

The Deprived Children and Their Rights under the Law

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Abstract

A deprived child is one who does not have access to the material, social and psychological resources which are necessary for normal physical and mental development. There are several international treaties and conventions aiming to ensure an optimum growth environment for children who are free from neglect, abuse, or victimization. Pakistan also has such laws at the national level which are based on the teachings of Islam. It is necessary to implement these laws in order to save our children and safeguard our own future.

Key Words: *Interpol, UNICEF, ECPAT, OHCHR, UNCRC.*

Introduction

The Deprived Child refers to an abandoned child, destitute and homeless; a child whose home, because of the neglect, brutality, or depravity of parents, guardians or other caretakers, is an unfit place to live in. In fact, a deprived child is one who is without his or her parental and legal guardians or custodians, and who has been abused and neglected. As per law, a deprived child is one who is without proper control, education, subsistence, parental care, and other basic necessities of life which are important for his or her mental and physical growth. A deprived child is usually under 18 years of age. Such a child needs more attention, care, and treatment because the parents, custodians, or legal guardians are willfully failing or unable to give such attention as the child requires.

A deprived child basically denotes a person of tender age not having access to the basic necessities of life such as food, shelter, education and parental care. In Pakistan just because of the poverty children below the age of five years are suffering from deprivation. They don't have access to adequate food, shelter, education and basic necessities of life. The term "Deprived child" also covers those children who are physically handicapped, disabled and mentally challenged.

There can be many types of deprivations a child may be suffering from, socially or emotionally. Hence, it can be said that a socially deprived child is the one facing insufficiency or lack of the care and attention of his or her parents. This may cause harm to their personality as a whole.

Research Methodology

The research work of this article is based on the qualitative and comparative analysis. In this article, there is a comparison of legislation on the rights of deprived children at regional and international level and this research paper also focuses on the implementation of rules and regulations of the child protection institutions in Pakistan and beyond.

Reasons of Deprivation

The deprivation usually entails a lack of those basics amenities which are essential for life such as not having enough food, money, or other good living conditions.

Types of Deprivation

1- Social Deprivation

Children who are facing little attention, care, or love from their parents are socially deprived. They are not growing like other normal children, which may lead them into a complex zone.

2- Emotional Deprivation

It can be seen that people who were not very attached to their parents in their childhood generally turn out to be disturbed and anxious adults. This is because of the lack of love and other unmet emotional needs whose fulfilment was necessary for their nurturance.

Child Deprivation

A) Effects on Mental Growth

If the first ten years of a child's life are disturbed, it may lead to depression, anxiety, and poor self-control in later life. Such people have difficulty for adapting to changes in their lives; they have trouble maintaining their interpersonal relationships, and often take to drugs. In Pakistan 2006-7, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in association with Anti-Narcotics Force of the Ministry of Narcotics Control conducted the assessment of drug abuse. This assessment explained the reasons of drug addiction which clearly stated that one of the major causes of drug addiction in Pakistan is the lack of proper interest in education and the negligence of the parents (ANF, Pakistan).

The emotional deprivation, even in the infancy affects the brain. There are changes in the prefrontal cortex which produces high levels of the stress hormone cortisol. Negative interventions cause brain diseases like schizophrenia, poor self-image and Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD). According to one research study, the MRI data was collected from the deprived children of the Roman descent adopted by the UK families, these were compared with the MRI data of non-deprived children of the UK adoptees. It was found that former had smaller total brain volumes (TVBVs) than the latter. (Mackes & others, 2020).

B) Effects on Physical Growth

Deprivation is another form of negligence which may damage the optimal environment of the child. If a child is mentally tortured, how can he or she be physically fit? If they are physically, mentally or emotionally handicapped, how can they survive in society like normal children? There are a lot of causes of physical health issues of deprived children such as poverty, lack of food, mental diseases, stress and discrimination.

