Role of NGO’s in Protecting Child Rights

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Abstract: Any society’s most valuable resource is its children. They represent a country’s future. Thus, the governments of several nations and numerous other organisations, including Non-Governmental Organizations, are making efforts to preserve their rights globally (NGOs). Despite these efforts, the so-called civilised society of this globalised globe does not yet adequately protect children's rights. According to a survey, "about 1.2 billion children, or more than half of all children globally, are at danger for an early end to their childhood due to poverty, conflict, and prejudice against girls. Many of these at-risk kids reside in nations where two or three of these serious risks are present simultaneously. The situation is the same in India as well. Even after 72 years of independence, India's society is not completely free of evil practices that violate children's rights. Various studies and reports have painted a clear picture of the bleak state of children in India. "According to the 2011 Census, India has 158.7 million children aged 0-6 years, accounting for approximately 16% of the total Indian population." "It is estimated that approximately 40% of India's children are vulnerable to or experiencing difficult circumstances, such as children without family support, children forced into labour, abused/trafficked children, children on the streets, vulnerable children, children affected by substance abuse, by armed conflict/civil unrest/natural calamity, etc., as well as children who have committed offences and come into conflict with the law." This article aims to present the situation of children in India and Karnataka, particularly in terms of nutritional intake and crime against children.

Keywords: Child rights, Non-Governmental Organization, Malnutrition, Child abuse, Crime against children.

Introduction:

'Child Rights' refers to those human rights that are critical for a child's overall development. These are fundamental rights that give meaning to their lives. However, in today's world, not all children have equal access to their rights. Children, more than any other group, are the most neglected, exploited, and vulnerable to almost all forms of social evil. Infanticide child marriage, child trafficking, child labour, child prostitution, drug-addicted children, and other child-related issues are widespread in developing countries.

This article discusses the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in child protection in great detail. Over the last two decades, India's growth has made a tremendous contribution to global human development. In India, extreme poverty has been reduced to 21%, infant mortality has been more than halved; 80% of women now give birth in a health facility, and two million fewer children are out of school. These are significant accomplishments for a country that contains nearly one-sixth of the world's population. However, challenges remain, and India's economic successes have not resulted in improved quality of life for all, particularly women and children.

Malnutrition (38.4% of children are stunted), poor learning outcomes (only 42.5 percent of children in grade three can read a grade one text), vaccine-preventable diseases, and child labour all persist. Child rights violations are a major issue in today's world. Although every human being is entitled to certain basic rights and privileges, in our society, not all groups of people enjoy these rights equally, and one such group is children, who are frequently neglected, exploited, and deprived of their basic rights and privileges.

India is the only large country in which more girls die than boys, with an inverse sex ratio of 900 girls born for every 1000 boys at birth. Globally, boys die at a higher rate than girls under the age of five, but girls die at a higher rate in India. Children from rural areas, slums and urban poor families, scheduled castes, tribal communities, and other disadvantaged populations face a slew of challenges, including poverty, malnutrition, access to quality health services, child marriage, poor school attendance, low learning outcomes, a lack of sanitation facilities, hygiene, and improved water.

A number of provisions in the Indian Constitution and other governmental acts, laws, policies, programmes, and schemes aim to ensure equal social status for children as well as the protection of their basic rights. Several non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have also been working on the national level to protect and promote children's rights. Despite such efforts, millions of children in India are still living in great distress, not understanding what it means to be a child. As a result, their childhood is ruined and their dreams remain unfulfilled. Assam is also not free in this regard.

India has the world's largest adolescent population, at 253 million, with every fifth person aged 10 to 19. India will benefit socially, politically, and economically if this large number of adolescents is kept safe, healthy, educated, and equipped with information and life skills to help the country continue to develop. Adolescent girls, on the other hand, are especially vulnerable to
poor nutritional status, early marriage, and childbearing, limiting their ability to live empowered, healthy lives, affecting the next generation. India has the world's highest number of child brides. In terms of child marriage prevalence, India ranks fourth (after Bangladesh, Nepal, and Afghanistan) out of the eight South Asian countries.

More than half of adolescent girls (54%) have anaemia compared to 30% of boys, and the issue of low BMI in adolescent girls, combined with the challenges of child marriage and adolescent pregnancies, has an intergenerational impact. India has one of the highest rates of violence against women, with 60-90 percent of girls experiencing sexual harassment/violence in public places. Disasters such as flooding, droughts, earthquakes, refugee flows, and climate change all have an impact on the country's rate of development.

Karnataka

Karnataka is divided into three geographical zones: the coastal region, the hilly region along the Western Ghats, and the plains of the Deccan plateau. Karnataka has invested in areas of social development such as health and education as a result of its impressive economic growth rate over the last two decades. However, the state's northern region, which has a sizable population of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and minorities, continues to lag on several human development indicators and has high rates of child labour, child marriage, and child trafficking. Bengaluru, Mysuru, and other smaller cities are rapidly urbanising, attracting a large influx of adults and children from the state's northern region and other states. Approximately 20.9 percent of the population lives in poverty. As part of its Vision 2025 goals, the state is developing a nutrition policy that is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and World Health Assembly targets, and it is expanding the nutrition supplementation net through near universal targeted schemes.

