



Are Juvenile Care/Observation Homes in India Effective in Their Reformatory Objective? What is the Status Quo?

An Empirical Study of Delhi's Three Juvenile Care Homes

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“There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children.”

- Nelson Mandela



1. Introductory Concept Note

Children of today become the adults of tomorrow and are thus the future of the world. In order to ensure that the world is a better place to live in the times to come, it is necessary to focus our attention towards the children of our nation.

Upbringing of an individual plays a vital role in shaping a person he is / becomes. Researches reveal that most of the criminals or the people, who commit crimes, resort to such practices as a result of their wrong upbringings. In the initial stages of their lives, they are deprived of the basic love, care and guidance that are required by every child. Lack of adequate attention by the parents of such children towards them results in inability of such children to differentiate between the right and the wrong. Researches and studies also show that great number of (adult) criminals have had a record of being juvenile offenders in their teenage. They implicated that the delinquency of a juvenile, if not addressed at the earliest and with utmost care, might pose some serious threat to the society.

To check this menace, juvenile justice system had been introduced in our country. The main aim of the Juvenile Justice Act is rehabilitation rather than punishment.

The fourth chapter of the Act discusses the importance of rehabilitation and social integration as the purpose of this act. But besides being on paper, the Juvenile Justice Act is totally different in its implementation. Although the Act provides for various methods for rehabilitation, its practical application is far less than satisfactory, as a result of which the delinquent juveniles, that are kept within the juvenile homes, become uncomfortable, frustrated and consequently start damaging the property and the premises of the juvenile homes (as has been recently observed many a times in the juvenile homes of Delhi) in order to vent this frustration. More or less the Homes that have had been set up to provide care and protection for reformation have rather become places of frustration. Delhi suffers from such violent instances arising out of frustration at the Observation and Special Homes frequently, which poses many questions in front of everyone.

Firstly, if this is the condition at the capital of the country, what might be the scenario of the implementation of the act in other cities and towns?

Secondly, what are real reasons which drive them to do so? What accurate facilities should be provided? Or, the juveniles are misusing the fact that they can't be given harsh treatment by the law?

Well besides all the questions that are put in front, the increasing juvenile delinquency and their resistance towards reformation stands as the biggest threat for the whole Nation. Thus the Juvenile rehabilitation/ reformation, is perhaps the biggest challenge before the Society at large and the government as these children are the future of our Nation.



These children, as reflected through their aggressive acts, instead of being reformed and rehabilitated at the Juvenile homes are feeding more on anger, hatred and carelessness. The gloomy environment of the juvenile homes acts as a barrier in the rehabilitation of these juveniles. Therefore, it is necessary to make the juvenile homes more child-friendly and introduce certain changes in the existing rehabilitation practices in order to meet the demands of the modern time.

Therefore, the Juveniles ought to be dealt by the justice system in a manner consistent with their rights, inherent dignity as human beings and one which takes into account their needs and targets their reform.

2. Objectives of the Project

The following are the objectives of doing the empirical research:

- To examine various factors which influence/affect the psychology of the Juveniles.
- To see the conduct of officials towards the juveniles at the Juvenile Homes.
- To understand the emotional level of the Juveniles admitted at Juvenile Homes.
- To inquire about the existing rehabilitation practices for the Juveniles at Juvenile Homes.
- To ask for better rehabilitation practices that should be introduced at the Juvenile Homes.
- To give recommendations for improving the rehabilitation process after drawing inferences from the responses given by officials/ social workers and Juveniles.

3. Significance of findings of the Project

The findings of the Project would prove to be of enormous help for the executive agencies responsible for the welfare of children as the project is the result of the primary data collected from the direct acquaintance with the juvenile inmates at juvenile homes.

4. Research Methodology

4.1. Research Methods

The project study was empirical in nature wherein quantitative analysis was made of the quantitative data collected through field study. Delhi being the Capital of the country is a metropolitan study & cosmopolitan city, both; thus it was selected as the target city in which field work was carried.

