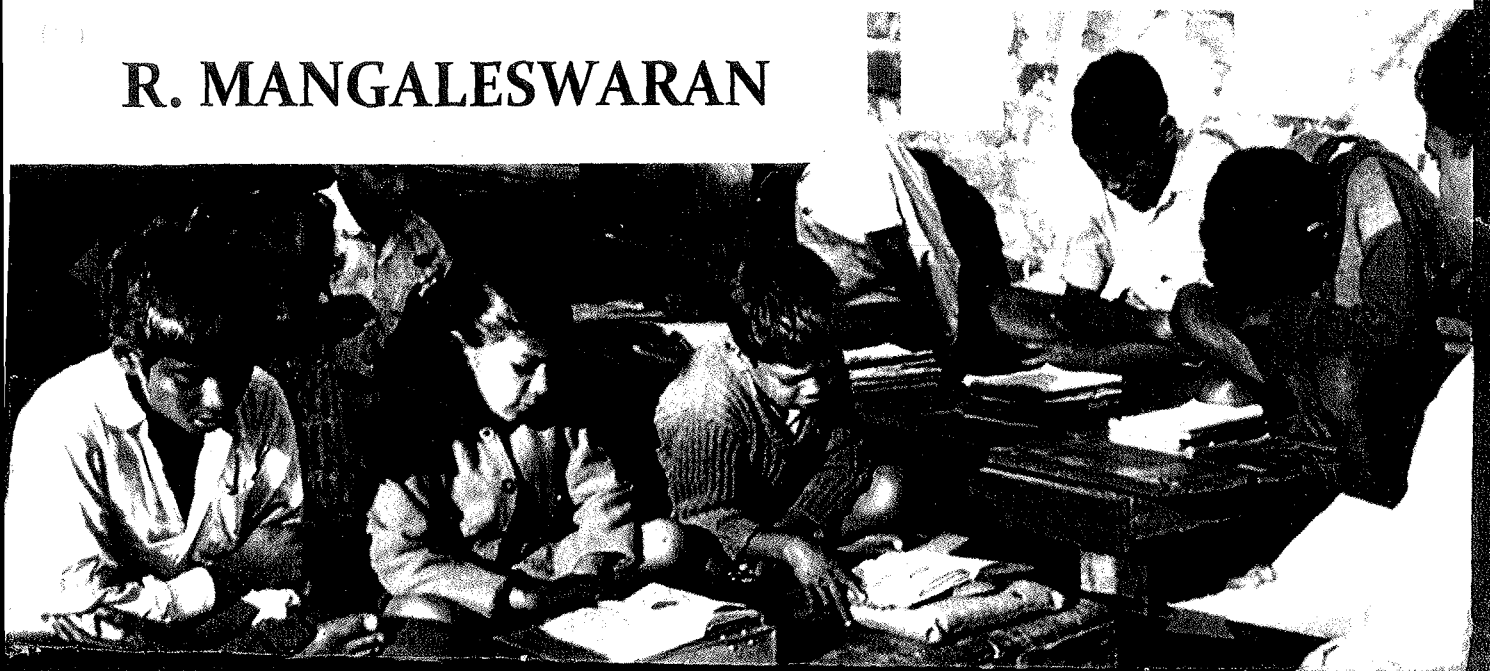


SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

Retrospects and Prospects

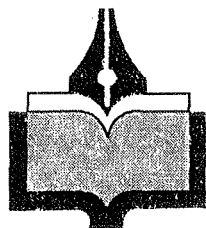
R. MANGALESWARAN



Social Development in India

Retrospects and Prospects

R. Mangaleswaran



AUTHORSPRESS

Publishers of Scholarly Books

Worldwide Circulation through Authorspress Global Network

First Published 2011

by

Authorspress

Editorial

Q-2A Hauz Khas Enclave,

New Delhi-110 016

e-mail: authorspress@yahoo.com

Marketing

E-35/103, Jawahar Park

Laxmi Nagar, Delhi-110 092

e-mail: authorspress@yahoo.com

Copyright © 2011 Editor

Social Development in India: Retrospects and Prospects

ISBN 978-81-7273-607-1

Printed in India at Tarun Offset, Delhi.

