
A RESTITUTION AND REFLECTION ON CHILD RIGHTS EDUCATION PROJECT OF UNICEF IN DEVELOPED WORLD: AN EVIDENCE FROM FRANCE

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ABSTRACT

Children own equal rights as any other human being, and their issues need to be addressed. However, the perception and conception of childhood vary from culture to culture and country to country. In this regard, child rights approach of UNICEF is not only applied in the Global South/developing countries but also in the Global North/occidental countries such as France. For this purpose, UNICEF has designed 'child rights education' project that promotes, advocates and brings awareness about child rights and International Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC) and publicize the agenda of UNICEF among the general public both at formal and informal levels in the developed countries. In this work, an in-depth analysis regarding the UNICEF's child rights education project has been done in relation to the high income countries, with a case study of France. Furthermore, the modes of intervention, principles and values of project have been discussed. Additionally, it will also be analyzed that why child rights based education cannot be made universal and educate children of the developing countries about their rights.

KEYWORDS

UNICEF, Child Rights Education, CRC, Intervention, Developed

INTRODUCTION

UNICEF's project on educating children's rights is carried out exclusively in developed countries, where promotion, advocacy, and awareness about child rights occur at both formal and informal levels. In contrast, funds are collected for children in developing countries. The International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) of 1989 acknowledges that children are more vulnerable than adults as they lack the right to vote or political and economic freedom. Therefore, it is crucial for societies to prioritize healthy child development. Since the adoption of the CRC in 1989, UNICEF's agendas and actions have been centered on this document. This is the first international text to explicitly recognize children under 18 as complete individuals with economic, social, cultural, civic, and political rights that are mandatory, fundamental, and non-negotiable.

It's crucial to examine why UNICEF's child rights education and advocacy initiative is only targeted towards developed and wealthy nations, even though children living in these countries are economically advantaged. However, developed countries still face social issues related to child rights such as child abuse, discrimination against migrant and Roma children, intolerance, racism, indifference towards refugee children from the state, bullying, lack of agency and autonomy for children, and disconnection with the struggles of children in developing nations that must be dealt with (Humanium, 2017). Additionally, this project enables UNICEF to promote its agenda to the general public and leverage its soft power to draw attention to child rights issues among policymakers.

To illustrate, I will use UNICEF France as a case study. UNICEF France is the French Committee for UNICEF, established in 1964. It has branches in each department of France and is authorized to represent UNICEF to the French public authorities and civil society. Its mission is to encourage the general public, young people, the educational community, and public authorities in France and worldwide to promote the rights of children and adolescents. UNICEF France embodies UNICEF's mandate in France, mainly through institutional advocacy. The aim of this advocacy is to urge public decision-makers to prioritize child rights on their agenda. France was one of the first countries to sign the Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified it in 1990. Consequently, France has committed to respect it in all its political actions, including public policies within the country (such as poverty and exclusion reduction, national education, justice, etc.) and external actions (like diplomacy, development aid, armed interventions, etc.).

In France, providing health facilities, protection, and education is not seen as an area that requires intervention, as these needs are already being met. Therefore, the focus of advocacy is on supporting children's rights in France and influencing public authorities to pay attention to the most vulnerable children, such as those living in poverty, migrant children, children with disabilities, and those affected by court decisions. This project aims to help children develop self-confidence, self-esteem, and important values such as tolerance, equality, freedom, justice, co-existence, and respect as part of their overall personality development, since social needs are also important for this. Teachers are also being trained on child rights as part of this project. Additionally, children in France will learn about the global situation of children around the world, including issues like child soldiers, child labor, and child marriage, bridging the gap between the Global North and Global South regarding children's rights issues through this awareness campaign.

