Chapter III

Research Methodology
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Childhood is a social phenomenon. It is so in the sense that every society crystallizes its own set of norms, rules and regulations which dictate its attitudes towards the category of its members defined as children. The most prominent characteristics of a child, according to any definition, is that he / she is not (yet) an adult (Shahar, 1990; de Mause, 1974; Aries, 1962).

From the collective perspective, childhood should be described as that period of time in each person's life which society allocates for the process of training to become the kind of member that the society wants him / her to be (Lea Shangar Handelman, 1984).

From an individual point of view, childhood is that period during which persons are subject to a set of rules and regulations unique to them. Children’s personal freedom including freedom of movement is quite limited (Boocock, 1976).

Thus, childhood what ever form it may take in a given society, always determines children’s dependency on adults for supplying their needs and protecting their interests. Needless to say, relevant adults (be they parents, teachers or officials whose concern is with children) are first and foremost aware of the heavy burden of their obligation and responsibility towards children.

But children of lifers are forcibly missing their pleasant childhood. Almost all these children either miss both their parents, or miss any one of them. For instance, father will be in prison after killing the children’s mother; Mother will be in prison after killing the childrens’ father. In these peculiar circumstances, one can easily understand that the children are left without any parents. On the other hand, any one of them would have murdered either the children’s relatives, enemies or neighbours and be in prison. There are other
compelling situations where, if the parents are imprisoned, they are automatically given in the hands of relatives, family members including inlaws, grand parents or these children will be institutionalized.

These young and old toddlers are often caught up in confusion and conflict immediately after the parents’ imprisonment. They become scapegoats of the many horrors and exploitation of life.

Imprisonment usually occurs in the lowest socio-economic strata of our society, in families with the fewest resources. It is a departure often wrenching in its suddenness, usually heavily publicized and stigmatizing in its aftermath. Since all the imprisoned parents have lived with their families prior to incarceration, they find it difficult to adjust to the new circumstances.

**NEED FOR THE STUDY**

In the case of father’s imprisonment, mother and children are left to suffer and the vice-versa occurs, in the case of mothers imprisonment. In these two horrible conditions, the most affected person is the ‘child’. This unsatisfactory, separated relationship with parents certainly ruins the personality of the child. To our surprise, when these children are placed in an institution, though all their biological, esteem and love needs are met by the institutions, they could still feel the vacuum in life. The innumerable problems which are faced by them become the potential source of danger to these children which are listed below.

1. Collapse of family environment.
2. Change in the academic environment.
4. Strange encounter of new relationships.
5. Unknown period of separation. In most of the cases, the children will be rejoining the parents as adults after their release and not as children since their parents are imprisoned for 14 years.
6. Socio-economic changes.
7. Disturbance in their perceptions, attitudes and personality.
8. Experiencing sleep disturbances, eating disturbances, etc.
9. Academic interest gets declined since their concentration or attention span is being disturbed.
10. Children of lifers develop anxiety
11. Adjustmental problems set into various dimensions of life namely home, emotional, health, self, social, etc.
12. Total or partial feeling of alienation disrupts their emotions and challenges their constructive lives.
13. Mental health of these children is affected in a large way.
14. Developing anti-social tendencies and take an attitude of revenge by indulging in criminal activities.

Therefore, the researcher felt most appropriate (i) to get an insight into their problem; (ii) to intervene with the help of strategic methods to reduce their anxiety, stress, alienation and to improve their general well being (positive mental health); and (iii) to assess the impact of intervention on children of lifers. This study is based on the impact of social workers’ intervention on children of lifers.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Parental incarceration causes chaos and trauma in the life of a child. Children of life imprisoners suffer a wide range of negative emotions and experiences which may place them at a higher risk of becoming victims of neglect and abuse, truancy and delinquency.

For the present study, the following variables have been chosen.

