

# NEED FOR GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES IN CHILD CARE INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

## Abstract

Children admitted to Child Care Institutions (CCIs) have certain deficiencies that Counsellors and Social Workers need to address in unique ways. Such children can only be expected to appreciate their peculiar skills and assess their strengths and limitations through appropriate counselling. It also gives them the confidence and courage to assimilate into Institutions from different social backgrounds. Further, as per the United Nations Global Compact article, children are the most vulnerable in society; they are dependent and have less control over their lives. Some children are more marginalised and neglected than others because of their Psycho-social problems. The systematic review in this paper aims to assess the need for counselling services in CCIs in India, to find the existing social adjustments of children in CCIs, and to identify the gap in counselling services in CCIs. The Juvenile Justice Act of 2015 mandates that institutions should be the last resort for any child. Lack of parental supervision and support makes children susceptible. Therefore, Child Care Institutions and Observation Homes are places wherein children in need of care and protection and conflict with the law are kept (J.J Act,2015). It is observed that children staying in CCIs exhibit poor social adjustments, poor emotional stability, and behavioural problems (Micheal,2018). Further, due to the lack of love, affection, and untrained staff of the CCIs, the children do not want to stay in CCIs, resulting in trafficking nexus, drug and substance abuse addiction, and antisocial behaviours. Due to a lack of a stimulating environment, intellectual and perceptual competencies were also low among children staying in the institutions.

**Keywords:** Counselling services, Child Care Institutions (CCIs), Social Adjustment.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

As per the Ministry of Statistics 2021 report, India has the world's largest child population, with about 25.69 per cent of the Indian population falling into the 0–14 years category. India has ratified the United Nations Child Rights Conference, an international treaty that outlines the rights of every child, including civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights (UNCRC, 1992). The Rights of Children were realised in India because the treaty and convention had played an important role. Followed by this, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), 2007. The Juvenile Justice (J.J. Act, 2000) to cater to children's basic needs through proper care, protection, development, and social integration. This Act was amended in 2020 and establishes the Principles, Systems, processes, and related statutory bodies. The statutory bodies include the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) for Children in Conflict with the Law and Child Welfare Committee (CWC) for children in Need of Care and Protection.

Ganguly, E.T., Ali, B., & Mathur, S. (2007) stated that India has progressed in overall indicators like a decline in Infant Mortality Rates, improvement in child survival, school dropout rates falling, and improved literacy rates, but is far from achieving Millennium Development Goals (2015), when children are considered. The negative fallout of the changing socio-economic status is that children are deprived of social benefits, leading to forced migration, an increased number of children on the streets, more trafficked, and a rising number of children engaged in full or part-time labour. Therefore, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has envisaged the Child Protection Scheme, which brings many existing Child Protection Schemes- Mission Vatsalaya, which created a scope for the creation of new institutional facilities and maintenance of existing institutional facilities for both children in conflict with law and children in need of care and protection. These include Shelter Homes, Children's Homes, Observation Homes, Special Homes, and Places of Safety.

Every Children's Home must be registered as a Child Care Institution under sub-section (3) of section 34 of the Act and rule 71 of the J.J. Act. These institutions are run by state Government or can run through the help of civil society. The CCIs provide long-term care, treatment, education, training, development, and rehabilitation for children needing care and protection. Children admitted to Child Care Institutions (CCIs) have specific deficits that Counsellors and Social Workers need to address in unique ways. It is only through appropriate counselling that such children can be expected to appreciate their peculiar skills, assess their strengths and limitations, gain self-confidence, and develop the capacity to face the challenges of life better. It also provides confidence and courage to the child as the children come from Institutions from different social backgrounds. It helps in the child's overall development by choosing the right career and participating in extra-curricular activities provided to the children of the Institutions.

Further, children are the most vulnerable section in society; they are dependent and have less control over their lives. Some are more marginalised and neglected than others because of their Psycho-social problems like attention deficit disorder (ADD)/ ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) in children, including exhibiting inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsiveness, about children's Anxiety Disorders, Substance Abuse Disorder, Depression, Sense (fear) of being rejected or neglected, etc. These children constantly and consistently need Counselling and Psycho-social treatment to reconnect to

