when they are abandoned by both, they might end up in a care facility. In those places, they depend on caregivers to help them through tough times and find a sense of home and belonging.

Furthermore, children residing in care facilities may experience many different kinds of results depending upon several factors, including the quality of care provided, the length of the child's stay, and the child's resilience. In addition to providing educational support and mental health services, different facilities can help children deal with trauma and acquire lifelong skills. However, the environment of care facilities could limit the chances for individual freedom and self-expression, which could hinder the child's growth into an independent and unique person. Generally, the impacts of residing in a care facility differ substantially throughout people and are largely contingent upon the caliber of support and care offered. It was backed by UNICEF (2020), which states that a child's care status affects his or her current and future health, developmental results, and general well-being [1]. Along with all these issues, perceived stigma was the main issue children in care facilities face. Other kids treat them differently, and this perceived stigma significantly affects them psychologically. According to Kaiman and De Leon (2016), explained that the Philippines struggles with the issue of abandoned children that may be prone to perceived stigma [2]. Experience of perceived stigma was a complex and widespread social phenomenon that had an impact on people and communities all over the world. This refers to the fear of being discriminated against or the fear of enacted stigma, which arises from society's belief. This may internalize perceived prejudices and develop negative feelings about themselves, and patients feel shame and embarrassment about having the mental illness. The expression of stigma includes prejudicial attitudes, beliefs, and actions that were directed against people or groups that have traits, identities, or behaviors that were viewed as abnormal or socially undesirable.

Children raised outside of families were more prone than their family-based peers to endure abuse, neglect, exploitation, inadequate nutrition, and toxic stress, which may result in stigma, which can have long-term effects on their physical and mental health. Thus, the researchers aimed to pursue this study for the following reasons: they have previous interaction with other children in a care facility that gave them more desire to broaden their knowledge regarding their situation and how they perceived the stigma that is commonly present in many care facilities, as well as its link to their future life perception; and to further scientific contribution in the field of Psychology where there was still a limited number of studies relating to this topic.

### 1.1. The Problem and Its Background

Children in care facilities are possible to experience increased risk of stigmatiza-

tion, which can result in poor mental health. Therefore, this influences their various activities in life and even their perception of their future life. Giving value to one's mental health is an important factor for them to live in the right way and to live in a world of survivors towards achieving their goals and it starts on how they develop or structure themselves.

As compared to children from the regular family setup, the significant difficulties children in care facilities face daily revolve around perceived stigma, leading to affects their activities presently and even their future life perception (Hermenau, 2015) [3].

The number of children in care facilities worldwide was 153 million, with 132 million living in developing nations including the Philippines. At least 2.7 million children live in care facilities, and it is somehow considered a large number of children in view of how many families left their family members living in those facilities (Hendel N, 2022) [4].

Overall, it may be said that children frequently struggle with the perceived stigma attached to their situation as they navigate the difficulties of growing up in alternative care settings, which can have a significant impact on how they view themselves and their future possibilities. It is crucial to explore how these kids understand the views of society towards them and how it affects their goals and self-worth in order to create surroundings that promote their overall growth and well-being.

## **1.2. Theoretical Framework**

The Behavioral Theory of Attachment, developed by John Bowlby in 1969, highlights how forming attachments is vital for a child's survival, creating a sustained psychological bond with caregivers for safety during times of stress. Bowlby's theory, drawn from his work with emotionally disturbed children, suggests that attachment develops during the early years (0 - 5 years old), shaping lifelong relationships. This theory outlines stages: pre-attachment (birth to 6 weeks), attachment-in-the-making (6 weeks to 7 months), clear-cut attachment (7 months to 2 years), and formation of reciprocal relationships (2 years and above), emphasizing the importance of consistent caregiving for healthy development. Such nurturing relationships enable children to develop resilience, independence, and the drive to pursue their goals in life.

In line with this, it is crucial for their development to have parents that will provide the life necessities they need as they grow and develop because it will help them build their capacity to stand on their own for the future, to defend themselves when the situation is not in their favor and even to strongly pursue their aspirations in life.

## **1.3. Objective and the Scope of the Study**

This case study aimed to explore the concept of stigma and future life perception of children in care facilities.

This was to accomplish the objective, specifically:

1. What was the profile of the participants in terms of age, number of years spent in the institution, and their initial reactions when they arrived?
2. How do the participants experience perceived stigma?
3. How do the participants view their future life?

The research, conducted as a case study, utilized an interview guide to streamline data collection, with each problem addressed by five corresponding questions. Participants were children residing in one of the care facilities in San Pablo City, Laguna, aged 14 - 16, who had been there for an extended period, ensuring sufficient insight into perceived stigma and future life perception. The interview was overseen by the institution's head, and also by a social worker and was conducted in January 2023. Confidentiality was maintained to safeguard the sensitive nature of the results, shared solely between researchers and participants.

#### **1.4. Literature Review**

Formerly, the term “orphans” was used during the mid-1990s as conceptualized by the UNICEF (2020) [1]. However, the researchers purposively defined the term “children in care facilities”, referring to children who were rescued by such institutions as they experienced abuse, neglect, lack of support, or loss by their parents.

