



Nurturing Sustainable Future for Marginalised Children Through Life Skills Education: A Social Work Study

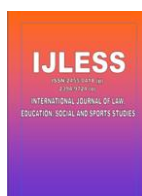
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Abstract

Children are a special group in society that is susceptible to marginalization because of their needs, behavior, and biology. By denying them access to economic, educational, and sociocultural options, marginalization reduces them to helpless positions. Among the many difficulties marginalized children encounter include racism, poverty, homelessness, and school expulsion. They must be involved in the planning and execution of solutions if a bright future is to be guaranteed. Approaches to life skills like empathy, self-awareness, and critical thinking can assist solve children's issues and create a sustainable future. Casework, group work, and community organizing are examples of social work interventions that support mainstreaming and inclusion. This study uses a social work perspective to evaluate how well life skills programs support underprivileged children's sustainable future. We can help youngsters overcome barriers and realize their full potential by teaching them life skills. To solve the various difficulties that marginalized children Specialists, government and non-governmental organizations, social work professionals, and community members must collaborate.

Keywords – Nurturing, Sustainable Future, Marginalised, Children, Life Skills Education, Social Work

Introduction

Concept of Marginalisation

Marginalization occurs when individuals in power make a specific person or group of people feel less important than others. Marginalized people are pushed to the outside or edge of society. As a result, they are denied the same facilities and possibilities as the rest of society. Marginalization sets off a chain reaction of events that worsens the marginalized's situation. Their pleas are frequently overheard, and

society ignores their desires and dreams. The Indian Constitution States that we must cherish our population's diversity and treat all citizens equally.

Marginalization, also known as social marginalization, happens when an individual or group of people has limited ability to do things or access fundamental services or opportunities. It can also be referred to as social exclusion. (Liberties EU, 2021).

The term "marginalization" mostly refers to the way that some individuals and their needs are disregarded in society. A process that keeps people or groups at the periphery of society or pushes them beyond it is called marginalization. Those people or groups that are marginalized can be referred to as outsiders. The goal of this research work is to examine the health status of underrepresented populations and groups in India, including children, women, scheduled tribes , scheduled castes , people with disabilities, migrants, and the elderly.(Zulufkar Ahmad Khanday and Mohammad Akram, 2012)

Meaning of Marginalization

Marginalized communities do not move; the "margin" of society is not a physical location. Marginalization is essentially an analogy that describes how certain people and their needs are overlooked in society. Marginalized persons are relegated to the sidelines, similar to a wallflower at a dance. They are frequently regarded (and seen differently) than the "mainstream" demography of society. Marginalized communities face exclusion as a result of power inequalities and are frequently targeted for discrimination. Unequal power is a critical idea in defining that is marginalized: to be consigned to a minor or powerless position in a community or group. The term "minority" is sometimes used to refer to "non-dominant" social groups. The term "minority," however, indicates a numerical loss. (Power To Fly, 2024)

Types of Marginalization

Marginalization exists in several forms and affects many different groups of people. However, there are three primary types of marginalization: Social marginalization, Economic marginalization, and Political marginalization. (Liberties EU, 2021a)

Review of literature

1)Sadhvi Maithili, 2024,

Life skills helps to children from an early age. Parents and teachers must Provide their children learn and When apply these skills become successful adults in the future. Developing life skills is a lifetime process that helps people develop, mature, and succeed. Building basic life skills is a process that helps youngsters acquire excellent judgment and habits. Life skills help youngsters develop their personalities, talents, and mental and physical abilities. Life skills are useful in everyday situations for youngsters. Totally Life Skills Awareness and applicability are beneficial to the long-term well-being of all children.

Methodology

This study using a descriptive research design and is base on secondary data. Sources for books, journals, and online.

Aim of the Study is Assess the Nurturing Sustainable Future for Marginalised Children Through Life Skills Education : A Social Work Study.

Objectives

1) To Study the Stutus of Marginalised Childrens.

2) To examine the Significance of life skills education for marginalize Childrens to have a sustainable future.