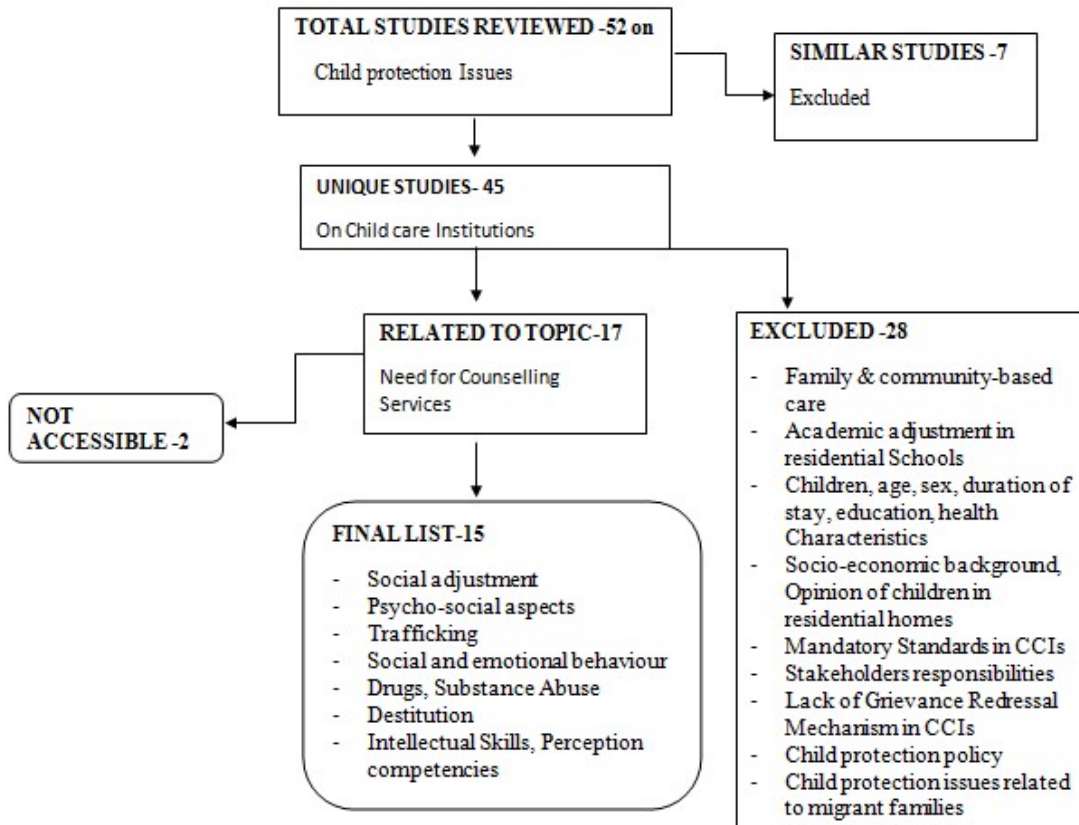
their environment and community and reintegrate into society. Counsellors can help these children to develop positive feelings toward themselves.

Guidance and counselling are a continuous and ongoing process. While providing legal aid to children, it increasingly becomes apparent that counselling and psychological therapy are needed for their healing and into society. As per provision of Rule 46 (6) under “The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Rules, 2007”, every institution should have the services of trained counsellors or collaboration with external agencies such as child guidance centers, psychology, and psychiatric departments, for specialised and regular individual therapy for every juvenile or child in the institution. Given the above, this systematic review article attempted to assess the need for Guidance and Counselling Services and social adjustments of children in Child Care Institutions in India.

## **II. MATERIAL AND METHOD**

In this research paper, an attempt was made to review and assess the need for counselling services in childcare institutions in India. This review followed the PRISMA 2009 checklist (Moher et al., 2009) and flow diagram guidelines and was informed by the Assessment of Multiple Systematic Reviews to ensure methodological quality (Shea et al., 2009).

At first, for the systematic review, keywords like Child Protection in the Indian context were searched in Google Scholar, Research Gate, SSRN, and other search websites. Subsequently, the studies from 1973 to 2019 relating to Child Care Institutions in India were searched. While searching, specific studies on the need for counselling services in CCIs in the Indian context were downloaded. Ultimately, the research studies were narrowed down based on the specific topics: Social adjustment, Psycho-social aspects, Trafficking, Social and emotional behaviour, Drugs, Substance Abuse, Destitution, Intellectual Skills, and Perception competencies.



**Figure 1:** Shows the Flow Chart of the Methodology Adopted for Systematic Review

### III. DATA EXTRACTION

The data extraction was carried out for the systematic literature review by formulating sub-topics, and the data abstraction was prepared in Excel. The Excel columns included the study's name, authors, place, year, sample size, type of problem dealt with, tools used, findings, and recommendations. Data was extracted from each study and organised into a standardised table with crucial headings to ensure systematic and compatible analysis.

### IV. RESULTS OF SYSTEMATIC REVIEW STUDIES

Numerous studies are available in the domain of institutionalised children, and a few of them are discussed below, which have briefly addressed the self-esteem, social adjustment, emotional stability, inferiority feeling, and adjustment problems among institutionalised children. It is also mentioned that the following **seven studies** were studied before implementing the child protection scheme and the implementation of UNCRC. More studies were not considered for review because no minimum mandatory non-negotiable standards were prescribed for the Child Care Institutions before implementing the child protection scheme.