Corresponding to the research of Yarney *et al.* (2015) [5] children residing in care facilities frequently face a multitude of challenges, including perceived stigma, inadequate nutrition, physical and sexual abuse, emotional distress, and educational difficulties. Compared to their peers, these children are more prone to behavioral issues, depression, and anxiety. Stigmatization of orphans appears in numerous forms, and its effects on their mental and emotional health are significant. Youth in orphanages frequently experience social exclusion and may be perceived as “distinct” or “lesser” due to their absence of parental care. This societal prejudice is rooted deeply in many cultures, where the family unit is viewed as the cornerstone of social order and value.

Growing up in harsh environments, children in care facilities often endure tough upbringings. Despite the difficulties in ensuring their safety, well-being, and development, the risks associated with a generation lacking family support, educational opportunities, and employment prospects are too significant to overlook. Further, it was commonly acknowledged that perceived stigma was a substantial stressor that can have a negative psychological impact. According to research, those who feel stigmatized are more likely to have higher levels of psychological distress, sadness, anxiety, and low self-esteem. Research has consistently demonstrated that children raised in orphanages are more prone to experiencing stigma than those who are brought up in family environments (Beegle *et al.*, 2020) [6]. A chronic stress reaction brought on by a persistent fear of being evaluated or rejected by others can lead to the onset or worsening of mental health conditions (Anderson *et al.*, 2015) [7].

Relative to this, the awareness and expectation of being analyzed, rejected, or

treated unjustly because of a certain quality or identity, such as race, sexual orientation, mental illness, or physical handicap, was what was meant by perceived stigma. It includes people's internalized expectations and ideas about how other people will see them and treat them, which can lead to emotions of embarrassment, self-doubt, and concealment. The subjective sensation of expecting or sensing societal prejudice based on one's traits or identities was represented by perceived stigma. The perception of stigma was influenced by things including preconceptions, media impact, and personal experiences. The effects of perceived stigma on people's psychological health, interpersonal connections, and daily functioning were profound. In order to develop tolerance, empathy, and supportive workplaces that respect diversity and acceptance, perceived stigma must be acknowledged and addressed. Society may endeavor to lessen perceived stigma and create a more inclusive and welcoming atmosphere for everyone by tackling preconceptions, advancing education, and building empathy (Williams *et al.*, 2017) [8].

Also, in a study conducted by Guo and Li's (2023), children in care facilities were more likely to face discrimination than children who live with their parents. This was due to the fact that children in care facilities were more vulnerable to discrimination since they lacked the social and financial support that parents provide [9]. Accordingly, a major problem in society was perceived stigma-based discrimination. People's negative attitudes and views toward members of stigmatized groups were referred to as perceived stigma. People who experience discrimination due to perceived stigma may have less access to social assistance, education, work opportunities, and healthcare.

Similarly, the State of the World's Children of UNICEF (2021), discovered that children, specifically those who reside in care facilities were particularly susceptible to prejudice. They are frequently vilified as being at fault for their parents' passing and thus seen as a burden on society [10]. These children may find it challenging to receive essential services like healthcare and education due to this stigma, which can also result in social marginalization. Along with together, low emotional well-being and high mental discomfort were highly correlated with stigma. In contrast to the cause of parental death, Caserta *et al.* (2016) [11] found that perceived stigma differed significantly among living settings. Furthermore, the impact of living conditions, particularly those in care facilities, was diminished when stigma was taken into consideration.

Kids living in orphanages frequently adopt the negative views that society has about them, which can result in a profound feeling of self-stigmatization. This internalized stigma is associated with increased occurrences of depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues among orphaned and at-risk children (Penner *et al.*, 2020; Wilkerson, 2022; Cherewick *et al.*, 2023) [12].

Moreover, the social exclusion experienced by orphaned children due to stigma significantly impacts their ability to form healthy social relationships. Orphans in Kaduna are frequently isolated from their peers and may be bullied or discrimi-

nated against in school or community settings. This isolation deprives them of the social support networks that are crucial for emotional and psychological resilience (Kalomo, Jun and Lee, 2022) [13]. Social connectedness has been identified as a key protective factor for children facing adversity, but when orphans are stigmatized and excluded, they are denied this vital source of support (Sherr *et al.*, 2014) [14]. Without meaningful social connections, these children are at greater risk of developing long-term psychological issues and experiencing difficulties in their personal and professional lives as they grow older.

Every kid has ambitions for what they want to be when they grow up. When a physically fit young child expresses a desire to play professional sports, their aspirations can sometimes appear attainable. Furthermore, Mangubat (2016) [15] discussed that children in care facilities had optimism for the future but faced several difficulties. Among them were poverty, social marginalization, and limited access to knowledge and resources. The children in the care facility also experienced anxiety, mainly as they considered the future. The children in the care facility wished to live a life free from financial struggles and one day be able to support themselves and their families. The children in the care facility expressed a wish to be able to follow their aspirations and to have access to resources like schooling.

