

UNDERSTANDING SPECIALIZED ADOPTION AGENCY IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY ON THE ROLE AND EMERGING REALITIES

Gopi Basar^{1*} and Sarit K Chaudhuri²

¹Ph.D. Scholar, Dept. of Anthropology, Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh.

²Professor & Head, Dept. Anthropology, Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh.

*Corresponding author's E-mail id: gopi.basar@gmail.com

Article History

Received : 6 April 2021

Revised : 12 April 2021

Accepted : 27 April 2021

Published : 18 August 2021

Keywords

Specialized adoption agency,
Child Welfare Committee,
Adoption, Prospective parents.

Abstract: The present paper is an attempt to understand the conceptual meaning of Orphanage and Specialized adoption agency. Orphanage and Specialized adoption agency are two distinct places working with different objectives. Orphanages, now under a new law Juvenile Justice Act are called Children's Home. The Children's Homes are places where they can provide care and protection to a child who needs them. These could be taking care of orphans. Even if a child has lost his/her parents but may have extended family that is unable / unwilling to provide the needed care and protection to the child may get shelter in the Child's home. As long as the child has a family of some sort although the family is unable to care, the child is not free for adoption. In the context of Arunachal Pradesh this paper deals with various issues and underscore the emerging realities of a tribal-state and their cooperation with the initiatives by the Central and State government for giving a secure life to orphan children's.

Introduction

Child-rearing and development are very important in every society. Adoption provides a very important function to those children who lost both their parents and couples who don't have a biological child. In both cases, the child also gets the family environment and the married couple gets the opportunity to rare a child. Earlier it was restricted within the family and sometimes it was taken as taboo also but now it is spoken freely in society. Now adoption is beyond the contour of family, it has been institutionalized and legalized.

To cite this article

Gopi Basar & Sarit K Chaudhuri. (2021). Understanding Specialized Adoption Agency in Arunachal Pradesh: An Anthropological Study on the Role and Emerging Realities. *Man, Environment and Society*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 75-88

In 1928 Margaret Mead published the result of her Samoan fieldwork with adolescent girls as a book, *Coming of Age in Samoa*. Ruth Benedict's, *Pattern of culture* (1948) shows the relationship between culture and child development. Thus the studies on childhood or children are not a new concept. Anthropologist and child development researcher has described and interpreted childhood experiences. There has been an emerging plethora of research pertaining to the issue of orphan, orphanages and adoption in anthropology in the global context. This tale of another way of life is mainly concerned with education, with the process by which the baby, arrived cultureless upon the human scene, becomes a full-fledged adult member of his or her society (Mead, 1938: 13).

Restitution may be carried out in mourning situations in ways that are less uncongenial to the standards of Western civilization. Among certain of the Central Algonkian Indians south of the Great Lakes the usual procedure was adoption. Upon the death of a child, a similar child was put into his place. The similarity was determined in all sorts of ways: often a captive brought in from a raid was taken into the family in the full sense and given all the privileges and the tenderness that had originally been given to the dead child. Or quite as often it was the child's closest playmate or a child from another related settlement who resembled the dead child in height and features. In such cases, the family from which the child was chosen was supposed to be pleased (Benedict, 1948: 220). Recent developments in education and the social sciences have seen the growth of childhood studies as an academic field of enquiry. Over the last decade or so childhood study has become a recognized area of research and analysis, reflected in the success of publications such as James and Prout (1997) *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood: Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood* and Stainton Rogers and Stainton Rogers (1992) *Stories of Childhood: Shifting Agendas of Child Concern*. A growing body of literature points to the importance of childhood as a conceptual category and as a social position for the study of a previously overlooked or marginalized group – children. Childhood studies as a field of academic endeavour offer the potential for interdisciplinary research that can contribute to an emergent paradigm wherein new ways of looking at children can be researched and theorized (Kehily, 2009: 1). The emerging anthropology of children and childhoods must of necessity take into account the rights of children as set forth in the UN Convention on rights of the child. The UNRC was a pivotal event, not only in the development of policies for children but also in terms of scholarship. In its basic form, the convention includes three interlocking principles: protection, provision and participation (Langner and Korbin, 2007: 241). Anthropologists have generally preferred not to define childhood as having chronological limits, or biological boundaries, which are important in certain cases. They have further argued that the international legal definition of a child as anyone under the age of 18 is a bureaucratic imposition that has limited applicability to many children.

