

BOOK REVIEW

Child Protection and Child Rights in India: COVID -19 Experiences and Contemporary Challenges

Editors: Sunita Reddy and Javaid Rashid

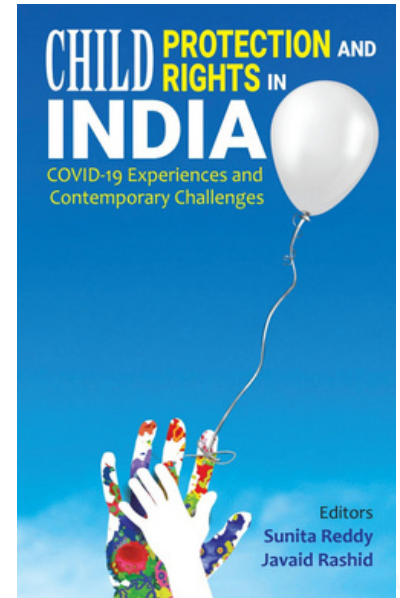
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Theme and Scope: The book extensively examines pertinent complexities associated with the protection of children and enforcement of child rights as well as the history and development of social, legal, cultural, and familial institutions related to the same, particularly within the Indian context. It provides a cross-disciplinary exploration of child abuse and crimes targeting children while delving into the various frameworks and policies that influence how a child is defined across different contexts. This edited volume of articles endeavors to address questions regarding violence against children, the role of the state, family, community, and school; the resolution of structural inadequacies, vulnerability, and intersectionality, the impact of the pandemic on the well-being of children and effective strategies to curtail crime against children; among other broad themes. It aims to share knowledge on child rights and protection issues with researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and educators, fostering a deeper understanding of the challenges, practical obstacles, and solutions implemented within the realms of child welfare and child protection. An interdisciplinary analysis has been employed to understand backgrounds, experiences and narratives of child abuse with particular reference to cross-cultural contextualities of childhood, interconnected and pervasive institutional structures and the historical processes of colonialization, de-colonialization and global capitalism.

Content: This edited collection encompasses a wide range of issues concerning child protection and rights, featuring contributions from leading authorities in child rights, legal practitioners, members of the judiciary, child rights activists, and scholars from disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, and social work. The chapters draw on the contributors' extensive research and professional experience in the field of child rights, alongside original reviews and empirical studies conducted within their areas of specialization. The volume is divided into the following sections:

- **Child Rights, Legislations and Policy Response**
Authors: Bhula Bhadra, Amod Kanth, Amithabh Srivastava, RN Srivastava and Bindiya Shajith
- **Child Sexual Abuse, Vulnerabilities and Institutional Child Care**
Authors: Sunita Reddy, Itishree Padhi, Rossama Francis and Sojo Varughese, Javaid Rashid, Shaweta Anand, Rajender Dhar and Jyoti Mathur
- **Child Protection in Disasters and COVID-19 Pandemic**
Authors: Renu Shah and Sangita Pant, Anjaiah Pandiri and Anuradha Vidyasankar, Biswajit Ghosh, Seema Naaz, Shamikh Arsh and Zubair Meenai, and Santosh Kumar

The volume chronologically expands upon the cultural notions associated with childhood and children across history, the universalization of childhood and the development of the 'school' as an institution. The contemporary notion of childhood has been shaped by the rise of free-market liberal capitalism and the development of modern nation-states, alongside the establishment of authoritarian institutions centered on children.



Conclusion: The book emphasizes how a child-centric approach is crucial, emphasizing the importance of listening to children's voices. Ethnographic, context-based research on child abuse and protection at the micro level is essential for a nuanced understanding of abuse. Effective prevention strategies require understanding the perpetrators, social contexts, and application of child laws. This volume is a deliberate effort to contextually deconstruct children's well-being in India by incorporating expert insights from various disciplines. However, as the book itself acknowledges, broader themes associated with children including children with disability, accessibility, cyber-crime, indoctrination and contemporary parenthood debates have not been discussed within this limited volume. Despite this, it serves as a key driving force for continued research on childhood in India, where significant opportunities remain for further documentation and analysis of these critical issues.

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