Law Regarding Deprivation

International Perspective

Conventions on the Rights of the Deprived Child 1989

1-The Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action, 1996 against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children:

This was the plenary meeting of World Congress aligned with CSE Children (Feinstein, C., & O'Kane, C. 2009). The main agenda was to protect the sale of children and to take action on the recommendations made by the committee on the rights of the child. It also recognized the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. It acknowledged further the recommendations and initiatives of the World Trade Organization, mainly in the 1995 WTO on the deterrence of OST (Organized Sex Tourist), the Council of Europe relating to Sexual misuse, Pornography and Prostitution of, and Trafficking in, Children and adolescent, relying on INTERPOL and many other regional and international organizations. (Curley. M. & Stanley, E, 2016).

Article 6 of this declaration is very interesting as it encourages children, young adults, and their families including child victims and their potential helpers, to participate in eliminating deprivation. In this way, victims can express their views and other people can help them to rehabilitate in the society. It may also assist governments and other child protection agencies to figure out the original problems which lead to the victimization of these children and adolescent. (Stockholm Declaration, 1996).

2- Yokohama Global Commitment 2001 against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children:

This meeting was co-organized by the Government of Japan, International non-governmental organization ECPAT, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the other NGO groups for implementing the Stockholm Declaration 1996 (Jullien, K. 2002).

States were called to ratify the international instrument relating to poverty, inequity, inequality, and the sexual exploitation of children. In this meeting, UNICEF described its various commitments aligned with the sexual violation of children (Yokohama Global Commitment, 2001).

3-Third World Congress against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents Rio de Janeiro, 2008:

The Third World Congress provided an opportunity to renew global commitments aligned with the sexual misuse of children and adults. It was organized in Brazil, on 25-28 November (Feinstein. C., & O'Kane, C. 2009). Participants included UNICEF, the NGO Groups for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and ECPAT (End Child Prostitution in Asia Tourism) which was launched in Thailand in 1990 (Jullien, K. 2002).

Many other international child protection forums participated in this Congress (Third World Congress, 2008).

4-Committee on the Rights of the Child:

This is one of the Human Rights bodies of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) that ensures the execution of the core International Human Rights Treaties. The Committee on Right of Child is responsible for monitoring the execution of the CRC including the two optional protocols to the Convention i.e., OPAC (Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict) and OPSC (Sale of children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography) (Weissbrodt et al, 2011).

The UN General Assembly has also accepted a third optional protocol which is Communications Procedure (OPIC) whereby children can put forward their complaints regarding the violation of their rights under the CRC.

5-United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child (UNCRC):

There are 54 articles in this convention. All articles are in line with the rights of deprived children. This Convention recognizes all the children of the world irrespective of developed or developing countries (UNICEF, 1989). The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) elaborates the various rights of deprived children. Some of them are given below:

Article 20 is very important in respect of the deprived children. It elaborates that every child who is deprived either temporarily or permanently shall be allowed to special protection by the state. Another significant object of this article is that the State is responsible in accordance with its laws to provide care to such a child, which may include the *kafalah* of Islamic law or any other adoption which is necessary in favor of the protection and care of the child (CRC, 1990).

Article 27 elaborates that the State should recognize the right of every child with respect to their standard of living as well as an adequate environment for the child's moral, spiritual, substantial, psychological, and social development (Abramson, B. 2008).

Article 37(a) of the CRC ensures that there is no torture or any kind of brutal or humiliating treatment of the children (Abramson, B. 2008).

Article 37(c) of the convention deals with the right of the child who is deprived of his or her liberty. They shall be treated humanely and with respect as they have a right to the dignity accorded to each human person (Abramson, B. 2008).

Article 37(d) also gives the right to every deprived child to access legal assistance along with the right to confront in any court of law the legality of their deprivation of liberty (Abramson, B. 2008).

6-The Human Rights Council (HRC)

The HRC is one of the UN Charter based bodies, formed to ensure the compliance of governments with all fundamental rights and freedoms. States can also voice their concerns regarding human rights irrespective of whether they are large or small.

The rights of the deprived child are also covered indirectly via Human Rights Council (Wouters, J., & Meuwissen, K.2014).

