
Mali Children's Villages: Socio-Educational Environment for Socialization of Orphans

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Abstract: Since 2012, Mali has been going through an unprecedented security crisis. Armed terrorist groups and Tuareg separatist movements in northern Mali start a war and carry out attacks against civilian populations, symbols of the State such as the administration, the army, schools, and the judicial system. In 2017, the conflict took on a new dimension in the center of the country. It becomes an intercommunity war between the Fulani and Dogon tribes. Entire villages are destroyed. Terrorists killed more than 100,000 civilians and burned dozens of SOS villages with food and livestock during violence in the center of the country. Many people become physically or mentally disabled (military and civilian). These contribute to a dizzying increase in the number of orphans in orphanages and SOS Children's Villages in Mali. Such a situation makes it difficult to provide social and educational support in the children's villages. The objective of the article is to describe the social and educational environment in which the orphans of the children's villages of Mali are socialized. To carry out this study, we set ourselves the following objectives: to determine the problem; observe the organizational and pedagogical device in place, the socio-educational activities implemented in the process of socialization of orphans in these institutions. At the end of this research, we determined the organizational and educational system set up in the SOS children's villages in Mali.

Keywords: Children's Villages, Socialization of Orphans, Upbringing in Traditional African Societies, Socio-Educational Environment, Mali

1. Introduction

Before the opening of the first children's village in Mali in 1987 in the city of Sanankoroba, located 35 kilometers from the capital Bamako, and the care of orphans was provided by extended families. Economic crisis of the 1980s exacerbated social problems in Africa, especially in Mali, where poverty, unemployment, the breakdown of families and social ties reigned. This has led to deterioration in the quality of support provided to vulnerable children (orphans) in African society. Families have become unable to meet the basic needs of orphans in food, health, education.

It is in this context that children's villages have been established in Mali to provide orphans with adequate socio-pedagogical support. Children's villages as a socio-pedagogical space cannot leave the researcher indifferent.

The purpose of this study is to identify and describe the

socio-pedagogical conditions for the socialization of orphans in children's villages in Mali.

Background and rationale for the study

Mali is a sahelian country (the desert occupies 51% of the country's territory), which does not have access to the sea. It is located in the heart of West Africa. Mali covers an area of 1,241,238 square kilometers. The country is bordered by Algeria to the north, Niger to the east, Mauritania and Senegal to the west, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso to the south.

The country's population is estimated at 19,820,334 inhabitants (eighteen million nine hundred and fifty-seven thousand two hundred and fifty-eight inhabitants). Mali has one of the highest birth rates in the world. The birth rate in Mali is estimated at 6.5 children per woman. Population growth is estimated at 4.9% per year. The population of Mali is very young. Indeed, 48.8% of the population is under 15 years of age. Life expectancy is 57.9 years.

Mali is a poor country with a slightly diversified economy. His economy is mainly based on agriculture and animal husbandry, subject to climate hazards. According to the Capacity Development Index, Mali ranks 182 out of 188 countries. *"About 90% of the population lives in rural areas."* [5] The poverty of the population is increasing due to drought and war that have been raging in the country for several years.

Since 2012, Mali's security has been under threat. In January 2012, separatist movements start a war and attack such symbols of the state as the administration, the army. On March 22, 2012, Amadou Toumani Toure, the democratically elected president, was overthrown in a military coup.

On March 30, 2012, the national liberation movement AZAWAD, with the support of armed Islamist movements, occupied the city of Kidal in the far north of the country. On March 31, they invaded the city of GAO, and the next day it was the turn of the city of Timbuktu.

Thus, armed Islamist movements, together with separatist rebels, occupied about 60% of the country's territory. January 10, 2013, Islamist militants advance south and push the army out of the Konna strategic zone. Islamist and separatist groups committed atrocities in the occupied territories. Indeed, they threatened, robbed, raped and killed civilians. These atrocities led to mass executions of prisoners of war, the use of civilians as human shields, the destruction of public buildings (hospitals, courts, town halls, schools, etc.). *The pace and extent of violence in northern Mali is alarming and there is no investigation to judge the authors.*" [3]

On January 11, 2013, together with the Malian army and the French army (Operation Serval), a large-scale movement began to restore the national territory. This operation led to the liberation of the Timbuktu and Gao regions. Two peace agreements have been signed (in June 2013 Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso and in June 2015 Algiers, Algeria) between the Malian state with separatist movements. Despite the signing of these peace agreements, violence intensifies and spreads throughout the country.