Similarly, the findings of a study by Lupu (2016) also implied that, despite these difficulties, most children in care facilities aspire to a better future through self-sufficiency, employment, and education. These results can guide initiatives and policies that attempt to increase the chances of survival for children in care facilities in Romania. Examples of policies and initiatives that could help to increase these children's chances of leading a fulfilling life include those that increase access to healthcare and educational opportunities [16].

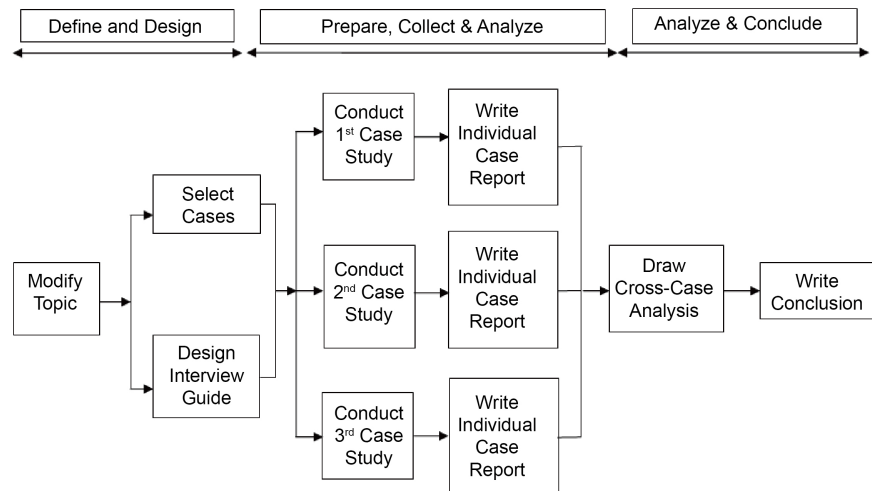
## 2. Methodology

For research to be successful, the researchers need an effective methodology. In this part, the researchers discussed the research design, the respondents of the study, how the participants were selected, the sampling technique, the research instrument, and the research procedure.

### 2.1. Research Design

This research study was a qualitative case study. This research study was a qualitative case study. Crossman (2019) describes qualitative research as a branch of social science research that concentrates on examining specific groups or locations to collect and interpret non-numerical data, helping to enhance our comprehension of social life [17]. Additionally, Bhat (2019) highlighted that the aim of qualitative research methods is to uncover the attitudes and behaviors of a target audience regarding a particular topic [18].

For this study, a research paradigm functions as a road map to help visualize and implement the research. It outlines the relevant variables for the study, defines them, and analyzes any connections among them. (See **Figure 1**)



**Figure 1.** Research paradigm.

Further, the diagram illustrates the basic idea of a multi-case study research design by Yin (2018) [19]. However, the researchers modified and patterned the above-mentioned figure to make it more aligned with the process of the study.

In this study, a conceptual framework serves as a vital tool, outlining key variables and their interrelations to guide research implementation. Adapted from Yin's multi-case study design, the researchers tailored the framework to suit their study's objectives. This involved sequential steps: topic modification, case selection, interview guide design, individual case study execution, cross-case analysis, and conclusion synthesis. Through this repetitive process, researchers navigate the complexities of their study, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of themes and insights while synthesizing findings into a cohesive conclusion.

## 2.2. Participants and Procedure

In San Pablo City, one of the care facilities for street children was established as a non-profit organization that offers a temporary shelter to boys aged 5 to 17 who have experienced neglect, abuse, or abandonment. Despite facing adverse circumstances, some former residents who have resided in the facility since its inception almost 25 years ago have gone on to achieve success, whether by starting families or pursuing professional careers. At present, the facility typically accommodates around 30 children, although this number has been reduced to 10 due to pandemic-related restrictions, with the age range spanning from 10 to 17 years old.

The first challenge in the study was coming up with a good topic, which required coming up with and researching a number of significant themes. After choosing a topic, researchers carefully collected information from a variety of media to make sure their study materials were reliable and thorough. The study's methodology was guided by a theoretical framework, and participants' informed consent was obtained through rigorous processes that emphasized their right to withdraw from the study at any time and their voluntary involvement.

The head of the institution approved a personal interview and suggested that four of the oldest and longest children living in the institution participate; nonetheless, the researchers still obtained the children's informed consent before conducting the interview. To gather the needed data, the researchers either interviewed the participants or asked them questions. Participation was based on an informed consent form. To adhere to the principle of informed consent, researchers provide participants with sufficient information and assurances regarding their involvement, allowing them to fully understand the implications and decide whether to participate without any coercion.

Out of six (5) participants, the researcher selected four (4) participants only because of the common responses and analyses that led to the saturation of data. Interviews were conducted in January 2023, lasting 15 to 40 minutes. Open-ended questions were translated into Tagalog and transcribed by the researcher into English. Supplementing data collection, audio recordings were employed to ensure accuracy and facilitate thorough analysis. After the interview, the participants underwent a debriefing conducted by the institution's social worker. Participants were provided with comprehensive orientation sessions prior to interviews, elucidating the study's objectives and outlining their rights. The meticulous transcription, coding, and analysis of interviews were aimed at objective interpretation and were devoid of any researcher bias. Ultimately, the study drew conclusions and formulated recommendations based on the gathered data, ensuring the integrity and validity of its findings.

