

**FAMILY COUNSELLING CENTRES:
A STUDY**

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2011



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Foreword

Family is an oldest institution that has helped the human kind to survive all these centuries. It is united by the ties of marriage, the members interacting and communicating with each other in their respective roles of husband and wife, mother and father, son and daughters etc. It provides an environment of love, belongingness security to its members, which guarantees them marital peace, fulfillment and growth. But today, the scenario is fast changing and the family, a very precious unit of the society is being threatened by many factors.

In fact, it has been seen across the country that powerlessness among women is directly proportional to the intensity to violence experienced by women. In the face of widespread prevalence, domestic violence is not acknowledged and has remained invisible from the public domain. Silence is maintained around this issue and it is construed as an issue unworthy of legal or political attention. Phenomenon of domestic violence is recognized as private affair and is kept under wraps because of concerns of guilt, shame and secrecy. Interference into domestic privacy has traditionally been seen as a greater evil than actual violence inflicted upon a woman.

The marital relationship is under increasing strain and becoming complex and demanding. There are growing instances of divorce, marital discord, demand for dowry, bride burning, violation of woman's dignity etc.

In order to help couples with strained relations, marital discord and to provide the warring factions of the family a platform to discuss their problems and to find solutions, the scheme of Family Counselling Centres (FCCs) was launched by Government of India in 1983. It is being implemented by Central Social Welfare Board through voluntary organizations all across the country. The broad objective of the scheme is to provide preventive and rehabilitation services to women and families who were victims of atrocities, harassment and family mal-adjustments through crisis intervention and systematic counselling.

Under the study a total of 11 FCCs were studied intensively from the states of Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

The findings of the study revealed that it is a very useful scheme rendering unique services of uniting families which were otherwise on the verge of collapse. Quite a few case studies were presented in the report, which give an idea as to how these institutions were instrumental in helping the families and individuals. Although the findings are based on a small sample but it gives a fairly good understanding on the functioning of FCCs in general, type of cases reported, technical manpower available with these

institutions, advocacy work carried out, kind of problems being faced by the councillors and the Heads of NGOs in implementation of the scheme and it identifies areas which needed strengthening for the effective organization of services at the FCCs. In fact, there is a lot of scope of further research in the area after all the subject deals with family, which is a backbone of any society.

I am grateful to Dr. S. P. Jain, Dr. Surender Singh and (Late) Professor S. P. Srivastava the members of Research Advisory Committee for their invaluable technical inputs and guidance in the study. I am also thankful to all Heads of NGOs, Counsellors of FCCs, Jail authorities and the Clients for their cooperation in data collection of the study.

I would like to place on record my appreciation of the effort put in by Shri N. Khan, Project In-charge for conducting the study and preparing the report.

I appreciate the contributions made by Dr. Mukta Gupta, Project Assistant in preparation of tools, data collection and tabulation. I also appreciate Ms. Pooja Verma for typing the report and designing the cover page.

(Madhu Agarwal)
Regional Director

Chapter I

Introduction

Indians perhaps, from the very beginning of their civilization, regarded marriage as a sacrament, as a tie which once tied cannot be untied. The Hindu notion of sacramental marriage differs from that of others. Derrett puts it succinctly thus: “the intention of the sacrament is to make the husband and wife one, for physical and spiritual purposes, for this life and for after lives.

Manu declared, to be mothers were women created and to be fathers men, the Vedas ordain that *dharma* must be practiced by man together with his wife, himself and his offspring. Husband and wife are enjoined to live in perpetual love, bliss and happiness. A passage in Rig-Veda reads, Be thou (wife) mother of heroic children devoted to Gods, be thou queen in thy father-in-laws household. May all Gods unite the hearts of us two into one.

The wife is not just *Patni* (wife) but *Dharmapatni* (partner) in the performance of duties, spiritual, religious and other. Among the Hindus, there are many *Yagnas* (religious and spiritual sacrifices, rites and ceremonies), which a man without a wife cannot perform. That is why she is called *Dharmapatni*. She is *Ardhangini*, half of her husband. The concept of the unity of personality in Hindu law is at the higher plane, because a wife is not merely the source of *Artha* and *Kama* but also of *Dharma* and *Moksha*. The Vedas have ordained that *Dharma* must be practiced by man together with his wife”.

Whereas, in the Muslim community the marriages are performed as per the Muslim personal law “marriage (nikah) is defined to be a contract which has for its object procreation and legalizing of children” it is not a sacrament although it is considered to be a religious duty. It is essentially an agreement between the parties. The terms and conditions are mostly governed by Muslim Personal Law the ‘Sharia’. A marriage contract comes into immediate effect after the Nikha and it terminates on death or divorce. It is an object of piety and devotion and necessary to restrain passions finding expression in wrongs and therefore, obligatory. Mohammedan law definitely discourages celibacy. No formalities or religious ceremonies are required for a Muslim marriage. As mentioned by Sayed Ameer Ali in his Mohammedan Law, 5th edition, that the ‘Marriage may be contracted amongst the sunnis and the shias through the agency of proxies or *vakils*’.

In the Christian community marriages are considered as civil contract and performed as per Indian Christian Marriage act, 1872. Basically, it was the same as the previous regulation and Acts which were passed in India and the general pattern was the

English Common Law. In Section 4 of the Indian Christian Marriage Act, 1872, it is provided that every marriage between persons, one or both of whom is, or are, a Christian or Christians, shall be solemnized in accordance with the provisions of the act, and that any such marriage solemnized other than in accordance with such provisions shall be void.

The contract of marriage, by which man and woman are co-enjoined during life till death or divorce shall separate them, is the most ancient, the most important, and the most interesting of the domestic relations. Though correctly designated a civil contract, it differs in sundry points from all other civil contracts; and chiefly in this, that is indissoluble at the will of the parties.

Family

Family is an ancient institution which has helped mankind to survive over centuries. It is united by the ties of marriage, blood or adoption, constituting a single household, the members interacting and communicating with each other in their respective roles of husband and wife, mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister” (Burgers and Locke, 1945). It provides an environment of love, belongingness, security and blissful atmosphere to its members, which guarantees them marital peace, fulfillment and growth and all these should come from within. A family is a happy one if its entire atmosphere is charged with love and affection and each and every member cares for the feelings and welfare of other members of the family. In such an atmosphere of love and consideration every member of the family comes to acquire the right to give and take, the right to love and to be loved and to respect and be respected.

It does not however, mean that there would be no differences or provocations or quarrels on minor matters among the members of the family. Such quarrels have always existed between siblings, between parents and children or husband and wife. But still, in well-knit family, ties of relationship are generally strong and they do not get easily broken by petty quarrels. Quarrels may be equated to spices in food, which at times irritate the throat but still add flavour to the food. When sorted out they help to bring about greater understanding. The members come to understand their rightful place in the family along with the realization of their obligations and limitations; they come to realize the need for one another, which brings them, closer to each other. In other words, if in these quarrels no one crosses the line of propriety, family continues with a sense of belongingness.

Further, the joint family considered by social historians and sociologists as one of the pillars of Indian social organization along with caste and village community. Members of the joint family share or jointly own many of their resources. They rely on

their family elders for major decisions and keep up mutual obligations to each other; get together on important ritual occasions such as birth, marriages and deaths as well as on certain festivals; feel profoundly affected by the reputation of other branches of the family and the emotional binding, the support systems were very strong. The disputes of any kind were amicably settled without any outside interference.

But today, the scenario is fast changing and the family, a very precious unit of the society is being threatened by many extraneous factors. The marital relationship is under increasing strain. It is becoming complex and demanding. Present day women are more educated, more economically independent and they contribute substantially to the workforce and family kitty. Yet, they are more vulnerable to violence today than before due to various factors particularly when violence is perpetrated by her own family members and safety and security of her so called home is taken away by those whom she trusted. In fact violence against women is a global epidemic that kills, brutalizes, harms women physically, psychologically, sexually and economically. It is one of the most persistent forms of human rights violation that deny women equality, security, dignity, self worth and freedom.

Family is considered as a secure place by many. However, in reality it may not be true, especially for a woman, who is not only being abused or tortured as a wife but also discriminated as a daughter and neglected as a widow. In fact, woman's right is violated from 'womb to tomb'. Family violence manifests itself in various forms varying from foeticide to honour killing, bride burning or dowry deaths to marital rape and in fact witch hunting. At home, violence is usually perpetrated by males who are or who have been, in positions of trust and intimacy and power-husbands, fathers, father-in-law, step fathers, brothers, uncles, etc. Traditional values give men propriety rights over women within families. A number of factors including female seclusion, confinement to the periphery within household and lack of productive opportunities further marginalized women. In fact, it has been seen across the length and breadth of the country that powerlessness among women is directly proportional to the intensity to violence experienced by women. Despite this widespread prevalence, domestic violence is not customarily acknowledged and has remained invisible from the public domain. Silence is maintained around this issue and it is construed as an issue unworthy of legal or political attention. Phenomenon of domestic violence is recognized as private affair and is kept under wraps because of concerns of guilt, shame and secrecy. Interference into domestic privacy has traditionally been seen as a greater evil than actual violence inflicted upon a woman.

The Prevention of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 defines domestic violence as abuse or threat of abuse that is physical, sexual, verbal, emotional and economic. Harassment by way of unlawful dowry demands to the woman or her relatives has also been covered under this definition.

Situation of Women

The National Family Health Survey (NFHS-III) carried out in 29 states during 2005 – 06 and released in 2007 revealed that 37 per cent married women in the country were victims of physical or sexual abuse by their husbands. Over 40 per cent of Indian women have experienced domestic violence at some point in their married lives, and nearly 55 per cent thought that spousal abuse is warranted in several circumstances. The survey showed that country wide more women face violence in rural areas (40.2 per cent) as compared to those in the urban areas (30.4 per cent). The survey found that over a third of women who had been married at any point in their lives said they had been pushed, slapped, shaken or otherwise attacked by their husbands at least once. Slapping was the most common act of physical violence by husbands. The survey also found that one in six wives had been emotionally abused by their husbands.

As per NFHS-III nearly 45 per cent of women in the country, aged between 20 and 24 years are married off before they reached 18 years the legal age to marry. The number is over 50 per cent in eight states. The NFHS-II also had revealed that an overwhelming majority of women who reported domestic violence were first assaulted by their husbands within two years of their marriage. According to the figures, 62 per cent experienced physical or sexual violence within the first two years of marriage, while 32 per cent experienced violence in the first five years.

Women belonging to scheduled caste and scheduled tribe communities reportedly experienced the most spousal abuse, with one in three reporting having been beaten by their husbands according to NHFS-III data. Ironically, Buddhist women reported the highest levels of violence (41 per cent) followed by Muslim and Hindu women (35 – 34 per cent) and Sikh and Christian women (28 – 26 per cent). Women from the Jain community reported the lowest levels of violence (13 per cent). A major contributing factor was observed to be low levels of education 47 per cent of women who reported domestic violence had no education, compared with 12 per cent among women with 12 or more years of education. The figure was 16 per cent for women who had completed high school.

With regard to attitudes to domestic violence, the NFHS III revealed that 41 per cent of women thought that husbands were justified in slapping their wives if the latter showed disrespect to their in-laws. Meanwhile, a substantial 35 per cent of women thought they deserved a beating at the hands of their spouses if they neglected doing the household chores or looking after their children. Nearly 51 per cent of the 75,000 Indian men surveyed also think hitting or beating their wives is acceptable for some reasons, specially being disrespectful to in-laws. A fewer number believe that poor cooking or refusing sex are reasons for physically assaulting their wives. This may be because often “men are brought up being taught that beating up their wives isn’t wrong, while women

are told that being assaulted by their husbands is acceptable. Girls are taught that they can be punished by their husbands for disobedience”.

There is a need to change this attitude of not only men and women but also the judiciary and the police personnel who are involved in implementing the law against domestic violence. In a study conducted in 1996, by SAKSHI, a feminist legal resource group, interviewed 109 judges to assess their attitudes to violence against women, and found a disturbing prevalence of stereotyped assumptions. According to this study 48 per cent judges believed that there were certain occasions when it was justifiable for a husband to slap his wife. 74 per cent were of the view that the preservation of the family should be the woman's primary concern, even if she faces violence. Half of the judicial officials interviewed opined that child sexual abuse is not common. 68 per cent held that “provocative” clothes are an invitation to sexual assault. The study found that 34 per cent of those interviewed believed that dowry has an inherent cultural value. 55 per cent argued that the moral character of a woman is relevant in cases of sexual abuse. Nine per cent of the judges opined that a woman who says “no” to sexual intercourse often means “yes”. These attitudes co-existed with a definite awareness of the implications and seriousness of violence against women.

However, during recent years, in response to years of sustained legal activism by the women's movement, the Supreme Court has begun to apply equality principles to address issues of violence against women. Apart from the landmark ruling on sexual harassment in the workplace in 1997, judgements have also begun to apply international conventions like CEDAW and the Convention on Human Rights. However, these have so far had limited systemic impact, as frequently they have applied formal notions of equality without taking into account specific factors that disadvantage women. Thus, issues of virginity, chastity and marital status continue to be important concerns in many judgements.

It has been stated that the magnitude of the problem of domestic violence or its prevalence cannot be ascertained precisely because it is a crime that is under recorded and under reported. Many women are not aware of law and the legal procedure while others accept and justify violence. Stigma, shame, fear of reprisal, lack of confidence in, or fear of, the legal system and the legal costs involved make women reluctant to report incidents of violence.

Thus, the increasing rate of crime against women reflects urgency to ensure the availability of legal remedies. It also indicates that steps must be taken to ensure that laws dealing with violence against women are there and these laws are implemented properly. It also points out the fact that law alone is not sufficient what is required is will to implement the law and mind set and attitude to address the issue of domestic violence.

Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA)

Several laws and policies have been formulated by the Government of India after independence to protect and empower women. The women's movement in India has continuously advocated for laws and policies that protect women and facilitate women's empowerment. To address the issue of dowry and domestic violence, amendments have been sought in the criminal law in India in the year 1983, and a new provision has been inserted i.e. Section 498 – A of the Indian Penal Code which penalize the husbands and his relatives who inflict cruelty on a married women. However, it was seen that the women who face domestic violence when attempts to seek justice under the criminal law, frequently ends up getting victimized. As for obtaining relief like divorce, custody of children and other matrimonial remedies under the civil law she has to knock the doors of civil courts which were not an easy preposition. Therefore, to seek justice and to ensure that a women victim of domestic violence get relief the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA) was enacted in 2005.

PWDVA is a civil law. The Act recognizes domestic violence as a human rights violation. It acknowledges a woman's right to live in a violence free home. To realize this right, the Act identifies a woman's right to residence and her right to obtain protection orders under the law. The Act does not make any changes in the existing personal law regime on family matters relating to marriage, divorce and related issues. For the first time, this Act clearly defines what constitutes 'domestic violence' and provides a comprehensive definition and captures women's experience of abuse to include physical violence as well as other forms of violence such as emotional, verbal, sexual and economic abuse.

Intimate partner violence is multi dimensional and involves complex dynamics of relationship where perpetrator and victim share a history of affection, hopes, dreams, expectations and battering. This is different from violence by strangers where a victim may not share any relationship with the abuser. Because of this dynamic relationship between the victim and the abuser in domestic violence, a victim may take all steps to salvage the relationship, and therefore, may not take immediate action against the abuser. Due to high value placed by society on loyalty, commitment, trust and stability of marital relationship, a woman generally stay within the abusive relationship, despite serious abuse. She may try to get rid of the abuse but may also at the same time try to protect the abuser and her relationship with him.

The growing demands and expectations from spouses have led to a number of problems like, rise in divorce and separation, delayed initiation into motherhood, mental tensions, increased harassment of women for dowry and incidences of domestic violence etc.