3) To explain the function and role of social work in helping Marginalised Childrens.

Who is Child? (The Hindu, 2012)

1)The 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) In India, the terms 'child' and 'minor' are defined differently by various laws, Under age of 18.

2)Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 – The act defines a child as someone under 14 years old and prohibits them from working in 65 hazardous processes and 18 hazardous occupations.

3)The Plantation Labour Act 1951 : defines 'child' as someone who hasn't completed their 14th year, 'adolescent' is completed their 14th but hasn't reached their 18th, and 'adult' as someone who has.

4)The Motor Transport Workers Act 1961, and the Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act 1966, Both definitions of a child include Under the age of 14.

5)Matrimonial laws such as Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 stating that males cannot attain majority until 21 years old, while females reach majority at 18.

6)According to CRY CEO Puja Marwaha, CRY urges the government to amend the law to prohibit child labor for children aged 0-18, ensuring uniformity in child definitions.

7)The government has introduced the Prevention of Offences Against the Child Bill, 2009, which defines a child as anyone under 18 years old.

Issues of Childrens

India's children are highly vulnerable due to chronic poverty, limited access to medical services, low vaccination rates, malnutrition, street children, female infanticide, child trafficking, child labor in various industries, and child marriage. These factors contribute to their vulnerability and contribute to the country's high child mortality rate under five. Vaccination could have prevented these deaths. India also faces issues like street children, female infanticide, child trafficking, child labor in various sectors, and child marriage. (Byjus, 2021)

Classification of Marginalised Childrens Human rights Watch

In India, children who are excluded, disadvantaged, or subjected to discrimination for a variety of reasons are considered marginalized. These factors include:

1) Socioeconomic Status: Children from scheduled tribes, scheduled castes, and low-income households.

2)Caste and Social Hierarchy: Dalit children are discriminated against in schools and society because they are frequently viewed as "untouchables."

3) Religion: children of Muslim descent may experience discrimination and exclusion. 3)Geographic Location: Children living in slums, migratory communities, or isolated or rural locations. Children with physical, mental, or cognitive disabilities are classified as disabled. 5) Gender: Girls who might experience early marriage, unavailability of education, and discrimination based on their gender. (Human rights Watch, 2014)

Statistics On Marginalised Children

International Statistics

Children who are restricted to the lower or periphery of society are considered marginalized. Participation in mainstream political, cultural, social, and economic activities is prohibited for such a

group. India has the highest number of child laborers under the age of 14 worldwide, with an estimated 12.6 million youngsters working in dangerous jobs (2001 Census). Certain groups of children, such as children of sex workers and street children, experience additional sorts of discrimination. It is reported that many children are transported to neighboring countries. (Devesh Sakshena, 2019)

In the United States, about 600,000 children are mistreated annually. According to recent year government data is available, an estimated 600,000 children (unique instances) suffered from abuse and neglect in 2021. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, the true number of assaulted children is probably underreported. (National Children Alliance, 2022)

Indian Statistics (Search My Child, 2022)

In India, there are 488 million children below age of 18. This represents 39% of the nation's overall population. (Census 2014)

1)Education

The 2011 Census revealed that one-fourth of school-age children are unenrolled, with 99 million dropping out. DISE 2014-15 reports 32 out of 100 children complete their education at appropriate age.

2) Child Abuse and Exploitation

Indian children aged 5-14 work as child laborers, with 33 million employed between 5 and 18. Kidnapping and abduction are common crimes, with daily missings. Crimes against children have increased fivefold in the last decade, with test anxiety being the second leading cause of juvenile suicide. (Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India ADSI, 2014).

3)Girl Child

Over 45 lakh females under the age of 15 are married, and 70 percent of them have two children. In India, women marry 42 percent of minors. (Census 2011).