### **2.3. Ethical Consideration**

For this research paper, the PAP guidelines as specified in Article 10, Research, have been taken into consideration. Before taking part in the study, the participants were asked to sign an informed consent for research papers that were translated in language that the children understand. Before they signed, the researchers additionally discussed the purpose of the interview in detail. The research's participants were not coerced into taking part.

The researchers chose to include the institution's head in the interview to ensure that the intervention would not affect or harm the children in any way. Since all of the interviews were recorded, the researchers obtained the consent of each participant. The institution's head, who agreed to take part and allowed the children to be interviewed, also gave the researchers permission to conduct the research. Their privileges and rights as participants in the interview were explained in the form, including the right to withdraw at any point if they felt uncomfortable and the confidentiality of their answers.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

### **3.1. Results**

#### **Case 1: Participant 1**

The participant is a 16-year-old male who has been at the institution for ap-

proximately 9 years. The interview takes place at the institution and lasts 15 minutes. During the interview, the social worker and the institution's head were present to give emotional and psychological support to the children in the care facility. When researchers also inquired about their experience living there, the participants' expressions showed that they reminisced about their whole experience during the previous years of living in the facility. The participant expressed that he misses his home sometimes and gets emotional.

The themes derived from their experiences were Experiences of Perceived Stigma and Manifestation of Motivated Behavior.

#### **Aspect of Perceived Stigma**

**“Experiences of Perceived Stigma”** was the theme that emerged from the aspect of perceived stigma among children in care facilities for Participant 1, which was characterized as a negative self-concept and negative concept of others.

The negative self-concept experienced by Participant 1 can be classified as (1) low self-esteem and (2) social withdrawal. And as indicated in the study of Lala (2014), children in care facilities usually encountered stigma and prejudice in their neighborhoods. However, there is still a chance because some children in care facilities may learn resiliency and coping skills that help them get past these obstacles and accomplish their objectives [20].

Additionally, the negative concept of others can be classified as social withdrawal. Deborah (2023) states that because children cannot grasp their own feelings and thoughts, early relationships and encounters with others mold and affect the development of children's beliefs. And one of the statements demonstrated this;

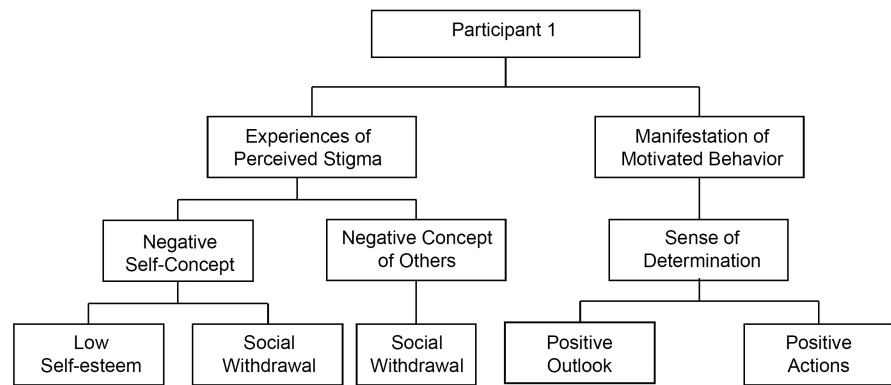
*“I am afraid to socialize because I am too old”*. The concept of “Fear of Interaction” emerged as part of the theme Experiences of Perceived Stigma in Participant 1.

#### **Aspect of Future Life Perception**

For the second theme, **“Manifestation of Motivated Behavior”** was the theme that emerged from the aspect of the future life perception for Participant 1, which was characterized as a sense of determination. The sense of determination that was experienced by Participant 1 can be classified as (1) a positive outlook and (2) positive actions. In the opinion of Allman *et al.* (2022), children in care facilities were very vulnerable to a range of negative outcomes, including poor mental health. Being hopeful was discovered to be substantially associated with outcomes pertaining to mental health after other characteristics were taken into account [21].

The emerging concept was from the significant statement, *“I will really study hard and find a good job opportunity”* and *“The hindrance for me to get a good job is stopping from schooling because of not-so-good practices”*, which is also under “Sense of Determination”.

To illustrate the themes that emerged from the experiences of perceived stigma and manifestation of motivated behavior for research Participant 1, **Figure 2** was presented below.



**Figure 2.** Framework for perceived stigma and future life perception of Participant 1.

### Case 2: Participant 2

The participant was also a 16-year-old male who has been at the institution for approximately 8 years. The interview lasts 15 minutes and takes place at the venue of choice. The institution's head was there during the interview to provide emotional and psychological support to the children in the care facility. When researchers asked about their experience living there, the participants' emotions revealed that they recalled their entire experiences throughout the previous years of living at the institution, including how they provided him with physiological needs. The participant felt delighted upon having noticed he could finally wear decent clothes and have a proper bath with soap and shampoo.

The themes derived from their experiences were Experiences of Perceived Stigma and Manifestation of Motivated Behavior.

