



BSc Health and Social Care

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Assessment 2: Written Assignment Essay

An Essay on Childhood Development and Interventions to Reduce Child Vulnerability

Introduction

For all children, childhood is a period of physical, emotional, as well as psychological growth. To provide Children with a secure and healthy atmosphere to grow up in, it's critical to comprehend how children develop and what they require. To implement interventions to lessen the dangers that these vulnerabilities bring to children, it is also critical to recognise the possible vulnerabilities that may result in problems with early development (Nadan & Korbin, 2018). This Essay will give a general review of childhood development and address strategies that may be utilised to lessen children's susceptibility. Also, it will go through the numerous influences on a child's development and how intervention may be used to address them. Lastly, it will discuss how crucial it is to comprehend how children grow up and how interventions may help to ensure that every child has the chance to realise their full potential.

Interpreting the Key Elements of Childhood and Family lives

Understanding the different components that affect a child's experiences and the family structure is necessary for interpreting the major aspects of childhood and family life. Informing policies and practises that help children and families have to keep in mind. The family is the fundamental societal unit, and it is in the home that children first discover who they are and what the rest of the world is like. The familial environment that children encounter has a significant influence on their growth and well-being (Rizwan, 2015). The nature of the interaction between parents and children is a crucial aspect of childhood and family life. The emotional, cognitive, and social development of children depends on their relationship with their parents (Seltzer, 2015). Warmth, love, and responsiveness are characteristics of effective parent-child interactions. These characteristics encourage stable connection, which is necessary for normal growth. Negative parent-child connections, on the other hand, entail strict, contradictory, or inattentive parenting, which can result in insecure attachment, behaviour issues, and subpar academic achievement (Thakur, 2017).

The standard of the home environment is another crucial aspect of children and family life. The physical, emotional, and social surroundings in which the kid lives are all

included in the home environment. Children's healthy growth depends on a safe and nurturing family environment. The physical environment consists of elements like the standard of the dwelling, safety, and cleanliness (Hyun Ju, 2019). The warmth from the parents, emotional support, and communication are examples of emotional variables. Opportunities for social contact, exposure to variety, and availability of local resources are social variables. Children's well-being, resiliency, and academic performance are all supported by a happy family environment. Another important factor that has an impact on childhood experiences is the family structure (Koblitz, 2013). The scholastic performance and general well-being of children tend to be better in typical nuclear households with both parents present (Pollard & Lee, 2014). Nonetheless, children may encounter greater levels of stress and financial difficulties in families with divorced, separated, or single-parent households, which may have an impact on their general development (Smedegaard et al., 2016).

Together with the family structure, cultural as well as societal standards can influence a child's early experiences. Children could feel pressure to conform to society's standards, for example, in cultures where obedience and conformity are highly valued (Jordan & Graham, 2016). This can affect children's self-esteem and personal development. Understanding the different components that influence a child's experiences and results within the family structure is essential to comprehending the fundamental aspects of childhood and family life. Parents, carers, and legislators may take action to make sure that children have the support they need to grow and realise their full potential by being aware of these factors. Such assistance can involve fostering healthy parent-child connections, granting access to a top-notch education, and resolving economic inequalities that may hinder a child's growth (Barlow & Ellard, 2016). In the long run, we can improve the futures of people, families, and society by putting children's welfare first.

Understanding the Development of Childhood From Historical Times to Present Times

For many ages, people have been interested in the development of children. From the early years of infancy being seen as a time of "original sin" to the present, when childhood is seen as a crucial era of growth and development, our understanding of childhood development has greatly changed through time. Childhood was not seen as a

separate stage of life throughout the mediaeval era (Milan, 2022). As soon as they were physically competent, children were expected to assume the roles of "little grownups" and take on adult responsibilities. It was believed that although childhood was a period of innocence and fragility, it was also a time when children needed to be disciplined to guarantee that they grew up to be contributing members of society.

There was a change in how infancy was perceived throughout the Age of Enlightenment. Philosophers like John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau highlighted the value of education and the necessity of giving children a caring environment. They saw childhood as a particular time in life that needs special care and consideration. As child psychology emerged as a separate field of study in the 19th century, this viewpoint was further developed (Iris, 2018). The concept of childhood development underwent a substantial change in the first half of the 20th century. The relevance of early childhood events in forming personality and behaviour was stressed in the work of Sigmund Freud and other psychoanalytic thinkers. This resulted in a greater emphasis being placed on the function of parents and other family members in creating a caring environment for children.

A growing understanding of the significance of play and exploration in early childhood development emerged in the middle of the 20th century (Pollard & Lee, 2014). Psychologists like Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky stressed the importance of cognitive development in determining how children experience and comprehend the environment (Athur, 2015). Early childhood education and the creation of play-based learning settings as a result received more attention.

Our knowledge of childhood development has advanced significantly in recent years. The significance of social and emotional growth as well as the influence of connections on children's experiences are becoming more widely acknowledged. Also, there is a clearer understanding of how socioeconomic elements like poverty and inequality affect children's development.

In conclusion, there has been a substantial advancement in our understanding of childhood development. Childhood is now considered a special stage of life that needs particular care and attention, as opposed to earlier times when it was seen as a period of discipline and grownup preparation. The advancements in psychology, philosophy and education have shaped our understanding of how children develop. As we gain

more understanding about how children develop, we must apply this knowledge to build nurturing situations where children may flourish and realize their full potential.