The conflict has reached the center of the country since 2017 (in the Segou and Mopti regions). He took a different dimension to the center of the country. This became an intercommunal war between the Fulani and the Dogon. Entire villages are destroyed. *"Ethnic militias have killed over 100,000 civilians and burned dozens of villages during communal violence in the center of the country."* [1] Targeted killings and kidnappings have become common in the central region and the capital, Bamako. At present, entire districts remain without a state presence. These zones are without army and administration. Schools and hospitals are closed there. *"More than 900 schools remain closed due to insecurity in northern and central Mali, and 225,000 children are denied the right to education."* [2] This war resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of people in Mali. Because of it, many people have become physically or mentally handicapped (military and civilians). This contributed to a dizzying increase in the number of orphans in the country.

The situation of most children whose parents died in the war became unstable. Their caregivers most often cannot cope with daily expenses: food, health, education, vocational training. So the Malian state and other charitable organizations came to the aid of these war orphans. It is in this context that the Government of Mali voted for Law No. 2016-056 of December 27, 2016, in which children whose parents died in the war are supported in children's villages. This law clarifies the nature of the support that the Malian state proposes to provide to orphans of war in children's villages. But despite the overall positive results, some orphans experience problems.

The situation of these orphans is characterized, for example, by social exclusion and difficulties in vocational training. Usually these are children who have accumulated academic failures and psycho-emotional disorders. However, Mali's children's villages remain little explored. Indeed, the system and pedagogical practices used in these institutions for the socialization of orphans are little known. This leads to a lack of knowledge and objective data about these educational structures in Mali. This situation raises the following question: Under what socio-pedagogical conditions does the socialization of orphans take place in the children's villages of Mali?

2. Literature Review

Many studies are devoted to SOS children's villages. L. N. Grigorievna (2010) thinks that, as a rule, there are no material problems in SOS children's villages. The standard of living in orphanages (comfort, food, study opportunities) is usually better than in ordinary families where orphans used to live. According to a number of Russian teachers, the basic needs of orphans are often met in orphanages, orphanages (L. P. Kuznetsova, N. N. Denisevna, S. O. Leonigovna, I. Lisina, E. O. Smirnova, A. M. Parishioners, A. G. Ruzskoy). But it should be recognized that in these institutions difficulties remain for the socialization of orphans. There are children who have never seen their parents. This makes it difficult for the pedagogical team to educate children about the role they are meant to play in society. In order to include orphans in normal social life, it is necessary to teach them the role that belongs to them in the family and society. But sometimes the educators of these institutions give children a distorted idea of the status and the role they are called upon to play in family and social life. In the children's village SOS, much attention is paid to the issue of education through work. Teachers develop certain skills in orphans by introducing them to work. Many children are ready to do hard and difficult work, but under pressure they lose their desire to work or study (K. E. Serebulatovna, L. Istinidi). A number of problems hinder the socialization of orphans in children's villages SOS: interaction with a poor social environment, lack of qualified personnel and poor professional orientation of orphans (N. A. Ivanova). In SOS children's villages, states of contentment and disappointment alternate. The dysfunctions and inconsistencies of some of

the staff in these institutions affect the behavior of the child. They create an atmosphere of doubt and insecurity in the sos family (Vincent Doles, 2015). For example, some children may take advantage of the weakness of their aunt sos, who replaces their mother, to impose their own whims and rules. Delors and Hubert (2016) identify three levels of understanding of orphans' vulnerability situation: - Social trajectory (personal characteristics of orphans and the social group with which they interact). - Interactions during which two or more trajectories intersect (frequency, degree and quality of interaction between the orphan and the social group). - Socio-political context in which interactions take place (socio-cultural norms, legal framework, etc.) In short, these three levels of understanding of an orphan's vulnerability correspond to individual, relational, and contextual vulnerability. Taking into account these three aspects of the vulnerability of an orphan child (individual, relational and contextual vulnerability) is essential for the education and socialization of orphans in sos children's villages. Maria Montessori (1870-1952), transforms her medical approach into a pedagogical approach, according to which the poorer the environment of a vulnerable child in terms of sensory stimulation, the more he will be at a disadvantage during his development. It establishes a link between the environment and the child's vulnerability. The environment that should be prepared for orphans is very important in their socialization process.