Some key pieces of legislation on the rights of the child in the UK are:

- The Children Act 1989 (as amended)
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- The Education Act 2002
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Human Rights Act 1998

Pakistani Perspective

The rights of children are as important as the rights of other human beings. In Pakistan, it is necessary to make laws relating to the child's rights and their implementation in harmony with the teachings of Islam, the Constitution of Pakistan and the UN Convention on Rights of the Child.

1-The Constitution of Pakistan 1973:

The Constitution of Pakistan guarantees the rights of its citizens. Articles 9 to 28 are about the fundamental rights of all the citizens of Pakistan but with reference to the child's rights some articles are especially notable, such as:

Article 11(3): This Article states that in Pakistan no child below the age of 14 years shall be engaged in any hazardous employment (Rafiq Butt, M. 2014).

Article 25(1): All citizens without any discrimination are equal before the eye of law and entitled to equal protection of law and there can be no any kind of discrimination on the basis of sex. (Rafiq Butt, M. 2014).

Article 25-A: It is the responsibility of the State to provide free and basic education to all children between the ages of 5-16 years in such a way as prescribed by law (Rafiq Butt, M. 2014).

2-Section 82 of Pakistan Penal Code 1860:

The Section 82 of provides that nothing is an offence which is done by a child under 7 years of age. (PPC, 1860)

3-National Plan of Action for Child Protection 1990:

The National Plan of Action for children (NPA) is a commitment of the Pakistan government towards its children for the next decade. The First National Plan of Action for Children was implemented in the 1990s on the basis of the targets set forth in the 1990 World Summit for Children. The Plan is basically designed to cover the issues relating to child abuse, child pornography and prostitution, child labor, education, health, poverty, and child mortality.

4-National Commission on the Rights of the Child Act 2017 (NCOROF):

This Act was passed by the Parliament (Majlis-e-Shoora) on 26 September 2017. This Act entrusts the National Commission with all matters relating to the rights of the child and their implementation according to international obligations (NCRC 2017). This Act has recently been amended and is now called the National Commission on the Rights of the Child (Amendment) Act 2020.

5-Child Protection System Act 2014:

The Child Protection System Act 2014 was introduced in the National Assembly to protect the children at risk in Islamabad Capital territory (ICT). Article 142(d) of the Constitution of Pakistan 1973 grants the parliament exclusive power to make laws for ICT (CPS, 2014).

6-National Commission for Child Welfare and Development (NCCWD):

This Commission is functioning under the domain of the Ministry of Human Rights. The NCCWD is accountable for submitting mandatory Periodic Reports on the execution of the Geneva Convention or the UNCRC to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and other agencies.

The National Commission for Child Welfare and Development synchronizes, supervises, and facilitates the execution of the UN Convention (UNCRC) and other national and international obligations. The Commission is responsible to ensure that the children living in the State are given their legal, constitutional, and administrative rights.

The NCCWD is also working on the amendments, revisions and modifications of the existing national laws and policies and legal rights. It is a positive sign that some of their recommendations and amendments have been accepted (NCCWD, 2011).

Regional and National Instruments on the Rights of the Child

1-SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution, 2002:

The basic scheme of this convention is to check and ban the trafficking of women and children. The purpose of this convention is to stop the use of women and children for prostitution through international networks of organized criminals, and to rehabilitate the victims of trafficking.

It also plays a vital role in promoting cooperation between member states so that they may combat efficiently trafficking in women and children for prostitution. (Secretariat, S. A. A. R. C. 2002).

2-SAARC Convention on Regional Arrangements for the Promotion of Child Welfare in South Asia:

This convention was signed in January 2002 during the Eleventh SAARC Summit in Kathmandu. The Convention envisages facilitating the growth of the South Asian child. Article II of this Convention states that its purpose is to make proper arrangements at the regional level to facilitate and protect the rights of the child (Secretariat, S.A.A.R.C. 2002).

3-South to South Cooperation on Child Rights 2010:

South-South Cooperation for Child Rights was a high-level meeting held with the support of UNICEF in Beijing, China, from 4 to 6 November 2010. In this declaration it was decided that the member countries will work on the rights of children in the Asia-Pacific Region.