Common reasons for family disputes as observed today;

- The wife, as such, may not consider the husband as the sole provider, protector or philosopher who will direct and control major or even minor family decisions;
- When provocations and hurting each other by taunts, sarcasms and abuses become a repetitive pattern of behaviour of spouses;
- Wife battering, dowry, bride burning;
- Violent behaviour of either spouse more often than not the husbands;
- Another factor is education, particularly when the wife is more educated than the husband and the husband does not have regular or steady work;
- Use of alcohol and drug abuse are also important factors;
- Some women consider sex dirty and find it difficult to enjoy it with their partners, the husband or the wife or both may be anxiety prone;
- In many parts of India the question of dowry or promised dowry becomes a bone of contention and a point of wrangling between the spouses. The situation may be further worsened or aggravated by needless interference from in-laws;
- There are highly competent wives who may make the husband feel small. They are indiscriminate, insensitive and do not exercise caution in hurting fragile male vanity. The husband may retaliate to cover up feelings of inferiority by showing his physical power and aggression;
- Extra marital relations by either spouse or promiscuity;
- Doubting the integrity/ character of spouse (by either spouse).

In India, in the wake of increased family disputes, divorces, family violence, dowry harassment and family maladjustments some support systems came into existence to help the victims and the aggrieved parties. This gave rise to introduction of family courts and the concept of Family Counselling Centres.

The Family Courts

Family courts are a specialized type of courts entrusted with the disposal of cases concerning disputes relating to the family. In brief, these courts deal with litigation concerning marriage and divorce, maintenance, guardianship and the property of spouses. They are established under the Family Courts Act, 1984.

The object of family courts (as stated by the legislature) is to promote conciliation and secure speedy settlement of disputes relating to marriage and family affairs. Besides

this, the idea underlying the movement for family courts is that ordinary courts with their conservative atmosphere, setting and procedure, cannot appropriately deal with family disputes in the proper spirit. There is also the feeling that all matters concerning a family should be settled speedily in one court.

A Family Court may consist of one Judge, or may consist of more than one Judge. The Judges are appointed by the State Government with the concurrence of the High Court. Where it consists of more than one Judge, the State Government, with the concurrence of the High Court, may appoint a Principal Judge and an additional Principal Judge.

The State Government, in consultation with the High Court, determines the number and categories of counsellors, officers and other employees required to assist a Family Court. The educational background of these counsellors should be graduate with a law degree. They are appointed on contractual basis for the initial period of six months and further, extended based on their success and performance. These family counsellors discuss the case with both the parties and try to come up with acceptable solution / compromise accepted to both the parties then again these case files are sent back to the Additional District Judge for final decision.

The Family Counselling Centres

The concept of family counselling was conceptualize by the Central Social welfare Board (CSWB) in 1980s when there was a spate of dowry deaths. The Board spearheaded the campaign by setting up Voluntary Action Bureaus, which subsequently took the shape of Family Counselling Centres.

The objective of the Family Counselling Centres is to provide preventive and rehabilitative services to women and families who are victims of atrocities and family mal-adjustments through crisis intervention and systematic counselling. The centres also create awareness and mobilize public opinion on social issues affecting status of women.

The Scheme

The scheme of Family Counselling Centres (FCCs) was launched by Government of India in 1983 and it is being implemented by CSWB through voluntary organizations across the country. At present approximately 800 Family Counselling Centres are functioning in different states. The centres also create awareness and mobilize public opinion on social issues affecting status of women. The FCCs work in close collaboration with the local administration, police, courts, free legal aid cells, medical and psychiatric institutions, vocational training centres, short stay homes etc.

A grant of Rs. one lakh ninety two thousand per annum was given to voluntary organizations for running the centres on an 80:20 matching basis. The budget includes honorarium of two counsellors and other recurring expenditures.

Family Counselling Centres (FCCs) have also been set up for special interventions in different set ups. The same are listed below;

FCCs at Police Headquarters

Family Counselling Centres are being run in some Police Headquarters premises under the administrative control of the State Social Welfare Boards. These FCCs were established with the objective of providing speedy crisis intervention to those women whose cases were registered in Police Stations. Such FCCs attempt to arrive at out of court settlement of family discord cases. Thirty four such FCCs are functioning in Police Headquarters in Assam, Bihar, Chandigarh, Delhi, Goa, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, M.P., Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Orissa, Pondicherry, Punjab, Sikkim, Tamilnadu, Tripura, U.P. and West Bengal.

FCCs in Mahila Jails

Twenty-three FCCs have been set up in Mahila Jails in Bihar, Chandigarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Punjab, Tamilnadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Pre-marital Counselling Centres

This new initiative is being implemented in Women Development Centres at various colleges in Delhi. They lay special emphasis on pre-marital counselling and deal with other areas of psycho-social crises management for young women.

Centres for Devdasis / Red Light Areas

At present there are two FCCs working for the welfare of Devdasi and sex workers and their children one each in Mumbai (Maharashtra) and Belgaun (Karnataka). The Centres are set up with the objective of providing preventive services through awareness campaigns on STD, AIDs and other health and legal matters and also rehabilitative measures for children of prostitutes.

Meaning and Definitions of Counselling

The term counselling denotes a wide variety of procedures for helping individuals to achieve adjustment, such as giving help in finding solution to problems and therapeutic discussion. It aims at making individual self-sufficient, self-directed and to adjust themselves efficiently to the demands of a better and meaningful life.

According to Rogers, an effective counselling consists of a definitely structure permissive relationship which allows the client to gain an understanding of himself to a degree which enables him to take positive steps in the light of his new orientation.

The term counselling is used in a number of ways. It is viewed as a special kind of helping relationship, or as a set of activities and methods or as defining an area in which services are provided.

The need for the study on Family Counselling Centres

As mentioned elsewhere the FCCs were set up for reuniting the families and helping the clients to resolve their disputes through a process of dialogue. It was over a quarter century ago the FCCs were established and are still being run all across the country today, however, not many researches had been conducted to know as to how these institutions are contributing in family reintegration and meeting the expectations of aggrieved parties and settling down their disputes as envisaged in the Scheme. Precisely with this object in mind the present study was under taken on a limited scale covering a total of eleven FCCs located in Northern States.

Chapter II

Research Design

The Study

The study was conducted on Family Counselling Centres by drawing samples from the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal. The scheme under reference is being implemented by the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) through Voluntary Organizations across the country.

The Family Counselling Centres (FCCs) scheme has been in operation for more than 25 years, it aims at saving the families from breaking up on account of marital discord, dowry problem, alcoholism, drug abuse etc. and to provide preventive, curative and rehabilitative services to victims of domestic violence and other problems relating to the individual and family. Besides, it also aims at generating awareness in the community about prevailing laws relating to women and giving legal aid to people. It is a unique programme and has an immense potential to help women who are victims of domestic violence and facing marital discord. However, there is only a little information available about its service delivery, linkages of FCCs with different agencies and difficulties faced by voluntary organizations in effective implementation of the scheme. In order to probe into the above, a detailed study on Family Counselling Centres was done with the following objectives;

- i. To study the extent to which the scheme has achieved its objectives;
- ii. to study the effectiveness of services provided and identify type of cases reported to FCCs;
- iii. to know the rate of success with respect to rehabilitation of aggrieved women;
- iv. to understand the problems and difficulties faced by Voluntary Organizations in effective implementation of the programme; and
- v. to suggest ways and means for strengthening FCCs.

Methodology

From a total of 86 FCCs operational in the 6 states of Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) and Uttarakhand 11 FCCs were taken for the study which accounts for 10 per cent of the operational FCCs in the Northern Region of the country. Since maximum number of FCCs were operational in the State of U.P. and Bihar, it was decided to take three FCCs each from U.P. and Bihar and one each from rest

of the States. An additional FCC was studied from U.P. which was run in the Police Headquarters by an NGO. Care was also taken to have sample of FCCs run in the Jail premises for the women prisoners. The basic idea for this diversified sample was to have a better understanding about FCCs functional in variety of set-ups.

As per the Annual Report of Ministry of Women and Child Development, 884 Family Counselling Centres were sanctioned by CSWB in the country. The centres allocated to Bihar, Jharkhand, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal are presented in the table given below:

Table 2.1: Showing Sample Units

S. No.	State / UTs	No. of Units operational	No. of Units taken in the study
1.	Bihar	30	3 (incl. 1 jail.)
2.	Jharkhand	12	1
3.	Haryana	12	1
4.	Himachal Pradesh	03	1
5.	Uttar Pradesh	27	4 (incl. 1 jail, 1 Police Hqrs.)
6.	Uttarakhand	02	1
	Total	86	11

Selection of Respondents

Information was collected from a targeted respondent group of individuals in each of the selected FCCs for the purpose of this study.

Table 2.2: Target Respondents

Sl. No.	Target Respondents	Nos.
1.	Head of the Organization	11
2.	Counsellors (two from each FCC)	22
3.	Aggrieved Person/Clients (four from each FCC)	36
4.	Women Prisoners (four from each prison)	8

Research Tools

The information for the study was collected by interviewing the Organizational Heads, Counsellors, and the Clients from every FCC. Two FCCs located within the women Jail premises at Nari Bandi Niketan, Lucknow, (U.P.) and Ara, Jail (Bihar) were also covered in the sample. A separate interview schedule was constructed to collect the data from these prison inmates.

- 1. Schedule for Head of the Organizations:** A total of 11 Head of the Organizations were interviewed. The information collected was related to services delivered at FCCs, problems faced in running FCCs and some constructive suggestions to strengthen the overall functioning of the FCCs.
- 2. Schedule for the Counsellors:** A total of 22 counsellors of the FCCs were interviewed. A detailed schedule was developed to gather information from the counsellors for each sample unit on the functioning of the FCC, including day-to-day activities, the counselling process, process of documentation, details of cases coming to the FCC, problems generally encountered by the counsellors in the field.
- 3. Schedule for the Clients:** Four clients from each FCC who had availed the services were randomly selected for a detailed case study thus a total of thirty six clients were interviewed. The information collected was related to utilization of services, perceptions and their views about overall functioning of the FCCs.
- 4. Schedule for Jail inmates (Women prisoners):** Eight women prisoners were interviewed through a schedule specially developed for this group. These women prisoners were availing the services of the FCC located within the Jail premises.
- 5. Observation Schedule:** Apart from individual interviews, a schedule was prepared for making overall observation on the FCCs with focus on the physical infrastructure, aids, equipments, records and kind of activities conducted.

Information from other Sources: Studies and reports published and unpublished on the theme of the present study constituted the secondary source of information for the study.

Pre Testing

Tools prepared for the study were initially pre tested in the field. Modifications and changes required were incorporated in the schedule before finalization.

Operational details

The study was conducted covering six states viz. **Bihar, Jharkhand, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal**. The selected voluntary organizations who were running FCCs from each state were informed through letters before hand about the study, its objectives and the data collection programme, in order to obtain their maximum cooperation. This was followed up by the researchers visiting the FCCs to collect the data.

An experienced team was deployed for data collection. For any research study, the most important and critical period is data collection phase, because operational details

cannot be worked out so meticulously unless one visits the field. A wide range of problems generally crop in, such as, transportation, stay arrangement for researchers, climatic conditions, and of course, the availability of respondents. The research team deployed also had to face all such types of problems in collection of data from the 11 FCCs spread in 6 states in different geographical and climatic conditions.

Quality Assurance

A number of steps were taken to ensure reliable and good quality data. A Research Advisory Committee was formed comprising eminent professional researchers in the field of Social Sciences. They were consulted at different stages of the study.

Research Advisory Committee

The Research Advisory Committee comprised of Prof. Surender Singh, Vice Chancellor (Retd.), Kashi Vidyapeeth, Late Prof. S. P. Srivastava, Professor (Retd.), Deptt. of Social Work, Lucknow University and Dr. S. P. Jain, Director, NIRD (Retd.) and Former Regional Director, NIPCCD, Regional Centre, Lucknow.

After collection of data, the same was coded. The responses on open-ended questions were classified for coding. Univariate and bivariate tables were prepared for description of data in the report.

Presentation of Report

The report of the study has been presented in different chapters. Chapter I and II includes introduction and methodology, Chapter III includes a profile of voluntary organizations running FCCs, physical aspects of the FCCs including, physical infrastructure, physical amenities, equipments etc. Chapter IV describes the functionaries of the FCCs (counsellors), their qualifications, role and responsibilities and job satisfaction. Chapter V gives an overview of the beneficiaries (Clients) and Chapter VI describes the success stories in the form of individual case studies of the clients whose cases were successfully solved by the FCCs. Chapter VII includes conclusions and recommendations of the study.

Chapter III

The Profile of the Organizations and the FCC

As mentioned in the previous chapters the Scheme is being implemented by Central Social Welfare Board through voluntary organizations all across the country and has very wide outreach. The State Social Welfare Boards monitor the FCCs being run by the voluntary organizations and provide all possible technical support for smooth functioning of these units.

A total of eleven FCCs were surveyed in the Northern States to collect data. There were two FCCs in the sample which were exclusively run for inmates of women jails, one FCC which was run at the CB-CID premises in Lucknow in collaboration with Mahila Sahayata Prakoshtha and the rest of the eight were general FCCs (See Table No. 3.1).

Table 3.1: Showing the category of FCCs

Sl. No.	Category of the FCC	Number	Percentage
1.	General FCCs	8	73
2.	FCCs in Jail Premises	2	18
3.	FCC in Police Headquarters	1	9
	Total	11	100

As regards the condition of buildings where the FCCs were housed, it was found that maximum buildings were 'fairly good' and some could be rated as 'very good'.

As regards the availability of the furniture/furnishings in the FCCs, majority of the FCCs were having chairs, tables, almirahs, fans, type writer, computers, telephone, fax, e-mail, books on counselling and books related to law. Only a few FCCs were not equipped with modern facilities of a computer, e-mail, fax and library services.

Almost fifty per cent of the FCCs had earmarked two rooms for work related to FCC as one room was used for administrative purpose of the FCC with tables and chairs. The second room was for counselling of the client along with tables and comfortable chairs for seating because some clients didn't want to disclose their marital, domestic problem/ harassment in front of others. Realizing this fact, some NGOs earmarked a separate room for counselling which gave privacy for the clients to discuss matters that are very personal in nature.

As regards the educational status of the organizational heads running FCCs, it was found that most of the heads were educated up to graduation 54 per cent, post graduation

36 per cent. Among them a few heads were having professional Masters degree in Social Work, Business Administration, Diploma in Tourism and Hotel Management etc.

Most of the organizations operational concerns and areas were wide ranging. The main combination of areas which they focused were Women Empowerment, Child Development, Health and Education and Rural Development etc.

Details of organizations and the FCCs

As regard the experience of the organizations in the field, it was found that 54 per cent of these were working for over 20 years, 45 per cent between 10 – 20 years. These organizations were getting financial support from various government and non-government agencies like; Central Social Welfare Board, State Social Welfare Board, CAPART, SIFPSA and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare etc. Apart from these, some organizations were getting funds from International organizations like Mennonite, Central Committee (USA), Caritas India, and UNICEF.

As regards the staff appointed for FCC, it was informed by the organizational heads that every FCC got two sanctioned posts of counsellors, one office assistant (part time) and one peon (part time) (See Table No. 3.2).

Table 3.2: Details staff appointed for FCC

Sl. No.	Designation	No. of Staff
1.	Counsellors	2
2.	Accountant	1
3.	Peon	1

As regards the flow of funds from board to FCC it was found that the Central Social Welfare Board releases grant to all the State Social Welfare Boards on yearly basis. These state boards in turn transfer the grant to the organizations. A total grant sanctioned for one year to each FCC was Rs.2,28,000 (A class cities) and Rs.1,92,000 (Other cities). The breakup for one year grant showed that Rs. 1,32,000/- were being earmarked for the salary of two counsellors and Rs. 60,000/- as contingency, which included the salaries of one Accountant and one Peon (which were appointed as part time workers) and other administrative expenses. Apart from the sanctioned grant of Rs.1,92,000/- for one year, the organizations required to contribute 20 per cent of the sanctioned grant, from its own resources (See Table No. 3.3).

