

Indigenous Social Work Practice – A Need for Promoting Child Rights Knowledge Among School Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Social Work is a noble profession with the blend of scientific knowledge and humanistic practice (Hilaria Sounadri). School social work is a specialty area of the practice of social work that focuses on the performance and the bio-psychosocial factors that affect students' school achievement and school social worker carries out the psychosocial service (Ozbesler and Duyan 2009) towards children and other stakeholders of children in schools. Hence Social work in school setting as an indigenous social work practice has greater significance in the well-being of children. Today child rights violation is an issue of social concern, abuses on children at home, school and in the community are multifaceted and the problems of children have become more complex leading to cases of lack of interest for schooling among children, school dropouts, child suicide, missing children etc growing intensely. One of the reasons for such a situation of children seems to be a lack of knowledge on child rights among school teachers and absence of their role in the care and protection of children. This brings to the attention of the social work practice that as champions of human rights, school social workers have a scope of promoting child rights knowledge among school teachers. Hence the researcher intended to conduct a study among school teachers with regard to their knowledge on Child Rights in Udupi District Karnataka. The main aim of the present study is to understand the level of Knowledge on Child Rights among school teachers. Descriptive research design has been adopted. The universe of the study consists of school teachers in Udupi District, Karnataka. About 782 samples of school teachers were selected by adopting Proportionate stratified random sampling technique. Self Prepared Questionnaire on Child Rights Knowledge was used. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) 23 version was used for analyzing the data. The result portrays that more than half 52.7 percent of the school teachers are having low level of knowledge on child rights. The teachers working in Government schools have high level of Knowledge on Child Rights than the teachers working in the management schools. To conclude the school teachers who are working in unaided schools with degree qualification are having low level of knowledge on child rights. Hence this category of teachers can be addressed by the school social workers for enhancing their knowledge on child rights.

Key words: Indigenous, social work practice, school setting, knowledge, Child Rights, teachers

1. INTRODUCTION

Social Work is a noble profession with the blend of scientific knowledge and humanistic practice (Hilaria Sounadri) that is quite broad, diverse and offers a variety of settings, roles and services to those who share one common value of helping those in need (Cassandra Girll 2017). School social work is a specialty area of the practice of social work that focuses on the performance and the bio-psychosocial factors that affect students' school

achievement and school social worker carries out the psychosocial service towards children in school system (Ozbesler and Duyan). School social workers are an integral link between school, home, and community in helping students achieve academic success. They work directly with the pupils having problems in adjusting in their social environment, coping with studies, anxiety, issues related to developmental tasks, scholastic backwardness, truancy and school

phobia (Arti Mann 2017). The social workers in collaboration with parents, guardians, teachers and other school officials provide psychosocial services to students and ensure their academic achievement and over all well-being. Assessing the problems of pupils and needs of the school, the social workers assist parents and provide in-service training to teachers and other personnel of the school on how to address students' problems and achieve their institutional goal.

Today Child Rights violation is an issue of social concern and a topic of discussion in and across the countries of the world. According to UNICEF (2014) report millions of children experience physical, sexual and emotional abuse on a daily basis and the results can be devastating. Save the Children India Report (2016) highlights that violation against child rights is a human rights issue in India that has to be addressed by government as well as non government organizations at different level. Among the stakeholders of child protection school teachers are one of the significant persons. Apart from imparting knowledge, skill and development to students, the teachers also influence the life of children to the greater extent in forming and shaping the life of children. Along with the teaching responsibility a real and authentic teacher need to perform a key role of protecting children from all forms of violence. Identifying and understanding students who are suffering with bio-psychosocial problems and responding to each child's problem are crucial for a teacher to ensure safety and well being of children in school as well as at home.

But the persistence of Children's problems and violation of Children's rights expressed in the form of out of school children, child labour, child marriage, child trafficking, child sexual/physical/emotional abuse, child beggary, corporal punishments etc are all indicators of schools failure in the protection of children. Today the violence and abuses on children at home, school and in the community are multifaceted and the problems and issues of children are becoming more complex leading to cases of school dropouts, child missing, child suicide etc becoming more intense. One of the reasons for such persisted problem of children is teacher's lack of knowledge on child rights and absence of their role in the care and protection of children. This brings to the attention of the Social Work that

as champions of human rights school social workers have a scope of promoting child rights knowledge among the school teachers.