Karnataka is one of the few states that implements decentralization processes as per the 73rd and 74th Amendments of the Constitution, empowering local institutions and communities to participate in development activities.

The neonatal mortality rate is 19 per 1000 live births, and the maternal mortality ratio is 133 per 100,000 live births, to name a few key indicators for the state (Source: Sample Registration System 2015). According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS), 35.4 percent of under-five children are stunted, 19.5 percent of children under the age of five are wasted, and 8.4 percent of children are severely wasted. The state's rural sanitation coverage is 100 percent (Swachh Bharat Mission MIS). However, according to NFHS 5 (2019), only 74.8 percent of the population living in households has access to improved sanitation.

According to the findings of the Annual Status of Education Report 2016, reading and arithmetic scores in public-funded schools in the early grades have improved after ten years. According to NFHS-5, 21.3% of women aged 20-24 marry before the age of 18.

Tumkur
Data on children aged 0 to 6 were collected during census enumeration in all districts, including Tumkur. There were a total of 265,742 children aged 0 to 6, compared to 308,162 in 2001 census. There were 135,671 males and 130,071 females out of a total of 265,742. The child sex ratio in 2011 was 959, compared to 949 in 2001. Children aged 0 to 6 made up 9.92 percent of Tumkur District in 2011, compared to 11.92 percent in 2001. When compared to the previous census in India, there was a net change of 2%.

**Advancing children’s rights and well-being**

Karnataka has invested in social development areas such as health and education as a result of its impressive economic growth rate over the last two decades. It is said that the seeds of success are best planted in women and children in every nation on Earth. Women and children have equal rights in India, but people violate those rights, resulting in crime against them. It is a critical issue that India has been dealing with for a long time. Their minds are consumed by concern and fright as a result of the increasing violence, which has an impact on their growth and development. Though the country's economy is improving, some people still do not receive the dignity and respect they deserve and are looked down upon.

This is the situation; every parent wants their child to study and become a better person, but in an underprivileged society, few children under the age of fifteen are working in a variety of chemical manufacturing factories or as labour in a construction project. They are not provided with the necessary education, nor are they provided with a better environment in which to learn, play, and make their childhood fascinating. On the other hand, we've seen people still discriminate against mothers who give birth to a boy child. Even though it is the twenty-first century, our country is still developing in this field.

In our society, there are many people who simply fail women. Female infanticides, female foeticides, the dowry system, violence, discrimination, and a slew of other issues.

Nutritional chart of major States

Every day, violence against women and children grows at an alarming rate. Because of Indian culture and values, some forms of violence are not considered crimes. They go unreported and unsubstantiated.

Child Marriage Cases in Karnataka

Role of NGOs in Child Welfare:

Governments, civil society, and concerned citizens are critical stakeholders in any programme designed to revitalise a community’s needs and lift it out of trouble. Children are India’s largest and most marginalised community. India’s children face life-changing challenges at every stage of their lives, including birth. Strategic and consistent intervention by NGO workers in the form of on-the-ground support and activism, as well as collaboration with officials, is required to ensure that every child has a better future.

‘Life becomes harder for us when we live for others, but it also becomes richer and happier’
- Albert Schweitzer

Social workers are professionals who work to improve overall well-being and to meet the basic and complex needs of communities and others. Social workers work with a wide range of populations and individuals, with a particular emphasis on those who are vulnerable, oppressed, or impoverished. Men become wealthy only when they give. Great service results in great rewards. Social work is an active profession that seeks to assist individuals and families with a variety of issues. The specific work that social workers do is determined by their field. Consider a child welfare social worker, or case worker, who spends each day dealing with fosterchildren, bio-parents, and thus the juvenile courts.

Here is how India’s child development NGOs working for child development: Eliminating child labour:

Today, ten million children work 14-16 hour shifts in farming, stone cutting, embroidery, and mining. India is one of 74 countries with a "significant incidence of hazardous working conditions" (US Department of Labor report - "List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor"). NGOs collaborate with trade organisations to educate businesses on the dangers of child labour. Locals in villages and cities are also tasked with reporting child labour in businesses. One of the most effective ways to end child trafficking and labour is to reduce its demand. Furthermore, the NGO works with vulnerable communities across India, as well as state and national level governance, to address child labour, abuse, corporal punishment, trafficking, and violations of child rights.

Despite having the largest education system in the world, India has low literacy due to low enrollment and high dropout rates.

