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RESEARCH ARTICLE

REENGAGEMENT OF THIRD GENDER CHILDREN THROUGH THEIR EDUCATION.

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Abstract

The well-known "Hijra" group lives culturally, educationally, economically, psycho-socially and psycho-sexually on the margins. They are also battling for their identity and freedoms for hundreds of years. Conclusion of debate in this article can be understood as the incorporation of third gender kids or individuals in the mainstream education scheme or in culture; requires an appropriate teaching atmosphere or cultural recognition. In addition to content and pedagogical changes, pre-service and in-service educators must be sensitized to cope with school that has third gender kids. In the context of debate, it is suggested that in the event of third gender children's education; in-service and pre-service teacher training programs should be performed comprehensively. The current teacher training program should be restructured by incorporating material linked to the third gender group; such as its historical context, lifestyle, culture, rituals, customs, life abilities, psycho-social circumstances, psycho-sexual elements, participation in various cash making operations, participation in sex work, legal regulations and welfare systems must be included as a unit. Adding this would enhance understanding among our trainee teachers and trainee teacher educators about third gender and they will not hesitate to discuss issues related to this community.

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Introduction:-

Every child has right to live with full dignity of life as any regular human being. In our country many groups on the basis of poverty, disability, difficulty, deprived conditions, are disadvantaged, like third gender children, are living at margins of the mainstream society. They are equally important like other students in the whole development process of the country. In changing present scenario of inclusive growth round the globe nobody could be left behind the curtains. Third gender children were never considered as main part of our society from colonial period, though they could be good human resource for the national progress. Right to education 2009 also emphasized on the education of third gender children in mainstream schools. RTE-2009 gave a boost to Article 21A guaranteeing universal elementary education particularly children of marginalized groups. Third gender children will be able to take admission under disadvantaged category. This may raise a hope in third gender children / persons that now they could study with full dignity like normal students. There is need to understand that this third gender community favored constitutional and legal input will be sufficient to create adequate educational and social environment for third gender children's education and their rehabilitation or some other measures are should be taken on account for

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adequate education and rehabilitation of third gender persons. This article has come with some very elementary questions related third gender children and their educational, social and economic rehabilitation.

Questions to be answered

1. Is there adequate learning environment about the education of third gender children?
2. Are teachers adequately sensitized to deal with the class along with third gender children?
3. Is there any content based and pedagogic modification required before putting third gender children in the common class?
4. Is the mindset of our society, academic, and corporate sector is in mode of acceptance of third gender persons?

Discussion about these questions:-

Learning environment about the education of third gender children

Education of third gender children is equally important like others, but in this reference a question arises that is there adequate learning environment with in school boundaries for education of third gender children, because from the time of identification of their sexuality orientation they started to face the stigma. This is duty of administration and school management to ensure adequate environment in school campuses, because there are greater possibilities that different stigmas might be start to affect to inclusion of third gender children as they had faced earlier. And different stigmas could break such children's interest and focus from the learning activities and more important that they could feel avoided, ignored, disrespectful, disgraced in educational conditions and they might be dropout from the school or college education system. To create the adequate learning environment in school / college boundaries this is necessary that administrators and school management personals should be sensitized regarding the educational rights of third gender children and how they could be helpful in creating in adequate learning environment to attain the learning goals by third gender children. Educational research can enrich the knowledge of this area and research will provide scientific evidences to choose particular direction for betterment.

Sensitization of teachers regarding the education of third gender children

In educational process at any level teachers and students are important to attain the goals of educational life keeping in mind the national goals and their roles. The quality of whole educational process is depend upon the teachers and somehow their learners. According to human right philosophy every child has right to be nurtured at fullest with full and adequate cognitive, psychosocial and emotional and moral support of every system around him/her. Similarly third gender children also have the right to education like other children and from humanistic point of view they should be nurtured at fullest and it should be clear each and every person who is engaged in educational process at any level so that s/he could contribute in their education inclusively. Teachers must be sensitized regarding the issues related issues third gender, their life and culture, psychosocial and emotional condition and cognitive aspects, cooperation among all the children and relationship of third gender and other students etc. Teachers could be sensitized regarding content delivery, which may be specially related to third gender children. Sensitization of teachers only can make the inclusion of third gender children success. But the cooperation of peer group is always considered at large in maintaining classroom dynamics, creating adequate motivating learning environment and in attaining the learning goals. Peers might be very helpful in maintaining stigma free school or classroom environment for better learning along with their third gender peer(s). Though, in this area also focused educational research is the demand of hour.

Content based and pedagogic modification

It is very difficult to express about this area without research inputs. Third gender children normally they are not dull. They have normal child like mental abilities and emotions. Though, through it should be tested that is there is a need to add some content with reference to third gender community. Besides, pedagogic modifications may be useful in inclusion of third gender children in the classroom. At present there is no research evidence is available in this regard. But content based and pedagogic modification could develop better understanding among peers and teachers along with third gender students. This is era of change and therefore

Mindset of our society, academic fraternity and corporate sector about third gender children's rehabilitation

The mindset of society and other sectors of life is not much more favorable about third gender children's rehabilitation, their education, personality development, connectivity with other social orders and socio-cultural aspects. Third gender children face many socio-cultural stigmas and due these unfavorable conditions third gender children could not be able to overcome from the difficulties around them. Therefore mindset of academic fraternity and other sectors of life must be positive and motivating about third gender children education their rehabilitation.

