

Internship Report

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Program: MBA (Hospital and Health Management)

Organization: Centre for Behavioural Sciences (CBS), IIHMR University

Internship Period: May 2025

Activity Title: Behavioural Insights-Based Consultation on Parenting Package for Foster Families

1. Introduction

As part of the MBA (Hospital and Health Management) program, I got the opportunity to do my internship with the Centre for Behavioural Sciences (CBS) at IIHMR University. The internship involved supporting a two-day national consultation organised in collaboration with UNICEF India on the theme: “Behavioural Insights-Based Conceptualization of Parenting Package for Foster Families.”

This consultation was the first of its kind in India to apply behavioural insights and human-centered design to strengthen the support systems for foster families. As a student, it was a unique experience for me to be part of something that directly contributes to the well-being of children living outside institutional care and to understand the emotional journey of foster parents.

2. Objectives of the Internship

- To learn how behavioral science is used in public health and social care programs.
- To observe and participate in planning and conducting a multi-stakeholder workshop.
- To assist in note-taking, stakeholder coordination, and group activities during the event.
- To get practical exposure to consultation processes, reporting, and program design.
- To understand the real challenges faced by foster parents and how those can be addressed through better policies and tools.

3. Organizational Profile

The Centre for Behavioural Sciences (CBS) is a part of IIHMR University that focuses on using psychology, behavioural economics, and social science to improve public health programs. It supports different organizations like UNICEF, state governments, and NGOs to

design and implement programs in areas like child protection, health communication, and social behaviour change. The CBS team also conducts research and builds tools that help improve real-life outcomes through behavioural approaches.

4. Services Provided by the Organization

- Designing programs using behavioural science and human-centered methods.
- Supporting governments and NGOs with technical advice and communication strategies.
- Organizing consultations, capacity-building workshops, and training sessions.
- Developing parenting toolkits, communication materials, and health behavior interventions.
- Conducting research to understand human behaviour in social and health settings.

5. Key Activities / Projects Undertaken (Other Than Dissertation)

Supporting a Two-Day Consultation on Foster Parenting (May 20–21, 2025)

During my internship, I worked closely with the CBS team in planning and supporting a national-level consultation that focused on developing a parenting package for foster families.

This was based on a rapid study that had earlier been done in Udaipur to understand foster parents' experiences.

Some of the major activities I was part of:

- Helping prepare the materials and set up for the consultation
- Taking structured notes during sessions and group activities
- Participating in group discussions and ideation tasks
- Observing stakeholder mapping and ranking exercises
- Supporting the preparation of the final consultation report

Through this consultation, we explored the different phases of the foster parenting journey—from the first enquiry to the closure of the foster care term.

We helped identify the needs of foster families at each stage, such as counselling support, legal clarity, emotional preparation, and transition management.

We also looked at who supports the families during each phase and how behavioural tools can be used to make their journey smoother.



Presentation of the Foster Parenting Journey during the national consultation on Behavioral Insights-Based Parenting Package, organized by CBS and UNICEF at IIHMR University.

6. Key Learnings from Internship

- Understanding foster care in the Indian context and how different it is from adoption or traditional parenting.
- How behavioral insights like positive framing, empathy, and emotional triggers are used to design programs that truly help people.
- The value of listening to stakeholders—especially people with lived experiences—and building programs around their needs.
- I saw how small things like better communication tools, a welcoming gesture for a child, or counselling sessions can create a big impact.
- I also learned the importance of team coordination, being prepared, and managing time during live events.
- Most of all, I realized how meaningful it is to contribute—even in a small way—to something that can improve the lives of children and families.