#### Aspect of Perceived Stigma

Just like the previous participant, "**Experiences of Perceived Stigma**" was also the theme emerging from the aspect of perceived stigma among children in care facilities for Participant 2, which was characterized as a Negative Concept of Others.

Negative Concept of Others experienced by Participant 2 can be classified as (1) Discrimination and (2) Self-doubt. In line with this, Hassan *et al.* (2016) claimed that according to the findings of their research, although having a positive and healthy sense of oneself is important, the majority of the children residing in care facilities had low self-esteem and a negative self-concept [22].

*"I cannot take a shower properly and I do not have proper clothes as well. That is why they look at me differently"*. This significant statement expressed the past experience of Participant 2 that emerged the concept of "discrimination".

#### Aspect of Future Life Perception

**"Manifestation of Motivated Behavior"** in the aspect of future life perception for Participant 2 which was described as Sense of Determination. Sense of Determination that was experienced by Participant 2 can be classified as (1) Positive Outlook and (2) Positive Actions. In the work of Alimbayeva *et al.* (2018), Children in care facilities frequently lack role models and have little awareness of their

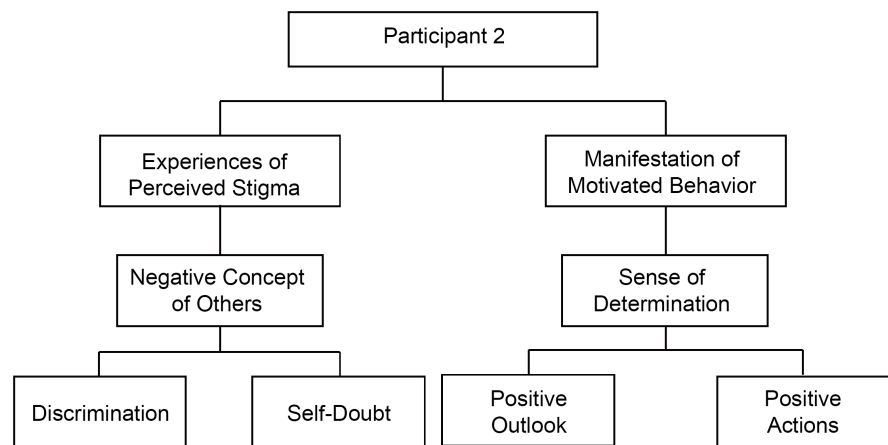
family history, which makes it difficult for them to imagine their own futures but this does not mean that it will stop them to view themselves in the future [23].

After considering other factors, hope was found to be significantly correlated with outcomes related to mental health. Along with this, Adams *et al.* (2016) mentioned that there were several advantages to being determined [24]. People who are determined often establish high standards for themselves, stick with them no matter what, and seek out solutions to problems. They were more likely to have decreased stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms. Additionally, determination fosters resilience, well-being, and a positive outlook, empowering people to face challenges head-on and overcome them.

*“When I return to our home because they cannot provide for my education.”*

Under the category of “Sense of Determination,” these are the significant statements that demonstrated the emerging concepts of “Setting Personal Goals” and “Hoping for a Better Future.”

To illustrate the themes that emerged from the experiences of perceived stigma and manifestation of motivated behaviour for research Participant 2, **Figure 3** was presented below.



**Figure 3.** Framework for perceived stigma and future life perception of Participant 2.

### Case 3: Participant 3

Participant 3 was a young man who had been a resident of the facility for around 7 years and was 14 years old. Prior to the interview, the researcher noticed that this participant was performing the duties more frequently than other kids in the facility. For someone of his age, the participant also did gardening, which was rather entertaining. The researcher has also observed that the individuals mentioned earlier were distant or less friendly among kids. They accomplish the tasks more quietly and diligently than those around them. The interview with Participant 3 took the longest, lasting over 18 minutes or more. The researcher gave him extra time to think about it since he was quiet or aloof, and sometimes he was hesitant about an appropriate answer.

The themes derived from their experiences were Experiences of Perceived

Stigma and Manifestation of Motivated Behavior.

#### Aspect of Perceived Stigma

“Experiences of Perceived Stigma” was the theme that emerged from the aspect of perceived stigma among children in a care facility for Participant 3 which was characterized as Negative Concept of Others and Negative Self Concept.

Negative Concept of Others experienced by Participant 1 can be classified as (1) Discrimination. It was shown that teenagers living in care facilities ought to receive as much assistance from professionals as possible in order for them to form healthy self-concepts. According to Abu Baka (2015), one way to address the many issues facing young people is to work to improve the foundation of the family. Parents should be aware of the normal developmental stages of young psychology and recognize that, at this stage, they require care, attention, and supervision from family members [25].

Negative Self-concept experienced by Participant 3 can be classified as (1) Difficulty with Social Life. The term “self-concept” describes a person’s defining beliefs about their identity and traits. Humans cannot stop thinking about themselves since they are the focus of their own social universes. A generic phrase used to describe how an individual thinks about or views themselves is self-concept. Furthermore, the current study was carried out by Ahad *et al.* (2015) to look into the aggressiveness and self-concept of children living in a Kashmiri care facility [26]. The results of the study indicated that most of these young people had above-average self-concepts and that their degrees of hostility ranged from moderate to high.

