

# Periodic Research

## Children in Need of Care and Protection: A Study of Punjab

Paper Submission: 20/05/2020, Date of Acceptance: 29/05/2020, Date of Publication: 30/05/2020

### Abstract

Children are the future of every nation. They have to be protected and nurtured, as they are the citizens of tomorrow. Family is the strongest unit and institution for the overall development of the child, however, where this institution is either missing or hampered, it becomes the duty of the State to provide for the 'best interest of the child'. Hence, it is significant to study the actions taken and the provisions made by the State to protect and provide for the children who are in need of care and protection. This study was conducted on a sample of 100 beneficiaries of institutional services provided in the State of Punjab. There are a total of 7 Homes run by the Government and 36 run by the NGOs. Of these, for the study, all Government homes and 16 NGO run homes were covered. The objective of this paper is to bring out the difference in the provision of services by the Government and the NGO run homes and the satisfaction of the beneficiaries with these services. The secondary data has been collected from the journals, newspapers and government reports etc.

**Keywords:** Children In Need Of Care and Protection, ICPS, Government Homes, NGO Run Homes.

### Introduction

Since the advent of welfare state, the ambit and nature of the government's work has undergone myriad changes from the time of the police state. The State takes upon itself the responsibility for the growth and the wellbeing of the national resources, including human resources. This responsibility extends from the birth till the death of a citizen, from the cradle to the grave. Hence, child welfare is an important element of the welfare state. Though the family is the strongest social defence against criminality, but when the family is non-existent or ineffective, or broken or faulty, the onus of the child lies upon the State. This responsibility extends to protection and nurturing the child to grow up into responsible adults, contributing positively to the society<sup>1</sup>. If the State does not take upon itself this task, or does not perform well in the same, it exposes itself to the threat of added burden and liability of future criminals and social threats. However, if it protects and nurtures such children, it stands to profit in the long run in both social and economic terms. Hence, childhood being a universal human experience, every society has a vital stake in its children. The future and stability of a society depends upon the quality of its children and their childhood.

The International community as well as the Indian State are sensitive towards the rights of children. India acceded to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1992 and signed two additional protocols. The UNCRC has come to establish the child as a citizen of today, rather than an adult of tomorrow. It bestows upon each child certain rights, which can be divided into three categories:

Right to provisions	Right to protection	Right to participation
---------------------	---------------------	------------------------

This brings to the fore the shift in the approach towards child rights from welfare approach to development approach, which is rights based as against needs based and focuses upon holistic development of the child, appreciating inclusion and mainstreaming the participation of the child<sup>2</sup>. In compliance of the provisions of the UNCRC, the State of India has brought out various policies, schemes and legislations to give effect to the provisions of the CRC. The main out of these being:

1. The National Policy for Children, 2012
2. The Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 and Rules thereof
3. The Integrated Child Protection Scheme.



**Suchreet Kaur Cheema**  
Research Scholar,  
Dept. of Public Administration,  
Panjab University, Chandigarh,  
Punjab, India

It is mainly through these instruments that the protection of child rights has become a reality in India.

### Importance of Child Protection

The importance of child protection cannot be underestimated as only when adequate protection is provided to the children and their life and childhood safeguarded, can the other aspects of their welfare be provided for them. Child protection being imminent, the Central Government in India launched the Integrated Child Protection scheme in 2009-10, as an umbrella scheme ensuring various aspects of protection to the children in need of care and protection and children in conflict with law. It aids and extends the motive of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2000. This scheme has been adopted by almost all the states in India. The state of Punjab, signed a MOA with the Central Government in 2010 to implement this scheme in the state.

### Review of Literature

With a view to comprehend the subject matter in detail, review of literature has been done as under:

Arnold (2005)<sup>1</sup> recognises that children have particular needs, distinct from those of the adults. The rights of the children and the care givers are also interdependent with each other and that too to a degree which excludes separation, especially in the developmental years of the Child's growth. The author believes that children are the most negatively affected by violence, hunger, exploitation etc. they are also positively affected by adequate public policy for human development. Hence, this realization and understanding has led to an unprecedented increase in the worldwide concern for their wellbeing and human rights.