For the purpose of field work, selection was made of 'sample group' and 'sample size', both. By the virtue of this project we wanted to draw out certain best possible recommendations for the better rehabilitation process of the Juveniles at juvenile homes. Thus all the stake-



holders who deal with the issue of this project, 'Officials at Juvenile Homes', Social Workers at Non-Governmental Organizations dealing with juvenile issues and Juveniles admitted at Juvenile Homes, were made part of the sample group. Selection of these groups was made on the basis of philosophy of functioning of our Nation.

In the functioning of our Nation, functions of judiciary are carried out by judicial officers; executive functions are carried by the Cabinet with the help of the officials; and the legislative functions are carried by the legislature. This project focuses on better rehabilitation of the Juveniles, which comes under the realm of executive functionaries.

Moreover, to understand the exact nature of the juveniles, all the setbacks that result in delinquency and every aspect that can help in reformation, those respondents were to be targeted who confront with the issues/problems on everyday basis.

So the first focus of study was to interview the juvenile inmates at the Observation and Special Homes, so as to explore their attitude. It helped us to understand the socio-psychological factors that affect their behavioural traits and other multi-variant personality factors, like, identity crisis, attitude, parental conflict, behavioural disorder, etc. it contributed significantly in developing detailed profiles of the delinquent juveniles.

Second focus of study was to interview the Officials at Juvenile Homes, as they are the ones who are the caretakers/custodians of the Juveniles at the juvenile homes. They confront with the behavioral patterns of juveniles and their problems on everyday basis.

Third focus of study was to interview the Social Workers at the Ngo's dealing with juvenile justice. Only those social workers were interviewed who themselves deal with the delinquent juveniles frequently.

All the sample groups were administered interview-questionnaires. Different interview-questionnaires were prepared for all the sample-groups. These interview-questionnaires were developed in consultation with the experts.

4.2. Methods of Data Collection

Based on the above stated methodology, data was collected through these above mentioned tools. The data collection was done in phased manner. The task of data collection was carried in two stages. At first stage, permission was taken from the concerned authority to meet and interview the juvenile inmates. Thus, after permission was acquired the juvenile inmates at all the two observation homes ('Prayas' & 'SewaKutir') and one Special Home (MajnukaTila) were interviewed.

While visiting observation and Special Homes, the detailed opinions of the officials were also sought in two ways, firstly by the help of interview-questionnaire and secondly by, seeking their suggestions for the betterment of rehabilitation process and psychological patterns of the juveniles.



At last Social Workers dealing with delinquent juveniles from 2 Ngo's (naming; 'Aarohan' & 'Haq') were interviewed. Here also only those respondents were taken from the Ngo who actually deal with the delinquent juveniles. Third social worker was from the Prayas Institute of Juvenile Justice.

All these interviews were conducted through 'interview-questionnaire' prepared in consultation with experts.

Stage 1: Approach for starting the research

First visit was done at 'Prayas' (Observation Home for Boys-I) and after meeting the Authority there, we got clear about the things like, whom to approach for seeking permission to interview the juvenile inmates and how to approach them.

Moreover, we got a good idea of the practices that are followed in relation to a juvenile once he is admitted at the home.

Stage 2: Taking permission from the concerned Authority

After three visits, on the fourth visit we were finally able to meet the Deputy Director of Department of Women & Child Development, Govt. of NCT of Delhi located at 1 Canning Lane, K.G. Marg: New Delhi (Child Protection Unit), who asked us about the objectives of our project. After listening to the objectives and other general details of our project, she agreed to give us permission. Therefore, we received a formal permission letter to interview the juvenile inmates via e-mail on 08.08.2013.

Stage 3: Empirical Study (through interview-questionnaires)

Three Respondent groups, 'Juvenile in conflict with law', Officials posted at Juvenile Homes', Social Workers from NGO's, were selected.

- Interviews were taken from juveniles admitted at Juvenile Homes.
- Interviews were taken from Officials posted at Juvenile Homes
- Interviews were taken from Social Workers at Ngo's (Aarohan&Haq) and Prayas Institute of Juvenile Justice dealing with delinquent juveniles.

Stage 4: Data Interpretation

All the collected data has been analyzed in the form of tables and by stating collective responses of all the respondents in a particular group.

