



# LOST TRADITIONS, SILENCED CHILDHOODS: COLONIAL LEGACIES AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF CHILD RIGHTS IN INDIA

Faraaz Subla<sup>1</sup>, Javaid Rashid<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Department of Social Work, University of Kashmir, India

## Article Info

### Keywords:

Child rights, Colonial childhood, Decolonization, Education policy, Indigenous knowledge, Kinship systems, Postcolonial india

## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the legacy of colonization on indigenous child-rearing practices and notions relating to childhood in India, conceptualizing this historical rupture as a driver for the erasure of culturally located modes of care, education, and protection. This study focuses specifically on colonial interventions that displaced family settings, alienated community caregiving, and imposed Eurocentric disciplinary and morally sanctioned practices; the British legal and educational legacy entrenched vernacular forms of childhood as pathological. This theoretical paper draws from postcolonial and decolonial childhood studies to examine how popular representations of children were located within pre-existing constructs of the child through a Victorian lens, missionary schooling, the deferral of the English legal system, and juvenile reformatories that made singular the plurality of parenting and knowing in terms of some wage-earning regions of the subcontinent. By analyzing legislative texts, educational policy records, and cultural artifacts, the study assumes a child shifting between a collective and a juridical subject of state power. In narrating such changes, I demonstrate that the contemporary child rights agenda in India, situated in a response to an international human rights framework, contains a legacy of colonial constructions of the child, the family, and development. While the Right to Education (RTE) Act and the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act are formalized, they frequently occur in an epistemic fracture with local culture and knowledge. Through this research, it advocates for a renegotiation of the child rights discourse that aims not only to rectify structural injustices but also to reimagine care, kinship, and learning spaces, which have been irreparably silenced by epistemic colonization. By reclaiming the subaltern accounts of childhood, it reconstitutes a rights-based framework in cultural legitimacy and historical continuities. The erased traditions are not just remnants of past practice, but they are also sites of ethical relations and resilient communities, representing signposts for envisioning decolonized, inclusive, child-centred futures.

*This is an open access article under the [CC BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.*



### Corresponding Author:

Faraaz Subla  
Department of Social Work  
University of Kashmir, India  
[faraazwrites@gmail.com](mailto:faraazwrites@gmail.com)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Childhood is not an experience universal across time and space; instead, it is a socially developed construction that is influenced by power, history, and ideology. Philippe Aries (1962) famously asserted in

Centuries of Childhood that the modern Western conception of childhood arose with a specific cultural and economic trajectory—think of schooling, industrialization, and bourgeois domesticity, a particular moment in time. In precolonial India, however, children's lives were enfolded within rich and plural traditions of family, community-based caregiving, religion, and oral knowledge-seeking ways of learning; all of which diverged, sometimes dramatically, by caste, region, and beliefs, and emphasized alternate ways of knowing and being that privileged spiritual and communal, experiential growth. The British colonial regime supplanted these indigenous epistemologies with a Eurocentric notion of discipline, dependence, and morality (Nieuwenhuys, 1998). The colonial state recontextualized the Indian child not as a cultural subject but as a civilizing project. The British administrator's usage of schools, reformatories, missionary institutions, and the legal system as counterparts for inducing childlike innocence and docility with Victorian moral sensibilities also erased legitimacy from many traditional caregiving systems. Examples of the colonizers' borrowings from indigenous culture to civilize Indian childhood through the use of caste-based apprenticeship, religious instruction, and extended family networks of child-care of children were thus deemed as "uncivilized" or "morally depraved" (Manjrekar, 2021). This remake of childhood helped expand the overarching colonial ideology of colonialism, namely, to (a) Edward Said outlines *Orientalism* (1978), to construct the colonized Other to overcome primitive, irrational, and Dominion essentially, exotic with *Orientalism*; and (b) raise the status of the colonizers to be all-knowing and westernized. As Gayatri Spivak considered in her critical essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1988), the colonial subject, most especially women and children, experienced silence imposed by dominant narratives where they were either spoiled for others or made invisible. The Indian child, being equally subjected, was then in a second-class position; that is, monitored, catalogued, but rarely consulted. The western nomenclature classifications of child-marriage, child-home labour, and vernacular education can be put in two categories of right or wrong, discarding consideration for particular culture-related specificity. Therefore, in the end, the colonial experiment not only purported to delegitimize indigenous ways to develop child characters, ultimately it also reconstructed almost all social institutions, which so far can be seen in a post-colonial sensibility. Contemporary frameworks for child rights in India, although fairly progressive, still have the legacy of colonialism. Laws designed for child rights, such as the Right to Education (RTE) Act and the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act, are largely based on accepted international provisions, generally aligned to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child UNCRC. As these contemporary frameworks attempt to empower and promote children's rights, they are often done so through more universalist frameworks. This is a disadvantage because these frameworks underplay regional, caste, and class realities. To use the words of Satish Deshpande (2012) in his book *Equalizing Access*, the Indian state has its policies that appeared egalitarian, to a large extent, but this response did not ever address the structural inequities in the social fabric, often resulting in policy gaps for marginalized children. In the last few years, critical scholarship has started to challenge these assumptions and create some room for less essentializing, more culturally specific, and more historically informed child rights discourse. For instance, academics like Olga Nieuwenhuys (2009) have posited that to decolonize childhood means to reinsert agency and context into the lives of children from the Global South. It has to be not of children as passive recipients of Western policy templates, but as agents situated in specific moral economies and kinship networks. This paper builds on these attempts to consider how colonial legacies continue to inform the child rights landscape in India, and query how indigent legacies of care, education, and community might offer alternative conceptions of justice and safety. Ultimately, what this research focuses on is not just putting the child as an object of intervention, but as a positionality in which histories of colonization, resistance and reconstruction take shape. Following in the footsteps of those forgotten indigenous childhood rituals and dreaming them back into existence, this research promotes a child rights framework that extends beyond mere legal stewardship of rights to being culturally resonant and historically grounded.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

