



ISSUES, PROGRAMMES AND RIGHT TO SURVIVAL IN CPOs: EFFECTIVENESS STUDY AMONG STAFF

Dr. A. Thomas William
(UGC Post Doctoral Awardee)
Dean of Academic Affairs & Associate Professor ,
Arul Anandar College (Autonomous) , Karumathur, Madurai.



ABSTRACT

Child Protection Organizations (CPOs) working at the grass root level to safe guard the children who are in need of care are the major key stakeholders require quality of service. Staff working in these organizations plays a pivotal role in fulfilling this dream to come to a reality. Selected CPOs is covered and the staff is accessed to collect the primary data through sampling method using a questionnaire as a tool. The prime focus for this paper is to observe the various programmes, target groups covered by these CPOs and to statistically measure the intervention level on right to survival. The major target groups covered are child labour and the programmes are health care services, rehabilitation programmes and right based education. significantly CPO staff had scored intervention of right to survival only to a moderate extent shows that the need for enhancing quality of service among the staff of these CPOs and which requires consented efforts by various stake holders and improving their working and service conditions.

KEYWORDS: Child Protection Organizations , health care services , rehabilitation programmes.

INTRODUCTION

The discontentment that erupted was how the Non-governmental organizations, termed as Child Protection Organizations (CPOs) effectively function in addressing to protect the children at risk and vulnerability. The purpose of this study is to observe the strength of the protective systems through understanding the programmes, issues and rights to survival as perceived by the staff working in such CPOs. There is an increasing prevention of child rights violation with the joint efforts of government and non-governmental organizations but hitherto there exist violation and exploitation of child rights in various forms and changing patterns, which could not be denied. Agencies working in the fields to protect the children are the major key stakeholders in organizing other stakeholders and taking up immediate measures in rescuing and protecting the vulnerable and distressed children.

REVISITING THE REVIEWS

The predominant share by India to the world population is 19% which indicates that the significance ought to be given to the children for their survival and programmes for ensuring their childhood in a free and conducive environment. More over 42% of India's total population is below the age of eighteen years adds to the thrust to be focused on children (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2007).

According to the recent UNICEF report (2005) over one billion children have been denied their childhood. It is reported that some 640 million children lack adequate shelter; 400 million children have no access to safe drinking water; 270 million lack health care amenities and 140 million especially girls have remained outside the ambit of formal schooling. More than 150 million children are malnourished worldwide. It was observed by Rao, (2016) in a micro level study that more than half of the children from

both rural (56%) and urban (58%) schools were under nourished. The Global Nutrition Report 2017 also confirms that still malnutrition is a serious issue in India as reported in PTI (Nov 6, 2018).

Indian children are deprived of their rights to survival (Khalakdina, 2006), health, nutrition, education and safe drinking water. About 63% of them go without food and 53% suffer from chronic malnutrition. About 85 million do not get immunized, 27 million are severely underweight and 33 million have never been to school (UNICEF, 2005).

While Pawar (2007) analyzed the causes for the pathetic condition of children in India, reported that the contributory factors are extreme poverty, family breakdowns, health issues and disasters, and deep rooted cultural practices that lead to gender biases, biased attitudes and discrimination of certain groups appear to force children as child labour (Bhargava, 2003).

On the darker side these children are susceptible to various forms of neglect (India has twenty-one million 'unwanted girls' as observed by Economic Survey 2018; as reported in Indian Express on Sep 20, 2018) and abuses despite the number of child protection laws and linkages of services that are advanced by both governmental and nongovernmental organizations (Segal, 2001). India has played a major role in increasing the vulnerability of children to various and newer forms of abuse ((Kacker, Varadan, & Kumar, 2007).

Hence efforts are required from various stakeholders especially the CPOs to augment the rights to the resources, skills and contributions necessary for the survival and full development of the child. They include adequate food, shelter, clean water, formal education, primary health care, leisure and recreation, cultural activities and information about their rights. These rights require not only the existence of the means to fulfill the rights but also access to them.

OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To understand the various Children Issues addressed by the child protection organizations (CPOs)
- ❖ To observe the types of Programmes advocated by these CPOs in order to safeguard and protect the Children from exploitation and abuse
- ❖ To measure statistically the level of Intervention by the staff of CPOs on Child Right to Survival

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This is a descriptive study conducted among CPOs belong to eight southern districts of Tamilnadu. The CPOs are categorized into three types as follows: from each district; one CPO that works purely for children was selected (FCP) and thus Eight CPOs, working with prime focus to child protection were selected. Five CPOs, which have child protection as one of the prime activities (PCP), were selected from each district; totally under this category 40 CPOs selected. Three CPOs with child protection as one of the activities along with other activities (ACP) were selected from each district, thus totally under this category 24 CPOs selected. Overall, 72 CPOs were selected. Depending upon the availability of the number of child protection programmes and staff members; at the time of data collection, the CPO staff were selected and conducted interviews for collecting primary data. Totally, 172 staff was interviewed. This paper covers only one part of the large data collected for a major project.