1. Family environment
2. Adjustmental problems
If a parent remains in jail, regular contact with the children becomes impossible. The children are either partially thrown out of their structured family or being placed in an entirely different environment which may be conducive or destructive. Low level family environment creates a lot of adjustmental problem and alter their personality. When personality is not strong, open, the children tend to experience high level anxiety. Children also develop an ill feeling of shame, fear and anxiety. Anxiety interrupts their academic performance, disturbs their peace of mind. High level anxiety is associated with stress. Stress coupled with anxiety emerges and the feeling of alienation eventually results in the feeling of abandonment, anger, confusion, bad temperament and a voluntary aloofness. The children are in constant worry about themselves and about what is happening to their parents. They often encounter harassments and rejection from their peer groups and their families. When all these factors are put together, the children of lifers’ general well being (positive mental health) ultimately gets damaged.

The problem of the children of lifers is so serous that it demands a careful study and these children need a careful intervention since their lives are horrible since they undergo psychological turmoil in their day to day lives. Social workers’ contribution towards these children’s growth will certainly assume a ‘greater change’ in them. Keeping this in mind, a quasi - experimental study on the impact of social worker’s intervention on children of lifers has been undertaken by the researcher.
AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To describe the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents.
2. To study the family environment of the children before and after intervention.
3. To find out the level of impact on their adjustmental problems before and after intervention.
4. To assess the personality of the respondents and to know the impact of intervention on personality.
5. To measure the level of anxiety experienced by the respondents before and after intervention.
6. To assess the stress level of the respondents before and after intervention.
7. To identify the level of alienation of the respondents and to assess the impact of social worker's intervention before and after intervention.
8. To measure the state of well being of the respondents before and after intervention.
9. To suggest suitable measures to improve the lives of children of lifers.

RESEARCH DESIGN

In this present study, the researcher has adopted quasi-experimental design. According to Bakar (1988), the quasi-experimental designs are to be used in situations where the basic elements of a true experiment cannot be setup.

The present study attempts to experiment the impact of social worker's intervention on children of lifers' family environment, adjustmental problems, personality, anxiety, stress, feeling of alienation and general well-being. It further attempts to test the relationships and associations of variables upon which hypothesis were formed. To test the variables, basic socio-demographic factors have been described. Hence, the researcher felt it appropriate to base her study on before and after without control design a quasi – experimental design.
HYPOTHESES

Based on the objectives, varied hypotheses were formulated to find out the impact of intervention.

1. There is a significant difference between the respondents before and after intervention with regard to various dimensions of family environment.

2. There is a significant difference between the respondents before and after intervention with regard to their level of adjustmental problems in various dimensions.

3. There is a significant difference between the respondents before and after intervention with regard to their level of anxiety.

4. There is a significant difference between the respondents with regard to stress level before and after intervention.

5. There is a significant difference between the respondents with regard to their feeling of alienation before and after intervention.

6. There is a significant difference between the respondents general well being before and after intervention.

UNIVERSE AND SAMPLING OF THE STUDY

The researcher took an arduous effort in identifying the universe. In order to decide the universe, the investigator approached the Probation Officer, Tiruchirappalli and obtained the address of the institution where children of lifers are facilitated with institutionalization by providing residential care, food, medicine and education. The investigator was referred to Bethal Agricultural Fellowship, Danishpet, Salem District, Tamil Nadu, South India. This institution is catering to the varied needs of children (orphans, children of AIDS victims, children of lifers, etc.). This institution also has branches in Tirunelveli District. Out of 1600 children, 85 are found to be children of lifers, receiving support from this great institution. The investigator did not resort to any sampling
procedure because the universe was limited in number. Out of 85 children of lifers, only 65 were deemed fit for this study as they were falling in the age group of 8 – 18 years. Of the remaining 20 children, some were below 8 years, some other children have already completed 18 years and some of their parents were already released and hence only 65 were included for this study.

PILOT STUDY

The research investigator made many visits to this institution to find out the possibility of carrying out the study. The investigator had discussions with the General Secretary of Bethel Agricultural Fellowship, Salem and with the children and explained the purpose of the study. This helped the investigator to establish initial rapport with the respondents and made it possible to collect the required data in time.

TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

The researcher used questionnaire as the tool for collecting the data for the present study, since the respondents were all found studying in Tamil medium, the entire questionnaire was translated in their mother tongue. Before finalizing the tools of data collection to be used, the researcher had personal discussions with the caretakers (authorities who run organization) and decided on the relevant questions and the areas to be covered in the present study. Besides this, survey of existing literature on children of lifers also helped the researcher to finalize the appropriate tools of data collection.