Stage 5: Drawing inferences and findings of the study

Inferences have been taken out of all the responses and findings of the study have been given in the conclusion & recommendations.



4.3. Sample Group & Sample Size

S. No.	Sample Group	Sample Size	Area of the field Study	Tools/ Instruments	Remarks
1.	Officials of Observation Homes and Special Home (there are three observation homes and one special home)	Seven	Two Observation Homes and one Special Home (third observation for girls was not functioning, so didn't get its permission)	Interview- Questionnaire	Officials at Special home and one observation home were reluctant in filling the questionnaire, though two among them filled it without recording the name and identity. Though most of the officials there discussed the complexities in terms of juveniles at large. Also gave suggestions for improving the rehabilitation.
2.	Juveniles in conflict with Law	38 respondents	Observation Home for Boys-I, (PRAYAS) Behind Ambedkar Stadium Delhi Gate, New Delhi Adharshila Observation Home for Boys-II, SewaKutir Complex, Kingsway Camp, Delhi	Interview- questionnaire	Interviews were taken after taking permission from the Dy. Director, Department of Women & Child Development, Govt. of NCT of Delhi. Male juveniles in the age group 7-16 years are kept at PRAYAS and male juveniles in the age group of 17-18 years were kept at



			<p>Place of Safety/ Special Home for Boys, 1, Magazine Road, MajnuKaTila, Delhi.</p>		<p>SewaKutir, Kingsway Camp. Whereas male juveniles in the age group of 17-18 years who have committed heinous crimes or whose ages are not certain and the ones who were 18 or below at the time of commission of the offence, but due to indetermination of age were sent to Tihar jail, are kept at Special Home (MajnukaTila) when their age gets certain afterwards.</p>
3.	Social Workers	Three	<p>Aarohan, B-127, Basement, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi</p> <p>HAQ: Centre for Child Rights, B-1/2, Ground Floor, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi</p> <p>Workers dealing with delinquent juveniles were sent questionnaires electronically (via e-mail).</p>	Interview-questionnaire	<p>Interview of only one worker at each of the Ngo was taken, to maintain the symmetry of the project. As we had to include only those respondents who actually deal with the juveniles and can answer truly about their psychology and better rehabilitation practices. Thus, at both the Ngo's only one person (respondent) was dealing with the</p>



			PrayasInstitute of Juvenile Justice.		delinquent juveniles. Whereas, 3 rd social worker was from Prayas Institute of Juvenile Justice.
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4.4. Time Frame

The research survey was started after permission to interview the Juveniles admitted at Observation/special homes was obtained from the Deputy Director, Department of women & child welfare on 08.08.2013. More than 10 visits were done at the Observation/Special homes for interviewing the juvenile inmates from August 2013 to October 2013. Whereas, visits were again made in order to obtain the interviews of Officials till 20 December 2013. Whereas, the Social Workers were informed about the project via telephonic conversations, questionnaire was mailed to all three of the Officials, who filled the questionnaire and sent it back through e-mail only.

4.5 Constraints & Opportunities

S.No.	Constraints	Opportunities
1.	Officials at Observation home-II (for 17-18 yrs boys) and at Special home, didn't let us interview more than 6-7 children. Moreover the Officials posted at these Homes were reluctant in filling the questionnaire.	Majority of responses we could collect from PRAYAS (OB home-I).
2.	In 3.5 months after taking permission, we visited the homes for interviewing more than 10 times. It was not easy matching their timings with our college schedule.	Interacting with the juveniles admitted at the homes was a whole new experience.
3.	The officials were reluctant in filling the questionnaires and revealing their names, moreover, not many officials are there at juvenile homes who directly deal with the juveniles. Thus could interview only 7 officials.	Meeting the officials gave us lot of knowledge about the complexities involved in handling the juveniles at the juvenile homes. Moreover, an insight of the juvenile justice mechanism was achieved.
4.	At both the Ngo's only one person was dealing with delinquent juveniles directly, so could interview only 2, they took more than one	



	month in replying. After contacting some officials, three other social workers were also contacted and interview-questionnaires were mailed to them but inspite of waiting for some days, no reply was attained.	
5.	Even though Juvenile justice which should be the foremost concern of the government, majority of social workers, lawyers, etc it is not addressed properly as no direct or indirect commercialization can be obtained out of this issue.	