Assadi (2011)<sup>2</sup> makes a perusal of the international legal framework protecting the rights of the child, bringing forth the nuances and the changes in the Declarations over the years. He observes that the difference between the 1924 and the 1959 Declaration on Child Rights is the realistic approach towards children's needs and the State's ability to provide. He explains the efforts made by India- by the Indian legislature, the executive and the proactive approach of the Indian judiciary to operationalize the international guarantees for children.

Plan International (2016)<sup>3</sup> have detailed the significance of Sustainable Development Goals and how now their ambit and reach is enhanced by adoption of UN Millennium Development Goals in sphere of Children in Difficult Circumstances. The report has also enumerated the various categories of Children in Difficult Circumstances and the reasons which have led to an accelerated increase in the population of Children in Difficult Circumstances.

SeemaNaiz and ZubairMeenai (2019)<sup>4</sup> have comprehensively detailed the legal stand and the policy initiatives taken by the Government of India regarding the alternative care for children and have studied them in light of the International provisions in place acting as the guiding elements. The study also ably brings out the socio-cultural barriers that are acting as hindrances, producing resistance within the

society at large, to make a success of the Alternative Care models.

### Children in Need of Care and Protection in Punjab

The state of Punjab is one of the north western states of the country. The Department of Social Security and Women and Child Development is the main department looking after the implementation of the ICPS in Punjab. For the purpose of administration, state of Punjab is divided into the following administrative units<sup>3</sup>:

S. No.	Division	Districts
1.	Patiala	Patiala, Sangrur, Barnala, Ludhiana, Fatehgarh Sahib
2.	Rupnagar	Rupnagar, SBS Nagar, SAS Nagar
3.	Jalandhar	Pathankot, Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Hoshiarpur, TaranTaran, Kapurthala, Jalandhar
4.	Faridkot	Faridkot, Bathinda, Mansa
5.	Ferozpur	Ferozpur, Moga, Sri Muktsar Sahib, Fazilka

Source: Wikipedia

For the protection of its children, who are in need of care and protection, there are 7 government run and 36 NGO run Child Care Institutions (CCIs) in the state. The details of the homes are as follow:

### District wise Distribution of Children's Home run by Government

S.no	District	No of institutions	S.no	District	No of institutions
1.	Jalandhar	2	5.	Gurdaspur	1
2.	Bathinda	1	6.	Hoshiarpur	1
3.	SAS Nagar	1	Total		7
4.	Patiala	1			

Source: Interview Schedule

### District wise Distribution of Children's Homes run by NGOs

Districts	No. of Institutions	Districts	No. of Institutions
Amritsar	4	Kapurthala	2
Bathinda	1	Ludhiana	4
Ferozpur	1	Sri Muktsar Sahib	2
Faridkot	2	SAS Nagar	6
Fazilka	1	Patiala	5
Hoshiarpur	1	Roopnagar	2
Jalandhar	4	Mansa	1
		Total	36

Source: Interview Schedule

After the coming into force of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015; in compliance of section 41 of the same, all the Homes run by the NGOs in Punjab, have been required to be registered with the Department of Social Security and Women and Children Development, vide their letter dated 25/08/2018. With the coming of the ICPS scheme, even though greater power

has been given to the Government to engage with the children's homes run by NGOs, basic welfare needs of the people are compromised with a limited number of institutions run by the government.

Further, the geographical distribution of Children's Homes run by the Government is uneven too. Though Children's Homes run by Government are also located both in the affluent as well as not so affluent districts. The existence of innumerable number of NGOs for children in non affluent districts proves the dire need existing there. The non governmental efforts have greatly contributed in the development of child welfare services filling the gap created by the government sector. However, equal importance should be given by the government sector to all districts.

### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are enumerated as follows:

1. To examine the services provided in the Government and NGO institutional setups for the children under study.
2. To analyse the levels of satisfaction of the staff of the institutions with respect to their jobs.
3. To identify the overall impact of these institutions upon the children under study.
4. To give suggestions for improvement in policy implementation and functioning of such institutions.