This declaration pays attention to three key areas on regional cooperation:

- Disaster risk reduction
- Child protection and welfare systems
- Equitable economic and social development benefiting all children (Cepal, n, 2012).

4-South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children (SAIEVAC):

SAIEVAC has been formed to make sure that all children are liberated from all kind of violence, exploitation, neglect, discrimination and abuse. They must enjoy their environmental rights as well. Another objective of the SAIEVAC is to make sure the implementation of children's rights as declared in the UNCRC and its Optional Protocols and to support regional cooperation to end violence against children in South Asia. (SAIEVAC, 2010)

Islamic Perspective

Everything which is created by Allah Almighty is precious, and we should take care of every creation of Allah. Children are precious gifts from Allah. Parents should raise their children with proper love and affection.

Surah al-kahf verse 46 of the Quran says: "Wealth and children are the adornments of the present life. But the things that last, the virtuous deeds are better with your Lord for reward, and better for hope" (Trans. Yousaf Ali, A. 1938).

Parents play a fundamental role in the mental and physical growth of their children. It is a general presumption that parents or guardians should be competent enough to bring up their children in an ideal environment. A child's mental, corporal, emotional, social and spiritual development depends on the people who are responsible for his or her upbringing, so every stage of their evolution needs to be monitored.

Islam teaches morality, equality, affection, and patience to its followers. Islam is not only a religion but also a code of life that covers all the aspects of human life. So, when it comes to a child's growth or development it is necessary to comply with the teachings of Islam as enshrined in the Holy Quran and Sunnah. As Islam covers all the aspects of human life, the protection and welfare of children is also included in it.

Islam also covers the rights of non-Muslims as once Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) said: "every child was born *fitrah* (pure); it is their parents who make them Christians, Jews, or Majusi" (Sahih Muslim, Book 10) so if the biological parents fail to bring up the children properly, then the teachings of Islam suggest to shift the responsibility of that child on to the community.

In Islam, if the parents are deceased, then the guardian or the persons who are responsible for the child's upbringing are prohibited/ restricted from using the wealth of the orphan child. In fact, it is suggested that the guardians of the child should take care of his or her wealth until they attained the age of maturity. The guardians are not allowed to combine the orphan's interest with their own interest.

The Almighty Allah said in Quran: "And give to the orphans their property, and do not substitute worthless things for their good ones and do not devour their property as an addition to your property; this is surely a great sin." Surah Nisa verse 4:2 (Yousaf Ali, A. 1938)

Adequate food, education, shelter, and protection are the basic and natural rights of the children. If a child loses his or her basic rights due to any reason, it may damage the child mentally, physically, socially, and economically. There are so many reasons for deprivation, for example, in cases of dissolution of the parents' marriage, illegitimate birth, single parent household etc., children have to suffer. The consequences can be very serious. Children can start to consume drugs or commit suicide or join any criminal gang etc. The only reason is that they tend to lose interest in their lives as they are deprived from their basic rights which seriously injures their self-image (Currie, J., & Tekin E. 2012).

The Quran says: "Slay not your children, fearing a fall to poverty; we shall provide for them and for you. Lo! The slaying of them is a great sin" (Surah Al- An'am verse; 151) (Trans. Yousaf Ali, A. 1938).

Parents are obliged to protect their children from hell-fire as Allah mentions in the Holy Quran, Surah ut-Tahreem verse 6: "O you who believe! Protect yourselves and your families from a Fire, whose fuel is people and stones. Over it are angels, fierce and powerful. They never disobey Allah in anything He commands them, and they carry out whatever they are commanded" (Trans. Yousaf Ali, A. 1938).

The commandments requiring parents to save their children from hell-fire should therefore be obeyed keeping the welfare of the children in mind. A narrow-minded interpretation of this verse will lead parents to treat their children in ways that can be categorized as abusive.

