



Protection of Child Rights in India: Role of Teachers

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Abstract: The main purpose of this Paper is to throw light on the rights of children and discusses how the child rights are being violated irrespective of schools and homes both by educators and parents. Teachers and parents are becoming more conscious about education of their children. Almost all schools inflict corporal punishment on students for various reasons and most parents beat their children. In the Name of discipline, children are physically ill-treated and humiliated. The present paper discusses the harms of corporal punishment to a child and how it takes the shape of hatred, terror and fear in the nascent minds. Examination stress, rising expectations from our children and students has led to increasing depression among students. This paper also focuses on the role of a teacher and parents as a leader, a torchbearer, a mentor or a guide with love, care and Understanding of the child to provide best protection, opportunities and assistance in order to Ensure them the best future.

Keywords: Child, Child right, Human Right, Teachers, Parents

"The future of a nation can be seen through the eyes of the children."- Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru

Introduction:

Child rights are fundamental freedom and the inherent rights of all human beings below the age of 18. These rights apply to every child, irrespective of the child's parents/ legal guardian's race, color, sex, creed, or other status. The essential message is equality of opportunity. All children should have the same rights and should be given the same opportunity to enjoy an adequate standard of living. Human Rights apply to all age groups; children have the same general human rights as adults. A safe childhood is a human right. Across the world, children are denied their human rights. Childhood forms the foundation of human life. Ensuring child rights is the first step, towards ensuring human rights. Child rights and its accordance is the pillar for national construction, a brighter tomorrow (Shehla, F.2012).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 2006) sets out the rights that must be realized for children to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. It reflects a new vision of the child. According to UNCRC, child rights are minimum entitlements and freedoms that should be afforded to all persons below the age of 18 regardless of race, color, gender, language, religion, opinions, origins, wealth, birth status or ability and therefore apply to all people everywhere. All children are entitled to the rights guaranteed by the laws of our country and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The UNCRC obligates all the governments to respect and ensure that children get a fair and equitable deal in society. The CRC under Article 4, states "With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, State Parties shall undertake such measures to the



maximum extent of their available resources, and where needed, within, the framework of international cooperation." Children status in society, among many other factors, also means that they are more vulnerable to sexual abuse and other forms of violence and exploitation and they do not have any political inconsistency to represent their interests (Sandeep & Madhumati 2003). To understand the interests of the child, one must know their rights. The Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC) adopted by the general assembly of the United Nations on 20th November 1989 defines basic rights of children covering multiple needs and issues. The constitution of India guarantees all children certain rights, which have been specially included for them. These include:

1. Right to free and compulsory elementary education for all children in the 6-14 year age group (Article 21 A)
2. Right to be protected from any hazardous employment till the age of 14 years.(Article 24)
3. Right to be protected from being abused and forced by economic necessity to enter occupations unsuited to their age or strength (Article 39(e))
4. Right to equal opportunity and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and guaranteed protection of childhood and youth against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment (Article 39 F)

Need for the study: There is a very need to study about child rights India. Now-a- days emerging corporate schools violate the child rights in India. Children's Child hood days turned into strategic days.

Objectives of the Study:

- 1.To study about the violations of child rights at schools and homes in India

2. To study about the role of teachers in the protection of child rights in India

Methodology: Secondary sources of data used for this study like journals, magazines, newspapers and internet sources also used.

Violations of Child Rights at School and Home

All children need protection because of their social, economic, or even geographical location; some children are more vulnerable than others and need special attention. The boy child is as much a victim of abuse-physical and emotional –as the girl child, although the girl child remains more vulnerable because of her lower status in society as a whole. Boys are victims of corporal punishment at school and at home; many are sent, and often even sold for labor, while many are victims of sexual abuse. Child abuse is not a phenomenon of a particular class or a community. It occurs across socio-economic, religious, cultural, racial, and ethnic groups. Research by various groups in the past have clearly brought forth some of the following child violation issues occurred at school and home e.g. Corporal Punishment and Examination Stress and Domestic Violence

Corporal Punishment: Corporal punishment is the use of physical force with the intention of causing pain. It is often used as a measure to discipline children. Children are at the receiving end from parents, teachers and non-teaching school authorities. Right to discipline children cannot be at the cost of children's right to development and participation. In fact children right to participation alone can set the tone for discipline. In any case there is no religion or law that allows corporal punishment. Victims of corporal punishment during childhood are more likely to hit their



children, spouses or friends in adulthood. There are three types of corporal punishment as being explained here:

Physical Punishment: It is the most ineffective form of discipline as it rarely motivates an individual. It does more harm than good to the child. This punishment may deter a child from repeating the act of indiscipline to some extent, but it cannot improve her/his understanding of the subject or make her/him more intelligent. In fact it has numerous negative consequences on the child. Many street and working children have pointed out physical punishment at school as one of the reasons for running away from school and also from their families and home e.g. Making them stand for the whole day in the sun, on bench; holding and twisting their ears, tying the hands, do sit ups, caning and pinching, keeping the school bags on their heads etc. Nobody has any legal or moral authority to physically punish children simply because they are unable to control the situation in any other way.

