

## Socio-Demographic Analysis of Children in Child Care Homes in Nepal

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### ABSTRACT

The Nepali government established the National Council for Child Rights in 2018 to ensure children's rights and monitors 548 Child Care Homes (CCHs) in 46 districts. A study aims to explore the socio-demographic status of children in CCHs, identifying trends and demographic differences. Attachment theory, developed by John Bowlby, highlights the distress children experience when separated from their parents. Over 2.7 million children aged 0-17 live in care institutions globally, with 120 per 100,000 children. Factors like HIV/AIDS, natural disasters, and cultural differences influence placement. The National Plan Commission aims to make high-income countries responsible donors and participants in development. The study investigates child care home management and children's rights in 63 Nepalese Child Care Homes (CCHs) using a mixed model of qualitative and quantitative methods. Results show 47.1% are boys and 52.9% are girls, with the majority under 5 years old. Out of 2,121 children, 72.0% are orphans. Nepal's child care home numbers are decreasing due to government policies, with girls more likely to stay. Non-orphan children remain, with 72% double orphans, predominantly from Hindu families. The Nepali government should collaborate with non-governmental organizations and academic institutions to develop a national child protection system.

**Keywords:** Child Care Homes (CCHs), attachment theory, national child protection system, Orphans and non-orphans

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Nepal's government ratified UNCRC 1989, establishing the National Council for Child Rights in 2018. The NCRC collaborates with civil society, government, and NGO organizations to ensure child rights in Child Care Homes, enforcing laws and standards (National Council for Rights of the Child, Nepal, 2019).

### 1.2 History and Evolution of the Institutional Care in Nepal

Nepal's institutional care centers for orphan children began in 2008 with Paropakar Anathalayaa, and Nepal Children's Organization (NCO) was established in 2021, working in

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eight districts with 11 CCHs (National Council for Rights of the Child, Nepal, 2019), (www.nconepal.org, 2019). As mentioned, Nepal's government operates four orphanages in Butwal, Birgunj, Biratnagar, and Rajbiraj, following the establishment of 'Paropakar Anathalaya' in 1953 BS, 'Dudh Khane Bachcha Palne Adda' and 'Charitable Society' in 1919 BS, 1904 BS (Ministry of Women, Children and Social welfare, Nepal, 2014) & (New Era, 2005).

### **1.3 International Commitments and Domestic Legal Provisions**

Nepal has ratified international conventions and domestic laws to protect and care for children, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Constitution of Nepal. The government has issued laws, regulations, procedures, and standards to regulate the residential care system for children, with the responsibility of monitoring and ensuring standards falling under the NCRC. Policies and programs aim to strengthen the system.

### **1.4 Types of the Institutional Care System for the Children**

Throughout history, children with disabilities have been institutionalized in various countries, including prisons, communities, and training camps, as part of the juvenile justice system (Ministry of Women, Children and Social welfare, Nepal, 2014). Street children and homeless youth often face detention or institutionalization to protect them from sexual abuse, prostitution, drugs, and crime. HIV/AIDS-infected children often face ostracization and mental illness. Unaccompanied children may be orphans or semi-orphans due to war, natural disasters, accidents, or death. Orphaned, disabled, or traumatized child soldiers and divorced/split parents often abandon or reject them (Milse & Stephenson , Children in Residential Care and Alternatives). Child Care Home is defined in Comprehensive Standards for Operation and management of Residential Child Care homes, 2012, (Government of Nepal, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, 2012); similarly, Child Welfare Home is defined in Children's Act, 2018 and orphanage is defined in Comprehensive Standards for Operation and Management of Residential Child Care Homes, 2012, in Nepal.

Further, some type of institutional child care systems is defined as below;

### **1.5 Children in Child Care Homes**

In 2019, 548 Child Care Homes (CCHs) were established in 46 districts of Nepal, with 14,864 children in residential shelter. Bagmati Province had the highest number (75%), followed by Sudur Paschim and Sudur Paschim provinces (2%) and 12 CCHs (2%) respectively (National Council for Rights of the Child, Nepal, 2019). The Nepali government has issued legal documents ensuring children's rights and quality services in care homes, including the 2012 "Standards for Operation and management of Residential Child Care Homes," which includes 78 indicators in seven chapters.

Institutional care is often seen as a last resort for deprived individuals, while biological and family-based systems are considered the best. However, institutional alternative care is increasingly necessary (Gale & Khatiwada , 2016). The government should update rules and regulations for institutional care homes, especially in city areas. Studies show they are concentrated in Kathmandu valley and Pokhara. The NCRC plans to reduce the number of care

homes in Nepal (Government of Nepal, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, 2012).

### **1.6 Description and Trend of the Child Care Homes**

CCHs provide care, support, education, health services, and security to vulnerable children, often with international organization support or sponsorship from individual or religious groups or charities, making institutional care the last option (NCRC, 2015). The number of Central Community Health Boards (CCHs) fluctuates, with 454 in 2008, 797 in 2013, 594 in 2014, and 585 in 2015, with 45 districts having more than 46. (National Council for Rights of the Child, Nepal, 2019). Government initiatives and NGOs are forming Child Care Centers (CCHs) for children affected by conflict and social factors, categorized by objectives and service type.

