

REDEFINING CHILD RIGHTS FOR THE NEW NORMAL SOCIETY



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AWARENESS ON JUVENILE JUSTICE (CARE AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN) ACT AMONG PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS AT SECONDARY LEVEL

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Introduction

Education is to develop the unique individuality of each child according to his nature in a natural way. Every child needs nurturing, education and exercise. These needs do not end when children come in contact with the law. No delinquent has a gene or a set of genes, which produce in him a tendency to indulge in antisocial behaviour. Children are considered as the pillar of a nation. They form a bright nation with their power and capability. Nehru identified children as the root of a brilliant future. Hence childhood forms the foundation of human life. A safe childhood is a human right. But unfortunately, millions of children

all over the world remain deprived of educational opportunities, as a result of poverty, social customs, political instability, terrorist activities, internal disturbances, wars, defected policies and corruption. Children have not always been on the human right agenda. They are not considered as a separate group but were traditionally thought as a property of their parents.

Each and every child has some rights, but in practice most of the children do not get their rights. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989 defines child right as the minimum entitlement and freedom that should be afforded to every citizen below the age of 18 regardless of race, national origin, colour, gender, language, religion, opinion, origin, wealth, birth, status, disability or other characteristics.

In the earlier period nobody thought to give special protection to children. In the middle age children were considered as the small adults. During the 19th century the idea emerged in French to give children special protection enabling the progressive development of minor rights. Since 1881 the French government included the Law, the Right for the Children to be Educated. Protection of children begins in the 20th century. This was started first in France and spread across Europe afterwards. In 1959 the General Assembly of the UN adopted the Declaration of the Right of the Child, which describes in 10 principles of the children's right. The following are the Rights of the Child given in the UN declaration (1959).

- No discrimination on account of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, whether of himself or of his family
- Special protection, opportunities and facilities to develop physically, mentally, spiritually and socially in a healthy and normal manner and in condition of freedom and dignity.
- The Right to Name and Nationality.
- The Right to social security, adequate nutrition, housing, recreation, and medical service.
- The differently abled child to be given specific treatment, education and care.
- The Right to participation.
- The Right to development.
- The Right to survival.
- The right to protection

India also gives prior importance to the protection of Child Right. There are a number of Rights to the children which is included in the Constitution of India. Some of the Acts which related to the Child Rights in India are Child Labour Prohibition Act (1986), Pre-natal Diagnostic Technique Act (1994), Juvenile Justice (care and protection of children) Act 2000 and 2015, Right to Education Act (2009), The Protection Of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012(POCSO). The Department of Social Welfare has been implementing various schemes and programmes for the development of children for improving their overall quality of life. The New Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 is progressive child related legislation and its preamble invokes the UN convention on the Rights of the child. An institution was established by the Government of Kerala to rehabilitate children below 18 years of age, who are in need of care and protection under Juvenile Justice Act, 2015.

Need and Significance of the Study

“Ignorance of law is not excused”. This legal maxim explains the importance of law and its awareness.

The Constitution of India gives much importance to the Rights of children. There are a number of articles in our Constitution to address various needs of children. After independence, the Government of India has adopted many educational projects for the development of children. In 1964 the Kothari commission report provided a comprehensive recommendation to improve Indian education sector. After that various Commissions and committee reports came to enhance the quality of education in India in the elementary and secondary level. Also various Acts in the areas covering definition of the child rights, civil rights and freedom, general principles, family, environment and alternative care, basic health and welfare, education, leisure and cultural activities and special protection measures related to children are there. The Right to Education Act (RTE) 2009 describes the importance of free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 years. In 2015 the government modified the Juvenile Justice Act of 2000 and which allows children aged 16 to 18 years and in conflict with law to be tried as adults in cases of heinous offences. The new Juvenile Justice Act 2015 and Rules give guidelines for the proper functioning of the educational system, vocational facilities, medical care, remedial activities, Shelter, food, developmental opportunities and exposure for socialization/ mainstreaming etc .

