

PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF JUVENILES AND THEIR INSTITUTIONAL LIFE

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Abstract:

India facts 440 million children live in India (aged below 18 years) constitute 42% of India's total population; one-third of them live in conditions of abject poverty and neglect. Kerala ranks third in the issue of violence against children, 1 in 5 children are sexually abused in Kerala, and 56.10% of children in Kerala were physically abused in one or more situation. According to Juvenile Justice Act, there are two major classifications of Juveniles, Children in Conflict with law and Children in need of Care and Protection. This study mainly focuses on Children in need of Care and Protection of Thrissurs Juvenile Home. Researcher selected "Descriptive Research Design" and 60 Juveniles as sample size for the study. Using Structured Questionnaire, collected secondary data through interviewed the respondents. The major findings of the study are, 44% of Juveniles under the Institutionalized are coming under the age group of 11-14 years, Child Abuse is the major reason for Institutionalization (34%), Alcoholism of Parents and Consequent problems are more prone in these Children's Families, 56% of juveniles are satisfied with the services provided by the Juvenile Home including educational and recreational services. Through this study, Alcoholism, Family Conflict, Economic constraints, Peer group influence etc are the major factors for Institutionalization and Community Health centers, Counseling Centers and Social workers have had major role in these areas.

Key Words: Juvenile Justice Act, Children in Conflict with law, Children in need of care and protection, Institutionalization, Child Abuse.

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INTRODUCTION

Children are future of our nation. The importance of children in development is unique and complex. Children are both facilitators as well as deterrent factor in the process of development. Indira Gandhi, the first recipient of United Nations Award on population and development in 1981, observed, 'Children are not hands for work but mouths to feed, bodies to clothe and shelter and have host of other needs'. Juvenile is a status in our society; a social position somewhere between "Child and Adult".

According to Juvenile Justice Act, there are two major classifications of juveniles; An Act to consolidate and amend the law relating to *juveniles in conflict with law* and *children in need of care and protection*. 'Juvenile Delinquency' or 'Juveniles in conflict with law' has been used for various anti-social and undesired behaviours on the part of children. This anti-social behavior signifies only misconduct in certain cases where as in other cases it refers to serious deviant behavior like rape, murder, theft, dacoity and other criminal activities. Hence, delinquent behavior ranges from waywardness to serious behavior disorder, from minor to blatant violations of law. Children in need of care and protection are those children whose basic needs such as food, shelter, medical care, educational opportunities, security and psychological well being are not met. Poverty, Malnourishment, famines, girl child neglect and commercial exploitation are some of the other causes for increasing number of children in need of care and Protection [CNCPL]. The major category of CNCPL includes five groups, abused and traumatized children, orphans, street and working children.

The study is attempts to find out the psycho-social factors lead the Juveniles to Institutionalization and their institutional life of Juveniles in the Thrissur Juvenile Home. Rehabilitation through Institutionalization is not a new approach. Section 9 of the Juvenile Justice Act empowers the State Government to establish and maintain Juvenile Homes for the reception of neglected Juveniles. Few studies have been carried out about the Children in Juvenile Homes; from the view point that these children are neglected ones (either physically or psychologically) and are in need of Care and Protection. This study mainly emphasize on Children in need of care and protection.

JUVENILES- CLASSIFICATION

According to Juvenile Justice Act, there are two major classification of juveniles. An act to consolidate and amend the law relating to *juveniles in conflict with law* and *children in need of*

care and protection, by providing for proper care, protection and treatment by catering to their development needs.

Children in Need of Care and Protection

Children in need of care and protection are those children whose basic needs such as food, shelter, medical care, educational opportunities, security and psychological well being are not met. These basic needs are not met because of increasing social, economic, and political problems. Poverty, malnourishment, famines, girl child neglect and commercial exploitation are some of the other causes for the increasing number of children in need of care and protection [CNCP].

Apart from economic reasons, there are other social and cultural causes for increase in number of CNCP, which include, joint families transforming into nuclear families, lack of earning male member at home, incapacity to provide for basic needs because of large number of children, growing indiscipline among children and care free atmosphere among parents. The major category of CNCP include four groups,

- Abused and Traumatized children

Child abuse and neglect by parents or guardians has been on the increase because of the adverse social and family circumstances. Neglected children suffer from psychological and emotional stress. The factors responsible for child abuse operate at two levels, with the child and with the parents. The factors operate at child level include:

1. The child may be born out of unwanted pregnancy or illegitimate relationship
2. It may be a step child
3. Disabled child
4. HIV infected child
5. Difficult economic and social circumstances in the family

- Orphan children

An orphan may be defined as a child under the age of 18 years, who has lost both or one parent, as well as a child who has living parents but they are not in a position to take care of the child because of their physical and mental incapacity.