### **1.7 Nature of the Child Care Homes in Nepal**

Child welfare homes (CCHs) in Nepal can be categorized into two types: government-operated ones and those operated by NGOs or private sector. These CCHs serve various children, including those affected by armed conflict, disasters, street children, inmates, disabled, HIV/AIDS, abused, orphaned, trafficked, and religiously based (National Council for Rights of the Child, Nepal, 2019). The study explores Nepal's institutional child care system, highlighting international commitment and Nepali practice. It highlights the government's collaboration with NGOs and private sectors to improve the care system.

As per the definition by *UN guideline for Alternative Care of Children* residential care is defined as "*care provided in any non-family-based group setting, such as places of safety for emergency care, transit centres in emergency situations, and all other short- and long-term residential care facilities, including group homes,*" (UN General Assembly, 2010). According as *the Standards for Operation and Management of Residential Child Care Homes, 2012* "The children needed to special care and protection" are orphan Children defined as the *National (civil code) Act, 2017* or having no parents and the children nobody cared for; abandoned Children by their parents or unaccompanied or ran-away from their homes and parents did not find out; neglected and abused children without the proper care, by their parents and care taker; even if there is a parent, not possible care for physical or mental disability; the children having no their own homes and permanent residence (Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, Nepal, 2012).

### **1.8 Research Problems and Rationale of the Research**

According to the CRC, 1989, for the holistic development of the children's personality, they should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding (preamble of CRC-1989). Similarly, the CRC further says, "*A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided*". This study examines residential care centers in Nepal, focusing on their impact on children's rights and socio-demographic figures, and assesses if existing legal provisions address these issues and Nepal's commitment to promoting child rights (SOS Nepal, 2013).

### **1.9 Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to explore the socio-demographic status of children in child care homes (CCHs), assess trends, identify demographic differences, evaluate relationships, and analyze children's sources in ecological belts and provinces in Nepal.

### 1.10 Research Questions

Is the number of children residing in child care home and the number of child care home is in the declining trend? Is the source of the children - staying in care homes - is from the remote geographical locations, located at far from the Kathmandu Valley, the capital city of Nepal? and are the children from the socially deprived caste and ethnic communities? are the three major research questions considered for this study.

### 1.11 Limitations of the Study

The study used secondary sources from NCRC's 2015 and 2017-2021 reports on the state of child care homes in Nepal, with owners, managers, or officials as primary data sources from 548 CCHs in 46 districts.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 **Attachment Theory:** Attachment theory, developed by John Bowlby, focuses on the distress experienced by children separated from their parents. Its formal origins can be traced back to his 1958 papers, including *The Nature of the Child's Tie to Mother and Separation Anxiety and Grief and Mourning in Infancy and Early Childhood*. Mary Ainsworth's observational studies in Uganda further informed and expanded the theory, allowing some principles to be empirically tested (Bowlby, 1969).

2.1.2 **Internal Working Model of Attachment:** The child's attachment relationship with their primary caregiver leads to the development of an internal working model (Bowlby, 1969). The internal working model is a cognitive framework that guides an individual's interactions with others, influencing their memories and expectations (Bretherton & Moonholland, 1999). The theory suggests that a child's personality develops around age three, influenced by their primary caregiver's internal working model. This model, consisting of trustworthiness, value, and effectiveness, guides their social and emotional behavior and overall responsiveness to others (Bowlby, 1969).

2.1.3 **Definitions of the Technical Terminology Regarding Residential Care System for Children:** There are several definitions of the technical terms used in the residential care system for children.

**Alternative care:** Alternative care refers to community-based arrangements for orphans and vulnerable children without parental guardianship, including adoption, foster care, and family care (Meenai, 2019).

**Informal alternative care:** Article 18 of the UNCRC, 1989 states that parents or legal guardians are primarily responsible for children's upbringing and development, and Article 20 emphasizes proper care. (Roby, 2011).

**Formal Care:** The government or approved child care agency places children in non-family members' care, only considering residential care when necessary and in the child's best interests (SOS Children Village, 2010). Formal care is additionally defined as "... *all care provided in a domestic setting ordered by the competent administrative agency or judicial authority, and all care provided in a residential setting, including in private facilities, either for administrative or judicial measures* " (Roby, 2011).

**Residential care:** Provide care in non-family group environments, including emergency care centers, short- and long-term residential care facilities, and group homes (UN, 2009). The child's best interests are determined by factors like family reunification, residential care availability, and the child's individual wishes (Milse & Stephenson, Children in Residential Care and Alternatives, 2001).

**Children without parental care and Orphan:** The UN states that all children under 18 years old, regardless of gender, are not adequately cared for at home at night. An orphan is a child who has lost both parents due to death, and can be classified into maternal, paternal, double, or social orphans (UN, 2009). Most orphaned children are absorbed into their extended family, even in difficult circumstances, and without outside agents, they will also be absorbed into other community families (Milse & Stephenson, Children in Residential Care and Alternatives, 2001).

**The alternatives to residential care:** Institutional care children often experience structural neglect, characterized by limited resources, unstable staffing, and limited social and emotional interaction with caregivers (IJzendoorn, et al., 2011).