5. Analysis:

Reasons for involvement of juveniles in criminal activities:

Children who have not completed eighteenth year of age at the time of commission of the alleged offence are called as “juveniles in conflict with law”.¹

The children are deemed to be honest and innocent as perceived generally than how come children committing so many petty and heinous crimes, the reasons that may be involved can be made out.

As per Social Workers:

- Lack of parental guidance is the major reason behind involvement of juveniles in criminal activities (as per 2 social workers)

Whereas, according to another Social worker following can be the reasons:

- Dysfunctional family or when family is missing or not available. Family is unable to understand the child’s needs which are often psychological in nature.
- Violence in schools in the form of corporal punishments, lack of any individual attention in school result in either dropping out of school or part of bad peer group.
- In most families “sexuality” or sexual needs are taboo areas, leading to repression of sexuality of the child. Repressed sexuality manifests itself in the form of violence or crime.
- Poverty and lack of adequate living spaces means overcrowding and proximity, very little space for the individual and violence in the neighbourhood surroundings.

¹ Sec 21 of the JJA Act, 2000.



- Drug addiction is also one of the causes of delinquency among children.
- Risk taking behaviour, lack of decision making, experimentation and impulsivity, etc. are common feature of adolescent age, and teenagers especially in late teens are more prone to commit crimes.
- Cable TV and the exposure to violent and sexual content on media.

As per the **Officials at Juvenile Homes**, following are the reasons shown in **Table 1**.

Preferences		1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th
Sr. No.	Response options	No. of respon Dents						
1.	Lack of Parental guidance	7						
2.	Lack of interest in education		1	2				
3.	Lure for money		1		1			
4.	Use by crime syndicates			2				
5.	No fear of Police/Courts							
6.	Consumption of alcohol/drugs		1	1				
7.	Peer pressure		3		1			
	Total	7	6	5	2			

All the respondents hold the 'lack of parental guidance' as the major reason behind delinquency among the juveniles followed by peer pressure as the second reason. Whereas, use of juveniles by crime syndicates and lack of interest in education can be the other reasons for involvement of juveniles in criminal activities.



As per the **Delinquent Juveniles**, following are the reasons shown in **Table 2**:

Preferences		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th
Sr. No.	Response options	No. of respon Dents						
1.	Lack of Parental guidance	2	1	1	2	1		
2.	Peer Pressure	9	6					
3.	No fear of Police/Courts						1	
4.	Use by crime syndicates	1						1
5.	Lure for money	15	6	2	1			
6.	Consumption of alcohol/drugs	7	4	3				
7.	No social pressure	2		1	1			
	Total	29	13	4	4	1	1	1

As per juveniles 'lure for money' is the major reason why juveniles indulge into criminal activities followed by peer pressure and consumption of alcohol/drugs as the other reasons. Even though juveniles commit offences, they still **have a different attitude than that of adult offenders** (as answered by all the respondent officials of juvenile homes). The following reasons are given by the Officials which differentiate the attitude of a juvenile than that of an adult offender:

- Juveniles are less mature as they are clueless about the consequences of their acts.
- Juveniles don't understand every aspect before committing the offence. They are fearless of all the consequences.
- Juveniles don't feel much guilty after committing an offence.
- Juveniles are ready to change, i.e., can be reformed if someone works on their psychological aspects.
- Juveniles commit offences only because they are unguided else they are innocent.



As per Social workers undeniably there is a difference in attitude of juvenile offender and adult offender and they explain the attitude of the juvenile as varying from case to case. Many children are open, they discuss their issues in details which they themselves are able to introspect. A sense of guilt and remorse is visible in their behavior. While in some children there is not much guilt, they are concerned towards their family but not remorseful. In a very few children it has been observed that a sense of pleasure and achievement is there for what they have done.

In short, as per another Social worker Some Juveniles take pride in themselves for doing what they have done and some regret and want to correct themselves by considering what they did as mistake.