- Street Children

Street children are those who work and live on the street full time fending for themselves. There are also those who work on the streets during day time and get back to home at night with their street earnings to support their families.

- Child Labor

Childhood is a time for playing, enjoying and learning about nature. But there are millions of children who have to work than 12 hours a day in order to survive. They have no time for play, for education, for family affection.

Children in Conflict with Law or Juvenile Delinquency

Thus the term 'Juvenile Delinquency' has been used for various anti-social and undesired behaviors on the part of children. This anti-social behavior signifies only misconduct in certain cases where as in other cases it refers to a serious deviant behavior like rape, murder, theft, dacoity and other criminal activities.

Juvenile Home in Kerala:-

Rehabilitation through institutionalization is not a new approach. However, what is new is envisaged segregation of neglected delinquent juveniles in the correctional institutions. Section 9 of the Juvenile Justice Act empowers the state government to establish and maintain juvenile homes for the reception of neglected juveniles. Generally in correctional institutions (Juvenile Homes) two types of programmes are offered to the juveniles. On the one hand, basic amenities like accommodations, food, clothing health and recreation are provisional training imparted through instructors. Besides cultural meets, community contacts, excursions etc are conducted to facilitate the socio-cultural development of inmates. All these inputs are expected to help them reform and develop a healthy personality to lead an independent and normal life in the community after their release from the institution.

Child Welfare committee as stipulated in the Juvenile-Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act had been set up in all districts of Kerala except Kozhikode, Kannur, Thrissur, Malappuram, Kazargod and Palakkad. There are eight children homes in Kerala- Thiruvananthapuram, Kozhikode, Thrissur, Kottayam, Allappuzha, Kazarkode, Kollam and Ernakulam. Researcher selected Thrissur Juvenile Home for the study.

Poverty, lack discipline, pampering, parental indifference, ill treatment by step parents, broken and unhappy home conditions, industrializations and consequent

migration of the family as part of the circumstances affecting the emotions and psychology of the boys account for their ending up at the institution.

JUVENILE JUSTICE ACT

Juvenile Justice Act 2000 is a central Act enacted for the care, protection, development and rehabilitation of children in need of care and protection and juvenile in conflict with law. There are 6 Juvenile homes, 14 observation homes, one Balasadanam (Certified as Juvenile Home) and 2 special homes are functioning in the state. The Act seeks to achieve a uniform legal framework for Juvenile Justice in the country as a whole so as to ensure that no child in any circumstances is lodged in jail or police lock-up. Juvenile Justice Act envisages a new approach towards proper rehabilitation of children in need of care and protection. Institutionalization is the last resort in the case of juveniles. The Juvenile homes, observation homes need modification for security purposes. The inmates of the institution are imparted computer training.

Juvenile Justice Board and Child Welfare Committee hold the meeting in Observation homes in the districts where Children's Home are not functioning. Besides JJB/CWC members, Juvenile parents, legal counsels, DPO's and other department staff attend the meeting.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature pertinent is an important step in a research and is means to locate, elucidate and present the past as well as the current literature of research in a planned investigation. The review gives a clear perspective of the overall field of research and allows comparing the result of the studies in the particular field with the present research. It provides the researcher an opportunity of gaining insight into the method and approaches employed by other's and help to pursue the research. The review pertaining to the study has been divided in the following heads:

- **Angela A Robertson, Xiaohexu, and Andrea Striping (2010)**, *study on Adverse events and substance use among Female Adolescent offenders: Effects of coping and Family support*. This study examined a stress coping model for substance abuse among female adolescents, involved in the Mississippi juvenile justice system. Participants were interviewed in 2006, regarding exposure to adverse and traumatic events, and they

completed self-administered measure of social support from relatives, coping strategies, and questions of frequency of alcohol and other drug abuse.