1. Promoting the value of child education in "safe schools" that do not discriminate based on gender, caste, or socioeconomic status.
2. 'Inclusive Learner Friendly Environments' in slums and villages (for children aged 3 to 18 years).
3. As members of the Right to Education Forum, advocate for a financial framework that supports the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act of 2009.
4. Consult with families about enrolling their children in school and providing admission assistance.
5. Use child-friendly and interactive teaching-learning methods to create fun and meaningful experiences in school.
6. Fund libraries, computers, sports equipment, and Mobile Learning Centers.
7. Reintroducing out-of-school children to the classroom.
8. Bringing street children and child labourers back to school.

Rehabilitation and relief:

The NGO collaborates with the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme, the Department of Health and Family Welfare, and Panchayat Raj Institutions to develop an ecosystem for infant health and survival. The NGO does the following in India's most backward and marginalised communities:

1. Community Healthcare Workers (CHWs) are trained to provide mothers, newborns, and pregnant women with immediate health care.
2. Pushing for better policy implementation.
3. Assisting India’s public health and nutrition access.
4. Educating communities about prenatal care, hospital deliveries, breastfeeding, and nutrition and medicine access.
5. Cooking demonstrations, health camp setup, and nutrition rehabilitation for malnourished children.
6. Providing medical assistance in disaster-affected areas.

Case workers for the Child Protective Services (CPS) are specifically authorised to remove children from unsafe homes and place them in state custody. They are acting as a result of obvious neglect, abuse, danger, and concern for their safety. Several clients come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and are impoverished, homeless, or abused. Permanency case workers, on the other hand, work with children and youths in permanent foster care. They work to find long-term care providers or adoptive parents for their clients' children.

The expression Non-Governmental Organization can be defined as follows:

A Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) is a social service organisation that works to make society a better and stronger place. True to its name, continues to bring about positive change by bringing together people who share a common vision of a developed India and giving back to the society that has helped us. All great missions have humble beginnings and then embark on their journey.

The relevance of the organisation as a concept in theory and in practise, as a vibrant means of ensuring the concern of the citizens of this country to derive protection in terms of the rule of law, cannot be overstated in a country like India, which is the world's largest democracy, the largest country in terms of land, and the most populated country in the world. The Indian constitution provides an extraordinary and valuable fundamental right for the protection of citizens' rights. These rights, which include the directive principles of state policy, are relied on by NGOs in their critical role in assisting citizens in enforcing their rights in India.

They aim to achieve, eradicate economic conditions, eliminate child labour, and uplift and instil confidence in the society’s
weaker segments. NGO services specialise in assessing individual strengths and needs, setting personal goals, and providing environments that promote overall societal growth and development.

The role of NGO’s in development of children:

NGOs such as Save the Children and Young People also work to strengthen anti-childlabour laws by providing compelling evidence that serves as the foundation for legislation. Legislative victories include the Child Labor Prohibition and Regulation Act, which was strengthened by NGO intervention.

Despite having the world's largest education system, India's attainment is low due to low enrollment and high dropout rates. Community Healthcare Workers (CHWs) are trained to provide mothers, newborns, and pregnant women with immediate health care. Policy implementation should be improved and increased. Educating communities about prenatal care, hospital deliveries, breastfeeding, and drug and nutrition access Providing nutrition and aiding India's health, Cooking and preparation, demonstration, setting up health camps, and providing nutrition and rehabilitation to malnourished children are all part of the job.

Suggestions

A general recommendation to any or all non-governmental organisations is that they focus on a specific area of focus. This is frequently due to the fact that an NGO that solely focuses on all aspects of society cannot have experience in any of those aspects. As a result, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are unable to perform to their full potential. Whereas if an NGO focuses solely on one area of focus, it will be able to devote its full potential to resolving that issue.

Conclusion

NGO's work tirelessly to protect women and children forced into child labour, children facing abuse in the community, child trafficking, and women and children affected by a disaster or emergency situation. It rescues women and children who are victims of various forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation, violence, and physical abuse. The execution of programmes in India's most remote locations is driven by the premise of ensuring happy and safe childhoods for all women and children. The partners with civil society organisations, child-led initiatives, governments, and other key stakeholders to achieve this goal.

The work of non-governmental organisations has reduced infant mortality, chronic malnutrition, child trafficking, and increased access to education. These are part of a broader strategy to engage governments, civil society, and the community. All of these initiatives necessitate significant investment and infrastructure around the clock, and there is always a cause for which the NGO works tirelessly. Donate online to become an instant part of a movement to give every child a future, regardless of their circumstances. You will not only receive tax benefits, but also the satisfaction of knowing that you truly made a difference and contributed to society.

NGO campaigns that are fully engaged have reduced mortality, chronic deficiency disease, child trafficking, and have hyperbolic access to education. These are part of a broader strategy to engage governments, civil society, and the community. These initiatives necessitate significant investment and infrastructure around the clock, and there is always a cause for which the NGO is tirelessly working.

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