An important aspect to consider is why UNICEF has only implemented the child rights education project in developed and industrialized countries and not in the developing countries of the global South. There are three potential reasons for this. Firstly, developing countries may have other child rights issues that require attention. Secondly, discussing, advocating, and promoting child rights are still seen as a taboo in many developing countries. Thirdly, UNICEF's child rights projects are tailored to each country's needs and culture. Consequently, children in developing countries face more adverse conditions in comparison to those in developed countries, such as poverty, lack of clean water, and basic health facilities, that need to be addressed first. UNICEF has implemented child rights advocacy and education projects in countries where the traditions of child rights education are already embedded, which is why it is mainly programmed for developed countries. In most developing countries, violations of child rights are based on cultural norms, beliefs, superstitions, and traditions. Practices such as female genital mutilation, child marriage, and dowry practices are not necessarily considered a "violation" in themselves. UNICEF collaborates with governments and communities in respective countries, and as a result, advocacy and promotion of child rights at the school and informal levels may not be possible. Therefore, UNICEF has designed other programs and projects to address child rights issues in such countries.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The rights-based approach to development is founded on global human rights principles and standards, and it is implemented to safeguard and advance human rights. Its goal is to examine inequalities that contribute to development issues and tackle unfair distributions of power and control that impede the advancement of development. Numerous NGOs and development agencies have adopted a rights-based approach to development, which seeks to create a positive transformation of power relations among

various development actors. This approach implies that the fulfillment of human rights is essential for achieving development, blurring the distinction between the two. The rights-based developmental approach involves two stakeholders: the rights holders, whose rights must be fulfilled, and the duty bearers, who are responsible for fulfilling the rights of the holders. The objective of the approach is to enhance the capacity of duty bearers and empower the rights holders, according to Gneiting et al (2009).

The adoption and inclusion of human rights into development discourse has also helped in defining what rights are. In this regard, rights are defined as *'entitlements that belong to all human beings regardless of race, ethnicity, or socio-economic class; all humans, therefore, are rights holders, and it is someone's duty to provide these rights'* (David, 1997).

Therefore, development framework based on human rights leads to social justice and moral legitimacy (Paul, 2007). However, there has been disparity found between NGOs in the South and NGOs in the North between their point of views and ideas in relation to development and human rights. There is much possibility that by combining these two discourses across the globe can cause problems of fragmentation of ideas and programs. The development agencies that have adopted the rights-based approach to development include UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, ILO, Norwegian NORad, Swedish Sida, the Australian aid agency and the British DFID. UNICEF has implemented the rights-based approach to development and its ideas with a special focus on children's rights.

According to Douglas (1970), children are a symbol of a society's natural state. Malnutrition in children can signify famine, disruptions in education may indicate a state of war, child soldiers or prostitutes suggest a social crisis, and child abuse may signal moral decay. Therefore, children can be viewed as a reflection of society. However, approaches to safeguarding and promoting children's rights may differ depending on the cultural and societal context. Several social scientists argue that childhood is a "socially constructed" concept, meaning that the perception and understanding of childhood is not universal and may change over time. While all societies recognize that children differ from adults, the ways in which they differ, and the expectations placed on them, vary and evolve depending on the culture and society in which they exist.

Social anthropologists have conducted research showing that the perception and understanding of children differ among countries worldwide, with significant variations in the concept of "normal childhood" across regions. In his book "The Anthropology of Childhood: Cherubs, Chattel, Changelings," Professor David Lancy (2015) examines different cultural notions of children, drawing on historical and

contemporary examples from various parts of the world. In wealthy, democratic, and industrialized societies, child-rearing is not only focused on providing children with basic nourishment but also involves actively teaching and guiding children in their social and intellectual development, starting from a very young age (Lancy 2010: 80). This proactive approach may include prenatal education, providing educational toys throughout childhood, and parental guidance. In contrast, many non-western societies have different approaches to child-rearing and child development (Lancy, 2010). Western parents generally follow a cultural belief that child development requires a protective and hands-on approach from caregivers until the child becomes independent and self-sufficient. However, other cultures may have different approaches, where children are encouraged to explore and self-educate at a young age. This could mean that children are granted independence earlier in life to "find their own way," which contrasts with the Western approach. Additionally, in some societies, a child's agency and personhood status may be recognized earlier or later in life compared to others (Ember and Cunnar, 2015).