Age group more prone to criminal activities:

As per the **Officials of Juvenile Homes and Social Workers age – group more prone to criminal activities shown in Table 3:**

Preferences					
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
Sr. No.	Response Options	No. of respondents	No. of respondents	No. of respondents	No. of respondents
1.	Age group of 10-12 years			1	1
2.	Age group of 13-14 years	1	1		
3.	Age group of 15-16 years	3	2		
4.	Age group of 17-18 years	5	1		
	Total	9	4	1	1



As per Officials at Juvenile Homes & Social Workers, “age group in which mental transformation of a juvenile/child takes place majorly”

Table 4:

Preferences					
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
Sr. No.	Response Options	No. of respondents	No. of respondents	No. of respondents	No. of respondents
1.	Age group of 07-09 years				
2.	Age group of 10-12 years	1			
3.	Age group of 13-15 years	4			
4.	Age group of 16-18 years	4			
	Total	9			

Whereas as per a Social worker initial first 07 years are very important for a child in which child behavior and cognitive development are gaining development, later after puberty the adolescent age is very crucial where there is lots of change in body and behavior. These periods in child development are very crucial, parenting, school and social environment play a very crucial role in a person’s life throughout.

Psychology of a child/Juvenile:

Human beings through their acts reflect their mindset. Similarly, children through acts echo their psychological set up. As per the social workers **‘family surroundings/situations’** play a major role in forming the psychological behavior of a juvenile. And as per another social worker good parenting stands as a main facet in the psychological set up of the child followed by education, peer group, neighbourhood surroundings as other important factors.

Requisites of a good parental support/guidance:

As per the Social Workers requisites of a good parental support/guidance shown in Table 5:

Preferences	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th



Sr. No.	Response options	No. of respondents						
1.	Friendly approach	2			1			
2.	Compassion		2					
3.	Fulfilling monetary requirements					1	1	
4.	Fulfilling basic necessities of life	1		1				
5.	Providing with luxuries						1	1
6.	Routine interaction with child			2				
7.	Strictness				1	1		
	Total	3	2	3	2	2	2	1

Thus as per the responses, ‘friendly approach’ is the most important requisite of a good parental support/guidance followed by fulfilling basic necessities of life, compassionate approach towards the child and routine interaction.

As per a social worker besides above mentioned preferential requisites other factors such as involvement of children in decision making process, taking their opinion, conducting open communication according to age and providing with a violence free environment.

Utmost requirement for a good bringing up:

While a child is going through mental transformation a ‘good counseling’ is the most essential requirement for a good bringing up (as per two social workers). Whereas as per another social worker besides the basic amenities which are required for the survival with dignity, the most crucial requirements are good parenting (which includes positive disciplining, no physical and



emotional violence in the family, giving space to the child to talk, etc.), education and peer group.

Religious as well as spirituality sometimes also helps for moral teaching. There is no doubt that family is of the utmost importance in an individual's life.

Rehabilitation of a Juvenile in conflict with law:

As per Officials at Juveniles Homes and Social Workers things that help in rehabilitation of Juveniles shown in Table 6:

Preferences	1st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
Sr. No.	Response options	No. of respondents				
1.	Education	1	1	1	1	
2.	Counseling	4	4			
3.	Recreational activities	1	1	3	1	
4.	Parental support/guidance	3	1	2	1	
5.	Guarantee of a secured future (like promised job/higher education, etc)				1	4
6.	Harsh Punishment					1
	Total	9	7	6	4	4

Thus as per the responses '**counseling**' plays the major role in rehabilitation of a juvenile in conflict with law. Whereas **parental support/guidance** and **recreational activities** can be other important aspects which may help in rehabilitation of juveniles in conflict with law.

As per Juveniles in conflict with law, things that can play major role in rehabilitation of juveniles as shown in Table 7:



Preferences		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
Sr. No.	Response options	No. of respondents					
1.	Education	12	7	5			
2.	Counseling	9	1	3			
3.	Recreational activities	5	5	1			
4.	Parental support/guidance	7	2			1	
5.	Guarantee of a secured future (like promised job/higher education, etc)	2	6	2	2		
6.	Harsh Punishment						1
	Total	35	21	11	2	1	1

According to the delinquent juveniles '**education**' can play the major role in the rehabilitation of the delinquent juveniles or juveniles in conflict with law. Whereas, '**counseling**', '**parental support/guidance**' and '**recreational activities**' also play an important role. '**Guarantee of a secured future (like promised job/higher education, etc)**' may also have a good impact in the reformation of the juveniles.