This significant statement, “*I was still small, and they think that I cannot do anything*”, demonstrated how the emerging concept of “Experience of Unfair Treatment” emerged and is classified as Negative Concept by Others.

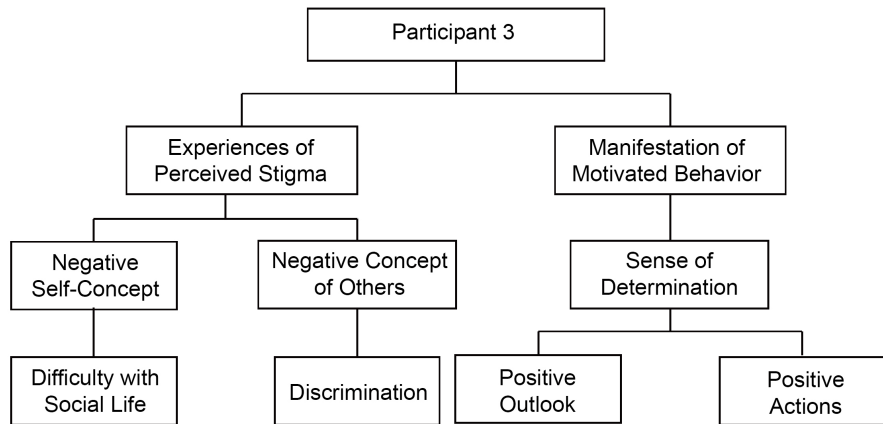
#### Aspect of Future Life Perception

“Manifestation of Motivated Behavior” in the aspect of future life perception for Participant 3 which was characterized as Sense of Determination. Sense of Determination that was experienced by Participant 3 can be classified as (1) Positive Outlook and (2) Positive Actions. A strong psychological quality that motivates people to overcome challenges, persevere, and accomplish their goals is determination. It was characterized by unwavering commitment, persistence, and direction. People may develop a strong sense of self-worth, focus on their goals, and tenacity, which will help them harness the good effects of determination in many facets of their lives (Jackson *et al.*, 2017) [27]. On top of that, as stated in the study of Harris *et al.* (2015), the quality of determination has several aspects and includes a number of essential elements [28]. It entails establishing specific objectives and forging a compelling sense of mission. Determined people have a strong internal drive and are prepared to make the required efforts and sacrifices in order to achieve their goals. Passion, ambition, and a steadfast unwillingness to give up in the face of difficulty were the fuels that drove determination.

These significant statements, “*I want to finish my studies*”, showed how the

emerging concept “Setting Personal Goals” and “Hoping for a Better Future” emerged and fell under the category of “Sense of Determination”.

To illustrate the themes that emerged from the experiences of perceived stigma and manifestation of motivated behavior for research Participant 3, **Figure 4** was presented below.



**Figure 4.** Framework for perceived stigma and future life perception of Participant 3.

#### Case 4: Participant 4

The participant was a 14-year-old male who had been living at the institution for around 8 years. The interview lasts for 12 minutes and takes place at the institution. The institution’s head was there during the interview to provide emotional and psychological support to the children in the care facility. There was nothing to notice in his body language. When the researchers asked about their experience living there, the participants answered confidently and without stuttering. There were instances when he didn’t understand the question and had to clarify it again, but he was still able to answer it after it was clarified.

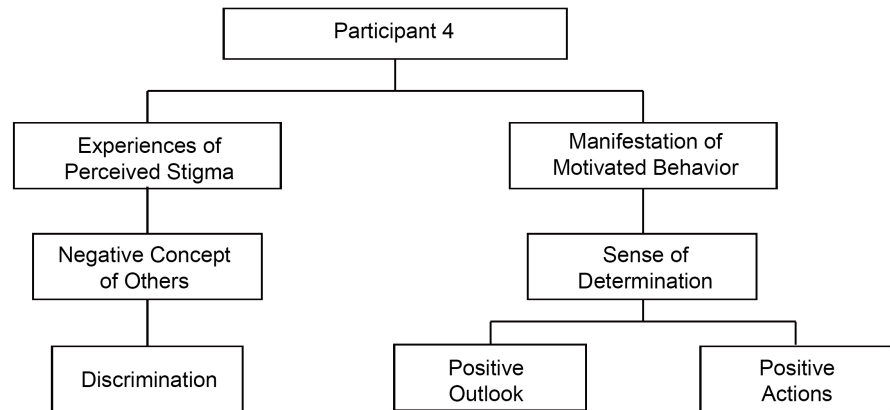
The last person, participant 4, likewise drew inspiration from their experiences, which they expressed in Experiences of Perceived Stigma and ideas of what is life ahead of them.

To illustrate the themes that emerged from the experiences of perceived stigma and manifestation of motivated behaviour for research Participant 4, **Figure 5** was presented below.