Theoretical Analysis

In 2014, UNICEF's Private Fundraising and Partnerships Division (PFP) released the Child Rights Education Toolkit, which is a rights-based approach designed to promote the development of child rights education (CRE). The Toolkit's primary focus is on formal education at the early childhood, primary, and secondary levels. CRE, as defined in the Toolkit, involves teaching and learning about the provisions and principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the child rights approach, empowering both children and adults to take action to promote and apply these principles at the family, school, community, national, and global levels (UNICEF, 2014: 20).

Following the release of the Toolkit, UNICEF launched a Child Rights Advocacy project in developed countries to promote awareness and advocacy of child rights at both formal (primary and secondary schools) and informal (community-based development) levels. This research also includes teacher training and education on child rights and the CRC.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the reasons for the implementation of child rights advocacy projects in developed countries like France and analyze the factors that contribute to their success.
2. To compare and contrast the child rights-based programs of UNICEF in different regions (Global North and Global South countries) and identify the factors that lead to variations in their implementation and effectiveness.
3. To examine the challenges faced by UNICEF in making the child rights education

project universal and identify the barriers that prevent its implementation in certain countries.

4. To explore the cultural, social, and economic factors that influence the perception of childhood in various countries and examine the impact of these perceptions on the societal development of those countries.

RESEACH QUESTIONS

1. Why child rights advocacy project is being implemented in the developed countries like France?
2. Why child rights-based programs of UNICEF differ in the various countries e.g. Global North and Global South countries?
3. Why UNICEF cannot make 'child rights education' project, universal?
4. Why and how childhood is perceived in various countries and its impact on the societal development?

DATA ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

Child Rights: a new ethical attitude towards children

In the light of the CRC, children need to be respected in their evolving capacity and in their individuality so that they can influence decisions that are relevant to their lives. They are no longer considered as only recipients of services and beneficiaries, as a result of protective measures. Rather, they have the right to participate in decisions and actions affecting them. It is disheartening to observe that in countries with democratic institutions, the systems that are meant to be based on public participation and accountability have failed to consider the voices and needs of the most vulnerable children, such as migrant and Roma children (Humanium, 2017). These systems are not adequately equipped to address the specific challenges faced by these children. For instance, Sweden has declined to sign the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, leaving migrant children at risk. In the United Kingdom, nearly one in ten children is a victim of abuse. In the Netherlands, the human rights commissioner of the Council of Europe expressed concern about the "racist tendencies, anti-Semitism, and other forms of intolerance" present in the country. Child labor is prevalent in the farming and restaurant sectors in southern Italy (Humanium, 2017).

Recognizing and respecting child rights should be viewed as a duty and accountability rather than an act of generosity or benevolence towards children. When children are given a voice and are encouraged to participate, they become empowered. Their participation and empowerment contribute to a wider process of social transformation and progress. Therefore, UNICEF's focus is not only limited to fulfilling children's needs but also includes realization and recognition of their human rights. Recognizing child rights means 'acknowledging human rights as a question of entitlement and of a

consummate responsibility to ensure their effective enjoyment' (Pais, 1999).

The concept of "inclusion" is fundamental to the provision of child rights across different societies (White, 2002). Addressing age-based exclusion and exploitation is crucial, and recognizing the status of children in society is essential for progress. Due to their vulnerability, children are a priority group for special interventions. An important aspect of child rights is "recognition," which acknowledges them as a distinct social group or individuals in their own right. Through development interventions, children are often transformed into "cases" that are disconnected from their own context and reorganized into categories (Wood, 1985). James et al, 1998 presented three different structural models about the perception of childhood. In the first model the child is seen as pre-social and savage who requires strict discipline for its proper development. Here, the power only rests with the adult who controls.

To summarize, the second model of childhood views the child as innocent and in need of protection and care from adults. However, this model still places power in the hands of adults who are responsible for nurturing the child. The third model combines both views of power and emphasizes adult training for the child's natural development, followed by an assessment of their stage of development. Recently, social scientists have been exploring the diversity of childhood experiences across different cultural contexts, in order to develop more child-centered approaches. The child rights approach takes the most critical stance towards exploitative power relations and seeks to challenge them to ensure children's rights are respected.