With reference these four above questions raised in this article author want to discuss some main reasons to their problems.

Social Condition of Third gender Persons

Due to stigma and discrimination faced by third gender people they have fewer opportunities for their adequate development as compared to other people of the society. Mainly third gender children are living in very critical situations. Though, census-2011 counted 54,854 third gender children of 0-6 year's age group. They are not educated as they should be in their age, because the social or academic environment is favorable as they are not accepted by the society and therefore do not receive proper education. Even if they are enrolled in schools, they again harassment at every moment and are pushed the school or they drop out at their own. Involvement in begging and sex education may be the big reason for this happening.

Challenges of Third gender Education

Since very time in history third gender persons are facing many challenges in their life for existence and survival in mainstream society. The classification for their gender identity as —third genderl create many problems to them and it put them at lower level in the socially accepted sexuality orientation. Third gender provides them legal acknowledgement but it does not make them able them to alleviate them from their real conditions and they remain at a part of marginalized group of society and are not treated equally as compared to other people.

Lack of Literature on Changing Identities

As literature has many references that most of family are not supportive to third gender children or youth; sometimes they are sexually abused or even they face violence or expulsion from their homes or from mainstream society after disclosing the gender identity to family.

Lack of Good Literature on Gender Identity and Sexuality

Third gender children / youth feel lonely in the society because there is no proper literature or information available regarding about biological sex, gender, gender identity or third gender.

Suggestions

Inclusion through Vocational Education / Training

Teacher, school/college management and community can play significant role in inclusion. Third gender children should be given vocational and skill training to be self-dependent. Teachers and other members of schools/colleges should be sensitized about third gender issues. Vocational training to teen third gender children should be provided to prepare them for any job. This self-dependence will enhance their moral confidence and their acceptance in the society as well as in family. In July, 2017, Prof. Ravindra Kumar, Vice Chancellor, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi announced Free education for third gender persons/children in all programmes of IGNOU through Open Distance Learning (ODL) mode. This is really big move in the direction of educational opportunity to third gender persons/students with motivating and favorable environment. This move will set an example to other universities of the country and it will help in creating acceptance of third gender persons in educational institutes, in developing attitudinal barrier free environment for their education and skill development. Now third gender students can continue their education/learning for their better development.

Financial Assistance

Government should provide financial assistance for third gender children like scholarships for their studies, books, and hostel facilities.

Anti-discrimination Cell for Third gender Children/Persons

Like women harassment cell there should be third gender anti-discrimination cell in schools or colleges or other educational setting, to supervise any kind of discrimination and harassment against the third gender persons.

Training of Teachers and Awareness in Society

To provide better educational opportunities and inclusion of third gender children our teachers must be sensitized and skilled in teaching the class, which has third gender students. Beside about the importance of third gender children society should be made aware with reference related issues of third gender children.

Interact them using name

We should call the third gender children or persons by their name while you are calling or talking with them because each and every person has own dignity and self-respect. This practice will boost their confidence and acceptance in society.

Aware the concerned people in organization/society

Every educational institutes/school/college or other organization should make aware about third gender children and their rights and respect as human. It should be assured that environment of the organization must discrimination free regarding, sitting space, toiletry facilities, confidentiality of such persons etc.

National Commission for Third gender Children/Persons

For progressive development and rehabilitation of third gender children and persons a national commission should be established to look after their educational, social and economical rehabilitation.

Comprehensive Census Data of Third gender Persons

This is a great need to have the adequate data of third gender persons/children as per their educational status, age, literacy, and literacy in different age groups, enrolment and dropout at different levels of education. This data can be collected through next Census and mechanized research efforts and govt. reports.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

Every person on this planet earth is unique and matchless and nobody could be discriminated on the basis of some socially man made stereotypes. Like others third gender children also have rights of equality under article 14 of Indian constitution. Our constitution has given a good legal ground/framework in favor of third gender children/persons and other disadvantaged or deprived children. Our present social and education systems are not fit to educate third gender children due to lack of positive attitude and their social acceptance. Without sensitization of teachers and community, modifications in content and pedagogic area and without changing the learning environment and mindset of schools/ colleges/ or any other organizations they could not be included.

With reference to above questions to be answered before including third gender children or persons in mainstream education system or in society; adequate learning environment for third gender children's education should be assured, teachers are also to be sensitized to deal with class which has third gender children, besides content and pedagogic based modification should be modified to put third gender children in regular education system. Answers of these questions will make sure for better education of third gender children and their rehabilitation in the society. "It is recommended that in case of third gender children's education; in-service and pre-service teacher training programmes should be conducted comprehensively. Present teacher training programme should be restructured by adding the content related to third gender community; like their historical background, life style, culture, rituals, customs, life skills, psycho-social conditions, psycho-sexual aspects, involvement in different money earning activities, involvement in sex work, legal provisions and schemes for their welfare must be included as an unit in present pre-service teacher training programme under Gender, School and Society subject". There is no need to include additional subject or paper, the content with respect to third gender community can be part of above said paper of pre-service teacher training (B.Ed.) syllabus and trainee teacher educator (M.Ed.) syllabus in option paper Gender Studies and Inclusive Education. The addition of this content would enhance the understanding among trainee teachers and trainee teacher educators about third gender community and children and they will not hesitate to discuss issues related to this community and they will move forward to conduct research studies on third gender children's education or other children of disadvantaged group.

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