Table 3.3: Break up of Expenditure

Counsellor 2 x Rs. 7000 pm (A city)	14,000 x 12 = 1,68,000
Counsellor 2 x Rs. 5500 pm (Other cities)	11,000 x 12 = 1,32,000
Contingency (salaries of Peon & Office Assistant - Part time and other expenses)	60,000
NGO contribution	20% of the total grant

As it is evident from the table given below that a majority 55 per cent of the organizations were running FCCs between 6 – 15 years followed by 27 per cent of these for more than 15 years. It showed that all the sample FCCs had very rich experience of handling cases of marital disputes (See Table no. 3.4).

Table 3.4: Experience of Organizations in running FCCs

Sl. No.	Time in years	F	%
1.	Less than 5	2	18
2.	6 – 15	6	55
3.	16 & above	3	27
	Total	11	100

The Counsellors at the FCCs

Almost all the FCCs had two counsellors. Newsprint advertising and direct selection process were adopted to select these qualified counsellors by the organizations. The selection committee comprised of the Secretary of the organization, State Social Welfare Board functionaries, expert from psychology department of universities, and members of the executive committee. Almost all the counsellors of the FCCs were qualified as per the norms except one, who was working as stop gap arrangement, because the regular counsellor was on a long leave and in her place a staff member of the organization who was closely associated with the counselling centre was given the responsibility of taking case history etc. and help the other counsellor (See Table no. 3.5).

Table 3.5: Qualifications of Counsellors as per the norms

Sl. No.	Responses	F	%
1	Yes	21	90
2	No	1	10
	Total	22	100

It was revealed that the educational background of most of counsellors was Social Work, Sociology and Psychology. Whereas, the Central Social Welfare Board had laid down specific guideline for essential educational qualification for two counsellors i.e. Masters in Psychology and Social Work. However, in one of the FCCs located at Kullu, it

was told that there was no institution having Psychology department as a subject so it was difficult for the organization to get any counsellor with a Psychology background. More or less it was found that the organizations took utmost care to have counsellors who were qualified and could handle complex cases of marital disputes.

About three fourth of the sample heads of organizations said that their counsellors were not having any experience regarding counselling at the time of joining FCC while the rest had some experience. Further, 82 per cent of them added that the counsellors should also have knowledge of laws such as Dowry Act, Domestic Violence Act, Child Marriage Act, IPC, Cr PC, Marriage laws related to various religions, etc. but the rest did not subscribe to this view as they thought that it was not necessary that a counsellor must have knowledge of laws because they have lawyers in the committees to handle legal issues of the clients reported at FCC.

When the organizational heads were asked whether counsellors should be provided any training, almost all the heads of organizations were of the view that the counsellors should be given orientation training on topics like legal issues / provisions, counselling skills, networking, human rights, women empowerment etc. so that they can enhance and update their knowledge to handle cases coming to FCCs effectively.

Release of Grants

The organizational heads were asked whether they received grant regularly for the smooth organization of services at the FCC. To this majority of the heads responded saying that due to irregular grants they were finding it difficult to retain their experienced counsellors as they were not able to pay them their honorarium regularly.

Further, the heads were asked in the absence of grant how they managed the expenses incurred on the programme. In response they said, since it was a liability of the organization it had to be managed by taking loan from NGO's general accounts and at times the funds were also diverted from other projects to meet the liability of FCC project.

Further, the heads were asked whether they pay honorarium to their staff regularly. To this query, 91 per cent of the organizational heads said that they were unable to give salaries to their FCC staff regularly as grant was irregular and reached very late to them. About 55 per cent of the heads of the organizations said that they could pay honorarium to their staff once in 6 months while 36 per cent organizations paid once in 3 months, see Table 3.6 for further details.

Table 3.6: Frequency of Honorarium paid to Counsellors

Sl. No.	Time Period	F	%
1.	Once a month	1	9
2.	Once in 3 months	4	36
3.	Once in 6 months & above	6	55
	Total	11	100

More than 50 per cent of the organizational heads believed that the heavy turnover of the qualified and experienced staff was due to low amount of honorarium and irregular payment of the same due to late release of grant by the state boards.

Details about functioning of FCC

The organizational heads were asked as to how do they get cases at their FCC and what strategy did they adopt to advocate for their FCC. To this query, almost all the organizational heads responded saying that they advocated about the FCC through Mohalla Meetings, advertisements in news papers and local cable network, awareness camps etc. Further, they said the new cases were referred from a variety of sources which include, Lok Adalats, Women Helpline, Women Cell, Women Commission, referrals from Sub-Committee members, Police Department and even some were through former clients.

The organizational heads were asked as to how often they visit FCC. The responses to this query revealed that around 46 per cent percent of the organizational heads visit FCC ‘daily’ 36 per cent ‘weekly’ and 18 per cent ‘fortnightly’ (See Table no. 3.7).

Table 3.7: Visit of Head of Organization to FCC

Sl. No.	Visits	F	%
1.	Daily	5	46
2.	Weekly	4	36
3.	Fortnightly	2	18
	Total	11	100

As regards the meetings with the FCC staff, most of the organizational heads said that they organized meetings with their sub committee to review the programme, along with FCC staff.

It was revealed that every FCC had a sub-committee which comprised Police Personnel, Social Activists, Psychologist, Psychiatrist, Lawyers, Doctors and Secretary of the organization and they claimed that the sub-committee meetings took place quarterly and no honorarium was paid to its members as they worked voluntarily. The organizations referred the cases to the members of the sub-committee for consultations or they call the lawyers, Police personnel, doctors for seeking legal, medical, and Police help for the clients. It was found that many a times the clients were very poor and they invariably required free legal services.

The organizational heads were asked whether they maintain individual case files for the clients. In response, almost all the heads said that they maintained an individual case file which comprised of application given by the client, a filled in proforma given by the FCC to client, relevant papers and documents supplied by the client and report of the counsellor dealing with the case etc.

It was revealed that most of the clients had to spend money mainly in court for lawyer, stamp papers etc. (if the case was registered in court), medical checkups (in case of wife battering) and to meet expenses on speed post / registry / courier etc.

As regards the percentage of solved cases at the FCC, the organizational heads were of the view that almost 80 per cent cases were solved by them every year. On an average every FCC got around 25 – 30 cases per year and it was observed that reporting of cases at FCC largely depended on the kind of ground work carried out by the organization in terms of advocacy. The findings of the study revealed that majority of the organizations were conducting advocacy programmes for FCC through Mohalla meetings (monthly), awareness camps etc.

As regards the monitoring of the FCC was concerned it was revealed that the State Social Welfare Board officials make two visits per year to every FCC. During their visits these officials checked the records and case files of the clients maintained at FCC and gave their inputs and suggestions wherever required.

As regard the networking of their organizations with other agencies, some of the heads told that their organization was affiliated to networks like NGO Munch, Jan Adhikar and Mahila Samakhya besides this they had liaison with organizations like, Action Aid and UNICEF which also helped them to perform their task successfully. Further it was found that some VOs were having networking with Police, Women and Child Helplines, District Administration, Women Commission and Women cell etc. This network at various levels helped these organizations to function effectively and to sought timely help for their clients. At times the organizational heads and counsellors were in danger and faced threats from second party for having taken up the cases of their rivals and these networks helped them to thwart any such threat.

The suggestions and recommendations offered by the organizational heads have been incorporated in the conclusions and recommendations chapter of the report.

Chapter IV

The Counsellors

It is commonly believed that all a person needs to become a counsellor is to have good intentions coupled with the ability to communicate with clients. In a way, counselling is a practical skill and it can be of help only if the counsellor enjoys the confidence of the counselee. To be a competent counsellor, there is needed to be caring, empathetic with a deep desire to support and help people. Small technicalities of counselling are not that important as the desire to help and to win the confidence of the one who is in trouble and seeks help.

Counsellors deal with personal and emotional problems of people i.e. with people who are in difficulty and are beset with problems which they themselves cannot resolve. A counsellor is expected to treat such people as human beings in their own right and not as just cases to be solved and pigeonholed. Their feelings should be understood and accepted. Unless this is done no reasonable and lasting solution of their problems can be reached.

It is better not to look at a problem just as a problem, but as a person with a problem. This will set the tone for counselling. However, sometimes a spontaneous action may become a kind of a symbol of recognition of the client's need for help and our willingness to give such help that may be required to solve the problem. Sometimes the counsellor has to work with very different kind of clients e.g. when he has to deal not with the troubled but with one who is the cause of the suffering, whether deliberately or otherwise. Such people are generally non-cooperative, and so a counsellor is required to spend a lot of time in rapport building and interacting with them to win their acceptance and cooperation.

Counsellor needs many attributes i.e. he/she should be skilled in interpersonal relations, should have the ability to give career information, should have a sense of humor and an attitude of acceptance towards all clients. They should have the ability of winning the confidence even of highly emotional clients through crisis intervention and he should work towards raising their morale and bringing in them a sense of self-dependence. It is very important for a counsellor to try to understand what the client's situation means to him. It is also important for a counsellor to keep in mind that a friendly approach is very necessary, particularly for emotional clients.

In short, counselling requires a capacity for sustained and patient listening to the person who is in difficulty, to see what his situation means to him, what he feels and what he feels about the possible ways out of his difficulties. Counselling is the most important function in the field of guidance. In counselling it is all important that the counselee has confidence in the counsellor. He must accept him as a person interested in his well being.

In a broader sense the counselling denotes a combination of the following;

- A **psychosocial process** that addresses client's thoughts, feelings and behaviour in the context of her environment that includes her family, and the community.
- A **planned intervention** between the client and the counsellor to assist the client to change, improve, and resolve behaviours that are difficult, distressing or mal-adaptive.
- A **process of identifying the client's coping strategies** and strengthening them further, as well as helping the client develop more effective coping methods.
- A **collaborative effort** between the client and the counsellor, keeping the client's interest and needs in mind.
- A process that takes place with full **active participation** of the client and involves a mutual responsibility between the client and the counsellor.
- Aimed at **developing individual's unique self and potentials.**
- A **form of education** through communication and structuring.
- **Voluntary** in nature, can't be forced on the client.
- A process that involves a **use of specific technologies** based on certain theoretical constructs, which should be carried out by trained personnel in an appropriate place and time.

Details about the Counsellors

As one of the most important aspect of this study was to collect feedback from the counsellors who were the backbone of the FCCs. Each FCC is supposed to have two counsellors as per the guidelines of Central Social Welfare Board. However, in the survey out of 11 FCCs it was found that in two of the FCCs only one counsellor was in place. Therefore, the sample of counsellors had 20 subjects only.

As regards the distribution of age of the counsellors it was found that majority (45 per cent) of the counsellors fell within the age group of 25 – 30 years while 25 per cent counsellors were between the age group of 31 – 35 years and the rest were above 36 years.

Since it is assumed that these FCCs cater to the needs of women clients therefore female counsellors were preferred and as a result the ratio of male and female counsellor in the surveyed FCCs was 20:80.

Education

As regards the educational status of the counsellors working in FCCs, it was revealed that majority (90 per cent) of the counsellors had done post graduation, out of which 40 per cent had possessed post graduation degree in psychology, 35 per cent in social work and 15 per cent in sociology. The educational status of two counsellors who were working in place of regular counsellors as a stop gap arrangement was not in accordance with the guidelines.

It was found that majority of the counsellors working in these FCCs were trained in computer operation and some of them were having additional qualifications like B.Ed., M.Ed., LLB, Diploma in Clinical Psychology and Diploma in Guidance and Counselling.

Experience & Training

The counsellors were asked, for how many years that they had been working as counsellors in the FCC. The responses in this regard showed that a large number of counsellors (45 per cent) were found to be working for more than 3 years, while 30 per cent were for 2 - 3 years and the rest for less than two years (See Table No. 4.1).

Table 4.1: Work Experience of Counsellors

Sl. No.	No. of working years	F	%
1.	3 years & above	9	45
2.	2 – 3 years	6	30
3.	Less than 2 years	5	25
	Total	20	100

When the counsellors were asked, whether they had any work experience as counsellors before joining in FCC, the responses revealed that more than half i.e. around 60 per cent had no work experience at all, whereas, forty percent reported to have some work experience before joining in FCC.

As regards the training, it may be mentioned here that the Central Social Welfare Board arranged orientation training for the counsellors working for the FCC programme. However, the data on training status revealed that only 60 per cent of the counsellors had exposure to this kind of training, perhaps this could be due to the fact that many of the counsellors after undergoing the orientation programmes must have left the FCC for better job prospects in due course of time. It was also expressed by the organizational heads that it was becoming very difficult for them to retain trained staff due to paltry and irregular payment of honorarium to these professionals. (See Table No. 4.2).

Table 4.2: Training Status of the Counsellors

Sl. No.	Training status	F	%
1.	Trained	12	60
2.	Untrained	8	40
	Total	20	100

The counsellors were asked if they had any knowledge of laws relating to marriage and divorce in different religious communities. The data in this respect revealed that more than half 55 per cent of the counsellors had some knowledge regarding laws. But when they were asked to give details of the same, it was found that most of them were unaware of basic details of laws governing marriage and divorce.

Counsellors' understanding of counselling and its principles

To examine the knowledge of counsellors regarding counselling, some multiple options were given to them and they were asked to indicate the preferences among the given options as to what exactly counselling means. In this regard majority of the counsellors (65 per cent) mentioned that counselling is a collaborative effort. Whereas, fifty five per cent of the counsellors said that counselling is developing individual's unique self and potential. While forty five per cent of the counsellors said that counselling is a psychological process and thirty per cent of them believed that counselling means advising. Whereas twenty five per cent counsellors thought that 'counselling' is problem solving and twenty per cent of them held the view that counselling is judging, followed by those who believed that counselling is helping the client to solve his/her problems (20 per cent). It is clear from the above data that there was a confusion atleast among 30 per cent of the counsellors about the real meaning and concept of counselling (See Table No. 4.3).

Table 4.3: Concept of Counselling

(Multiple response)

(N = 20)

S. No.	Concept of Counselling	F	%
1.	A collaborative effort	13	65
2.	Developing individual's unique self and potentials	11	55
3.	A psychological process	9	45
4.	Advising	6	30
5.	Problem Solving	5	25
6.	Judging	4	20
7.	Helping them to solve their problems	4	20
8.	Lecturing	3	15
9.	Deciding	2	10
10.	Instructing	1	5

There are a number of principles of behaviour that a counsellor should be acquainted with. These are the principle of resistance, selective attention, identification with self-concept, non-judgemental, psychological self-preservation, awareness and sensitivity. The counsellor should also try to develop several positive attitudes to function professionally. These include, principles of willingness to accept the counslee, to understand her/ him, to be honest with her, to develop empathy, to listen to her intelligently and to give her encouragement and approval. At the same time the counsellor should try to avoid the negative attitudes of cutting off communication at the slightest sign of disagreement with the counslee.

As far as the understanding of basic principles of counselling by the counsellors was concerned, the data revealed that only 20 per cent counsellors found to have fairly good understanding about principles of counselling. Whereas, 55 per cent of the respondents had little understanding and about 25 per cent of them had no knowledge or understanding about it (See Table no. 4.4).

Table 4.4: Understanding of Principles of Counselling

Sl. No.	Understanding of Principles	F	%
1.	Have fairly good understanding	4	20
2.	Little understanding	11	55
3.	No understanding	5	25
	Total	20	100

To assess the basic counselling skills of the counsellors a few situations were given to them to get their reactions. The situations were as follows:

- Suppose, a client comes to your FCC and he/she is very upset and unable to express his/her problem, in that situation how do you handle this client?
- How do you facilitate to make the client disclose her problems?
- What do you do when a client comes to you and asks for some shelter as she doesn't want to go back home?