Throughout time and across the globe, the notion of childhood has shifted dramatically. Philippe Ariès (1965) credits Western intellectuals with the rise of childhood as a distinct phase in life and he contends that childhood is not biologically universal, but socially curated based on historical and cultural elements. This insight has influenced later critiques of the export of Euro-American child-rearing ideals to postcolonial contexts. Especially in India, colonialism redefined the native notion of childhood, family, and care to fit a Victorian, European moral and governmental scheme. Homi Bhabha (1994) postcolonial agency, noting how colonial discourse operates not only through control but through insidious forms of cultural mimicry and hybridity. The colonial child was not just ruled, but remade by schooling and law that disciplined body and soul. This restructuring applied even to the Indian child, re-conceived now as an object of Western educational and developmental psychological practices, rather than an agent of local knowledge traditions. New work disputes the continuation of this colonial scaffolding in modern-day child rights discussions. Kjørholt (2016), for example,

challenges the universality of the UNCRC by pointing out how participation rights are frequently made 'out of place' when transposed into socio-cultural contexts where collective identity and interdependence are paramount. Cannella and Viruru (2004) take issue with how global child welfare models often ignore the embeddedness of children in their cultural and communal contexts, thereby ignoring alternative pedagogies and kinship structures. Regionally, the work of Susan Seymour (1975) provides us with early anthropological accounts of how Indian child-rearing based in joint family systems and caste-based socialization was disrupted by the rise of urbanization and colonial schooling. They contained interdependence, apprenticeship, and embedded moral learning, but were still largely disparaged as "backward" by both colonial officials and reformers. In a recent example, Shiv Visvanathan (2022) returns to the epistemic rupture wrought by colonial modernity, which tore peoples from their oral cultures, from their modes of labor and knowledge transmission, isolating children from their social and cultural worlds. In her insightful work on gendered childhoods, Shahnaz Hussain (2019) provides an ethnographic look at Muslim girlhoods in Assam. She explores how issues of identity, marginality, and justice intersect in the daily lives of young girls. Her research emphasizes the importance of nuanced, intersectional methods to understand child agency in marginalized communities, where state policies and social norms lead to overlapping exclusions. Together, this scholarship challenges the dominance of Western, legalistic, and individualistic.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is set within the realms of postcolonial and decolonial thinking. It aims to blend the sociological view of childhood with a critical look at development. Thus, the research adopts a view of childhood as a social class shaped by the mix of historical, political, and cultural forces. Forced ways of raising children, teaching, and Western moral values during colonial times in India are the main focus of the unrest that this work digs into. A deep look at the thoughts after colonial rule, mostly from the views of Fanon (1963), shows that colonization is more than just having power in politics or money; it is a hit on knowing things, where the home, grown ways of seeing are seen as less, and local ways, here about how child are brought up, are seen as not good or strange. Understanding the above is essential to see how Indian children were no longer seen as important knowledge contributors for previous generations, but were labelled and seen as needing "reform." The suggestions of some decolonial thinkers (e.g. Walter Dignolo (2007) and "epistemic disobedience" as a principle for working through that knowledge and skills rendered invisible by colonial power) suggests an interest in the kind of parenting that existed in pre-colonial times - not nostalgia, but a way of thinking against the impact (together with the wider industrial colonial world) of Western paradigms of development that shape the global construct since the colonial era fuelling ideas of how children are seen under "rights". Subsequently, we can begin to better understand how colonial-style schools in India obstructed ancient processes of knowledge transmission across generations, rendering far too many children unfamiliar with their earlier cultural heritage in the now. The ideas of Bourdieu (1986) about specific kinds of cultural capital capture this well. Herein, this study will engage with these ideas to interrogate the remnants of colonial structures that continue to exist in the care arrangements we now make for children. The study, in particular, will advocate the re-establishment of forms of parenting that articulate what local communities hold valuable, conceptualise who they are in the world, and articulate their aspirations.