The researcher's experience as a Child Welfare Committee (CWC) member in Udupi District Karnataka (CWC Udupi 2014-2017), her experience of counseling children with problems and the related school visits in Udupi revealed that the teachers in most of the schools of this District limit themselves to the teaching of syllabus and commit only to academic curriculum entrusted to them but, fail in their responsibility in responding to Childrens' problems further resulting in the intensity of Child Rights violation, which is an indication of teachers' lack of knowledge on child rights. This was the motivating factor for the researcher to assess the existing level of school teachers' knowledge on Child Rights. Hence the researcher conducted a study on the "knowledge on Child Rights among School teachers in Brahmavar block of Udupi District".

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

According to **Pandit N (2009)** School social workers often serve as the link between students' families and the school, working with parents, guardians, teachers and other school officials to ensure that students reach their academic and personal potential. For **Madhu Gupta & Parvesh Lata (2013)**, after parents it's the teacher who influences and contributes major to the shaping of the personality of students very much. Hence the teachers also need to play significant roles; as a leader, mentor, guide, catalyst, torch bearer, care taker and protector thus give them not only knowledge and development but also ensure them protection from all forms and situations of abuse and violence. **Dilip Kumar (2016)** in his study found out that the awareness and practice of Child Rights among the nation builders are abysmally poor.

3. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The main aim of the present study is to understand the level of Knowledge on Child Rights among school teachers in the District of Udupi, Karnataka. Three objectives were framed of this study that are; to describe the Demographic Characteristics of the respondents, to measure the level of knowledge on Child Rights among the respondents and to provide suitable

suggestions based on the findings of the study for enhancing knowledge on child rights among school teachers. The researcher formulated three hypotheses for the present study. Basically this study is descriptive in nature. The universe of the study consists of 7799 school teachers in Udupi District of Karnataka (Report from Department of Primary and Secondary Education Udupi 2016), out of which 782 samples were selected by adopting Stratified Proportionate Random Sampling Technique. 10 percent of the samples were selected from each of the stratum namely Government, Aided and unaided schools.

Self Prepared Questionnaire was used for understanding socio demographic characteristics of the respondents and also knowledge on child rights index was prepared using five point Likert type scale in order to measure the level of knowledge on child rights. Child Rights Knowledge questionnaire consists of six dimensions namely; Knowledge on Rights specific to children, Schemes/programmes related to children, problems/issues affecting children, Safety measures adopted for children in schools, legislations for the protection of children and protection mechanisms for children. The questionnaire method was adopted to collect the data from the selected samples. The statistical analysis has been done using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science). The tests namely mean, median, Karl Pearson Co-efficient of Correlation, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were employed to draw meaningful inference.

4. MAJOR FINDINGS AND RESULTS

While analyzing the age of the respondents it was observed that While analyzing the age of the respondents it was observed that less than one third 29.5 percent of the school teachers

were belonged to 31 to 40 years of age group, more than one fourth 26.2 percent of the school teachers belonged to 41 to 50 years of age group and remaining 22.1 percent of them belonged to the category of below thirty years of age, and yet, another less than one fourth percent of respondents belonged to above fifty years of age group. It was found that the mean age of the respondent was 41 years.

While analyzing the educational Qualification of the school teachers it was observed that nearly half 43.6 percent of the respondents had completed their B.Ed degree, more than one fourth 28.2 percent of them have done D.Ed Degree, and one tenth 10.4 percent of the respondents have completed Post Graduation, and very meager 7.4 percent were with under graduation, very less 5.2 percent are with only PUC qualification and BP.Ed course. With regard to type of school nearly half 49.0 percent of the participants were working in Government schools, more than one third 34.0 percent of the study participants were working in the unaided school and only very less 17.0 percent of the respondents are working in aided schools.

