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Indian Journal of Social Work & Social Sciences

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Children: Curative and Rehabilitative Facets

- John Menachery* Evolution of Child Helpline in India: The CHILDLINE Experience
Saroj Kolhe Reviewing the Phenomenon of Child Adoption in India: Time Analysis and Methodology

Youth : Gender and Contested Facets

- Amod Gurjar* Awareness of Youth about the Right to Information Act (2005) and role of Social Worker in promoting its awareness: A Study of Rural Youth in Sonegaon (Bai), Deoli Block, District Wardha, Maharashtra, India.
Aarti Pawar Youths, HIV/AIDS and Sex Education in India
Prajakta Tanksale Students' Community (present and past)
Naveenchandran An Extra-mile in Support of Students

Women: Urban and Rural Facets

- Geetha Thachil* Addressing domestic violence through family Counseling Centers: an Exploration of Knowledge Regarding Domestic Violence and its Implications for Practice in the Vidarbha Region
Jyoti Niswade Age and its Correlates of Widowhood in Rural Vidarbha
Jyoti Motghare Women and HIV/AIDS : Cases of Social Work Intervention in the City of Nagpur
Keshav Walke Examining the Gender Gap Through Census Data : Literacy and Rural Women



Matru Sewa Sangh Institute of Social Work

Bajaj Nagar, Nagpur 440010, Maharashtra, India

UGC-NAAC Accredited 'A' grade College

Matru Sewa Sangh Institute of Social Work

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(UGC-NAAC Accredited 'A' Grade College)

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Late Padmashree Kamalatai Hospet
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Late Dr Satyabala Tayal
(07.10.1924 06.01.2002)

About Matru Sewa Sangh - the Beginnings

The beginnings of the Matru Sewa Sangh Institute of Social Work can be traced back to the year 1921 when Late Padmashree Kamalatai Hospet founded Matru Sewa Sangh (MSS) in the city of Nagpur.

Having witnessed the abysmal facilities for pregnant Indian women, Kamalatai, widowed at the age of 15, set up maternity homes in Central Provinces and Berar. Her work, and more so her nature, attracted some remarkable individuals who engaged their life expanding the domain of MSS.

One such person was Dr (Ms) Satyabala Tayal. A true Gandhian, Satyabala had walked miles in the scorching sun of Hissar (Haryana) as a Bhoodhan worker a contribution acknowledged in the form of a 'Praman Patra' (1957) awarded by the Govt. of Punjab. Drawn to MSS by its unique 'all-women-run' organizational structure and on the advice from Kamalatai, Satyabala, came to Nagpur in 1956.

Observing the growing activities of MSS and the ensuing shortage of trained human power she decided to set up a "School of Social Work for Women".

About the Institute

The "School of Social Work for Women" founded by Dr Satyabala Tayal began with just seven students in a small room in the premises of MSS at Sitabuldi in Nagpur offering a Certificate Course in Social Work. It evolved with a coherent perspective, from a Certificate Course in Social Work to a Bachelor's course, and subsequently the Masters and M.Phil courses followed.

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The Indian Journal of Social Work & Social Sciences (IJSWASS) is a bi annual national level peer reviewed journal, published by the Matru Sewa Sangh Institute of Social Work. The journal would cover all the fields of Social Work and Social Sciences. Research papers as well as scientific articles are accepted.

Goals of IJSWASS

- To provide the platform to the Students, Alumni and Faculty of the Matru Sewa Sangh Institute of Social Work to undertake scientific writing.
- To encourage young researchers in social work and social sciences.
- To motivate the researchers to promote indigenous knowledge.
- To contribute to the body of knowledge of Indian Social Work Literature.
- To promote exchange of ideas and innovative social work practice.
- To provide the platform for the innovations in social work practice.
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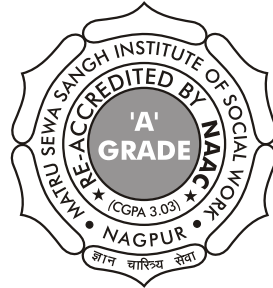
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Contents

<i>Title</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Page</i>
From the Chief Editor		ii
Themes and Concerns in Social Work : The Emerging Perspective		iii
<i>Children: Curative and Rehabilitative Facets</i>		
Evolution of Child Helpline in India: The CHILDLINE Experience	<i>John Menachery</i>	1
Reviewing the Phenomenon of Child Adoption in India: Time Analysis and Methodology	<i>Saroj Kolhe</i>	7
<i>Youth : Gender and Contested Facets</i>		
Awareness of Youth about the Right to Information Act (2005) and role of Social Worker in promoting its awareness: A Study of Rural Youth in Sonegaon (Bai), Deoli Block, District Wardha, Maharashtra, India.	<i>Amod Gurjar</i>	12
Youths, HIV/AIDS and Sex Education in India	<i>Aarti Pawar</i>	16
Students' Community (present and past)	<i>Prajakta Tanksale</i>	20
An Extra-mile in Support of Students	<i>Naveenchandran</i>	25
<i>Women: Urban and Rural Facets</i>		
Addressing domestic violence through family Counseling Centers: an Exploration of Knowledge Regarding Domestic Violence and its Implications for Practice in the Vidarbha Region	<i>Geetha Thachil</i>	29
Age and its Correlates of Widowhood in Rural Vidarbha	<i>Jyoti Niswade</i>	34
Women and HIV/AIDS : Cases of Social Work Intervention in the City of Nagpur	<i>Jyoti Motghare</i>	38
Examining the Gender Gap Through Census Data : Literacy and Rural Women	<i>Keshav Walke</i>	43

From the Chief Editor

It has been a long cherished wish of the Matru Sewa Sangh Institute of Social Work to publish a national level peer reviewed professional interdisciplinary journal which would facilitate exchange of research findings, view points and professional knowledge among social work educators, social work practitioners, social scientists and students. With the quantum growth of social work colleges in the country during the last decade being what it is, this wish became more intense and the creative energies of some of our social work educators culminated in the launching of this Journal which is aptly named 'Indian Journal of Social Work and Social Sciences'.

The IJSWASS is also a humble effort to promote higher standards in the quality of social work education in the country by enhancing scientific literature. It shall also strive to bring news and views on innovations and field action projects that are initiated by educational institutions in the country. Through such an endeavour, it is hoped that the students of both social work and social sciences will be able to expand their knowledge base and gain newer insights about practical aspects of social work.

This inaugural edition reaches you with ten scientific articles written by some of the most seasoned social work educators in the country. This bi-annual Journal hopes to provide inspiration to others to write and also provide a medium for expressing both their academic thoughts and practice based knowledge. The IJSWASS shall make special efforts in future to promote scientific writing among social work practitioners who are the mainstay of social work profession. It shall also strive to document policy initiatives, legislation relevant to social work, and lesser known but vital developmental initiatives in the country, thereby providing students with the much needed practical orientation. The IJSWASS also aims to review articles, books and visual media creations that are of interest to students of social work and social sciences alike.

Please send us your feedback and suggestions.

Dr John Menachery

Themes and Concerns in Social Work : The emerging perspective

The inaugural issue of the Indian Journal of Social Work and Social Sciences (IJSWASS) offers to its readers a select reading of articles encompassing a range of themes affecting diverse categories of people of India. Among this diversity, youth and women find favour with these writers, followed by children. What do these writers have to say?

Children: Curative and Rehabilitative Facets

Two of the papers of this issue of IJSWASS have children as their key concern. John Menachery narrates in considerable detail the Indian experience of a helpline for children. Childline, as this helpline is called has pioneered this idea in India and it has evolved an effective model. This effectiveness stems from the fact that it has created a wide network of local structures which is able to reach local communities. This paper can serve as a useful teaching material in the area of social work intervention and what adds value to it is the insider's perspective of the writer.

The paper by Saroj Kolhe looks at child adoption through a review of eleven empirical studies. What does this paper tell us? A time analysis reveals the changes in Indian attitudes. The studies of the 1970's "indicate low acceptance of the idea of child adoption" and a "preference for a male child and secret adoption". By the 1980's and 90's the preference was for girl children: So much is the change within two decades in India. This paper ends by expressing concern over couples going in for vitro fertilisation and surrogacy. But it is unclear how or why, the use of technology for having one's own child is a matter of concern. Or, for whom? Will this development do away with the need for adoption agencies and possibly completely alter the institutionalised structure of adoption.

Youth : Gender and Contested Facets

Amod Gurjar, in his field study of the youth of Sonegaon [Bai] village in Wardha district, examined the awareness level of the village youth about the Right to Information Act, 2005. What is interesting of this study is its insightful finding about gender and power. More of the male youth than female are aware of this legislation and those who are aware are people "connected to the power holders". Power is awareness is the inescapable inference that the reader has to arrive at. This leads to an intriguing question: has the 33 per cent reservation for women of Sonegaon [Bai] gram panchayat made no difference to their levels of awareness? More so, for a village that has the words 'Bai' suffixed to its name.

Aarti Pawar, in her paper, examined the prevalence of HIV among youth and its complex relationship with sexual behaviour based on secondary source materials. The "predominant route to transmission of HIV is sexual" as she puts it and her examination show that Indian youth are breaking old taboos by being sexually active before marriage. This behaviour has a gender facet: more boys than girls are active. Across all areas of life there is a clash between an old India and a new India and sexuality is only one among them. Value judgments are clouding this clash leading to questions and solutions being framed in

an ambiguous manner; an ambiguity evident in the section on 'Recommendations' where Aarti Pawar suggests both providing "knowledge about sex as well as abstinence" to youth.

Prajakta Tanksale, in a study of 95 college lecturers, took their 'experiences' as data to assess the qualities of today's students. Broadly speaking, the data indicates deterioration in qualities considered to be desirable among students both in their role as a young learner as well as in their personal attitudes and behaviour. The interpretation of the received data can be debated. At one place this paper says "that students view education only as a means to earn money". When the broader systems explicitly and implicitly promote professionalism, careerism and consumerism then the students are perfectly correct in viewing education primarily an avenue to earn. Today's 'undesirableness', a contrast to the qualities of an earlier generation is a small reflection of the larger contestation between a traditional India, yearning for a mythical golden past and an emerging new India seeking different moorings.

Naveenchandran, in his paper lucidly, sets out to "explore and/or enumerate the skills that are essential for a fresh UG/PG student". Furthermore, this paper presents a scheme for its implementation without disturbing the existing time-table of curricular and co-curricular activities. Over the years, a greater stress on skill enhancement has emerged in the social work curriculum for which this paper will be an useful tool in the hands of social work educators.

Women: Urban and Rural Facets

Four of the papers have taken up concerns affecting women. The paper by Geetha Thachil examines the nature of knowledge with which the counsellors of the family counselling centers are equipped with to address cases of domestic violence. One insight which this paper offers to its readers is the fuzziness in the knowledge domain of the counsellors who because of this inadequacy are not able to identify the victim correctly: the very first step in the intervention process of addressing cases of domestic violence. The paper further says that "a gendered approach to work was expected" but "the findings showed that a family centered" approach was practiced by the counsellors. Who expected such an approach? The paper says that the Central Social Welfare Board expected it. Why did the counsellors use a family centered approach? Because, the counsellors are poorly equipped with a gendered based approach, also known as feminist social work. This discordance between expectations and reality is a reflection of the bigger divergence between select ideologies promoted by special interest groups and Indian realities.

Jyoti Niswade has examined widowhood in rural Vidarbha based on a field study and has taken up age as an analytical variable. Conceptually, what is of interest in the paper, is the idea of reproductive age group and younger widows taken up for analysis. This analysis indicates clearly that a significant percentage of widows are in the younger age-groups. Possibly, this category could become a relevant area for social work intervention. Widowhood, because of the natural process of aging of one's husband, is quite different from widowhood, where the death of the husband is not because of aging. Here social work can make a beginning. This paper attributes the high incidence of widowhood to the fact that girls tend to marry early. This finding further strengthens the need to stringently implement the legislation on the age of marriage of girls.

The paper on women by Jyoti Motghare is based on a field study of women afflicted with HIV/AIDS. This illness, as this paper points out in the beginning, has far greater social and psychological implications than other illnesses and, correspondingly, the line of treatments is equally complex. It presents three case studies and their respective intervention measures. The major insight which it brings to us is the fact that non-disclosure has been practiced in all the three cases and this according to Jyoti Motghare is a major human right violation of the afflicted women. The very fact of non-disclosure practiced in all the three cases should alert us to the complexity of the question since no time can be judged to be the best time to disclose or the best person to whom it should be disclosed first: the patient or to their closest kin member. The decision will have to be made on a case-by-case basis for which the social work profession is much better equipped than the medical profession.

Keshav Walke has taken recourse to quantitative data to present a literacy profile of rural women. This paper, replete with latest census data, will be useful for students undertaking research studies. Among the many interesting facts which this paper brings to our notice is the difference of almost ten percent between the literacy rate of rural women of Nagpur and of Maharashtra. This possibly is a small pointer to the larger reasons why a demand for a separate state in Vidarbha is being made; and to the even larger problem of uneven growth between regions in Maharashtra.

A Summation

This collection of articles offers a rich fare to its readers. While these papers are written in the framework of 'social work', a deeper reading of the papers put together reveals a larger picture: a picture of a society with a lineage going back to five thousand years 'on the move', to paraphrase E. H. Carr from the last line of his book titled "What is History?"

Editorial Board: Indian Journal of Social Work and Social Sciences

September, 2013

EVOLUTION OF CHILD HELPLINE IN INDIA: THE CHILDLINE EXPERIENCE

JOHN MENACHERY

John Menachery is the Principal of Matru Sewa Sangh Institute of Social Work, Nagpur. He has been a social work educator for more than three decades. He has also headed the Childline India Foundation, Mumbai and also served as Professor and Dean of the School of Rural Development, Tata Institute of Social Sciences. He has done BSC (Criminology & Forensic Science), MA (Social Work), Bachelor of Journalism, PG Diploma in Gandhian Thought, M.Phil (Social Work) and PhD (Social Work).

