

Assessment 2

Written Essay

Children, young people and Families

BMHP5004



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Introduction:

The aim of this written essay is to analyze the emergence of childhood including the social and historical construction of the family.

I will also explain what is defined by child and childhood as a social construction in historical times to current times, also how the children's lives change from historical and current times, including different factors, policies and legislation that contribute to improving the changes in the social construction of childhood and families.

At the end I will provide discussion of the current interventions in the UK to support children that are vulnerable and explain how this can reduce inequalities related to children from advantage and disadvantage background.

Provide and compare definitions of childhood and discuss key elements of family life and childhood: Demonstrate understanding of the development of the social construction of childhood from historical times to current times.

(NAMC,2022)



Child can be defined in three perspectives legal, biological and social policy

According to the (UNCRC) United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child law child is defined as everyone under the age of 18 (NSPCC,2022)

From a Biological perspective, a biological child is a child that is conceived but not adopted by a certain parent, and the reason of carry genes from the parent (Dictionary,2022)

From Social Policy a child is vulnerable and needs protection (Kehily,2013)

Childhood is a period of innocence, development and vulnerability it is the time when the children are in need of adult safety and care because of physical and emotional immaturity.

Childhood is period of the human lifespan between infancy and adolescence (Britannica,2010)

The stage of being a child is not universal because is different and influenced by different cultures, socioeconomic aspects, religions, and families. Childhood is a social construction because the information that we have about childhood is made by society instead of being determined by the biological age of a child, which means that childhood is not just about the age but about what society said that is a child it depends on the country they lived and the culture, religion, ethnic or family. (ReviseSociology, 2015)

In order to understand childhood as a social construction I will give examples of childhood experiences in different two countries, in relation to child marriage, child labor or female genital mutilation. The country that I choose is Somalia and the UK they

have differences because in Somalia children married is between 15 and 18 according to UNICEF 2016 The State of the World's Children Report. They also said that 46% of girls go through(FGM) Female Genital Mutilation, which by law is not prohibited. (Humanium,2020)

In opposite by legislation female genital mutilation act 2003 in England is illegal include Wales and Northern Ireland it is considered civil and criminal law. (GOV.UK,2022), in relation to child marriage the minimum age is 18 by law in England and Wales ,this shows show how the expectations in terms of marriage and FGM are different in each country.(BBC,2022).

Key elements of family life

Family is the basic unit in society traditionally consisting of 2 parents raising their children (Merrian-Webster,2022)

The experiences of children and their basic needs not only depend on where they live but also are influenced by the family and the environment because the family is responsible for the child's wellbeing, health, and safety.

Family nowadays has been changing compared to before regarding marriage, divorce, homosexuality, and family life.

Marriage in 1971 people around 405,000 married but the number decrease to 275,000 in 2011. The reasons of this are money, the change of attitude that people is forced to marry, women's are independent and have job the same as men.

The society doesn't give importance to religious for marriage

Cohabitation wich means women and men living together having sexual relations but are not married now is acceptable have sex before marriage

Effective contraception- people now can choose wether wait to finish the carrer and have planned to have baby after because of the use of contraceptions for women and men that prevent from unplanned pregnancy.

Divorce is considered now an easy process because women are more financial independence.

Same sex marriage is allowed according to the couples act 2014. (BBC,2022)

Family is considered social constructed also because it depends on factors, cultural, sociological and religion.

Examples of family diversity in uk nuclear family is a family consist of mother, father, children excluding auntie, cousins, uncle. Family of single -parent, same sex family, Dual-worker family were the both parents work full time outside house, symmetrical family is equal family roles and responsibilities shared

Demonstrate your knowledge of the changes seen in the lives of children and their families from historical to present times.

The history of childhood in historical times has been of increasing interest since 1960 in this year it was publicated one of the most influential book called Phillipe Aries Centuries of Childhood. This book came first when there was no other book about history of childhood.

Aries in centuries of childhood create the contentious claim saying that the meaning of childhood is entirely modern, he also said that in the medieval society the idea of childhood were not existed. He also claims that childhood was not recognized as a different stage of life until the 15th century, children at this situation were seen as “little adults”. Edward Shorter and Lawrence Stone argue that early childhood and parenting were characterized by less emotional attachment in middle of children and their parents this is because of high mortality rates, as well as formal and less affection rearing techniques. Although the majority of these arguments were countered and contested by both number of historians. (Postgraduate Masterclass,2015)

Babies in Greek times were dying they had difficul time surviving, also the babies didn't receive names until turn seven or 10 days of life. In the case of a baby born with abnormalities can be because of abandon on a mountain, normally female babies were more frequently abandoned than male. Sometimes the babies that were abandoned were taken and created as slaves by another family. In some Greek towns, children were enfolded in clothes until they turned 2 years old to make sure that their limbs are strong and straight.

Normally the female children had to stay at home with their mothers receiving education and training, in opposite the boys had to learn the father's job and go to school at the age of seven. The families that were rich had money to buy toys for the children instead of poorer families the children had to work to help the family at a very young age, this situation is common today.

The girls in Greek when starts to appear at the time of puberty around the age of twelve and 13, they were ready to marry and considered adults. They had to take away the toys and leave them at the temple of Artemis, which means that their childhood was finished, and they start to be adults. When the girls marry, they must have a baby because if they can't have a baby was seen as a curse from the gods. In relation to the boys when they turn age 18 many ancient Greek towns were obliged to join the army for 2 years. (History Source,2019)

In Rome society the male children were considered the chef of the family they have more power above his family. This is because the women before didn't have voice in relation to private or public life, the children of ancient rome were under comand of their parents, wich means the parents had to decide everything for the children including education, lifestyle and dressing. The law more horrible about the roman children is that fathers could kill their children without breaking Roman law.

