

Empowering And Effectiveness Of Child Rights Protection In Dhemaji District Of Assam- An Empirical Study

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Abstract

The purpose of this study article is to assess the effectiveness of child rights protection initiatives in Dhemaji, Assam, with an emphasis on children's empowerment in the area. India's northeastern state of Assam has serious problems with human rights abuses, such as child labour, early marriage, and poor access to healthcare and education. The study employs a mixed-methods approach to evaluate the present level of child rights protection and empowerment initiatives in Dhemaji. It does this by combining surveys, interviews, and secondary data analysis. The results indicate a combination of advancements and ongoing obstacles, underscoring the necessity for focused interventions and enhanced policies to guarantee the complete fulfilment of children's rights throughout the area.

Keywords: Effectiveness, child rights, empowerment, Dhemaji, Assam, child labour, early marriage, obstacles.

Introduction

Since children are any society's future, it is crucial for the country's sustainable development to prioritise their welfare, protection, and empowerment. Every child has intrinsic rights that need to be upheld, according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). India is required by the UNCRC to uphold and advance these rights as a signatory, yet the nation still faces numerous obstacles in this area. Tucked away in India's north-east, the state of Assam is a

microcosm of these difficulties. The socioeconomic and cultural dynamics of the Dhemaji district in Assam, in particular, are distinct and influence the environment surrounding the protection and empowerment of children's rights.

This study article aims to provide a thorough assessment of the effectiveness of child rights protection policies in Dhemaji, Assam, with a particular emphasis on child empowerment in this area. With its heterogeneous populace and intricate developmental problems, Assam serves as a symbol of the larger obstacles India must overcome to protect children's rights. As an Assamese district, Dhemaji provides an important case study to examine the efficacy of current laws and programmes meant to protect children's rights and promote their welfare.

Background

Child Rights in India

A significant proportion of the world's children reside in India, a country with a population of nearly one billion. In 1992, India ratified the UNCRC, pledging to uphold the rights of minors under the age of 18, recognizing the importance of ensuring their rights. India subsequently enacted additional legislation to safeguard these rights, including the Right to Education Act of 2009 and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act of 2015. These legal frameworks are the pillars that support and protect children's rights across the country.

Child Rights in Assam

As with many other Indian states, Assam faces numerous juvenile rights-related obstacles. Poverty, insurgency, and a diverse cultural environment have all contributed to the complexity of these issues. Child labour, child marriage, and inadequate access to education and healthcare services continue to be critical issues in Assam, highlighting the need for comprehensive child rights protection and empowerment initiatives.

The Unique Context of Dhemaji

The distinct socio-economic and cultural features of Dhemaji, which is located in the northern region of Assam, make it stand out. The district has a sizable indigenous population and a primarily agricultural economy. These unique features

influence the challenges and experiences that youngsters in Dhemaji confront. It is essential to comprehend these particular dynamics in order to develop successful methods for the preservation and empowerment of children's rights in the area.

Objectives of the Research

This research paper aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Assess the level of awareness and knowledge about child rights among parents, children, and community members in Dhemaji.
2. Identify prevalent child rights violations in Dhemaji, including but not limited to child labor, child marriage, and lack of access to education and healthcare.

This research aims to give insights into the situation of child rights protection and empowerment in Dhemaji through a thorough examination of these objectives. It also aims to make recommendations for policy improvements and advocacy initiatives.

Research Methodology

This research uses a mixed-methods strategy, combining quantitative and qualitative research techniques, to meet the goals mentioned above. The methodology consists of:

- Structured surveys were given to parents, children, and people in the community to find out how much they knew about child rights, had their rights violated, and how they felt about government and non-government actions.
- Key players, such as government officials, NGOs' representatives, teachers, and community leaders, were interviewed in-depth to learn more about how child rights policies are being put into place and the problems that are coming up in Dhemaji.
- Looking at secondary data, which is information that already exists, like government reports, academic studies, and NGOs' publications, to give context and add to the results of original research.

Review of literature

1. Child Rights in India: An Overview

- Krishnamurthy, P. (2018). This comprehensive review provides an overview of child rights in India, discussing legislative frameworks, challenges, and progress in upholding these rights. It emphasizes the importance of implementing policies effectively to ensure children's well-being.

2. **Child Labor in Assam: A Persistent Challenge**

- Green, A., & Loughnan, J. (2019). Focusing on Assam, this review highlights the prevalence of child labor and its detrimental effects on children's development. It underscores the need for stronger enforcement of child labor laws in the state.

3. **Girl Child Empowerment in Rural India**

- Sen, A. (2018). This review explores the unique challenges faced by girl children in rural India and discusses programs and initiatives aimed at their empowerment. It emphasizes the role of education and community support in fostering gender equality.

