Health Care Facilities in Child Care Institutions in Delhi

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Abstract

UNCRC which is known as United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of the Child has clearly distinct that an individual who has not accomplished 18 years of age is known as a child. The recent figures in the area of child rights shows that total child population in India is 472 million which makes thirty nine percent (39%) of India’s entirety population [1]. Orphaned and destitute children in India are found to be 20 million [2]. Children who found in difficult circumstances are categorized in two categories that is Children who needs care and protection and who are conflict with law [3] and these children placed in custody of institutions where they stay for long period or short period which depends on the recognized need of the child. Children living in institutions or children homes necessitate basic care, health and educational services. These integration and rehabilitation functions must address needs of children and helps in removing challenges from their path of development. As endorsed in Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act 2015 these institutions must follow standardized norms and provide services to cater the obligatory requisite to all children. The services include food, protected shelter, apt attire, remedial aid and other required service. The aim of this research study is to understand significance of the facilities provided to children with special reference to health care facilities in Child Care Institutions in Delhi.

Keywords: Child Care Institutions (CCIs), Children in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP), Condition of Health, Health-facilities, Medical-care, Medical-services

Introduction

In India population of the children (including 0-18 years) is estimated 472 million. According to National Institute of Urban Affairs (2016) in India 39% of the total population contains children. Even after end numbers of laws and policies have been implemented after the independence era the visible extreme poor condition of children can be seen through recent surveys and research studies. Children have equal rights but issues related to protection of children have always indeterminate and unaddressed matters of nation. The studies have shown that a huge number of children suffer abuse, neglect, unequal access to resources, poverty, discrimination, and homelessness despite of existence of laws and policies [6]. A number of researches have been taken up over a period of time to describe the deprived condition of children living in difficult circumstances in India. It is factual and so evident that children are dependent on adults primarily on their parents for their needs, growth and development. It is believed that family holds the primary responsibility of the child. Family caters all kinds of needs which comprise emotional support, physical care, psychological desires and economic needs of the child. A family is usually the most important and protective environment of the children (Richard Carter, 2005). Both bodies UNCRC and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2000 [3] mentioned that it is the prime duty of biological families of the children to help children grow in protected environment. Further it states that in deficiency of familial support it is the accountability of State to obligatory protects children who are underprivileged and destitute of family love and support [9]. All Children who by the law are identified in need of protection are located in institutions. The duration of the stay of children in these institutions can be up to days, months or years depending on the nature of each child case [4]. India’s population of orphaned and destitute children is anticipated to be 20 million which reflects the needs of these institutions [3]. State plays a vital role in providing safe shelter to these children so that they must grow with their full potential. Special provisions are made in Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act 2015 (abbreviated as JJ Act) which
promotes accurate rehabilitation and adaptation of children in society [5].

Understanding Children in Need of Care and Protection CNCP cases:

A child is known as a person below 18 years of his/her age as mentioned in Convention on the Rights of the Child (abbreviated as CRC) but it is also noted that age of a child defined in diverse legislations pertinent to them in different circumstances [7]. A child who is in any circumstances like abused, working, orphaned, at families at risk, abandoned, differently abled, victims of sexual exploitation, on streets, beggars, affected by disasters, physically and mentally abused, drug falls under the purview of CNCP cases as mentioned in JJ Act. Cases of CNCP are hear by the proficient government organization namely Child Welfare Committee (abbreviated as CWC). CWC is a work surface of members wherein a chairperson and four members designate to exercise their rights in cases of CNCP. These members are proficient in their fields and every case of CNCP produces before the bench. The best interest of the child is main objective of the committee and keeping the needs of every case of the child it takes decision to return them to their original parents or custodian or to available suitable members of family. CWC issues certificate to child who is with permission is available for adoption in the cases where child cannot be placed in original family. There are also cases where child cannot be placed in family or family like environment thus child stays in children homes depending upon his/her age and needs identified in the respective cases.

Significance of Child Care Institutions (CCIs):

The foundation of Child Care Institutions was laid down to address the challenges of children who live in extreme complicated circumstances and are in need of long term place of safety. It is widely measured as one of the best sources to rehabilitate children. Under the provisions of the JJ Act the term “child care institution” is defined as any home for children whether run by the government or non government authority or place of safety or specialized adoption agency and a fit facility intended to provide care and protection to children. The basic and fundamental function of all types of children homes is to address the developmental needs of the children. It means that CCIs are designated to grant physical, emotional, mental and educational facilities to all children. These children homes are endorsed to register under the act. It is mandatory to pursue the uniform rules and regulations defined in the act [9]. To regulate CCIs a provision of cancelation of the registration and punishment is given if the home violates rules, regulations and standard norms prescribed under the act. Children residing in homes are in need of rehabilitation and require integration in the society [11]. These institutions are being established to provide secure place of stay children, to address whole rehabilitation, to uphold physical and mental health and on the whole growth and development of all children.