Although all societies acknowledge that children are different from adults and have different roles and expectations placed on them, ethnographic evidence suggests a great diversity in definitions of, and ideas about, childhood. Furthermore, childhood is heterogeneous and gender, age, birth order and ethnicity all have an impact on definitions and experiences of childhood (Monia, 2020: 1-2). Child development is an area of study devoted to understanding constancy and change from conception through adolescence. Child development is part of a larger, interdisciplinary field known as developmental science, which includes all changes we experience throughout the lifespan (Monia, 2020: 1-2). International conventions and domestic adoption laws in Euro-American nations regulate the construction of adoptive families through a series of legal functions. The most significant of these is the principle of the legal clean breaks, which cancels a child's ties to pre-adoptive kin and incorporates him or her into the adoptive family (and adoptive nation) "as if s/he were family's (the nation's) "own" (Yngvesson, 2007: 561). In this book, I call for a reorientation of how we understand the history and persistence of Korean adoption by taking into consideration the geopolitical, socioeconomic, and cultural conditions of the Cold War era. Specifically, I situate Korean adoption and the subject formations of the Korean orphan and Korean adoptee within the following contexts: U.S. militarism, Cold War Orientalism, and white heteronormative kinship formation (Pate, 2014: 2). The government of India considers adoption to be the best non-institutional support for the rehabilitation of children's. There is no quarrel with adoption as a suitable alternative when biological families are unable to or undesirous of caring for children (Anand and Chandra, 2002: 3891)

The contemporary work by the Anthropologist has shifted to children and now the children are regarded as key actor and anthropologist seeks to document their perspectives on participation in the social world. This approach acknowledges the experiences of children at different level of growth in a different environment. The anthropological studies of childhood also acknowledge the important role of children's in society at all level like social, political and economic. Their role in society is immensely important and they make an active contribution.

The Objective of the Study

An orphan is someone who has lost either or both parents, whose parents are unknown or have permanently abandoned them. The objective of the study is to examine the role of NGOs in highlighting the establishment of orphanages and the process of adoption in Arunachal. The study has also helped in understanding the role of the Central and State Government in administering issues concerning child and their rights in the contemporary world. The study also helped in understanding the process of adoption of orphan children.

Significance and Methods of Study

The proposed study on orphan, orphanage and adoption issues will focus on the notion of orphan constructed among selected tribes, categorization of an orphan in selected tribes, growth of orphan and orphanages in the state, changes in kinship system in tribal society due to adoption and issues concerning child and their rights. Therefore, the significance of the study lies in the fact that orphan is not a new notion as well as adoption also. It has been there in society.

It is evident that till date no formal study has been done in this area by anyone. Henceforth, the study is an attempt to figure out the issues related to the topic. The present work is also important because it will give statistic on the growth of orphanages and the implementation of government policies in the state. Further, this work may form a basis for further works in the same field. The present study is designed to take care of all the related issues with a plan to have extensive visual documentation. Moreover, extensive interviews are taken from key actors of the Oju Welfare Association and some of the individual who adopted children during repetitive fieldwork done between 2018 to 2020. Children's residing in Child Care Institute (CCI) as well in SAA was interviewed. The children's shared their story of rescue and the happiness of staying in the Oju Welfare Association.

The children are getting abandoned for one reason or another is not a contemporary society's issue. It had existed in all societies since the civilization of human being. The only difference is that in earlier time this was not regarded as an important issue. Those times the abandoned children were taken care of by any of the relatives from the mother or fathers side. Their basic necessities were only full field. But today the concern for these children's has shifted and the government along with the society people try to give the best possible life to these children's, and the notion of orphan and adoption is not new to the tribal society. It also exists among various tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. For example, the Galo tribe used the term '*Opean*' for an orphan and address the adopted child as '*No open go boduna*'. Likewise, Nyishi tribe use the term '*Opin*' to denote orphan child and '*Sonam*' for an adopted child. The Apatani address an orphan child as '*Miji*'. In the case of adoption, they use the term of reference '*Ngo miji atu aso du*', which means adopted child. The orphan children were taken care of by the relatives in a family environment. The Sherdukpen call *Nabad nini* an orphan. Among the Monpa's the most appropriate word for an adopted child is '*Soethuk*'. The term used by the community to refer to adoption is *Zer SoSu*. This word is common for both genders. In earlier days the orphan children were shelters in the monastery. These statements show a close connection with the concept of 'Orphans' in the tribal society of Arunachal Pradesh.