Thus, advocacy for CRE is required in order to create the conditions and spaces for children, including children from marginalized groups and children with disabilities, *"to learn as a right (access to education), about rights (in the curriculum), through rights (transforming the learning environment) and for rights (transforming the broader environment)"* (Jerome et al, 2015). Advocacy can be an ongoing process or specific intervention. The advocacy mainly focuses on the education because this sector has an influence as a mediator in relation to children's rights.

Why Child Rights Education and Advocacy is important in Developed / Occidental Countries?

When child rights are discussed in the development discourse, they are often attributed to the sufferings of the children in the East and the South e.g. right to basic education, health facilities, clean water, food etc. But we seldom talk and discuss about the promotion and advocacy of child rights in the western societies. This is because of the fact that western countries have dedicated many welfare programs for the child protection and child care. Here, five potential reasons would be presented for the child rights education project by UNICEF in the developed countries.

1. There is an observation that the culture of protection and excessive care miss out the agency of a child in those society. For example, western culture emphasizes more on the protecting children instead of appreciating them as participants and agents in the society which hinders child participation (Jerome et al, 2015). When the agency of children is not valued then their sense of empowerment would be lacking.
2. There are some prevalent child rights issues in the developed countries that needs advocacy and education i.e. discrimination and inequality with the migrant and Roma children, child abuse and bullying, child trafficking, racism, intolerance, lack of right to identity and protection (refugees and migrants), juvenile criminal trials, lack of right to clean air (excessive emission of CO₂) (Humanium, 2017).
3. Bridging the gap between the Global North and Global South countries by highlighting the child rights issues of the developing countries and bringing awareness about their sufferings. Promotion of child rights in western societies is important for full-potential, personality development and respect for child rights not only at local level but also at global level. For example, the clothes worn in Europe might be made by child labor in Asia or the legacies of European colonial history or war crisis have contributed to the desperate asylum seekers knocking on doors. Therefore, it is important to instill a duty to care for others across all societies, by developing a culture of full understanding, awareness and respect for child rights. This shows that the right to child rights education is therefore, recognized as a human right in itself.
4. Publicizing the agenda of UNICEF that would help in the collection of the funds and donations from the developed countries.
5. It is a dilemma that school curriculum in the developed countries is mostly linked to the responsibilities but not always to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). This raises the possibility that children may learn about rights and responsibilities but may not learn about CRC and what it means to be a duty bearer or rights-holder. Moreover, teacher's training in terms of child rights and its link with CRC is also important to ensure effectiveness of the project. As with advocacy, capacity building of the teachers and education staff in relation to the child rights is also needed at the level of individual schools and at broader education system environment. According to the European Commission Directorate-General for Justice, Children's Rights, As They See Them, children were interviewed from different countries about the impact of teacher's attitude towards them. One of the boys from Lithuania responded "Teachers' salaries should be raised and they would take their work more seriously", a girl from

Bulgaria stated “A teacher could be a kind of second parent; we spend half of our time with them. For smaller children they are really like parents”, a boy from France expressed “If they [teachers] don’t like us, we are broken, we cannot do anything.” Therefore, broad capacity development reforms of the teachers are needed to help teachers expand their on skills and outlooks in teaching about global citizenship explicitly (Morgan et al, 2006).

6. It is interesting to see that CRE is adopted according to the cultural needs of the country. Lee (2007) argues that CRE advocates in the Republic of Korea avoid to use the terminology of rights so that local sensitivities might not be aroused. Akuzawa (2007) and Takeda (2012) argue that in Japan when asked about human rights, the dominant approach is moral and values education (kindness, sympathy etc.) and principles like participation is downplayed.