### Significance of the Study

A study on the Government and the NGOs initiatives and performance for care and protection of children in need of care and protection is mandated

as increasing number of children is being subjected to the risk of being left at the mercy of the State. According to the Ministry of Women and Child Development, 170 million children in India are vulnerable to or are experiencing difficult circumstances, such as violence at home, separation from family and street life<sup>4</sup>. These future citizens, if left un-provided for, have a high probability of becoming anti-social and adding to the social conflict and burden of the society.

There are 7 Government run homes and 36 NGO run homes for such children in the State of Punjab. It becomes pertinent to study the sufficiency of the existing Government initiatives in the field, their effectiveness, and suggest measures for improvement in their working. Interface of the Government and NGOs in the area too, is of major significance, as Government work in this field is necessarily complemented by NGOs.

### Research Methodology

For the present study, both primary and secondary data was used. Primary data was collected by interview schedule. The study was conducted on the sample of 20 officials concerned with the Institutions and 100 beneficiaries of the Institutions. The samples were selected by random sampling method. Secondary data was collected from various government records and other sources.

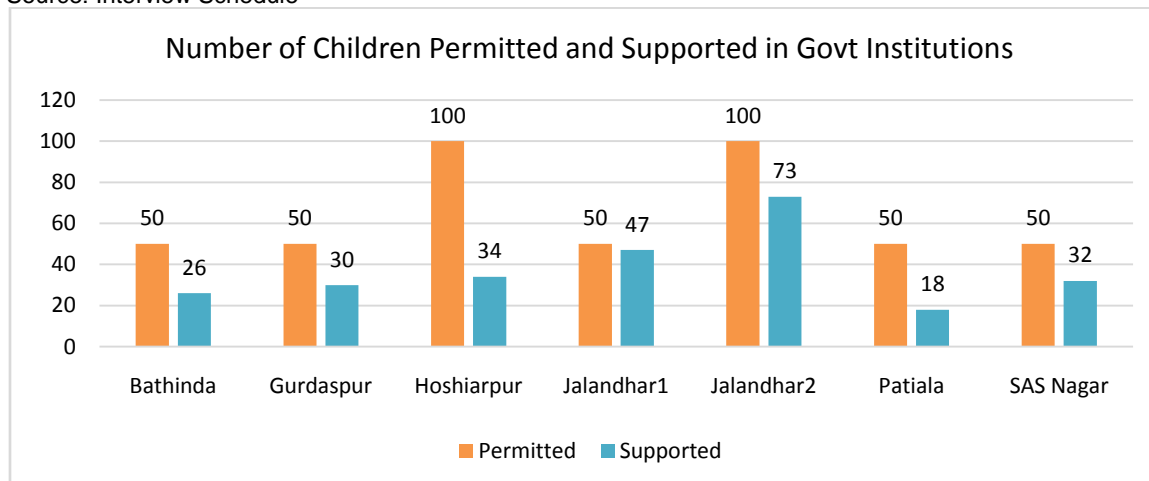
### Number of Children Permitted and Supported in the Homes

According to the data collected for the study, the occupancy levels of the homes have been found out. This has a direct relation with the quantity and the quality of services that are provided to the inmates of the homes.

**Number of Children Permitted and Supported in Govt Institution**

Name of District	Institutions	Number Permitted	Number Supported
Bathinda	Children Home, (For Boys)	50	26
Gurdaspur	Children Home, (For Boys)	50	30
Hoshiarpur	Children Home for Boys	100	34
Jalandhar	Children Home for Girls	50	47
Jalandhar	Children Home (For Girls)	100	73
Patiala	Children Home Rajpura, (For Boys)	50	18
SAS Nagar	Children Home Dusrana, (For Boys)	50	32
	<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>260</b>