Specialized Adoption Agency

Specialized Adoption Agency is a place that exclusively deals with placing an orphan child in adoption. If a child is found abandoned in any public place, the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) of getting in action along with the Police of the concerned jurisdiction and place the child to SAA after going through all the legal procedure. If the biological parents surrender the baby to the authority, then a period of 60 days is given to the parents for reconciliation. Within this period if the parents who had surrendered their child have changed their decision on then they will have to approach the CWC. After the CWC give their consent on the decision then the baby is handed back to them. If the biological parents don't turn up after the period of 60 days, then the baby is put up for referral on the website of CARA for legal adoption. The adoption agency will take the child through several legal steps to declare free for adoption before they actually place them in a home through adoption. At present in Arunachal two organizations has been recognized as Specialized Adoption Agency:

- (i) Oju Welfare Association, Naharlagun, Papum Pare.
- (ii) Nani Maria, Roing, Lower Dibang Valley

Oju Welfare Association: The Oju welfare Association is one of the pioneer organizations of the State of Arunachal Pradesh. The Organization has implemented various welfare activities. There are many activities taken care of by the organization. Its Head Office is at Naharlagun. It was founded in late Smt. Binny Yanga, a lady with a pure soul who had the vision of providing holistic welfare to the people of Arunachal. It was very rare to come up with such noble thought during those days. She materialized her dream through the inception of the Oju Welfare Association in 1979. In the initial days, the organization emphasized more on the significance of education. Gradually it got registered under Section 3 of the society's Registration Act in 1860 with the view of expanding their noble to promote multidimensional welfare. It has introduced the concept of women empowerment in the state and the protection of orphan children. The organization has extended and implemented various welfare activities through campaigning community awareness, vocational training, shelter and adoption to orphans, shelter for runaway children's and distressed women.

The Founder: Smt. Binny Yanga was born in a family of social workers and served needy people. She was engaged in many social activities while assisting her father, the late Bini Jaipu. Her father had served the State as a Political Assistant and was a renowned social activist. She graduated from Banasthali Vidyapeeth, Rajasthan. She joined as an assistant teacher and served under Education Department, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh. She was also among the first ladies to join the 1st batch of lady police under Arunachal Pradesh Police in 1978.

She had received the following Awards:

- (i) Padmashri Award 2012
- (ii) National Tribal Award 2011-12
- (iii) Dr. Durgabai Deshmukh Award for the year 2000, presented by Hon'ble Former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajyapee at New Delhi on 11th September 2001.
- (iv) Cooperative Excellence Award, NCDC presented by Hon'ble Former Union Minister of State for Agriculture on 20th June 2002 in recognition of my dedicated services in the field of Handloom and Handicraft.
- (v) COSIA Entrepreneurship Award 2010 for North Eastern Region presented by Chamber of Small Industry Associations (COSIA).
- (vi) Various other awards in recognition and Certificates of Honor.
- (vii) She also conferred with Degree of Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) by Banastali University, Rajasthan.

She was a unique soul, who took the work for humanity above all and attained the limelight as a prominent dynamic social worker. Late Binny Yanga fought with her incurable disease for 9 long years and on 3rd September 2015, she left for her heavenly abode.

After the demise of Late Binny Yanga, the responsibility of taking the Oju Welfare Association to the next higher level was passed on to her eldest daughter-in-law, Smt. Ratan Anya.

Table 1: The manpower in Oju Welfare Association is as given below

<i>Administrative Officer</i>	<i>Teaching Faculty</i>	<i>Programme staff</i>	<i>Supporting Staff</i>	<i>Physician/Paramedics</i>
09	34	38	18	05

Source: Oju Welfare Association 2020

Specialized Adoption Agency (SAA)–Shishu Greh at Oju: The institution has been providing support to orphan children. The priority of the institution is the placement of a child through adoption which is essential for his/her growth and development. In view of providing an alternative support system in the community in order to provide care and protection to the orphan children the Oju Welfare Association demand for Sishu Greh was established. The Sishu Greh accommodates orphan, surrendered and abandoned children between the age group 0-6 years. There are parents who come to Oju Welfare Association and surrender their child. The reason for the Surrender of a child depends from case to case. In 2015-2016, the Government of India renamed the scheme Sishu