## 2.2 Empirical Review

### 2.2.1 Children living in residential child care systems in the global context

Residential care refers to non-family group environments, including emergency care, transfer centers, and collective houses. It should be small, organized around children's rights and needs, and closely based on family or group situations (Khatiwada, Castillo, & Mishra, 2014). Nepal has 759 registered children's homes, and the government monitors them to meet quality standards. However, preventive actions are not effective. A 2008 study by UNICEF and Terre des Hommes Foundation found 60% of children up for adoption were not orphans but separated from families, leading to child abuse (Pradhan, Tuladhar, & Sanjog, April 2015). The Nepalese government has reported 454 abandoned children living in child care homes (CCHs), with over 759 homes providing services for over 12,000 children as of January 2013. Other vulnerable groups include HIV/AIDS affected children, internally displaced children, and injured children, including those trafficked for sexual purposes (Khatiwada, Castillo, & Mishra, 2014). Around 2.7 million children aged 0-17 live in care institutions globally, with 120 per 100,000 children (UNICEF, 2017). The review reveals that poverty, education, and emergency situations are the main reasons for placing Asian children in alternative care institutions. Shelters are often used for education, and orphans are a significant factor in these institutions. Asia's vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, natural disasters, armed conflicts, and cultural factors also contributes to placement. Gender inequality and aggressive advertising also influence placement (JaganathanThatparan, 2014), (Gale & Khatiwada , 2016) & (European Commission, SOS Children's Village International, 2016).

### **2.2.2 Regional Context – Population**

South Asia has an estimated 651,903,547 children, with 41 million orphaned. India has 31 million orphans. Pakistan and Bangladesh have 4.2 million and 4 million orphans respectively. Afghanistan has over 900,000 children in inadequate care. Nepal and Sri Lanka have 537,959 and 692,122 orphans respectively. Bhutan has fewer orphans than Maldives (JaganathanThatparan, 2014).

### **2.2.3 Children in alternative care**

In particular, Official data in many countries only reveals a small fraction of children in foster care and households, with 2.7 million aged 0-17 in residential care worldwide, or 120 children per 100,000 (UNICEF, 2017). Over eight million children worldwide lack suitable care due to financial, war, abuse, family disputes, disability, and parental care shortages. South Asia houses 28% of the world's toddler population, with many institutionalized due to endemic poverty (JaganathanThatparan, 2014).

### **2.2.4 The residential care system for the child in South Asia**

Asia's vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, natural disasters, and armed conflicts increases children's vulnerability, leading to placement in alternative care institutions, household duties, or street placement. Culture, gender inequality, and aggressive advertising contribute to placement issue (JaganathanThatparan, 2014). Pakistan's government established a Human Rights Commission to set minimum standards for children's institutions, while national policies focus on domestic adoption and food and nutrition standards (JaganathanThatparan, 2014).

### **2.2.5 Alternative Child Care system in Nepal**

In Nepal, Children receive formal alternative care due to poverty and belief in better living conditions in school facilities. Parents, particularly in remote rural areas, abandon their children for informal care within the extended family (JaganathanThatparan, 2014).

The Nepalese government has assessed 585 residential facilities, revealing a rise in children between 2008 and 2015. However, concerns persist about abandonment methods, lack of alternative care, and human trafficking issues persist (Gale & Khatiwada , 2016), (UNICEF, 2017).

In 2012, 78 standards for residential child care homes were issued. Inter-country adoption was legalized in 1976, allowing more child centers to apply for orders. The Nepalese Government's Terms and Conditions now permit more adoptions (JaganathanThatparan, 2014). Armed conflict in Nepal has affected many children, leading to loss of parents, displacement, and separation. Families send children to cities for safety and better education. In 2010/11, 7,59 registered children's homes cared for 15,095 children (Bennett, McKeon, Larsson, Papi, & Bylander, 2014). Of course, Some organizations provide high-quality child care, while others struggle due to lack of resources. Most residential day care centers fail to meet minimum standards, with evidence of abuse, neglect, and exploitation (Bennett, McKeon, Larsson, Papi, & Bylander, 2014).

## **2.3 Laws and Policy Review:**

### **2.3.1 International and Regional policy documents**

The CRC emphasizes family and parental responsibility for children's care, while international instruments recognize the State as a better guardian in absence of primary care. In the context of South Asia, Eight SAARC countries have renewed their commitment to implementing children's rights, with the Convention on the Rights of the Child being the most ratified among them (JaganathanThatparan, 2014). In addition to the above, SAARC countries have adopted the various regional documents as their own policy documents in recent years (JaganathanThatparan, 2014).

### **2.3.2 Domestic Laws in Nepal**

Nepal, as a state party of UNCRC, 1989 and all civil rights concerned to children, should have to fulfil the commitments through constitutions and other domestic laws. Constitution of Nepal, 2015; National (Civil Code) Act, 2017 and *Children's Act, 2018* are the major domestic laws for the child in Nepal. Similarly, in order to regulate the residential care system for children in Nepal, Government of Nepal has also issued some regulations, procedures, guidelines and standards, such as comprehensive standards for operation and management of residential child care homes, 2012 (National Council for Rights of the Child, Nepal, 2019).

### **2.3.3 Sustainable Development Goals and children**

The 2030 Agenda for Property Development aims to make high-income countries responsible participants in the development process and donors. While not all SDGs are child-focused, children are mentioned in some targets. This paper proposes an analytical framework to help navigate these targets and their implications for children (Bruckauf & Cook, 2017). According to UNICEF, by examining policy problems from a horizontal interconnectedness perspective, we can analyze the drivers and outcomes of this intricate issue. In summary, the integration of health and education sectors is crucial for managing obesity in children and young people, requiring targeted interventions based on socio-economic knowledge (Bruckauf & Cook, 2017).