Concept of Nurturing Sustainable Future

A sustainable future requires alternative futures founded on spirituality, emotional and personal growth, and non-material indicators of advancement. Children require life skills such as data analysis, cultural competency, leadership, critical thinking, environmental literacy, and resilience. Sustainable development addresses current needs without Compromising future generations' ability to meet their own. (Christopher Burr Jones, 2019) The 17 SDGs are as follows: SDG 1: No poverty; SDG 2: No hunger; SDG 3: Good health and well-being; SDG 4: Quality education; SDG 5: Gender equality; SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation; SDG 16: Peace, justice, and strong institutions; and SDG 10: Reduced disparities. are beneficial to marginalized children's sustainable future. (Wikipedia,2022)

Meaning and Components of Life Skills Education

Through life skills education, a student or Childrens gains the capacity to manage his life effectively and plan out life-related activities. It is a form of education where the abilities are intended to make the child effective so that he can judge his own knowledge and intelligence in strange circumstances. so that he can develop into a capable citizen. (Sinha Vaishnavi, 2025). Life skills Education aims to teach learners appropriate knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to promote healthy behavior, prevent risky behavior, and influence knowledge and attitude components. It involves learning to know, do, live together, and be, fostering memory, reasoning, aesthetics, and communication skills. (Sunitha Ranjan, 2020)

Components of Life Skills (Tchiki Davis, 2024)

Life skills are psychological abilities that enable individuals to navigate life's challenges. They involve interpersonal, cognitive, and behavioral abilities, helping people flourish in various spheres. According

to the World Health Organization, life skills help make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathize, and manage life effectively. They can be applied to personal or environmental changes to enhance health.

Life skills are categorized into three types: Thinking skills, social skills, and Emotional skills. Thinking abilities involve problem-solving and creativity, social skills involve building connections, communication, and productive engagement, and emotional skills involve understanding oneself, handling emotions, and exhibiting positive behavior.

CBSE introduced life skills in 2003-2004, and NEP 2020 emphasizes vocational education in secondary schools. It encourages students to choose courses, promoting problem-solving, teamwork, critical thinking, and decision-making, promoting inquiry-based, creative learning. (Jannat Fatima Farooqui, Rohit Gupta, 2022)

Concept of Social Work

Professional social work empowers individuals and communities, fostering social development and unity. It involves understanding human behavior, social, cultural, and economic structures. Social workers address social inequities, housing shortages, discrimination, unemployment, poverty, substance misuse, home conflict, and child disability. (Social Work License Map, 2023)

Social Work Basic methods: It includes another three parts such as (1) social case work (2) social group work (3) community organisation. And Auxiliary methods: It also includes 3 parts. These are – (1) social action (2) social work administration (3) social research.

Discussion

Significance of Life skills for Nurturing Sustainable future for Marginalised Children

Categorization of life skills Thinking, social and emotional skills are the three types into which the WHO has classified the ten fundamental skills. (Anne syomwene, 2019)

I)Thinking Skills:

1)Creative thinking: In our daily lives, creative thinking enables us to react nimbly and adaptably. Beyond our immediate experience, it involves considering other options and the different outcomes of our choices or inaction. Creative thinking is a new approach to problem solving that consists of four elements: originality, fluency, adaptability, and elaboration.

2)Critical thinking: It allows us to evaluate the elements that affect our thoughts and behaviors and to objectively interpret data and experiences.

3)Decision making: Making positive choices in our lives is beneficial.

4)Problem-solving: These abilities enable us to not only manage our issues transform into possibilities.

II)Social Skills:

1)Self Awareness: Understanding our strengths, weaknesses, values, outlook, character, needs, desires, aspirations, and feelings is crucial for personal growth and self-acceptance, despite imperfections.

2)Effective communication: Culturally acceptable expression is the capacity to communicate both verbally and nonverbally in a condition that is acceptable to the cultural context.

3)Interpersonal relationship skills: Positive relationships foster positive relationships, contribute to mental and social well-being, and can be ended constructively.

4)Empathy: For those with mental illnesses who could experience stigma and exclusion from others who depend on them for assistance, it is essential to be sensitive to another person's solution.

III)Emotional Skills:

1)**Coping with stress:** Recognizing stress sources and their impact is crucial for managing it. This can be achieved by altering our environment, lifestyle, and learning relaxation techniques.