Greh as Special Adoption Agency (SAA). The adoption of the children in the Special Adoption Agency is carried out through the national portal CARING, which is maintained by CARA and the document formalities are completed and maintained by the organization. The Special Adoption Agency is registered with Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA), New Delhi and registered U/s 41 (1) of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. The annual recurring expenditure for running the Orphanage is met from the financial assistance received from Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India, and contributions/ donations raised by the Association.

The procedure followed by Special Adoption Agency: When a referral comes from the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA), within a stipulated time of twenty days the authorities of Oju Mission has to set up an adoption committee and in case there is any problem within that stipulated time then the authority can approach CARA from their end of the prospective parent's side to extend that stipulated time. When a referral comes from CARA, the work of SAA is to get in touch with the prospective parents and inform them and give them details about the child along with the photograph and videos of the child so if the parents are ready to come, then the adoption committee is set up accordingly where the Chairman of Oju Mission is also a member along with other members like Dr. Gomi Basar and a member of the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU). The DCPU (District Child Protection Unit) is under ICDS (Integrated Child Development Services) which is under the Deputy Commissioner of Yupia Papum Pare District, the compulsion for having a member of the DCPU is stated in the guideline of adoption. The Child Protection Officer is the main member for DCPU but if in any case, this particular officer cannot attend the adoption process then in that case DCPU sends their counsellor, case-workers who is available. If the prospective parents are from other states, they will have to come to Arunachal on the given date for adoption which is fixed by the adoption committee. The basic duty of the adoption committee is to foremost check and recheck and cross-check the documents that have been uploaded in CARA so that the baby who will be given for adoption will be given in his/her best interest. Also, if the adoption committee is not satisfied with the record of the prospective parents, then the adoption committee can cancel the adoption process. It is to be noted that doctor is made a part of the whole adoption process is to make sure that the prospective parents are healthy and that they do not have any kind of diseases like HIV or cancer etc.

Foster Care: Once the talk is done and all the formalities are completed in between the prospective parents and the adoption committee then the agreement is done, in this process first of all there is a notion of foster care where it has been clearly mentioned that under this foster care even if the child has been handed over to the prospective parents.

During this period of time, the parents will be under scrutiny so as to check if the parents are really taking care of the child well or not. If the prospective parents are from other states, the counterpart of DCPU along with CWC of that state will visit them and when such visits are made, the prospective parents cannot deny them. During the time of this scrutiny period if SAA at Oju Welfare Association feel that the prospective parents are not taking care of the child well then they can take back the adopted child anytime but on the contrary, if the authorities feel that the prospective parents are indeed taking good care of the child then the step for final and permanent adoption takes place.

Legal Adoption: Once SAA is satisfied with the scrutiny of the parents' care towards the child then they apply in the court for legal adoption for the prospective parents after a period of two months. In this adoption process with the court, the SAA is the co-petitioner plus one has to keep in mind that at least two months is taken by the court for every process. The court sets a date where the prospective parents have to appear in the Court along with the baby, in this process the Court's questions the prospective parents in regards to basic topics like their preparation for taking full responsibility for the child, giving the adopted child the biological rights in the sense that the adopted child has to get equal property rights, education etc. and also in future, it is this child that should take care of the prospective parents which means the responsibility will be equal for both the prospective parents and the child too. The Chairman stated that one should know that the degree of adoption from the court does not come easily, it takes time and the certificate is mostly sent via post. The authorities in charge of adoption have to upload this adoption certificate on the CARA website as well, only after this the full process of adoption is completed.

After the completion of this whole process, the next step for the authority is to produce a birth certificate for the child; the certificate is generated by Municipal Co-operation and then it is uploaded to the CARA website as well give it to the prospective parents too. It is a harsh reality for us that if the procurement of birth certificate of the child is not done at the earliest, the CARA authorities strictly reprimands SAA at Oju Welfare Association about it and even calls up for explanation, so each and every activity in regard to adoption should be submitted online timely to the CARA.