### **2.3.4 Residential child care system in National Periodic plans in Nepal**

Nepal's planning history dates back to 1956-61, with the National Plan Commission focusing on children's survival, security, care, protection, development, and participation. The plan system includes periodic plans for alternative care systems for orphan, helpless, and oppressed children.

## **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Study Area**

The study area for this study has been selected using the appropriate sampling methods. The study has been confined in 63 legally operated child care homes of Nepal from 20 districts of every province covering with each ecological region, as mentioned in annex 2.

### **3.2 Research Design**

The study uses a mixed model of research, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to assess compliance with child care home management and children's rights in surveyed CCHs, using structural questionnaires and interviews with management members.

#### **3.2.1 Sampling and Calculation of the Sample Size**

Multi-stage sampling was used to select CCHs as PSUs, with 63 CCHs selected using Raosoft Sample Size based on CAP Guidance, with 90% confidence level and 10% margin of error.

*Raosoft calculation methods:* In terms of the numbers selected above, the sample size  $n$  and margin of error  $E$  are given by;

$$X = Z (c/100)2r(100-r) \quad N = N x / ((N-1) E^2 + x) \quad E = \text{Sqrt} [(N - n)x/n(N-1)]$$

Where  $N$  is the population size,  $r$  is the fraction of responses and  $Z(c/100)$  is the critical value for the confidence level  $c$ . This calculation is based on the Normal distribution, which assumes more than about 30 samples.

### **Selection of Child Care Homes**

Sampling Method: SRS from categorized CCHs

Criteria: The result, by calculating the Rao-soft method is 63 child care homes as the primary sampling unit from 20 districts (Out of 20 districts, 7 from Terai, 4 from Hill, equal 3 from Inner Madhesh and Mountain and the Kathmandu valley) and seven provinces attached in annex.

#### **3.2.2 Sources of Data, Data Collection Technique and Data Analysis**

This study examines children's issues in Child Care Homes (CCHs) in Nepal using data from State of Children in Nepal, State of CCHs in Nepal, 2016 and the 2011 Population Census Report. It categorizes children into age groups under 5 years, male and female, and adults over 18 years.

## **4. RESULT**

This section deals with the fundamental statistics of the child care homes and the socio demographic characteristics, are defined in the section One and Two, of the children staying in the CCHs as the result of this article. Furthermore, this chapter also shows the child population in Nepal.

### **4.1 Province wise Trend of the Districts Having CCHs**

The following table shows the trends of the districts having CCHs in Nepal, as they lie in respective province, during the year 2017 to the year 2021.

*Table 4. 1 The Trend of the Districts Having CCHs in Nepal, as the provinces*

Year	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P
Koshi	7	15.56	7	15.22	7	15.22	7	15.56	7	16.28
Madhesh	8	17.78	6	13.04	6	13.04	7	15.56	6	13.95
Bagmati	11	24.44	11	23.91	11	23.91	11	24.44	11	25.58
Gandaki	5	11.11	5	10.87	5	10.87	6	13.33	6	13.95
Lumbini	7	15.56	7	15.22	7	15.22	7	15.56	7	16.28



Karnali	4	8.89	5	10.87	5	10.87	3	6.67	3	6.98
Far Western	3	6.67	5	10.87	5	10.87	4	8.89	3	6.98
<b>Nepal</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *The State of Children in Nepal, NCRC, 2017-2021*

The table shows the annual trend of districts having Central Carrier Health Units (CCHs) in every province over the last five years. In Koshi Province, seven districts had CCHs from 2017-2021, while in Madhesh Province, eight districts had CCHs in 2017, six in 2018, 2019 and 2020, and three in 2020-2021. The table further shows that, out of 77 districts in Nepal, 45 districts had Central Committees of Health (CCHs) in 2017, 46 in 2018 and 2019, 45 in 2020, and 43 in 2021.

#### 4.2 Province wise Trend of the CCHs

The table represents the trend of CCHs as per the province in Nepal, during the year 2017 to 2021.

Table 4. 2 *The Trend of the CCHs in Nepal, as the provinces*

Year	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P
Koshi	27	4.77	24	4.50	28	5.25	26	5.32	28	6.17
Madhesh	15	2.65	12	2.25	13	2.44	13	2.66	12	2.64
Bagmati	415	73.32	401	75.23	391	73.36	362	74.03	329	72.47
Gandaki	55	9.72	52	9.76	53	9.94	45	9.20	46	10.13
Lumbini	30	5.30	19	3.56	20	3.75	20	4.09	17	3.74
Karnali	12	2.12	13	2.44	14	2.63	10	2.04	10	2.20
Far Western	12	2.12	12	2.25	14	2.63	13	2.66	12	2.64
<b>Nepal</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *The State of Children in Nepal, NCRC, 2017-2021*

Table 4.2 shows the annual trend of CCHs in Nepal over the last five years, with Koshi Province having 27 CCHs in 2017, Madhesh Province having 15 CCHs, Bagmati Province having 415 CCHs, Gandaki Province having 55, Lumbini Province having 30 CCHs, Karnali Province having 12 CCHs, and Far-Western Province having 12 CCHs.