Development in the Policy and Legislation for the Children and Families

For many years, a key component of governmental activity has been the creation of laws and policies for children and families. By tackling a variety of concerns, from education and healthcare to child safety and welfare, these policies seek to promote the well-being and results of children and families. The evolution of legislation and policy for families and children from the early 20th century to the present will be covered in this article.

Governments started to realize how important it was to safeguard children from maltreatment and neglect around the beginning of the 20th century. Child protection policies were created as a result, to ensure the safety and well-being of children. The Child Labor Act of 1916 in the United States was the first federal law that sought to safeguard children from being exploited at work. Underage workers were not allowed in mines, factories, or other dangerous jobs, according to the legislation (Hek et al., 2021). There was a rising understanding of the value of early childhood education in the middle of the 20th century (Brotherton, 2021). This prompted the creation of regulations intended to give children from low-income households access to a high-quality education. The Head Start program was developed in the US in 1965 to offer low-income children and their families comprehensive early childhood education, health, as well as nutrition services. A trend towards family-centered policies that attempted to assist families in establishing a caring environment for their children occurred in the latter half of the 20th century. The Adoption and Child Welfare Act of 1980 in the United States was a ground-breaking piece of legislation that prioritized maintaining intact families and offering resources to help families in need. The statute mandated states to do their best efforts to keep children in their homes and to offer services to families to address the underlying problems that brought them into contact with the child welfare system.

Addressing problems like poverty, injustice, and prejudice that influence the welfare of children and families has received more attention recently. International norms for the protection and welfare of children have been greatly influenced by the United Nations

Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was established in 1989. Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 sought to enhance educational performance for all children, especially those from poor families, while the Affordable Care Act of 2010 gave access to healthcare to millions of previously uninsured children.

Impact of Legislation and Policies to improve children and Inequalities in the Health Care Service

Since its adoption in 1989, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) has played a significant role in establishing global norms for the safety and welfare of children. According to the convention, children have the right to the best possible health and unrestricted access to healthcare services. By stressing the value of healthcare access and the elimination of health inequities, the convention significantly improved children's health around the globe (Aka, 2016).

The United States Affordable Care Act (ACA), which was implemented in 2010, sought to provide access to healthcare for millions of uninsured people, including children (Maharaj et al., 2014). The Affordable Care Act (ACA) mandated insurance companies to provide preventive care for children without requiring cost-sharing and increased Medicaid coverage to millions of low-income families. The ACA has thereby improved children's access to healthcare and decreased healthcare inequalities among low-income households.

To enhance educational achievements for all students, especially those from underprivileged families, every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was passed in the United States in 2015. According to the statute, states must monitor and report on student health, including rates of chronic absenteeism, levels of physical activity, and other health indicators. This clause has contributed to a greater understanding of the role that health plays in academic success and increased funding for school health initiatives. Notwithstanding the good effects of these regulations, there are still large gaps in children's health and access to healthcare. Chronic illness, mental health issues, and a lack of access to healthcare continue to affect children from low-income households, racial and ethnic minorities, and rural regions more frequently.

Approaches and Intervention to Support Vulnerable Children and Families at present times

Before starting school, early intervention programmed concentrated on detecting and treating developmental delays and disorders in young children. To enhance the outcomes for children, these programmed offer services including screening, evaluation, and therapy. The Early Head Start programmed, as well as the Nurse-Family Partnership programmed, are two instances of early intervention programmed. Working with families in family therapy entails addressing problems that are harming their well-being. This strategy emphasizes enhancing family ties, communication, and problem-solving abilities (Olds, 2014).

Family counselling may assist families in understanding and coping with difficulties including drug misuse, mental health challenges, and domestic violence. This technique known as trauma-informed treatment acknowledges the effects of trauma on people's physical and mental health. To protect and support vulnerable children and families, this strategy uses treatments that are sensitive to their trauma histories. Providing trauma-informed treatment can lessen the harmful impacts of trauma and encourage healing and recovery (Iris, 2018).

Recommendation for Improvement of Children, Young People and Family

Access to early childhood education and care (ECEC) programs should be made more widely available. This can guarantee that children have the groundwork necessary for lifetime learning and are well-prepared for school. Provide instructors and schools with enough resources to help children develop socially and emotionally. Together with supporting mental health and well-being, this entails fostering pleasant interactions between children, teachers, and parents. Increasing children's and family's access to high-quality healthcare, including mental health treatments (Olivas, 2015). By doing this, health problems may be addressed before they worsen. Provide parents and other carers the assistance they need, such as access to parenting classes, family counselling, and other tools to enable them to offer their children a secure and caring environment. Spend money on initiatives and services that support traumatized children and families as well as those that work to stop child abuse and neglect.

Conclusion

The atmosphere in which a child is raised has a significant impact on their early development. Interventions that lessen child vulnerability include giving children the tools and encouragement they require to form good connections, gain self-confidence, and become more resilient. These interventions, which may be carried out by families, schools, and communities, can involve offering caring and safe childcare, encouraging good parenting techniques, and facilitating access to high-quality healthcare and education. By making investments in children's welfare, we can enable them to realise their full potential and build a more promising future for everyone.

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