### **Objectives**

This study reflects on the consequences of traditional understandings of children and how they influenced the perception of children in India, and how they are apprehended within the discourse around child rights today. It expressly examines how, and to what extent, old modes of care, schooling, and protection were replaced, namely by a Western model of care, in British colonialism, and also how these changes became intermingled into new laws and rule schemes. The main objective is to delineate how the perception of children was altered during the colonial period. The study argues that British colonialism, institutionalized schooling, and more broadly codified law attempted to supplant the Indian perception of children through Western moral systems, and in so doing substituted multi-voiced and group-based care by top-down, state-led care. The second objective is to examine how these old systems exist in child rights regimes after independence from the British Empire. Even with new, more progressive laws, the perspectives from the global North continue to permeate the legislative narrative. Liebel (2016) claims the global South child discourses are often "framed" by post/colonial constructions that privilege Western discourses, not engaging with the range of material lives. The third objective is to identify & reinsert local conceptualisations of child care, such as oral learning, group care, & work-based learning models that existed prior to & with British social construction. This means to acknowledge how colonised populations made these conceptualisations seem illegitimate or peripheral, which cut the ways of knowing, & how it was transferred. The final objective is to present a new conceptualisation regarding the framing of child rights within India & its role in supporting children' agency, their culture, & their collective knowledge. By drawing from Boyden (1997), who focused on children as active social actors, & Hart (2008), who challenged actors to politicise

children's role, this project demonstrated a process to understand child rights by situating culture & historical roots.

The theoretical framework discussed in the article is postcolonial critique and decolonial epistemology, and while play is the only domain of analysis, it sets out to demonstrate the ongoing resonance of colonial agendas in the conceptualization and governance of childhood and child rights in India. It is attempting to make no objective generalizations; rather, its aim is around historical depth, cultural specificity, and discursive sensitivity." The primary method of analysis is uncovering textual and documentary traces in archives, legislative texts (like the Indian Penal Code, Juvenile Justice Act), educational policies and international conventions on child rights. As Scott (1990) asserts, documentary texts are not passive forms of evidence; they are discursive formations that disclose the logics of rule. This study shows how Indian childhood was bureaucratized, medicalized, and moralized quite thoroughly under colonial governance using this rather clever technique of investigation. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as developed by Fairclough in 1992, is used by this study to uncover the ideological underpinnings and continuities that lurked underneath in these texts. Colonial representations of vulnerable native children and uncivilized households have been revealed as underpinnings to social engineering using CDA very thoroughly. In Smith's decolonizing approach, there is simultaneously a geographical voice from ethnographic and oral histories and rival, non-institutional educational practices, many are little discussed in mainstream history. The Adivasi and Dalit ways of knowing are heavily grounded in this preservation of distinct methodology that connects vehemently to the ethnographic imploration of Denzin and Lincoln. This study has been coded thematically and has, to a fair extent, adhered to the focus of Braun and Clarke's (2006) model of thematic analysis to identify the apparent textual patterns. Colonial Constructions of Childhood and Stifled Indigenous Pedagogies are contrasted with Cultural Resistance among other Legal Epistemologies of debilitating Control.