There are some basic rights of children in Islam which are elaborated below:

1. Islam forbids causing harm to a child or pregnant mother as mentioned in surah al-An'am verse 151: "Kill not your children because of poverty. We provide sustenance for you and for them" (Trans. Yousaf Ali, A. 1938).
2. Any action of any person that adversely affects the chances of the child to lead a normal life or that harms him or her physically or mentally is prohibited. Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) said: "There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm" (Ibn majah, 2/748, hadith 2340)
3. Islam guarantees the child's right to be a product of legitimate wedlock. Sharia law orders Muslims to stay away from shameful deeds, whether open or secret, as mentioned in surah al-An'am verse 15: "Come not near to *al-fawahish* [shameful sins, illegal sexual intercourse] whether committed openly or secretly" (Trans. Yousaf Ali, A. 1938)
4. In Islam, there is a clear command to call children with names that have acceptable meanings. Names should not be abhorrent. They should not cause psychological trauma by drawing ridicule or arousing inquisitiveness and expressions of bewilderment from others as Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) said: "Honor your children and give them pleasant names." (Ibn Majah, 2/1211, Hadith 3671).
5. In Islam a child who is deprived of parental care and protection must be provided for. Therefore, the persons responsible for the upbringing of the child are tasked with treating her or him as they

would treat their own child. Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) said: "I and the provider of the orphan will be (companions) in Heaven just like these two" and he held up his middle and index fingers, joined together (Ahmad, Musnad 5/250).

6. Islam also emphasizes that State legislative and executive institutions are responsible for the protection and welfare of the children. Hazrat Muhamad (SAW) stated that: "Each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is accountable for his or her flock." (Al-bukhari, 1/248, hadith 893).
7. Islamic law forbids any kind of violence against the human body or human soul as stated in surah al-Baqarah verse 190: "And fight in the way of Allah those who fight you, but transgress not the limits. Truly, Allah likes not the transgressors" (Trans. Yousaf Ali, A. 1938).

Islamic *Kafalah* as an Alternative Care Option for Children Deprived of a Family Environment:

The children who are facing disaffection of their family are more prone to the violation of all other rights that they are entitled to as children and rights-bearing individuals in society. Kafalah is another type of care for children who are deprived. Basically, in Islamic law it means to protect the child's rights. Kafalah is an Islamic concept which has been adopted by the various CRC (The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) parties to ensure the deprived child's protection in their countries. The insertion of kafalah in CRC has been recognized for the first time in a binding international instrument. In 1986 kafalah was mentioned for the first time in the UN Declaration on Social and Legal Principles to the safety and welfare of the children with special reference to foster placement and adoption both nationally and internationally. It is distinct from other childcare options. (Usang M Assim, Julia Sloth-Nielsen, 2014).

Judicial Perspective

Child should have special status in the world with no discrimination at any level. This rule must be followed by every individual because this right is given by Allah Almighty. The deprivation of children must end.

In Pakistan, most of children are deprived of basic rights such as the right to survive, the right to good mental and physical health, and education as per the UNICEF annual report of 2020 prescribed that 22.84 children are out of school, 14.4 % children in KP are engaged as a child labor. (UNICEF, 2020)

Even though these rights are enshrined in the Constitution, children are mostly deprived of these rights. There are some reasons behind their deprivation like poverty, low resources to survive, overpopulation, illiteracy, diseases, and most importantly, disputes among broken families. Child labor is increasing day by day and because of this, deprivation is also increasing in Pakistan. Former Chief Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah of Lahore High Court, in the case of *Asfandyar Khan Tareen vs Government of Punjab*, explained that dignity has its origins in simple words; that "justice consists in the refusal to turn away from suffering." Right to dignity is the most vital of all human rights. Dignity bonds the other human rights as a whole. The right to dignity involves the acknowledgment that human beings are free, and can shape their body and mind as well as their community as they choose. Basically, a sense of dignity shapes individual identity and choice. It is called freedom of choice and independence of the human will as well. If human physical or mental health is being injured, then they have no dignity. The right to dignity is infringed in the absence of physical and mental prosperity of the individual.

