

Assessing Licensure Gaps Between Training and Registration in the RCI's Central Rehabilitation Register (CRR)

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ABSTRACT

Background: The Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) regulates training and licensure for psychologists and formally recognizes a defined limited set of clinical psychology programs. The RCI has been quite successful in maintaining standards in education and accreditation for rehabilitation professionals. However, entries in the Central Rehabilitation Register (CRR) suggest a wider range of accepted qualifications than the currently listed pathways. This apparent misalignment highlights the need for clearer mapping between program titles and licensure categories, as well as greater transparency in how the qualifications are evaluated and recorded.

Methods: The study aimed to examine the gaps between RCI's officially recognized programs and the qualifications of professionals licensed in the CRR, and to assess implications for workforce standards in India. A descriptive analysis of CRR data was conducted for "Clinical Psychologist" and "Rehabilitation Psychologist" categories. Information on qualifications, registration status (active or not active), and course types was extracted, organized into tables, and summarized using frequencies and percentages.

Results: The RCI licensure encompassed more course types than officially recognized, including MA/M.Sc., M.Phil., and Ph.D. in Psychology for rehabilitation and clinical roles. Among clinical psychologists (n = 3,890), 25.4% were inactive; among rehabilitation psychologists (n = 2,890), 48.6% were inactive. Overall, eight distinct clinical and six rehabilitation pathways appeared in the CRR, exceeding the three programs publicly recognized for clinical psychology.

Conclusion: The gaps observed between stated accreditation and actual licensure practices may lead to uncertainty for trainees, employers, and service users. Aligning accreditation with licensure, clarifying role categories, and improving transparency and monitoring are urgently needed to uphold professional standards and service quality in mental health care. The alignment can be strengthened through clear equivalence mapping, transparent documentation, and routine data audits, developed in collaboration with RCI, Indian Association of Clinical Psychologist, premier institutes, and state authorities. This can enhance credibility while preserving workforce viability and access to care.

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Keywords: Rehabilitation Council of India, Central Rehabilitation Register, clinical psychologist licensure, accreditation–licensure alignment, workforce standards, data audits, India