In response to situation one, majority of the counsellors said that in this situation they would first provide him/her a glass of water, make her comfortable and give her time to cool down. In response to situation two, majority of the counsellors said that first they would give him/her moral support, and encourage, build trust and take her into confidence. In response to situation three, majority of the counsellors said that they refer her to short stay home and those who were having short stay home with their organization, they would offer the client shelter at least till further arrangement was made. The responses to the above, gave an impression that majority of the counsellors took right steps or approaches towards the situation.

Details about the cases

When the counsellors were asked as to how do they get clients/cases at their FCC? They mentioned a number ways through which they got cases at their FCC, it included, net working with other NGOs, Self Help Groups in villages, Mohalla Gosthi, awareness camps/workshops etc. The counsellors mentioned that they also got cases through their former clients and at times the sub-committee members also referred the cases.

The counsellors were asked as to which SES group (socio economic status) the cases were reported at FCC from. It was revealed that majority of the cases were reported from lower socio-economic group whereas, a very small percentage was reported from middle and higher socio-economic status group. Perhaps, the clients from the later groups hesitated to register their case due to the fear of getting exposed or stigma. It was also found that in some FCCs, persons from higher income group came for consultation for their problems without getting registered.

As regards the male/female complainants at the FCC, it was found that the turnout of females in the FCCs was high in comparison to the male clients. The ratio of male/female complainants was found to be in the ratio of 20:80.

To a query about the type of cases reported at FCC, the counsellors revealed that majority of the cases registered at FCC with multiple complaints related to domestic violence, dowry harassment, followed by cases like adjustment problems, extra marital affairs by either husband or wife and so on. Besides this few cases of kidnapping, murder, drug trafficking, robbery and colluding with the rapist was also reported at the FCCs located at Jail premises (See Table No. 4.5).

Table 4.5: Type of cases reported at FCC
(Multiple response)
(N = 20)

Sl. No.	Type of Cases	F	%
1.	Domestic violence	20	100
2.	Dowry	12	60
3.	Adjustment problems	11	55
4.	Extra marital affairs	9	45
5.	Drugs and alcoholism	7	35
6.	Colluded with the rapist (jail FCC)	4	20
7.	Kidnapping(jail FCC)	4	20
8.	Murder cases(jail FCC)	4	20
9.	Sexual abuse	3	15
10.	Robbery (jail FCC)	2	10
11.	Drug Trafficking (jail FCC)	2	10
12.	Elopement	2	10
13.	Homo sexuality	1	5
14.	Dual Marriage	1	5

Services provided

As regards the services provided to the clients by the FCCs, it was revealed that these institutions provided various kinds of services to their clients. Almost all the FCCs found to have provided counselling services, legal aid, medical aid, referrals to their clients, and 75 per cent counsellors mentioned that they also had helped women in taking Police support. This is apart, the FCCs were also engaged in creating awareness among women regarding their rights and laws related to their protection (75 per cent), organization of workshops on social issues (65 per cent), about 25 per cent of the FCCs mentioned that they were providing shelter to their clients in their shelter homes (See Table no. 4.6).

Table 4.6: Services Provided by the FCC

(Multiple response)
(N = 20)

Sl. No.	Services	F	%
1.	Counselling	20	100
2.	Legal Aid	20	100
3.	Referrals	20	100
4.	Helping women in taking police support	15	75
5.	Create awareness among women regarding laws and their rights	15	75
6.	Medical Aid	13	65
7.	Organizing workshops on social issues	13	65
8.	Providing shelter	5	25

It may be mentioned that every case registered at FCC had received a number of counselling sessions and these were spread over some weeks and months and in few instances, it was reported by the counsellors that they had to follow up cases for years.

Process of Counselling

Counselling can best be described as a 'process' this implies an identifiable sequence of events taking place over a period of time. The nature and dynamics involved in counselling differ with each individual counselee. However, the stages usually included; initial appointment, pre-counselling session involving an exploration of the clients concerns, development of a facilitative relationship, goal specification, identification and consideration of factors related to the achievement of solution, evaluation of results, termination of relationship and follow-up. Outcome goals are the intended result of the counselling process. The process goals are those future events which the counsellor considers helpful or instrumental in bringing about outcome goals.

In the survey, the FCC counsellors were asked as to what process was adopted by them to help the client after his/her arrived at FCC. Nearly all the counsellors mentioned approximately the same process like, first of all they welcome the client, make her feel

comfortable by offering a glass of water and initiate a general talk. Then, they try to understand the problem and ask her/him to write down an application giving details of the problem. After the application was received, the registration form is filled and the case is registered in the FCC. After that the counsellor calls the second party through letter/phone to get his/her version on the complaint of the first party. After collecting all the facts the counsellor first initiates the individual counselling of both the parties then arranges joint counselling of both the parties. After several counselling sessions the counsellor tries to reach on some commonly acceptable decision/compromise formulae.

When asked what is the state of mind of the clients when they enter FCC for the first time. To this query, the counsellors mentioned that a varied kind of behaviors were exhibited by the clients in the first interaction at the FCC viz. 75 per cent clients were found to be crying and nervous and, 40 per cent were to be very aggressive and agitated, yet another 40 per cent never wanted to go back to their homes etc. see table no. 7 for details.

Table 4.7: The state of mind of the clients in the first visit to FCC

(Multiple response)
(N = 20)

Sl. No.	Response	F	%
1.	Very Nervous & Crying	15	75
2.	Aggressive	8	40
3.	Don't want to go back home	8	40
4.	Withdrawn	6	30
5	Scared& Doubtful	3	15

The counsellors were asked, whether any prescribed proforma was used for taking case history of the client. The responses in this regard showed that out of 11 FCCs surveyed, majority of them i.e. about 55 per cent had prescribed proforma for taking case history of the clients, rest had no such printed proforma to take details of the client. Besides this, it was found that in 80 per cent of the FCCs surveyed, it was mandatory on the part of the client to state his/ her problem in writing. This practice was adopted by the FCCs in order to use it as an evidence to show it to the second party and to take any official action when required. As regards the case file of individual clients, it was found that almost all the FCCs were maintaining case files for their clients.

Rapport Building

The counsellors were asked to give details regarding the number of sittings they usually have to build rapport with the client. The data in this regard revealed that about 40 per cent counsellors established rapport with the clients within two sittings, whereas 25 per cent mentioned that it took at least 3 – 4 sittings. It was interesting to note that around 20 per cent counsellors mentioned that it took 5 or more sittings to develop a rapport with the client. It is important to build rapport to facilitate disclosure by the client and to initiate problem solving process. The reason mentioned by the counsellors for this

delayed rapport building was basically the hesitation on the part of the client to share personal details to a new person when they come to the FCC. But after few meetings they feel comfortable and at ease to share. During this period the counsellors maintained records of every sitting and documented all details (date wise) of discussion held between them (See Table No. 4.8).

Table 4.8: No. of sittings to make Rapport with the Client

Sl. No.	No. of sittings	F	%
1.	2 sittings	8	40
2.	3-4 sittings	6	30
3.	5 or more sittings	5	25
4.	Don't have any idea	1	5
	Total	20	100

Confidentiality

It was revealed that in 75 per cent cases the records containing personal details of the clients were kept with the counsellors themselves and not shared with anybody unless it was required for official purposes and in rest of the 25 per cent cases it was either kept with the secretary or director of the organization who was responsible for overall functioning of the organization. This indicates that due care was taken by the FCCs to maintain confidentiality with respect to disclosures made by the clients during the problem solving process.

In continuation to the above the counsellors with whom the records were kept, were asked to specify, if they were to share the information regarding a particular client, with whom would they required to share it. In response, the counsellors mentioned that they shared the records with the organizational heads (30 per cent), Secretary (25 per cent), the sub-committee members (20 per cent), lawyers (15 per cent) and sometimes it was produced in the court. Further, the counsellors were asked whether anybody was allowed to check these records, in response they said that the welfare officers from State Social Welfare Boards did see these records when they visit the FCC for monitoring.

The counsellors were further asked whether the behaviour of the clients at any time created problems for them. To this, a large number of counsellors said 'yes', in fact at times the behaviour of the clients become aggressive, rigid and they never accept their mistakes and agree with the conditions/options given to them.

Summoning the Second Party

The counsellors were asked whether they called the second party and involved them in the problem solving process. The responses in this regard revealed that almost all the counsellors did call the second party against whom the complaint was lodged to know

their version about the case registered at FCC. The second parties were called after registration of the case at FCC and after discussing the case with first party i.e. the client and her/his relatives in several sittings. The second parties were called through different ways which depended on the client and the case. In majority of the cases, the second party was called either through phone or through a letter/notice by ordinary post. In certain cases the information to the second party was also sent through registered post or through personal visits. In the FCC located at CBCID, Police headquarters, Lucknow, the information to the second party was sent through Police special messenger and sometimes if the case fell in a distant place, then related thana was also approached to call the second party (See Table No. 4.9).

Table 4.9: Means of calling the second party

(Multiple response) (N = 20)

Sl. No.	Various Means of calling	F	%
1.	Through telephone	15	75
2.	Notice through ordinary/registered post	13	65
3.	By personal visit	2	10
4.	By the Police special messenger	2	10
5.	Not Applicable (counsellors working in jails)	4	20

When the counsellors were asked in case the second party ignored their call then how have they managed the case. In response, the counsellors mentioned that in some instances resistance was shown by the second party by way of threats to the secretary of the organization or the counsellors with dire consequences for taking up the case of their rival. But these elements were suitably dealt with and the organization running the FCC more often than not managed to get them for talks across the table. Sometimes the second party expresses its inability to present themselves at the FCC then in those cases the counsellors made personal home visits to meet the second party. In majority of the cases the counsellors acted firmly and made them clear that if they failed to cooperate in working out solution to the problem, a legal action would be initiated against them. It was observed that the organizations or the organizational heads running the FCC needed to have a neat and clean image in the community to handle family related disputes and their public relation and networking with Police and district administration. This would facilitate immensely in helping the clients seeking help at the FCCs.

While discussing with the counsellors it was learnt that sometimes the second party considered FCC letter as a legal notice and sent reply through their lawyers or at times they appeared at the FCC along with their lawyers to defend their case.

The counsellors were asked whether there was any procedure adopted by FCCs to record the statement of the second party. To this query the counsellors said there was a system in place to record the statement of the second party to be used it as an evidence.

Further, the counsellors were asked whether they encountered any resistance from the second party as well as from Police, political persons while dealing with the cases. In this regard majority said that generally in the initial stages they experienced some resistance from second party but gradually, it disappeared. Whereas, in some cases the resistance from the second party was very high, they often tried to exert political pressure, personal threats and at times try to prove that the first party was wrong. They were further asked, if the second party ignored their suggestions what steps the FCC took in such cases? In response, most of the counsellors said that they had gone for extensive counselling of the second party over and over again that generally helped in reaching out to a compromise between the parties. If all these efforts failed then the legal course was chosen, they said.

When the counsellors were asked as to how much time did it take normally to solve a case coming to their FCC, to this question almost all the counsellors mentioned that one can not define a time limit to any case because it could vary from case to case and client to client. Although they further responded that in majority of the cases (40 per cent) it took 4 to 6 months, yet in few cases, it took about a year or so (See Table No. 4.10).

Table 4.10: Time taken by a Counsellor in solving a Case
(Multiple response)
(N = 20)

Sl. No.	Time Duration	F	%
1.	4 – 6 months	8	40
2.	1 – 3 months	3	15
3.	7 – 9 months	2	10
4.	10 – 12 months	2	10
5.	More than 1 year	1	05
6.	Not applicable(FCC run in jail)	4	20

Record maintenance

It was found that the records/registers maintained in FCCs were as per the guidelines provided by State Social Welfare Boards i.e. case register, sub-committee register, dispatch register, visitors register, awareness programme register, movement register. While only 75 per cent counsellors found to have maintained dispatch register and visitors register (See Table No. 4.11).

Table 4.11: Types of Records maintained by a Counsellor
(Multiple response)
(N = 20)

Sl. No.	Records	F	%
1.	Case Register (13 Column)	16	80
2.	Sub-committee Register	16	80
3.	Dispatch Register	15	75
4.	Visitors Register	15	75
5.	Awareness prog. Register	14	70
6.	Movement Register	13	65

When the counsellors were asked as to how long the records were kept at the FCC of solved/other cases? In this context they categorically mentioned that none of the records had been destroyed till date of any client visiting FCC. Further, when asked as to who checked these records at their FCC, in response they mentioned that generally these records were inspected by the welfare officers of the State Social Welfare Board visiting from time to time to the FCC for monitoring.

The counsellors were asked about the authority that made a final decision for closer of any case. The information in this regard showed that in most of the cases the counsellor as well as the client were responsible for making a final decision for closer of his/her case after reaching out to a compromise (Ikarar-nama) between the two parties.

To a query about the percentage of solved cases at the FCC, it was reported by the counsellors that a majority of the cases reported at FCC were either solved or continued as follow up where inputs were given to the parties from time to time and only a negligible number of cases were dropped out after making a visit or two which in fact was a fairly good performance. With regard to the re-opening of the cases, it was informed by the counsellors that only about five percent cases were reopened per year and the possible reason stated by counsellors for this was, breach of agreement made between the two parties and resurfacing of differences between the couples. The counsellors informed that in the process of solving of cases they take help from Police department, district administration, legal advisor/ lawyers, NGOs helpline, women cell, sub-committee, lok adalat, women commission, human right commission, etc. If all these efforts failed then the counsellor encouraged the first party to file a case in the court.

The details of cases registered in the FCC during the last three years from 2005 – 2008 revealed that the highest number of cases were registered in the FCC located at Mahila Sahayata Prakoshtha CBCID (468) apart from Nari Bandi Niketan (400). The possible reason for such high turnout of the clients at CBCID could be the location of FCC within the Police headquarters. This could be due to the fact that the clients believed

that they would get relief faster in comparison to other FCCs as this particular FCC was backed and supported by the Police department (See Table No. 4.12).

Table 12: Status of Cases between 2005 – 2008

Sl. No.	Name of the Organization	Name of the State	Total no. of registered cases	No. of solved cases	No. of drop out cases	No. of running cases
1.	Karuna Sadan (ICSW), Chandigarh	Haryana	144	108	-	36
2.	H.P. Mahila Kalyan Mandal, Kullu	Himachal Pradesh	156	142	-	14
3.		Bihar				
	YMCA, Patna	„	144	98	-	46
	Karmbhoomi, Ara	„	89	56	1	32
	Ara jail (Shyam Khadi Gramodyog Sangh)	„	148	-	-	-
4.	Sindoor tola Gramodyog Vikas Vidyalaya, Ranchi	Jharkhand	128	48	9	71
5.		Uttar Pradesh				
	CBCID, Lucknow	„	468	223	41	204
	Nari Bandi Niketan (FCC in jail), Lucknow	„	400	-	-	-
	Sabla, Rai Bareilly	„	309	123	6	180
	Suraksha, Lucknow	„	205	150	7	48
6.	Sarvanchal Seva Samiti, Haridwar	Uttarakhand	218	198	-	20

Follow up and Home visits

As regards the home visits made by the counsellors, it was found that nearly all the counsellors under took home visits for their clients as and when required or approximately in the interval of 1 to 2 months. During their visits they tried to understand the client's family set up and interacted with other members of the family. The counsellors further informed that they also faced some bitter experiences during home visits made to the homes of their clients. Sometimes, people were very hostile and did not allow them to enter their houses. Yet, they said there were some instances where the client's family members felt honoured and extended warm welcome to the counsellors. When the counsellors were asked whether did they get conveyance allowances for making home visits. To this query, all the counsellors said 'yes' they got the conveyance allowance from the FCC. As regard the follow up, it was told that it was done up to six

months as within this period it was presumed that the dispute among the families would have got settled down for a normal and stable life.