Psychosocial Competencies of Street Children

— Arockia Maraichelvi

ABSTRACT

Most studies have brought street children to prominence as "a category of children whose life circumstances place them at physical and psychosocial risk". It was in this context, the study entitled 'Psycho-social competencies of street children' was embarked upon with a thrust that through a designed Life Enrichment Education programme (LEE), the chosen unprotected section of the children can be encouraged to a hopeful prospect by expanding their Knowledge/Attitude/Skill (KAS), and thereby constructing them to adopt and practise socially approved roles. This research conducted in Coimbatore city, TamilNadu, comprised 66 street boys and 52 street girls residing in rehabilitation homes. An interview schedule was framed to secure adequate information on the lifestyle of the selected street children in reference to psycho-social issues before and after undergoing LEE. The data collected was systematically computed and subjected to systematical analysis. The substantial leap of the KAS percentage and the 't' value significant at 1 per cent level with regard to the selected psycho-social issues (social development, emotional behaviour and decision making ability) designate that the LEE programme had made a better headway in the minds of the selected street children. As the promotion and protection of street children's life is dependent on education, attitudinal changes in behaviour and confidence to lead an independent life, the society should frame suitable strategies to mould their livelihood, which can be made possible with Life Enrichment Education.

Key Words—Street children, Life enrichment education (LEE), Psycho-social competencies, Knowledge, Attitude, Skill (KAS).

PSYCHOSOCIAL COMPETENCIES OF STREET CHILDREN

Children in general are regarded as being in need of protection from abuse, but the nature of the lives of street children exposes them to an almost unimaginable potential for exploitation (Rizzini and Lusk, 1995). 'Street children' being a problem created by the society, a movement against social and human inequality, exploitation, abuse and cruelty needs to be focused by the researchers to fill the gap existing between the street children and the community as a whole (Navreet, 2003). Thus, it is of an imperative need to develop good psycho-social qualities in order to sketch them into the mainstream of the society. Aligned with this milieu, an education programme was developed for street children

known as “Life Enrichment Education (LEE)” focusing on improving their psycho-social strength.

The philosophy of LEE is based on the belief that an individual’s daily experiences should reflect, his/her preferred lifestyle, while providing a sense of usefulness, pleasure and as normal a level of functioning as possible (Adeyinka, 2000). Therefore, this study was embarked upon with the trust that through the designed LEE programme, the unprotected section of the children can be encouraged to a hopeful prospect. Hence the objectives framed for this study were to:

- Assess the street children’s existing knowledge/attitude/skill (KAS) on their lifestyle with respect to psycho-social issues
- Enhance the selected street children’s psycho-social competencies by imparting LEE.
- Assess the efficacy of LEE imparted to the street children.

METHODOLOGY

Don Bosco Anbu Illam for boys at Ukkadam, and Mariyalaya for girls at Ganapathy in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, were identified and selected for the study aiming to impart LEE among street children focusing, psycho-social development. All the street children in the age group of 13 to 17 (66 boys and 52 girls) residing in the selected rehabilitation homes were chosen. Interview schedules were evolved to collect the general background information of the respondents, to assess the KAS of the respondents on psycho-social dimension (social development - communication and listening skill and assertive behaviour; emotional health - emotional behaviour and emotional control; decision making ability). Both participatory and non-participatory approaches such as role play, situational analysis, small group tasks, debates, vignettes, content analysis, brainstorming, games, relaxation and trust building exercises were the methods chosen for imparting knowledge among street children. The same interview schedule on psycho-social dimension was re-administered to the selected street children, to find out the efficiency of the intervention programme on them.

