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An Overview of Quality of Life Among Children

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ABSTRACT

The quality of life (QoL) for children includes their general well-being, happiness and contentment with daily experiences, taking into account physical, mental, social and environmental variables. It is a subjective and multifaceted term essential for comprehending the effects of health conditions, societal influences, and interventions on children. The quality of life in children encompasses not merely the absence of illness but also a positive sense of general happiness and life satisfaction. Quality of life is a subjective evaluation that differs among children and evolves over time for the same individual, shaped by their aspirations, expectations, and cultural background. In this article; an overview of quality of life among children have been discussed.

Keywords: Quality, Life, Children, Importance.

INTRODUCTION

The notion of quality of life (QoL) in children includes their total well-being, including physical health, mental state, social connections, education, and environmental factors. It illustrates how children comprehend and encounter their existence within the frameworks of family, community, and society. In contrast to adults, children's quality of life is predominantly shaped by external influences, including familial support, access to school and healthcare, safety, and chances for fun and development. (Bell, N., Kruse, S., Simons, R.K. et al., 2014)

Measuring children's quality of life is crucial for making informed decisions regarding treatment suitability and evaluating the efficacy of interventions for those with chronic conditions. It supplies vital data for comprehending the impacts of illnesses, treatments, and societal influences on children's well-being and underscores the necessity of fostering environments that promote and enhance children's welfare, both presently and in the future.

The Quality of Life (QoL) of children is a multifaceted notion that signifies their total well-being, including physical health, emotional stability, social interactions, education, safety, and possibilities for development. It transcends material prosperity and emphasizes how children perceive and experience their lives within familial, educational, and communal contexts.

QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG CHILDREN- AN OVERVIEW

The quality of life for children is a multifaceted concept, encompassing both quantitative measures (such as nutrition, housing, education, and healthcare access) and subjective evaluations (including happiness, security, and self-esteem). Researchers and politicians are increasingly acknowledging that assessing children's quality of life necessitates including their viewpoints rather than depending exclusively on adult evaluations. (Faka, A., 2020)

Assessing children's quality of life (QoL) encompasses multiple methodologies, including health-related quality of life (HRQOL), social indicators, and subjective well-being (SWB), frequently employing multidimensional instruments that evaluate areas such as physical, emotional, social, and psychological health. (Gayawan, E. et al., 2016)

The HR QoL emphasizes dimensions of overall QoL that distinctly influence health, employing multidimensional instruments to evaluate physical, emotional, cognitive, and social health domains. Social indicators assess overarching societal elements that influence a child's welfare, including educational access, safety, and living situations. Subjective well-being includes a child's emotional state, contentment, and life satisfaction, typically evaluated using self-report questionnaires. Factors affecting children's quality of life include chronic health diseases such as neurocognitive developmental disorders and impairments, which greatly influence quality of life owing to comorbidities and psychosocial issues. The familial context, social support, and the child's interactions with peers and family members are key factors. Essential requirements such as nutrition, security, and housing are critical to a child's overall well-being. Mental health issues during childhood and adolescence can significantly detriment a child's quality of life. (Jozefiak, T. et al., 2008)

QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG CHILDREN-IMPORTANCE

Methods for assessing children's quality of life (QOL) encompass health-related quality of life (HRQOL), emphasizing physical and mental health; social indicators, which are population-based metrics such as health, education, and housing; and subjective well-being (SWB), which reflects a child's individual emotions and happiness. Critical issues encompass conceptual clarity, delineating quality of life domains for children, integrating both subjective and objective perspectives, comprehending developmental variations, identifying the most suitable reporting source, and acknowledging the impact of factors such as family, health, and environment on a child's quality of life. (Lillemor, D. et al., 2015)

The health-related quality of life approach assesses a child's physical, mental, and social well-being in relation to their health status. Social indicators are population-based measurements that indicate the quality of life of a demographic group, encompassing wealth, housing, education, and health, hence offering insights on societal factors impacting children. Subjective well-being emphasizes a child's individual views and emotions, encompassing their sense of happiness, well-being, and general life satisfaction.