## RESULT AND ANALYSIS

This thematic analysis of policy documents, secondary information, and critical scholarship produced four themes that describe colonial legacies and systemic disruption that deeply impact childhoods in India. The themes of Displacement of Indigenous Childhoods and Normalization through Law and Schooling emerged with Erasure of Communal Knowledge and Market Appropriation of Child Rights. Each theme highlighted neoliberal and colonial structures distorting the narrative around child rights and the impacts of child rights on notions of childhood, often at great expense.

**Table 1.** Codes, Sub-themes, and Themes

Codes	Sub-themes	Themes
Indigenous displacement, cultural erasure	Alienation in schools, seasonal rhythms disrupted	Displacement of Indigenous Childhoods
Legal infantilization, moral pedagogy	State rationality, institutional discipline	Normalization through Law and Schooling
Loss of oral traditions, urban hegemony	Erased knowledge systems, ritual exclusion	Erasure of Communal Knowledge
Metrics of access, CSR schooling	Neoliberalism, consumer-child framing	Market Appropriation of Child Rights

### Displacement of Indigenous Childhoods

A critical finding of this research is how indigenous, tribal, and/or agrarian forms of childhood were supplanted with colonial or post-colonial educational forms. Referring to Macaulay's Minute of 1835, Pattnaik (1996) notes that when colonization displaced vernacular educational forms, and formal educational forms replaced spiritual learning, learning was invalidated as a form of transport at the outset to indigenous and vernacular knowledge. Even after independence, state schooling displaces indigenous epistemologies in general, and makes tribal children as a population "backward". Kannan and Maithreyi (2023) discuss how educational or school systems dismember rural children's ecological lives and restrict educational access to children in rural areas by disallowing non-formal education based on the practices of forests, land, and the local community. Manojan (2019) discusses how displacing local languages and stories with a Tamil or Anglocentric curriculum did not produce agency for subaltern identities. The impacts of place-based learning transform not only the learner, but the ontology of the child as a relational learner in a cultural ecosystem, perfectly constraining ontological learning to a set of distanced normed practices.

### Normalization through Law and Schooling

Historical laws such as the Indian Penal Code (1860) and the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, implicated children as dependent beings who need the protection of the state, thus denying them autonomy. Banerjee (2025) demonstrated how, following independence, urban planning and schooling fed into the same logic by controlling space, discipline, and identity. How children have become institutionally situated and subject to moral education, punishment, and monitoring in schools is aligned with the structures of neoliberal rationality. Schools have a role in this larger economy as not simply sites of learning but, rather as formal apparatuses of disciplining that manage time, movement, and aspirations. Ogunniran et al. (2022) critiqued this political economy of education and its prioritization of compliance and efficiency over justice, creativity, and critical awareness. Children from marginalized communities are disproportionately affected. They are overwhelmingly from Dalit, Muslim, and tribal communities, faced with strict classroom practices, homogenized textbooks with no reference to cultural and ritual differences, and inequitable teacher attitudes towards the material and the children. According to Manojan (2019), teaching in these contexts is an oppressive process of pedagogical domination rather than a liberating process.

### Erasure of Communal Knowledge

Another pattern that also recurs in discussions of child rights and education is the further erasure of communal knowledge from dominant conversations. Kannan and Maithreyi (2023) point to how collective storytelling, rituals based on seasonality, and knowing through apprenticeship are either discredited or invisible in contemporary schooling. This is a repetition of the cognitive dissonance for children, linking the world they are in at home with the one they encounter in school. Abebe, Dar and Wells (2025) note that global development frameworks, which proliferate the language of periodically sited ontological and epistemological representations, often maintains the impetus for some knowledge traditions, but marginalizes local knowledge traditions, as they bear the settle pattern of template for the UNCRC and whatever other globalized constructs they are than just the practices for child rights. Sharma (2020) reinforces this critique, noting that writers and researchers heavily rely on international conventions, such as the UNCRC, but as writers strive to understand the diverse ontologies and collectives, Indian childhoods are neglected. This homogenizing of childhood conceals important tools of identity construction, especially for children in post-conflict and rural regions who are trying to revive what was important during cumulative epochs, where collective belonging relies on cultural continuity. This erasure is pedagogical and political, made visible by the epistemic violence of caste and class contexts.