ABSTRACT

It was in 1996 that the idea of a telephone based child helpline was conceived for the first time in India. Childline was envisaged as an emergency service for children which will reach back to the caller when necessary, and provide the needed intervention within the least possible time with the backup of a well connected network of partner organizations. Both voluntary sector organizations and academic institutions collaborated to make this venture possible with the active support of the Union and State Governments, the Telecom Ministry and the Corporate Sector. This article attempts to trace the origins of Childline 1098 and outlines the growth this unique project which became part of a vital national programme aimed at child protection. This article also throws light on the nitty-gritty's of a helpline, which is useful for the effective functioning of any helpline service in the Indian context. An overview of the nature of calls received by Childline during one financial year also helps to develop insights on the issues of child protection in India. The author was connected to the origin and growth of Childline and had also worked as the Deputy Director holding the charge of the Executive Director of Childline India Foundation, Mumbai.

THE BEGINNINGS OF CHILD HELPLINE IN INDIA

A group of post graduate students of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, were placed for their field work at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, popularly known as VT Station, of the Central Railway in Mumbai. Their main focus was the street children who were found in large numbers in and around the railway station. Many of these children had left their own families and had travelled to Mumbai in search of opportunities for livelihood and better living conditions. At the station premises, where thousands of passengers congregated each day, who were brought in or waiting for the local trains and inter-state trains, these children engaged themselves in rag picking, cleaning the railway bogies, selling water in recycled bottles and doing odd jobs that come their way. They could earn some money which was enough for their daily needs. Most importantly, many of them could escape from the exploitative or abusive home environment and enjoy greater degree of freedom on the streets of Mumbai.

The students were concerned with ensuring the safety of these children and in encouraging them to accept certain measures of rehabilitation that they had devised for them in partnership with a few voluntary organizations. Having enjoyed the freedom on the streets, many of these children disliked a life of discipline in an institutional setting and therefore preferred the street life. However, they admitted to the students that they were faced with exploitation and abuse on the streets as well, from anti social elements, beggars, and even from the police men, and they needed some mechanism for their protection. They told them that during day time they felt safe but at night the situation changed and they would require someone to help them. The students brought these issues of the street children before their

Faculty Supervisor, Ms Jeroo Billimoria. They decided to offer help to these children. They asked the children to call them on their home telephones from public telephone booths (only land lines existed in those days). Little did they realize then that they were giving shape to an emergency helpline system for children in difficult circumstances. Soon they started receiving several calls from the street children even at odd hours requesting help. They then realized that they were not able to deal with the situation and required a more organized system. This was in June 1996 and this was the beginning of a field action project of the Department of Family & Child Welfare of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences.

FIRST EXCLUSIVE HELPLINE NUMBER IN INDIA

The students and their supervisor then contacted the Police Commissioner and requested him to allow them to use the police emergency number 100 to organize help to protect the street children who were in need. This suggestion was however not acceptable to the police department as the control room number 100 was primarily meant for people to contact the police control room so that immediate help could be rushed to prevent crimes and arrest criminals. The Police Commissioner however suggested to them to get in touch with the telephones department with their request, which they did. The Mumbai Telephones assured them that it was possible to set up a dedicated telephone helpline number for the benefit of children in difficult circumstances. The Mumbai Telephones requested Ms Jeroo Billimoria and the students to suggest a four digit number for the helpline. By then, the students had an excellent rapport with the street children and held regular meetings called 'Open House' with them. In one such 'Open House' the street children were asked to suggest a four digit number for the child helpline. Quite surprisingly, the children came out with the number 1098 ten nine eight dus, nau, aat. The number was conveyed to the telephone department and they commissioned the first four digit telephone helpline in the country with a universal number 1098 called Childline, with restricted accessibility within Mumbai city.

The only professionally managed helpline in Mumbai, and perhaps in the whole of India, till then was the suicide prevention helpline run by the Samaritans. But it had a regular telephone number and not a four digit universal number. As a result the suicide prevention helpline number was not widely known. Childline from day one made an effort to make the number visible and its existence widely known. The other important parameters for the success of a professional helpline are that it should be sensitive to the needs of the caller and should not pass value judgments, maintain confidentiality and credibility, and should be sustainable. Childline maintained all these aspects from its very inception. In addition, it also allowed children to chat freely with the social workers, even when they were not in difficult circumstances, in an effort to provide them the emotional support that they needed and to win their confidence in the service.

That Childline was conceived as a service which will reach back to the caller if necessary and provide the necessary intervention necessitated the creation of an efficient and committed network which could reach any nook and corner of the city within the least possible time. Thus right from the beginning, Childline laid emphasis on building partnerships. A few committed voluntary organizations in Mumbai were identified as partners and were named as 'Collaborative Organizations' for running the service by responding to the calls. A few other voluntary organizations were invited as 'Support Organizations' which provided help in matters of follow up. As an academic institution the Tata Institute of Social Sciences also became part of the partnership as the 'Nodal Organization', providing training, awareness, advocacy, documentation and rendering overall support to strengthen the helpline. The setting up of

Childline was “in response to a situation marked by lack of an emergency service for children, restricted outreach of existing organizations and the adhoc role of allied systems in child protection” (CIF: 2011).

GOVERNMENT CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERSHIP

Realizing that the Childline model was a successful one, efforts were made by TISS for scaling up the service. This was a time when there was no external funding for sustaining the service. Each partner organization was providing whatever monetary support they could mobilize and a minimal support came from the TISS.

The situation changed for the better after a National Workshop titled “Childline : A National Service” was organized at TISS by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India, on 23-25 June 1998. (The author had represented Nagpur, as Nagpur was planning to start a Childline, in this Workshop). This Workshop finalized a draft of the proposed Childline scheme. The draft was submitted to Smt Maneka Gandhi, the then Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment who also had attended the Workshop as a Guest of Honour. She was convinced about the immense potential of this helpline service and she announced in her valedictory address that her Ministry will partner with the TISS in promoting Childline service across the country. The Ministry then decided to launch Childline under the 'Integrated Street Children's Scheme' in a phased manner, covering the major cities in the first phase. The second Childline in the country (after Mumbai) came up in New Delhi, and the third one in Nagpur. Nagpur Childline was inaugurated on 14th November 1998.

THE GROWTH OF CHILDLINE

Subsequently, having accomplished the objectives of the field action project, TISS decided to hand over Childline activity to an independent body. The Childline India Foundation (CIF) was then formed in partnership with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India. The CIF was mandated to work towards replication of Childline service in the country. After the Ministry of Women & Child Development was set up by the Union government, Childline service was transferred to this new ministry. By 2011-12, Childline had grown into a countrywide network of 458 partner organizations and Childline service was available to children in 204 cities/districts across 28 states/UTs in India. Today, Childline is the only development sector service that can be accessed across the country from all Telecom Service providers and is India's largest helpline service in terms of the number of calls received.

In India, Childline is a phone outreach based intervention model and the work begins when a call for help comes in. As soon as this happens, the local Childline team swings into action for direct intervention. Intervention covers a range of actions from rescuing children from abusive circumstances, providing immediate SOS attention, to registering a case at the police station, presenting a child to the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) in the city/district and developing the papers for onward action as directed by the CWC and so on and so forth. Each case is unique in nature. Some takes less than an hour to resolve whereas others take months of work. From its inception, Childline recognized that it cannot work alone. Hence it sought to involve various allied systems such as Department of Telecommunications, the Health Care system, the Police, the Juvenile Welfare Boards and Child Welfare Committees, Residential Institutions for children, the Railways, the Transport System etc. to ensure protection of children. Childline's operational model involves the team activating a variety of linkages among the allied system institutions such as the Police, Municipality, Health care, Education, and Transport institutions along with the Judiciary, Child Care NGOs, Local, State and Central Governments. Very often, the team provides unique solutions that require a relevant interpretation of legislations such as the Juvenile Justice Act and

others, and sensitize allied institutions on issues. At the city/district level, the 'Childline Advisory Boards' (CAB) comprising representatives of government and local self government officials, voluntary sector workers, police and other allied system functionaries along with Childline team members monitor its functioning and introduce supportive measures.

NATURE OF CALLS RECEIVED

Childlines received calls from worried parents, sensitive adults, community well wishers and distraught children themselves. Calls for intervention range from cases of child marriage, child labour, domestic child labour, medical aid, child sexual abuse, child physical abuse, cases of mentally challenged children, child trafficking and child beggary racket (CIF: 2012).

When Childline began its operations in India, telephones with 1098 number were directly connected to the Collaborative Organizations and callers using 1098 could directly talk to the Childline team members. In the year 2008, with a view to provide a more systematic approach to receiving and documenting calls, the modern day technology of a 'Call Centre' was adopted by Childline. Thus today, the voice of every caller from the Northern and Western regions of India reaches Childline through the Childline Call Centre (CCC), which is the central body to which all 1098 calls in these two regions are diverted. In course of time, CIF plans to bring all regions of the country under the CCC.

Table 1: All India Call Statistics in 2011-12

Call Categories	East Zone	South Zone	West Zone	North Zone	National
A. Intervention Calls					
Direct Intervention Calls					
Child Missing	3477	2800	1469	4363	12109
Shelter	2662	5514	1216	1558	10950
Protection from Abuse	1554	4013	1315	2789	9671
Child Restoration	2649	3396	500	2210	8755
Medical Emergencies	4184	1306	1423	1494	8407
Sponsorship	802	2700	1446	617	5565
Child in Conflict with Law	143	77	13	8	241
Indirect Intervention Calls					
Emotional Support & Guidance	140320	81725	124586	224741	571372
Silent/Confidence Building Calls	74607	126611	84975	112729	398922
Information/Referral to Services	92850	140675	10370	33714	277609
Intervention Follow-up	41381	72487	11541	25329	150738
Unable to Locate Caller	564	2530	75	358	3527
Total Intervention Calls (60%)	365193 25.05%	443834 30.44%	238929 16.39%	409910 28.12%	1457866 100.00%

Table continued on next page

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B. Non-Intervention Calls					
Awareness Building Calls	29506	65409	8023	22119	125057
Technical Connectivity Problems	128626	168628	221655	309120	828029
Any Other	7400	4509	624	2452	14985
Unclassified	399	731	151	390	1671
Total Non-Intervention Calls (40 %)	165931	239277	230453	334081	969742
Grand Total (A + B)	531124 21.88%	683111 28.14%	469382 19.34%	743991 30.65%	2427608 100.00%

Source: Annual Report 2011-12 of Childline India Foundation. p-41

As evident from the Table 1, the highest number of intervention calls were about missing children (21.74%), followed by calls for shelter (19.66%), protection from abuse (17.36%), child restoration (15.72%), medical emergencies (15.09%), and sponsorship (9.99%) in that order. CIF reported that in 2011-12, the majority of children (65%) assisted by Childlines across India were males. It was also reported that majority of the children (47%) called Childline from mobile phones. Calls from landlines accounted for 20.00 percent of the total calls. (CIF: 2012).

Table 2: Age Distribution of Children Assisted by Childline

No.	Age Group of Children Assisted	Percentage
1	1 to 5 years	07.00
2	6 to 10 years	23.00
3	11 to 15 years	48.00
4	16 to 18 years	16.00
5	19 to 25 years	01.00
6	Age not known	05.00
	Total	100.00

Source: Annual Report 2011-12 of Childline India Foundation. p-43

As clear from Table 2, vast majority (71%) of the calls were for assistance to children in the age group of 06 to 15 years. Apparently, these are children of school going age and it brings to the fore the significance of the child helpline for school going children.

Besides using telephones to contact Childline for help, it is also possible to personally report issues to Childline. While in most cases (72%) the callers used the 1098 number to contact Childline, in some cases (14%) children requested assistance of Childline during outreach programmes conducted by Childline team members. In some other cases (7%) adults visited the Childline office to report the issue. In a few cases (4%), other voluntary organizations referred cases to Childline. (CIF: 2012).

As an offshoot of Childline, in the year 2000, the National Initiative for Child Protection (NICP) was launched by the National Institute of Social Defence. Childline India Foundation played a key role in conceiving this initiative and making it functional across the country through its network. Through NICP, allied systems are provided training in various aspects of child rights and child protection with a view to

ensure better coordination of different agencies. Subsequently, the NICP became a framework for the Ministry of Women and Child Development to initiate the 'Integrated Child Protection Scheme' (ICPS).

CONCLUSION

Childline is India's first national level response to the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child (CIF: 2012). The service has rightfully received special mention in the Juvenile Justice Act. The telecommunication boom was yet to happen and mobile telephony was yet to enter India when the first Childline was set up in Mumbai in 1996. Today, India's telecommunication network is the second largest in the world (next only to China) based on the total number of telephone users (both fixed and mobile phone). The Indian Telecom Industry has grown over twenty times in just ten years, from under 37 million subscribers in the year 2001 to over 846 million subscribers in the year 2011. The industry employs an extensive system of modern network elements such as digital telephone exchanges, mobile switching centres, media gateways and signalling gateways at the core, interconnected by a wide variety of transmission systems using fibre-optics or Microwave radio relay networks. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communications_in_India, accessed on 14.8.2013). The overall teledensity has increased to 79.28% as of May 31, 2012 and the total numbers of mobile phone subscribers have reached 929.37 million as of May 2012. According to recent reports, India was purported to overtake China to become the world's largest mobile telecommunications market by the year 2013. The projected teledensity is 1.159 billion, 97% of population, by 2013. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telecommunications_statistics_in_India, accessed on 13.8.2013).

It is a well known fact that telecommunication has significantly supported the socioeconomic development of India and has played a vital role to narrow down the rural-urban digital divide to some extent. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communications_in_India, accessed on 14.8.2013). It is quite certain that helpline services in the country are bound to become the backbone of crises and disaster intervention systems in the coming days under these circumstances.

The Childline India Foundation (CIF) aims to strengthen and systematize child protection in India through its collaborative/collective efforts with the Government of India, State Governments and Civil Society Organizations in order to make children's issues a priority on the national agenda. The Ministry of Women & Child Development has mandated CIF with the expansion of this service to cover all districts in the country. The modus operandi of child helpline developed and fine tuned by CIF is a 24x7, emergency, free phone outreach service linking children in need of care and protection with government and civil society organizations. Childline is a crucial link between needy children and the available services. It acts as a one-point contact, which facilitates instant access to support, active intervention, guidance or just emotional support. It is an appropriate and sustainable model ideal for the Indian realities. It is also a model that is worthy of emulation by other helplines in the country.