Source: Interview Schedule



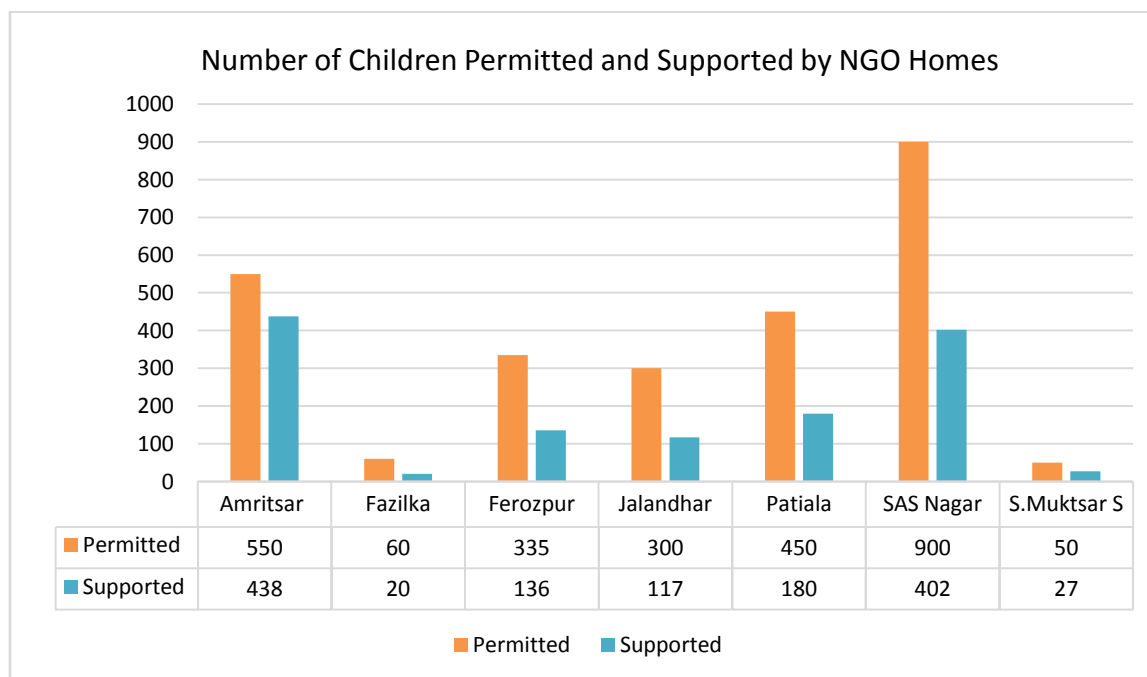
### Number of Children Permitted and Supported in Institutions run by NGOs

The table below illustrates the total number of children permitted in 16 institutions

under study which run by NGOs in different districts of Punjab as well as the occupancy of these Homes.

**Number of Children Permitted and Supported in Institutions run by NGOs**

Name of District	Institutions	Number permitted	Number supported		
			Girls	Boys	Total
Amritsar	All India Pingalwara Charitable Society Amritsar	150	42	46	88
	Central Khalsa Orphanage	400		350	350
Fazilka	Matra Chaya Anath Ashram Bal SanskarGreh	60		20	20
Ferozpur	Arya Anathalya Ashram	300	25	79	104
	Missionary of Charity	35	17	15	32
Jalandhar	Missionary of Charity, Shanti Bhawan	50	21	5	26
	Guru Nanak Anaath Ashram	50	13	18	31
	Unique Home for Girls	200	60		60
Patiala	Mata Gujari Sahara Trust- kalarbheni	300	56	84	140
	S.D.K.S. YadvindraPuran Bal Niketan	150	40		40
SAS Nagar	Jyoti Syrup Kenya Asra Trust, Kharar	150	90		90
	GurAsra Trust	300	102		102
	Apne Foundation	50	4	40	44
	Mata GujriSukhNiwas	150		80	80
	PrabhAasraVillage	250	50	36	86
Sri Muktsar Sahib	Jyoti Foster Care Home for girls	50	27		27



It is understood from the table above that there is no uniformity regarding the number of beneficiaries supported in each institution. There is uniformity in number of sanctioned beneficiaries, depending upon the availability of the infrastructure. No home is full beyond capacity, only the Homes run for Girls by the Government at Jalandhar is almost full to its

capacity, rest all Government run homes, have scope of housing way more children. This is also because the Government provides just these two Homes for female beneficiaries, whereas five homes are available for housing male beneficiaries. As far as the Homes run by NGOs is concerned, there too, no home is full beyond its capacity. Others have ample scope for

housing more beneficiaries as per their capacity. Overcrowding can affect the quality of service. An inadequacy will be faced in all aspects of services provided ranging from healthy accommodation facilities, clothing, diet etc to

### Staff Availability in Homes

proper education and health facilities. In case of the home for girls run by the Government, to solve the issue of overcrowding, mutual transfer is impossible as there are only two homes for them and both in the same campus.