The counsellors were further asked as to how the follow up was done i.e. whether by personal visits or telephonic call. It was revealed that majority of the counsellors made follow up by telephone (70 per cent), personal visits (60 per cent), asked clients to make a phone call (40 per cent), through letters, by sending someone to the clients house etc. In some cases the clients were also instructed to come to FCC after a certain interval for follow up (See Table no. 4.13).

Table 4.13: Means of undertaking follow up
(Multiple response)
(N = 20)

Sl. No.	Means of Follow up	F	%
1.	By telephone	14	70
2.	Personal visit	12	60
3.	Asked client to make a phone call	8	40
4.	Through letter	4	20
5.	By sending someone	1	5
6.	N.A.	4	20

Panel of Experts

The counsellors were asked whether they had any panel of experts in their FCCs. It was revealed that every FCC had a panel of experts or sub-committee which generally comprised of three to four numbers including legal advisor, psychologist, social activists, superintendent of Police/Police inspector, senior citizens, educationist, chief medical officer, legal aid cell representatives, female constables and jail superintendent etc. This panel of experts help the counsellors in critical cases by providing legal support and expert opinion on various cases as and when required. Apart from the above support systems, sometimes the lawyers help in getting the bail of the women prisoners. Majority of the counsellors informed that they had meetings with the expert panel 'quarterly' (60 per cent) and the rest had six monthly or once in a year.

Organization of Awareness Programmes

The counsellors were asked to furnish information with regard to organization of awareness programmes on issues pertaining to women. They revealed that almost all the counsellors had organized various types of awareness programmes in the community. The methods adopted for awareness building included 'Campaigns' (35 per cent) 'Mohalla Goshthis' and 'Talks' (30 per cent), Advertisements in Newspapers Helpline column (15 per cent) Screen Shows, Posters/Pamphlets, Hand bills, Cable Advertisement and Wall writing etc. (See Table no. 4.14).

Table 4.14: Type of awareness programmes done

(Multiple response)
(N = 20)

Sl. No.	Awareness of Programmes	F	%
1.	Campaigns	7	35
2.	Mahila Goshthis	12	60
3.	Newspapers (Helpline column)	3	15
4.	Screen Shows/ Cable Advertisement	2	10
5.	Posters/Pamphlets /Handbills/ Wall writing	3	15
6.	N.A (FCCs run in jail premises)	4	20

The counsellors were asked whether they had any resource directory for referral services. The data in this regard revealed that only 65 per cent of the counsellors had this resource directory to facilitate clients to seek help and the rest had no such document which is very important in any FCC.

Family Counselling Centre in Jail

Twenty-three FCCs have been set up in Mahila Jails in Bihar, Chandigarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Punjab, Tamilnadu, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal. The main objective of these setups is to provide psychological and emotional support to women who were cut off from main stream society suddenly. In the present study two FCCs in jail premises located in Lucknow, U.P. and Ara, in Bihar were studied.

When these under trial women inmates arrived at jails they were found to be in great mental trauma particularly those who were first time offenders as they were cut off from their families and confined to four walls. This feeling of confinement uncertainty about their future was the cause for going into depression. Hence, most of these women in the initial stages presented symptoms of complete withdrawal, aggression, anger, distrust, indiscipline etc.

In order to solve these behavioral problems and to help these women to come out of this adverse situation, the counsellors were placed in jails under the FCC programme. These counsellors also helped the inmates to sort out their day to day quarrels and reduce feeling of guilt among the inmates. Besides, the counsellors placed at these prisons were of a great help to link the inmates with their families and near and dear ones.

Counsellors working with inmates in Jail

In this study four counsellors were interviewed from the FCCs located at two women Jails at (Nari Bandi Niketan) Lucknow U.P. and Ara Jail women cell, Bihar. Since, these counsellors were working exclusively for women prisoners, so the questions were specially framed for these counsellors.

When the counsellors were asked as to what types of cases handled by FCCs located in Jail premises. The counsellors informed that generally all kinds of cases were taken up by them charged under various sections of IPC & Cr. PC, these included, dowry deaths, robbery, murder, kidnapping, elopement, colluding with rapist, trafficking of drugs, involving in counterfeit currency transaction etc.

Process of work with inmates in the Jail

As soon as any new prisoner arrived at the Jail, she was immediately registered by the counselling centre and the counsellor took the details from the prisoner about herself and her family in the form of a case history. It was revealed by the counsellors that the inmates hesitated in the initial sittings to share information. However, in course of time they felt comfortable to interact with them. During these interactions the counsellors helped them to understand the jail setup the rules and regulations of the jail etc.

The counsellors were asked as to what kind of problems did these women prisoners suffer from. To this query the counsellors informed that the majority of the women prisoners suffer from tension and depression due to loneliness and being cut away from their families and society. Often these inmates complained of headaches, high blood pressure, migraine etc. and most of the time they found to be frustrated.

When asked what kind of support services the FCC or counsellors provided to these women prisoners. The data pertaining to this query revealed that the counsellors placed at the jail provided counselling and helped them to adjust with the environment. Further, the FCCs provided services such as free distribution of postcards, help in letter writing to inmates family, writing applications for illiterate women prisoners, and legal help wherever required.

It was informed by the counsellors that majority of the women prisoners slipped into depression as in due course of time the frequency of visits by their family members decreased considerably and then slowly they stopped visiting them completely. This loss of touch with near and dear ones made a majority of the inmates worry as to why their family members were incommunicable and whether anything went wrong with them (self – doubts) etc. In this situation, the role of counsellors made a big difference. The counsellors working in these jail acted as a conduit between the prisoners and their family. It was learned that in certain situations the family completely disowned the inmate fearing social stigma making the feeling of isolation complete. In these cases the counsellors played a crucial role in motivating the family members to initiate the legal process to procure the release of the inmate.

Bridging the Gap

As mentioned earlier, one of the major problems which the inmates encountered during their stay in the prison was lack of contact with their near and dear ones. It was here, that the role of a counsellor was found to be extremely helpful. In these two jails a total of 20 inmates were interviewed and almost all of them lauded the help provided by these counsellors. The help provided included contacting the client's family members by telephone, helping them write letters, conveying messages received from their families etc. The counsellors provided the inmates with free postcards, taught illiterate inmates reading, writing skills etc. Many a times it was seen that family members were least interested to meet the inmates due to social stigma.

Free Legal Aid

To provide the facility of free legal aid to the inmates who were not capable of hiring a lawyer, the FCCs functioning in jails had consultant lawyers who helped in fighting the case for the inmates in the court. These lawyers got acquainted with the cases and then gave advice to the inmates who were seeking legal support from the organization. Apart from this, there were few advocates who also provided voluntary legal support free of cost to the inmates from weaker sections who could not afford to bear the court expenses.

Since majority of the inmates were from rural background and from poor families they were not aware of their legal rights. In order to enhance the awareness level of these inmates on legal rights, the FCCs functional in jails, from time to time organized "Legal Awareness Camps" within the Jail premises. Through these camps these inmates were educated about the various laws governing crime and the penalties imposed for different crimes. This facilitated them to know about the legal actions which could be taken against and punishment imposed for different criminal activities, thus acting as a deterrent for the inmates to stop them from repeating the crime again in the future.

Besides, the non availability of information from the family, there were other problems that were associated with these inmates. One of such problems was lack of information regarding the proceeding of their cases in the courts. This situation really was a cause of concern for majority of the inmates in jail and they were pre occupied with thoughts such as, 'who was taking care of her case in the court', 'was the advocate taking adequate care of her case', 'what was the present position of the case', 'whether someone was trying to get her bail or not' etc. To facilitate the inmates in this situation, the FCC collected the information regarding her advocate, contacted them to know about the position of the case and later the same was passed on to the inmates.

Celebration of Festivals

During festival time, FCC also involved inmates in celebration of the same so that they could feel at home and lessen the feeling of missing the families on these occasions.

The celebrations were completely planned and managed by the inmates themselves and the counsellors were around to help them whenever they required it.

Financial Support

At times when the inmate had completed her full term in the Jail and was not in position to pay the fine and her family members did not show up to receive her, particularly in these situations the FCC helped in arranging money for paying the fine as imposed by the court and to free the person. This way some inmates were being facilitated by the counsellors and the FCC.

Care & Support to Children

Few of the inmates who were having small children were given some extra care and support. The children were allowed in jail with their mothers till they attained the age of seven years. In Ara jail the organization running the FCC had also set up a crèche centre for children of women prisoners in the jail premises itself under the Rajiv Gandhi scheme of assistance to voluntary organizations for crèches. The jail authorities built a big room which had basic minimum facility to accommodate children of the inmates. The crèche offered services of preschool education, nutrition etc. to children attending the crèche as per the provisions of the said scheme. As per the Jail manual after the age of seven years the children were not supposed to stay with their mothers who were serving sentence in the jail and these children were shifted to Child Care Centres. In the beginning these women showed resistance to send their children to Child Care Centres but after counselling and motivation they usually came to terms with the hard realities. Proper follow-up had been done by the counsellors at regular intervals after the child had been sent to Child Care Centre, this follow up was helpful to the inmates as it kept them informed about their children's well being. Even at sometimes the counsellor visited Child Care Centre to know the exact position in which the child was living. The FCC also facilitated the meeting of mother and child on certain occasions and intervals. This effort facilitated in keeping the inmates tension free about their children.

Other facilities provided by the FCC

Jail has its own health facility but the FCC functioning at the jail premises organized health and hygiene camps so that the inmates could avail the benefits. The eye testing camps and cataract operations were conducted by the organization with the help of qualified doctors for affected inmates and they were provided with spectacles free of cost.

The inmates had plenty of time at their disposal after completing their daily routine. So to keep them busy and for making small earnings, the FCC at Nari Bandi Niketan had established one "Tailoring Training and dress making centre" within the jail premises. Interested inmates would regularly work in this centre and learn skills besides

earning some money out of these activities. The FCC facilitated in getting orders of school dress from Government schools so that the inmates could have sufficient work at their disposal. On the whole the FCCs functioning in the jail premises were in a way trying to help the inmates who were in need of care and support. Particularly, the counsellors were playing a very important role of link between the family and the inmates. The counselling done by them at regular intervals boosted the self confidence among the inmates and kept them in good spirits. There were various instances wherein the counsellors helped to bring together the family and the inmates as these families had disowned them completely due to social stigma of being in jail.

As regards the limitations faced by the counsellors in the FCCs functional in the jail premises, it was informed that although counsellors wanted to help the women prisoners but rules and regulations of the Jail created hurdles for free functioning. The jail authorities often did not take initiatives to make a difference in the lives of these prisoners due to rigid rules. The work of the FCC largely depended on the individuals like the jail superintendent i.e. if he was accommodative and believed in the philosophy of reformation then the work by FCC went on smoothly or else lot of time required to be spent in convincing the authorities for undertaking any kind of activity. Further, the kind of rapport built by the organizational head and counsellors with the jail personnel was an important determining factor to carry out work with the jail inmates. It was quite often seen that many women prisoners from poor economic background needed free legal Aid as they were not able to afford to have a lawyer to defend. However, in such cases the FCCs were trying to help some of these women by providing a lawyer wherever possible but these FCCs were finding it difficult to stretch further as there was no provision in the scheme to pay even a nominal fee to the lawyer.

Honorarium and Job satisfaction

The counsellors were asked whether they got honorarium regularly. The responses in this regard were very discouraging and only 15 percent counsellors were found to have received their honorarium regularly and the rest had to wait for very long to get it. When asked, what was the frequency of receiving it, to this, they informed that more than half of them were getting their honorarium once in six months, twenty percent once in nine months etc. see table below for details.

Table 4.15: Frequency of Getting Salary

Sl. No.	Frequency	F	%
1.	Regularly	3	15
2.	Once in three months	2	10
3.	Once in six months	11	55
4.	Once in nine months & above	4	20
	Total	20	100

The irregular payment of honorarium to staff was a single most important problem being faced by these FCCs. It was observed that only those organizations that had other programmes, could divert their funds for payment of honorarium to the staff of FCC. In fact, many counsellors said that the honorarium itself was too meagre i.e. Rs.7,000/- (A class city) and Rs.5,500/- (B class city) compared to the price index and compounded by the irregular payment of honorarium, was the main cause for the counsellors to leave the job with FCCs and it was resulting in depletion of the trained man power in the organization. Those who continued, in spite of these difficulties however, had low morale and poor motivation and they were always on the lookout for better prospects.

The counsellors were further asked whether their organizations supported them when grants reached late. To this query, nearly all the counsellors said 'yes' the organization supported them and many a times organizations paid them from their own resources. But sometimes it became difficult for the organizations also to manage the payment of the FCC staff when the grant was delayed for nine to twelve months as happened quite often.

Further, they were asked whether they were satisfied with their work or not. To this query majority of them responded in affirmative and added that the role they played in helping a needy and helpless person and reunite the family gave them tremendous satisfaction. As regards the women prisoners the counsellors working in the jail premises felt that these women needed their support more than anybody else because there was no one to understand their feelings and emotions. Whereas, a few counsellors were of the view that they lacked facilities and funds, further they said that in spite of their hard work and best possible efforts, at times they felt helpless to bring the second party to a compromise and help the clients as they lacked legal powers.

The counsellors were asked as to what additional role they play in the organization apart from counselling. The responses in this regard showed that the counsellors were engaged in other project activities of their organization and their role included that of a resource mobilizer, administrator and monitor for other projects undertaken by these organizations. In short, it can be said that the counsellors were used as a multipurpose workers in almost all the organizations surveyed for the study.

The counsellors were asked to specify the areas in which they needed training which could help them to function more effectively as counsellors. Responses indicated the areas which included; Prevention of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005; Counselling; Women Rights; information related Women Issues; Laws related to Marriage; Right to Information Act; Documentation; Training for effective functioning of FCCs.

Chapter V

The Clients

A total of forty-five clients were interviewed from eleven FCCs spread over six North Indian states. Among which the two clients were male and the rest were females. It is also worth mentioning here that out of the total forty five clients, eight women prisoners were interviewed from two district jails located at Lucknow (U.P.) and Ara (Bihar). A separate interview schedule was developed to collect precise data from these women prisoners.

As regard the clients from general FCCs it was found that a majority of them had two to three years of married life. It was also observed that majority of the clients who had reported at FCCs, had married with their parent's choice whereas, only few clients had chosen their own life partners.

The majority (86 per cent) of the clients said that there was no dispute at the time of marriage but it occurred in due course of time. While analyzing the type of problems of the clients at the time of registering the case, it was revealed that more than 80 per cent clients reported that they were harassed by their husbands (See Table no. 5.1).

Table 5.1: Type of problems reported by clients at FCCs

(Multiple response)

(N = 37)

Sl. No.	Type of Problems	F	%
1.	Harassment by husband/Domestic Violence	30	81
2.	Adjustment problem	17	46
3.	Harassment by in laws	11	30
4.	Dowry demand	10	27
5.	Extra marital affairs	8	22
6.	Drug abuse/Alcoholism	4	11
7.	Sexual abuse	1	3
8.	Others	4	11

While analyzing the data it was seen that the majority of the clients reported (41 per cent) that the harassment started 'immediately after marriage' followed by one year 37 per cent and about 14 per cent clients reported that harassment started after over 3 years of married life. This information indicated that the beginning of harassment did not have any definite point of time or time frame (See Table no. 5.2).

Table 5.2: Harassment after Marriage

Sl. No.	Time period	F	%
1.	Immediate after marriage	15	41
2.	After 1 year	14	37
3.	3 year & more	9	22
	Total	37	100

When the clients were asked as to what kind of harassment were they undergoing, to this query majority of the clients (59 per cent), mentioned ‘Abuse’ and ‘Physical assault’ were the main types of harassments. Whereas 54 per cent reported ‘Threats’ and followed by attempt to murder (6 per cent) (See Table no. 5.3).