3. Definition of the Concept of Socialization

Reflecting on the relationship between the individual and society, it is worth determining the weight of society in the behavior of the individual, analyzing the place and role of parents, family in the socialization of the individual. We are talking about determining the methods and strategies for transferring culture, values, and norms to a person in order to ensure the cohesion of society. These methods and strategies influence the construction of each person's personality. Finally, it is about understanding how a person integrates into society.

3.1. Definition of Socialization

Socialization is the instillation in a person of ways of thinking and acting in accordance with the norms of society. The basic function of a person is to establish and maintain relationships with other people in order to become a full member of society.

In sociology, socialization is a subject of discussion that stems from a variety of theoretical approaches. In fact, a person gradually learns, becomes a social actor, whose roles will continue to grow. When the child grows up, he will learn what he needs for his social development. Thus, the child is connected to the mother physically and emotionally. He gradually learns to interact and cooperate with those who share his environment. As a teenager, he learns the rules

(codes) that must be known and respected in society.

According to Emile Durkheim, socialization is the process of integrating an individual into social groups. The transfer of cultural models from the older generation to new generations is carried out in the learning process. Socialization is carried out through coercion, constantly creating bonds between people who make up a society based on a system of rights and obligations (Schmitt, 2002). For E. Durkheim, socialization and education are inseparable. A person devotes himself to social life. Therefore, the formation of its collective consciousness is carried out mainly in education. Education plays a socializing role and gives a person a methodical assimilation of social rules.

However, some thinkers describe the concept of socialization as "soul shaping", the subjugation of individuals. It is in this light that based on the thesis of J. Piaget; A. Percheron (2016) proposes an alternative approach. She defines socialization as a mechanism of interaction arising from two processes: *"Through assimilation the subject will seek to change his environment to accommodate his needs, and through adaptation he will seek to change to cope with the pressures of his environment."* [4]

Socialization is, first of all, the process of assimilation of the norms and provisions common to society, in other words, the progressive inclusion of the modes of existence of the group, its vision of the world (Dubar, 2006). Socialization is the result of the interaction between the child and the environment. *«The action of socialization is a continuous and progressive way of learning that is constantly evolving. Socialization is carried out primarily through people and institutions acting on the child on behalf of society»* [9]. Childhood is the best time to form a social actor. An African proverb says: "A child is like wax, you need to give it the desired shape." This is primary socialization, where the child builds a personality and social identity. This happens to him in the family, with children, friends.

The family plays an important role in structuring a person's personality. The way of communication varies from one family to another. How parents socialize their children varies depending on their social status. Initial socialization is critical to continuing life learning. Indeed, engineer-parents do not convey the same meanings as parents-traders (Handel, 2002).

The process of assimilation of a way of life in society occurs in accordance with the stages of development of the child. G. H. Mead highlights three strong points: 1) the child learns to observe others and imitate the behavior of others; 2) then, the child realizes the need to adopt behavior in accordance with various situations caused by others; 3) the child becomes a person who begins to produce and invent in society.

According to Piaget's theory, child development is defined as a continuous process of equilibrium, leading to a constant transition from a state of less stable equilibrium to a state of more stable equilibrium. At the end of the first year, the child has fun giving his toys to his parents. His parents give him

toys and accompany this action with gentle words.

Thus, socialization is based on the exchange, giving and receiving of knowledge between the older generation and the new generation. Parents develop social relationships in children that are not based on aggression. Thus, giving shows respect for others and contributes to the preservation of peaceful relations (Pierre Pascal, 2008). To take means to deprive a person of his property without his permission, which can develop a feeling of aggressiveness in a child?

The child grows up in a family and social environment that conveys to him the basic elements that will influence the formation of his social identity. The family and the school create mental structures such as linguistic and symbolic codes, for example [10]. These structures allow a person to develop ambitions and tastes. The results of cognitive research (psychology and neuroscience) have shown the importance of the influence of the richness of the context on the child's learning. He will be able to develop the skills necessary to build social interactions if he capitalizes on love and environments that allow him to express his emotions.

Even the absence of one or both parents has an impact on the child. According to the research of F. Pedersen, the absence of a father has many negative consequences for the cognitive development of a child (Bergonni-Dupu, 1995). Indeed boys experience more difficulty than girls in terms of mental development and responding to social stimuli if a father is absent. The absence of a father also has an indirect effect on the development of the child. Indirect consequences of the absence of a father are, for example, the transfer to children of the emotional difficulties experienced by a mother without a husband.