#### 4.3 Province wise Trend of the children staying in CCHs

Table 4. 3 *The Trend of the Children Staying at CCHs in Nepal, as the provinces*

Province	2017			2018			2019			2020			2021		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
One	328	258	586	280	260	540	337	266	603	270	280	550	325	302	627
Madhesh	252	72	324	211	73	284	232	73	305	112	49	161	98	68	166
Bagmati	5,826	6,056	11,882	5,174	5,695	10,869	5,205	5,592	10,797	3,707	4,629	8,336	3,592	4,609	8,201
Gandaki	753	866	1,619	748	850	1,598	763	864	1,627	581	598	1,179	692	605	1,297
Lumbini	778	582	1,360	391	421	812	413	424	837	243	342	585	225	233	458
Karnali	202	256	458	206	255	461	267	298	565	147	137	284	172	204	376
Far Western	174	126	300	184	116	300	195	116	311	134	121	255	133	123	256
<b>Nepal</b>	<b>8,313</b>	<b>8,216</b>	<b>16,529</b>	<b>7,194</b>	<b>7,670</b>	<b>14,864</b>	<b>7,412</b>	<b>7,633</b>	<b>15,045</b>	<b>5,194</b>	<b>6,156</b>	<b>11,350</b>	<b>5,237</b>	<b>6,144</b>	<b>11,381</b>

Source: *The State of Children in Nepal, NCRC, 2017-2021.*

Table no. 4.3 shows the annual trends of children staying in Child Care Homes (CCHs) in Nepal over the last five years. In Koshi Province, there were 586 children in 2017, 540 in 2018, 603 in 2019, 550 in 2020, and 627 in 2021. In Madhesh Province, there were 324 children in 2017, 284 in 2018, 305 in 2019, 161 in 2020, and 166 in 2021. In Bagmati Province, there were 11,882 children in 2017, 10,869 in 2018, 10,797 in 2019, 8,336 in 2020, and 8,201 in 2021.

#### 4.4 Number and Percentage of the Children staying in surveyed CCHs, as their age group (2021)

The following table refers the Number and Percentage of the Children staying in surveyed CCHs, as their age group, in the survey year 2021, in Nepal.

Table 4. 4The Distribution of the Children Staying in the Surveyed CCHs, as their age and sex composition

Age Group	Male		Female		Total		Total Percent	Number of CCHs (n=63)	Percent
	N	P	N	P	N	P			
> 5	138	41.9	191	58.1	329	100	15.5	45	71.4
5-9	308	48.9	322	51.1	630	100	29.7	61	96.8
10-14	358	46.5	411	53.5	769	100	36.3	61	96.8
15-18	185	49.9	186	50.1	371	100	17.5	55	87.3
18 <	10	45.4	12	54.6	22	100	1.0	6	9.5
Total	999	47.1	1,122	52.9	2,121	100	100	63	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2021*

Table no.4.4 shows the number and percentage of children staying in surveyed Child Care Homes (CCHs) based on age group. Out of 2121 children, 47.1% are boys and 52.9% are girls. The majority are under 5 years old, with 22 remaining in 95% of CCHs.

#### 4.5 Number and Percentage of the district having CCHs (2021)

The following table figures out the distribution of the districts – having CCHs - and child care homes as the population and sampling unit of research process, conducted in the year 2021.

Table 4. 5 The Distribution of the Child Care Homes with reference to districts and the provinces, as their population and sampling composition

Domain	CCHs		Districts having CCHs		Sample district		Sampled CCH	
	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P
<b>Nepal</b>	548	100	47	100	20	100	63	100
Koshi Province	28	5.11	8	17.02	3	15.00	4	6.35
Madhesh Province	28	5.11	6	12.77	2	10.00	2	3.17
Bagmati Province	391	71.35	11	23.40	5	25.00	45	71.43
Gandaki Province	53	9.67	5	10.64	4	20.00	6	9.52
Lumbini Province	20	3.65	7	14.89	2	10.00	2	3.17

Karnali Province	14	2.55	5	10.64	2	10.00	2	3.17
Far-western Province	14	2.55	5	10.64	2	10.00	2	3.17

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.5 displays the number of surveyed Child Care Homes (CCHs) and their provincial distribution, with 63 from 20 districts and sourced from various provinces.

#### 4.6 Number of the surveyed District having CCHs

The table 4.6 shows the number and percentage of the 20 sampled districts, where they are located, as ecological belt defined by Government of Nepal, in the local government operation act, 2018.

Table 4. 6 the distribution of the sampled districts located as ecological belt

Ecological Belt	Number	Percentage
Terai	7	35
Hill	4	20
Inner Madhesh	3	15
Mountain	3	15
Valley	3	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.6 shows that out of 20 surveyed districts, 7 are in the Terai region, 4 in the Hill region, 3 in Inner Madhesh Region, 3 in the Mountain region, and 3 in the Kathmandu Valley.

#### 4.7 Number and Percentage of the children staying in the surveyed CCHs

The table figured below, displays the distribution of the statistics of the children, with reference to gender and the provinces, the province where the children are currently living.