Table 5.3: Type of Harassment

(Multiple response)
(N = 37)

Sl. No.	Type of harassment	F	%
1.	Abuses /calling names	22	59
2.	Physical assault	22	59
3.	Threats	20	54
4.	Attempt to murder	2	6
5.	Others	1	3

When clients were asked as to who helped them at the time of crises, to this, thirty five per cent clients told that they directly got help from the FCCs, 46 per cent clients told that their ‘Parents’ came to their rescue, eleven per cent said that the whole natal family stood by them. When they were further probed whether they tried to take the help of women cell at the local Police station, a majority responded in negative and only 22 per cent of the cases tried to get in touch with Police though. This made it clear that a lot of effort required to be done to educate the women and the community in order that they approach the right place for help (See Table no. 5.4).

Table 5.4: Persons who helped the client at the time of crises

Sl. No.	Persons	F	%
1.	Parents	17	46
2.	FCC	13	35
3.	Whole family	4	11
4.	Relatives – helped in compromise	2	5
5.	Neighbours	1	3
	Total	37	100

When clients who had approached the Police station (22 per cent) were asked whether they got proper response at the Police station the reaction of the respondents to this query was mixed i.e. a few of them mentioned that they were heard properly by the Police and tried to help them, whereas, some of them said that they were asked to come later and were completely ignored as in these cases the 2nd party was influential. It seemed that the Police response depended on the stature of the second party i.e. if the second party is influential then the client did not stand any chance to be heard unless she took the help of FCC or NGOs or Media as it happened in few cases interviewed for the study.

The clients were asked as to who guided them to seek help from FCC. The data in this respect revealed that about one third of the clients came to know about FCC through solved cases (former), followed by those clients who came to know about it from ‘their friends’ (22 per cent), 16 per cent through ‘Mahila Goshthis’ and 14 per cent through relatives etc. (See Table no. 5.5).

Table 5.5: Information about FCC

Sl. No.	Source	F	%
1.	Through solved cases	11	30
2.	Friends	8	22
3.	Through Mahila Goshthis	6	16
4.	Relatives	5	14
5.	NGOs	4	11
6.	Through cable advertisement	1	3
7.	Neighbours	1	3
8.	FCC took up the case after going through the newspaper report	1	3
	Total	37	100

The clients further probed as to what were their expectations when they first approached FCC. The responses received from the clients were varied in this regard and differed from client to client based on their type of problems. A few of them thought that they would get all help from FCC in settling down their disputes. Some of them were of the opinion that FCCs would help them to get compensations from their husbands through proper legal support or they may mediate to work out some compromise, yet a few of the clients expected that the FCCs would send their husbands behind the bars as they were physically assaulting them.

It was found that after meeting the counsellor all the clients felt that they had come to a right place and the attitude of the counsellor was positive towards their problem. When the clients were asked whether the counsellors could help them as per their

expectations. In response the clients said, yes they could and listed a number of ways by which they were helped. Majority of the clients mentioned that FCCs helped them to build their self confidence, provided psychological support and helped to settle the dispute by providing legal advice and for reaching out to a compromise formula.

In addition, it was also seen that FCCs could also put pressure on the Police to register cases wherever it was seen to be reluctant to do it. Some FCCs also provided legal support free of cost for deserving and needy clients for fighting cases in the court. Further, some FCCs also provided shelter in short stay homes and also arranged marriages for the clients where it was possible.

As regards the advocate's facility provided by the FCC to the client, it was found that (32 per cent) clients were provided services of an advocate while (68 per cent) clients never required any such type of service. Those clients who were provided with advocate's services had to pay court fees as admissible.

The clients were asked whether the counsellors had helped them by visiting their homes, the responses in this regard showed that in majority (76 per cent) of the cases the counsellors made home visits to the clients houses for collecting information and to understand physical set up and family dynamics. As mentioned elsewhere their visits were never liked by the accused/ second party and in some places they were treated badly. In about 24 per cent cases the counsellors never made any visit probably because the situation never demanded for it.

The clients were asked whether they came to visit FCC for follow up. The information in this regard revealed that out of the total clients, majority (75 per cent) said that they came to FCC for follow up visits to inform about their well being. The rest of the clients (22 per cent) had said that they did not come to FCC for follow up visits once their case was closed or solved.

The present study showed that over two third of women who had been married had faced some physical violence in their married lives and it ranged from being pushed, slapped, and beaten hard by their husbands at least once. Slapping was the most common act of physical violence by husbands. It was also reported by some women that their husbands pulled their hair or twisted their arm and hurled household objects at them. Apart from this they were also emotionally tortured.

As for the types of violence faced by the clients, the responses in this regard showed that a majority (83 per cent) of the clients faced 'mental torture' followed by 'physical torture (77 per cent), put to financial hardships (54 per cent) and sexual abuse (9 per cent). In all these cases the husbands or in-laws were involved (See Table no. 5.6).

Table 5.6: Type of Violence/harassment faced by the clients.

(Multiple response)

(N = 35)

Sl. No.	Response	F	%
1.	Mental torture	29	83
2.	Physical torture	27	77
3.	Sexual Abuse	3	9
4.	Financial hardships	19	54

The opinions of clients were also obtained regarding the possible reasons for violence and harassment that these women had to face. The responses showed that more than half of the clients mentioned 'Dowry' (60 per cent) as a main reason for violence/harassment. Another (57 per cent) clients said that violence occurred and women were harassed due to 'Alcoholism', followed by the clients who gave the reasons like for committing 'Small mistakes' (57 per cent) for 'not giving birth to a male child' (49 per cent), suspicion of 'Extra marital relations' (26 per cent), 'for not conceiving' (3 per cent) etc. see table below for details.

Table 5.7: Reasons of Violence

(Multiple response)

(N = 35)

Sl. No.	Reasons stated by Respondents	F	%
1.	Dowry	21	60
2.	Alcoholism	20	57
3.	For committing trivial mistakes	20	57
4.	Not giving birth to male child	17	49
5.	Suspicion of Extra marital relations	9	26
6.	For not procreation of children	1	3
7.	Others	8	24

These respondents stated that they tried to compromise with the situation and stayed with the strained relationship as often they found no place to move away from the family and support herself or her children due to lack of employment. They often got humiliated and abused yet stayed with the family due to fear that her friends, family and community will blame her for having broken the family. But when the situation got out of hands they decided to approach a place like Family Counselling Centre for help.

The clients were further asked as to why women bear violence. The opinion of majority of the clients (66 per cent) revealed that women bear violence as they 'feel helpless' whereas, thirty one per cent clients informed that women bear violence because they take it as a destiny, followed by those who said that they didn't know how to react

(31 per cent) and a few felt it was alright (11 per cent). Sometimes it becomes a habit of woman to bear the violence (9 per cent) etc. (See Table no. 5.8).

Table 5.8: Reasons for which Women bear Violence
(Multiple response)
(N = 35)

Sl. No.	Opinions	F	%
1.	Feel helpless	23	66
2.	Destiny	11	31
3.	Don't know how to react	11	31
4.	Feel it alright	4	11
5.	It becomes a habit	3	9

The clients were asked to give their opinion on 'whether women themselves were cause for violence'? About half (49 per cent) of the clients said 'no' while forty three per cent clients said 'yes' women themselves were cause for violence and nine per cent clients said can't say .

The clients who said 'yes' were further probed as to how women themselves were the cause for violence, then out of the 15 clients a majority 53 per cent clients mentioned that women themselves were cause for violence because they never resist. Whereas 33 per cent said that women themselves promote it by tolerating it and rest thought that it was their destiny (14 per cent).

When the respondents were asked as to who did more violence against women, the responses in this regard revealed that majority (63 per cent) of the clients said that husband did more violence followed by mothers-in-law (46 per cent), sisters-in-law (20 per cent), fathers-in-law (14 per cent) and brother-in-law (3 per cent). Few clients (20 per cent) mentioned that sometimes all the above categories of people join together to harass women particularly in dowry cases (See Table no. 5.9).

Table 5.9: Person who does more violence on woman
(Multiple response)
(N = 35)

Sl. No.	Persons	F	%
1.	Husband	22	63
2.	Mother-in-law	16	46
3.	Sister-in-law	7	20
4.	Relatives	7	20
5.	Father-in-law	6	17
6.	Brother-in-law	1	3

The clients were asked ‘Are women aware of laws’ which safeguard them? The responses in this regard showed that only 37 per cent of the clients said ‘Yes’ that they were aware of laws’ which safeguard them while rest of the clients about 63 per cent responded in negative.

The study pointed out the fact that many women were not even informed about their rights. In rural areas a good number of women were made to believe that wife beating is justified. In metropolitan or urban areas, even if a few women were aware of laws, the complexity and technicalities of law and legal procedures prevent many to use it. Social stigma, family pressures, cost involved in filing a legal case, delay in getting justice, biased attitude of Police etc. were found to be the impediments for seeking justice.

Thirty seven per cent respondents who had said that they were aware of the laws were further asked, which laws they were aware of. The responses in this regard included Child Marriage Act, 85 per cent, Dowry Prohibition Act, 46 per cent, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 31 per cent and law related to Rape 8 per cent. It was found that majority of these respondents only had heard about the name of the laws and were not aware with the details and the provisions of the laws (See Table no. 5.10).

Table 5.10: Type of laws which women aware of

(Multiple response)

Sl. No.	Type of laws	%
1.	Child marriage Act	85
2.	Dowry Prohibition Act	46
3.	Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act	31

The clients were further asked as to ‘why most of the women do not use existing laws for their benefits’? A majority 77 per cent of the clients said that women did not use laws because they were not aware of these laws in the first place. Further nine per cent of clients mentioned that women ‘feel helpless’ in using it, followed by six per cent who said that women do not have money to fight their cases etc.

The respondents were asked as to in their opinion what is the best way to fight against violence. A majority 69 per cent of the respondents said that education and economic independence of women are the best way to fight against violence. Change in the male mindset was mentioned by the rest.

Experiences of those working with the victims of domestic violence indicated the difficulties faced by women in getting the case registered or lodging a FIR (First Information Report). Conviction rate is abysmally low not because the cases were false

but because the trial takes a long time and takes toll because of which many complainants find it difficult to sustain through long and tardy legal process. Many cases were not reported because women lack knowledge or resources or they do not consider domestic violence as a violation.

It may be said that there is need to address the issue of violence within domestic relationship. Domestic violence is a multi – dimensional problem and needs to be addressed from different perspectives. Any law alone is not sufficient to deal with the issue. What is required is a will to address domestic violence as a public matter. More specifically in the Indian context it is significant to address the related dimension of domestic violence for instance, lack of support services, legal aid, shelter homes, lack of awareness about the law and the legal procedures and most important is beliefs and attitudes that justify the domestic violence on one account or the other. Underlying all the above is the need to nurture boys with an abiding respect for girls and women in general. Care and nurture values within the home are sacrosanct in building a solid foundation for mutual respect and family well – being.

Inmates in Jail

In this study eight women prisoners were interviewed from two jails located at Lucknow (Nari Bandi Niketan) and Bihar (Ara Jail). The data in this regards revealed that majority of the women prisoners fell within the age group of twenty to forty five years and were found to be illiterate. Further, it was seen that the majority of the women prisoners were booked under dowry Prohibition Act, murder, and forgery and they were under trials.

When the women prisoners were asked about the help provided to them by the FCC, they revealed that the FCC helped them in number of ways, viz. worked as a link between them and their families (by way of writing letters to their family members or making telephone calls and passing on information about their families’), building their confidence and motivating them all the time. These women were found to be worried about their children and other members whom they had left behind and often it was a primary cause of depression among the women prisoners for this very reason. The counsellors from FCCs were found to be very effective in bridging this gap among the women prisoners and their families. Since the women prisoners lived in isolation and they were cut off from outside world as a result their spirits were low and emotionally they were found to be disturbed. This led to frequent fights with co-prisoners over trivial issues. Under the circumstances, it was found that the counselling services provided were helpful to pacify their charged emotions. It was also revealed that the counsellors had gone a step forward in creating awareness among inmates about their legal rights and helped in getting free legal aid to needy prisoners.

It was found that jail authorities had arranged some educational classes for these women to make them literate to an extent. Further, they had also arranged facilities for vocational training within the jail premises. The basic objective behind the vocational training was to enable these women prisoners to develop some skills of their own interest like cutting, tailoring and embroidery etc., which could fetch them some money and keep them occupied.

It was observed that FCCs were in jail set ups playing a very important role in the lives of women prisoners by providing them emotional, psychological, and legal support and helping these women prisoners to cope with unpleasant situation having occurred in their lives.

Briefs on some cases reported at different FCCs:

A retired defense person was harassing his wife physically and mentally to the extent that she opted to get rid of him by taking divorce. For this, she approached FCC for help. The counsellors at the FCC had separate counselling sessions with both wife and husband to sort out the dispute between the couples. After a few counseling sessions, it was found that the major problem between the couple was lack of communication and opportunity for the wife to express her displeasure over the behaviour of her husband. Whereas her husband was completely unaware that his behaviour was causing such a discomfort to his wife and she was contemplating for taking divorce. Finally, the misunderstandings between the couples were sorted out by the counsellors and their intervention helped the family from a possible split.

It was found that 46 per cent clients reported 'Adjustment problems with their husbands' at the time of registration of their cases at the FCCs. In this regard yet another unique case was found at FCC Suraksha, Lucknow, where a newly married girl filed a case against her husband and in-laws under Domestic Violence Act. As the case was taken up by the FCC and during the course of investigation the counsellors found that it was simply a case of adjustment problem and the girl who filed a case against her husband and in-laws wanted to live separately with husband alone and did not like the company of in-laws. She was so irritated in the set up that she took the extreme step to file a case against all including her husband. The FCC intervened and had separate counselling sessions with in-laws, husband and complainant. The counseling helped in sorting out differences between the parties for an amicable settlement.

Further 27 per cent clients reported dowry related violence. In this regards a case from Kullu FCC could be a best fit to explain as to how a whole family had gone on to inflict torture on a hapless person for the lust of dowry. In this case after a few months of marriage the in-laws started inflicting physical torture on the client for more dowry from her parents. She tolerated physical onslaught for quite some time thinking that they could improve later on. Instead the events took a very ugly turn as one day they locked her up

in the bathroom and thrashed her very badly. The client somehow managed to escape from there and later she approached FCC for help. The FCC helped in a separation formula as the situation had gone bad to worse and there was a danger to her life and helped the client and her natal family in retrieving her belongings from her in-laws.

In another dowry case a client after having got married for two years was harassed for dowry both by her husband and in-laws. However, her parents were unable to fulfill the demands. As a result, she was tortured every day and was burnt. The FCC helped the client's family to file a case with the Police, later the family settled with compensation for treatment from her husband. Earlier the case had been closed by the Police after the accused had camouflaged it to be an attempt of suicide by the victim. However, with the active involvement of the FCC and the media the case was re-opened and some justice had been done to the hapless victim's family.

Yet in another case the victim was not as lucky and she died. The accused were so influential that the Police refused to register the case, as according to them it was a suicide case. The FCC took up the case after going through the Newspaper reports and helped the victim's family to re-open the case. The counsellors relentlessly helped the victim's family and put pressure on the Police. They provided legal support for fighting the case in the court. The FCC also involved National Women Commission and the Human Rights Commission for further support. Finally the FCC helped the victim's family in conviction of the culprits.

Extra Marital Affairs were reported by 22 per cent of the clients. In this regards a case dealt by FCC Sabla was worth mentioning. The client was working as an Asha Bahu in her village. Her husband was a drug addict and alcoholic. He was very doubtful about his wife's character as she went out for work. Due to this he always tortured his wife physically and mentally. The case was successfully handled by the FCC and helped the client.

A case of abuse was reported by a girl in the FCC at Raibareilly. Her step father made sexual advances at her with the consent of her real mother. Further, they both wanted to use her to earn money for them. In this case the FCC played a proactive role in protecting her interests and arranged her marriage.