The first part of the questionnaire included the questions pertaining to personal data, socio demographic characteristics and parents’ details. Also the academic and behavioral problems of the respondents and their dreams coupled with expectations were covered. Added to this the following tools were also used for the present study.
Family Environment Scale

Family Environmental Scale by Moos and Moos (1986) has been used in the present study. There are 90 true or false items related to family with 10 domains such as cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, independence, achievement orientation, intellectual cultural orientation, active recreational orientations, moral religions emphasis, organization and control. The reliability of the scale is found to be 0.835.

Scoring Key

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>True</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>False</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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The positive questions include 1, 6, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 24, 26, 28, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 37, 39, 40, 42, 43, 45, 47, 48, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 58, 59, 62, 63, 64, 66, 67, 69, 70, 71, 73, 75, 77, 78, 80, 81, 82, 85, 86, 88 and 89. All other questions are negative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Item Numbers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cohesion</td>
<td>1, 11, 21, 31, 41, 51, 61, 71, 81</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Expressiveness</td>
<td>2, 12, 22, 32, 42, 52, 62, 72, 82</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>3, 13, 23, 33, 43, 53, 63, 73, 83</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>4, 14, 24, 34, 44, 54, 64, 74, 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Achievement orientation</td>
<td>5, 15, 25, 35, 45, 55, 65, 75, 85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Intellectual</td>
<td>6, 16, 26, 36, 46, 56, 66, 76, 86</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Active recreational orientation</td>
<td>7, 17, 27, 37, 47, 57, 67, 77, 87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Moral religious emphasis</td>
<td>8, 18, 28, 38, 48, 58, 68, 78, 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>9, 19, 29, 39, 49, 59, 69, 79, 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The researcher used median test to categorize the various dimensions scores into two categories namely low family environment and high family environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cohesion</td>
<td>Upto 6</td>
<td>7 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Expressiveness</td>
<td>Upto 5</td>
<td>6 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>Upto 3</td>
<td>4 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Upto 4</td>
<td>5 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>Upto 6</td>
<td>7 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Intellectual cultural orientation</td>
<td>Upto 4</td>
<td>5 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Active recreational orientation</td>
<td>Upto 4</td>
<td>5 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Moral Religions emphasis</td>
<td>Upto 5</td>
<td>6 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Upto 5</td>
<td>6 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Upto 4</td>
<td>5 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Upto 53</td>
<td>54 and above</td>
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**Personality**

To find out the personality types like introversion, extraversion and neuroticism, personality inventory adapted from EPI form – A) developed and standardized by Sridevi Ammal (1977) has been used.

There are two alternative choice in each item ‘yes’ and ‘no’. After reading carefully, if it is correct the subject has to choose only one alternative. The marks should be allotted as mentioned below.

**Extroversion – Introversion**

Mark (1) for ‘Yes’ Answers and ‘0’ : Items : 1, 3, 8, 10, 13, 17, 22, 25, mark for ‘No’ answers 27, 38, 43, 45, 52 and 55.
Mark (1) for ‘Yes’ Answers and ‘0’ mark for ‘No’ answers

Items : 5, 15, 20, 29, 34, 36, 40, 48 and 50 (24)

12 marks and above : Extroversion
Below 12 marks : Introversion

Neuroticism

Mark (1) for ‘Yes’ Answers and ‘0’ mark for ‘No’ answers

Items : 2, 4, 7, 9, 11, 12, 16, 19, 21, 23, 26, 28, 31, 33, 35, 37, 39, 42, 44, 46, 49, 51, 54, 56 (24)

15 marks and above : Neuroticism

Lie Scores

Mark (1) for ‘Yes’ Answers and ‘0’ mark for ‘No’ answers

Items : 6, 24

Mark (1) for ‘No’ Answers and ‘0’ mark for ‘Yes’ answers

Items : 12, 18, 30, 41, 47, 53

As per the modified tool administered by Sridevi Ammal (1977), regarding the scoring of Extroversion – Introversion and Neuroticism, high score in Extroversion indicates Extroversion and high score in Neuroticism indicates Neuroticism.