– **Emotional Punishment:** The punishment of such kind leads to creation of anger, resentment and low self-esteem. It contributes to feelings of helplessness and humiliation, robbing a child of her/his self-worth and self-respect, leading a child to withdrawal or aggression it even has its effect on the academic performance of a child. It teaches children violence and revenge as solutions to problems e. g. slapping by the opposite sex, Scolding, abusing and humiliating, make them stand at the back of the class, suspending from school, Pinning and labeling paper on their back and removing the shirts of the boys etc.

– **Negative Reinforcement:** This type of punishment has negative impact on the psychology of young minds as it

usually takes the shape of hatred, terror and fear in the nascent minds. Children might imitate what the adults are doing. Children begin to believe that it is good to use violence and there is nothing wrong with it. Children may even assault their own parents or teachers in realization e.g. detention during the break and lunch, locking them in a dark room, call for parents or asking the children to bring explanatory letters from the parents, keeping the children outside the school gate, making the child clean the premises, Sending the children to the Principal, making them teach in the class, Giving oral warnings and letter in the diary or calendar, deducting marks ,excessive imposition and make the children pay fines etc.

Examination Stress: India's education system has made the world inquisitive of the brains we produce. Strict discipline along with a competitive examination system has been the way to success. All parents want to put their children into schools that produce good results. The pressures of cut throat competition, rising expectations from our children and students, good results being the main stake for the reputation of a school or a teacher and inability to help children cope with all this has led to increasing depression amongst students, leading to growing number of student suicides. The brains are dying and if we do not open our eyes to this reality now, we may lose out on a whole generation of bright young people very soon. The schools will have to make the first move and also perhaps start counseling the parents along with children. **Domestic**

Violence: Domestic violence is physical, psychological, or emotional abuse that occurs in or around the home between family or household members. Domestic violence includes all forms of abuse



resulting from conflicts or misunderstandings that take place at home.

Violence in the home is a serious threat to the well-being of children. It can happen in wealthy homes and in poor homes, and has serious harmful effects on victims, but can be difficult to identify. Violence between adults or other members of the household and against children can have negative effects on child development. Domestic violence can include emotional, physical, or psychological abuse. Because cultural and social norms often allow for heavy punishments or child beating, domestic violence against children is often overlooked and under-reported.

Role of Teachers in protection of Child Rights:

A teacher's role in the life on an individual crucial and a good teacher occupies a very significant place in the minds of young students. After parents, it is the teacher who influences a child most, and contributes to the shaping of his or her personality. A teacher can take following steps to protect child rights:

Participation and enrollment campaign: A teacher can run non-formal education centers for working children. He can conduct primary school enrollment campaign and encourage children's participation in matters that affect their lives. He can build children's capacities to participate effectively and involve children in organizing events. He should give them responsibilities and at the same time give them the guidance and engage children in discussions/debates/quiz and other recreational activities. He should encourage education and participation of girls through creative measures within the classroom. Training and sensitization activities with teachers on child rights

must become a regular feature by various schools on a regular basis.

Motivating parents: A teacher can orient the parents and community leaders to involve in the child labour education programme. He should motivate the parents of those children who have completed 5 years of age to join the regular schools and to encourage the school going children to continue their education. He should discuss child rights issues with the parents in the PTA meetings.

Open to learning attitude: A teacher can motivate the drop-out children below 15 years of age and enrolling them in the regular schools. He should make children feel it is worthwhile attending class. He should be a Friend, Philosopher and Guide to the child.

Check on child abuse: A teacher should understand children's rights as human rights. He can get information on abuse privately and giving comfort to the child and evolving peer groups to check drug abuse or any other form of abuse taking place within the school premise is a good practice that schools must adopt.

Create interest: A teacher should make the classes interesting and informative.

Avoid punishments & Discrimination: A teacher should avoid corporal punishment and discrimination. He should use positive reinforcement techniques like dialogue and counseling to discipline children. He can take active steps to reach out to children from minority and other discriminated groups.

Democratic outlook: A teacher should be democratic but not unstructured.

Providing conducive environment: A teacher should create child-friendly environment in school. 'Spare the rod and save childhood' should be the slogan and message for children. All teachers



can help in creating and strengthening a protective environment around children.

Check dropout rate: A teacher should follow-up on girls who drop out or attend irregularly to ensure it does not continue.

Keen observer: A teacher should be a keen observer because observations are important, as they alone will help to assess the growth and progress of a child.

A good counselor: A school must have a trained counselor to help both the children and their parents/guardians. A teacher should help the child express her/his problem either through drawing and painting or by writing a story or simply talking to the school counselor/social worker or to a friend in the class.

Regular and periodic PTAs: a teacher can suggest the school authorities to provide a platform for dialogue between teachers and parents on the child's overall development.

Provide facilities: Basic facilities like toilets and drinking water for children of both the sex must be made available within the school premises. Adequate breaks for toilet and drinking water must form a routine.

Conclusion: Education, as a tool to protect rights helps to promote the welfare of the society. The basic values of the society can be achieved through it. Everyone in society has a duty to protect children and their rights, including children themselves. In this 21st century, when we Indian are busy counting our economic and political success both at national and international level, still is much needed to be done to improve the status of children in India for the coming future (Narula, G. 2005). Parents, teachers, Community, members, local

leaders, religious leaders, doctors, members of parliament, and even the president all play a role in protecting children. The family, especially parents and guardians, have the primary responsibility to raise children and ensure their safety.

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