While analyzing the level of Knowledge on Child Rights with six dimensions among the respondents it was observed that in all the dimensions of Knowledge on Child Rights more than half 62.8, 57.4, 55.6, 53.1, 52.7 and 52.7 percent of the respondents are having low level of knowledge on Protection mechanisms for children, Rights specified in UNCRC, Safety measures adopted for children in schools, Schemes/programmes related to children, Problems/issues affecting children and Legislations for the protection of children and respectively. Therefore in overall knowledge on child rights the results reveals that more than half 52.7 percent of the school teachers are having low level of Child Rights knowledge.

Karl Pearson's Coefficient of Correlation between Age of the Participants
And Dimensions of Child Rights Knowledge

Dimensions	Correlation	Statistical Analysis
Age with knowledge on Rights specific to children	.002	No Significance
Age with knowledge on Schemes/programmes related to children,	-.168	Highly Significance
Age with knowledge problems / issues related to children	-.064	No Significance

Age with knowledge Safety measures adopted for children in schools	.045	No Significance
Age with knowledge on Legislations for the protection of children	.035	No Significance
Age with knowledge on Protection mechanisms for children	.016	No Significance
Age with knowledge on child rights	-.035	No Significance

Karl Pearson Co-efficiency of Correlation statistical test analysis demonstrates that no statistically significant relationship was found between the age of respondents and knowledge on child rights with the five dimensions namely knowledge on Rights specific to children, Problems/issues affecting children, Safety measures adopted for children in schools Legislations for the protection of children and Protection mechanisms for children. But there is highly significant relationship between participants' age with their knowledge on schemes/programmes related to children. This is due to the fact that as the respondents grow in age they reduce

their interest towards knowing welfare programmes for children.

Test of Hypothesis 1

Research Hypothesis: There is statistically significant correlation between age of the participants and knowledge on child rights.

Statistical Inference: Karl Pearson's Co-Efficiency of Correlation statistical test was applied to test the above research Hypothesis and it has been inferred that no statistical significant correlation found between age of the participants and overall knowledge on child rights. Hence Null hypothesis stands accepted.

One-way Analysis of Variance among Educational qualification of the respondents And dimensions of child rights knowledge

DIMENSIONS	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND CHILD RIGHTS KNOWLEDGE	SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN	MEAN SQUARE	STATISTICAL ANALYSIS
Knowledge on Rights specific to children	Between Groups	169.345	5	G1=27.0000	33.869	F=2.996 Significant
	Within Groups	8771.458	776	G2=27.2759	11.303	
				G3=27.3827		
				G4=27.2773		
				G5=26.7390		
				G6=25.3171		
Knowledge on problems/issues related to children	Between Groups	13.747	5	G1=23.0488	2.749	F=.395 Not Significant
	Within Groups	5406.295	776	G2=23.2414	6.967	
				G3=23.6543		
				G4=23.4364		
				G5=23.3871		
				G6=23.1951		
Knowledge on problems/issues related to children	Between Groups	106.489	5	G1=26.0244	21.298	F=2.414 2.996 Significant
	Within Groups	6847.318	776	G2=26.8793	8.824	
				G3=27.1728		
				G4=27.2955		
				G5=26.8035		
				G6=26.0244		
Knowledge on	Between Groups	328.423	5	G1=25.6098	65.685	F=6.811

safety measures adopted for children in school	Within Groups	7483.777	776	G2=25.9483	9.644	2.996 Highly Significant
				G3=24.3580		
				G4=25.8045		
				G5=24.5484		
				G6=24.3659		
Knowledge on Legislation for the protection of children	Between Groups	136.510	5	G1=25.0000	27.302	F=3.253 Highly Significant
	Within Groups	6513.761	776	G2=25.1207	8.394	
				G3=25.2099		
				G4=26.0545		
				G5=25.3607		
Knowledge on protection mechanism for children	Between Groups	7.300	5	G1=20.2195	1.460	F=560 Not Significant
	Within Groups	2022.159	776	G2=20.2069	2.606	
				G3=20.1235		
				G4=20.0182		
				G5=20.1232		
Over all Child Rights Knowledge	Between Groups	1904.318	5	G1=146.902	380.864	F=3.655 Highly Significant
	Within Groups	80858.649	776	G2=148.672	104.199	
				G3=147.901		
				G4=149.886		
				G5=146.961		
				G6=143.878		