FINDINGS

Knowledge / Attitude / Skill (KAS) on Psycho-social Dimension before and after LEE

LEE comprises a group of psycho-social competencies that help people make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships and manage their lives in a healthy productive manner.

a) Social development

The aspects of the social development covered in this present research are interpersonal relationship, communication and listening skill, and assertive behavior.

i) Interpersonal relationship

For children whose family circumstances have been limited, the 'interpersonal relationship matters much when compared to other children. Table 1 exemplifies the understanding of the selected children on factors related to interpersonal relationship.

Table 1: KAS Gained on Interpersonal Relationship of the Selected Street Children

<i>Factors related to interpersonal relationship</i>	<i>Boys</i>				<i>Girls</i>			
	<i>BE</i>		<i>AE</i>		<i>BE</i>		<i>AE</i>	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Be a good friend	46	70	66	100	13	25	34	66
Be an important member of the gang	32	48	55	83	15	29	42	81
Respect other's views/lifestyles	9	14	51	77	8	15	46	89
Have trust in friends	12	18	56	85	10	19	31	60
Show appreciation for others' work	43	65	66	100	0	0	43	83
Be able easily approachable	33	50	66	100	38	73	52	100
Ability to organize / lead group activities	15	23	49	74	6	12	42	81
Be good in conversation	14	21	52	79	2	4	36	69
Mean score	3.0909		6.9848		1.7692		6.2692	
SD	1.2370		0.9526		0.8771		1.2851	
't' value	25.2215**				25.4367**			

** Significant at one per cent level

The 't' value calculated with the data prior and after LEE was highly significant at one per cent level with reference to both boys and girls, highlighting the fact that the well planned and organised LEE elevated the understanding on the aspect of interpersonal relationship, and it had far-reaching implications in the minds of street children.

ii. Communication and listening

The street children who were deprived of a good home environment were found far behind normalcy before LEE. They did not mind saying things clearly before, but gained considerable knowledge through LEE and tried to say things clearly. This change in behaviour was implied through the appreciable improvement from 32 per cent to 81 per cent (girls 25% to 79% and boys 38% to 82%). The importance of listening with a clear head was emphasized among the respondents through a 'whispering game'. The overall 't' value that shows significant difference at one per cent level confirms the above findings.

iii. Assertive Behaviour

Johnson *et al.* (2000) have rightly figured out that children with limited family protection often require more intensive work in providing them love and affection in order to learn

to assert themselves appropriately. The Table II illustrates how the behaviour of being assertive takes a hold of them after LEE.

Table 2: Assertive Behaviour of the Selected Street Children before and after LEE

Assertive behaviour	Boys				Girls			
	BE		AE		BE		AE	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Saying 'no' to specific situations	22	33	49	74	10	19	33	63
Taking rejection in their stride	18	27	44	67	6	12	34	65
Enjoying conversing with strangers	23	35	66	100	17	33	43	83
Insisting upon knowing why	11	17	47	71	15	29	38	73
Asking for clarification	10	15	48	73	3	6	29	56
Not getting upset and shaken	32	48	52	79	9	17	35	67
Accepting criticism in case of fault	32	48	56	85	13	25	40	77
Being stringent with possessions and money	17	26	56	85	5	10	35	66
Giving personal opinion	22	33	60	91	6	12	37	71
Talking with people spreading false stories	42	64	64	97	19	37	52	100
Mean score	3.4697		8.2121		1.9808		7.2308	
SD	2.2203		1.1703		1.5529		1.6404	
't' value					17.2401*		19.8373**	

** Significant at one per cent level

Adolescents are normally not assertive for fear of displeasing others and of not being liked. This happens more in case of street children who do not have anyone to love them. However, LEE made them learn to take rejection in their stride and think of creatively dealing with rejection if it happens, shown by the boost to 66 per cent (67% for boys and 65% for girls). The overall statistically significant 't' value at one per cent level reiterates the fact that the LEE had boomed the street children's knowledge of exhibiting assertive behaviour.

b. Emotional health

Statements used to deem the intellectual capacity of the respondents towards their emotional behaviour along with percentages before and after LEE is projected in Figure 1.

The leap in the overall percentages and the statistically significant 't' value calculated with this data on emotional behaviour revealed the fact that the street children had become conversant on issues related to the same after LEE.