Table 4. 7 the Distribution of the Children Currently Living in the Sampled CCHs, as the Province and Gender

Province	Male		Female		Total		Total Percent	Number of CCHs	P (n=63)
	N	P	N	P	N	P			
Koshi	137	50.9	132	49.1	269	100	12.7	47	74.6
Madhesh	69	52.7	62	47.3	131	100	6.3	32	50.8
Bagmati	172	45.9	202	54.1	374	100	17.6	29	46
Gandaki	147	42	203	58	350	100	16.5	45	71.4
Lumbini	133	40.8	193	59.2	326	100	15.4	42	66.7
Karnali	224	50.6	219	49.4	443	100	20.9	48	76.2
Far-western	100	48.5	106	51.5	206	100	9.7	32	50.8
Not Stated	17	77.3	5	22.7	22	100	1.1	8	12.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>999</b>	<b>47.1</b>	<b>1,122</b>	<b>52.9</b>	<b>2,121</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.7 shows that out of 2,121 children surveyed, 12.7% were from Koshi Province, 6.3% from Madhesh Province, 17.6% from Bagmati Province, 16.5% from Gandaki Province, 15.4% from Lumbini Province, 20.9% from Karnali Province, 9.7% from Far-Western Province.

#### 4.8 Number of the children staying in the surveyed CCHs, as ecological belt

Table 4. 8 the distribution of the children, staying in the surveyed CCHs, as the ecological belts

Ecological belts	Male		Female		Total		Percent	Number of CCHs	P (n=63)
	N	P	N	P	N	P			
Mountain	210	45.9	248	54.1	458	100	21.6	48	76.2
Hill	598	48.4	637	51.6	1235	100	58.2	61	96.8
Valley	49	39.9	74	60.1	123	100	5.8	24	38.1
Inner Madhesh	78	44.3	98	55.7	176	100	8.3	29	46
TeraiMadhesh	47	45.2	57	54.8	104	100	4.9	23	36.5
Not Stated	17	68	8	32	25	100	1.2	9	14.3
Total	999	47.1	1,122	52.9	2,121	100	100	63	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.8 shows that out of 2,121 children in 63 surveyed Central Child Health Centers (CCHs), 21.6% are from mountain, 58.2% from hill, 5.8% from Kathmandu Valley, 8.3% from Inner Madhesh, and 4.9% from TeraiMahdesh regions, with 1.2% staying in unspecified ecological zones.

#### 4.9 Number of the children staying, as their family's religious faith

Table no.4.9, represents the number and percentage of the Children staying in surveyed CCHs, as their family's religion faith.

Table 4. 9 the Distribution of the children, as their family's religion faith

Religion	Male		Female		Total		Total Percent	Number of CCHs	P (n=63)
	N	P	N	P	N	P			
Hindu	664	46.6	761	53.4	1425	100	67.2	63	100
Bauddha	138	49.8	139	50.2	277	100	13.1	44	69.8
Islam	24	54.6	20	45.5	44	100	2.1	11	17.5
Christian	136	45.9	160	54.1	296	100	13.9	32	50.8
Kirant	20	40.8	29	59.2	49	100	2.3	10	15.9
Other	17	56.7	13	43.3	30	100	1.4	9	14.3
Total	999	47.1	1,122	52.9	2,121	100	100	63	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The survey reveals that of the 2,121 children surveyed in 63 Central Christian Churches (CCCHs), 67.2% are from Hindu families, 13.1% from Bauddha, 2.1% from Islam, 13.9% from Christian, and 1.4% from other religion families.

#### 4.10 Number and percentage of the children, as their caste and ethnicities

The table presented below, displays the statistics of the children as their ethnic identities.

Table 4. 10 the distribution of the children in CCHs, as their caste and ethnic identities

Caste/ Ethnicity	Male		Female		Total		Total Percent	Number of CCHs	P (n=63)
	N	P	N	P	N	P			
KhasAarya	237	48.3	254	51.7	491	100	23.2	61	96.8
Indigenous (AadiwashiJanajatis)	255	44.1	323	55.9	578	100	27.3	60	95.2
Marginalized	44	57.9	32	42.1	76	100	3.6	27	42.9
Dalit	314	45.9	370	54.1	684	100	32.3	56	88.9
MadheshiAarya	14	50	14	50	28	100	1.3	11	17.5
Tharu	62	53.9	53	46.1	115	100	5.4	21	33.3
MadheshiDalit	26	59.1	18	40.9	44	100	27	16	25.4
Muslim	16	53.3	14	46.7	30	100	1.4	11	17.5
Other	31	41.3	44	58.7	75	100	3.5	14	22.2
Total	999	47.1	1,122	52.9	2,121	100	100	63	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table no.4.10 shows the caste and ethnicity of children in surveyed Central Child Health Centers (CCHs). Out of 2,121 children, 22.2% are KhasAarya, 23.3% are Indigeneous, 3.6% are Marginalized community, and 32.3% are Dalit. Other ethnic groups include MadheshiAarya, Tharu, Madheshi Dalit, Muslim, and other.

#### 4.11 Number and Percentage of the children, as their orphan-hood

The table represented below, shows the distribution of the children as the types of orphans.

Table 4. 11 the distribution of the orphan children as their types of orphans

Types of cared children	Male		Female		Total		Total Percent	Orphan Percent
	N	P	N	P	N	P		
Double Orphan	342	48.2	368	51.8	710	100	33.5	46.5
Single orphan with Father	196	49.9	197	50.1	393	100	18.5	25.7
Single orphan with Mother	206	48.6	218	51.4	424	100	20	27.8
Total number of Orphan children	744	48.7	783	51.3	1527	100	72.0	100.0
Having both Parents	255	42.9	339	57.1	594	100	28.0	
Total	999	47.1	1,122	52.9	2,121	100	100	
Unaccompanied children*	8	36.4	14	63.6	22	100	3.1	

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.11 shows that out of 2,121 children, 72.0% are orphans, with 46.5% being double orphans, 25.7% being single orphans with parents, and 3.1% being unaccompanied.

