ABSTRACT

The Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a fatal illness caused by a retrovirus known as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) which breaks down the body's immune system, leaving the victim vulnerable to a host of life-threatening opportunistic infections, psychological and neurological disorders. Acquired means it is obtained or received by a person and is something which does not ordinarily exist within one's body. Immune deficiency means the immune system is weakened. AIDS is a syndrome which means it is not one particular isolated disease but one which has a variety of symptoms leading to various disorders and a set of diseases.

India has the third highest estimated number of individuals infected by HIV in the world after Nigeria and South Africa. In India estimated 2.3 million people were living with HIV (NACO and UNAIDS, 2010). Karnataka State Aids Prevention Society (KSAPS) Consolidated ART report of August 2012, the scenario of Karnataka state is 2, 10, 469 adult and 16,432 children living with HIV, among them 1, 27, 722 adult and 8071 children receiving Antiretroviral therapy.

Children living with HIV/AIDS are discriminated and stigmatised by the society. They are deprived of one or more necessities of life. These children are left helpless, abandoned, neglected by the parents/ caregivers due to social, economic and personal reasons like gender, domicile, age, etc. In this context they may develop and face a lot of psycho-social adjustment problems, lower self-esteem and emotional competencies.
With this background objectives for the present study are formulated as; 1) To study the level of adjustment, self-esteem and emotional competencies of children with HIV/AIDS and Non-HIV/AIDS. 2) To study the level of adjustment, self-esteem and emotional competencies among boys and girls with HIV/AIDS. 3) To study the level of adjustment, self-esteem and emotional competencies among rural and urban children with HIV/AIDS. Total 800 children were selected as participants; among 400 children living with HIV/AIDS and 400 Non-HIV/AIDS. The selected children were measured on adjustment inventory, Self-esteem Inventory and Emotional Competencies Scale.

The findings indicated that the children with HIV/AIDS have higher adjustment problems, lower self-esteem and lower emotional competencies than Non-HIV/AIDS. Girls with HIV/AIDS have higher adjustment problems, lower self-esteem and lower emotional competencies than Boys. Rural Children with HIV/AIDS have higher adjustment problems, lower self-esteem and lower emotional competencies than Urban Children. Accordingly this study suggested that the pressing need for appropriate counselling and guidance, care and support to overcome their psycho-social problems of the target group.