2)**Coping with emotions:** Emotion recognition is crucial for understanding our own and others' emotions, their influence on behavior, and responding appropriately to these emotions.

Role of Social Work in Nurturing Sustainable Future for Marginalised Children

Social workers play a Important role in fostering safe and healthy families and communities, with a particular focus on child welfare, protecting vulnerable children and families from neglect or abuse, often working with families grappling with systemic issues like poverty and trauma.

Social Work Services for Marginalised Childrens (Anita Gonzalez, 2024)

1)**Assessments:** The process involves conducting home visits and meetings with family, caregivers, and other significant individuals in a child's life to assess if their needs are being met.

2)**Resource consultation:** The goal is to provide a child and their family with essential resources such as housing, food assistance, counseling, public benefits, career services, and medical care.

3)**Case plan development and referrals:** Social workers assist clients in cases of neglect or abuse by referring them to resources such as anger management courses, parenting classes, domestic violence support groups, counseling, and drug addiction programs.

4)**Foster care resource:** The process involves providing a stable, supportive resource or foster family to a child in custody, while the birth family collaborates with social workers to establish a reunification plan.

5)**Adoption:** Family reintegration is the primary objective, but some children are unable to return home and are adopted.

6)**Independent living:** Social workers assist youth who leave care at age 18 by creating an independent living plan.

7)**Advocacy:** Macro social work involves collaborating with the community to advocate for change in public policies affecting children and families.

8)**Counselling:** Social workers provide comprehensive guidance and counseling to help children avoid various problems and ensure they are well-supported and supported.

9)Psychosocial Rehabilitation

10)Provide Moral Education and Legal Awerness

Constitutional Guarantees for Children (Center for Child Rights, 2024)

1.All children between the ages of 6 and 14 are guaranteed a basic education through the right to free and compulsory education (Article 21A).

2.Protection from hazardous employment (Article 24): Prohibits involvement in hazardous job by children under the age of 14.

3.Article 39E: Protection from Abuse and Exploitation: Prevents youngsters from being compelled to work in inappropriate jobs because of financial need.

4.Article 39(f): Right to equal chances and healthy development: Provides protection for children and young people against exploitation and desertion.

5.Article 45, "Right to Early Childhood Care and Education," guarantees that all children under the age of six receive such services.

Government Schemes for Marginalised Children (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2023)

1)Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP): The Sambal sub-scheme of Mission Shakti's BBBP program seeks to safeguard and preserve girls, eliminate gender-biased sex-selective elimination, and provide education for girls.

2)Anganwadi services (under SakshamAnganwadi and Poshan 2.0 offers the eligible beneficiaries the following six services nationwide via the Anganwadi Centers (AWCs) platform: Nutrition & Health Education, Immunization, Health Check-up, Referral Services, Supplementary Nutrition (SNP), and Preschool Non-Formal Education.

3)POSHAN Abhiyaan: POSHAN Abhiyaan aims to solve the country's nutritional issues through a variety of strategies, such as ICT application, convergence, community mobilization, behavioral change & Jan Andolan, capacity building, incentives and rewards, and innovations.

4)Mission VatsalyaScheme: The Ministry is working with the State and UT Governments to provide services for Children in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP) and Children in Conflict with Law (CCL) under the Mission Vatsalya Scheme, which is a centrally supported program. The program's Child Care Institutions (CCIs) provide age-appropriate education, access to career training, leisure, health care, and counseling, among other things.

Conclusion

Children's special needs, conduct, and biology make them social outcasts. In addition to dealing with a variety of issues, marginalized people struggle with decision-making, self-esteem, confidence, and problem-solving. In addition to working with families dealing with systemic issues including poverty, racism, addiction, and generational trauma, child welfare social workers concentrate on safeguarding children and families who are at risk. School instructors, psychiatrists, social workers, and human resource managers should concentrate on building life skills in order to support marginalized children, as these abilities are essential for their effective development.

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