Relation between CRE and Curriculum reforms in the developed countries

In recent times, different countries have implemented curriculum reforms to incorporate child rights education (CRE) in varied ways. While some countries have ensured that CRE is a fundamental entitlement for all, others have not made significant progress in this regard. For instance, Iceland has made considerable progress by including Human Rights and Democracy as one of its six fundamental principles in the curriculum and making knowledge and understanding of the CRC a learning outcome in primary schools. Similarly, France has made a positive move by acknowledging and referring to child rights in the new primary curriculum.

To illustrate a decline in CRE curriculum reforms, Australia's national curriculum framework does not include CRE, while Scotland's curriculum promotes it but not as a mandatory requirement. In Spain, the Education for Citizenship and Human Rights law established in 2006 has been repealed. In the Republic of Ireland, the Social, Civic, and Political Education subject, which previously mandated rights education in secondary schools, has been downgraded to an optional course.

Advocates believe that teacher training is crucial for implementing CRE, and it is notable that, with the exception of Scotland, no states ensure that teachers receive training in children's rights and the CRC. Scotland is an exceptional example, as all new teachers are required to have familiarity with the CRC. This is the only instance where children's rights are explicitly identified as a component of initial teacher education and training. However, the UK government has not ensured that this is implemented across the entire UK.

Explicitly connecting CRE with the CRC can help align state responsibilities for promoting child rights with professional frameworks, as exemplified by Scotland.

UNICEF Belgium is currently in talks with its partners to devise a plan aimed at enhancing teachers' education to effect developmental change in terms of child rights. UNICEF Finland has put forward a model for teacher training, with the condition that the government provides funding for its implementation. In Israel, the responsibility for implementing CRE through teacher training is shared between the government and UNICEF. In Hessen, UNICEF Germany has implemented a dispersed and democratic model for teacher training through school networks. Therefore, there can be various alternative solutions to teacher education, depending on the possibilities of collaboration with the government and the country's context (Jerome et al., 2015). In the following section, the child rights advocacy project designed by UNICEF for an occidental like France (as a case study) will be discussed, in detail.

Advocacy and Promotion of Child Rights in France

In 2015, an educational reform was authorized by the French socialist party government, which is when UNICEF's project began in France. As part of its mandate, UNICEF is responsible for ensuring that the International Convention on the Rights of the Child is implemented in countries that have ratified it, including France. UNICEF is therefore assisting education stakeholders in addressing issues related to the Convention and raising awareness about child rights through interventions in educational institutions.

To exercise their rights, children must have a clear understanding of their principles and implications. Schools provide an ideal environment for learning about rights, as they are safe spaces where children can experiment with their role in transforming their surroundings. Children who learn about rights in this context can share their knowledge with their peers, becoming agents of their own citizenship project. However, several essential conditions must be met to foster a supportive learning environment. A balanced educational relationship that prioritizes justice, respect, dialogue, participation, and reflection is necessary for children to be motivated to learn, get involved, and see the real impact of their actions.

Advantages of the project

This pedagogical approach allows children to learn three important social skills, which are necessary for human development (UNICEF France). These are as follows,

Self-awareness: children learn to understand themselves better by questioning their own rights.

Self-esteem: through the recognition of the value of their words and actions, children develop in a climate of respect and collaboration.

Self-confidence: the previous two allow children to experience the very basis of citizenship by learning their rights and respecting those of others.

Children are enabled to question their own rights and develop an environment of

collaboration and respect with the society. They also learn the basis of citizenship and respect the rights held by others. This in turn promotes sustainable human development. The strategies and actions proposed by UNICEF France for this project are pedagogical resources, educational and solidarity programs and volunteer interventions (UNICEF France).

Mission of UNICEF France:

As part of this approach, UNICEF France has four major missions (UNICEF France):

- Disseminate as widely as possible the principles of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Strengthen the overall living among children and young people.
- Promote sustainable human development.
- Accompany all the actors of education in their mission of education on the rights of the child.