Stay of Juveniles at Observation/Special home:

As per the Juvenile Justice Act, 2000 Police officials cannot use force on the juveniles, no matter whichever crime they commit. Thus on questioning whether the police ever used force, 11 respondents answered 'yes' and 25 respondents answered 'no'.

Out of 38 respondents, 1 respondent said that he had been sexually abused at the juvenile home. Whereas only 11 respondents knew about sexual abuse is and as per their further response, no one was ever sexually abused at their home.



Out of **in total 38 respondents**, **33 respondents** say that **'Yes'** their stay at the observation/special home will help them in becoming a better person. Whereas, **4 respondents** say **'No'**, it won't help them in becoming a better person.

In furtherance of questioning why the stay at home is helpful, majority of respondents (i.e. 25 in number) answered that 'the facilities provided will mould their mind in a better way', the food provided will help them in becoming physically stronger' and the care taken by the juvenile home officers will help them shape in a better person', all the these three aspects will help them reform or become a better person during their stay at the observation/special home.

Moreover, only **5 respondents** said that **'yes'** other facilities should be provided to the juveniles who are kept at observation/special homes. Whereas, **30 respondents** said that **'no'**, nothing else is required. While majority of the respondents, (i.e. **33** in number) said **'no'** when asked you deserve to be here and only **6 respondents** said **'yes'** that they ***deserve to at observation/special home.***

Conclusion & Recommendations:

The first impression which came after visiting Juvenile homes is that children of only lower class families and lower middle class families were admitted at the Observation/special homes. Therefore it can be very easily assumed that one of the major reasons behind the juvenile delinquency is poverty or insufficiency in life which as a result might be tempting the children to obtain the riches by wrong ends. *As per the majority of responses from juveniles at the juvenile homes, 'lure for money' is the major reason behind the juveniles committing crimes.* Thus the rationale behind juvenile delinquency is a mixture of family problems & financial conditions ultimately leading to frustration. Thus, frustrated brain of a child which is yet to be nurtured commits offences.

Understanding juveniles below 16 years of age:

The children/juveniles below the age of 16 years were very innocent, mostly all the children missed their parents especially mothers. They were lacking a motherly affectionate environment at juvenile home. They were interested in learning, as they said education can reform the delinquent juveniles. Moreover juveniles below 16 years of age being innocent can be reformed through good counseling by parents and officials at juvenile homes. Thus juveniles of this age group need more care, love, affection and high inspirational counseling sessions as children till this age are in the process of molding their minds, so if shown the right path in a gracious manner, these children would definitely improve.

Understanding juveniles above 16 years of age:

The juveniles above 16 years of age reflected lot of frustration within themselves. While interacting with many of them, it was found that their parents don't pay attention towards them and so they are deprived of parental/family love, concern and care. Thus they behave carefree from family and social taboos as a result indulge into criminal acts. Once a juvenile



is deprived of right direction and discipline in life, he/she gains resonance in friends and outsiders thus keep getting into a trap which is not easy to leave. Traps for such unguided souls are made by crime syndicates and shameless adult/juvenile repeat offenders. Many of the juvenile inmates are repeat offenders and they take pride in committing offences, they are not afraid of anyone or anything, moreover, they frequently create chaos at the juvenile homes, do damage and involve other juveniles also with them in damaging the property. Besides damaging the property at the Juvenile Homes, many of the juveniles above 16 years of age kept blades or other sharpened devices to harm their own body. They had signs of cuts all over their bodies.

Whereas some juveniles in this age group are also there who are first time offenders and thus are innocent, they definitely reflected rays of reformation.

Attitude of officials towards Juveniles:

The officials at the observation/special homes for 17-18 years, were though upset and troubled with the chaotic and evil attitude of majority of juveniles, tried to control their anger and agitation in a calm manner. They used a friendly and compassionate approach towards the juveniles. Whereas officials at observation home below 16 years of age were quite satisfied with the attitude of juveniles and called them innocent. Whereas officials at all the Juvenile Homes demanded reforms at the Homes in terms of the rehabilitation processes for the better rehabilitation.