### Staff Availability in Government Homes

S.No.			Till 30.09.18
1	Total no of Full time staff in all Children Homes in the State.	Sanctioned Strength	149
		Working strength	93
		Vacancies	56
2	Total no of Part time staff in all the Children Homes in the State	Sanctioned strength	4
		Working strength	4
		Vacancies	0
3	No. of staff given Additional charge of Children Homes.		6

In the Children's Homes run by Government, a total no of 153 posts are sanctioned. However, only 97 are filled, i.e 63 % of the total sanctioned posts are filled and 37% are vacant. Of these, for 6 posts additional charge has been given. Upon enquiry of the same with the officials of the Department, the

### Staff availability in NGO Run Homes

response given was that recruitment is under process. Upon further enquiry, it was found that all posts of Superintendents of the Homes are filled. The vacancies are in the categories of Accountant, Helper, and Counselor.

### Availability of Staff in NGO Homes under study

Details of Staff Pattern	No. of Institutions	Percentage
Managing committee	16	100%
Manager	16	100%
Warden	14	87%
Counsellor	4	25%
Rehabilitation officer	2	13%
Psychologist	0	0
Medical officer	3	20%
Care takers	15	93%
Teachers	5	32%
Vocational Instructors (Part -time)	9	55%
Typist	11	72%
Clerk	3	19%
Cook	12	75%
Peon	3	20%
Watchman	13	80%

Source: Interview Schedule

The Homes run by NGOs have varied legal identities like some are run by Trusts, Foundations, Societies etc. All these homes have a Managing Committee and a Manager. The other categories of staff recruited by the Homes are as per the needs and requirement of the Homes and their financial capacity.

87% of the homes have a warden. In two homes under study, the warden was not found due to different reasons. In one of the homes, the earlier warden had resigned recently and the authorities were finding a new person. In the other home, the manager is staying in the same compound with family and hence a warden is not appointed.

25% of the homes have counsellors. Only 13% of the homes have rehabilitation officer, mostly the managers or wardens are designated as rehabilitation officers. 20% of the homes have part time medical officer. A doctor from the locality is shown as the medical officer. Some of them visit the

home occasionally. In other homes, children are taken to the medical officer during emergency for consultation. 80% of the homes do not have an enrolled medical officer and the children from these homes are taken to government hospitals when required or there are doctors who volunteer their services to the Homes.

The other administrative staff such as clerk, peon, cook, and typist is seen in non government organizations at varying percentages. Proper staffing is an essential aspect of social welfare administration. In order to carry out the various functions, appointment of suitable persons to various posts under the organization is essential. By such appointments the organization attempts to achieve a pattern of position and responsibilities which ensure unity of aim through supervision. Unfortunately in non-government institutions one cannot find a strong staffing pattern.

## Finding

There is a strong staffing pattern in the Government run homes, with majority of the posts

### Job Satisfaction of Staff

#### Job Satisfaction and Categories of Staff in Government homes

Category	Satisfied		Dissatisfied		Can't say
	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	
Superintendents	25%	35%	6%	27%	17%
Care takers	5%	12%	12%	61%	10%
Vocational instructors	2%	13%	30%	36%	19%
Others	10%	9%	8%	7%	66%

Source: Interview Schedule

The above table exhibits that majority of the staff interviewed have expressed dissatisfaction in job and minority of the staff expressed job satisfaction. 33% of superintendents, 73% of caretakers, 66% of vocational instructors are dissatisfied. Dissatisfied employees are found among all categories of staff in government sector.