#### Aspect of Perceived Stigma

As with the other participants, Participant 4’s “**Experiences of Perceived Stigma**” subject was inspired by the stigma that children in care facilities were said to experience. This stigma falls into one category: Negative Concept of Others. Similar to Participant 2, Participant 4 similarly experienced solely Negative Concept of Others in its forms. Understanding the types of social assistance that vulnerable children can access and how these sources were used was crucial for ensuring that these children can successfully transition from childhood to adulthood. Vulnerable children have access to various support networks, including family, friends,

educators, community organizations, and government services, according to the study by Ossa (2015) [29]. Thus, it is assumed that young people residing in care facilities ought to receive as much assistance from professionals as possible in order for them to form positive self-concepts. Participant 4 feared that they would see him negatively. The participant was anxious and self-conscious around other people, and was always looking for “signs” that he was not liked.



**Figure 5.** Framework for perceived stigma and future life perception of Participant 4.

In the significant statement, “*Before, when they treated me unfairly, I was hiding*”, the emerging concept of “Experience of Unfair Treatment” arises, which can be categorized as “Negative Concept of Others” because of unfair treatment of others to Participant 4.

#### Aspect of Future Life Perception

The theme “**Manifestation of Motivated Behavior**” also emerged from Participant 4’s perception of their future, which can be characterized as Sense of Determination. Participant 4 expressed Sense of Determination towards the future due to Hoping for a Better Future and Setting Personal Goals. As mentioned by Van den Berg *et al.* (2018), a psychological quality known as determination is defined as a firm dedication to one’s objectives in the face of challenges and disappointments [30]. It entails a strong will to carry on and move on in the face of difficulties or adversity. People who are determined have a high sense of confidence in their capacity to succeed and pursue their goals with tenacity. Being determined in life means having a strong sense of resolve, being able to endure, and having an unwavering commitment to achieving goals and overcoming obstacles.

In the significant statement, “*I find myself already working*”, the emerging concept of “Setting Personal Goals” arises, which can be categorized as “Sense of Determination” because of the anticipation of Participant 4 to have a job in the future.

This section combines the results of the study across instances to produce more descriptive frameworks for children in care facilities perceived stigma and future life perception. **Table 1** displays the themes that were obvious and prevalent in the instances studied. It demonstrates the similarities and contrasts among exam-

ples backed by empirical research.

**Table 1.** Themes of Perceived stigma and future life perception of children in care facility across four cases.

Variables	Themes	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4
Perceived Stigma	Experiences of Perceived Stigma	✓	✓	✓	✓
Future Life Perception	Manifestation of Motivated Behavior	✓	✓	✓	✓

### Perceived Stigma

“**Experiences of Perceived Stigma**” was the theme that emerged from the aspect of perceived stigma among children in care facilities for all the participants which was characterized as Negative Concept of Others and Negative Self Concept. Negative Concept of Others by Participant 1 can be classified as (1) Social Withdrawal and the Negative Self Concept was (1) Social Withdrawal and (2) Low Self-esteem. Unlike Participant 1, Participant 2 only experienced the Negative Concept of Others described in two (1) Discrimination and (2) Self-doubt. While Participant 3 had both categories same as Participant 1, Negative Concept of Other, which is classified as (1) Discrimination and Negative Self Concept which also characterized as (1) Difficulty with Social Life. The last participant which was participant 4 had Negative Concept for others that categorized by (1) Discrimination. (See **Table 2**)

**Table 2.** Cross-analysis of the emerged theme as to the commonalities and differences in the aspect of perceived stigma among children in care facilities.

Theme	Experiences of Perceived Stigma	
	Negative Concept of Others	Negative Self Concept
Case 1	✓	✓
Case 2	✓	×
Case 3	✓	✓
Case 4	✓	×