In *Sardar Hussain vs. Mst. Parveen Umar*, (PLJ 2018 Lahore 508) the court decided that the child should live with his mother despite her re-marriage just because of his emotional attachment with the mother. The child was attached with his mother and considered his father as a stranger. There is another case

regarding emotional attachment with the mother, in *Uzma Wahid vs. Guardian Judge*. In this case the custody of two minor children was given to the mother by Lahore High Court even with re-marriage.

Literature Review

Mackes, (2020) conducted a study of a million of worldwide children living in a non-familial institutions. This article elaborated the impact on adult brain structure of a particularly severe but time-limited form of institutional deprivation in early life experienced by children who were subsequently adopted into nurturing families. Deprivation related alterations in total brain volume were associated with lower intelligence quotient and more attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder symptoms; alterations in temporal volume seemed compensatory, as they were associated with fewer attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder symptoms.

Feinstein, C., & O'Kane, C (2009) conducted a study This paper presents an overview of government commitments concerning children's and adolescents' participation in the fight against sexual abuse and exploitation; children's and adolescents' own recommendations to end sexual abuse and exploitation of children; and inspiring case studies that provide concrete recommendations for strengthening children's and adolescents' involvement in child protection.

Curley. M. & Stanley, E, (2016) This article aims to contribute to the existing body of research on the application of Australian CST laws and the wider international debate concerning the utility of extraterritorial CST offences, and will address certain related controversies regarding the extraterritorial application of criminal laws, including those regarding sexual offences committed by UN Peacekeeping personnel. A number of international treaties and legal instruments relate to the commercial exploitation of children (including sexual and labour exploitation), such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ('UDHR'), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. While the UDHR is not legally binding on states, its articles on (liberty), (slavery) and (degrading treatment) render the sexual exploitation of children contrary to the spirit of the UDHR. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and its optional protocols make specific reference to combating Child Sex Tourism ('CST'). The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography was ratified by the UN General Assembly on 25 May 2000, and requires each member state to ensure that its domestic legislation allows the prosecution of its nationals for crimes of child sexual exploitation regardless of whether such acts were committed domestically or internationally. The 1996 Stockholm Declaration,⁶ Agenda for Action and subsequent World Congresses have reaffirmed the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol provisions and developed further measures to combat child sexual exploitation.

Abramson, B. (2008) consist the commentary on the United Nations Conventions on the rights of the children. All the rights are explained, for instance, it suggests that every child who is deprived either temporarily or permanently shall be allowed to special protection by the state, it also indicates that children and young people have the right to education irrespective of their race, greed or gender, whether they are in confinement, or are refugees and also deals with the right of the child who is deprived of his or her liberty and all other rights of the children explained in detail. Currie, J., & Tekin, E. (2012) focuses on measuring the relationship between child maltreatment and crime using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health it lays emphasis on crime because it is one of the most detrimental potential outcomes of maltreatment. Our work addresses two main limitations of the existing literature on child maltreatment.

Results

There have been no such digital or technical developments in the past that a child can lodge complaint for sexual abuse or harassment but with the passage of time new and modern devices are introduced for reporting and awareness of the sexual abuse. Children can now easily access the websites to know their rights and enforce them against the offender. So, if the parents and teachers are not paying attention to the child's complaint, they can use the child protection helpline to seek the assistance of relevant state agency. In Pakistan now a day's different child protection agencies are working to give instant relief to the deprived children.

Discussion

In this article the main focus has been on the rights of deprived children, their welfare and protection, along with legislation on children's rights. In Asia particularly in Pakistan children between the ages of 0-18 are more vulnerable to several development challenges that impact their well-being. These challenges may include the quality of education, nutrition, child marriage and labor and child trafficking. The purpose of this writing is the welfare of the deprived child and to bring the new legal reforms by implementing the existing laws on protection and security of the child who are deprived.

Conclusion

Children are building blocks of every state in the world. If they are neglected it means that the future of that society is put at stake. Their bright future is the guarantee for peace and prosperity in the society. It can be only be possible if we provide them with enough food, education, shelter, protection, and safety.