### Market Appropriation of Child Rights

Lastly, the commodification of childhood through neoliberal development practices is troubling. Children are increasingly being depicted as economic commodities within the practices of 'universal education.' Even in the case of the Right to Education (RTE) Act, most aspects of the policy are being materialized as quantitative norms of reference (for example, published statistics for enrolment rate, dropout rates, literacy rates, etc.) and not as qualitative transformation. Ogunniran et al. (2022) pose an important argument about how global funding priorities and national curricula are produced to focus on 'employable youth' rather than a more robust critical thinking educational framework with cultural depth and social justice. These priorities are often perpetuated by corporate social responsibility (CSR) engagements on behalf of teacher education programs or national NGO schooling initiatives, often reducing children to future workers instead of human beings. Liebel (2016) noted that access-based approaches silence children's voices and reduce rights to bureaucratic access or utility, disconnecting children from their lived daily experiences. Along these lines, the interaction of neoliberalism and privatization of schooling solidifies an inequitable and unfair infringement on future access to alternative, community-based, locally-consistent approaches to education. The conceptual implications and possibilities presented in this study signal the disconnect between the 'schooling possibility frameworks' of institutions in comparison to children's lived realities in India and elsewhere. Although there are legal reforms consistent with children's rights frameworks internationally, and organizations and institutions generically profess to prioritize children's rights above all else, children continue to be excluded from their rights of possibilities in ways that perpetuate indigenous silences and colonial hierarchies - all because of the powers of the law, pedagogy as institutions, and a neoliberal mandate of access as progress. It is crucial to interrupt, rethink, and reimagine children's rights - children should be center and relational, community memory, and plurality, not assimilation, control, and failure.

### Discussion

The analysis identifies how colonial and neoliberal interventions undermine the very nature of Indian childhoods through four interrelated themes. First, the displacement of indigenous and community-based childhoods arises from modern schooling fracture, cutting children from localized lifeworlds, kinship networks, and seasonal rhythms. As Prasad, Juvva, & Nayar (July 2017) point out, the modern Indian family system, and

specifically in the case of tribal and rural childhoods is losing parental transmission of values and usually explicit roles for those values because more commonly drawn upon schooling models impose a framework of non-indigenous knowledge over other forms. Also, these changes remove childhood as a space for intergenerational knowledge and community inputs to shape the upbringing of children. Second, the imposition of Western-centric childhoods has a potential unbound normalization to either explicitly or implicitly define still rigid, normative boundaries around 'who is a proper child' through legal and educational institutions. Manojan (2019) argues that the institution of the state education system enculturates citizenship education while regularly working to discipline and normalize the schooling of subaltern children. Essentially, Manojan's point is that under the major social infrastructure of the nation-state, children are likely transformed into moral, economic subjects, with deference to the cultural uniqueness of a child prohibited by the hegemonic nation-state framework. This tragedy extends into established curricular choices, excluding the multiple linguistic and lived childhood experiences (or negations) of the marginalized community. Singh (2025) points out, while the National Education Policy 2020 appears to have committed to a sense of multilingualism, in practice, the implications for pedagogical work in a multilingual system still only accept homogenized forms of knowledge, firstly suppressing children's voice and secondly enabling multilingual children's voices a form of persuasion. The persistent endeavour of deleting communal and oral knowledge systems continues to exist in development models, which treat knowledge as a product. Lekha and Kumar (2024) observe that schooling and development policies appear to disregard these forms of knowledge, which include orally transmitted knowledge and performative learning. This is evident in the literature on rural and tribal girls and how and why they are excluded from formal schooling. The market is also invading the child rights space - and undermining children's agency - because children are seen as future units of economic production. Shanor and Light (2023) critique neoliberal capitalism, specifically with market-logics connected to corporate philanthropic initiatives or CSR measures, which, collectively, have little meaningfully engaged with inequality through tokenistic inclusion in 'education' or welfare policies, and as such, erase any real inequalities. Further troubling, highly consequential, and perniciously unexamined, these market models do not interrogate the structural difficulty of reproducing class and caste hierarchies, as they induce 'rights' that are qualitatively performative and quantifiable. To this point, the battle for capitalist ideology put in place within education leaves tribal students facing even more hurdles. Kisku (2024) argues that there is an isolation, absence of culturally relevant support systems, and a chronic tendency to disregard tribal learners' cognitive capacities are important blockages in terms of their higher education access. Oladosu, Ojebode, and Afolayan (2024) illustrate how the humanities in the global South, at times, struggle with a broader struggle between local and global ways of knowing, which foreshadows the extent of the problem in the context of Indian child rights. Finally, we cannot ignore the role of cultural imagination in framing these tensions. Yousaf and Anwar (2024) argue that transcultural dialogues taking place in South Asia can only emerge once people call out the homogenizing tendencies of nation-building and market forces that shape people's lived experiences in order to make room for fluid identities, hybrid practices of childhood. Collectively, these diverging perspectives compel us to rethink a child rights-oriented framework grounded in cultural specificity, free from commodification, and that understands the relational and dynamic nature of Indian childhoods.