From early childhood, the father performs a simultaneous, differentiated, complementary function with the mother. The individual is not completely determined by primary socialization (family and school). Socialization occurs throughout life. Various agents interfere with socialization. Each agent and their interaction have a different effect depending on the time of children's socialization.

We can talk about socialization by peers, the media. Television, radio and other means of communication are often considered by the family and school as destructive elements of socialization (weakening of morality, increased violence among children). But it is important to emphasize the predominant role of the media in the positive socialization of people. They can also instill moral and social values in people. Finally, we must not forget the fundamental role of labor in the socialization of man.

Professional activity takes up more than half of a person's life (Dubar, 2006). Thus, socialization is, by definition, a learning process that results from interactions between people and their environment. Each society is distinguished by its economic, cultural and political characteristics, which negatively or positively affect the socialization of its members. African society has its own socio-cultural characteristics, which will be the subject of the next section.

3.2. Features of Agents and Processes of Socialization in Sub-Saharan Africa

In traditional African society, raising children to adapt and integrate into society is the responsibility of the entire community. It is in this logic that the Burkinian historian J. Kee Zerbo said: *"After birth, comes education. For a given society, through education it is perpetuated Education is a collective birth that prolongs the individual biological birth."* [6] In this passage, he is essentially saying that raising a child in traditional Africa belongs to the whole community. Thus, the socialization of a child in Africa begins in the extended family, where he interacts not only with his biological parents. He communicates with other members of the extended family such as aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents. They monitor the children's behavior and actively participate in their education (Kyongo-Male and Onyango, 1984).

In African society, ties with neighbors are sacred. We share joy and sorrow with our neighbors. Therefore, they have the right to look at the behavior of children everywhere. *"For example, if a child misbehaves on the street, a neighbor may intervene to discipline him"* [11].

However, this socialization of the African child goes beyond discipline. The focus is on socialization through work. The child participates in the production of goods needed by his family. The socialization of the child takes place under the sign of obedience, (Kyongo-Male and Onyango, 1984). The processes of socialization are sometimes marked by rituals of transition that combine drama and practice (Oppong, 1999). These include mutilation (circumcision, excision) and other spiritual dictates.

Rites of passage from one stage to another are accompanied by the moral and physical education of children. The mode of socialization varies depending on the gender of the child. In fact, in the process of socialization, the boy develops aggression, while the girl develops submission and tenderness. In urban areas, the socialization of children takes place in a different context.

The family in Africa is undergoing changes due to socio-economic constraints. Due to poverty, the extended family tends to disappear in African societies (Jarre Mathieu 1991). The family circle is narrowing more and more. This situation gives rise to the construction of individualistic models of the family. The study of cultural values is mainly carried out by the mother, who often lacks the presence of her husband, who works all day. For families that have migrated, the socialization of children suffers from the absence of grandparents and other family members.

Defining the concept of socialization, we noted that the process of socialization of the child begins both in the family and at school.

The child in Africa, especially in rural areas, participates in the production of resources (agriculture and animal husbandry) necessary for the life of society. A child comes into the world to increase the labor force of his family. This is the philosophy of African society. At a certain age, he is

not considered a burden to his family. On the contrary, he supports his family in producing the resources necessary for his survival. *"In Africa, many children drop out of school due to domestic and rural work" [7].*

African society as a whole prefers the socialization of the child through work. But the perception of school in Africa varies from one community to another, from one family to another. Perception in Africa school also depends on the success or failure of students, their socio-professional integration after studying in the economic sphere. They also vary depending on the level of education achieved by the country: the more students, the more the school is a recognized institution in the process of socialization (Lange, 2003).

The construction of modern African society is associated with urbanization driven by globalization. Political instability and conflicts have increased migration flows. The city represents a hotbed of dynamism and change for young migrants. Thus, Engin F. Osip sees an undeniable socializing role in the city: *"A city is a place where people's lives are organized, connected with the lives of other people. It is also a place where socialization creates identity and develops people's individuality and sociability. [13]"* In fact, the norms and values instilled in youth in African societies are the result of cultural changes taking place in cities.

Due to unemployment and underemployment, most of the young people in the city work in the informal sector. They find jobs that allow them to demonstrate initiative and innovation. The informal sector in Africa is a stepping stone for the vocational training of a child. The skills acquired in this sector influence the behavior of young people.