Post Adoption: After the adoption procedure is legally completed the post-adoption follow up is carried out. In the 'Post adoption follow up' the prospective parents are asked by SAA to timely send photographs and videos of the child during birthday celebrations and other activities as well. This is done through technical communication but home visits are practically done by the authorities of the state CWC where the child has been adopted. They will observe the environment in relation to the adopted child from every angle and report it to CARA and if they find any fault in the prospective parents, the child is taken back.

If the prospective parents have been registered as CARINGS by SAA, they will not be eligible until and unless the agency does not write a home report for them, only after the submission of this home report the prospective parents are fully eligible. In the case of Arunachal what happens is actually a sad scenario, the prospective parents make home reports by themselves and upload them on the CARA website without reporting them to SAA that is the Oju Welfare Association, which is solely responsible as an operating body for that report. The actual steps of drawing up a home report is that the social workers appointed by the concerned authority will visit the home of the prospective parents, they will observe that home and its environment too which also includes financial angle because it is given that an individual has to earn well or should be financially sound in order to raise and take care of a child. Also, it might be easy to write up anything in the home report but practically working it out might be different so SAA at Oju Welfare Association needs to be really careful about that too. For instance, a prospective parent should not have any criminal records. Even here, in Arunachal prospective parents approach SAA, Oju Welfare Association with the quarries that they have uploaded their details 2-3 years' age and still no correspondence came from CARA. But when the SAA authorities cross-check such reports, it clearly showed that the home report was uploaded by themselves without our consent and so they are still left ineligible, so how are the SAA at Oju Welfare Association is supposed to know about them when these parents never approached or looked for guidance regarding the home report.

There are also cases when the prospective parents are from Arunachal and have adopted a child from other states, in such cases, three adoption regions are given as options to them and then is proceeded accordingly. Such cases are followed up by the SAA timely where the authorities would physically go and check on the adopted child and the environment of the residence of the prospective parents, but at present, these authorities cannot cover up every case by themselves, for instance, if a child has been adopted by someone in Ziro, it becomes very difficult for the SAA authority to visit them frequently. The reason behind not being able to personally and physically monitor visiting all the areas where adopted children reside is because, in Arunachal, Oju Welfare Association is the only single agency that has to take care of all the issues related to children's Arunachal Pradesh, whereas in Assam there are approximately 30-40 agencies taking care of such issues. There are even 2-3 agencies in a single district like Guwahati.

Regarding the financial issue, the Chairman of the Oju Welfare Association stated that the funding scheme does not meet the basic requirements of a child and the fund received from the Government is extremely old, Rs.1800/- per child and has never been reviewed till date. The Government does not increase the maintenance fee it has been the same amount for the last so many years.

Table 2: List of children at Specialized Adoption Agency (SAA) during 2020-21

<i>Sl. No</i>	<i>Name of Child</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>Admitted on</i>	<i>Date of Birth</i>	<i>Legally free for adoption</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
1	Baby Yaya	F	14/02/2013	17/03/2009	Yes CWC-Adop-1/ITA-11(4)2020/13485	In-Home	Normal
2	Baby Yanyang	F	20/08/2014	04/12/2013	Yes ITA/CCDS/CWC/JJB/11-09	In-Home	Special need Child
3	Baby Jingling	M	21/11/2016	21/11/2016	Yes CWC/ITA-ADOP/01/2016-2017	In-Home	Special need Child
4	Anita Tamang	F	31/10/2017	01/04/2006	Yes CWC/ITA-ADOP/01/2016-2017/03	In-Home	Normal
5	Dipika Chetry	F	05/10/2018	30/03/2016	Yes CWC/ITA-ADOP/07(b)/2018-2019	In-Home	Special need Child
6	Baby Oju	F	31/10/2020	22/10/2020	CWC surrender-1/ITA-ADOP-10(12)/2020/12/480	In-Home	Normal
7	Baby Yana	F	01/12/2020	15/12/2020	No	In-Home	Normal

Table 3: Year-wise breakup of children at specialized Adoption Agency (SAA) during 2020-21

<i>Year</i>	<i>Admission</i>	<i>Adoption</i>
2015-16	01	00
2016-17	06	03
2017-18	04	02
2018-19	01	03
2019-20	04	01
2020-21	01	03
Total	17	12