Whereas, some juveniles at the Special home (repeat offenders) complained about the behavior of the Magistrate and said the Magistrate talks rudely with them.

Existing rehabilitation processes at the Juvenile Homes:

Besides the daily routine followed up at the Juvenile Homes as per the JJA Act, 2000 and Rules of 2007, a few vocational training programmes are conducted for diverting the mind of the juveniles from the past events and providing help in reforming. Another motive behind providing any vocational training programme to the juveniles is that once the juvenile is out of the juvenile home, he can take up work in that area and earn his living. The current vocational training programmes that are being provided to the juveniles are of cooking, tailoring and hair cut. As per today's time such vocational training programmes stand outdated and cannot comply with the new existing market and practices that are followed and thus the juveniles don't take interest in learning out of the courses. Even the officials at the Juveniles Homes request new and better training-programmes so that actual reformation may happen. On the other hand, when training/learning of computer science was introduced at the Special Home/Place of Safety, the majority of juveniles created uproar and damaged all the computer systems introduced for the vocational course. According to the Officials some of the juveniles were really learning and enjoying the course but due to the ruckus created by many of them, everything got ruined and as a result the computer course was brought to a close.

This event at the Special home reflects the lack of aspiration of the delinquent juveniles in learning even the best possible courses of today's time. It seems taking out frustration at



every possible means has become the only motive of the juveniles at the Juvenile Homes, where they are supposed to learn and change for the better. Besides this aforesaid incident, there are many confrontations in which the juveniles create ruckus at the juvenile home out of their frustration and anger. Such episodes take place very frequently in Delhi at the Special Home/ Place of Safety or at the Observation Home for Boys-II.

Thus, very appropriate and quick solutions are needed for balancing the rehabilitation process of the Juveniles.

Policy Recommendations for Juvenile Homes:

- The Observation Homes and Special Homes require more Probationary officers and counsellors for better dealing with the juveniles, moreover for the complete improvisation of the whole Juvenile rehabilitation process.
- Juveniles till 16 years of age, brought at the Observation Home should be given more care and guidance as they can be reformed easily. It's a general notion that children till 16 years of age can be moulded as per their conditioning. Thus, children till 16 years of age admitted at the Observation home should be provided with education. Moreover, strict rules shall be made pertaining to the admission of juvenile in the best possible affordable school by the parents/guardians, if the juvenile seriously desires to study as soon as he is released from the Observation Home.
- Frequent interactive sessions of the juveniles with their parents/guardians and families should be made mandatory at every Observation/Special Home. Parents/guardians along with the delinquent juveniles should have open discussions with the Probationary officer about the juvenile. Such discussion should include the parents/guardians telling about all the disturbances in the family, health issues of the child since early childhood, friend circle, interests of the child and any other essential information pertaining to the child to the officer. The child should be asked with compassion the real reasons behind his involvement in crime. Asking him about his real requirements and finally trying best to assure him that he is loved and cared of and has a lot of importance, as sense of worthiness and belongingness reforms the carefree attitude.
- After obtaining all the information about the Child from the parents/guardians and obtaining information from the juvenile also, the Probationary officer should analyse the real reasons troubling him. Therefore, sessions for rehabilitation shall be made in accordance with the needs of the child.
- As per Rule no. 48 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Rules, 2007, every juvenile home shall provide gainful vocational training to the juveniles admitted in the homes. The rule very clearly specifies that the juvenile Institutions shall seek collaboration and help from various Agencies and non-governmental organizations for more expertise and thus provide good vocational training to the juveniles.



Therefore the officials of the Juvenile Homes should seek help from different NGO's dealing with child welfare issues. The help which can be taken from the NGO's is to organize 'counselling sessions' involving the social workers/volunteers from the NGO's for lifting up the morale of the juveniles. Once the morale is built/developed then asking the child/juvenile about his activities of interests, if he doesn't know about his interests then explaining him various possible activities that can be performed at the Juvenile Homes, thereafter making the report of the level of morale of the child and his areas of interest which is to be given to the Probationary Officer.