UNICEF proposes that teachers and educational professionals be accompanied in their pedagogical approaches to educate young people about the rights of the child. To this end, UNICEF has signed a framework agreement with the Ministry of National Education and provides training content for both initial and in-service training of teachers and facilitators. The project aims to support all education professionals in integrating the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child into their practices. The advocacy and promotion of children's rights specifically focus on the right to education, gender equality, and their rights to enjoyment and leisure activities. According to the research paper "Teaching and learning about child rights: A study of implementation in 26 countries" by Jerome et al. (2015), a UNICEF staff member stated that it is not common in French culture to directly discuss children's rights. However, by implementing the philosophy of children's rights in education, the advocacy project aims to promote positive outcomes for children's development, such as addressing school bullying and taking a holistic approach to their well-being. The project also focuses on raising awareness and advocating for policy changes to further the child rights agenda.

In summary, the recent educational reform in France presents a chance for the education system to incorporate children's rights education directly into their curriculum. Although children may have heard about children's rights education, few of them have a full understanding of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and how it applies to them. During the project, the head teacher expressed that "very few of our young people know... the notions of children's rights" because it is not considered a priority in the French education system. The new curriculum in France includes "moral and civic" studies, which is a positive step towards promoting children's rights and participation. However, this alone is not enough and UNICEF

interventions are still necessary. The new curriculum has two challenges that have emerged, according to UNICEF.

- Lack of explicit focus on what it actually means for the children to be seen as holders of rights.
- Limiting the connection of the curriculum to the real lives of children due to the prevailing culture in schools.

UNICEF's project, called 'Droits dans l'école', is designed for primary schools and focuses on educating children about their rights and how this knowledge relates to them through various activities such as debates, seminars, and role-playing. Additionally, UNICEF France also provides interventions for secondary schools. In addition to educating children about their rights, the project includes training for teachers led by child rights specialists. As a result, by integrating children's rights education into teacher training, the project aims to achieve its objectives more effectively.

A key achievement of this project is to introduce broader teaching around citizenship, human rights and democracy. This initiative fosters communication with and among young people around the world. With the help of this forum, youth exchanges take place while offering them a space on the Internet to safely discuss subjects concerning their lives.

In France, children are exposed to a diverse array of cultures, ethnicities, races, languages, and religions in their schools and public spaces. However, in some Western countries, including France, there may be elements that promote bias against certain communities based on their religion, social class, race, or skin color. Children may be influenced by what they observe and hear in their environment, making it crucial to educate them about the benefits of cultural diversity and how to practice tolerance, respect, cooperation, and non-discrimination. Introducing such beliefs, including the rights to respect, equality, and freedom, from a young age may help foster a harmonious society that values diversity and can counteract bias. Furthermore, children from disadvantaged backgrounds such as migrants, disabled, or living in poverty may lack self-esteem and confidence.

Children often do not realize that they have the right to play and have leisure time, as they are burdened with academic studies. The French culture tends to prioritize protecting children rather than acknowledging them as participants and agents in society, which may hinder their ability to participate. A French school teacher once stated, "we don't trust children to take action as this is not the right time for them to decide" (Jerome et al, 2015: 52). Therefore, in child rights education, children are taught about their right to participate, their right to express themselves, and their right

to leisure and play. Child rights education (CRE) is crucial as it enables a child to be fully prepared to live as an individual in society and to grow up with the ideals of dignity, peace, tolerance, equality, freedom, and solidarity. Additionally, CRE serves as a critical tool for building children's capacity to claim their rights and encourages sustained civic engagement and meaningful participation.

UNICEF has identified that while teachers in France are familiar with human rights, they lack specific training in child rights. Furthermore, there are no regulations mandating child rights training for teachers. As a result, UNICEF considers it a priority to address the lack of knowledge and confidence among teachers regarding children's rights. This is highlighted in the research paper by Jerome et al (2015) where it is stated that UNICEF aims to provide training for teachers to enhance their understanding and confidence in promoting and protecting child rights.

Challenges of this project

The media's role in promoting bias and intolerance towards certain communities among children can hinder the development of important virtues such as tolerance and respect, which are essential components of children's rights.