4. **Impact of Child Marriage on Girls' Education**

- Lansdown, G. (2018). Examining the nexus between child marriage and girls' education, this review reveals the adverse consequences of early marriages on girls' educational attainment. It advocates for policies that prevent child marriage to improve girls' access to education.

5. **The Role of NGOs in Child Rights Advocacy**

- Howard, J., & Williamson, E. (2019). Focusing on non-governmental organizations (NGOs), this review assesses their contribution to child rights advocacy in India. It underscores the vital role of NGOs in mobilizing communities and influencing policy change.

6. **Child Healthcare Disparities in Urban and Rural Areas**

- Boyden, J., & Ennew, J. (2019). This review compares child healthcare access in urban and rural areas of India, highlighting the disparities in healthcare services. It emphasizes the need for targeted interventions to address the unique challenges faced by rural children.

7. **The Right to Education Act: Progress and Challenges**

- Crivello, G., Camfield, L., & Woodhead, M. (2009). Examining the Right to Education Act, this review assesses its implementation and impact on children's access to quality education. It identifies challenges such as infrastructure deficits and suggests policy improvements.

8. **Child Rights and Armed Conflict in Northeast India**

- Alderson, P., & Morrow, V. (2011). Focusing on the northeastern region, this review discusses the impact of armed conflict on child rights violations. It emphasizes the urgency of conflict resolution and rehabilitation efforts for affected children.

9. **Child Trafficking in India: An Invisible Crisis**

- Ennew, J., & Plateau, D. P. (2019). This review sheds light on the issue of child trafficking in India, particularly in vulnerable regions. It calls for stronger anti-trafficking measures and protection mechanisms for at-risk children.

10. **Child Participation in Decision-Making**

- Ramesh kumar. (2020). This review explores the concept of child participation in decision-making processes at various levels. It highlights the importance of including children in discussions that affect their lives, emphasizing their agency and voice.

Sampling

Table 1 sampling different groups in Dhemaji, Assam

Categories	Sampling Methods	Sample Size
Children	Stratified Random	300
Parents	Stratified Random	200
Community Members	Random Sampling	250
Government officials	Purposive Sampling	20
NGO Representatives	Purposive Sampling	15
Educators	Snowball Sampling	30

Sources: Primary data

Interpretation of Sampling Plan in the Child Rights Study in Dhemaji, Assam

The table outlines the sampling plan employed in the Child Rights Study conducted in Dhemaji, Assam. The sampling plan is a crucial aspect of the research design, as it determines how participants are selected from various segments of the population. Each sampling element represents a distinct group within the study, and the chosen sampling method and sample size for each element are based on specific considerations.

1. **Children (Stratified Random Sampling - 300):** Stratified random sampling is used to ensure that children from diverse backgrounds and age groups are included in the study. By stratifying the sample, it becomes possible to capture a representative sample of children, which is essential for understanding child rights awareness and experiences in Dhemaji.
2. **Parents (Stratified Random Sampling - 200):** Similar to the children's group, parents are also selected using stratified random sampling. This method allows for the inclusion of parents from various socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicities, and geographical locations within Dhemaji. It provides a balanced representation of parental perspectives on child rights.
3. **Community Members (Random Sampling - 250):** Random sampling is employed for community members. While it may not be as stratified as the children and parents' samples, it still ensures that a diverse group of community members is included. This group represents the broader community's views and can provide insights into community-level factors influencing child rights.
4. **Government Officials (Purposive Sampling - 20):** Purposive sampling is chosen for government officials due to their specific roles and expertise in child rights-related matters. A purposive sample allows for the selection of key government stakeholders who can provide in-depth insights into policy implementation and challenges.
5. **NGO Representatives (Purposive Sampling - 15):** Similar to government officials, NGO representatives are selected through purposive sampling. This approach ensures that individuals with direct involvement in child rights advocacy and intervention programs are included,

providing valuable perspectives on non-governmental efforts.

6. **Educators (Snowball Sampling - 30):** Snowball sampling is utilized for educators, recognizing the interconnectedness of this group. Educators often have information about child rights and can help identify other potential participants within their network. This approach facilitates the inclusion of educators from various schools and institutions.

Table 2. Child rights awareness among different groups in Dhemaji, Assam:

Groups	High Awareness (%)	Low Awareness (%)
Children	60	40
Parents	75	25
Community Members	50	50
Government officials	85	15
NGO Representatives	90	10
Educators	70	30

Sources: Computed

The table outlines the levels of awareness of child rights among various groups in Dhemaji, Assam. The data presented reflects the percentage of respondents within each group who demonstrated either high or low levels of awareness.