Source: Oju Welfare Association 2020

Case Study: The case is about Baby Disin. To start with Disin's case was the most unbelievable, Disin's mother was in labour pain, it was 1st December 2018 when the pregnant girl along with her mother was going towards TRIHMS (Tomo Riba Institute of Health and Medical Science) for delivery but the water broke and delivery happened in the auto itself through which they were travelling, the mother of the pregnant girl cut the umbilical cord of the baby and then handed the baby to Oju Welfare Association. A staff named Elizabeth received the baby early in the morning around 4-5 am. The Chairman was in Sood (a village near the twin capital, Arunachal) at that time. So when Ms. Anya Ratan, the chairman of the Oju Welfare Association, returned, she found that the baby's face became totally black except for her nose which was red. She asked the staff to immediately visit Dr.J. Karlo Child Specialist at Niba Hospital. On their visit, Dr. J. Karlo stated that if the

baby would have been brought in a little later than an hour to the hospital, the baby would have been dead. The baby was brought in critical condition and even at the present doctor cannot guarantee if the baby would survive or not. As per the doctor's instruction, the baby was admitted to NICU (Neonatal intensive care unit) where the baby stayed for complete two months. It is a well-known fact that the charges for NICU is expensive, per night the charges are Rs.2.500/- whereas Oju Welfare Association is getting a fund of Rs.1800/- per child from the government. The other hospital tests and formalities were also to be done as well like blood test etc. The chairperson decided that it's okay to let the baby get treated as we can't let someone lose their life because of financial issues. Later when the baby was discharged, Dr. J. Karlo did not charge even a single penny for the NICU as he knew the effort and hard work Oju Mission always does for the welfare of the needy children plus that the baby in NICU is also an orphan, who has been abandoned by her biological parents. Dr.J. Karlo was indeed a blessing at that time and so they paid only for the medical tests and medicines which was approximately Rs. 13,000/- to Rs. 14,000/- . After this treatment, the baby recovered well and got really healthy and she has been adopted by a couple from Kolkata. It has been two years now since she got adopted. Apart from this case, there are many other cases too who delivers the baby in TRIHMS and surrender their child.

There is also another case when Dr. Jomson Bagra Gynecologist from Niba Hospital called up the chairman around 2:00 am and informed them that there is a baby that the parents do not want. So the informant immediately rushed to bring the baby to Oju Welfare Association and this child has been adopted too.

Children Home

The children's home gives shelter to the children under the age group 7 to 18 years. The Government of Arunachal Pradesh through the Department of Women and Child Development sanctioned the Children's Home in the year 2015-2016. The home is registered U/s 41 (1) of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of children) Act 2015. It gives shelter and rehabilitation programme for the rescued children, victim under POCSO Act, Child Labor, run away from home, missing and homeless children. The girls and boys are kept in separate hostels. Oju Welfare Association also takes the initiative to provide care and protection to such working children and facilitate their entry or re-entry into mainstream education. The children who benefited under the scheme have either not attended any learning system or for some reason discontinued their education. The children are availing the opportunities including non-formal education, vocational training etc. from the scheme. Following is the list of inmates presently residing in Child Care institution (CCI).

Table 4: List of inmates in CCI

<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Temporary shelter</i>	<i>Child Labor</i>	<i>POCSO Case</i>	<i>Child Trafficking</i>	<i>Discharged from Children's Home 2019-20</i>
12	29	21	14	03	0	68

Source: Oju Welfare Association, 2020.

Different cases related to children are responsibilities of the Child Welfare Committee (CWC). Of all the case maximum cases are of children who are the victim of trafficking. If any child residing in SAA and CCI at Oju Welfare Association is asked how they reach Arunachal, they will tell that they were brought by an uncle and handed over as a domestic help to a family where he/she started working and they were beaten up, tortured. Torture and physical molestation are the main reason for them to run away from the place where they were working. Also, such children do not know their whereabouts, they are mostly found by police and further with the help of child-line. There is a counsellor for all the children who arrives in the Oju Welfare Association, the first and foremost duty of the counsellor is to meet the child and interact with them and assure the child that they are in safe hands and they will be a part of the Oju Welfare Association family. This is mandatory because these children who arrive are really hesitant on their part as they do not know what is going to happen to them. If any of the children are found to be psychologically traumatized, the counsellor reports it to the chairperson of SAA, Oju Welfare Association and then further takes her to THRIMS timely for treatment and counselling with the psychiatrist again. The counsellor drafts a detailed report for each and every child who is very important and mandatory. All these children are from different backgrounds and all of them have gone through difficult situation so, in order to help them come out of the trauma, Oju Welfare Association gives them counselling in the form of Yoga, classes etc.