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REVIEWING THE PHENOMENON OF CHILD ADOPTION IN INDIA: TIME ANALYSIS AND METHODOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Adoption as a non-institutional child welfare service is seen as the best alternative in the rehabilitation of destitute or abandoned children. Adoption of a child secures the child's right to a family, ensuring nurture and all round development of the child in a caring, loving environment of a family. However there are very few scientifically conducted research studies, or scientific literature available on adoption of the destitute or abandoned children. The present article presents an overview of research studies since 1971. It reviews studies focusing on the pre and post adoptive concerns of adoptive parents, the social profile of the adoptive parents, adopted children, the motivation for adoption, attitude of adoptive parents, behavioural problems of adopted and non adopted children, and trends, issues and challenges facing adoption. The article emphasizes the need for more in depth and comprehensive research on child adoption in India. The objective of this paper is to review research studies on adoption of the destitute and abandoned child in India since 1971 and to trace the changes in attitude towards child adoption.

INTRODUCTION

Adoption as a child welfare service is seen as the best alternative in the rehabilitation of the destitute or abandoned child. Adoption of a child secures the child's right to a family ensuring the nurturing and all round development of a child in a caring, loving environment of a family. Adoption in India finds its' roots in ancient tradition wherein a male child was adopted to continue the family name and the parents to attain "moksha" after death (Bharat: 1993). Over the years adoption has undergone a change in both nature and approach. Earlier it was parent centered, a child within the family to, child centered, adopting an unrelated child, ensuring and securing "child rights" and in the "best interest of the child". The child is at the centre of the adoption process, where the adoption placement agency serves as a vital link for both the adoptive parents and the destitute child. It is a meeting place for the adoptive parents and the child, Socio Legal adoptions are encouraged as they are seen as a means of ensuring child rights. This is also emphasised by the initiatives and legislations enacted to promote and ensure adoption taken by both the Government and voluntary agencies.

Though child adoption is of importance one finds that very few research studies or literature is available on adoption The research studies attempt to study attitudes, pre and post adoptive experiences, profile of adoptive parents, trends, issues and challenges.

RESEARCH METHOD

This paper examines the following eleven empirical studies. The Studies were conducted over a time period of 1971 till 2005. Of these, six studies were conducted in the western and northern metropolis of Mumbai and Delhi respectively. Adoptive parents are the respondents in all these studies. Three studies were conducted in Maharashtra state, outside Mumbai. Adoptive parents and social workers in the adoption placement agencies were the respondents. Secondary data from 28 adoption agencies were collected to trace the trends in adoption. One study was conducted in four villages of Varanasi district in

Uttar Pradesh, wherein the villagers were the main respondents. One evaluation study was of all India nature in which data were collected from 54 organisations of which 34 organisations directly implemented the 'Shishu Griha' scheme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt of India. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment had sponsored the study which was undertaken by the research unit of the College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai.

REVIEW OF RESEARCH STUDIES

All the above mentioned studies addressed more than one aspect related to adoption, but they can be broadly categorised as research related to three broad areas, namely: a) State policy and programs; b) Parents; and c) Child.

a) STATE POLICY AND PROGRAMS

The study conducted by Chatterjee et al in 1971 is a part of a larger study "Impact of social legislation on social change". The purpose was to examine the impact of legislations in relation to effects of communication focussing on awareness, knowledge and acceptance to adoption. The study was limited to four villages of Varanasi district of which two had better communications facility and the other two had poor communication facilities. Among the different welfare legislations, the study analysed the influence of the legislation on child adoption, on people's awareness, beliefs, attitudes, opinions and practices. The study reported that there was not a single case of adoption in the recent past. The villagers had heard about child adoption they favoured the idea of adoption, in which custom, caste, education and income influenced adoption. There was disagreement on the issue of girl child adoption. The respondents lacked awareness regarding legal provision of adoption (Bharat: 1993).

The study conducted by Ahmad in 1975 is an attitudinal survey conducted in Delhi when there was a demand being made in parliament for the passage of a comprehensive legislation on adoption. The study aimed at assessing the people's opinion and views to such a legislation. The study was carried out in two localities. The respondents had a negative attitude towards adoption and most of them considered that the background of the child was important. The respondents in both the above studies supported the idea of adopting a male child from either relatives or of known background.

The scheme of assistance to homes for children (Shishu Grih) was initiated by NIPCCD to encourage voluntary organisations to take the responsibilities for providing care, protection, nurture to children and to find placement for them. Promotion of in-country adoption was evaluated. This study to evaluate the performance of the 'Shishu Griha' scheme ascertains the contribution of various institutions for in country adoptions. It also attempts to find the limitations of existing laws, procedures and explore the potential of the scheme to promote adoption in districts and states. Data were collected from 54 organizations of which 34 organizations were directly implementing the scheme. The study concludes with a recommendation for effective implementation of the scheme, management in government, procedure for adoption of children in India.

b) PARENTS

Research conducted by Billimoria in 1984 is a much more comprehensive study as it deals with people's attitude towards adoption as well as the psycho social factors related with the adoptive experience and the development of the adopted child. The study throws useful light on experiences of the adoptive parents in the Indian context; however the study is restricted to only one adoption agency in Bombay.

A study of 76 adoptive families based on factual information collected over a period of 10 years 1971-1988 focuses on the profile of adoptive parents, referrals, and direct adoptions from the hospital. Disclosure of adoptive status is not discussed. Only one mother in the study told the son about his adoptive status. The study concluded that adoptive parents would benefit from counselling and guidance after adoption (Narang: 1982).

The research unit of the College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai studied adoptive parents registered at the 14 adoption placement agencies in Mumbai. The study conducted in 2003 was qualitative in nature and focused on the pre-adoptive and post adoptive concerns of the adoptive parents. Pre adoptive experiences related to the decision to adopt, the reactions of the family members, the relatives and friends are discussed. Issues like parent child bonding, sharing the fact of adoption with the child, parenting issues like disciplining the child etc. the post adoptive concerns are largely, the fear of not being able to bond with the child, the inexperience as a parent, the fear of the child of not being able to accept his adoptive status, and the consequences thereafter are also discussed. The parents expressed concern that after the child would learn about its adoptive status the child would feel rejected and it would affect his self-esteem. One adoptive mother felt that if the child would learn of his adoptive status the child would run away. This study is restricted to the adoption agencies in Mumbai only, Groza V studied Indian families adopting Indian children. The study undertaken in 2003 for Bhartiya Sanaj Sewa Kendra, Pune focused on the perceptions of the adoption process and the post placement services. The study used a random sample data collected from 230 families with the help of an interview schedule and a mailed questionnaire. Data were collected from adoptive parents residing in Pune by interview with the help of an interview schedule. Data from adoptive parents residing all over India were collected by a mailed questionnaire. There was a 56% response rate for mailed questionnaire 82% response rate for the face to face survey. According to the study excellent progress was made with regard to meeting the needs of adoptive parents. Issues thrown up in this study were regarding discussion with the child about his/her adopted status, absence of formal support for adoption etc. It was suggested that adoptive families must be provided with an array of formal and informal post-adoption services from which they can choose.

Shalini Bharat in her study on adoption which was conducted in the state of Maharashtra with data collected from 28 adoption agencies during a period of ten years from 1977 to 1986, analyses the trends in adoption with reference to profile of parents, children, and their motivation. She has also examined the nature of adoptions, the views of the agency staff, the issues and practices with respect to adoption work. One prominent finding was that child adoptions done by majority of adoption agencies were inter-country adoptions. There was a steady rise in Hindu adoptions and a decline in guardianship cases. One encouraging trend was the increase in the number of Indian parents who adopted. The study also indicated there was an increase in socio-legal adoptions or open adoptions.

A more comprehensive study conducted in 2005 in New Delhi by Vinita Bhargava, which addressed macro and micro level issues. At the macro level she examines the policies and legislations related to in country and inter country adoption. At the micro level the study addressed the experiences of adoptive parents. She does this through narratives, observation and interacting with the parents and adopted children. However this study was limited to the adoption agencies in New Delhi.

A study focusing on the girl child, her status, protection of child rights by means of adoption was conducted covering adoption agencies in Vidarbha region by Mangala Deshkar. It also gave an insight

into the profile of the adoptive couples, their motivations, and efforts taken to secure the rights of the child. The study focused on securing rights of adopted girl child. It also discussed the role of the adoption agency and the difficulties faced by the adoptive couple, adoption social worker and solicited suggestions which may overcome the various problems in the context of girl child adoption. The study showed that adoptive parents who had adopted a girl child had done so by their own choice. Findings also indicated adoptive parents with one biological child adopted another child who was of the opposite sex. Adoptive parents shared an open relationship with the child and were aware of their responsibility of sharing the fact of adoption (Deshkar: 2004).

c) CHILD

A comparative study of behavioural problems among adopted and nonadopted children was conducted by Dhavale H. S., et al. It was found that the Indian context offers a different psycho cultural setting as compared to the previous studies carried out in the west. The parameters on which the adopted and non-adopted children were compared were the parent symptom questionnaire (PSQ), and the social adjustment inventory for children and adolescents (SAICA). The findings published in 2005 showed that though there was no difference in parenting practices according to Alabama Parenting Questionnaire, adopted children had more behavioural problems.

DISCUSSION: A TIME ANALYSIS

The research studies reviewed for this paper were spread over a time frame of approximately three and a half decades i.e., from 1971 till 2005. The studies conducted during the earlier part of 1970's indicated low acceptance of the idea of child adoption. People were unaware of legislations regarding adoption. The respondents showed a preference for a male child and favoured secret adoptions.

However, the studies conducted during the 1980's and 1990's showed a change in the earlier trends. Dr. Bharat's trend analyses showed an increase in number of socio legal Indian adoptions. The preferences for a male child were being replaced by an increasing preference for a female child. Younger adoptive parents were desirous of adopting an unrelated child. It was surmised that the increase in the number of legal adoptions, younger age of adoptive parents, and acceptance of an unrelated child were indicative of society's acceptance of the idea of adoption.

The studies conducted during in the period of 2000-2005 addressed broader areas and focused on adoption both at the macro and micro levels. A child rights perspective focusing on the girl child also emerged. However pre and post adoptive concerns of adoptive parents, the adoptive parents inhibition and fears in revealing the adoptive status of the child, and sharing the fact of adoption were matters of concern for all adoptive parents, as indicated in all these studies. Though some studies concluded that adoptive parents would benefit from counselling and guidance after adoption, later studies failed to mention any new developments in counselling and guidance.

CONCLUSION: EMERGING TRENDS

Adoption as a measure of rehabilitating the destitute and abandoned child has undergone a change in the nature and approach and is now widely accepted in the society. It has changed from being parent centered to child centered emphasizing the child's right to a family. There has been a significant change in the attitude of the people towards adoption. Preference and acceptance of a girl child is a significant

and encouraging development.

The recent technological advancements in medical sciences, wherein there is an increasing trend of childless couples opting for in vitro fertilization and surrogacy, is an emerging area of concern in the context of rehabilitation of the destitute or abandoned children.

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AWARENESS OF YOUTH ABOUT THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT, 2005: A STUDY OF RURAL YOUTH IN SONEGAON (BAI), DEOLI BLOCK, DISTRICT WARDHA, MAHARASHTRA, INDIA.

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ABSTRACT:

This article is the result of a study which aimed to document the level of awareness of rural youths on the Right to Information Act, 2005. This study has been conducted at village Sonegaon (Bai) which comes in Deoli Block of Wardha District. The sample size for this study was 60 units which was selected by ensuring randomness of the sample. Data were collected using a structured interview schedule. Appropriate measurement scales were also incorporated in the interview schedule to gauge the level of awareness. The study revealed that majority of the rural youths have poor/average awareness about the Right to Information Act, 2005.

INTRODUCTION

India secured independence from the clutches of the British rule thereby finishing an era of bondage. On the 26th January 1950 the Indian constitution came into existence with its own sovereignty and full administrative powers. Now, after completing 58 years of first independence, India's efforts for its second independence from the evil of the corruption got a fillip in the form of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005. The RTI Act gives power to the common man to seek information from any public department thereby promoting transparency in government spending. This is a major step towards true democracy.

India is the largest democratic country in the world. The term 'democratic' implies that the government draws its authority on the basis of people's vote. The representatives are elected by the people and are expected to govern the country in the interest of people. This is not only necessary, but also the duty of the state. Here lies the essence of good governance. But, this principle is often ignored or neglected by those who hold powers.

What does Right to Information mean?

It includes, under Section 2 (j), the right to:

1. Inspect works, documents, and records.
2. Take notes, extracts or certified copies of documents or records.
3. Take certified samples of the material.
4. Obtain information in the form of printouts, diskettes, floppies, tapes, video, and cassettes or in any other electronic mode or through printouts (Desai, 2007).

A person can now inspect the documents, work records of any public authority. It promotes openness, transparency and accountability in the administration and a law like RTI Act can be made effective only through people's Active involvement (Nigam, 2006). This involvement will only be possible when the people are aware about this Act and use it as a tool for getting information. "The Right to information Act 2005 is a reflection of a liberal and resurgent India that shifts the power of knowledge in the hands of common man, the real stakeholders of the Government," (Punjab CIC, 2007). The real stakeholders in the

Government are the common people and the RTI Act has given the power of knowledge in the hands of common. Therefore it is important to study the level of awareness about RTI Act among ordinary people. The Legal News & Views in an article in its 2005 September Vol:19 No:9, titled "Right to information: the grassroots movement for accountability in panchayats" indicated the need to study the level of awareness among the rural youths. This article stated that "The Right to Information campaign was an important step towards participatory governance at grass roots level." (Nayak, 2005).