- Lot of indoor games which involves recreation as well as application of mind shall be encouraged at the Juvenile Homes, for eg; chess, crossword puzzles, etc. Whereas, arrangement of other indoor games likes ludo, carom, etc. shall also be made.
- Hobbies create a sense of self love and worth among a person, thus, it is very important to inculcate any kind of hobby in the children/juveniles. Classes for dancing, singing, playing instruments, etc shall be introduced. NGO's can play a very serving role here, by providing volunteers/social workers/other interested people having some level of ability/competence in any of the activities to give such classes to the children at Juvenile Homes atleast once or twice a week. Having a hobby in life would develop a deep sense of happiness among the child/juvenile.
- Arrangement of a party/festivity every week at the Juvenile Homes would create a nice environment at the Juvenile Homes.
- Making it mandatory to organize various kinds of competitions regularly to increase the level of competence among the juveniles. Different kinds of competitions such as racing, dancing, painting/drawing, debates, extempore, speeches, article writing, story-telling etc. Such competitions will urge the children/juveniles to compete, hence to show their worth and talent. As a result an inner stimulation towards a worthy life will develop in the juveniles.
- As per the majority of responses given by the officials, setting up of After Care organizations is the biggest requirement in the Juvenile Rehabilitation process. According to the Act, once the juvenile is out of the Special Home, he is to be sent to the After Care Organization for better rehabilitation. Now firstly, After Care organizations where the juveniles can be sent after their release from Special home do not exist and no juvenile is thus sent there for better reformation. Secondly, the act prescribes sending to after-care organization for only the juveniles who are out of Special home and not for the ones who are out of Observation Homes. Well keeping the juveniles after releasing from Special home in the After care organization for 3 years till they attain 21 years of age, as per the Act is not possible in practicality as keeping them secluded from their family, society, etc won't actually help in rehabilitation. Thus, the best solution for reforming the juveniles in truest manner is organizing proper **"follow-up programmes"**.



The “follow-up programmes” should include keeping a track of the juvenile for a good amount of time once he is released out the Observation Home or Special Home.

The probationary officers shall head the follow up team comprising of volunteers, social workers, student volunteers from various colleges, etc who meet the juveniles at-least once in a week at their homes, locality, schools or workplaces and talk to them, observe their attitude, change in behaviour etc, keep a record of every meeting and give that to the Probationary officer. While meeting them, showing a compassionate and friendly approach, the volunteers should try to inspire them towards their area of interest and develop a sense of belongingness and positivity towards life. This should be done with every juvenile till his follow-up mentor and the Probationary Officer is satisfied about the increment in his mental maturity. The mentors and Officials at the Juveniles Homes should, once the Juvenile is out of the observation/special home, help him get a good job in his area of interest if he needs to earn, should help him enrol in a school/academy if wants to study or learn some course and keeping a friendly track of the improvement made.

The juveniles who are admitted at the Observation homes/ Special home come majorly from disordered family situations with meagre economic conditions, ignored of the parental guidance, thus step into bad influences and commit different forms of crimes. So even if they change their mind-set while living in Observation/Special home, they still are immature and vulnerable to fall in bad peer groups, crime syndicates, etc. and so the whole objective of rehabilitating the child for his better and brighter future gets infringed. Thus, starting the “Follow-up programmes” for reforming the child is of paramount importance.

- Another most important requirement for a better and effective rehabilitation is to divide the Place of Safety/Special Home for Juveniles into two or setting up of an additional Special Home. This should be done to separate the first time offenders who reflect innocence from the repeat offenders who take pride in committing offences. While observing the conduct/behaviour of the repeat offenders and also according to the Officials at the Juvenile Homes, it can be made out that the repeaters derive pleasure in creating ruckus at the Juvenile homes and take undue advantage of the rights and protection given by the Juvenile Justice Act, 2000. And because of their attitude and activities, the first time offenders who actually are innocent suffer and become prey of the bad influence.

Thus the repeat offenders should be kept at the Place of Safety separate from other first time offenders.