#### 4.12 Educational Status of the Children

The article reports that out of Out of 2,121 children in Central Community Home (CCHs), 2,111 are not attending school or college due to underage, disabilities, financial issues, and early enrollment. 83 are tertiary level students.

Table 4. 12 Distribution of Children Staying in Sampled CCHs by their Educational Level

Education Level	Male		Female		Total		Total Percent	No. of CCHs	P (n=63)
	N	P	N	P	N	P			
Pre basic (< 1 grade)	186	42.4	253	57.6	439	100.0	20.8	53	84.1
Basic (1-8 grades)	371	45.1	451	54.9	822	100.0	39.0	63	100.0
Secondary (9-12 grades)	348	51.6	326	48.4	674	100.0	31.9	60	95.2
Tertiary (Bachelor)	87	49.4	89	50.6	176	100.0	8.3	31	49.2
Grand total	992	47.0	1,119	53.0	2,111	100.0	100.0	63	100.0

Source: Field study, 2021

#### 4.13 Number of the children, as the provinces

Table 4. 13 Distribution of the Children's Population in Nepal, distributed as age-sex and provinces

Age Groups		0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	Total	Grand Total	Percentage
KOSHI	Male	206,29 9	259,26 9	290,12 8	251,59 5	<b>1,007,29</b> <b>1</b>	2,166,53 6	46.49
	Female	198,98 9	252,97 3	283,37 4	267,11 1	<b>1,002,44</b> <b>7</b>	2,368,40 7	42.33
	Total	405,28 8	512,24 2	573,50 2	518,70 6	<b>2,009,73</b> <b>8</b>	4,534,94 3	44.32
MADHESH	Male	301,09 5	390,67 1	373,53 0	273,75 8	<b>1,339,05</b> <b>4</b>	2,717,93 8	49.27
	Female	292,40 7	372,31 5	353,67 7	241,03 4	<b>1,259,43</b> <b>3</b>	2,686,20 7	46.89
	Total	593,50 2	762,98 6	727,20 7	514,79 2	<b>2,598,48</b> <b>7</b>	5,404,14 5	48.08
BAGMATI	Male	214,07 8	274,36 6	332,59 3	323,36 4	<b>1,144,40</b> <b>1</b>	2,747,63 3	41.65
	Female	197,70 2	259,15 0	318,91 6	319,37 7	<b>1,095,14</b> <b>5</b>	2,781,81 9	39.37
	Total	411,78 0	533,51 6	651,50 9	642,74 1	<b>2,239,54</b> <b>6</b>	5,529,45 2	40.50
GANDAKI	Male	106,67 7	132,50 5	158,24 3	133,14 1	<b>530,566</b>	1,090,80 8	48.64
	Female	100,03 3	127,22 6	156,57 6	148,30 9	<b>532,144</b>	1,312,94 9	40.53

LUMBINI	Total	206,710	259,731	314,819	281,450	<b>1,062,710</b>	2,403,757	44.21
	Male	231,661	287,690	313,245	244,877	<b>1,077,473</b>	2,140,316	50.34
	Female	219,001	275,547	306,027	272,574	<b>1,073,149</b>	2,358,956	45.49
	Total	450,662	563,237	619,272	517,451	<b>2,150,622</b>	4,499,272	47.80
KARNALI	Male	103,321	114,115	111,912	81,383	<b>410,731</b>	767,923	53.49
	Female	100,095	112,805	111,200	89,542	<b>413,642</b>	802,495	51.54
	Total	203,416	226,920	223,112	170,925	<b>824,373</b>	1,570,418	52.49
	Male	151,826	176,560	184,979	135,073	<b>648,438</b>	1,217,887	53.24
FAR WESTERN	Female	144,779	169,667	181,024	150,842	<b>646,312</b>	1,334,630	48.43
	Total	296,605	346,227	366,003	285,915	<b>1,294,750</b>	2,552,517	50.72
	Male	1,314,957	1,635,176	1,764,630	1,443,191	<b>6,157,954</b>	12,849,041	47.93
Total	Female	1,253,006	1,569,683	1,710,794	1,488,789	<b>6,022,272</b>	13,645,463	44.13
	Total	2,567,963	3,204,859	3,475,424	2,931,980	<b>12,180,226</b>	26,494,504	45.97

Source: Population Census, CBS Nepal, 2011

#### 4.14 Number and Percentage of the children in Nepal as the Age groups

The following table, Table 4.14 reveals a child population of 121,880,226, comprising 45.97% of the total population, with a male population of 50.56% and a female population of 49.44%.

Table 4. 14 Distribution of the Children in Nepal, with age sex composition

Age Groups	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
0-4	1,314,957	1,253,006	2,567,963	21.08
5-9	1,635,176	1,569,683	3,204,859	26.31
10-14	1,764,630	1,710,794	3,475,424	28.53
15-19	1,443,191	1,488,789	2,931,980	24.07
Total	6,157,954	6,022,272	12,180,226	100.00
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>50.56</b>	<b>49.44</b>	<b>100.00</b>	

Source: Population Census, CBS Nepal, 2011

The Nepalese child population, spanning 12,180,226 children, ages 0-9. The highest number is in the 10-14 year age group, while the least is in the 0-4 year age group, indicating a slowing population growth rate.