RESEARCH METHOD

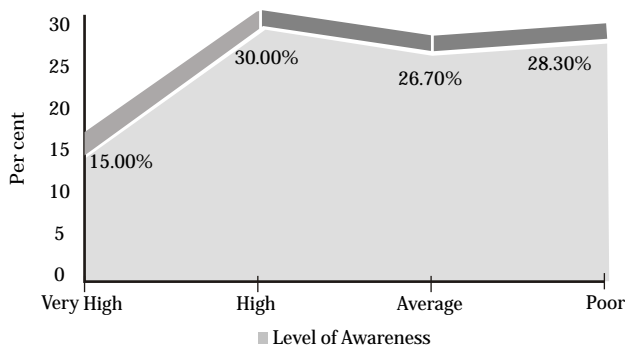
The main goal of the study was to explore the level of awareness of the rural youths about the Right to Information Act (2005) and to suggest the measures to promote the awareness about it. It was hypothesized that "male rural youths are more aware about the Right to Information Act 2005 than the female youths".

All youth within the age group of 18 to 35 years, as on October 2011, who were permanent residents of Sonegaon (Bai), thasil Deoli, Wardh district, Maharashtra, India, constituted the universe of this study. In order to identify this universe, the voters' list of the Election Commission of India prepared in 2009 was made use of. To ensure that the age of the respondents as on October 2011 will be in the range of 18-35, all those youth whose age recorded in the voters' list in the range of 18-33 in 2009, have been considered as universe for this study. Probability sampling design was used to select a sample from the universe. Simple random technique using the Tippet's Random Number Table was used to ensure randomness of the sample. Sample size for this study was 60 units (respondents). Interview method has been used to collect the primary data. A structured interview schedule was specially prepared as tool to collect the primary data. Appropriate measurement scales were also prepared for primary data collection, which were also incorporated in the interview schedule.

RESULTS

Level of Awareness of Respondents: The awareness of the respondents regarding RTI Act, 2005 was measured using a summated marking scale, which was specially developed for this purpose. This scale was developed in consultation with a few experts in the field and the books on RTI Act, 2005. The scale contained thirteen questions. Each question was about the basic knowledge of the RTI Act, 2005. The respondents were asked to give answer to each of the above questions and marks were given as 1 for an very correct answer; 0.5 for somewhat correct answer; 0 for totally wrong answer. The scores were later summed up and on the basis of the summated scores, the respondents were divided into four categories. The findings are presented in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1: Level of Awareness on Right to Information Act, 2005



Scale: 1 cm = 3 respondents

As evident from the findings on Figure 1, as high as 55.00 percent (majority) of rural youths have average/poor awareness about the Right to Information Act, 2005. The study revealed that among the 15 percent respondents whose awareness is very high, most were connected to the power holders and were the informal leaders of the village. As mentioned earlier, “The Right to information Act, 2005 is a reflection of a liberal and resurgent India that shifts the power of knowledge in the hands of common man, the real stakeholders of the Government” (Punjab CIC, 2007). This can only happen when the common man will be aware about this Act. It could therefore be inferred that there is a need to increase the level of awareness about Right to Information Act, 2005 among rural youth, so that they will be able to seek information under this Act.

Gender affecting the level of awareness:

'Gender' refers to the socially constructed roles of and relations between men and women, 'Gender relations' are characterized by unequal power. 'Gender norms' assign specific entitlements and responsibilities to men and women - for example, women might be expected to take on caring or domestic duties and remain close to home, while men may be expected to be the main breadwinner, working outside the home, with greater freedom to move around in public places. ([http://www.eldis.org/go /topics/dossiers/trade-and-gender/ what- is- gender](http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/dossiers/trade-and-gender/what-is-gender) visited on 5/12 /2011). But in this industrialized 21st century the responsibilities of the different genders are changing. Nowadays women are coming forward in each and every field. It was therefore felt that there is a need to understand the level of awareness of RTI Act according to gender. The findings are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1: Gender affecting the level of Awareness

Gender	Level of Awareness of Respondents				Total
	Very High	High	Average	Poor	
Male	8 (28.6%)	14 (50.0%)	03 (10.7%)	03 (10.7%)	28 (100.0%)
Female	1 (03.1%)	04 (12.5%)	13 (40.6%)	14 (43.8%)	32 (100.0%)
Total	9 (15.0%)	18 (30.0%)	16 (26.7%)	17 (28.3%)	60 (100.0%)

t test : Degree of freedom 58

Level of significance 0.01

t value -5.452

As evident from the findings on Table 1, exact half (50%) of the male respondents have high awareness of RTI Act. And greater majorities (84.40%) of females have poor or average awareness. The 't' statistic was found to be -5.452 which was significant at 0.01. This means that the difference between the awareness about the RTI Act was significant between males and females and not occurred by chance. On the basis of this discussion it can be said that the hypothesis of this study “male rural youths are more aware about the Right to Information Act, 2005 than the female youths” has been proved.

“RTI is reality and have significance of transparency. It's a tool to obtain positive result for communities. It plays vital role for social development and poverty alleviation. It is a weapon for social justice.”(Dwiwedi, 2007). But when the greater majority of the female youth have poor or average awareness about the Right to Information Act, then how will women play a vital role in development and how will poverty alleviation take place especially in the context of the female rural youths. The findings presented in Table 1 strongly indicate the need for empowering the women by making them aware about

the Right to Information Act.

SUGGESTIONS:

Role of Governmental Agencies:

There is a need to promote awareness of RTI Act among rural youth. For promoting awareness among the rural youths, the governmental systems can play a lead role in it by making TV Advertisements on the RTI Act. Further, more effective results could be achieved if RTI Act is included as a subject in the high school syllabus, as the upcoming generation will become aware about it and will make use of it.

Role of Voluntary Social Work Organizations:

The study revealed that majority of the rural youths lack specific knowledge about the Act. There is also a need to focus on the female rural youths for enhancing awareness. Voluntary organizations and civil society groups can play a vital role in introducing campaigns for imparting the awareness about the RTI Act by organizing workshops on the Act, by distributing information pamphlets among youth, and by organizing exhibitions giving details of the RTI Act. In other words, RTI related activities should be included as one of the main objectives of Voluntary Organizations. Such organizations could also lend technical support to individuals for filing applications under RTI Act. Such initiatives will certainly strengthen the RTI movement in India.

Role of Gram Sabhas:

The Gram Sabhas in the villages can make pioneering contributions in this regard by making suitable financial allocations for such activities in their budget. The special Women Gram Sabhas, which take place one day prior to the main gram sabha, could also be used as a platform for awareness creation.

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YOUTHS, HIV/AIDS & SEX EDUCATION IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Fifty percent of both male and female AIDS cases reported from all over the country revealed that they fall within the age group of 15-29 years which has great implications for the overall socio-economic development of the country (Abraham, 2001). There is a great need to promote knowledge and services on sexual and reproductive health.

The present article is focused on HIV epidemic among the youth. It also talks about the practice of premarital sex leading to escalation in HIV epidemic and the need for sex education among youth. The main goal of the present article is to elaborate the relation between the youths and HIV/AIDS epidemic and to promote sex education in schools and colleges effectively. It is also focused on the essentiality of some changes required in the social norms. This is a completely library based article.

INTRODUCTION

Youths are like sign-posts because they reflect the situation of the society. According to UNESCO (United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization), the youth constitutes people between 15 and 24 years of age (Nongkynrih, 2009). The spread of HIV among young people in India is a growing cause for concern. It has been pointed out that a large number of reported AIDS patients in India are below the age of 24 years and have contracted the disease through sex. The surveillance data show that a large percentage of the infected persons is between the age of 20-40 years. The trend shows that many of those infected have contracted the virus early in life. Studies conducted in different parts of India revealed that the average age for men with HIV to be 28 years and women to be 25 years. Nearly 34 percent of HIV cases were within the age group of 16-25 years. Other studies reported that 25 percent (19-23 years), and 19 percent (average age 19 years) of males were sexually active. A survey among college students in Mumbai showed similar trends in sexual behavior. An important finding of these studies is the age at which sexual activity is initiated. It ranges between 16-18 years among males and even earlier among females (Abraham, 2001). Thus, it appears from these studies that sexual activity among adolescents is much higher and begins at an earlier age than what is commonly believed. Youths are familiar about the precautionary measures or contraceptives due to which they used to establish sexual relationship with opposite sex as well as homosexual relationship. As per the recent news there are above 4000 homosexual practitioner among most of them are only youths. This is happening in Amravati district in Maharashtra, which is one of the known place for homosexual practices at the national level. It means our youths are having a horrific future with HIV infection.

As per the statistics given by the Indian Red Cross Society there are above 500 male youth (12-25 years) visiting Red Light Area in a day in Nagpur city (Waghmare, 2013).

WAVES OF HIV EPIDEMIC

The predominant route of transmission of HIV is through sexual contacts. HIV epidemic spreads classically in three waves. In the first wave, HIV infection is seen amongst sex workers or Injecting Drug Users (IDUs) who are the core transmitters or core groups. In its second wave, HIV infection reaches the clients of sex workers or partners of IDUs. When evidence suggests the infection of spouses and children of the clients of sex workers, the HIV epidemic is understood to have reached its third wave. HIV infection is brought into the low risk population from core transmitters through the bridge population, a term used to connote mobile population such as truck drivers, single male migrants etc., some scientists consider that injection drug use is a major risk factor for HIV infection and Injecting Drug Users (IDUs) constitute the first wave followed by sex workers and so on. Recently a fourth wave comprising of adolescents has also been proposed to indicate the severity of the epidemic (Kar, 2009). The urban youngsters are more active sexually than their rural counterparts. The issue of reproductive health to unmarried young people as the time between youth getting into a romantic affair and taking it further to sexual relationship is just a month, sometimes even less than that. It is very common these days among the youth to establish sexual relationship only for the sake of sexual pleasure. It is found that despite strict parental supervision and norms discouraging intersex friendships among the unmarried partnerships are formed that lead to sexual relations by young men and women in the present situation (Anand, 2006).

Youth group is considered as economically more productive group, and the future of any country depends on their contribution to the economy. Their participation in processes of economic growth thus has great significance when it comes to the development of a country. It is frightening to note that HIV which mostly affects youth between 15 and 24 years of age will render the youth unable to play this crucial role.

SEXUALITY AND PRACTICE OF PREMARITAL SEX

In India, STDs rank third among the major communicable disease groups. It is also a fact that around 25 percent of the total STD cases are among teenage boys. Studies conducted among the clients of a clinic found that three-fourth of the clients were in the age group of 18-19 years. The RTIs and STIs are closely related to sexual practice and behaviour, and their role in making a person vulnerable to HIV infection has now been well established. These facts indicate that sexual behavior of the youth has serious health implications. The growing literature on sexuality in the last few decades show that sexuality is a complex concept as it encompasses not only the biological and psychological, but also the social and cultural dimensions of sexual identity and sexual behavior (Nag, 1994).

Youth are more prone to the sexually transmitted diseases as they are likely to be more sexually active and wanting to experiment. A survey conducted among male and female students (14-28 years) of a few colleges in Madras city (Chennai) regarding sexual behavior and attitude is quite revealing. Out of 1120 students (634 male and 486 female) about 61 % male and 48 % of female students stated that they had their first sexual experiences before they attained 25 years. Since 96 % of male students and 93 % of female students were unmarried, it can be presumed that the majority of male students and a substantial minority of female students had already experienced premarital sex (Nag, 1994). Some 20-30 years back there was the problem of non availability of contraception. But still premarital sexual relations took place. With easy availability to means of contraception today, today's youth are more

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entertainment and social change, there is an increase in premarital sex in India. However, socio-cultural norms which prohibits pre-marital sexual relations have its own disadvantages. They force sexual activities to become clandestine. Therefore, in India issues like unwanted pregnancies, induced abortions and the number of single mothers are increasing at an alarming rate. Similarly, sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS is also showing an increase in incidence. All these factors point towards the need for sex education to save the youth in India from the clutches of HIV/AIDS.

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STUDENTS' COMMUNITY : PRESENT AND PAST

PRAJAKTA TANKSALE

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ABSTRACT

Teachers observed that following points are on the decrease among the present batches of students as compared to the earlier batches: ? Positive approach towards education. ? Urge to develop knowledge through education. ? Respect for teachers. ? Use of judicious means to pass exams etc. The study shows that the elements which are prerequisites for education as well as development are also gradually decreasing among the students which are noted by the teachers. Majority of the teachers' state that qualitative aspects value base which should supplement the educational development and qualification is also decreasing. This makes the situation further green. Educated generation of future society seems to be in danger zone for democracy. Timely and effectively intervention is required now, from all dimensions. Some positive trends are also noted by the teachers among the present students' community as compared to earlier batches.

INTRODUCTION

Aim of formal and informal education is to create human beings out of living beings. Education is to prepare the individual to face life by developing certain qualities like analytical, power, understanding, decision making, problem solving and fulfilling the demands of life etc. Control on one's own desires and ability to fulfill the desires in a socially acceptable manner are the expected outcomes of education. Education aims at developing the capacities of the individual, helping the person to prove himself. Education has to infuse the qualities of socially acceptable and just human beings in a democratic society. An educated person is expected to develop knowledge and share it with others for others' development of ability to adjust with others. A learned person should use education to lead a happy life, make people around him happy, and lead a satisfying and progressive life in all fronts. It can be said that education moulds mind and personality in a positive direction for one's progress and for the development of the society. Of course, education is also a means to earn livelihood. These and many other are the expected outcomes of formal education imparted through educational institutions for which wards are sent there.

In view of the above said meaning of education, and especially at higher level of education, i.e. at college and university levels, when its impact on the students and the situation of the students who are undergoing education are studied, we come across the following facts, which need immediate thought for better future of the society. We cannot afford to take a casual approach to the trends fast developing among the majority of the students, if we want to protect the human society and social system.

