

**Creating Professionals for Child  
Development and Child Protection**  
— *An ODL initiative*

*Editor*

**Kasturi Sinha Ghosh**



**School of Professional Studies**  
**Netaji Subhas Open University**

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*From the desk of the Officer-in-Charge*

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# Care and Protection for the Juveniles : A Case Study of Sneha

Kasturi Sinha Ghosh & R. M. Sinha

Children who belong to prostitute mothers have to suffer right from their birth. First of all they are addressed as illicit and illegitimate children of the society and are isolated and segregated from the mainstream. They are born and brought up in an environment, which is not congenial for their emotional, social and psychological development. They are generally confined within the brothels without any exposure to the outer world. The young children, especially the girls have the danger from pimps, traffickers and the madam of the brothels, who have the intention of forcing them into the flesh trade. Such children have no idea about a healthy family life, love, affection, care and security that a child normally derives from the family. Most of them are aware about the profession of their mothers but they are tutored to hide the actual secret of the family and project a picture that is very different from the reality. They do not follow a regular and discipline life style like the other children. There is an absence of familiar ties and support system in their lives.

There is a negative impact of the brothel culture on the children of such parents, which creates enormous pressure on them, but they are unable to come out of the situation and thus remain cut off from the society. Child abuse is not a new phenomenon, with the development of agriculture in the Neolithic period, 'the exchange of women' between tribes became a very common practice, as societies with more women could produce more children who could increase the production and thus help in the accumulation of a surplus. In the Mesopotamian societies the female children of the poor were sold into prostitution in order to improve the economic conditions of the family, or they were used as pawns by becoming debt slaves to the creditors, in case their father could not pay back the debt. Although the subordination of the male children was temporary but the subordination of the girl child was lifelong. (Lerner, G. 1986, pp 212-213)

Today in the 21st century, child abuse still remain to be a very serious problem in our society. It is a very complex issue and it poses a medical, social, legal, emotional and moral problem for the growing child. Unfortunately very few people know about the problem, even if they are aware of the problem they have no clue how to tackle it due to lack of knowledge and understanding of the actual problem. Therefore the cycle of the violence continues from generation after generation.

# Mitigating Child Marriage through Multi-disciplinary Approach

Kasturi Sinha Ghosh

## Introduction :

Children are the future of a nation. The state is responsible for providing a secured and safe living conditions so that the children, who are still at a vulnerable situation and are unable to take their decision may grow up to become responsible citizen of the country and contribute towards its development. However the recent census report does not give us a very encouraging picture. The report revealed that even today, children of India are exposed to hazardous situations like child labour, trafficking, sexual abuse and child marriage. Out of these social maladies we would try to critically analyze the phenomena of child marriage in India. This paper would try to make an attempt to understand the causes of child marriage and its drastic effect on children and also try to see that inspite of having so many legislations and constitutional provisions, why there is a rampant occurrence of child marriage in India? We would also try to suggest some remedial measures to combat the problems.

The institution of marriage is a partnership between consenting adults which sanction sexual relation & gives legitimacy to any offspring. Child marriage is defined as the marriage or union between two people in which one or both parties are younger than 18 years old (Mc Intyre, 2006). According to UNICEF 2005, early or child marriage must be considered as an issue of violation of human right. Ironically, in India often an under aged child who is incapable of taking decision get married before the age of 18 years. Therefore, it is clear that an individual who is not sufficiently mature cannot give consent for making such decision like marriage. It is shocking to learn from a report of UNICEF that though the incidence of marriage has declind in India due to an increase in literacy programmes and Government intervention, yet the practice of Child marriage is common. In rural India , still 47% of girls are married at the age of 18 years while 18% of girls are married by 15 years of age. According to census 2011, in India more than 23 million population continue to be child brides. District Level Household and Facility Survey (DLHFS) conducted a survey in 2007-2008, and their report revealed that 58.2 % of married women fall in the age group below 18 years, were from the rural areas while, 28.2% of women in urban areas got married at or above 18 years of age. The survey also reflected that about 68% cases of child marriage