The subjective method prioritizes children's self-reported pleasure, fulfillment, and emotional well-being, emphasizing personal impressions over objective measures, and uses instruments such as child self-assessment questionnaires or interviews. The objective approach evaluates quantifiable factors, including health status, nutrition, education, living standards, and access to essential services, utilizing data from institutions, health records, and national polls. The rights-based approach is derived from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), emphasizing children's rights to survival, protection, growth, and participation, and posits that quality of life is contingent upon the realization of these rights. The socio-ecological approach examines the impact of several environments—such as family, school, community, and policy frameworks—on a child's quality of life, while acknowledging the significance of social networks and support systems. The developmental approach highlights the stages of childhood growth—cognitive, emotional, and social—and their influence on life satisfaction and capacities, while addressing both short-term well-being and long-term life outcomes. (Prakash, K. & Jegankumar, R., 2021)

Significant issues impacting children's quality of life encompass poverty and economic inequality, which restrict access to nutrition, healthcare, education, and safe housing, thereby inducing psychological stress and limiting future opportunities; health and nutrition challenges, including malnutrition, infectious diseases, and inadequate sanitation, persist as critical concerns in numerous regions, while mental health issues are escalating, particularly due to familial instability and social pressures; educational disparities, characterized by unequal access to quality education, adversely affect learning outcomes and life prospects, and the digital divide exacerbates inequality between urban and rural children. Child abuse and neglect, including physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, profoundly affects emotional and psychological well-being, with numerous incidents remaining unreported owing to social stigma or inadequate child protection mechanisms. Economic pressure compels youngsters into labor, robbing them of education and the experiences of childhood, leading to exploitation. Social exclusion and discrimination, including gender bias, caste, handicap, and minority status, can isolate children from mainstream chances. The familial and communal environment, characterized by parental discord, substance misuse, or insufficient emotional support, can adversely impact children's sense of security and well-being. Digital and media influences, including excessive screen time and exposure to detrimental content, can result in emotional and behavioral problems. Nonetheless, prudent digital use might augment education and social interaction. (Karvánková, P., Popjaková, D., Slepíčková, M., 2019)

Critical issues in children's quality of life (QOL) encompass the necessity for conceptual clarity, which demands precise definitions and a mutual understanding of what constitutes QOL for children across various contexts and research domains. Content specification involves delineating the specific dimensions and domains that comprise a child's QOL, ensuring their relevance to children's lived experiences. Measuring QOL necessitates the integration of both objective conditions, such as stable housing, and subjective feelings, such as happiness, as they provide distinct insights. QOL is dynamic; it evolves as children develop, necessitating methodologies that consider developmental stages and experiences. A pivotal consideration is whether the child, their parents, or other proxies should report on QOL, as discrepancies may arise, influenced by numerous factors including parental education, living conditions, health status, safety, and social relationships. (Raj, M. et al., 2017)

CONCLUSION

Recently, the emphasis has transitioned from solely meeting children's fundamental needs to fostering holistic well-being, which includes emotional, social, and cognitive development. International organizations such as UNICEF and WHO advocate for child-centered methodologies to guarantee that every kid experiences a healthy, secure, and enriching existence. Evaluating children's quality of life is essential for assessing the efficacy of social and developmental policies. (Sivanna, G., 2018)

Consequently, examining the quality of life in children is crucial for comprehending their living conditions, recognizing inequities, and devising solutions that promote equitable growth and development. This study facilitates the development of societies in which every child can flourish and achieve their greatest potential. (Trahorsch, P. & Bláha, J. D., 2022)

Multiple elements influence children's quality of life, encompassing socioeconomic situations, familial environment, educational chances, and community resources. Children residing in disadvantaged environments, such as rural or economically underprivileged regions, frequently encounter obstacles such as malnutrition, inadequate education, and restricted healthcare, which adversely impact their well-being. In contrast, supporting families, secure neighborhoods, and inclusive educational systems augment general life pleasure.

Ensuring a superior quality of life for children necessitates a comprehensive approach that encompasses physical, emotional, educational, and social aspects. Governments, families, and communities must collaborate to establish supportive circumstances that enable children to flourish. The well-being of children today dictates the health and advancement of society in the future.

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