According to the author only the scores obtained in Extroversions or Neuroticism should be considered.

In this study, there are 24 items to measure Extroversion –Introversion. As per the directions of the author, average score of the maximum of 24 i.e., 12 is fixed as the cut off mark for extroversion and Introversion. Thus, if the scores
obtained by a subject is 12 and above he is considered as an extrovert. If the score is below 12, then he is considered as an introvert for the present study.

There are also 24 items to measure Neuroticism. In this study, the researcher considered 60% of the total score as the cut off score for Neuroticism, since the author of the test specified as higher score only. The 60% of the 24 items comes to 15 marks. Thus, if a subject’s score is 15 and above in Neuroticism, the respondent is considered as a neurotic and his score in Extroversion is not at all considered according to the authors instructions.

**Lie Score**

According to Sri Devi Ammal (1997) if the high score exceeds 5 or more out of the 8 items meant for it, the questionnaire need not be considered for further analysis. For scoring purposes of this test, the guidelines given by the author is followed.

The reliability of the scale is: 0.8299.

**Adjustment Inventory**

Adjustment problem inventory developed by Ramamurthy (1968) has been used to find out the extent of adjustmental problems in the dimensions of health, emotional, self, home and social. The same tool has been also administered to find out the overall adjustmental problems. The variability of the scale is found to be 0.8555.

**Scoring Key**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The negative questions are 5, 12, 20, 33, 35, 40, 43 and 50. All the other questions are positive.
The score indicates the degree of maladjustment (adjustmental problems). The higher the score, the higher the maladjustment.

The researcher used median test to categorize the various dimensions scores into two categories namely low adjustmental problems and high adjustmental problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Upto 7</td>
<td>8 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>Upto 11</td>
<td>12 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Upto 9</td>
<td>10 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Upto 9</td>
<td>10 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Upto 9</td>
<td>10 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Upto 49</td>
<td>50 and above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tailors Manifest Anxiety State (Revised), 1935

Taylor’s manifest anxiety scale developed by Taylor (1935) revised edition was used to find out the level of anxiety. In this scale, most of these are a check list of things about which adults are commonly anxious. The Taylor manifest scale is currently the most widely used tool to assess anxiety.
The subjects answered “True or False” to the item given. There are 27 items, scored in terms of the number answered in the level items. If the response coincided with the key, score one was given and otherwise no score had been given. Then the total score was calculated.

**Scoring Key:**

Items : 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 are True

Items : 2, 4, 8 and 9 are False.

The reliability of the scale is: 0.7398

The researcher used median test to find out the low level anxiety and high level anxiety.

Low level anxiety - Upto 12

High level anxiety - 13 and above

**STRESS**

To find out the level of stress the researcher has developed a scale specifically for the children of lifers as the other scales on stress were not appropriate.

There are three alternative choices in each item “Strongly Agree”, “Moderately Agree” and “Not at all agree”. The subject has to choose only alternative. The marks should be allotted as mentioned below:

- Strongly Agree – 3, Moderately Agree – 2, Not at all Agree – 1

Higher the score indicates higher stress.

The reliability of the scale is found to be 0.9069
The researcher used median test to find out the low level stress and high level stress.

- Low level stress – upto 40
- High level stress – 41 and above

**The Alienation Scale**

To measure the alienation, the alienation scale developed by Afzal Kuroshi and Meenakshi Dutt (1979) was used. The scale comprises of 21 items to be answered. The reliability of the scale is found to be 0.8923.

There are two alternative choices in each item “Yes” and “No”. The subject has to choose only alternative. The marks should be allotted as mentioned below:

- Yes – 1 and No – 0

The researcher used median test to categorize the various dimensions scores into two categories namely low alienation and high alienation.

- Alienation – Upto 11 low level
  - 12 and above – high level

**General Well Being**

To measure subjective well being (Positive mental health), PGI General Well being scale developed by S.K. Verma, A.C. Mondgil, Karlip Kaur, Madan Pal, B.L. Dubey, D. Gupta (1986) was used. It comprises of 20 items.

There are two alternative choices in each item “Yes” and “No”. The subject has to choose only alternative. The marks are allotted as mentioned below:
Yes – 1 and No – 0

The reliability of the scale is found to be 0.7618.