Yet in another sexual harassment case a young women registered a case against her father-in-law. As her father-in-law was making advances and was on the lookout for exploiting her sexually. It was interesting to note that her husband was impotent and the accused was fully aware of this fact. The girl approached the FCC and they helped her obtain divorce from her husband.

In another case of extra marital affair, a man who was already married, had sexual relations with a girl who was his neighbor. This relation continued for quite a while and

the client got pregnant. After the girl had disclosed the facts to her parents, the parents wanted to marry off the girl with the same person as it was a practical solution which they could see at that point of time. However, the man refused to marry the girl under the pressure from his wife. Then the parents of the girl approached the FCC for help. The FCC helped her by providing legal and Police support as the man's parents and father-in-law were opposed to the second marriage. Later, a compromise formula was worked out by counsellors of the FCC involving all the parties concerned and got the girl married off to him, thus making her his second wife. Presently she has been leading a normal life with three children. In fact, it may not sound to be an ideal settlement for the problem but the client was saved from further exploitation by the family and the community.

A client aged around 33 years registered a complaint at FCC of neglect against her husband. She got married to this man when she was 16 years. It was an arranged marriage between two cousins as they were Muslims. She never liked this person right from her childhood however, due to some family compulsions she got married to him. She reportedly had two grown up children but her married life was troublesome. This couple did not have trust in each other as a result there were spates of allegations and counter allegations against each other's character. At one occasion the client took oath on religious book and proclaimed that she would never have any physical relations in life with him owing to his allegations on her character. A long period of five years had passed by since she took this oath and still was up with this rigid stand. Her husband tried to compromise on many issues and took help of her own relatives to persuade her to come out of that rigid stand but all his efforts went in vain. Finally, he cut off his relations with her although they were living under the same roof with children. The case was not yet closed and the FCC was still working with this couple and trying hard to work out a suitable compromise to save the family from breaking.

A girl aged around 17 years had friendly relations with her neighbor aged 22 years. The relation got so intimate that he eloped with her and went to an undisclosed location. He lived with this girl for about 3 – 4 months and left her when he came to know that she was pregnant. Her parents persuaded the boy to marry her but he did not agree to it. Then her parents registered a case with FCC against the boy. The counsellor summoned the boy to the FCC for consultations however, he refused to appear. Then the FCC registered a case with the local Police of elopement of minor girl against the boy. Fearing serious repercussions the boy and his family met the counsellor of the FCC. Then a meeting was fixed for both the parties at the FCC to work out a compromise formula. After a series of consultations and counselling sessions the boy agreed to marry the girl. The marriage was solemnized and presently the couple is living together and has a child **(Please see chapter 6 for case studies in detail).**

Chapter VI

Case Studies

Case No. 1

A client aged 49 years was married to an army officer for 30 years. Post marriage the couple lived together for four and a half years. The couple had three children. In order to ensure quality education for the three children the family decided that the children along with their mother live in Kullu. It was a smooth life the children grew up and the eldest daughter got married. After fifteen years the client's husband took Voluntary Retirement from army, and joined a college as a lecturer which was located near Kullu and lived with family. However, soon after the client began finding it difficult to live with Mr. X as Mr. X was a heavy drinker and his morning started with a glass of whisky. Besides his alcoholism his general behaviour was a cause of concern for the family. He used foul language, compounded with excessive demand for sex. Day by day the situation began getting from bad to worse. The client shared her problems with her close relatives but nobody helped her. The client and her daughter were fed up with quarrels which became a daily affair. Soon some of her distant relatives told her about the FCC, presuming that it might help her in a way.

The client visited the FCC and shared her problems with the counsellor. She had reached a point where she was willing to share the same house, living on separate floors, while managing a common kitchen, but could not have any physical relations with her husband.

The counsellor had a series of sessions with her and gave her psychological support and helped her to develop confidence in herself. Then the counsellor contacted Mr. X and invited him to the FCC. When Mr. X learned that his wife had approached the FCC with a grievance against him, he was stunned as he had never imagined that his wife would go out of the house and discuss intimate family problems with strangers. The counsellor spoke to him and tried to explain how his behaviour had caused his wife severe emotional problems and affected her mental make up to her detriment. To his credit Mr. X listened patiently to the counsellor and shared his points of view.

The counsellor made several home visits and tried her level best to bring the couple to a compromise. She regularly counselled both of them in several counselling sessions. With the passage of time there was marked improvement in Mr. X's behaviour, he realized his excesses overbearing behaviour and compared them with sacrifices made by his wife in bringing up his children single handedly. Fortunately the efforts of the counsellor bore fruit and the couple resolved their differences and agreed to live together.

In this case the FCC played a very crucial role in bringing the couple to a compromise and thus saved a 30 years old marriage which was about to break due to severe differences, incompatibility and lack of communication.

Case No. 2

A client, 35 years old was happily living with his wife along with his four children. Suddenly one day his wife developed fever and died. His old mother was worried about his children as to who would look after them as they were very small. Six months after the death of his wife, his mother began pressurizing her son to remarry. The mother had already chosen a girl, who she hoped would look after his children and home. For the sake of children the client agreed and got married to Ms. X. Everything seemed to be alright for few days but later on Mrs. 'X' went back to her parental house. After a fortnight, the client went to his wife's house but Mrs. X refused to accompany him and said that she would come later after a week or so at the end of the week when the client went to his wife's house she refused to return to the house and demanded two thousand rupees. The client came back alone, but a few days later a policeman came to the client's house and told his mother that Mrs. X had filed a case under section 498 (A), against the whole family. Later the family was called by the Thana In-charge where they were treated like offenders at the Police station, they kept trying to convince the Thana In-charge of their innocence but to no avail.

The whole episode was informed to client's relatives. His mother was very worried about him. Some of his relatives informed his mother about the FCC. Without wasting any time she rushed to FCC 'Suraksha'. In Suraksha she told everything to the counsellor and showed the copy of FIR, in which section 498 (A) and 504 were mentioned. The secretary of the organization after hearing the entire story directed her counsellor to send a letter to the Superintendent of Police and Director General of Police. Later the secretary went to Mrs. X's house to ascertain the real facts and requested her to come to the FCC. She accepted and came to the FCC with her sister-in-law. When the counsellor asked her why she had lodged FIR against her husband, she said that while she was living with her husband (the client), she was completely ignored by him as if she was not his wife. She felt that she was there to look after his four children (from first wife) and do the household work. He was always busy with his work and after that with his children. He gave her no time and attention. Sometime he did not even try to find out if she had eaten or not. After listening to her the counsellor called the client and spoke to him. Later she had separate sessions with both the parties. The client realized his wrong doings. Later a joint session was arranged where intensive interaction took place between the couple. Both of them were told that the problem was not as serious that one should go for lodging an FIR.

Finally, with the efforts of the FCC, in the presence of the Thana In-charge and the counsellor a 'Sulah Samjotha' was made between the two parties and the couple got reunited. A happy ending!

Case No. 3

An 18 year old girl (the client) was married to a businessman. On the reception night when she was with her husband, the couple heard very loud shouting. The client immediately opened the door. She saw his sister-in-law (husband's Bhabhi) was standing at door. She (Bhabhi) started shouting at her husband. Then he (her husband) went out from the room along with his Bhabhi. Another night the client woke up at mid night and found that her husband was not in the room. She kept on waiting for him, after about two hours or so her husband came back. When she asked him about where he was, he said that he was in the toilet. A number of nights passed like this. One night again she found that her husband was not sleeping in the room. That night she started searching for him. When she was passing through his sister-in-laws room she heard some whispers, it was the voice of her husband, then she stepped in the room and was shocked as she found her husband with his sister-in-law in a compromising position. She started crying then her husband came out of the room but his sister-in-law scolded her and said that if she disclosed incident to anyone she would ruin her life completely. The client was very afraid and upset. When confronted, her husband accepted his relations with his sister-in-law but he said that soon he would stop this relationship.

The client thought that she would change her husband by giving him true love and care. But instead of stopping the relationship his sister-in-law started harassing the client. The situation was deteriorating daily and the two continued with the relationship. Later, her husband also started harassing and abusing her. As a result, the client was both physically and mentally shattered. Her health began deteriorating and she became a patient of low blood pressure and depression. But she never discussed her problems with anyone. However, in one of her visits to her parents home her parents could gauge that something was wrong somewhere with her. They insisted that she tell them the truth as they sensed something a miss the truth. The family members were shocked when she disclosed the whole facts to her parents. They wanted to speak with their son-in-law but he refused. In the meantime, they got to know about the FCC and contacted them for help. After registering the case with the FCC her husband was called. In the interview her husband pointed out many negative things about the client. He alleged that his wife's character was of doubtful, besides being a jealous person.

Several consultations later with the counsellors, the client and her family decided to go for divorce, as neither was the husband's position improving, nor was any solution forthcoming. This marriage headed for divorce.

Case No. 4

A 19 year old girl was brought to FCC run by Sabla , a voluntary organization by Mr. X. He told the In-charge of FCC that he found the girl near Shahid Smarak, in

Lucknow. He got to know about FCC and Short Stay Home through his neighbours. A case was promptly registered. The girl was very afraid to reveal her real identity, and gave a fictitious name. The FCC informed the details of the case to Thana In-charge. In the police station her fictitious name was matched with a missing girl report that was already registered. Following that report Police informed the concerned person who had filed missing girl report. He came and after seeing the girl he said, she was not the one who had gone missing but he knew the father of this girl. He also revealed that her name was Ms. X, and she belonged to a Muslim family and they resided in his village. Next day when the counsellor of FCC had a session with her, she disclosed the facts that her step father was troubling her with the consent of her real mother. They even planned to use her to earn money. After learning about it she ran away from home she revealed. The following day, her mother came to the FCC to take her back but the client refused to go with her. She told the counsellor that she wanted to go to school for studies but her mother never allowed. After few days her mother came again to the FCC along with her husband (the girl's step father). Yet again the girl refused to go to her home and kept crying saying that these so called parents would spoil her life. She expressed her desire to stay back in the Short Stay Home and continue her studies. Accordingly, the FCC provided her books for 9th standard and she was given training in stitching and embroidery also.

In due course of time she expressed her desire to get married to a boy whom she liked and he used to help her whenever she had problem at her home. She said she would marry him only if he was willing. Then the counsellor called that boy and talked to him. He was willing but his parents had reservations. After a few counselling sessions with his parents they finally said 'yes' to this marriage. The date of marriage was fixed the 'Baraat' came to FCC, the client was given clothes, jewellery and many other things by the organization as is the practice for any marriage. The formalities of 'Nikah' were done by 'Hafiz ji', in the presence of the press, electronic media and members of the voluntary organization.

After a few days of her marriage she visited the FCC along with her husband and met the counsellor and other workers of the organization with whom she spent her days. She told them that she was very happy with her husband and his family.

Case No. 5

A client, handsome boy of 27 years, after completing his graduation started working in a private company as a manager and was drawing a good salary package. He got married and for about two years they lived happily. But later, on account of minor squabbles the client's wife went back to her parents house and refused to come back to her husband.

So he decided to take help from a professional agency and registered a case with FCC – CBCID. He reported that his father-in-law was not sending his wife back although he tried several times but failed. After interacting with the client the counsellor decided to call the 2nd party for discussion. After discussion with both the parties some facts surfaced which were as follows:

According to his wife, her husband (the client) never had any problem with regard to her visits to her father's house but her father always wanted that she accompanied her husband (the client) whenever she visited him as he was staunch believer in traditions. Further, it was revealed that her father was a very short tempered man and even after marriage, he interfered in every matter pertaining to the couple and involved in decision making on behalf of his daughter.

After discussion with both the parties it was found that the only dispute among them was his wife's inclination towards her parents particularly her father. Furthermore, his wife was also not very much comfortable in her In-laws house and there were some adjustment problems.

Interestingly, the findings of the discussion which took place between the counsellor and the client revealed that he had no problems with his wife and he loved her. He wanted to settle the case so that he could lead a peaceful life.

Although the reasons narrated were very trivial in nature but because of the same the family was at the juncture of divorce. Considering all the facts and by listening to both the parties, the counsellor took several sessions with the client's father-in-law and wife.

The counsellor reasoned out with his father-in-law as to how his little interferences were creating disturbances in his daughter's married life, in case these continued it might be very difficult for her to adjust. He was further told that he needed to take view on this and take a decision. At the same time the counsellor also had a detailed session with the client's wife and facilitated her to analyze pros. & cons. of the matter and take a decision as to how to balance her relations.

After several sittings with both father and daughter, things started falling in place for the young couple. Finally a 'Sullah-nama' was worked out between the parties. Presently the couples were well settled and happy. The counsellor continues to contact the couple as a follow up measure, from time to time.

Case No. 6

A client aged 27 years was having a retail shop in a market, in Lucknow. He got married to a 25 years old girl. The whole family was happy and lived together for one and

a half year without any dispute. When she was reported pregnant some traditional but difficult conditions were imposed on her. Her movements were restricted as she was not allowed to go to her parent's home because she had to cross a river, which was thought to be inauspicious during pregnancy.

In the intervening time, she gave birth to a baby boy. Since the client's mother was a traditional lady, was always worried about the little boy and even sometimes she over reacted on petty issues. Most of the times the client's wife tried to avoid confrontation but slowly things started getting bad to worse. It was more than a year since she last saw her parents, so she requested her mother-in-law for a permission to visit them. The plea was accepted and she was told to call her parents along with whom she could go. Accordingly, she informed her parents and on the given date and time they came to take their daughter. As when they were about to leave, her mother-in-law surprised everyone when she ordered her daughter-in-law to leave her baby behind and go alone. This was a big shock for everyone and embarrassing situation for her. Everyone present at the home tried to convince her mother-in-law but she was not ready to hear a word on this issue. Finally, Police was called and after its intervention she was able to take her baby along.

Due to this episode she was afraid to come back to her husband's home. Although the client tried his best to get his son and wife back but her parents did not allow her to go with him. After four and a half years of long struggle with no results in hand, the client finally registered a case at FCC – CBCID.

After taking the case history from the client the counsellor immediately called the 2nd party at the FCC to get acquainted with the facts in detail. After analyzing the disclosures of both the parties the counsellors came to a conclusion that the two families were engaged in disputes over petty issues. The counsellors held intensive counselling sessions for both the parties separately and prepared them to come to a common platform for discussions and clarify each others doubts and misconceptions.

After several sittings and rigorous counselling, everyone realized their mistakes and finally agreed upon to allow the couple to live on their own with no interference from either side.

Case No. 7

A client aged 29 years registered a case with FCC against her husband. She stated that immediately after the marriage she was shocked to know some facts about her husband, that he was only 6th standard pass whereas it was understood that he had completed his class twelve, further the family was told that he had his own General Merchant Shop but the actual fact was that he was working in his father's shop. He was totally dependent on his father and he had no say in the family. Although her mother-in-

law and sister-in-law were very cooperative but her father-in-law was a very different person.

One morning when her husband was out and her mother-in-law was busy with prayers her father-in-law tried to sexually abuse her but somehow she managed to escape. Her father-in-law told her that if she wanted to live in his house, she had to accept whatever he asked to do. She told this incident to her husband but since he was fully controlled by his father he did not take heed. Then she told this incident to her mother-in-law. Since she was a very sensitive person she immediately called the client's father to take her back home, with her 5 year old son.

The FCC called her husband along with his family and discussed the case in length. It was found that her husband was not able to take care of her and he was also incapable to earn money and protect her interests. After many sittings and consultations with the counsellor the client decided to opt for a divorce.

She filed a case in court and got divorce from her husband. She also got all her money and other articles from her in-laws.

Case No. 8

A client aged 25 years was married to a young boy in the same town. Her parents tried their level best to arrange a good marriage and were happy that they had secured their daughter's future after solemnizing her marriage. Her dreams of a happy and contented married life were shattered when after 3 – 4 months, the client's in-laws started demanding more from her parents. They asked her to bring some money from her parents so that her husband could establish a general store. She was reluctant for this as she knew that her parents had done whatever was possible for them.