Discussion

Gender and Age Group

In this study, which gender is highly engaged in the promotion and protection of child rights is a quest; hence the gender is cross tabulated with the age group of the staff, which is produced in table 1. The age group of the CPO staff was calculated based on the value of the mean (38.13) and standard deviation (8.61). The deduction of mean and standard deviation was attributed as less than 30 years, the addition of mean and standard deviation was assigned as more than 46 years and the value between these two categories was fixed as ages between 30 years and 40 years.

Table -1. Staff Age Group and Gender

Gender	Age Group			Total
	< 30 years	30 - 46 years	> 46 years	
Male	14 (15.7%) 51.9%	42 (47.2%) 38.9%	33 (37.1%) 89.2%	89 (100.0%) 51.7%
Female	13 (15.7%) 48.1%	66 (79.5%) 61.1%	4 (4.8%) 10.8%	83 (100.0%) 48.3%
Total	27 (15.7%) 100.0%	108 (62.8%) 100.0%	37 (21.5%) 100.0%	172 (100.0%) 100.0%

More than half of the CPO staff were males and slightly less than 50% were female staff. More than three fifth of the CPO staff were in the age group of 30 years to 46 years, 15.7% of the CPO staff were in the ages of less than 30 years and 21.5% of the CPO staff were more than 46 years of age. Female staff (61.1%) were higher than male staff (38.9%) in the age group between 30 years and 46 years. Male staff were higher than female staff in the age categories of less than 30 years (51.9% males; 48.1% females) and more than 40 years (89.2% males; 10.8% females).

Chi-square test was administered to find out the association between gender of the CPO staff and age group of the CPO staff. Since the level of significance was lower than 0.05 ($\chi^2 = 27.925$, Degrees of freedom = 2, P = 0.000), null hypotheses was rejected. Hence, there was a statistically significant association between gender of the CPO staff and age group of the CPO staff. It could be deduced that a significant proportion of males and females were engaged in child protection programmes.

Children Issues addressed

The CPO staff were enquired on their children's issues addressed by their Child Protection Organizations. Table 2 shows responses of the CPO staff on children issues addressed by Child Protection Organizations.

Table -2 CPO Staff on Children Issues addressed

Issues	Status		Total
	Addressed	Not Addressed	
Abandoned/Neglected	73 (42.4%)	99 (57.6%)	172 (100%)
Child labour	142 (82.6%)	30 (17.4%)	172 (100%)
Runaway children	58 (33.7%)	114 (66.3%)	172 (100%)
Street children	80 (46.5%)	92 (53.5%)	172 (100%)
Orphan children	117 (68.0%)	55 (32.0%)	172 (100%)
Semi-orphan children	90 (52.3%)	82 (47.7%)	172 (100%)
Abused children	84 (48.8%)	88 (51.2%)	172 (100%)
Delinquent	28 (16.3%)	144 (83.7%)	172 (100%)
Child marriage	113 (65.7%)	59 (34.3%)	172 (100%)
Bonded	69 (40.1%)	103 (59.9%)	172 (100%)
Victims of natural calamities	55 (32.0%)	117 (68.0%)	172 (100%)
Infected children	66 (38.4%)	106 (61.6%)	172 (100%)
Affected children	68 (39.5%)	104 (60.5%)	172 (100%)
Physically disabled	67 (39.0%)	105 (61.0%)	172 (100%)
Mentally retarded	50 (29.1%)	122 (70.9%)	172 (100%)

Female infanticide	30 (17.4%)	142 (82.6%)	172 (100%)
School dropouts	56 (32.6%)	116 (67.4%)	172 (100%)
Excluded by caste (SC/ST)	44 (25.6%)	128 (74.4%)	172 (100%)
Others	16 (9.3%)	156 (90.7%)	172 (100%)

A good majority of the CPO staff (82.6%) stated that their CPOs addressed child labour issues. More than six tenth of the CPO staff expressed that their CPOs had addressed issues of orphan and child marriages. It could be inferred that the CPOs had addressed issues based on the issues existing in the focused geographical areas.

PROGRAMMES ON CHILD PROTECTION

The CPO staff were questioned on various programmes promoted for child protection in their organizations. Table 3 illustrates responses of the CPO staff on programmes for child protection. Nearly one tenth of the CPO staff expressed that education was promoted for children's development. More than three fourth of the CPO staff asserted that counseling was provided for the target children. More than seven tenth of the CPO staff articulated that their CPOs had promoted health care services, rehabilitation programmes and right based education.