## **5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

This chapter discusses and narrowed the findings as conclusions with the significant recommendations and contributions to strengthen the residential child care system in Nepal.

### **5.1 Discussion**

#### **5.1.1 Fundamental Data of Child Care Homes in Nepal**

The article examines Nepal's annual trend of districts with Child Child Rights over the past five years, revealing a decreasing trend across various provinces.

#### **5.1.2 Socio - Demographical Data of Child Care Homes in Nepal**

The report shows a fluctuating annual trend of children staying in CCHs in Nepal over the last five years, with a total of 16,529 children in 2017 and 11,381 in 2021.

#### **5.1.3 Age – Sex Composition of the Data**

A 2021 survey surveyed 63 Child Care Homes (CCHs) in 20 districts, revealing a socio-demographic data of 2,121 children aged 10-14, with 47.1% boys and 52.9% girls. The majority were under 5 years old, and 1% were still in CCHs, indicating a need for independent living or return to their communities.

#### **5.1.4 Nature of the Children**

The Nepali Government mandates residential child care homes as the last resort for children, but 28% of non-orphan children remain in these homes. Out of 2,121 children, 72.0% are orphans, with 46.5% being double orphans, 25.7% being single orphans with parents, and 3.1% unaccompanied.

#### **5.1.5 Spatial and Geographical Representation of the Data**

The survey indicates that the majority of children in Central Child Health Centers are from remote regions, primarily from Karnali, Lumbini, Koshi, Far-Western, Madhesh, and Hill regions.

#### **5.1.6 Caste/Ethnicity and Religion of the Children**

The survey shows that 67.2% of children in Nepal's 63 Child Care Homes are from Hindu families, with 32.3% being Dalit, and the remaining children come from various ethnic backgrounds.

#### **5.1.7 Educational Status of the Children**

The survey reveals that 99.5% of 2,121 children are attending school or college, with many underages, disabled, financially disadvantaged, or early enrollees. 8.3% of tertiary level students are still in CCHs.

#### **5.1.8 Number of the Children in Nepal in Age Sex Composition.**

The Nepalese Population Census, 2011 revealed a decreasing population growth rate, with the 10-14 year age group having the highest number of children, compared to the 0-4 year age group.



**5.2 Conclusion:** In conclusion, the number of child care homes in Nepal is decreasing due to government policies and regulations. Girls are more likely to stay in CCHs, with the majority aged 10-14. The government mandates CCHs as the last resort, but 28% of non-orphan children remain. 72% of orphan children are double orphans, mostly from Hindu families. The population is 45.97%, with the highest number aged 10-14.

**5.3 Recommendation:**

Program and policy recommendation: The Nepali government should collaborate with non-governmental organizations, children, and families to develop a strategic plan for a national child protection system and institutional care. They should promote deinstitutionalization and reintegration, monitor and regulate, and ensure proper adherence to laws, policies, and standards.

Further Research: Academic institutions in Nepal should promote research on children's experiences at CCHs, using longitudinal and cross-sectional methods, with government and stakeholders allocating budget and developing research plans.

Contribution of this study: This article will provide a comprehensive understanding of Nepal's socio-demographic data and the number of Child Care Homes (CCHs), thereby aiding in the formulation of policies and programs.

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## Annex 1: Percentage of the children staying in CCHs

Annex one displays the percentage of the children stayed in the CCHs in Nepal, as their gender and province.

Year	2017			2018			2019			2020			2021	
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls
Province														
Koshi	3.9	3.1	3.5	3.9	3.4	3.6	4.5	3.5	4.0	5.2	4.5	4.8	6.2	6.2
Madhesh	3.0	0.9	2.0	2.9	1.0	1.9	3.1	1.0	2.0	2.2	0.8	1.4	2.6	1.9
Bagmati	70.1	73.7	71.9	71.9	74.3	73.1	70.2	73.3	71.8	71.4	75.2	73.4	72.5	68.6
Gandaki	9.1	10.5	9.8	10.4	11.1	10.8	10.3	11.3	10.8	11.2	9.7	10.4	10.1	13.2
Lumbini	9.4	7.1	8.2	5.4	5.5	5.5	5.6	5.6	5.6	4.7	5.6	5.2	3.7	4.3
Karnali	2.4	3.1	2.8	2.9	3.3	3.1	3.6	3.9	3.8	2.8	2.2	2.5	2.2	3.3
Far Western	2.1	1.5	1.8	2.6	1.5	2.0	2.6	1.5	2.1	2.6	2.0	2.2	2.6	2.5
Nepal	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: *The State of Children in Nepal, NCRC, 2017-2021*

## Annex 2: Name of the surveyed location and number of the CCHs

Domain	No of CCHs	No. of districts having CCHs	Sample district	Sample CCH
<b>Nepal</b>	548	47	20	63
Koshi Province	28	8	3	4
Madhesh Province	28	6	2	2
Bagmati Province	391	11	5	45
Gandaki Province	53	5	4	6
Lumbini Province	20	7	2	2
Karnali Province	14	5	2	2
Far Western Province	14	5	2	2

Source: *The State of the Children in Nepal, NCRC, 2019 and Research Design, 2021*

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