For students today, education means holding a degree, earning money through it, and a qualification for getting married. Developmental parts, maturity of the mind and the above said benefits of education, are rather unknown to the students. And when they find that their aim of getting education remains unfilled, and does not contribute to the improvement of their social status, then the situation further gets negatively aggravated. Students have developed crude materialistic approach to education rather than adopting knowledge oriented approach. As a result of this trend, study/college becomes a casual thing for with the aim of getting through examinations by hook or crook at every turn (e.g. by manipulating,

cheating, misleading the teachers/ guides/ examiners, using tactics like flattery, offering gifts, or threatening them) becomes acceptable way and nothing is thought to be wrong in it. It is also true that this trend among the students has another side of the story, but still this tendency among the students is increasing day by day which shows the direction in which society is moving. This is happening in almost all streams of education, even in professional courses the human being deal with the human beings directly. This situation has direct relationship with the skeleton and nature of the society which will exist tomorrow. Of course there are some dedicated lecturers/ teachers who are deeply concerned about the well-being of the students. They are well aware of the long term impact of this situation on the lives of the students and others. They try to help the students by making them understand the meaning and value of education and try to convince them to try their best and progress in life. But such dedicated ones rarely get the desirable responses from the students. Those who do their jobs find that most students simply refuse to accept and digest what they are served.

METHODS

This paper aims at understanding the viewpoints of the teachers about the present batches of students with reference to education, studies, and other development. The present study has been conducted in Nagpur and the universe of the study was all the teachers of colleges imparting professional training in various fields. The sample size was 95 and the data were collected in 2007.

Findings of the present study :

- (i) Majority of the college lecturers, i.e. 61 to 69 percent find that negative approach towards education and teachers is increasing among the students today as compared to earlier batches. Majority i.e. 61% of the respondents feel that students view education only as a means to earn money and that the students do not find education of any use to them. Such wrong notion among the students needs to be urgently analysed to find out the causes and the remedies.
- (ii) Students no longer have the urge to develop knowledge through education and the percentage of such students is growing today (61% of the respondents). Students (61%) consider cheating the teachers by various means as a casual matter and do not find anything wrong in doing so.
- (iii) About 56% of the respondents feel that disrespect for the teachers is a growing phenomenon among the students. Such self defeating behaviour definitely increases if timely action is not taken vigilantly and strictly by the authorities. This attribute contributes to the character building and hence needs serious strategies to be planned at all levels.
- (iv) About 69% of the respondents feel that the students today can go to any extent and use any unacceptable method and means to get through examinations. Respondents feel that the students today are losing value base while doing so and this tendency is increasing.
- (v) This picture has not emerged over night. It is also clear that it is a multidimensional phenomenon. To deal with this situation serious operations by strong and steady hands is a need right from homes to educational policy and system for better future of society. On the other hand, it was also found that the respondents find some positive trends with reference to following aspects among the students: 54% of the respondents feel that students today are more eager to clear the ideas by consulting teachers as compared to earlier batches. 69% of the respondents feel that students today find education as a facilitator of development.

Above said findings show that college lecturers find negative tendencies on increase among the students. Such trends are visible to the respondents in many aspects, though there are many areas where the respondents find increase in positive tendencies among the students.

- A) Previously the students used to exert themselves, used to try hard to achieve maximum possible height and perfection in their work. Majority used to concentrate on their work, honestly and regularly, to achieve educational goals. Students used to try to satisfy themselves and others with reference to the expectations. Readiness to apply oneself to the taste with dedication was the characteristic of most of them. This is a major area where degeneration on the part of the students is clearly evident day by day. This is the feeling of 63% of the teachers. They wrote that students are not bothered about the quality of their own performance.
- B) Curiosity to seek more and more information, asking questions, a need to learn and understand the subject, use of library, regularity and punctuality etc. are some of the major points, which used to be comforting for the teachers, are slowly disappearing from the students' community. "Get it done somehow or anyhow, finish it up as fast as you can without giving due importance to the quality of the work done", are the easy shortcuts acceptable to the students today. Majority of the students are found to be satisfied with the educational material they possess in the form of guides/notes borrowed from others. About 57% state that students using computers rarely go to book stores. This definitely is a 'no good' situation which will have long term damaging impacts.
- C) Carefulness, maturity of thoughts, seriousness about the things happening in the surroundings, concern for others, sensitivity towards others, obedience, humble behaviour, respect and consideration for others, togetherness for constructive work, use of opportunities, self-realisation, accepting and overcoming shortcomings etc are slowly becoming outdated values among the students as compared to earlier batches of students. These feelings are expressed by about 52 to 56% of the teachers. Perhaps they find these qualities limited or of no use today. If so, the situation is grim.
- D) Ways of thinking, approach and attitude to any situation, behaviour, moral values, ethics, human values, ideals of human dignity and worth etc. are showing negative trends; especially the behaviour of the students in general is a matter of serious concern for all. Ability to face the crisis and failure in life does not seem to be present as is expected to result from education. Depth and maturity, analytical view point which are expected to be the outcome of education in every sphere of life are rarely seen. About 50% of the respondents noted as above is falling short to fulfil the expectations of building personality, moral character value among the students.

These are only some of the areas where changing trends among the students are evident. There are many more areas which need to be given serious thought with reference to above subject.

- E) Majority of the respondents of the research study find that expected values, qualities, behavioral patterns among the students, habits, tendencies among the students are showing declining trends as follows:
 - a. More than 90% of the respondents feel that among the students today, morality, obedience, carefulness are declining as compared to earlier batches of the students.
 - b. 90% of the respondents feel that percentage of addicted students, students who have love affairs, who enjoy flirting, is increasing today.

- c. 77% of the respondents find that as compared to earlier batches, students today are least bothered about attending the classes.
- d. About 70% of the respondents find that following types of negative tendencies among the students are increasing, as per their experience: irregularity, dishonesty, disorder, pessimism, goondaism. Respondents find that the students today are losing value base while getting the things done.
- e. About 61% find that idleness among the students is on the increase, students tend to make less use of library and they are less of perfectionists.
- f. When the respondents were asked about their opinion and experiences about whether the following aspects among the students were increasing or decreasing, it was found that 50% of the respondents feel that following aspects are increasing and 50% feel that these aspects are decreasing: ability to analyse, positive attitude, seeking guidance, scientific approach, ability to understand, maturity of thoughts, and ability to face life and problems.
- g. About 70% of the respondents find that today's students have more adjustment power.

The above findings give interesting picture that as a student, youths today are showing more decline in different trends. When we look at the findings in view of general development of the students, it is found that in many areas trend is in negative direction but still in some other vital areas the trends are positive as per the study.

No doubt that this is the most debatable topic which has many versions and dimensions. Many cause-effect relationships may be put forward, but even then whatever is discussed above, remains to be the bitter factual situation to a great extent, which cannot be denied. It shows that the very meaning of education in the context of development is defeated and education is not producing the future generation which it is supposed to produce. This situation is very fast becoming universal and is destroying the youth of today and the pillars of the future nation and the society. More and more students are being victimised by the situation and are getting disorganised and despairing.

Causative factors are in the following areas: social situation and system, political system and politicians and politics, administrative system, educational system and pattern, employment and other developmental as well as welfare situation, parents and of course the students themselves.

The very purpose of education has become questionable. Whatever is experienced with reference to above is the representation of the social circumstances at large. This situation needs immediate thought and action.

All said and done, it is a fact that ultimately the youth, the students, the educated ones, the next generation of society are at stake. These are the ones who are in danger and are heading towards total disorganisation.

What should be done, who should do it and how etc. are the questions which have to be answered positively and at the earliest. We cannot afford to wait for the answers till an indefinite future.

The basic questions that emerge :

- A. Are the youth today going to wait for others to do something to improve the situation?
- B. Whether they are going to think for themselves, for their own future and the future of the society?

- C. Whether they have the willingness, awareness and capacity to join together and find the ways to change the trends among themselves?
- D. The trends among themselves as well as the trends in the society. This is very practical and within reach, with planning and organisation.
- E. Do they have the strength and courage to think about the damage being done to them?
- F. Whether they can, individually or in an organised way, develop positive trends among themselves for better future and make use of available educational and other opportunities.

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AN EXTRA-MILE IN SUPPORT OF STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT:

The student support activity is of paramount importance to every educational institution as it not only helps the institution to improve its score in NAAC assessment but also helps in imbuing a special and unique mark on their students who will always remember their Alma-mater in years to come. Hence it becomes vital to go an extra-mile in carving out activities which will boost the confidence level of students to face the alien world outside the class room, once they are out of college/institution.

A fresh UG or PG student who comes out of the college after obtaining a degree finds it difficult to cope with the demands of outside world. He/she finds that whatever academic knowledge he/she might have gained is useful to understand the subject or the discipline he/she had studied but do not give leverage to him/her to get meaningfully employed or to lead a meaningful life. He is not equipped with essential skills that may help him land a good job or face the realities of the outside world boldly without getting into a tail-spin of depression. For example, a student doing BSc/MSc or BSW/MSW never ever get an opportunity to know about soft skills which will make him/her employable or about life skills that may help him/her lead a healthy life.

PURPOSE OF THE ARTICLE

The purpose of the present article is to explore and/or enumerate the skills that are essential for a fresh UG/PG student which can be easily developed by minimum efforts when he is undergoing the course in University and to provide suggestions for its implementation without disturbing the current system of curricular and co-curricular activities.

IMPORTANT SKILLS

A debate on the number of skills required for a fresh UG/PG student may be unending as one can take different points of view. However no one can deny the fact that the present day Curriculum overlooks these skills and try to impart only the subject matter or the knowledge of the stream that the student has opted for. Nothing beyond or outside the syllabus is taken care of as the system is Examination oriented and both the students as well as the teachers bother about answering the Questions in the University Examination and getting grades or marks.

The following is an indicative list of skills and not an exhaustive one.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication skill oral as well as written is highly essential for a fresh student. The student ought to be equipped with skill of writing a not only a plain application but also a highly technical or formal letters/reports. Expressing one's thoughts and ideas systematically and convincingly is of vital importance in modern era and it requires lot of efforts or inputs in terms of intensive training and practice which is definitely not similar to writing a University examination paper. Developing

communication skill should not be left to chance.

PRESENTATION SKILLS

Student must possess knowledge as well as the skill of presentation as the employment market demands. Presentation skill helps him/her to express views on a topic with greater level of confidence. He/she should be at ease to handle e-gadgets like Lap-top, LCD projector etc. He/she should be able to speak about himself/herself or make presentation of self with courage, ease and conviction for which one should understand or have the knowledge of one's strengths and weaknesses also.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

The chances of employability of student having leadership quality/ skill are very high and mere possession of good marks in exams will not yield the expected outcome. One may argue here that leadership skill is not one single skill but a set of skills. Whatever we may agree with but requirement of leadership skill(s) can never be looked down upon. Being educated at UG or PG level students are the leaders of our society which expects much more than what today's normal student is capable of offering to the society.

SKILLS IN PARTICIPATING IN GROUP DISCUSSION

Group Discussion has become part and parcel of every interview for employment. Unfortunately, very few Syllabi cover this important aspect, leave alone its practice. Educational institutions never bother to consciously devote time for developing this capability among students and on the other side, the so called professional coaching classes mint money on it. Further, it also helps a student to take a stand on many socio-political and economic issues existing in our society.

SKILLS IN PREPARING FOR COMPETITIVE EXAMS

Almost all organizations select candidates for jobs based on some or the other kind of screening tests and definitely not on the marks/grades obtained by students at University level examinations. Knowledge of the subject or the field chosen by the student is of course essential and the depth of knowledge is invariably tested or verified. But beyond this, students have to face the so called screening tests which consist of Psychological tests, Tests of Reasoning, Tests for Numerical ability, Thematic Appreciation Tests etc. Students must have a good knowledge of these Tests and also the skill in cracking them. At least students from UG level require lot of assistance in preparing for competitive exams.

SKILLS IN APPEARING FOR PERSONAL/ JOB INTERVIEWS

A fresh student never gets an opportunity to face an interview panel in his student days. He/she comes to know the hard realities only after attending few interviews by trial and error method. No one in the college tells the student about how to present oneself for a job interview. Further lot of encouragement is essential to make students competent and competitive to survive in the employment world.

SKILLS IN UNDERSTANDING BODY LANGUAGE/ NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Even though it comes under communication skill, skill in understanding body language helps the student in a job interview to concentrate on his strengths and avoid un-necessary embarrassment. Body language brings out even the attitude of a person and many a times sends right or wrong signals to a third person knowingly or unknowingly. Student must be helped to develop control over it and use it to

his/her advantage. Many may not know where, whom or how to look at while answering a question in an interview.

SKILLS IN COPING WITH DEPRESSION

As per recent studies, depression kills more number of people than any other disease or even road accidents. Student-suicide is an issue of great concern in our country but the general tendency is to ignore it completely. Hardly any college/institution addresses it seriously or devotes time and energy to help a student come out of depression. The skill to cope with depression is essential and conscious efforts are necessary for the personal and professional growth of students.

SKILLS IN DEVELOPING SELF-ESTEEM AND SELF AWARENESS

Lack of self-esteem and at the same time aggressiveness in unwanted place is common in our student community. He/she is not trained to grow up with self-esteem as students are always at the receiving end. Boosting up self-esteem transforms the personality positively.

SKILLS IN HANDLING INTER PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

For a student, outside world seems to be highly competitive and survival of the fittest at the cost of others seems to be the only alternative. He/she unknowingly underestimates the significance of inter personal relationships and ultimately utter chaos in life becomes the only outcome. No curriculum teaches him/her the importance of inter personal relationships or imbibes any skill in this regard.

LIFE SKILLS

Life skills is a set of various skills which include coping with stress, handling emotions, leading a healthy life and/or married life, working in team, adjustments with partners, indentifying and analyzing the root causes etc. Much more can be added under this depending on specific needs of group of students. However, the focus should be on developing all round personality of the student to lead a meaningful life. He/she must be helped to become a good citizen and a responsible member of the society.

SKILLS IN TIME MANAGEMENT

Time Management is an important area for progress and growth in life. The number of hours per day remains same for every individual but one who manages it skillfully races ahead of others. Students should know the benefits of Time Management and must possess the skill in utilization of time optimally. Procrastination leads to nowhere and it is not that difficult to develop the skill of Time Management.