The researcher used median test to categorize the various dimensions scores into two categories namely low general well being and high general well being.

General well being -  
Upto 14 – low level of general well being
15 and above – High level of general well being

PRE-TESTING

Prior to the finalization of the questionnaire and standardized tools before data collection, it was pretested with 10 children in order to ascertain its suitability and adaptability. It provided the researcher with an idea about the drawbacks in the questionnaire. Accordingly, a few questions were deleted from the socio-demographic profile. Further the responses were carefully scrutinized and analysed since standardized tools had been used and found that no modification was required.

PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION

The research investigator obtained written permission from the General Secretary of Bethal Agricultural Fellowship Organization, Danishpet, Salem to collect the required data from the inmates. Then the children who were in the age group of 8 – 18 years were contacted in a calm and peaceful room atmosphere. The researcher was provided with a meeting hall where the children could come together to fill up the questionnaire freely, frankly and fearlessly. Moreover, the investigator was duly recognized as a professional worker since her purpose of visit was the first of its kind to those institutions. Investigator approached the inmates 2 times totally for data collection. First, to collect information before intervention, second to give intervention to the
respondents followed by the assessment of impact of social workers’ intervention on the respondents. Altogether, the researcher met 65 respondents twice \((65 + 65 = 130)\) respondents for both before and after intervention. It took nearly 6 months time to collect the relevant data.

**INTERVENTION : NEED AND IMPORTANCE**

One cannot but feel, however that the long-term effect of the additional stresses and strains which separation from the parent brings about is likely to be detrimental (Mc Cord and Mc Cord, 1963).

Children are the future wealth of the country and they need special protection because of their age, physical and mental faculties. Children should be given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and the childhood and youth should be protected against exploitation (Shaw, S.P.).

Realizing the need for protecting the children of lifers from their abject family environment, anxiety, stress, feeling of alienation, adjustmental problems and from low general well being, the researcher has decided to provide an intervention in order to assess its impact on children of lifers.

**Development of the package**

The educational package for the children of lifers was designed and prepared on the basis of discussion and review of related literature. Intervention was provided in order to assess the impact on the children of lifers.

The educational intervention was mainly focussed on Mental Health of children of lifers and its sub-themes were

(i) Know thyself, family and surroundings
(ii) Self Motivation and be optimism
(iii) Self esteem  
(iv) Anxiety and stress management  
(v) Goal setting  
(vi) Role model

Based on psychoanalytical model (Sigmund Freud) the respondents were given sufficient time to ventilate their feelings in the beginning of the intervention, and then proceeded with the interactive sessions. The respondents were also divided into small groups to think and enact on the topic ‘Where is my happiness?’ This helped the team (psychiatrist and researcher) to know their inner feelings and, following that, the respondents were oriented to strengthen their ego by being optimistic and to know their family and surroundings. Psychiatrist Dr. E. Balagurusamy, Iyyappa Trust, Tirunelveli District was able to provide an effective intervention programme along with the researcher on stress and anxiety management skills, tips for goal setting and how to be firm in achieving their goals, etc. After the intervention is over, feedback sheets were collected from them which really prove the fact that intervention has a definite impact on the children of life imprisoners.

**Efficacy of the intervention Programme**

The findings (Chapter IV) suggest that the respondents mental make-up definitely improved after the intervention programme.

The data before and after intervention of experimental group was also analysed factor wise to assess the impact of intervention programme. In toto there were 7 factors in the children of lifers on which the impact was assessed and they are as follows.

