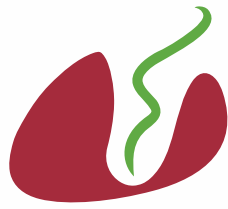


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# Institutionalised Children Explorations and Beyond

An International Journal on Alternative Care

Volume 3

September 2016

Number 2



**Focused on the South Asian Region**



# Institutionalised Children Explorations and Beyond

An International Journal on Alternative Care

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## ***Editorial***

### **INSTITUTIONALISED CHILDREN: EXPLORATIONS AND BEYOND**

As I sit down to write the editorial for this issue, I am reminded of the journey that the founding members of the editorial board took approximately four years ago. This is the second issue in its third year of publication and nothing gives me greater pleasure than acknowledging the ongoing hard work of the group and our associated members. It is a testament to their belief in this endeavor, to draw attention to the needs of those who are most vulnerable in our world.

The current issue maintains the core structure established in the inaugural issue, ensuring the journal's characteristic features and dedication to exploring and presenting the key concerns related to the care and management of vulnerable children. It begins with an interview with the Honorable Justice Muhammad Imman Ali, Judge of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh. I along with my editorial board had the pleasure of meeting the Honorable Justice during the March 2016 Second Biennial International Conference on "Improving Standards of Care for Alternative Child and Youth Care: Systems, Policies and Practices" with focus on South Asian countries,, held at Amity University. Once again, the interview conducted by Luis Aguilar Esponda, reflects the thoroughness, sensitivity and clarity of thought we have become accustomed to from the interviewer and once again we are not disappointed. With precision, Luis Esponda draws us into a world where we learn of the H. Justice's concern for children in welfare, his dedicated work to representing the dire needs of this group of individuals and his reflections on the general state of justice for children in Bangladesh and South Asia. It is informative, inspiring and representative of the work conducted by many in the region.

For our main research section we have once again a selection of papers that reflect our increasing diversity and outreach with respect to issues and region. While we attempt to maintain our core structure and belief in presenting articles that reflect policy and legal matters with respect to orphaned children as well as the behavioral and mental health concerns that accompany them, we are also beginning to select articles reflective of a more complex picture of this population. This section begins with a paper by Jagannath Pati who examines the evolving nature of adoption programmes in the context of socio-cultural background of the country. He sensitively explores the shift from parent-centered to child-centered adoptions, reflecting the increasing awareness of concerns related to orphaned children in general. As the global initiative to move towards family base care continues to gain momentum, a paper by Bhubaneswri and Sibnath Deb seems timely. Focusing on the efficacy of

family based care as compared to institutional care, these authors explore the legal and moral ramifications of providing protection to institutionalised children and to revolutionising family based care simultaneously

Consistent with our objective to bring diverse and interesting articles to the readership, we have chosen an article that explores the relationship that can exist between disadvantaged children with intellectual disabilities living in impoverished settings and the valuable connections that can be build with the elderly and privileged communities of West Bengal. Chaitali Maitra's paper highlights the growing need for such connection. She quite astutely points out that gerontology has a specific and definite place in social sciences. Referring to this as 'mutual benevolence' she advocates for constructing elderly townships with a view to helping the underprivileged.

The social adjustment and mental health of orphaned children remains a strong focus for us. From the city of Hyderabad and Secunderabad and Telangana State, we have a paper by Eswari Vadlamudi. Her in-depth examination of the terminology associated with institutionalized children is followed by how such care is imparted in her region. She sheds light on what is helpful for good social adjustment and suggests various avenues by which one can enhance the level of care provided to this population.

The next paper by Roma Debabrata examines the plight of the abandoned girl child in the Indian context. She advocates for a rehabilitation process to socially reintegrate the female child through emotional, physical and educational training. Using case studies from STOP, a rescue and rehabilitation center, she makes the argument that current rehabilitative methods lack a personalized approach. They do not take into account the specific needs of the female child given her past history.

A paper by Ryan Heath, Aditi Das and Nayla Khoury concludes this section. In their paper on youth development models particularly with Indian youth, the authors examine how Western based models of youth development can be applied to an institutionalized Indian population. Their paper examines the potential problems involved in the cross-cultural applications of theory and literature with several suggestions for reform and growth.

For our international section, we have two fine papers. In a paper titled 'Home beyond Border', Rebecca Compton examines the drop in international adoptions. While she presents the benefits of adoption for an orphaned child, she goes on to examine the policies and socio-cultural concerns that have contributed to families, particularly American families, not pursuing adoption as a viable option. Fears of corruption in the adoption process and the challenges that one encounters to ethnic, national and cultural identity are also cited as concerns in the adoption process. This is followed by a provocative paper by Jane Reas who examines the popular

Western trend of volunteering vacations to orphanages in third world countries. Delving into this practice in an orphanage in Cambodia, she describes the ‘commodification’ of these children who are marketed for the Western world and examines the underlying processes that govern such practices.

For our Good Practice section, W. D. P. Perera from Sri Lanka has a concise piece on how SOS Children’s Villages work in the region. While SOS programmes are well known, the regions’ specific geo-political situations can present challenges to the care provided to an orphaned child and Perera does not disappoint us in examining how this programme works in Sri Lanka.

Our movie editor, Sonia Parikh writes an illuminating piece on Buddha’s Lost Children, a movie directed by Mark Verkerk. The movie portrays the life of the Buddhist monk Phra Khru Bah and the children he rescues. The movie made in Thai is subtitled and portrays exquisitely the journey taken by the children as they move forward in their lives.

For our book review, we are delighted to present a review by Sherry Sabbarwal of Punjab University who provides a comprehensive review of the book “Inclusive Education across Cultures: Crossing Boundaries, Sharing Ideas” edited by Mithu Alur and Vianne Timmons. This is a massive undertaking as the book, is extensive, about five hundred pages and divided into five sections. It examines the challenges of promoting and implementing inclusive education for children with special needs. The book makes a significant contribution to understanding the complexities associated with this process and Dr. Sabbarwal’s review gives us a good glimpse of what we can expect if we were to read the book.

Finally, ending with the Brief Communications and Upcoming Events section, we highlight regional issues and communications. The journal continues to grow with the input of those who wish to make a difference in the care of orphaned children and those in need of care and protection. Since our inception, we have grown, having successfully held two Biennial International Conferences, drawing participants from all around the world. We hope that you will continue to sponsor us and consider contributing an article to the next issue of this journal.

**Monisha C. Nayar-Akhtar, Ph.D.**  
*Editor-in-Chief*

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JOURNAL THEMES will cover a wide range of topics. From time to time, an issue may be devoted to a particular theme as in addressing mental health concerns and treating trauma in this population. Authors are encouraged to submit their ideas for particular themes and can work with the editor-in-chief to develop their ideas into a special issue. We hope to encourage creativity in thinking and promote a desire to develop new initiatives in research and care in this field.

Authors who are interested in editing a special issue should contact Dr. Monisha Akhtar at [monisha\\_akhtar@hotmail.com](mailto:monisha_akhtar@hotmail.com)

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