### 3. CONCLUSION

This study has methodically analyzed how colonial legacies, laws, and neoliberal reforms have influenced and bound the child rights discourse and practice. Through a thematic analysis, we identified four main themes: the dispossession of indigenous childhoods; normalization via law and schooling; annihilation of communal knowledge; and market and appropriation of child rights. These important themes show how dominant frameworks of education and childhood tend to mirror a Eurocentric, urban, and upper-caste experience that erases and marginalizes multivalent experiences. In the context of systematically developing child rights policy and legislation, their practice often replicates the same hierarchies. The state schooling system tends to alienate and possibly dehumanize tribal and rural children by ignoring their languages, epistemological systems, cultural rhythms, cosmologies, etc. Legal discourse and moral discourse infantilize "the child" and legitimize a form of political protectionism stripped of children or young people's autonomy and agency, while schooling combines disciplinary and controlling mechanisms in place of care. Even traditional communal forms of knowledge transfer e.g., storytelling, ritual, and apprenticeship are socially and culturally considered "unscientific," creating forms of cognitive and cultural dissonance in children's lives. Market-based models are gaining traction, and child rights are increasingly treated as a commodity, education as a focus and metric, and as future labour, rather than as social beings in communities. This type of approach cannot be seen in a legalistic or bureaucratic fashion but takes relational and community-based, and cultural meanings of childhood as the centre of definition. Children are collaborators and participants in their social world, not simply subjects of protection or knowledge.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Abebe, T., Dar, A., & Wells, K. (Eds.). (2025). *Routledge handbook of childhood studies and global development*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- [2] Ariès, P. (1965). *Centuries of childhood: A social history of family life*.
- [3] Banerjee, P. (2025). *Critical Perspectives on Urban Planning in India: From Colonial Legacies to Inclusive Futures*. In *Cities: Inclusive, Liveable, and Sustainable* (pp. 21-36). Routledge.
- [4] Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The postcolonial and the postmodern: The question of agency. The location of culture*, 171-197.
- [5] Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. "The Forms of Capital." Pp. 241-258 in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by J. G. Richardson. New York: Greenwood Press.
- [6] Boyden, J. (2015). *Childhood and the policy makers: A comparative perspective on the globalization of childhood*. In *Constructing and reconstructing childhood* (pp. 167-201). Routledge.
- [7] Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). *Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- [8] Burra, N. (1995). *Born to work: Child labour in India*.
- [9] Cannella, G. S., & Viruru, R. (2003). *Childhood and postcolonization: Power, education, and contemporary practice*. Routledge.
- [10] Chakrabarty, D. (2009). *Provincializing Europe: postcolonial thought and historical difference-New edition*.
- [11] Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2011). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. sage.
- [12] Deshpande, S. (2012). *Social justice and higher education in India today: markets, states, ideologies and inequalities in a fluid context. Equalizing Access: Affirmative Action in Higher Education in India, US and South Africa*, 212-238.
- [13] Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and social change. (No Title)*.
- [14] Fanon, F., Sartre, J. P., & Farrington, C. (1963). *The wretched of the earth (Vol. 36, pp. 3-317)*. New York: Grove press.
- [15] Hart, J. (2008). *Children's participation and international development: Attending to the political. The International Journal of Children's Rights*, 16(3), 407-418.
- [16] Hussain, S. (2019). *Contemporary Muslim girlhoods in India: A study of social justice, identity and agency in Assam*. Routledge.
- [17] Kannan, D., & Maithreyi, R. (Eds.). (2023). *Modern Schooling and Trajectories of Exclusion: Childhoods in India*. Taylor & Francis.
- [18] Kisku, A. (2024). *Tribal students in higher education: exploring their pedagogical, social, and cognitive challenges and supports*.
- [19] Kjørholt, A. T. (2016). *Children's Rights to Participation: 'Out of Place' or 'In Context'?*. In *'Children Out of Place' and Human Rights: In Memory of Judith Ennew* (pp. 157-170). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- [20] Lekha, N. B., & Kumar, P. (Eds.). (2024). *Routledge handbook of gender, culture, and development in India*. Routledge.
- [21] Liebel, M. (2016). *Children without childhood? Against the postcolonial capture of childhoods in the global south*. In *'Children Out of Place' and Human Rights: In Memory of Judith Ennew* (pp. 79-97). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- [22] Manjrekar, N. (Ed.). (2021). *Gender and education in India: A reader*. London: Routledge.
- [23] Manojan, K. P. (2019). *Cultural democracy and schooling in India: A subaltern perspective. Journal of Pedagogy*, 10(2), 101-121.
- [24] Mignolo, W. D. (2007). *Delinking: The rhetoric of modernity, the logic of coloniality and the grammar of de-coloniality. Cultural studies*, 21(2-3), 449-514.
- [25] Mizala, A., Christensen, S., Verger, A., Bray, M., Zhang, W., Sarangapani, P. M., ... & Ogunmiran, M. O. (2022). *Political economy of education: implications for efficiency, equity and social justice*. Oladosu, A. A., Ojebode, A., & Afolayan, A. (Eds.). (2024). *The Human and Humanities in the Age of Globalization*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- [26] Nieuwenhuys, O. (1998). *Global childhood and the politics of contempt. Alternatives*, 23(3), 267-289.