Soon their demands and harassment became louder and bolder. Her in-laws started teasing and abusing her and at times physically tortured her too. She always tried to cover up these happenings as she was worried about her parents that as soon as they would know her situation they would get disturbed. She also believed that the situation would normalize in due course of time and she started all efforts to adjust. But she was wrong and the situation went bad to worse. As the days passed, her in-laws started harassing her more and nobody talked to her at home.

Things were getting worse for her day by day. After a few months she came to her parent's house to stay. But she never told anything to them, but during her stay at parent's house she tried to contact her in-laws on phone a number of times but they always ignored her and never responded. Months passed by but nobody came to take her back, with the result she slipped into a cycle of severe depression.

When her parents put pressure on her to disclose the facts then she revealed the entire story and the facts. After getting acquainted with the facts and the plight of their daughter they registered a case with FCC. The counsellor at FCC tried to call the second party but they never responded. Then with the help of FCC the case was registered in Women cell at a Police station. The client's in-laws were arrested under the Dowry Prohibition Act but since they were resourceful and were soon got out of the jail.

At the other end the counsellors of FCC played a very effective role in pulling client out of deep depression. She got divorced from her husband. The FCC also exerted pressure and helped her in retrieving her belongings and gifts which she had been given in marriage. Further FCC facilitated her to get job as Anganwadi worker and a part time computer operator in the town. There after she has been living life afresh.

Case No. 9

The client was married, her husband was working as a manager in a company and most of the time he was on tour. Since the client used to be alone in the house for days when her husband was on tour. One of her husband's cousins often came to their home. Slowly she developed an intimate relations with her husband's cousin. As soon as her husband was on tour she would call his cousin and spend time with him.

One day her husband came back from his tour without informing her and caught his cousin in the house in an objectionable situation. He was shocked to see this and he beat her black and blue. After this incident, she filed a case against her husband at FCC of domestic violence. The counsellor called her husband for discussion. When he revealed the incident to the counsellor she realized that this was a case of an extra marital affairs rather than that of a domestic violence as was reported by the client. Later the counsellors of the FCC started taking sessions with both the parties separately. The client's husband was very upset as he felt that his wife had cheated him and betrayed his trust. He told the counsellor that he did not want to live with his wife. The counsellor tried to reason out with the couple and made them realize the adverse affects of separation/divorce.

The counsellor also took separate sessions with the client and made her realize as to how this irresponsible behaviour would ruin her life. After a few counselling sessions, the client realized that she had made a big mistake, and was ashamed of herself and the repercussions it would have on their children's future if her husband decided to divorce her.

After few sessions they both realized their mistakes and client promised not to breach the trust of her husband and her husband too agreed to forgive her simply for the sake of their children's future. Due to this incidence the warmth in their relations had reduced to great extent but they were still united and started their life afresh.

Case No. 10

A client aged 18 years was married to a boy in a nearby village. The boy was totally dependent on farming and had no other means of income. When the client faced financial hardships she applied for “Asha Bahu” and she got the job. She was happy to help the women in her village and earn some money as well. Her husband on the other hand was not doing any job and whenever he got money from sale of agricultural produce he used the money for liquor daily and ate outside and never gave any money to his wife. As a result of this the financial situation of the family began to deteriorate.

Further, her husband doubted her character whenever she was out to work with the people in the village. Due to her job’s demand she sometimes visited families in the evening or any odd time. This led to frequent quarrels between wife and husband, sometimes he even physical assault her. He always criticized his wife in front of her co-workers and his friends and relatives regarding her job timings and was abusive. One day after consuming liquor he assaulted the client and dragged her and children out of his house. She found herself alone and helpless and one of her co-workers took her over to FCC for help.

There she registered a case of domestic violence with the FCC. The counsellor called her husband and discussed the case at length. She took many sessions with him and warned that if he did not mend his ways and neglected his wife and children then he would be in trouble. After many lengthy counselling sessions and lot of motivation her husband got convinced and finally decided to take his wife and children back home. This way the FCC played a proactive role in saving the family from a split.

Case No. 11

A woman was harassed for ‘dowry’ soon after her marriage. Her in-laws started demanding money to set up a shop for their son. When their demands were not fulfilled then the whole family started torturing her mentally as well as physically. The situation became worse when they forced her to do each and every household work during her pregnancy. Her husband started pressurizing her by saying that he will go for another marriage, if she did not bring the demanded money. Later, her in-laws including her husband sent her forcefully back to her parent’s house.

After coming back to her house she told the whole story to her parents then they tried to convince her in-laws but they refused to budge and did not consider anything less than the demanded money. Finally the client’s father lodged an FIR against her in-laws but to their shock the Police was indifferent and favoured her in-laws family. In the mean time they came to know about FCC after going through an advertisement published in the helpline column of the newspaper. The FCC took up the case and summoned the second

party and had intensive counselling sessions for the client's in-laws and husband. The counsellors explained to the family the repercussions if they were booked under Dowry Prohibition Act. After regular follow ups of the case the FCC succeeded in motivating the in-laws and husband to recall the client into their family and gave opportunity to the client and her husband to start their life a fresh.

Chapter VII

Conclusions and Recommendations

The present chapter attempts to summarize the broad conclusions which have emerged in the study. Based on these conclusions, the chapter also presents recommendations, which are based on the intensive study of 11 Family Counselling Centres being run by voluntary organizations across six states of Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. Although the sample of the study was small but the intensive coverage of FCCs makes it all the more important. It is hoped that the conclusions and recommendations of the study will be of relevance for the effective implementation of the FCC scheme.

The Scheme

The scheme of Family Counselling Centre (FCC) was initiated by Government of India in 1983, now it is looked after by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. The Central Social Welfare Board is implementing the scheme through voluntary organizations all across the country. At present there are over 800 FCCs operational all over the country. Initially the Central Social Welfare Board spearheaded the campaign for counselling centres by setting up voluntary action bureaus, which subsequently took the shape of Family Counselling Centres. The objectives of the FCC are to provide preventive and rehabilitative services to women and families who are victims of atrocities and family maladjustments through crisis intervention and systematic counselling, besides creating awareness and mobilizing public opinion on social issues affecting status of women.

In a country where in every six hours a young married women is burned alive, beaten to death or driven to commit suicide, 37 per cent married women in the country are victims of physical or sexual abuse by their husbands coupled with insensitive judiciary and Police the usefulness or relevance of the scheme of FCC is a foregone conclusion. Further, the responses of innumerable clients who felt after coming to FCC that they came to a 'right place' is reason enough to say that the services provided at FCC are invaluable. The clients not only got psychological support, legal advice, self reliance but also the FCCs exerted pressure on the Police to register cases where the victims were denied their rights. At places FCCs with the help of media opened up otherwise closed criminal cases to provide support to victims of dowry and domestic violence. The above mentioned facts prove that the scheme is no doubt very useful in providing support to victims of domestic violence and offering a level playing ground to aggrieved parties to settle their disputes to save families from breaking up. There were a number of families which were at logger heads on flimsy grounds and had snapped communication were brought to a common platform to sort out difference by FCCs.

FCCs in Police Headquarters and Jail Premises

The study revealed that not only the regular FCCs but also those located in Police headquarters and jail premises were rendering services very effectively. Infact, the responses for the FCCs located in police headquarter were observed to be very prompt as summoning of 2nd party for consultations could be done with ease as the Police tag was attached with it. It was also found that the FCCs run in women jail premises were very useful as support provided by counsellors to the inmates cannot be underestimated. It was found that as soon as the women prisoners entered the jail they were completely cut off from their near and dear ones and as the days passed in the jail they got into the cycle of depression and the same was expressed in the form of aggression. Here the counsellors were found to be very effective in bridging the gap between women prisoners and their families by providing necessary support in the form of counselling, legal aid, arranging meeting with family members particularly children for whom they were often worried about. These inputs may look very trivial for outside world but are invaluable to the female inmates and mean a great deal to them.

Physical Infrastructure

As regards the condition of buildings where the FCCs were housed, it was observed that almost all the buildings were 'fairly good' as well as some building were 'very good and well maintained' with adequate ventilation and good lighting facilities with pacca construction. All the surveyed FCCs had sign boards at appropriate places, which helped in locating them with ease. As far as the availability of the furniture/furnishings in the FCCs is concerned, majority of the FCCs were having chairs, tables, almirahs, fans, type writer, computers, telephone, fax, e-mail, books on counselling and books related to law. Very few FCCs were deprived of modern facilities like computer, e-mail, fax and library.

It was also observed that almost fifty per cent of the FCCs had earmarked two rooms for work related to FCC as one room was used for administrative purpose of the FCCs with tables and chairs and the second one was utilized for counselling.

The counsellors at the FCCs

It was revealed that majority 55 per cent of the organizations were running FCCs between 6 – 15 years followed by 27 per cent organizations which were running these for more than 15 years. It shows that all the sample FCCs had very rich experience of handling cases of marital disputes.

Almost all the FCCs were having two counsellors and all the counsellors of the surveyed FCCs were qualified as per the norms set by Central Social Welfare Board. i.e. they were holding Masters Degree either in Psychology or in Social Work/Sociology.

About three fourth of the sample heads of organizations said that their counsellors were not having any experience regarding counselling at the time of joining while the rest had some experience. It was interesting to note that most of the counsellors had attended orientation training on counselling organized by Central Social Welfare Board.

As regards the percentage of solved cases at the FCC the organizational heads were of the view that 80 per cent cases were solved by them every year. On an average every FCC received around 25 – 30 cases per year and it was observed that reporting of cases at FCC largely depended on the kind of ground work carried out by the organization in terms of advocacy. The findings of the study revealed that majority of the organizations were conducting advocacy programmes for FCC through Mohalla meetings (monthly), awareness camps, advertisement in newspapers, and local cable T.V., distributing posters and pamphlets etc.

The study has pointed out that majority of the cases registered with the FCC received counselling services, referrals, free legal aid etc. Further, the FCCs were able to facilitate in settling down family disputes and helped in reintegration of families which were otherwise on the verge of collapse. The cases given in chapter 5 and 6 are the testimony to the above.

Advocacy

It is quite disappointing that though of late the media has been proactive and a number of safeguards are in place to protect women yet a majority of the interviewed clients hardly had any knowledge of laws and its provisions. To add insult to injury, in rural areas significant women believed rather made to believe that wife beating was justified. In this context it is suggested that the awareness generation programmes of FCC should address these issues rigorously and some financial provisions have to be made in the schematic budget for organizing these.

Services of Lawyer

It was also observed that in most of the cases both in regular FCCs as well as FCCs in jail premises the clients were so poor that they could hardly afford to pay for their lawyers. The situation of some inmates in jails was pathetic as on one hand there was rampant illiteracy among them and on the other their families disowned them completely due to stigma. There was hardly anybody to take up their cause. Infact, in such cases the counsellors took up some of the very deserving cases through free legal aid or by requesting local lawyers to take up these cases free of cost. But this luxury could not be availed to all the deserving inmates. In this context it is recommended that

the schematic budget should have a budgetary provision for services of a lawyer under which a minimum fee could be paid for taking up cases in the court for bail etc.

Release of Grant

Majority of the NGO heads expressed difficulties on account of late release of grants for project implementation. It was observed that a number of organizations had to wait at the minimum of six months from the beginning of the financial year to receive their first installment of the grant. To add to their woes even issuance of sanctioned letter for continuation of the FCC was also considerably delayed in almost all cases. It is therefore, recommended that utmost attention be paid to timely release of grants as also requisite sanction for continuation of FCCs preferably between April and May (beginning of financial year), so that there was no break in rendering services at the FCCs. Further, this kind of arrangement would also help in arresting massive turnover of trained and experienced counsellors. It may be mentioned that in majority of the FCCs surveyed, the honorarium to counsellors was being paid once in six months and this was the main factor which played a significant role for the heavy turnover of staff at the FCCs.

Budgetary Provisions

A lot of discontentment was seen among NGO heads over low budgetary provisions of the scheme. Infact, almost all the heads reiterated that a grant of Rs.1,92,000/- per FCC is too meagre to run it effectively. They mentioned that the contingency amount is Rs.60,000/- which covers expenses like; honorarium to clerk or any office staff/ peon/sweeper, rent for the building, electricity, stationery, telephone, postage, Travelling Allowance to counsellors for making home visits, at times nominal fee to lawyer etc. They questioned, whether all these expenditures could be met from the paltry amount earmarked as contingency. In this regard they pleaded for an immediate increase in overall budgetary provisions of the scheme. Notably this kind of problem is seen in many of the schemes as when these were launched the provisions appeared to be perfect, however in course time they lose the value due to ever increasing price index perhaps. In this context, it is recommended that there should be a mechanism of review of budgetary provisions every two years which could help in updating various budgetary provisions with the price index.

Honorarium to Counsellors

A lot of discontentment was also seen among the counsellors working with FCCs over the amount of honorarium paid to them as it did not match up with their qualifications. It may be mentioned that the Central Social Welfare Board has prescribed Masters Degree in Social Work and Psychology for the post of counsellors in FCCs, which is no doubt a basic and essential educational qualification for technical job of counselling. However, the honorarium prescribed for the post of counsellor i.e.

Rs.7,000/- (A class city) and Rs.5,500/- (B class city) per month is no doubt paltry by any standard. In this context, it is recommended that an immediate review may be done to increase the honorarium for counsellors, which should commensurate with their qualifications and the price index. Further, it is suggested that the amount of honorarium to counsellors should be based on number of years of experience (service in the FCC), which may be divided into slab of 5 years,10 years,15 years and so on. This would help in giving weightage to senior counsellors.

Almost all the counsellors had suggested that categorization of honorarium on the basis of city as being done presently should be done away with, rather the slab of honorarium may be linked with experience and educational qualifications. They further suggested that the Central Social Welfare Board should create some provision for social security measures for the welfare of the counsellors of FCC in the form of insurance, provident fund etc.

Linkages and Resource Mapping

The FCCs are required to work in close collaboration with the local administration, Police, free legal aid cells, medical and psychiatric institutions, vocational training centres, short stay homes etc. However, the study revealed that some of the surveyed FCCs have not developed suitable linkages with the above institutions. It is therefore recommended that efforts should be made by the FCCs to strengthen these linkages which will help the clients visiting the FCCs to take maximum possible help. Further, it is suggested that efforts should also be made to map the resources available in the districts where FCCs are operating. This resource directory would help to refer the clients to appropriate places for availing services. There is also a need to linking up FCCs with the protection of women from domestic violence Act (PWDVA).

Capacity Building of Counsellors

It was observed that barring a few counsellors, a majority of them had knowledge gap on counselling skills, laws related to women, personal laws related to different religious communities etc. It is therefore, recommended that the concerned State Social Welfare Boards make suitable arrangements for regular orientation/ refresher training for the counsellors on the subjects mentioned. Further, it is suggested that there should also be Annual Meets or Symposia for the counsellors at national level where they could share their cases, best practices and views and learn from sharing of experiences of one another.

The study revealed that almost all the FCCs surveyed were devoid of publicity or IEC material on issues related to women and legal safe guards. Therefore, there is a need to develop subject specific IEC materials for advocacy. Besides, it is further suggested that the Central Social Welfare Board may if deemed fit could publish the successful case

studies of solved cases as there were a variety of cases handled by different FCCs. This sharing of information would not only help the counsellors but also all the stake holders working on women issues.

Although the findings are based on a small sample but it gives a fairly good understanding on the functioning of FCCs in general, type of cases reported, technical manpower available with these institutions, advocacy work carried out, kind of problems being faced by the counsellors and the NGO heads in implementation of the scheme and it identifies areas which needed strengthening for the effective organization of services at the FCCs. Finally, there is a lot of scope of further research in the area after all the subject deals with family, which is a backbone of any society.

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