A total of 20 staff members working at various posts were interviewed by the researcher from various institutions run by NGOs and majority of them

### Levels of Satisfaction of the Beneficiaries of Homes

#### Satisfaction levels among beneficiaries

Are you satisfied with the services provided by the Home?	No. of respondents		Percentage	
	Govt homes	NGO homes	Govt homes	NGO homes
Yes	22	33	43%	65%
No	28	13	48%	26%
No reply/ Can't say	4	4	9%	9%
Total	50	50	100%	100%

As per the above table, there is not much difference in the satisfied and dissatisfied beneficiaries of the Government run CCIs. However, in the NGO run homes, a clear 65% of the beneficiaries are satisfied with the services provided by the homes, as against 26% who are not satisfied.

### Level of Involvement of Beneficiaries of CCIs

#### Involvement Levels of Beneficiaries in work and Decision Making

Involvement of beneficiaries in work and decision making at institutions	Number of Respondents		Percentage	
	Govt homes	NGO homes	Govt homes	NGO homes
Yes	10	23	20%	45%
No	13	9	25%	18%
Can't say/ No reply	27	18	55%	37%
Total	50	50	100%	100%

Source: Interview Schedule

The above table brings to light the fact that there is greater involvement of children in work and decision making in the NGO run homes as against the Government run homes. A clear 45% of the inmates are involved in work and decision making in NGO run homes as against 20% of Government run homes. However, a staggering 55% gave no reply to this question in Government run homes.

### Findings

There is greater involvement of children living in NGO run homes in work and decision making as compared to the ones living in Government homes.

### Suggestions of the Study

1. There is a need for quicker filling up of vacancies by the Department of Social Security and Women and Children Welfare.

filled. Unfortunately in non-government institutions one cannot find a strong staffing pattern.

i.e. 52% expressed that they are satisfied in their job and 48% of them expressed dissatisfaction.

### Finding

There is no significant difference between the percentage of staff who expressed satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

The main reason for dissatisfaction among staff of both Government and NGO run homes is lack of adequate remuneration.

Only 9% of the beneficiaries in both types of homes gave no reply.

### Finding

Majority of the beneficiaries in NGO run homes are satisfied with the services provided by the Homes.

2. The facilities and remuneration of the staff of CCIs should be improved to ensure that there is greater satisfaction of the employees with their job. Training and sensitization sessions of the staff will also go a long way in helping in this area.
3. Greater involvement of the staff with the beneficiaries and provision of better facilities in Government run Homes may raise the levels of satisfaction of beneficiaries therein.
4. The Government run CCIs should also focus on child work and involvement of children in decision making. There can be constitution of children committees to decide menus etc. which will go a long way in bringing about a feeling of belongingness in the inmates.

## Conclusion

The study concludes that there is greater need to focus on the Government run Child care institutes for children in need of care and protection. As has come forth in the study, there are greater levels of dissatisfaction among the staff of Government run homes as against the NGO run homes, there is a need for focused training and sensitization at that end. This will not only help the staff, but will also percolate down to the beneficiaries and their sense of satisfaction with the institutions and procedures. It is also mandatory that timely review of the situation be taken by the higher authorities. The children should be involved more in the daily routine work of the CCIs. This will help them feel more a part of the homes and improve constructive peer group interaction amongst them, as well as equipping them with life skills. Citizen participation in the homes will also help improve the transparency in procedures of the homes, interaction of children with people beyond the home, and help in resource improvement of homes through donations. This can go a long way in helping to lift the standards of the homes.

## References

1. Vijayalakshmi Balakrishnan, "Growing Up and Away Narratives of Indian Childhoods Memory, History, Identity", Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2011, p. 193
2. [http://www.unicef.org/india/institutional\\_and\\_legislative\\_framework\\_bajpai.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/india/institutional_and_legislative_framework_bajpai.pdf) last accessed on 12/12/2017
3. Punjab stats last accessed on 17/01/2020
4. Website for ministry of women and child development LAST ACCESSED ON 09/04/2020
5. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333666554\\_Alternative\\_Care\\_in\\_India\\_Issues\\_and\\_Prospects](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333666554_Alternative_Care_in_India_Issues_and_Prospects) last accessed on 16/04/2020
6. S. Anandlakshmy, Nandita Chaudhry and Neeraj Sharma, "Researching Families And Children: Culturally Appropriate Methods", Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2008