SUGGESTIONS USEFUL FOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

Every educational institution which values imparting of skill development among students must evolve their own strategies with commitment and honesty. In puts in terms of time, energy, expertise etc is essential which will also have a relation with the quality and quantity of students in the institution. A multi-disciplinary college with large number of students will have to work out a strategy different from a single faculty college with less number of students. Similarly, the methodology for skill development in students will also depend on certain factors like the Goals of the institution, expectations of the students, available material and human resources, short term and long term targets etc.

A pre-determined plan of action is necessary to run the program smoothly. In general, factors or aspects

that need to be addressed for smooth implementation of any program will include 1) Time 2) Place or Space 3) Human Resource 4) Material Resource 5) Financial aspects, etc.

SOME SUGGESTIONS WITH RESPECT TO THESE ASPECTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- 1) Time: One hour per week may be kept aside for this purpose initially and later on may be increased depending on the response of the students and the nature of demands that may come up. Modules of topics should be framed in such a way that it becomes easy for both the teacher and the taught. Some sessions may require longer duration or otherwise the topic or subject-matter may be divided into suitable smaller modules.
- 2) Place or Space: Normal class rooms will be sufficient enough to begin with and at the most some minor changes in seating arrangements may be necessary. For example for a Group Discussion session circular seating arrangement will help the participants to interact face to face. For providing practical experience of Job-Interview, seating arrangement may be made accordingly where the student feels like entering a Board-room for giving an interview.
- 3) Human Resource: The existing Faculty members can function comfortably as Resource persons with inputs from external experts whose help may be sought occasionally. Even though experts from outside may be better equipped to deliver or enrich the activity, involvement of internal Faculty will enhance better bonding between students and teachers. Mock-interviews and mock-Group Discussions, Sensitivity Training, Role-playing etc can be incorporated for added advantage and deeper involvement of students, instead of mere class-room lecture. Of course outside placement agencies or HR experts will be of much benefit to the students in certain areas of skill development.
- 4) Material Resource: Normal class room materials along with some audio-visual gadgets like Projector for Power point presentation (ppt), Computers/lap-tops, Over-head projectors apart from Podium for formal address, conference room, charts etc will be sufficient enough for a live and practical experience.
- 5) Financial Aspects: At the discretion of the college or institution, a nominal fee may be charged to meet the bare expenses. However profit making should never be an objective as it will defeat its purpose as helping activity. Making payment also helps in bringing seriousness and formal appearance to the whole activity. No one would take it lightly or as taken for granted.

To conclude, one may say that this activity will help the students a lot and at the same time the college/institution will also be benefitted. Further, educational institutions can also highlight this activity as a 'Best Practice' under 'Student Support and Progression' for NAAC purpose.

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ADDRESSING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE THROUGH FAMILY COUNSELLING CENTRES : AN EXPLORATION OF KNOWLEDGE REGARDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE IN THE VIDARBHA REGION

GEETHA THACHIL

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ABSTRACT

Existent knowledge of the specific field of practice is necessary for effective social work intervention. Currently there exists a gap in the literature that has explored professional social work intervention, in the field of domestic violence, regarding the knowledge of professionals to work in that area. The present study explored the knowledge base of professional social workers employed as counsellors in the field of domestic violence and its implications for practice. Data for the present study were collected via a questionnaire from 26 counsellors working with victims of domestic violence in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra. The questionnaire included open ended questions on the definition of domestic violence, victims of domestic violence and the role of the counsellor. The data were analyzed using content analysis to identify the key themes emerging from the data. The findings showed that the knowledge of the counsellors regarding the field of domestic violence was partially deficient. The implications of this for practice and the need for developing basic professional competencies through social work training and in service training has been emphasized.

THE BACKGROUND

Professional social workers started intervening in domestic violence cases in the year 1982 when the Voluntary Action Bureaus, (which subsequently developed into Family Counselling Centre Scheme) of the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB), New Delhi were initiated to deal with cases of dowry victims, wife beating and other domestic violence issues of that time. This was a government response to the rising victims of dowry and the wide negative publicity it got in the media. It was into this system that the professional social workers entered to help the victims. It was the women's movement outside the system that was actually drawing attention to the issue of bride burning for dowry and took up cudgels on behalf of the victims by registering offences, offering emotional support and lobbying to amend the Criminal Procedure Code. Section 498-A, dealing with harassment by matrimonial family members to a woman became a cognizable crime due to the efforts of the women's movement. Women's support groups emerged to advocate for women victims and help the society see the ugly face of domestic violence.

In Nagpur, a Family Counselling Centre (FCC) was started in the year 1987 by the Matru Sewa Sangh Institute of Social Work. Soon the Stree Atyachar Virodhi Parishad started an FCC in 1989. Then in 1995 an FCC was opened in the Crime Branch of Nagpur by another NGO, the Indian Institute of Youth Welfare. In 1998 the Matru Sewa Sangh Institute of Social Work started another FCC in the Dhantoli Police Station and in 2000 an NGO called BBSKBS began the Tejaswini FCC at the Ambazari Police Station. Today there

are five FCCs operating in Nagpur funded by the CSWB, New Delhi through their Maharashtra State Social Welfare Advisory Board, Mumbai. The structure of the FCC comprises of an Honorary Director, two counsellors, a clerk and a peon. Occasionally the CSWB conducts training programmes for the counsellors and office bearers of these FCCs. Besides, the NGOs running these FCCs also conduct training for their counsellors with a view to updating knowledge, sharing of best practices or for capacity building of the counsellors.

THE PRESENT PAPER

Empirical studies conducted in the country have not touched upon the knowledge base of professional social workers and their capacity to work as counsellors. The researcher wished to find out the knowledge component of the professional social workers regarding the field of domestic violence where they are currently employed, to find out whether the knowledge possessed by them was adequate to work in the field. Based on an exploratory study of counselors working in the field of domestic violence, the paper attempts to capture their knowledge of the subject of domestic violence and the implication of this knowledge on practice.

RESEARCH METHOD AND DATA COLLECTION

The present study is quantitative in nature. A specially constructed questionnaire was given to 32 counsellors and office bearers of FCCs from Akola, Bhandara, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Gondia and Nagpur. It contained eleven open ended questions to understand the knowledge of the participants on issues such as what is domestic violence, who are the victims of domestic violence, causes of domestic violence, services for victims of domestic violence, role of counsellors and the usefulness of intervention services for victims of domestic violence. Content analyses of all the responses were done which formed the method of research of the study. Ethical clearance for the study was gained from the participants, who signed a consent form, for use of the filled in questionnaire for research purpose. For the purpose of this paper only the responses from the 26 counsellors have been used. All responses were read, transcribed and emerging themes were identified. These themes were analyzed for identifying the understanding of domestic violence of the participants and how this knowledge could potentially affect their professional intervention. However, the data are not without limitations. The most important one being that the study has not covered demographic data of the counsellors. In this study, the terms 'counsellors', 'professional social workers' and 'practitioners' have been used interchangeably. All participants in the study were Masters of Social Work (MSW) degree holders from the Vidarbha region.

FINDINGS/RESULTS

The findings based on the content analyses are given below:

1. Women centered versus Family centered: An analysis of the responses showed that only 6 of them reported that domestic violence occurs when women are subjected to mental, verbal, economic and physical violence within their families. The rest of them reported that if any family member suffers any harassment at the hands of any other family member from either the immediate family or their extended family, it would constitute domestic violence.
2. Physical violence versus Other forms of violence: 20 of them identified physical violence as domestic violence while only 9 of them identified mental or emotional abuse as domestic violence. 6 of them reported economic abuse and only 3 respondents reported sexual violence as domestic violence.

3. Significant violence versus Trivial fights: 16 of them saw domestic violence as 'harassment' and 3 of them as 'torture'. Four of them reported that the violence was just petty fights / misconceptions within families. Only one respondent reported that the violence was a violation of rights. One respondent saw domestic violence as a form of mental illness and yet another respondent saw it as 'family troubles'.
4. Identification of victim: Almost all respondents except one reported that the victim is usually a woman. However out of the 25 respondents who said this, only 11 of them reported that only women are victims of domestic violence. Out of these eleven respondents, two of them stated that only 'married women' could be victims of domestic violence while one stated that women within and outside the family could be victimized. The remaining 14 respondents clubbed women victims with men (9), four of them clubbed them with children and the elderly and one of them reported that parental family members (parents and relatives) and matrimonial family members (mother in law and sister in law) could also be victims of domestic violence.
5. Role of counsellor: With respect to the role of the counsellor in the FCC, 9 of them stated the obvious, which was 'counselling'; 8 of them reported 'understanding the problem in depth' in order to be able to intervene; 7 of them spoke of 'guidance'; and 6 of them mentioned that the role should be a 'supportive' one. Three of them stated making women independent is a role of the counsellor by strengthening her self confidence and through empowerment, and two out of the three spoke of legal guidance; 6 of them stated 'help in problem solving'; one each reported that 'genuine interest in the victim', 'listening to both sides', 'maintaining confidentiality' and 'helping victim to take the right decision' as part of the role of a counsellor. Only one respondent spoke of providing shelter; one mentioned protection of the victim and yet another respondent spoke of providing information on the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence (PWDV) Act 2005. Only two of them explicitly mentioned bringing about reconciliation as a role of the counsellor.

DISCUSSION

1. Women centered versus Family centered: The main objective of the FCC is to help families in distress using a gender perspective. The CSWB clearly states that "providing quality services to women and children for their protection, capacity building and total empowerment and raising awareness about the legal and human rights of women and girl child and to run campaigns against social evils affecting them" is their mission (<http://cswb.gov.in/index1.asp?linkid=275&langid=1>). Under professional core competencies, the CSWB has specifically mentioned "commitment to achieving the goal of gender equality by ensuring the equal participation and full involvement of women and incorporating gender perspective into substantive work" (<http://cswb.gov.in/index1.asp?linkid=274&langid=1>). If this is the avowed mission of the funding agency, a 'gender perspective in substantive work' was expected from the respondents, but the finding does not support this. Instead the counsellors showed a preference for 'family centered' manner of understanding of domestic violence. This could be due to the fact that the NGOs running the FCC may not have a gender perspective in their overall work or the fact that the nomenclature of the scheme itself being 'Family Counselling Centre' may create a confusion in the minds of the counsellors as to whether they are expected to see all persons in the families as potential clients/victims or only women? In the largely patriarchal system in which the counsellor is functioning, women ought to be approaching them for assistance but they are unable to 'see' them. This is a cause for professional concern. There is a danger of a 'mistaken client' being registered as a client.

2. Physical violence versus other forms of violence: The fact that physical violence has been given precedence over all other forms of violence shows a lack of understanding of even the law in existence for domestic violence which clearly states physical, emotional, sexual and economic abuse as domestic violence. Several workshops and conferences have been held in the Vidarbha region on Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, and therefore, it is not clear why the counsellors have not incorporated all forms of violence in their definition of domestic violence. This again has serious repercussions in actual practice. The major one being the counsellor will only consider a case worthy of helping if the client has physical injuries and may neglect cases where emotional abuse is predominant. Similarly, sexual violence was seen as domestic violence by a miniscule number of counsellors. Once again this could lead to neglect of such forms of abuse.
3. Significant violence versus trivial fights: A good number of counsellors saw domestic violence as a serious issue and referred to it as harassment, torture and denial of rights. This is a very positive development as they will view victims suffering from domestic violence as persons experiencing problems which require immediate intervention and attention. This will hasten the urgency and make for immediate action on the part of the counsellors. This is indeed positive.
4. Identification of victim: The identification of victim as women is a welcome step in the right direction but there seems to be a clubbing of women victims with all other vulnerable persons within the family such as children, the elderly and even men. This can become problematic as the counsellor is not clear as to who their client is. Every so often the researcher has seen the counsellors in FCCs registering the first person who comes to the FCC as the client whether he/she is the victim of violence or the perpetrator of violence. So it seems a clear knowledge of how to identify a victim is lacking among counsellors. Use of a good screening tool for identification of victim is necessary.
5. Role of counsellor: The role of the counsellor seems to be very weak in its understanding. No mention of the salient features of counselling such as a non judgmental attitude, and an empathetic listening were visible in the responses. Important core principles of working with individuals such as self determination were not even mentioned by any of the respondents. Only 'support' was the response received from some of them. No skills of counselling were elaborated upon in the responses.

This exploratory study has several implications for practice. Social workers working in the area of domestic violence need to have specific knowledge of the domain in which they are working which includes how to identify a victim, assess the situation and plan interventions. A feminist analysis of domestic violence and demonstrating such an approach in dealing with victims of domestic violence may help professionals to understand this approach. By feminist analysis it meant understanding women victims of domestic violence within the patriarchal society in which they live. Such an analysis involves defining women's personal difficulties as being directly related to the inferior position she has in a patriarchal society. Therefore, women's personal problems within their families can be addressed effectively only by addressing the inequity of power between men and women. Training programmes on how to use legal options and protective orders would improve interventions as well. Counsellors also need to be supervised by experienced counsellors. Such supervision will help curb errors made in actual practice due to deficient knowledge. The fact that the social work profession does not have a professional body which monitors the functioning of counsellors is a major drawback as there is no professional accountability for the counsellors to adhere to.

professional body which monitors the functioning of counsellors is a major drawback as there is no professional accountability for the counsellors to adhere to.

CONCLUSION

It is time the counsellors look at the knowledge they have in the field of domestic violence and take responsibility for self learning. If knowledge is deficient, services will be affected negatively. The NGOs running the FCCs also have a responsibility to supervise the work of the counsellors. This sporadic system of organizing training programmes should be changed and a systematic training schedule should be drawn up for the counsellors of FCCs. A feminist social work practice could form part of the social work education so as to encourage students to become equipped to work in the field of domestic violence subsequently. Otherwise professionals will end up revictimizing the victims during counselling.

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AGE AND ITS CORRELATES OF WIDOWHOOD IN RURAL VIDARBHA

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ABSTRACT

Age assumes greater significance in case of widows who are denied physical, emotional, biological, economical and social needs creating more problems especially when they are young. The paper examines the state of widowhood in terms of current age profile of widows and analyses aspects of incidence of widowhood in rural Vidarbha. Data were collected from 300 widows of rural Vidarbha with the help of interview schedule and observation method. The result of the analysis shows that higher life expectancy among women is an important socio-demographic factor for significant increase in elderly widows. This may further aggravate the problems of widowhood in terms of deprivation in social, economic, cultural and psychological terms in rural social system.