In relation to the wealthy and poor Roman children there were differences because wealthy Roman children could enjoy education, opportunities, and better food they got their education through hired tutors also they enjoy leisure, but the poor children had to help their parents in work. Wealthy children had option to adopt children if they want instead of poor children they had less social status, enjoy fewer privileges, regarding education poor children didn't receive any which is bad.

Roman children wear the same clothes as adults was knee-length tunic, also cloak above the tunic in wintertime. The rich boys used toga with purple borders which shows their social importance and the girls wore a tunic and a woollen belt around the waist. (legend and chronicles, 2021)

Families in the industrial revolution were poor and didn't receive enough money to pay their living expenses, in order to live a better life the families were forced to change for the industrial cities, although there was enough work the wages were very low because of this they had to look for more help, they also were facing hard problems such as debt, which leaves them an option to use their children to work with them so that they can make enough money. The life of children in Industrial revolution were very horrible and sad children who have the father's working in domestic outworks or casual borders had to work soon.

The children were experiencing a new child labour a hard work that they didn't do before, in the past they were used to various common jobs include coal mining, rat catching and chimney sweeping.

It was made research from Paxton Price about Victorian Child labour the children that we know who work in mills and factories, they work for many hours, around ten to fourteen hours per day. These works that they were doing cause damages and high risks at the moment or in the future such as death, injuries or health problems. Before didn't exist laws and regulation on safety for children, it can be said that they were exploited for their size, age and gender. The amount of money that the children received were less than the adults which influence on the mental and physical health of the children, various children that were examined by Dr Johnson Boutflower looked pale, slim with problems of respiration like difficulty in breathing, wheezing and hoarseness of voice.

After the children work for long hours with risk of harm, abuse and health problems they established the first act in 1819 "Cotton Factories Regulation Act" which had many objectives in relation to children's rights. This act was made to ban children under age of 9 work, they cut the hours of work for children between 9 and 16 to work just 12 hours per day, the law established also that at night children must not work.

After it was made new rules in 1833 called the regulation of the child labour law, the law was established with different rules.

1. Children were not allowed to have employment below the age of 9 in textile manufacturing factories

2. Children were not allowed to work at night under the age of 18

3. Childrens between the age of 9 and 13 were not permitted to work more than 8 hours per day and must receive an hour lunch break, and they can have a job if they show schoolmaster's certificate it is a document that evidence that they had 2 hours of study that day.

4. The fourth rule prohibits children with the age of 14 and 18 work more than 12 hours per day, if they work more than 12 hours they must receive one hour break.
(Foundations of Western Culture,2022)

Factors which have contributed in changing the lives of children and reducing inequalities. . Provide the reasons why these factors changed and improved the lives of children, young people including right for all the children and in reducing inequalities

The changes that contribute to improving the life of the children since Victoria to current time is about changes in policy and legislation, sociological factors, the emergence of child development and Neuroscience.

In England, in relation to policy and legislation it was established legislation about work, child health safety, education and United Convention on the rights of the child (UNCRC,1991)

The legislation about child labour that changes the lives of children started in 1833 Factories Act in the 19th Century made illegal child labour before the age of 9 years old but in nowadays, the law says that children can work full-time just with the age of 16 years old (GOV.UK,2021) The legislation related to child labour make sure that children are protected from harm, exploitation and abuse and can receive education (UNICEF,2016)

The legislation related to education was one of the most important factors that contribute to changing the lives of the children. In 1880 the Education Act implemented compulsory education for every child from the age of 5 until 11. At the moment in England, all children must be in compulsory education until they turned 16 years old and be in training until 18 years old (GOV.UK,2021).

In UK Compulsory education is important to change the children's lives because is the engine of the economy, the foundation of our culture it is a preparation for adult life, having a good job and a completed career. (GOV.UK,2015)

Legislation that protects children from abuse and harm as for example sexual content from the age of 16 years old and alcohol restriction under age of 18 years old.

This legislation also contributes to improve children's lives because according to NHS, 2021 the use of alcohol during teenage years can have a big impact on children's health development and be harmful.

The introduction of United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1991) was important because it makes sure that every child has the right to education, life, protection from abuse and harm, non-discrimination and healthy development.

The emergence of child development influenced the impact of bad experiences on a child's future development, providing the importance of giving a good childhood to every child.

Neuroscience and child development contribute to changing the lives of children because these disciplines are essential to provide a good environment, and good experiences to every child.

Identify and analyse a range of approaches and interventions which support vulnerable children, young people and families in present times and evaluate their effectiveness in reducing inequalities.

The actual interventions that support vulnerable children and families are

Universal services that are services provided for all children and young people including schools, health visiting, GP

Targeted services are services that support some children and young people who need additional support such as parenting programmes, school counselling

Specialist services are services that support children and young people that show severe or complex needs for example specialist child, adolescent mental health services. (Social Care Institute for Excellence, 2012)

These services are important in reducing inequalities for children because according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs of children in order to achieve full potential needs to have food, water (Physiological need), it will help the development of the child, the safety needs, protection and home and relationship with others, self-esteem helps in confidence and respect.

Draw your conclusion providing Suggestions and recommendations for improving the lives of the children

In conclusion the lives of the children improved and change a lot comparing to before in the 19th century but still in Uk we can see many children living in poverty (Joseph Rowntree Foundation,2022)

Recommendation- increase the benefits of universal credit and Working tax credit and increase the quantity of low-cost housing. (Rowntree Foundation,2022)

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