1. Family environment  
2. Adjustmental problems  
3. Personality
4. Anxiety
5. Stress
6. Alienation
7. General Well Being

Significant mean differences were found between before and after intervention. It made a definite and positive contribution in preparing the children of lifers to deal effectively with stress, anxiety, alienation, adjustmental problems and to bring desirable changes in the personality and to modify the family environment.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data collected were carefully analysed and processed. Statistical test such as mean, median, standard deviation, chi-square, one way analysis of variance and Karl Pearson’s co-efficient of correlation were applied to interpret the data to draw meaningful inferences. The mean values were used for the quantitative data such as age, income, family size, number of siblings and so on. The one way analysis of variance was used to find out the significant difference between three groups. Students ‘t’ test was used to find out the significant difference between the two mean scores of the two groups. The chi-square test was used to find out the association between two variables. The Karl Pearson’s co-efficient of correlation was used to find out the relationship between the variables such as family environment, adjustmental problems, anxiety, stress, alienation and general well being. The same test was also used to find out the relationship between the personal data (age, religion, native place, family size, number of siblings, income and so on) and above mentioned variables.
OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Lifers

Lifers in this study refer to the parents of respondents (father / mother) who are imprisoned for life time and one who is a life convict according to Indian legislations. Lifer is a person who spends his life time inside the prison for his offence either by accident or by decision or by any other force.

Children of Lifers

For this study, the investigator has considered a child to be a person between the age group of 8 – 18 years whose parent / parents are imprisoned for life.

Impact

It refers to the changes that take place after social worker’s intervention in various factors such as family environment, adjustmental problems, personality, anxiety, stress, alienation, general well being.

Family Environment

It refers to various dimensions of family environment namely cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, independence, achievement orientation, intellectual cultural orientation, active recreational orientation, more religious emphasis, organization and control in families raising for children.

Low Family Environment

It indicates that the respondents who scores 89 in family environment scale (Moos and Moos, 1986) are termed as having low family environment.

High Family Environment

The individual who scores 90 and above in family environment scale (Moos and Moos, 1986) are termed as having high family environment.
Adjustmental problem

This refers to the prevalence of problems in the areas of health, emotion, self, home and social as measured in the adjustmental problem inventory developed by Ramamurthy (1968).

Low Adjustmental Problem

In the present study, the individual scores upto 49 in the adjustmental problems inventory of Ramamurthy (1968) is termed as less adjustmental problems. This means an individual who gets a score less than 49 has less adjustmental problem.

High Adjustmental Problems

The individual whose score reaches 50 and above in the adjustmental problems inventory of Ramamurthy (1968) is termed as high adjustmental problems in this study.

Personality Types

Personality types in this study indicate three classification mentioned below which were identified by the relevant tool (i) : Introversion; (ii) Extroversion; and (iii) Neuroticism.

Introversion

Introversion is typically defined as ‘inter directedness’ and a preference for abstract ideas rather than concrete objects. A typical introvent is a quiet retiring sort of person, introspective, intellectual, fond of books rather than people. He is reserved and distant except to intimate friends. He tends to plan ahead – “Looks before leaps” and distrusts i.e. impulse of the moment. He does not like excitement, takes matter of everyday life, keeps his feelings under close control, seldom behaves in an aggressive manner and does not pose his temper easily. He is reliable, some what pessimistic and places great values on ethical values (Ammal, 1977).
**Extroversion**

A typical extrovert may be emotionally expressive, does not like reading or studying by himself. He craves for excitements, acts on the spur of the moment, generally like changes, being carefree, easily going and optimistic. He prefers to keep moving and doing things, loses his temper quickly. He is not always a reliable person. High scoring individual in extroversion dimension tends to be outgoing, impulsive and uninhibited, having many social contacts and frequently taking part in group activities (Ammal, 1977).

**Neuroticism**

Individual who gets high scores in Neuroticism tends to be emotionally over responsive and have difficulties in returning to a normal state. After emotional experience, such individuals frequently complain vague somatic upsets of a minor kind such as headaches, digestive troubles, insomnia, backaches and also respond to many worries, anxieties and other disagreeable emotional feelings. Those who have high scores in neuroticism are unstable persons, moody, anxious and restless person (Ammal, 1977). Scoring is done in such a way that the high scores in neuroticism indicate neuroticism.

**Anxiety**

It refers to a state of diffuse fear which is not restricted to define situations or objects and is subjectively experienced as dread apprehensions or tensions and may arise in any situation or measured by Taylors Manifest Anxiety Scale Revised (1935).

**Low Anxiety**

The individual who scores upto 12 in Taylor’s Manifest State Inventory (1935) are termed as high anxiety.
**High Anxiety**

The individual who scores 13 and above in Taylor’s Manifest State Inventory (1935) are termed as low anxiety.