«The acquisition of skills in the implementation of the profession is a powerful vector of the child's socialization. It promotes autonomy and develops a spirit of responsibility in young people.» [14] Some parents, due to their professional activities, devote themselves less and less to the upbringing and socialization of their children. Some parents leave home in the morning for work and return late in the evening. This situation creates a family vacuum around the child. The child spends most of the time at home, on the street. He is left without support, without a leader.

Children in this family context interact most with their peers and other agents of socialization such as social networks and the media. These media and social networks with which the child communicates today spread other values, norms, sometimes contrary to African society. Due to the location of the extended family and its methods of socialization, the African child is torn between typically African and foreign values.

Some of the behaviors seen in recent years among young people in Africa are viewed by older people as moral drift. Thus, in Africa there is a need to develop a new educational policy. African societies need an educational policy that takes into account the erosion of the extended family as the first agent of socialization and the destruction of social networks, media in the African educational space. Every human society develops. Its educational needs are also

evolving in accordance with its social, economic, cultural, political realities. In general, the analysis of the features of the African child's socialization process shows that the child grows up under the influence of the community, a multitude of socializing agents. Various pedagogical methods are used in the process of socialization of a child in Africa.

Unlike Western society, the socialization of the African child is largely influenced by the community. *The child is considered a common good. Therefore, the entire community is obliged to monitor his behavior [12].* Parents and family serve as a bridge between the child and society. The loss of a father or mother and the inability of the family to take care of the child hinders his development, his socialization. The coverage of the concept of socialization allowed us to emphasize the importance of the social environment and the pedagogical methods that are used in the process of socialization of children, especially orphans.

4. Methodology

In order to answer methodological problems, our article was based on a documentary study that focused on two types of works (essays): general works devoted to methodology and pedagogy in general, as well as specific works on the socio-pedagogical characteristics of the socialization of orphans. This is a descriptive (non-experimental) approach, which was endorsed in this study. It occurred in 2 out of 4 children's villages in Mali (especially in Sanankoroba and Kita). This study is based on a reality that creates a problem, and which is expanding, in view of the growing number of orphans in children's villages in Mali. This growing number of orphans creates difficulties associated with their social and educational assistance. This preliminary study made it possible to identify and describe the design and teaching methods used in these centres. We essentially exchanged leadership and the teaching team. In fact, we spoke individually with 4 out of 16 educators, 10 out of 35 mothers, 12 aunts out of 40, and some members of the administration of 2 children's villages. Socialization of orphans. Members of the school administration of the visited children's villages answered the questionnaire. In these interviews, the main attention was paid to educational activities in the school, the relationship between the school and families.

5. Organizational and Socio-Pedagogical Features of Children's Villages

Millions of children around the world survive on the streets for various reasons. Without support, they are at risk: lack of access to education, violence, exploitation, abuse. To remedy this situation, institutional assistance has long been the preferred option. Among these institutions supports children - orphans there are children's villages. In Mali, children's villages offer social and pedagogical support to

orphans with the help of a special device. This support device is based on two socio-educational units: the family and the school with their "ramifications."

5.1. Families SOS

Children's villages are made up of families that offer help to children (girls and boys) separated from their parents, family life, modeled on the African model. The family consists of 6 to 8 children aged 2 to 15 years. The family is headed by the mother. Her daily educational tasks are supported by one or two aunts. Family ties are based on the values of solidarity and togetherness. Children in the family share everything, even clothes. Same-sex children usually live in the same room. They eat together at any age. They must eat what they are given. So said the mother: "There are words to be avoided: I don't like it, I don't want it. Times are tough and can get tougher. We are happy with what we have today, if tomorrow we have more, the better." Through these words, we aim to develop in children the values of humility and courage to face life's difficulties. The children of the family have the opportunity in a large yard to play, communicate and interact under the supervision of their mother and aunt. The rules of work in the family and the corresponding sanctions are discussed at the family council under the guidance of the mother.

The nature of the relationship of children in the family is gerontocathic. Indeed, the younger ones are obliged to obey the elders. In return, the elderly are obligated to help and protect the youngest. According to Louis W. Thomas, "in Africa, old age is not a decline, but rather an acquisition and progress." (Louis W. Thomas, 19983: 1). Older people help children through their life experiences and guide the youngest in their socialization process. In the family, household work is distributed among the children according to age, gender, and ability. Girls from 9 years old do laundry; boys carry water and other materials that the family needs, the mother said. Families support two caregivers in the process of socialization of orphans. One is responsible for school monitoring of children, the other for social educational and cultural activities in the village.