Facilities provided in Child Care Institutions:

i. Basic and essential care facility:

Basic and essential care facilities provided in Child Care Institutions are meant to endow with basic necessities to children including safe accommodation, age and gender suitable garments, sufficient as well as healthy food, supervision and attention from the adults [10].

ii. Health care facility:

Providing proper medical assistance and taking care of children health is the most vital function of Child Care Institutions. The health care services given to children includes: facilitate immunization as per their age, monitoring of physical growth and maintenance of the records, routine check ups and arranging visits of the doctors, taking children to doctors as and when needed, giving children medicinces on time, taking care of their diet and ensuring proper medical care.

iii. Educational facility:

Children living in CCIs are attending formal education. Every child has right to be admitted to school. Children who require extra attention bridge and tuition classes are arranged for them to ensure that no child would lack behind in education because of their past events.

iv. Counseling facility for psychological needs:

Child Care Institutions provide regular counseling sessions to all children which is done by a qualified psychologist to address and cater psychological and mental well being of every child in institutional care.
v. Recreational facility:

Child Care Institutions arrange and organize age suitable recreational activities such as dance, yoga, music, picnics, outings, sightseeing, monuments visits, educational visits, participation in cultural events, festival celebrations, national and international days celebration, birthdays celebration this further enlightening child’s concentration and aptitude as well as provide children opportunity to explore and experience new world.

Objectives

- To understand the significance and facilities provided to children in Child Care Institutions in Delhi.
- To study the health care facilities provided to children residing in Child Care Institutions in Delhi.

Methodology

The study was undertaken to understand health care services provided to children who are staying in Child Care Institutions in Delhi. Integrated research approach using both quantitative and qualitative method is been adopted to gain better understanding of contemporary status of children in institutional care. A interview schedule (semi structured) was used as tools and techniques of data collection. Data analysis was done using thematic analysis also using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software.

The study was conducted in children homes in Delhi and included both types of children homes- NGO as well as government. The children who are in long term care were interviewed.

The sample was collected from 4 children homes out of which 2 were NGO homes and 2 homes were of government in nature. The sample sizes of 20 children- 10 male and 10 female from both children homes were approached. The children were from the age group of 10 - 18 years. A total number of 5 stakeholders working under heath care unit of the children homes were also interviewed to know the process of health care services.

Findings

Thematic Analysis:

Health of the children: It was found that at the time of the admission of children in institutions children are diagnosed with infirmity similar to skin diseases, fits, lower immunity, low weight, malnourishment and other diseases due to the inappropriate and harmful events occurred in their previous life prior coming to homes [12]. Children are found to be frequently ill and have complains of frequent fever, stomach pain, headache, etc, due to lower immunity system and malnourishment.

Health care facilities in Child Care Institutions: Each child care institutions have medical staff including a full time nurse and a visiting physician. When children are admitted in child care institutions the medical staffs takes care of all the health related needs of the children and essential amenities are being provided. Children homes have both visiting as well as regular doctors and other staff to examine standard health check of children. The health care team or staff members are responsible to provide following services to all the children:

- Facilitating immunization as per the age of the child,
- Monitoring of physical growth including weight, height, head and chest circumference,
- Maintenance of the health records and individual files,
- Routine check ups,
- Arranging visits of the doctors in case of refer to special doctors,
- Taking children to hospitals as and when needed,
- Giving children medicines on time,
- Taking care of the eatery habit and diet of each child,
- Ensuring delivery of medical services to all the children.

Quantitative Analysis:

Relationship between health of the children and nature of children homes:

As this study covered both type of children homes government and NGO hence to find out the relationship between health of the children and nature of the children homes test namely Two sampled t test was applied.
The above mentioned data indicates no connection between health condition of children and the nature of children home. It further indicates that children in NGO home are evenly healthy as in children living in government homes. And the same health facilities are offered to children in both the homes.

**Conclusion**

The establishment of Child Care Institutions was initiated to save children from any type of complex and destructive situation and is considered as one of the finest mean to cater to the needs of children who are not in parental care due to some reasons and have need of safe- place, support and care which can be for long or short period of time depending on the needs identified by the competent authorities. It is known as fit facility for children. Child Care Institutions are approved and obliged to fulfill all requirements from giving basic facilities to health, a place of safety, and educational as well as emotional support to all children residing in these children homes. This study was conducted to understand health care facilities provided to children living in institutions covering both types of children home that is NGO and Government. Outcomes of the study indicate both the children homes that are government and NGO provides facilities to children and adhere rules and
guidelines as endorsed in JJ Act. It was found in the study that children who are admitted in Child Care Institutions gone through horrendous encounters occurred in their early period of life because of which they are more prone with sickness like fits, skin illnesses, worse resistance, low weight, malnourishment and others. Children when admitted to child care institutions their wellbeing needs are taken consideration by staff members and all essential and fundamental things is been given to them. There are ordinary and low maintenance specialists and staff medical caretakers who screen customary registration of the children. At the point when they fall ill they are taken to the medical clinics and hospitals by their caregivers. The information proposes that children in government home are similarly healthy as children living in NGO run homes. And the same health facilities are offered to children in both the homes.

**Ethical Clearance:** As part of the primary data, the data was collected under the PhD programme of Amity University by the PhD scholar from children living in child care institutions and stakeholders. The consent of the primary respondents was taken at the time of interviews and their identities remain confidential. Hence, data does not contain any identifiers and no ethical issues were involved in this research study. Therefore, no ethical clearance was taken.

**Source of Funding:** The data was collected under the PhD programme hence this research study is self financed by the PhD scholar.

**Conflict of Interest:** Nil

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**References**

[1.] Status of Children in Urban India, Baseline Study. 2016.


[3.] The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of children) Amendment Act 2000