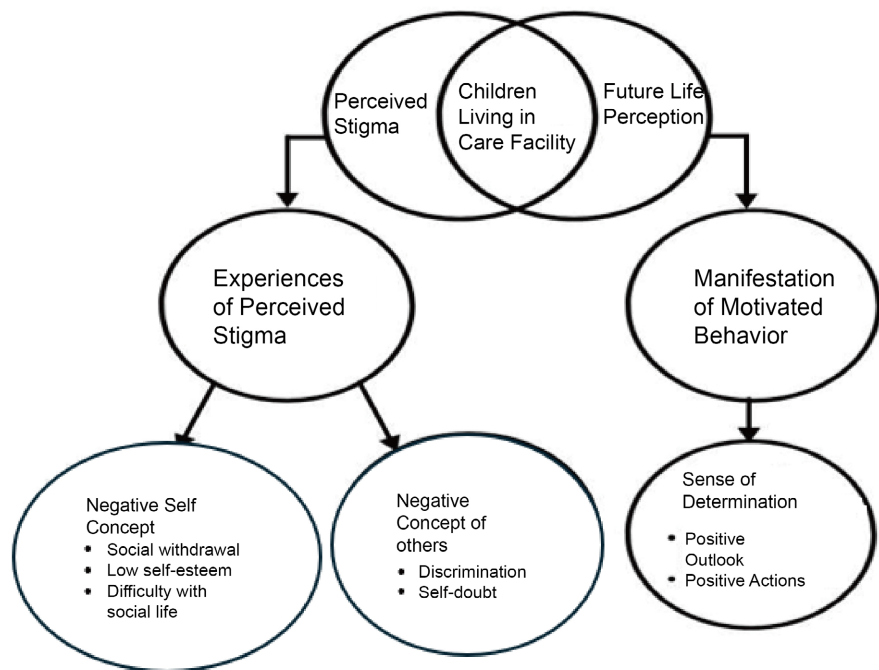
### Future Life Perception

Manifestation of Motivated Behavior: Cross-Analysis. The theme “**Manifestation of Motivated Behavior**” emerged from how participants perceived their future as children living in care facilities, and it was defined as a new sense of self that may lead to a sense of determination. On top of that, Participants 1, 3, and 4 have a positive outlook by (1) setting personal goals and positive action by (1) setting personal goals and (2) hoping for a better future. However, Participant 2 has a positive outlook by (1) hoping for a better future and positive action by (1) setting personal goals and (2) hoping for a better future. (See **Table 3**)

**Table 3.** Cross-analysis of the emerged theme as to the commonalities and differences in the aspect of future life perception among children in care facilities.

Theme	Manifestation of Motivated Behavior
Categories	Sense of Determination
Case 1	✓
Case 2	✓
Case 3	✓
Case 4	✓

To sum it all, a framework was developed to comprehend the experiences of children in care facility and the perceived stigma they were facing. Finally, their future life perception and manifestation of motivated behavior of them. Thus, results of the study can make a significant contribution to the development of appropriate approach for children in care facility by managing emotion to prevent and minimize the stigma suffered. **Figure 6** represents the framework developed in response to children in care facility’s perceived stigmas and future life perception. The respondent’s response was summarized below.



**Figure 6.** The proposed framework about stigma and future life perception of children in care facilities.

### 3.2. Discussion

The results of this research correspond with previous studies regarding the stigma faced by orphans, which includes exclusion, discrimination, and decreased opportunities, all of which can adversely affect the physical, emotional, and social health

of children living in orphanages. Although the study conducted in Kaduna, Nigeria found that a considerable number of participants indicated good health, emotional stability, and high self-esteem, the impact of stigma was still apparent in areas like peer relationships and social integration.

Research has consistently demonstrated that children raised in orphanages are more prone to experiencing stigma than those who are brought up in family environments (Beegle *et al.*, 2020) [6]. Consistent with this study, findings revealed that participants in this study experienced perceived stigma as an emerging theme. They manifest negative self-concepts, express social withdrawal, manifest low self-esteem and experience difficulty with their social life. A chronic stress reaction brought on by a persistent fear of being evaluated or rejected by others can lead to the onset or worsening of mental health conditions (Anderson *et al.*, 2015) [7].

Also, experiencing perceived stigma reflects the negative concept of others as it emerges from the responses of the participants. Emotional and behavioral challenges were significantly present among Orphaned children. These often manifest as concept discrimination and self-doubt. Discrimination experiences significantly and positively predicted suicidal thoughts and behaviors through the mediating effect of self-esteem in orphaned children, and there was no self-esteem mediating effect found for left-behind children, according to the study of Guo, H. B., & Li, S. Y. (2023) [9]. Thus, Orphaned children may struggle with issues such as bullying, exclusion, or difficulties in communicating and cooperating with others. Furthermore, self-doubt about having positive peer relationships is crucial among orphaned children. This inability to form meaningful connections can further exacerbate feelings of loneliness and emotional distress among them.

## 4. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 4.1. Conclusion

- The common perceived stigma of children in care facilities was based on their past life experiences which have become their motivation in the present. This was manifested because of the different treatment of the people around them. It additionally draws on how anxiety expresses itself in their daily lives.
- Moreover, it was concluded that the children in care facilities are still motivated about their future lives. This was manifested through their positive outlook and positive actions that resulted in their sense of determination in their life.

### 4.2. Recommendations

Though this study produced results in terms of the study's targeted variables, there are numerous ways in which this research might be improved and there are still some recommendations.

To the respondents, this study may help them have better emotional recognition that may help them have better awareness and acceptance of the situation that they are in presently. They may also be suggested to keep open about their

personal concerns and other possible difficulties to their respective care facilitators so that immediate assistance may be given to them.

The care facilities may strengthen their linkage within the community in order to gather wider assistance where common problems that may exist such as their basic needs may be supported. Also, they may be suggested to conduct a facility-based psychosocial program for the continuous monitoring of the positive progress of children in the aspect of their overall mental health.

The mental health workers may engage in visitations to further understand the common difficulties the children in care facilities are experiencing and may provide sufficient and most suitable expertise in assisting the mental health needs of the children. Also, they may provide relevant seminars and workshops among the care facilitators in order for them to be more equipped with knowledge and its application to the actual setting in guiding the children.

The Local Government Units may also engage in visitations in coordination with the mental health workers in order to have a more sustained enablement in the care facilities and the overall welfare of the children. Also, they may extend set of social activities in the nearby Barangays for a wider dissemination of information and assistance regarding the said concern.

To future researchers, they may be recommended to conduct studies that include similar and/ or additional variables that may widen the scope of exploring the life situation and the mental health status of children living in care facilities. Also, they may try to select broader age groups from children to adults who have been living in care facilities so that they may gain more insightful results.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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