**Table 1**

	<b>First Author &amp; Year</b>	<b>Name of the Study</b>	<b>Source of Publication</b>	<b>Place of the Study</b>	<b>Type of Problem Addressed and Specific Issues Dealt</b>	<b>Recommendations of the Study with Systematic Review</b>
1.	Khurana, S., 2004	Mental health status of runaway adolescents	Indian Journal of Paediatrics	Child Observation Home for Boys in Delhi	Psychological problems amongst the runaway adolescent boys - depression and attempted suicide. Prevalence of Physical abuse and substance abuse	As per the study, the recommendation included the runaway adolescents suffering from various mental health problems, indicating a need for a broad-based psycho-social intervention programme. These children require counselling by a trained counsellor in Children's Homes and CCIs (Khurana,2004).
2	Deb, S., 2005	Processes of child trafficking in West Bengal: A qualitative study	Social Change	Rehabilitation Homes for Trafficked Victims of Narendrapur, West Bengal	Trafficking Process of Trafficking – lured for marriage, jobs, and promise of a better life by known persons in the community	This study recommended a comprehensive rehabilitation of these trafficked victims; mental health services like counselling and legal support must be provided to these girls (Deb,2005).
3.	Aangan, 2006	A Study on the effectiveness of Observation Homes and Children's Homes in Maharashtra	A Non-Government Organisation (NGO)	CCIs in Maharashtra	Social, Emotional and Behavioural Problems faced by the Institutionalized children	NGOs should offer counselling through creative and therapeutic activities. Local psychologists and psychiatrists can assist in exceptional cases. NGOs can establish a referral system with nearby local government and

		through the children's and staff's perspectives.				private hospitals (Aangan,2006).
4	Saraswati C., 2007	Study on Adjustment of Institutionalized Children	Karnataka Journal of Agriculture. Science	Juvenile Institutions (Four in number) of Belgaum Division in Karnataka 9 Two Boys, two Girls)	CCI Children's Social, Emotional, and Educational Adjustment	The study recommended that the Department of Social Welfare address children's social, emotional, and educational problems. This can be done through special training for in-service teachers or through guidance and counselling services provided by a counsellor (Saraswati, 2007).
5.	Tiwari, P., 2007	A Study on the Juveniles in conflict with law	IRA International Journal of Management & Social Sciences	Observation Homes Delhi.	Antisocial and criminal activities include drug dealing, thefts, assaults, etc.	The essential rehabilitative step is recommended timely intervention in the form of a safe environment and counselling to channel their energy in a positive direction (Tiwari, 2007).
6.	Malhotra, C., 2007	A Study on the Drug use among juveniles in conflict with the law	The Indian Journal of Paediatrics	Prayas, Observation Home for Boys, New Delhi	Pattern of drug use, reasons for initiation, and the perception of the effects of using drugs Peer group and Media influence	As per Malhotra (2007), It has been determined that peer influence plays a crucial role in the start of drug use. Therefore, anti-drug campaigns need to focus on peer groups. Additionally, it is necessary to ensure that counselling services

						are available for young people at all healthcare system levels.
7.	Stanley, S., 2008	Psycho-social correlates in adolescent children of alcoholics-implications for intervention	International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation	Private Psychiatric Hospital in Tiruchirappalli	Adjustment in adolescent children of alcoholics (CoAs) – Self Esteem	It has been suggested that it is imperative to provide therapeutic intervention for this population and to create programs for Children of Alcoholics (CoAs) that focus on enhancing their resilience, developing desirable personality traits, and improving their psycho-social functioning through appropriate psychotherapeutic procedures (Stanley, 2008).
8.	Jose, 2008	A Study on the psycho-social aspects of institutionalised adolescence	Social Work in Mental Health: Book	CCIs of Kerala	Psycho-social aspects – Social, Emotional, and disciplinary adjustments	As per the study, institutionalised had higher insecurity, lower self-esteem and emotional adjustment mental problems (Jose,2008).
9.	Pasi , A, R., 2011	A study on socio-demographic profiles of children under institutional care in Mumbai	Journal Family Community Medicine	Mumbai	Prevention of destitution of children in the community	Researchers recommended implementing family assistance and sponsorship schemes to support socio-economically deprived families raising their children, along with counselling services (Pasi, 2011).