INTRODUCTION

The pattern of marital dissolution and remarriages, along with patterns of age at marriage are important determinants in family building process in all societies. The aspect of marital dissolution incorporates both the cultural as well as the demographic implications quite similar to marital unions, but the effects are in the reverse direction. Widowhood represents withdrawal from the married population and therefore, lends to diminish the population to which births are likely to occur.

Widowhood may be defined as the transition from one marital status to another. The consequences of widowhood to a woman are more hazardous than to a man since the society imposes lot of restrictions on women. The widow has to undergo deprivation in social, psychological, cultural and economic terms. Women marry relatively early in our country and high caste Hindu widows in India are socially prohibited from remarrying (Agrawala, 1962).

While remarriages for widowed women are not frequent, the same is not true with respect to widowers. Widowhood has been a serious problem which has socio economic and demographic consequences. The tragic alienation of a widow is causally related to the continued loss of her status and dignity in the remote past. The loss and decline of the status of a woman is reflected in our mythology and in Manusmriti which codified the Hindu social organization based on the Varnashrama ideology. The sati system was the tragic culmination of women's loss of status. The campaign against child marriages which gathered momentum in 1930s resulted in a legislation fixing the minimum age at marriage of girls and boys respectively at 14 and 18 years. This act was further amended in 1976 and the minimum age at marriage was raised to 18 and 21 respectively (Agarwala, 1985). Even after the enactment, one third of female marriages are still found to be taking place before a girl attains her legal age at marriage. This may be attributed to strong and deep rooted social, economic and cultural pressure prevalent in our society, which favours not only the early marriages but also marriages around the age at menarche (Agarwala, 1968).

The present work aims to probe the current pattern of widowhood in rural parts of Vidarbha. An attempt has been made to study the age as a demographic correlate of marital dissolution in rural Vidarbha. The study of age and patterns of widowhood gains importance as it is one of the factors which tends to reduce the length of fertile union.

OBJECTIVE

To study the age and its correlates of widowhood in rural Vidarbha with special reference to widows' present age, age at widowhood, age at marriage, duration of widowhood and duration of married life.

RESEARCH METHOD

An analytical study was conducted during the year 2006-2007 on 300 rural widows upto the age of 85, were randomly selected from three districts of Vidarbha namely Nagpur, Amaravati and Wardha. The Universe of the study constituted 927 widows from nine villages [Jalalkheda, Khairgaon, Thugaon Dev, Chandas Wathoda, Vaikhurd, Kurli, Sahur, Manikwada, Borgaon] of respective districts. The tools of data collection included an interview schedule and observation guide.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

With its focused attention on widows, the analysis provides an overview of their age. Among widows surveyed an overwhelming majority of 49 percent were in the age group of 61 and above, out of which 22 percent widows were aged 71 and above. About 31 percent belonged to the age group of 41-60, while 17 percent widows were in most reproductive age group i.e. up to 40 years. As far as widowhood is concerned it is especially important to remember that, while younger widows represent a small proportion of all widows some of them are among the most deprived.

It is interesting to find out that elderly widows were in significant number that can be further explained as an important socio-demographic factor. The proportion of widowhood increases as women grow older. Three important determinants are attributed behind this vital phenomenon in rural Vidarbha:

1. Gender differences in the expectation of life.
2. Differences in the age of marrying partners.
3. Differences in resort to remarriage between men and women.

Percentage of widows in the old age category was higher as compared to the young widows in rural Vidarbha which suggests higher life expectancy among women. This may lead to imbalance of gender among the aged population. It is an indication that widows among the aged will predominate in the years to come and very soon older women will greatly outnumber older men. There is considerable overlap between the problems of widowhood and old age in rural area, but one cannot be subsumed under the other. In other words, a woman who survives till old age is almost certain to become a widow in the rural areas.

In any society marriage has an important role to play. Often it plays a supportive role in the life of the husband as well as wife. Such relationship has institutional as well as personal dimensions. When the spouse is no more alive they are likely to get isolated all the more. Moreover, a number of aged is not able to maintain good health and they need care givers in the family. In the absence of the spouse they may feel helpless and unattached. Thus, marital status is of prime importance for the aged.

The younger widowed are more likely to have lost a spouse suddenly and thus be unprepared to cope with lowered financial subsistence. Poor adjustment to being widowed, therefore, can often be attributed to socioeconomic deprivation. This is especially apt to be the case among members of disadvantaged groups, whose recovery may be impeded by discrimination and inequitable social policies that affect their health and financial circumstances.

AGE AND ITS CORRELATES

Several correlates of age are important variables to understand widowhood. Present mean age of widows, their mean age at marriage and mean age at widowhood, mean duration of married life, mean age of death of their husband, mean duration of widowhood life, mean difference between the ages of spouses were calculated by 't' tests; and by testing paired sample correlation difference between the mean age of widows and mean age of death of their husband.

Analysis of mean ages at different stages of life of widows indicates: the mean age of widows at the time of study was 55 (55.72) years. Mean age at widowhood is an expected age of leaving a marital status due to husband's death. These estimates give an idea of the average length of married life. This phenomenon gains importance because early widowhood is one of the factors which tend to reduce the length of fertile union. Mean age at widowhood was 39 years (39.27). This means that a woman in rural Vidarbha is likely to get widowed in the young middle age. Once bereaved, their circumstances may worsen, especially, if they have been staying at home or wives who were highly dependent on their husband's income. They may be unwilling or unable to seek or find employment and they are likely to face discrimination in the labour market.

The statistical analysis throws up another interesting fact showing the mean age of widows at the time of marriage as 16 (16.21) years. Marriage of girls at early age is one of the causes of high incidence of widowhood. The effects of social institution, such as family system, marriage norms, social pressure, and customs as well as factor such as individual motivation to marry and financial and social condition likely affect marriage of girls in rural areas.

Age at marriage and age at widowhood gives significant result in the study. It is found through the statistical analysis that the mean duration of married life of widows was 23 (23.05) years. It can be inferred that a widowed woman lives a marital life for 23 years and for the rest of her life she survives as a widow.

The mean duration of widowhood life was 16 (16.45) years. The mean age of the death of their husband was 50 (50.28) years. The duration of widowhood has been associated with the loss of income and increased risk of poverty. The death of husbands result in lower financial status for wives, many of whom become impoverished following bereavement.

The age difference between marriage partners is an excellent indicator of the status of a woman.

Mean age difference between the spouses was 10 (10.79) years which is significant through the paired sample correlation (0.750). It can be attributed that the gender difference in marital status is the outcome of two factors: 1) The age difference between spouses and 2) considerably higher proportion of males than female's remarriages.

A woman's status role and self image varies with her stage in family life cycle. The family life cycle is a succession of stages that the family passes through from its formation to dissolution. Each demographic event, marriage, parenthood, migration and death makes a stage in the life cycle. The family life cycle covers the changes in size, composition and functions of the family once in life time. The family is said to come into existence with the marriage of a couple and ceases to exist with the death of the surviving spouse. In any society marriage has an important role to play. For husband and wife it becomes a supportive and interdependent role. Losing one's spouse, the partner, especially female, is likely get socially isolated.

CONCLUSION

The age profile carries a strikingly important message. The overlap between the incidence of widowhood and aging is more predominant for women which cause serious social and economic consequences. Widowhood and gender are strongly linked. Feminization involves segregation by sex in widowhood. Feminization of widowhood is not merely that widows are now more in number but that all widowhood takes on the characteristic of widows, namely discrimination, dependence, oppression, health problems etc.

The growth of the elderly widows aged 60 and above is one of the key features of the demographic transition. The age at marriage of girls and age differentials between the partners needs attention because it has important implications for incidence of widowhood and the need for family support to widowhood. Widowhood adds to the disadvantages associated with age and gender that women face and it often faces the prospects of living alone, destitution and ill health. The widows in all ages need financial security, physical support, medical care, training and education to their children. It is very important that the social workers, voluntary agencies and the Government make a concrete effort to improve the lot of widows. There is a need to create more favourable atmosphere for remarriage of younger widows. Role of Government in delivering the care and financial assistance is found to be of great significance for deserted widowed persons.

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WOMEN AND HIV/AIDS: CASES OF SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION IN THE CITY OF NAGPUR

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ABSTRACT

Women who are HIV positive suffer from various psychosocial problems. There is a social stigma attached with this condition. They are discriminated against at various levels. This paper indicates the need of social work intervention at various levels to help such women with such psychosocial problems.

INTRODUCTION

HIV/AIDS is increasingly being recognized as not merely a medical problem, but a social and psychological problem as well.

The spread of HIV/AIDS is different from that of other epidemics that have occurred in human history, owing to the fact that it touches sexual behavior and death, and remains hidden for much of the time. The latency period for HIV to reach full blown AIDS on average is 10 years, and patients need long-term care and support. Mode of spread of the disease is another factor that makes it different from other recent diseases. Globally, an estimated 33.4 million people were living with HIV in 2008. An estimated 2.7 million newly infected with HIV, and estimated 2 million lost their lives to AIDS.

HIV/AIDS now causes more deaths than any other infectious diseases, having overtaken malaria and tuberculosis. It is the fourth biggest killer in the world (after heart disease, stroke and respiratory disease). HIV/AIDS turns children into orphans, women to widows and weakens the breadwinner. In addition to its appalling, human consequences, it weakens societies, destroys productive forces, reduces life expectancy, and demolishes social structures. HIV/AIDS is not only a terrifying illness; it is also a major challenge to development. By killing economically productive of adults who are the key family providers, HIV/AIDS shatters social networks that provide households with community help and support. Survivors are left with few relatives upon whom they depend. The consequences of modernization and present day socio economic realities have eroded this traditional safety net for many Indians. The family, which is the agent of socialization, has been dissipated due to the presence of the disease within the households, as parents die and children are sent to relatives. It is pertinent to pose these questions, as what are the psychosocial problems these HIV positive persons face.

Focus on behavior change and prevention intervention seems to be crucial. In India HIV Prevalence varies widely according to geographical areas and risk groups leading to stigma and discrimination. The consequences of this stigma indicate two different situations. Firstly, there is a lack of support and care for the HIV, infected both at the level of community and in health care setting, secondly the fear of stigma may dissuade many individuals to get them tested.

The lopsided distribution of AIDS aid running into hundreds of million dollars is another worrying

factor. Most funds are given for prevention and advocacy while little is given for patient care. While prevention is very important, our system is guilty of doing little towards caring for its existing HIV/AIDS patients. Caring for psychosocial problems of HIV/AIDS is not given much emphasis.

There might be data available in certain government records but in all probability that data is not so exhaustive and secondly in the public sphere there exists a very hazy picture regarding the nature of problems relating to the HIV positive condition.

In view of this the study on psychosocial aspects and supportive mechanisms assumes greater significance. Further, there is no special reason to believe that some of findings of the study cannot be generalized to HIV positive persons of other cities. More specifically this information will be particularly useful to the professionals of social work and allied disciplines who are engaged in such care and rehabilitation work.

RESEARCH METHOD

This paper is based on a field study. The data were collected in 2008. The respondents were counsellors.

OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the major various psychosocial problems faced by HIV positive women.
2. To examine the nature of support available to HIV positive women.
3. To contribute to a better understanding of the support services, including social work intervention required by the HIV positive women.

CASE 1 (CASE OF VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF A WOMEN)

This is a case of a woman of 30 years of age (with education of 6th pass) who worked as a maid servant and had one child. Her husband who was HIV/AIDS patient had died. Her husband had not revealed his condition to the family members and it was only after his death, that the doctors disclosed this fact to the family members. Two years before the death of her husband, her 7 month old son too had died due to HIV/AIDS. She delivered a second male child, who is now 9 years old and HIV negative. An NGO is looking after this boy now. After a few months of her second delivery, her husband died.

This woman was tested HIV positive. Her mother was informed about her condition by the doctor but she kept it a secret and did not reveal it to the woman. Neither did she reveal it to anybody else due to the strong social stigma which is associated with this condition. This woman remained HIV positive for about 7 years without getting any kind of proper treatment. She did not know what was wrong with her. Then she fell ill and died. Had she been given proper treatment she could have survived for a longer period (as told by the NGO).

This case shows how a violation of human rights i.e. the violation of the right to know has taken place.

NEEDED SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION

1. Person who is infected or affected by HIV/AIDS should be informed by the Doctor. There should not be any violation of the patient's right to know.
2. If anyone in the family (or any relative) is aware of the positive status, it should be communicated to the person who is HIV positive and to other trustworthy people or relatives because HIV positive person needs lots of care and support.

3. It is better to inform the NGOs who are working for such people.
4. It is required to create awareness in the society regarding this.

CASE 2 (CASE OF TRANSMISSION OF HIV VIRUS FROM ONE PERSON TO ANOTHER)

An HIV positive woman of 40 years of age with education 7th pass had a business of making plaster of Paris idols. She did not have any children. Her first husband had left her and married another woman. She then married another man. Before she could be diagnosed of her HIV positive condition, her first husband had died. It is not clear as to whether she contracted the HIV virus from her first husband or from her second husband.

As her health started deteriorating she was sent to AIDS Hospice at Bangalore by an NGO working in Nagpur. Then her health improved to a large extent. For about 4 months she was there in the Hospice but was brought back to Nagpur by her second husband against the wishes of NGO who had sent her there.

The NGO was counselling her for nourishment etc. She was kept in a temporary tin shelter in hot Nagpur summer in the month of May, while her house was under construction. She died of heat stroke and not because of HIV/AIDS.

Her Psychological Problems Recorded by NGO were:

1. Fear of death.
2. How her family will treat her.
3. How to provide nourishment to herself.
4. Worried about the future of her children.
5. Worried about the attitude of her husband towards her.

Within a month after her death her second husband who was also HIV positive got married to another woman who was HIV negative, giving rise to chances of HIV infection to their prospective children.