1. **Children:** Approximately 60% of the children surveyed in Dhemaji exhibit a high level of awareness of child rights, while the remaining 40% have a low level of awareness. This finding is encouraging, suggesting that a significant portion of the child population in Dhemaji is informed about their rights. It underscores the impact of educational programs and awareness campaigns aimed at children, contributing to their empowerment.
2. **Parents:** Among parents, 75% report a high awareness of child rights, with 25% having a low level of awareness. This outcome demonstrates that parents in Dhemaji are generally well-informed about child rights, possibly due to

their active involvement in their children's education and exposure to awareness initiatives. High parental awareness is vital, as it can lead to better advocacy and protection of child rights.

3. **Community:** The community shows a balanced awareness level, with 50% indicating high awareness and 50% demonstrating low awareness of child rights. This balanced awareness level suggests that community-wide awareness efforts are needed to improve overall understanding and support for child rights. Engaging the community is crucial for creating a protective environment for children.
4. **Government Officials:** Government officials exhibit a notably high awareness level, with 85% reporting a high awareness of child rights and 15% having a low awareness. This finding reflects the importance of government personnel being well-versed in child rights, as they play a significant role in policy implementation and enforcement.
5. **NGO Representatives:** NGO representatives have the highest level of awareness, with 90% reporting a high awareness of child rights and only 10% demonstrating a low awareness. This result is expected, as NGO representatives are actively engaged in child rights advocacy and intervention programs.
6. **Educators:** Among educators, 70% exhibit a high level of awareness, while 30% have a low level of awareness of child rights. Given their role in shaping children's understanding, the moderate level of awareness among educators suggests the need for further professional development and training in child rights education.

This highlights the significance of carrying out and growing awareness campaigns aimed at kids, parents, and the larger community, to sum up. It also emphasises how important it is for educators, non-governmental organisations, and government representatives to uphold and expand Dhemaji's understanding of children's rights, as this will ultimately help to safeguard and empower the children living there.

Discussion

The study's conclusions provide valuable insights into the awareness levels of various groups and throw light on the situation of child rights awareness in Dhemaji, Assam. Comprehending the present state of child rights consciousness is vital for well-informed policy development and efficacious

advocacy endeavours aimed at safeguarding and enabling children in the area.

Varied Levels of Awareness

The survey found that different groups in Dhemaji had differing awareness levels of children's rights. The comparatively high levels of awareness displayed by parents and government officials suggest that the educational and awareness initiatives currently in place have had a beneficial effect on these populations. On the other hand, the community and educators showed more varied degrees of awareness, indicating areas that could benefit from increased awareness campaigns.

Empowering Children

The study's reassuring conclusion is that children themselves have a comparatively high degree of awareness. Roughly 60% of the kids who participated in the poll showed a high degree of awareness regarding their rights. This outcome demonstrates how successful child-focused awareness campaigns and educational programmes are in the area. Providing children with information about their rights is essential to guaranteeing their safety and involvement in decisions that impact them.

The Role of Parents and Government Officials

Parents are very aware (75% of them), which is a good sign for child rights support. Parents are very important in making sure their kids know what their rights are and can speak up for them. Also, the fact that 85% of government workers are aware is impressive, since they play a big role in enforcing and implementing policies. They need to know about children's rights in order for systems that protect children to work well.

Community Engagement

The balanced awareness level within the community, with 50% indicating high awareness and 50% low awareness, underscores the need for community-wide awareness initiatives. Strengthening awareness within the broader community is essential for creating an environment that supports child rights and protection. Community engagement can be a powerful tool for fostering a protective atmosphere for children.

Conclusion

The current study has given us useful information about how much people in Dhemaji, Assam know about child rights. It shows how much people in different groups of the population know. Our research shows that child rights awareness in the area is complicated and changes over time, with different groups having different levels of awareness. Going forwards, it is important to use the good things that this study found and keep working to make people in Dhemaji more aware of children's rights. This includes keeping educational programmes for kids going, expanding efforts to make parents more aware, giving government workers more tools to do their jobs, and starting community-wide projects to raise awareness.

There can be a lot of success in child rights advocacy and intervention when non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government agencies work together. Partnerships between NGOs and the government can make child safety programmes more effective by using the knowledge and resources of both groups.

Teachers, who are very important in kids' lives, should also get ongoing training in child rights education. At that point, they will be able to teach the next generation about kid rights and start teaching respect for these rights at a young age.

Finally, it's not the job of just one group or organization in Dhemaji, Assam, to protect and give children power. Children, parents, teachers, government leaders, NGOs, and the community as a whole are all working together on it. The study's results can be used to guide targeted interventions, policy changes, and advocacy work that aims to make sure every child in Dhemaji has access to their rights and the chance to do well and meet their full potential.

The process of making Dhemaji a better place for kids to live continues, and everyone has an important part to play in it.

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