Emotional Control of the Selected Street Children

Certain emotions, their causes, ways of overcoming and relieving techniques as perceived and practised by the sample before and after LEE were discussed as follows:

Emotional behaviour of the selected street boys and girls before and after LEE

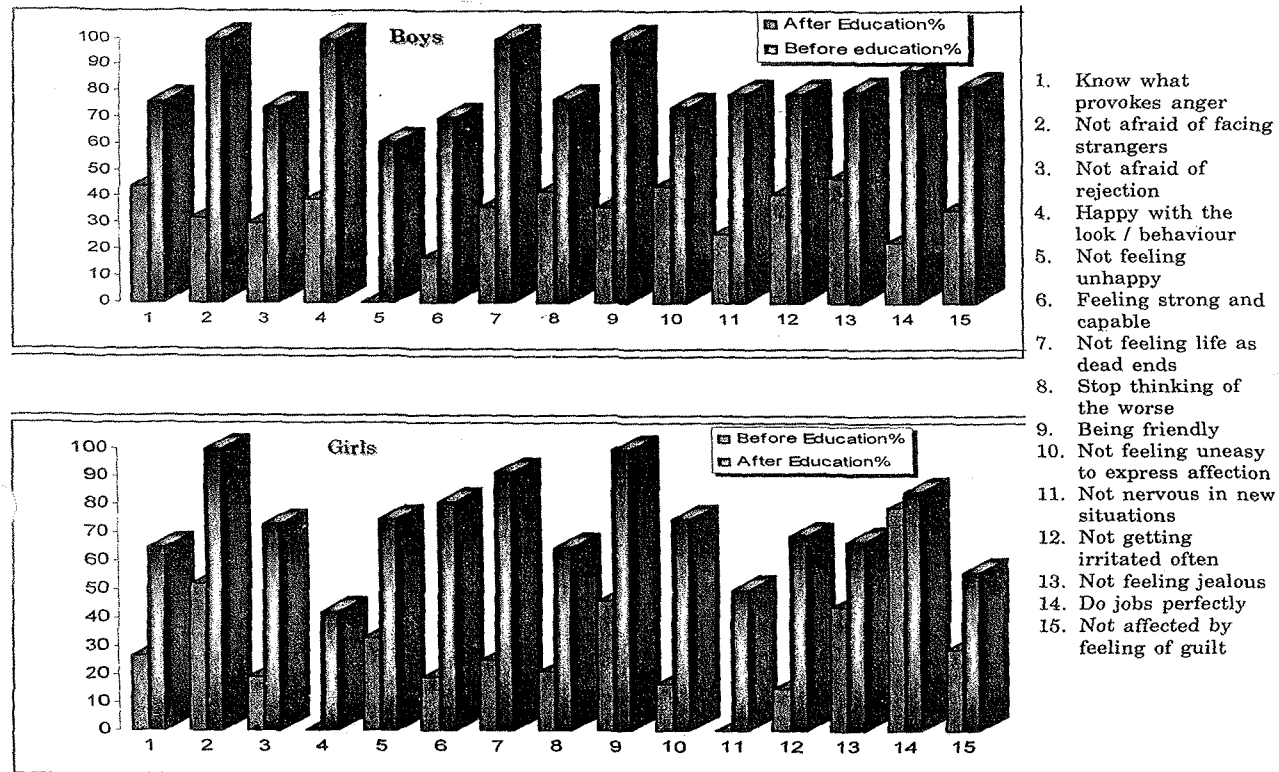


Figure 1

Fear: LEE taught them the steps to conquer fear and enabled 61 of the respondents to follow the steps in conquering fear.

Anger: Twenty-five per cent of the children learnt to be comfortable with anger and 89 respondents became familiar with the steps to be followed in controlling anger.

Stress: After LEE about 28 boys and 36 girls got into the practice of doing stress relieving exercises.

Anxiety: Six boys and nine girls were found to suffer from anxiety. Out of this 12 of them became familiar with anxiety-relieving techniques.