A teacher's role in the life of an individual is crucial and a good teacher occupies a very significant place in the minds of young students. After parents, it is the teacher who influences the child most and contributes to the shaping of his or her personality. Hence teacher should know the rights of the children and need to stand for it. Teachers should ensure that all children are protected from all forms of exploitation,

abuse, neglect, inhuman and degrading treatment. The teachers have a crucial role in protecting the children's right and it will create a significant and positive impact on children's minds. So, the prospective teachers should know and thoroughly understand the aspects of Juvenile Justice (care and protection of children) Act. Thus, the present study aims to understand the level of awareness on Juvenile Justice (care and protection of children) Act among prospective teachers at secondary level.

Objectives of the study

- To find out the level of awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, among prospective teachers at secondary level.
- To find out whether there exists any significant difference in mean scores of awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, among prospective teachers at secondary level with respect to subject of specialization.

Hypothesis of the Study

- There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, among prospective teachers at secondary level based on subject of specialization

Methodology in Brief

Method

Survey method was adopted for collecting the required data for the study.

Participants

The study was conducted on a sample of 110 prospective teachers at secondary level selected from Kozhikode district. While collecting the data due representation was given to the subject of specialization of the participants.

Tool Used

"Awareness Test on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act" (Abid and Niranjana, 2020) was used to measure the awareness of prospective teachers at secondary level on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act. The awareness consisted of 20 items related to various aspects of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015.

Statistical Techniques to be used

Test of Significance of Difference between Means of two samples (*t*-test) was used to analyze the collected data.

Analysis and Discussion**Level of Awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act among prospective Teachers at Secondary Level**

In order to understand the level of awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act among prospective teachers at secondary level, the mean score of the variable was calculated and the result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Mean Score of Awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act among Prospective Teachers at Secondary Level

Variable	Mean Score
Awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act	8.35

Table 1 reveals that the mean score of Awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act among prospective teachers at secondary level is 8.35 which is less than the neutral value (10) of the Awareness Test on Juvenile Justice Act. The result indicates that the majority of the prospective teachers at secondary level have low level of Awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act.

Difference in the Mean Scores of Awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act among Prospective Teachers at Secondary Level with respect to Subject of Specialization

In order to understand whether there exists any significant difference in the mean scores of Awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act among prospective teachers at secondary level with respect to subject of specialization, Test of significance of difference between means of two samples (*t*-test) was used. Data and results of mean difference analysis of awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act among prospective teachers at secondary level with respect to subject of specialization is given in Table 2.

Table 2
Data and results of mean difference analysis of awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act among Prospective Teachers at Secondary Level with respect to Subject of Specialization

Group	N	Mean	SD	t - Value
Arts	48	8.08	2.84	
Science	62	8.55	3.03	0.819

Table 2 shows that he obtained t value is 0.819 for awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act among Prospective Teachers at Secondary Level with respect to subject of specialization. The obtained t value is less than the tabled value at .01 and .05 levels of significance. The analysis of the results showed that there is no significant difference in mean scores of Awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act among prospective teachers at secondary level with respect to subject of specialization. Thus, it can be concluded that the Awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act among prospective teachers who belongs to science stream and arts stream are same.

Conclusion

The results of the study indicate that the prospective teachers at secondary level have only low level of Awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act. The result also indicated that there exists no significant difference in the Awareness on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act among prospective teachers at secondary level with respect to subject of specialization. Hence, it is very important to improve the awareness on Juvenile Justice Act among prospective teachers at secondary level as it constitutes a part of child rights. To improve the awareness on Juvenile Justice Act, while modifying the curriculum of B.Ed it is advisable to include Juvenile justice laws and their institutions as a part of Child Rights. Field visits to Juvenile Justice Institutions and a system correcting misconceptions about Juvenile Justice Laws and institutions through film and other media can be arranged. The teacher training institutions can arrange workshops and monitoring of the activities of the children's courts and prepare a report. The prospective teachers can be provided opportunities to interact with child welfare police officer at nearest police station and encourage them to conduct seminars on Juvenile Justice Law and its institutions.

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