Table -3. CPO Staff on Programmes for Child Protection

Programmes	Promoted	Not Promoted	Total
Health care services	126 (73.3%)	46 (26.7%)	172 (100%)
Nutritional services	119 (69.2%)	53 (30.8%)	172 (100%)
Shelter	45 (26.2%)	127 (73.8%)	172 (100%)
Uniforms/Clothes	72 (41.9%)	100 (58.1)	172 (100%)
Education	154 (89.5%)	18 (10.5%)	172 (100%)
Vocational Training	70 (40.7%)	102 (59.3%)	172 (100%)
Counselling	133 (77.2%)	41 (23.8%)	172 (100%)
Rehabilitation	58 (33.7%)	114 (66.3%)	172 (100%)
Awareness	122 (70.9%)	50 (29.1%)	172 (100%)
Career guidance	70 (40.7%)	102 (59.3%)	172 (100%)
Right based education	126 (73.3%)	46 (26.7%)	172 (100%)
Value education	55 (32.0%)	117 (68.0%)	172 (100%)
Recreation	60 (34.9%)	112 (65.1%)	172 (100%)
Sports & Cultural Events	86 (50.0%)	86 (50.0%)	172 (100%)
Others	8 (4.7%)	164 (95.3%)	172 (100%)

Level of Intervention on Child Right to Survival

To what extent the intervention strategies for right to survival being adopted by the CPOs, was viewed in the dimension of the CPO staff. Table 4 shows the level of intervention on child right to survival responded by the CPO staff. The level of intervention on right to survival was scored as low, moderate and high based the scores of mean and standard deviation. Table 4.53a displays mean and standard deviation for weighing scores for level of intervention of child right to survival. The coefficient of variation for all the measured variables showed a value closer to 0, signifying that the data had a greater uniformity with respect to the mean and there was a general consensus among the samples.

Table -4 Level of Intervention on Child Right to Survival

Variables	Level of Intervention			Total
	Low	Moderate	High	
The organisation addresses the children being at life risk	21 (12.2%)	151 (87.8%)	0	172 (100%)
The organisation promotes health programmes for the target children	37 (21.5%)	68 (39.5%)	67 (39.0%)	172 (100%)
The organisation focuses on the nutritional aspects of the target children	20 (11.6%)	105 (61.0%)	47 (27.3%)	172 (100%)
The organization works on the right to survival in respect of name choice and nationality of the target children	63 (36.6%)	109 (63.4%)	0	172 (100%)

Table -5
Level of Intervention on Child Right to Survival:
Mean and Standard Deviation for Weighing Scores

Variables	N	Mean	SD	CV	M-SD	M+SD
The organisation addresses the children being at life risk	172	6.87	3.10	0.45	3.8	10.0
The organisation promotes health programmes for the target children	172	6.59	3.72	0.56	2.9	10.3
The organisation focuses on the nutritional aspects of the target children	172	7.09	2.89	0.41	4.2	10.0
The organisation works on the right to survival in respect of name choice and nationality of the target children.	172	6.36	3.22	0.51	3.1	9.6

Note: = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; CV = Coefficient of Variation

A majority of the CPO staff (87.8%) had scored at moderate extent about the organisation addresses the children being at life risk to a moderate extent and 12.2% of the CPO staff had scored the same action to a less extent. Nearly two fifth of the CPO staff had scaled the performance of the organisation in promoting health for the target children to a moderate degree, 39% of the CPO staff had scaled the same assertion to a high extent and 21.5% of the CPO staff had scaled the same action to a less extent.

More than three fifth of the CPO staff marked the organization's nutritional support to the target children to a moderate extent, 27.3% of the CPO staff viewed the same action to a high extent and 11.6% of the CPO staff marked the same action to a less extent. Most of the CPO staff (63.4%) asserted that the organisation works on the right to survival in respect of name choice and nationality of the target children to a moderate extent and 36.6% of the CPO staff scored the same action to a low extent.

It could be inferred that most of the CPO staff had scored intervention of right to survival to a moderate extent. This study data has concurrence with the CPO heads' views of moderate level of intervention on right to survival.

CONCLUSION

Though there is an increasing promotion of child rights with the joint efforts of government and non-governmental organizations but hitherto there exist violation, abuse and exploitation of children and their rights in various forms despite the number of child protection laws and linkages of services that are advanced by both governmental and nongovernmental organizations. It is concluded that there are number of programmes being organized by CPOs and which are mainly focusing upon the welfare and development of children in which education and counseling finding a predominant place. The major target group is child labour followed by orphan and victims of child marriages as predominant in these geographical areas. The CPOs had promoted health care services, rehabilitation programmes and right based education. It is significantly concluded that CPO staff had scored intervention of right to survival to a moderate extent shows that the need for enhancing quality of service among the staff of these CPOs and which requires consented efforts by various stake holders and improving their working and service conditions.

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