In Pakistan, there are so many NGOs, agencies, and institutions which are working on the rights of the deprived child, but unfortunately the amendments and modifications on the child's rights made by our commissions and committees are not enforced and implemented to the extent they should have been.

Suggestions and Recommendations

The situation of the protection and welfare of the children and their health and education in Pakistan is far from satisfactory. Because of resource constraint and lack of political will, Pakistan has not been able to alleviate the sufferings of millions of vulnerable children in the State. An effective way to cope with the situation can be to invest in education, health, child protection, and welfare of the citizens in such a manner that wastage of funds should not be used as an excuse to put off the project. It is only possible, if we the citizen of Pakistan dedicate ourselves for the welfare of the future generations. To this end, an organized campaign can be launched to raise a child protection fund consisting of voluntary contributions by the private sector, this should be in addition to the governmental initiatives. With this fund, foster homes can be built to meet the educational and dietary needs of the deprived children. Need of the time is that we should spend our resources on the physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being of the deprived children in Pakistan. Our parliamentarians and law makers should come together for the amelioration of the miserable poverty-stricken conditions of the deprived children. To ensure holistic development of the children, federal and provincial governments should allocate adequate funds. To keep a check on the proper utilization of fund, the CRC should keep a hawk's eye on the child protection and welfare institutions and committees.

In addition to this, there is a need to amend and insert more offences in Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) as well as other child protection laws containing severe punishments for rendering a child homeless, forcing him to beg, putting him in forced labor and subjecting him to sexual slavery and sex trafficking. Our government should get to work on fully implementing the Juvenile Justice Act 2017, Juvenile Courts, and introducing other legal reforms on child protection. These reforms may include fixing a higher age of criminal responsibility and establishing borstal institutions to ensure child offenders are not locked up with adults. Furthermore, the government may want to experiment with reformatory justice system, requiring a child wrong doer to remedy the wrong and apologize instead of putting him in jail. Additionally, on the pattern of developed countries Pakistan may provide child rearing allowance to its deserving citizens to satisfy the educational, dietary and shelter related needs of their children.

Apart from this, our government should establish rehabilitation centers and help lines for those children whose rights are being violated or infringed upon. Psychological support is essential for the well-being and rehabilitation of the victims and psychiatrists can play a vital role in changing the traumatic mental state of the deprived children. If the State lends support to such centers or clinics by facilitating their operations, it could go a long way towards improving the plight of the deprived children.

A deprived child is not merely the one who is abandoned, destitute, or homeless due to the neglect, brutality, or depravity of the parents or guardians. The term also covers a child who is physically handicapped, disabled and mentally challenged. For the latter category of children, words like "only for disabled or handicapped" can be disheartening, as they make a child conscious of their disabilities. It is suggested that these words should be replaced with something more sophisticated like 'special or differently abled' so that the child is made to believe in his distinct abilities.

The citizens of Pakistan should join hands for the betterment of all aspects of the deprived children's life, including their academic, mental, physical, social and emotional outlook. There is a need to sensitize the general public regarding the rights of deprived children. That way, people can help mitigate cases of abuse and neglect which are increasing day by day. We should take part in discovering strategies for the child's mental and physical wellness so that an enabling environment can be provided where the children can realize their true potential. Every institution and political party should put its differences aside and play its role in improving the life of the deprived child both at national and international levels.

We, as a nation should aim to be on top, in terms of providing protection and mental freedom to the children irrespective of their religion, gender, social, and economic status. As per the commitments made by Pakistan at national and international levels, there is a need to improve the mental, physical, emotional, and social status of the children by allocating adequate human and financial resources for this sublime cause.

Birth registration is also the constitutional right of the children as it grants them a name, nationality, and age. Birth registration is the proof of identification or existence of the child at national and international level. Existence is nothing without identification. If children are not registered at the time of birth, the government will have a hard time to track cases of child trafficking, prostitution, and forced labor. Our government should launch a mobile birth registration service especially in backward areas to assist people in registering their children.

Last but not least, we should interpret and disseminate Islamic texts to help set up social structures which will ensure optimum level of wellness for the deprived children.

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