For several years, research has shown that it is beneficial for families and schools to participate in a concerted participation in student success. This observation tends to become a requirement. Thus, the school teacher serves as a bridge between the family and the school. They will check if the child is suitable to go to school. To do this, he exchanges with mothers who know children better. It also monitors children's learning activities individually. It can apply for class support for children who are having difficulty learning a particular school subject. He personally intervenes in families to help some children with their homework. At the end of each semester, he issues a summary of the results for each child and gives it to his mother. In one family, older people help the younger ones learn, one mother said. *"In support of students with learning difficulties, the roles played by*

families and the school determine the orientation of practice in the field, especially in schools." [8]. A sociocultural animator works in each of the two children's villages visited. Every child's village has an artistic troupe. She entertains orphans under the guidance of a socio-cultural animator. The favorite activities of these troupes are theater and choreography. These activities are mainly aimed at distracting and educating children. Through the theatre, we inform orphans about the dangers of the problems that threaten our society: drug addiction, violence, prostitution. Through the theatre, we convey values such as work, justice, honesty. A group of researchers showed the importance of certain methods in the development, socialization of orphans: therapy through art, fairy tales, dances, theater. Thanks to the introduction of these methods, many orphans in Russia have improved their health (V. S. Mukhina, L. Z. Kuzina, Ya. N. Gutsaluyk).

5.2. School

There is a school in each of the children's villages visited. These schools include a kindergarten and a basic school. The kindergarten accepts children from 3 to 6 years old. The main school includes elementary school (at 6 years old) and college at 3 years old. In the process of socialization, the school receives support from the garden and the workshop. The school through life and through life, this famous formula of Ovid Decrol (1871-1932), is therefore the focus of children's villages in Mali. Thus, under the guidance of a gardener, orphans are introduced to the cultivation of vegetables.

Besides these exercises, they learn other trades in the workshop: dyeing, carpentry and other handicrafts. In a children's village in Mali, school is connected to life. By practicing certain professions, school can become a springboard for entry into working life. We are talking about creating an educational environment for orphans, taking into account the socio-economic needs of society. The experience gained in an appropriate educational environment should allow the child to acquire fundamental qualities for adaptation to social and professional life.

In children's villages in Mali, children also receive religious education. Indeed, imams regularly visit these centers to explain the Muslim religion to children. At the same time, priests are accepted to explain the Bible to children who have chosen Christianity. These religions coexist in perfect symbiosis in the children's village. Religious education contributes to the construction of the child's social identity. It also provides an opportunity to develop the moral, civic and spiritual dimensions of the child.

Pedagogical activity is based on two principles: firmness and kindness. Children must strictly follow the rules and be responsible for the consequences of their actions. On the other hand, children who demonstrate good behavior and academic performance are rewarded. The local care coordinator stated: "It is necessary for any caregiver to know an orphan child in order to better

support him.” To do this, it is important to communicate and negotiate with children. It is important to take into account the characteristics and needs of the child in the process of his socialization.

6. Conclusion

This article focuses on the issue of expansion given the growing number of orphans in children's villages. This growing number creates difficulties in caring for children. The study is interested in the socio-pedagogical conditions of socialization of orphans living in these centers. It is held in Mali in sub-Saharan Africa. Its purpose is to identify and describe the organizational and socio-pedagogical features of children's villages. It critically examines the environment and pedagogical practices available in these institutions. The study collected data, documenting the following specific goals: 1) to determine the socio-pedagogical arrangement in place; 2) identify and describe the socio-pedagogical practices used. This study innovates by presenting the environment and pedagogical practices of children's villages in Mali. Few studies have focused on this aspect of children's villages in Mali.

Despite the limited number of participants, the results of this study allow for several observations: According to the results, orphans live in a family and school environment. The results show that in the children's village these two social institutions (family and school) interact in the care of orphans. The results also show that reinforcements are being made to prepare children for working life (vocational training in workshops and gardening). We notice that there is no divergence between the participants in the process of socialization of orphans. There is rather complementarity between actors, between institutions. There is synergy between actors and between institutions. At the end of this study, it can be stated that there are shortcomings in terms of social and pedagogical support in children's villages. The game is the child's favorite field for the development of physical and intellectual abilities. However, children's villages lack play spaces and infrastructure. Socialization requires the exchange and interaction of people with their social environment. But this study shows a lack of interaction between orphans and communities (the urban population in which they live).

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