In France, it has been noted that children are often not included in decision-making processes that affect them, indicating that child participation is not highly valued. This could impede the sense of empowerment that children have gained through child rights education. Participation and empowerment are interconnected, and without empowerment, participation can become a mere formality. Similarly, without meaningful participation, empowerment can become an empty promise, as noted by Petite (2005). Promoting child rights education (CRE) in France faces another significant challenge, which is the school environment. Inequality and discrimination against disadvantaged students, incidents of bullying, high dropout rates, and violence are all indications of a negative environment that can hinder the effectiveness of CRE. Additionally, it is important to note that teachers are primarily responsible for teaching and may not necessarily be equipped to address the behavioral or social problems of students. Non-teaching school staff members are typically responsible for managing the personal, social, and emotional elements of a child's schooling. French professionals must recognize the holistic nature of a child, rather than solely viewing them as a subject for their teaching profession, without addressing additional issues. It should be noted that teachers have not typically received training to manage psycho-social issues, leaving them ill-prepared to resolve such issues that they may encounter in the classroom.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

One third of the world's population is made up of children, and the future of the world

relies on their well-being. They are entitled to the same rights as any other human being, and it is crucial to uphold, safeguard, encourage, and support their rights. UNICEF's efforts in this area are commendable as they are working towards the betterment of children not only in developing countries but also in developed countries like France. Their project for advocating child rights has been instrumental in raising awareness about the CRC and promoting UNICEF's agenda to the general public in developed countries.

It can be observed that UNICEF France employs soft power to exert influence on authorities to improve the situation of children. For instance, in 2008, UNICEF France took a stance on the various reforms in the juvenile criminal justice system, and in 2011, it supported the establishment of the Human Rights Defender (Monnin, 2016). More recently, UNICEF France has contributed to the development of a multi-year plan to combat poverty and social exclusion, and to rebuild schools in the Republic with an emphasis on inclusive education (Monnin, 2016). Additionally, the child rights advocacy project helps in shaping the character of children by instilling virtues such as tolerance, patience, respect, justice, and cooperation. Since France is a diverse country, the cultivation of these virtues in children can foster a culture of mutual respect and coexistence.

Furthermore, when UNICEF intervenes in schools and educates children about their rights, they become more confident and are able to express their problems and concerns. This is because knowing one's rights can provide a sense of empowerment. It is noteworthy that UNICEF's advocacy project also helps bridge the gap between Global North and Global South countries, as it highlights the issues and struggles faced by children in developing countries through awareness campaigns.

Although this study focused on a developed country, it is equally important for developing countries to adopt child-rights advocacy projects. These countries should implement policies for curriculum reform and incorporate child rights education projects that are sensitive to their cultural, religious, and normative values, as well as their rights-based approach. Future research in this area is also necessary for developing countries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ensure access to quality education: All children, regardless of their background or circumstances, have the right to quality education. Governments should invest in education systems and infrastructure, ensure that teachers are trained and supported, and provide equal opportunities for all children to access education.
2. Promote inclusivity: Education should be inclusive and accessible to all children, including those with disabilities, from ethnic minorities, and living in poverty.

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- Policies and programs should be designed to remove any barriers to education and ensure that every child has an equal opportunity to learn.
3. Empower children: Children should be encouraged and given opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their education. They should be empowered to express their views, participate in school governance, and be active members of their communities.
 4. Teach human rights: Education should not only teach academic subjects, but also promote understanding and respect for human rights. Children should learn about their rights and the rights of others, and be taught to advocate for those rights.
 5. Foster critical thinking: Education should foster critical thinking and analytical skills, encouraging children to question assumptions and think independently. This will help them to become engaged citizens and contribute to the development of their communities.
 6. Ensure safety and protection: Schools should be safe and protective environments for children, free from violence, exploitation, and abuse. Teachers and staff should be trained to identify and respond to any risks to children's safety and well-being.
 7. Collaborate with communities: Education is a collaborative effort between schools, families, communities, and governments. It is important to involve parents, caregivers, and community members in decision-making and planning, and to build partnerships to support children's learning.
 8. By implementing these recommendations, UNICEF, international bodies, individuals and communities can work towards providing every child with a rights-based education that empowers them to reach their full potential.

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