- **Liesl. M. Iterinrich, and Eleconorra Gullone (2006):** “*A study on the clinical significance of loneliness*”. Satisfying social relationships are vital for good mental and physical health. According we recommend that the alleviation and prevention of social relationship deficits be a key focus of clinicians. In the review, we focus on loneliness as a crucial marker of social relationship deficits and contend that loneliness should command clinicians attention in its own right-not just as an adjunct to the treatment of other problems such as depression.
- **Spear (2000);** conducted “*A study on the influence of peers on Adolescent development*”. In this study, he emphasized that the children spend much more time interacting with peers than with family members, which is why peers grow to have such a large influence on adolescent development. Peers provide a source of experiences for children because they help to develop social skill through positive reinforcement. Peer group can also serve as role models of maladaptive behavior; such as delinquency, smoking, and drug intake.
- **Newman and Richard.S.(2000);** “*A study on the contribution of parents, teachers and peers for the development of children’s skills and attitudes associated with adaptive help seeking*”. The study stated that at school, a child who engages in adaptive help seeking, monitors his or her academic performance, shows awareness of difficulty, he or she cannot overcome independently and remedies that difficulty by requesting assistance from teachers and classmates. It traces early help seeking behaviors, in particular in home and link these to help seeking behaviors in the classroom.
- **Sheriff and others (1990)** presented a research paper at XIX annual conference of Indian society of Criminology held at Bangalore on the topic adjustment and deviance among school children. They studied relationship between adjustment and deviance among 231 school children attending three different schools representing three different social strata. The study revealed that the slum school children were poorly adjusted to their family, school, peer groups, teachers and adjustments in general.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methods and concepts attempt to study the factors responsible for institutionalization of juveniles and their life in Juvenile home. It includes Statement of Problem, Significance of the study, objectives, Research design and limitations of this study.

Statement of the Problem

World Health Organization estimates that 40 million children below the age of 15 suffer from abuse and neglect, and require health and social care. Child Neglect cases reported to National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children [NSPCC] rise 30% in a year. India facts 50,000 children were found to be missing in 2006. India has the world's largest number of sexually abused children with a child below 16 raped every 155th minute. Study on Child Abuse by "Ministry of Women and Child Development" and the Government of India in 2007. It covered 13 states with a sample size of 12447 children, 2324 young adults and 2449 stakeholders. Looked at different forms of Child abuse, as Physical, sexual, emotional abuse and Girl Child Neglect in 5 different evidence groups; Children in family environment, Children in School, Children at work, Children on the street and Children in institutions.

Kerala ranks third in the issue of Violence against children, one in five children are sexually abused in Kerala, 56.10% of children in Kerala were physically abused in one or more situations.

Significance of the Study

Millions of children in today's world undergo the worst form of child labor which includes Child Slavery, Child prostitution, Child trafficking. In this modern era of material and technological advancement, children in almost every country are being callously exploited. The Juveniles in Juvenile Homes is often sidelined by the Society, reinforcing the negative attitudes that these children have towards themselves.

Psychosocial factors like family environment, extra-familial environment like Neighborhood, peer group influence, Schooling, economic factors and psychological factors are mainly influencing the Institutionalization of Juveniles. The present study aims to identify the major factors that responsible for Institutionalization and provide proper suggestions for alleviating this problem.

Objectives:-

Main Objective:-

- Psychosocial factors Responsible for the Institutionalization of Juveniles and their Institutional life.

Specific Objectives

- To know the Socio-demographic profile of the respondents
- To find out the Pre-institutional life of Juveniles
- To examine the role of family responsible for institutionalization of Juveniles
- To examine the role of Extra-familial environment responsible for the Institutionalization of Juveniles.
- To know the role of economic factors for institutionalization of respondents
- To analyze the psychological aspect of Institutionalization of Juveniles.
- To understand the Institutional life of Juveniles and their relations to services provided in the Institutions for their care and rehabilitation.

Research Design

Researcher used Descriptive Research Design for the study. Descriptive knowledge regarding the Institutional life of Juveniles is very helpful to suggest suitable preventive measures for the children. The male Juveniles aged 8-18 who were institutionalized in the Juvenile home was taken as the Universe of the study. Sample was selected using Simple Random Sampling Method, 60 samples were randomly selected as the samples of the study. Researcher used Observation, Structured Questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion for Data Collection.