- [27] Nieuwenhuys, O. (2009). Is there an Indian childhood?. *Childhood*, 16(2), 147-153.
- [28] Pattnaik, J. (1996). Early childhood education in India: History, trends, issues, and achievements. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 24(1), 11-16.
- [29] Prasad, B. D., Juvva, S., & Nayar, M. *The Contemporary Indian Family*.
- [30] Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism* pantheon books. New York.
- [31] Scott, J. C. (1990). *Domination and the arts of resistance: Hidden transcripts*. Yale university press.
- [32] Seymour, S. (1975). Child Rearing in India: A Case Study in Change and. *Socialization and communication in primary groups*, 9, 41.
- [33] Shanor, A., & Light, S. E. (2023). Anti-Woke Capitalism, the First Amendment, and the Decline of Libertarianism. *Nw. UL Rev.*, 118, 347.
- [34] Sharma, R. (2020). Reading UNCRC and children's rights sociologically: A paradigm shift from 'protection to rights'. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Education Research*, 11(9), 188-198.
- [35] Singh, A. K. (2025). Multilingual Education and NEP 2020: Challenges and Opportunities. *Jindal Journal of Public Policy*, 8, 1-23.
- [36] Spivak, G. C. (2023). Can the subaltern speak? In *Imperialism* (pp. 171-219). Routledge.
- [37] Tuhiwai Smith, L. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*.
- [38] Visvanathan, S. (2022). *Work, Word and the World: Essays on Habitat, Culture and Environment*. Bloomsbury Academic India.
- [39] White, S. C. (2002). From the politics of poverty to the politics of identity? Child rights and working children in Bangladesh. *Journal of International Development*, 14(6), 725-735.
- [40] Yousaf, N., & Anwar, W. *Transcultural Humanities in South Asia: Critical Essays on Literature and Culture*.