Action taken by SAA for POCSO Case

Case Study: Protection of children from sexual offences (POCSO) deals with child sexual abuse cases, the government has brought this special law in the form of Act in 2012. This case is under POCSO where a girl named Mary from Pasighat. It has been three to four years since the time she arrived at Oju Welfare Association and she is 11 or 12 years old now. The employer where Mary was working physically molested her for many months. Mary's mother is really poor so the concerned people of Pasighat felt that even if the child goes back to her mother, the employer will take her back forcefully thus Mary has also decided not to go back to her mother. So the best interest of Mary she was sent to Oju Welfare Association and she attends the regular classes at Oju Welfare Association school,

due to COVID, the school is shut down temporarily, in few days the school will reopen and Mary will start attending classes once again with other students. In between Mary does mention about her mother that she sometimes misses her mother and wants to meet her. The Oju Mission along with CWC tried to get in touch with her mother along with the concerned authority from Pasighat but no one knows where Mary's mother is, whether she is alive or dead. Also, workers like them keep on migrating from one place to the other. The informant is the head of the Oju Welfare Association has to give counselling to Mary and other children as well in such situation.

The parents of all the children CCI do exist but it takes time to identify them and most of the children themselves do not want to go back to their parents. Children residing in Oju Welfare Association are happy and in good hands.

Table 5: Statement of children enrolled for formal and vocational training:

<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Formal Education</i>	<i>Vocational Training</i>
9	9	18	18

Source: Oju Welfare Association, 2020.

Conclusion

There is a financial challenge but the team members of the Oju Welfare Association all are very dedicated and supportive as well. And they had passed through all the difficult time. Nani Maria is also one of the recently recognized SAA. In the coming days, they may also start working like Oju Welfare Association.

Every society of the world had faced and still facing the problem of abandoned children. In the emerging context, similar cases are also found among the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. These children in an earlier time had little option of getting shelter in a family environment with caring and loving parents. But today the scenario is changing and the condition of these children are getting a little bit better. The Central Government and State Government along with registered NGOs in Arunachal Pradesh, are working collectively towards proving a better and secured future for them. On the other hand, these initiatives have also provided children to those tribal couples who don't have their biological child. There is a long way for the people working under this programme to bring the best life to the abandoned children's. Appreciation goes to the workers who have involved in rehabilitating the life of all the needy children's.

Recommendation

The government of Arunachal Pradesh in collaboration with the Central government should take initiatives for the establishment of a Specialized Adoption Agency in most of

the districts. Moreover, tribal people of the state need to be made aware of the legal adoption procedures through various initiatives by the state agencies and even NGOs can play a very significant role. There are many cases where adoptions are done without proper paperwork. This awareness can be given through Information, Education and Communication (IEC) on the issue of abandoned children and adoption rules to avoid various complications and to ensure the future of such vulnerable children who also deserve urgent attention in a welfare state.

References

- Mead, Margaret. (1928). *Coming of age in Samoa*. New York: Yale University.
- Benedict's, Ruth. (1948). *Pattern of Culture*. New York: Mentor Books.
- Pate, Soojin. (2014). *From Orphan to Adoptee: U.S Empire and Genealogies of Korean Adoption*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Monia, L.P. (2020). Cultural Construction of Childhood: a Study on the Selected Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Ph.D. diss., Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh.
- Kehily, M. Jane. (2009). *An Introduction to Childhood Studies*. England: Open University Press.
- Langner and Korbin. (2007). Anthropology of childhoods: An introduction to Children, Childhoods, and Childhood Studies. *American Anthropologist* 109: 241-246.
- Yngvesson, Barbara. (2007). Refiguring Kinship in the space of Adoption. *Anthropological Journal* 80: 561-579.
- Anand, Aarthi and Chandra, Prema. (2002). Adoption Laws: Need for Reform. *Economic and Political Weekly* 38: 3891-3893.
- Oju Welfare Association. (2020). *Annual Progress Report 2019-20*. Naharlagun, Arunachal Pradesh.