**Stress**

Stress is an internal state which can be caused by physical demands on the body or by environmental and social situations which are evaluated as potentially harmful, uncontrollable or exceeds the resources for coping – Self prepared (2006).

**Low Level Stress**

The individual who scores upto 40 in the scale for the assessment of stress (self prepared, 2006) are termed as low stress in the study.

**High Level Stress**

The individual who scores 41 and above in the scale for the assessment of stress (self prepared, 2006) are termed as high stress in the study.

**Alienation**

It refers to a feeling of uneasiness or discomfort which reflects one’s exclusion from social and cultural participation as measured by Alienation scale developed by Afzal Kureshi and Meenakshi Dutt (1979).

**Low Level of Alienation**

The individual who scores upto 11 in the Alienation scale of Afzal Kureshi and Meenakshi Dutt (1979) are termed as low level of alienation.

**High Level of Alienation**

The individual who scores 12 and above in the Alienation scale of Afzal Kureshi and Meenakshi Dutt (1979) are termed as high level of alienation.
General Well Being

This refers to the measurement of subjective well being (Positive mental health) which include happiness in life, sleeping well, feeling emotionally stable, relaxed, energetic and being cheerful, not easily depressed or irritated, having a sense of belongingness and being in good health as measured by S. K. Verma, A.C. Moudgil, Kuldip Kaur, Madan Pal, B.L. Dubey, D. Gupta in PGI Well Being Scale (1986).

Low General Well Being

The respondent who scores upto 14 in the PGI well being scale of S.K. Verma, A.C. Moudgil, Kuldip Kaur, Madan Pal, B.L. Dubey, D. Gupta (1986) are termed as low general well being.

High General Well Being

The respondent who scores 15 and above in the PGI well being scale of S.K. Verma, A.C. Moudgil, Kuldip Kaur, Madan Pal, B.L. Dubey, D. Gupta (1986) are termed as high general well being.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY THE RESEARCHER

1. The researcher had to travel a long distance from Tiruchirappalli to reach the respondents institutions in 2 districts namely Salem and Tirunelveli.

2. Since the respondents were children, and most of them were studying in Tamil Medium of instruction in schools, all the 300 questions had to be translated into Tamil. However, with the help of friends and colleagues the researcher could prepare an appropriate version in Tamil.

3. Some respondents were in all hesitation to reveal the fact that their parents were in prison. On the basis of the list of children of lifers obtained from their administrative office, it was possible for the researcher to see and converse with those children. It was a bit difficult
for the researcher to break their false image and to convince them to be included in the sample.

4. Disturbing children for more than 3 long hours of each and every stage of data collection posed some kind of problem to the children. Some revealed a bit of unhappiness, uneasiness. The researcher had to initially work on it before proceeding with her intervention.

5. Researcher could identify vacuum faces, depressed looks and frustrated pre-adolescents during data collection procedure. It reminded the researcher of the ‘crisis intervention’ and hence, apart from her intervention, she had to offer personal counseling to some.

LIMITATIONS

This study bears the following limitations.

1. The prime limitation of the study is it did not probe into health / rehabilitation aspects.

2. The investigator made no attempt to interview the parents / teachers or caretakers of the respondents.

3. Another limitation of this study is that the researcher conducted this study only with the institutionalized children of lifers.

4. This study suffers from a specific limitation i.e. their academic, achievement, depression and stigmatization were not apply included and not accurately measured because of their unawareness.
CHAPTERISATION

The present quasi-experimental study is divided into five chapters.

The first chapter discusses the condition of children of lifers, their perceptions, inner cry, anxiety, separation, relationship with incarcerated parents, children in criminal justice system and intervention packages.

The second chapter describes the related studies and literature.

The third chapter discusses the methodology adopted for the present study. It covers the need and importance of the study, statement of the problem, aims and objectives, hypotheses, universe of the study and sampling tools used for data collection, operational definitions, problems encountered and limitations and chapterization.

The fourth chapter deals with the results and interpretation of data based on statistical measures to draw meaningful inferences and conclusions.

The fifth chapter presents the findings of the present study. The implications and suggestion for future studies are also discussed in this chapter.