G1=PUC
B.Ed

G2= Under Graduation
G6= BP.Ed

G3= Post Graduation

G4=D.Ed

G5=

One way ANOVA statistical test analysis table portrays that there is highly significant variance among the educational qualification of the respondents and Safety measures adopted for children in schools, legislations for the protection of children and overall knowledge on child rights. There is also a statistical significant variance among the educational qualification among the study participants and Knowledge on rights specific to children, and problems/issues related to children. But the test also indicates that there is no statistical significant variance among educational qualification of the respondents and Knowledge on government schemes/ programmes related to children and knowledge on protection mechanisms for children.

The inference is that while the respondents with D.Ed qualification have higher level of knowledge on child rights than the respondents with other qualifications, the respondents with BP.Ed followed by B.Ed qualification have very low level of Child

Rights knowledge while compared to other respondents. One of the reasons for the respondents with BP.Ed and B.Ed qualification to have very low level of knowledge was that, as expressed by these respondents during the data collection, they did not get any training on Child rights during their academic study neither during the present teaching profession.

Test of Hypothesis 2

Research hypothesis- There is statistically significant variance among the educational qualification of study participants and their knowledge about child rights

Statistical Inference; Analysis of Variance (ANNOVA) statistical test was applied to test the above research Hypothesis. It has been inferred that school teachers' educational qualification and their knowledge about Childrens' rights have highly significant variance. Hence Research hypothesis is accepted

One-way Analysis Of Variance among the Respondents' Type of School Taught and Various Dimensions of Child Rights Knowledge

DIMENSIONS	TYPE OF SCHOOL AND CHILD RIGHTS KNOWLEDGE	SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN	MEAN SQUARE	STATISTICAL ANALYSIS
Knowledge on rights specific to children	Between Groups	216.153	2	G1=27.4517	108.077	F=9.650 Highly Significant
	Within Groups	8724.650	779	G2=26.7293	11.200	
				G3=26.2970		
Knowledge on schemes/programs for children	Between Groups	18.994	2	G1=23.4308	9.497	F=1.370 Not Significant
	Within Groups	5401.048	779	G2=23.0526	6.933	
				G3=23.5000		
Knowledge on problems/issues related to children	Between Groups	81.756	2	G2=27.1775	40.878	F=4.634 Highly Significant
	Within Groups	6872.051	779	G2=27.0000	8.822	
				G3=26.4624		
Knowledge on safety measures for children in schools	Between Groups	521.302	2	G1=25.8642	260.651	F=27.849 Highly Significant
	Within Groups	7290.899	779	G2=24.3158	9.359	
				G3=24.1917		
Knowledge on legislations for the protection of children	Between Groups	169.389	2	G1=25.8512	84.695	F=10.180 Not Significant
	Within Groups	6480.882	779	G2=25.6090	8.319	
				G3=24.8233		
Knowledge on protection mechanisms for children	Between Groups	6.104	2	G1=20.1802	3.052	F=1.175 Highly Significant
	Within Groups	2023.355	779	G2=19.9323	2.597	
				G3=20.1316		
Overall child rights knowledge	Between Groups	3481.894	2	G1=149.9556	1740.947	F=17.106 Highly Significant
	Within Groups	79281.072	779	G2=146.6391	101.773	
				G3=145.4060		

G1= Government school

G2= Aided School

G3=Unaided School

One way ANOVA Analysis test table illustrates the highly significant variance found among the participants' type of school taught and their knowledge on child rights in four dimensions; Rights specific to children, problems/issues affecting children, safety measures adopted for children in schools and protection mechanisms for children and over all knowledge on child rights among the respondents. But statistically significant variance is not found among the participants' type of school taught and their child rights knowledge in two dimensions namely government schemes/programmes for children and legislations for the protection of Childrens' rights.