NGO is now trying to find out the source of infection, i.e., whether she got it from her first husband or second husband. They are also in search of the lady who was her first husband's second wife.

Second case shows transmission of HIV virus from one person to another, either due to ignorance or due to carelessness.

Needed Social Work Intervention

1. Early detection and early counseling on how HIV infection is passed on or transmitted from one person to another is necessary.
2. Steps to prevent the infection from passing from one generation to another (i.e. from mother to child) are required.
3. A person who is HIV positive should inform his/her status to the HIV negative person before marrying with him/her.

CASE 3 (CASE OF A SEX WORKER)

A female aged 37 years who was a sex worker, passed away on Nov. 26th 2006. She was born and brought

up in a red light area for her mother too was a sex worker.

She had a brother and two younger sisters. Her mother had died due to HIV/AIDS. Although her mother was a sex worker this girl at the age of 12-14 years was studying and leading a normal life. Her job was collecting money from the agent of sex workers and depositing it into the post office. But untimely death of her mother brought responsibility of her younger siblings upon her shoulders. She admitted her younger sisters into the Govt. hostels in Nagpur.

Meanwhile, she came into contact with one man who was a Sari seller. She got married to this man in a temple. This man did not disclose that he was already married and had a family. He also had relations with many women in the red light area. She got separated from him. At the same time her brother who was living with her left her. She was left alone and due to the pressure of circumstances she too entered prostitution. She worked for about 14 years as a prostitute. She had two children a girl and a boy. Her daughter is not HIV positive while her son is HIV positive.

She kept her daughter with an NGO working in Nagpur for HIV positive people. When she came to know that she herself and her son are HIV positive, she had many abortions. This made her emotionally and mentally disturbed. Due to this she became violent and one day her neighbours informed the police. She was brought by the police to the Mental Hospital Nagpur but Medical Officers were hesitant to treat her. Finally the NGO intervened and got her admitted in the Mental hospital. Due to stigma and discrimination, the hospital authorities ill treated her and discharged her within a month (this is the area for social work intervention).

The NGO brought her back and admitted her to the AIDS Hospice at Bangalore. Her son was also admitted there. She improved her health in Bangalore. After returning from Bangalore the NGO started ART to her. After about eight months she was sent to Pune to work in a candle making company by the NGO. This company serves jobs to HIV positive people. At that time also she continued ART from the Pune medical college. She worked there for 3 months. During the Diwali Holidays the company gave her leave and again she went into the Red light area to earn easy money. Again frustration brought relapse of mental illness. NGO took her back to Nagpur mental hospital, but authorities refused to admit her and asked to take her to Medical College Psychiatric OPD. She received treatment there. After staying with the NGO for one week she went back to the red light area, from where she disappeared.

The NGO along with her brother gave a police complaint. The NGO also searched for her in different places. After about 1½ months they found her at a roadside nursery. She was found begging there with dirty clothes. They brought her back to the NGO. Cleaned her, gave her medicines and informed the police. She was very ill. She was sent back to AIDS Hospice at Bangalore. She refused to eat and drink and died there after a couple of months.

Her daughter is now studying in a school in Nagpur and is being taken care of by the NGO.

Third case shows consequences of HIV infection upon a person and ill treatment received by a person from public hospital authorities due to stigma which is associated with this condition.

Needed Social Work Intervention

1. Stigma and discrimination is seen among hospital authorities while dealing with HIV positive people. Social work intervention is needed very much in this area. Reorientation of public health

sector is necessary. NGOs and social workers can play an important role in this regard.

2. To prevent HIV/AIDS in sex workers 'IEC' (Information, Education & Communication) is very important.
3. Proper Counseling is needed for preservation and promotion of mental health, to prevent mental illness among the sex workers.

CONCLUSION

It was found that regarding disclosure of the HIV positive status, in all the three cases special efforts were taken to keep the condition secret among the kinship group. It was found that violation of human rights had taken place in one case. Psychological problems like fear, anxiety were seen in another case while mental illness was seen in yet another case. Where status is known, stigma discrimination was observed

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EXAMINING THE GENDER GAP THROUGH CENSUS DATA : LITERACY AND RURAL WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

Women play various crucial roles in every form of life and national development also recognizes women as a unique power unit and potential resource. Women make the most effective providers of healthcare, be it grandmothers, mothers, nurses, non-formal teachers or managers in the corporate world. As a wife and mother, she is the most influential member in determining the stability of her family and the development of her children's personality. Hence, women's development is a pre requisite for the all round development of the society. An educated woman can educate the whole family and contribute to the overall development of the family as well as nation. The present paper aims at critically analyzing the current Indian scenario of the illiteracy among rural women and its overall effect on the society. After 64 years of independence, as per Census of 2011, the difference in literacy level of the male and female is 16.68 percent. Gender bias, inequality, social discrimination, economic exploitation, occupation of girl child in domestic chores, low enrolment of girls in schools, low retention rate and high dropout rate are the major factors responsible for low literacy among the Indian women. Low literacy among rural women have adverse effects on health care, land reforms, and social equality. It leads to economic and physical exploitation, pervasive gender bias, insufficient employment opportunities, adverse sex ratio, child marriage and the like. Half the Indian adult population continues to be illiterate, while one-third of Indian women are illiterate. India is the only major country in the world that is trying to approach the 21st Century with a country of illiterates.

INTRODUCTION:

The development of a nation cannot only be assured through the technological and materialistic advances, but through the quality of life the people live. Current framework of National Development recognizes women as a unique power unit and a potential resource and has played crucial role in social reforms, economic development and also in the political processes.

Women make the most effective providers of healthcare, be it grandmothers, mothers, nurses, non-formal teachers or managers in the corporate world. As a wife and mother, she is the most influential member in determining the stability of her family and the development of her children's personality. Hence, women's development is a pre requisite for the all round development of the society. In a package of developmental inputs available to community, education should form an effective means to improve the physical quality of life of the masses. It is said that one educated woman educates the whole family but the Indian scenario regarding female literacy, and especially rural female literacy, reveals that even after independence most women are illiterate as compared to their male counterparts.

This paper examines the changing rates of literacy among rural women over a period of time and places it in the larger context of state policy.

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- ? Among the Indian states, Kerala has the highest literacy rate of 93.91% followed by Mizoram with 91.58% literacy.
- ? Bihar has the lowest literacy rate among all states in India with 63.82%.
- ? Among the Union Territories, Lakshadweep has the highest literacy rate of 92.28%.
- ? The Male literacy is highest in Lakshadweep with 96.11% and Kerala with 96.02%.
- ? The Female literacy is highest in Kerala with 91.98% and Mizoram with 89.40%.
- ? Lowest male literacy is in Bihar with 73.39%.
- ? Lowest female literacy is in Rajasthan with 52.66%.
- ? The male-female literacy gap has reduced from 24.84% in 1991 to 21.59% in 2001 and to 16.68% in 2011. Meghalaya has the smallest gap (3.39%) followed by Kerala (4.02%) and Mizoram (4.32%).
- ? All States and Union Territories without exception have shown increase in literacy rates during 2001-2011.
- ? In all the States and Union Territories the male literacy rate except Bihar (59.68%) is now over 60%.
- ? For the second time since independence there has been a decline in the absolute number of illiterates during the decade. In the previous decades, there has been a continuous increase in the number of illiterates, despite the increase in the literacy rates, but now for the first time the total number of illiterates has come down.
- ? The total population of literate females in the country was 224.2 million and in the past one decade it has increased to 328.8 million, showing a significant addition of 104.6 million literate females in the country.
- ? As per 2011 census the literacy rate in general is 63.3% for STs (www.tribal.nic.in).
- ? Literacy rate of STs was more than the SCs in the states of Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Sikkim.
- ? In general the SCs were ahead of the STs in literacy. But in urban areas the STs were ahead of SCs.

STATE GROUPINGS: ON THE BASIS OF LITERACY RATE, STATE/UTS CAN BE GROUPED AS UNDER:

High Literacy Rate (80% and above): Kerala (93.91%), Lakshadweep (92.28%), Mizoram (91.58%), Tripura (87.75%), Goa (87.40%), Daman & Diu (87.07%), Chandigarh (86.34%), Delhi (86.34%), A & N Islands (86.2781.30%), Pondicherry (86.55%), Himachal Pradesh (83.78%), Maharashtra (82.91%), Sikkim (82.20%), Nagaland (80.11%) and Tamil Nadu (80.33%).

Literacy Rate above national average (74.04%) and below 80% : Uttaranchal (79.63%), Manipur (79.85%), Punjab (76.68%), Gujarat (79.31%), West Bengal (77.08%), Haryana (76.64%), Karnataka (75.60%) Meghalaya (75.48%) and Dadra & Nagar Haveli (77.65%).

Literacy Rate below national average (64.8%): Chhattisgarh (71.04%), Madhya Pradesh (70.63%), Assam (73.18%), Orissa (73.45%), Andhra Pradesh (67.66%), Rajasthan (67.06%), Uttar Pradesh (69.72%), Jammu & Kashmir (68.74%), Arunachal Pradesh (66.95%), Jharkhand (67.63%) and Bihar (63.82%).

GENERAL ILLITERACY:

- ? In terms of the size of illiteracy, eight States, viz. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka and Maharashtra had more than 15 million illiterates each and accounted for 69.7 per cent of the illiterate population of the country.

As per 2011 Census (<http://www.mapsofindia.com/census2011/literacy-rate.html>):

- ? The first six of these states - Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan are in Hindi belt and have 31.2% illiterates (Male Illiteracy 23.85% and Female illiteracy 39.79%). Which means that 31.2% of the non-literates reside in these six Hindi-speaking States.
- ? Percentage of non-literates in these States In general Uttar Pradesh (30.3%), Bihar (36.2%), Rajasthan (32.9%), Jharkhand (29.0%), Chhattisgarh (32.4%) and Madhya Pradesh (29.4%).
- ? In Bihar the percentage of illiterates decreased from 53.0% in 2001 to 36.2% in 2011.
- ? Other States having more than national average illiterates are: Assam (26.82%), Orissa (26.55%), Andhra Pradesh (32.34%), Jammu & Kashmir (31.26%), Arunachal Pradesh (33.05%).

FEMALE LITERACY IN INDIA:

As per Population Census of India 2011, the Literacy rate of India has shown as improvement of almost 9 percent. It has gone up to 74.04% in 2011 from 65.38% in 2001, thus showing an increase of 9 percent in the last 10 years. It consists of male literacy rate 82.14% and female literacy rate is 65.46%. The literacy rate in the country has increased from 18.33% in 1951 to 74.04% as per 2011 census. The female literacy rate has also increased from 8.86% in 1951 to 65.46%. It is noticed that the female literacy rate during the period 2001-2011 increased by 11.79% whereas male literacy rate rose by 6.88%. Hence the female literacy rate actually increased by 4.91% more compared to male literacy rate.

There is a wide gender disparity in the literacy rate in India: effective literacy rates (age 7 and above) in 2011 were 82.14% for men and 65.46% for women. The low female literacy rate has had a dramatically negative impact on family planning and population stabilization efforts in India. Studies have indicated that female literacy is a strong predictor of the use of contraception among married Indian couples, even when women do not otherwise have economic independence.

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR POOR FEMALE LITERACY RATE IN GENERAL:

Historically, a variety of factors have been found to be responsible for poor female literate rate, viz:

- ? Gender based inequality.
- ? Social discrimination and economic exploitation.
- ? Occupation of girl child in domestic chores.
- ? Low enrolment of girls in schools.
- ? Low retention rate and high dropout rate.

STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR INCREASING FEMALE LITERACY IN THE COUNTRY:

The main strategies adopted by the Government for increasing female literacy in the country include:

1. National Literacy Mission for imparting functional literacy.

2. Universalization for Elementary Education.
3. Non-Formal Education.
4. Free education programs to poor people living in villages and towns.
5. Setting up of new school and colleges at district and state levels.
6. Several committees have been formed to ensure proper utilization of funds allotted to improve literacy rate.

EFFECTS OF ILLITERACY:

1. By a current estimate, based on official data, the number of children in India in the age-group 6-11 years (that is, the primary-school years) not attending school in 1995 was staggering - about 36 million boys and 42 million girls (Sen, 1997).
2. The lack of health care to rural women ,
3. The absence of land reforms makes the problem of social inequality very large.
4. Economic and physical Exploitation.
5. Pervasive gender bias.
6. Lack of employment opportunities to backward women.
7. Continuation of social inequality and backwardness.
8. Higher Sex ratio.
9. Leads to child marriage.
10. Less religious and more superstitious.
11. High population Growth.

Lots of people have very few opportunities to lead a good life - to receive medical attention when they are ill, to be able to communicate with others in the country or the rest of the world, to read and write as they like, and so on. But on top of that, these deprivations in respect of human capabilities also restrain a large section of the community from benefiting from the economic opportunities that exist in the modern world.

CONCLUSION:

The census provided a positive indication that growth in female literacy rates (11.8%) was substantially faster than in male literacy rates (6.9%) in the 2001-2011 decadal period, which means the gender gap appears to be narrowing. Higher education has expanded dramatically, and India has one of the largest higher educated populations in the world - for every student that China sends to the university we send as many as six (Sen, 1997). In contrast, while China is getting close to universal literacy, we are very far away from it. Half the Indian adult population happens still to be illiterate, one-third of Indian women are illiterate. India is the only major country in the world that is trying to approach the 21st century with the bulk of the country illiterate. And given the fact that among the commitments that Pandit Nehru emphasized in his speech on the "tryst with destiny" was the removal of illiteracy and ignorance, our failure in this regard is quite amazing.

Government of India has taken several measures to improve the literacy rate in villages and towns of

rnments have been directed to ensure and improve literacy rate in districts and villages where people are very poor. It is noticed that the female literacy rate during the period 2001-2011 increased by 11.79% whereas male literacy rate rose by 6.88%. Hence the female literacy rate actually increased by 4.91% more compared to male literacy rate. There has been a good improvement in literacy rate of India in last 10 years but there is still a long way to go. Government should ensure proper implementation of the Right to Education Act so that the future generation would be not only literate but educated leading to towards lessening the gap of illiteracy between men and women.

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