10.	Devarsetty, P., 2012	A study to estimate the distribution of whitener use among adolescents in Observation Homes for children in conflict with law	-	Two Observation Homes for boys and girls in Hyderabad	Whitener use among adolescents	The study recommends creating a thorough intervention plan to address the issue of inhalant use among street children. Additionally, it suggests establishing social support systems to guide, counsel, and assist these children in finding suitable job opportunities, living arrangements, and education. (Deversetty, 2012).
11	Padmaja, G., 2014	Psycho-social Problems and Well-Being in Institutionalized and Non-institutionalized Children.	IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science	Hyderabad & Secunderabad, Telangana; NGO that provides institutional care to children in a community-based sample, local government-run schools;	Internalizing & Externalizing Problems	Psycho-social interventions, particularly resilience-based, are highly essential. An assessment of children's counselling needs and an examination of the institution's corresponding services must be undertaken (Padmaja,2014).
12	Sivvala, R., 2014	Impact of Behavioural Intervention on the Adjustment of Inmates of Children Homes	IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science	Children Homes in Andhra Pradesh state	Behavioral intervention is the adjustment of inmates in children's homes.	The Department of Social Welfare should address children's social, emotional, and educational issues by offering specialized training to teachers or counselling services through the institution's counsellor's guidance (Sivvala, 2014).



13	Talukdar, H.K., 2015	Cognitive Competence Among Institutionalised and Noninstitutionalised Children In Greater Guwahati Area	A Doctoral Thesis, Gauhati University	Different Child Care institutions in Greater Guwahati, Kamrup district of Assam.	Intellectual skills and perceptual competency	Efficient and highly motivated trained caretakers and experts like counsellors should be employed in the institutionalized residences so that the institutionalized children can get proper guidance and counselling to improve their overall performance/cognitive competence (Talukdar,2015).
14	Sandhyarani, M C., 2016	A study on the Perception of adjustment among institutionalized adolescent girls in selected districts of Karnataka	International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research	Hubali & Mysuru Govt Institution for Girls, Karnataka	Perception of adjustment among institutionalized girls	It is essential that the concerned personnel /counsellor /house mothers responsibility to identify such adjustment problems before they persist further and to come out with measures to mitigate the problems of institutionalized adolescent girls with suitable intervention strategies to overcome problems (Sandhyarani,2016).
15	Talukdar, R.R., 2019	Social Adjustment of Institutionalized Children Under Need Care and Protection in Assam	IRA International Journal of Management & Social Sciences	Child Care Institutions run by the Govt of Assam and NGO of Assam.	Social adjustment of CCI children in need of Care and Protection	According to Talukdar (2019), there is a significant difference in the Mean Value of social adjustment between female and male children.

Table 1 Shows the systematic reviews of studies based on Author and year, Name of the Study, Source of Publication, Place of the Study, Type of Problem Addressed and Specific Issues dealt with, and Recommendations of the study about the systematic review

## **V. DISCUSSION**

The Juvenile Justice Act of 2015 mandates that institutions should be the last resort for any child. Many children in our country are at high risk for abuse and neglect due to a lack of parental supervision and support, which makes them vulnerable. Child Care Institutions and Observation Homes are facilities where children in need of care and protection, as well as those in conflict with the law, are housed.. The above systematic review found that children staying in CCIs exhibit poor social adjustments, poor emotional stability, and behavioural problems. Further, due to the lack of love, affection, and untrained staff of the CCIs, the children do not want to stay in CCIs, resulting in trafficking nexus, drug and substance abuse addiction, and antisocial behaviours. Due to a lack of a stimulating environment, intellectual and perceptual competencies were also low among children staying in the institutions.

Most studies have mentioned a need for counselling services to address the above problems. However, no study has assessed the efficacy of counselling services on social adjustment in the CCIs nor the status/ quality of counselling services provided to children in Child Care Institutions. The above research studies have not discussed the social adjustment during aftercare (Beyond 18 years) of children living in CCIs and the importance of counselling and life skill education for future repatriation and rehabilitation in society.

## **VI. LIMITATIONS AND DRAWBACKS**

1. The chief limitation is that the Mission Vatsalaya former Child Protection Scheme in India has been implemented for about 12 years. Therefore, the selection of studies/ references is only about those CCIs/ Homes registered under the J.J. Act.
2. Another drawback is that most studies addressed children's social adjustment in CCIs and recommended counselling. No studies found that assessed quality counselling services provided to the inmates in the Child Care Institutions.

## **VII. FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

1. There have been very few comprehensive studies on the quality and effectiveness of counselling services provided in Indian Child Care Institutions. Regular screening for psychological problems in these children is necessary. Furthermore, Extensive training and support for CCI staff can prevent psychological problems affecting children's development. Institutions must study counselling services for children's overall development.
2. The systematic review also provides a direction to Study the efficacy of the counselling services or to assess the status of counselling services in CCIs across the country. Again, aftercare is the final stage in a continuum of care for institutionalised children, facilitating their rehabilitation and social reintegration after they age out from CCIs. Studies can also

be taken to find the efficacy of counselling services for aftercare practices about the Need for Care and Protection of institutional children.

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