Variables

Dependent Variables

Family environment:-

Type of Family, Family income, Parents availability, Familial relationship, parental discipline these are the influencing factors for child development.

Extra-familial Environment:-

Neighborhood, Schooling, Peer group influence, Gang life etc are major contributing factors coming under this variable.

Economic Factors:-

Psychological factors:-

Independent Variables

Age, Religion, Education, Birth order are coming under this category.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria:-

- Researcher selected sex group as male. Because male delinquency is more prone than female delinquency.
- Age is from 8-18, in which children develop their physical, mental, social, moral and spiritual aspects of life.

Exclusion criteria:-

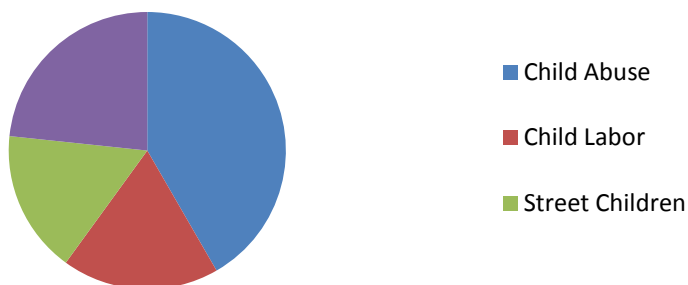
- Juveniles of other institutions
- Deaf and dumb Juveniles
- Juveniles from other institutions.

REASONS FOR INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Through this study it is clear that, most of the juveniles were placed in the Institution because of Child Abuse (from family members), and the root cause was alcoholism of Fathers of Juveniles. Economic Constraints, Child Labor and Street staying of children also the reason for Institutionalization. The factor behind the Child labor and street children also uncondusive family environment.

| Reason for institutionalization | Number | Percentage |
|--|---------------|-------------------|
| Child Abuse | 25 | 41.7 |
| Child Labor | 11 | 18.3 |
| Street Children | 10 | 16.7 |
| Economic Constraints | 14 | 23.3 |
| Total | 60 | 100 |

Reasons for institutionalization



Limitations of the study

- At first time, Researcher faced a difficulty for getting permission to collect data from Juvenile Home.
- Researcher only get 90% of juveniles for collecting data, remaining children are deaf and dumb and some children are from out of state.
- Time constraints also faced by researcher.

Findings and Suggestions

The major findings of the study are,

- The majority of the respondents belong to the age group 11-14 years and middle child.
- Most of the respondents are coming from the uncondusive family atmosphere like divorced or separated parents, alcoholic parents, discordant family or parents with extra familial affairs.
- Majority of the respondents are institutionalized because of Child abuse (34%), 24% respondents Child labour, 22% were in economic constraints and 20% were street children.
- Among 60 respondents, 50% of their parents (father) are alcoholic.
- 34% of them had Aggressiveness and 56% of respondents like loneliness.
- Majority of respondents get favorable treatment by the members of Institution and 22% of them faced indifferent treatment of Institutional staff.

The suggestions provided by the researcher are,

- Community counseling and Guidance Centre under the supervision of Social worker should be established with a view of find out risk families and problematic children.
- Counseling centre in school must be established for early detection and care of the problematic children in school.
- Poor families of juvenile must be helped through the various income generating programmes so that they become economically empowered.
- Above all, this institution must be managed by committed and qualified personals, which have a deep understanding of child psychology and social work, because all the success and failure of any programme depends upon the type of personnel employed for the purpose.

Conclusion

Every child needs nurturing, education and exercise. These needs don't end when children come in contact with law. This study illustrates that psycho-social factors like family environment and economic factors highly influenced for Juvenile Institutionalization. Alcoholism of parents, Parents rivalry, economic constraints, and psychological dilemmas are the contributing factors of Child neglect; that children become lead their life through Child labour, trafficking, Beggary, and delinquency. Ultimately, these children will be institutionalized as part of Rehabilitation. Family conflict and Alcoholism of fathers were the major factors for these juveniles become institutionalized. Other factors like economic constrains, peer group influence, psychological dilemmas are also affected them directly or indirectly. Most of the Juveniles are satisfied with the educational services provided by the institution because they hadn't get proper schooling before. The study is also expected to be helpful to provide an insight to the social workers, teachers, probation officers, other officials and policy makers about the need of developing awareness programmes among Community people about Parenting and Child development.

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