Depression: Out of seven boys and nine girls suffering from depression, six boys and eight girls were familiar with the techniques that relieve them from depression.

c. Decision-making ability

Education on decision making aspect involved strategies to make the participants encourage to think, discuss and express freely and frankly. LEE furnished significant and applicable information on the steps to be followed in a goal-getting process, and it also stressed the importance of the goals setting and problem solving. The 't' value with a significant difference at one per cent level projects the potential of LEE in enhancing the knowledge of the participants on the decision-making and problem-solving ability and also confirming the positive effect on goal setting procedures.

Feedback on LEE

Out of the 13 personnel involved with the street children 12 of them were greatly convinced on the subject of the resource persons, their contribution in giving out the information and the teaching strategies adopted to facilitate the selected group of children to gain desired knowledge, adopt acceptable behaviours and acquire/practise the skills learnt. The feedback form also made the respondents give their general views on LEE as observed by them, which in turn proved the efficacy of the programme as given below:

- Family relationship among ten boys and six girls were strengthened.
- Academic performance of 29 per cent of the total sample had been improved.
- Complaints over fighting with peers had gone down to a striking level.
- Leadership qualities had also been exhibited.
- The number of children participating in sports activities, art and handicrafts competitions held in schools as well in the institution had risen nearly twofold.

To conclude, responding to the needs and problems of street children adoption of suitable educational strategies that relate to the actual situation in their environment and issues that confront them in their daily lives will be made possible through Life Enrichment Education.

WORKS CITED

- Rizzini, I. and Lusk, M. (1995). "Children in the Streets: Latin America's Lost Generation", *Children and Youth Services Review*, 17(3), 387-95.
- Navreet. (2003). *Childhood Crisis: Child Neglect and Juvenile Delinquency*, New Delhi Discovery Publishing House.
- Adeyinka, A.A. (2000). "Social Correlates and Coping Measures of Street Children : A Comparative Study of Street and Non-Street Children in South Western Nigeria", *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 24, 1199-1213.
- Johnson, G. (2001), "The Debate about Homelessness", *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 36(1), 35-50.

Depression, Anxiety and Stress among the Urban and Rural School Students—A Comparative Study

— K. Maheswari and M. Sangeetha

ABSTRACT

There are many misconceptions about teen depression as there are concerns about teenagers in general. It is accepted that the teen years are tough, but most teens balance the requisite angst with good friendships, success in school or outside activities, and the development of a strong sense of self-confidence. Occasional bad moods or acting out is to be expected, but depression is something different. Depression can destroy the very essence of a teenager's personality, causing an overwhelming sense of sadness, despair, or anger. Unlike adults, who have the ability to seek assistance on their own, teenagers usually must rely on parents, teachers, or other caregivers to recognize their suffering and get them the treatment they need. The increase of stress, depression, anxiety levels leads to a nervous breakdown. The symptoms of stress, depression and anxiety are lack of energy, exhaustion, trembling hands, disturbed sleeping patterns, excessive worries, irritability, isolation, panic, worthless feelings, guilt, headache, muscle pain, increased heartbeat, loss of sex drive and loss of appetite. No matter even if he takes rest for long hours, he feels exhausted all the time. The trembling symptom is also one of the features of stress and anxiety. The purpose of the paper is to understand and compare the experiences of stress, anxiety and depression among the rural and urban students. The sample comprised of both male and female students and the sample size was 70. The Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS) was used to assess depression, anxiety and stress.

Key Words: Depression, Anxiety, Stress, School students.

INTRODUCTION

Anxiety can manifest itself in many different ways to affect every type of person. People who suffer from an anxiety disorder may experience stress, panic attacks or irrational fears. It is not uncommon for those suffering from an anxiety disorder to also feel depressive symptoms. Anxiety disorders and depression have always gone hand in hand. Statistics show that people who suffer from an anxiety disorder are much more likely to experience depression. As expected, people who suffer from depression are also much more likely to suffer from an anxiety disorder. Almost one-half of the individuals