It is understood that comparatively respondents working in unaided schools have low level of knowledge than those working in aided and government schools. It can be noted

that except the dimension of knowledge on government schemes and programmes in all the dimensions of child rights knowledge the respondents teaching in government schools have higher level of knowledge than those respondents serving in aided and unaided schools. This is mainly because of the fact that the government schools of this study area have availed the training programmes on child rights organized by the education departments for the teachers. Whereas management schools have not availed such awareness programmes for their teachers or teachers have not participated in such availed programs on child rights.

Test of Hypothesis - 3

Research Hypothesis: There is a significant variance among the type of Schools taught by

the respondents and Knowledge on Child Rights

Statistical Inference; the one way ANOVA analysis was applied to test the above research Hypothesis. It has been inferred that there is high level of significant variance among the type of Schools taught by the respondents and Knowledge on Child Rights. Hence research Hypothesis stands accepted.

5. DISCUSSION

Dilip Kumar (2016) discovered that awareness and practice of child rights among the school teachers are very poor. The same finding is found in the present study as 52.7 percent of the school teachers of this study show low level of child rights knowledge. But for Shahid M (2009)_ a big majority of primary school teachers in Lahore is knowledgeable regarding rights of children.

It has been inferred from the present study that significant correlation does not exist between the age of the participants and their knowledge about child rights. This finding has similarity with a similar study by Shahid M (2009) who found that Participants who were below as well as above 40 years of age both had same level of knowledge and attitudes regarding the rights of the children.

Krishnaveni and Sarada (2009) who measured child rights knowledge of school teachers at Tirupathi Urban in Andrapradesh found out that there exists no statistically significant variance among mothers' educational qualification and their knowledge on Childrens' rights. But as a contradiction the finding of the present study reveals that there is highly significant variance among school teachers' educational qualification and their knowledge towards Children's rights. This is mainly because not all respondents received training on child rights during their academic educational qualifications.

The present study shows a high level of significant variance among the type of Schools taught by the respondents and their Knowledge on Child Rights. This finding is supported by Samridhi Arora and Ruchi Thakur (2017) who found that Majority of teachers in government schools have average level of knowledge and majority of teachers in private schools have high level of knowledge on child right. But for Usha Ajithkumar (2013), Dilip Kumar (2016) type of institution

do not have much bearing on the awareness on child rights among school teachers. Even Kaur. N (2014) found that both government and private secondary teachers had moderate level of information regarding right to education.

6. Recommendations

1. More than half 52.7 percent of the respondents of this study have low level of knowledge on child rights. Among these, the school teachers who are serving in the unaided schools show that their child rights knowledge is at lower level compared to other category of respondents. Hence the researcher strongly recommends that the school management or school educational Department need to provide knowledge based child rights training to the school teachers especially to those working in unaided and aided schools.
2. The training package on Child Rights could be prepared by a team of experts from different organizations (government and non government) related to children. The School Social Workers to facilitate the preparation and implementation of the training package.
3. As comparatively respondents with BP.Ed and B'Ed have low level of overall knowledge on child rights, the Education Department need to include the syllabus on Child Rights in the curriculum of BP.Ed and B'Ed training courses.
4. As it is revealed that 62.8 percent of the respondents of this study have low level of Knowledge on Child Rights Protection Mechanisms, the Department of Women and Child Development in collaboration with education department need to organize Knowledge enhancement programmes on Child protection mechanisms for teachers in schools at the block level in whole District.
5. The investigator strongly recommends the professional Social Workers both the educators as well as the Practioner to further their professional approach in school setting. And the school social workers can conduct activity based educational programs focusing on

enhancement of knowledge on child rights among the teachers.

7. CONCLUSION

The present study concludes that the school teachers who are working in unaided and aided schools with B.Ed and BP.Ed qualification are having low level of knowledge on child rights. Hence these categories of teachers can be addressed by the school managements with the help of educational department and professional social workers for enhancing their knowledge on child rights which would indicate the impact of Indigenous Social Work Practice in school setting.

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