Psychological study of victims of Child Abuse and Trafficking

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ABSTRACT:

With the rising crimes around the world, we have observed that the victims of the crime not only go through physical abuse but have a traumatized mental image to survive with. The victims of the crimes are mostly observed as children and the surviving victims have a lifelong mental impact in their lives. The abuse children go through is beyond our imagination and it also affects their life choices. Even child trafficking for child labour and sexual exploitation not only violates their fundamental rights but also cause a major mental health problem. The physical abuse can be healed by time but the constant mental image of the crime survives and is not something many people focuses on. These abuses cause a lot of change in personality and thinking capability of the victims.

I. Introduction

Child abuse and child trafficking has been a serious crime since decades. Child abuse is when parents or guardians through either verbally or physically harm children which lead to emotional abuse, death, injury to the child like sexual abuse, physical abuse, exploitation, etc. Child trafficking is illegal practice of transportation of child for the sole purpose of labour or sexual exploitation.

The very first case of child abuse was observed in 1864, in which an eight year old Mary Ellen Wilson was severely abused by her foster parents Francis and Mary Connolly. Her foster mother abused the child by making her do heavy labor and injuring her by cutting, burning, beating and locking her in the closet. This case lead the United States to create the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

In India, only Goa Children's Act 2003, provided laws specified for the protection of children, until them Article 21 of Indian Constitution was followed in protection of the citizens of India. Later in 2012, based on the 2011 Census study, POCSO Act was enacted for the sexual offences against children.²

Child trafficking is when children are taken away from safety and exploited. They are exploited by forcing into work like sex, labor or are sold. Child Trafficking came into notice after the enactment of Mann Act of 1910 or the White Slave Trafficking Act, but at first the act didn't specifically protected children but women from prostitution and trafficking; After 60 years, i.e, in 1978 the Act widened its scope and added protection of male and female minors from sexual exploitation and the Act continued to amend and protect children like in 1986

¹https://www.thevintagenews.com/2018/06/29/mary-ellens-case/ accessed on 24th March 2019

http://ncpcr.gov.in/showfile.php?lang=1&level=1&&sublinkid=1289&lid=1514 accessed on 24th March 2019

the Act amended to protect children from "any kind of sexual activity performed and the person who did will be charged with criminal offence."

In India the growth of child trafficking was majorly noticed in 2005 raising this crime nearly 60% as per the NCRB report of 2005. As per the NHRC report, trafficking of women and children for the purpose of sex increased from 60,000 to 1 million. Considering these facts, different laws were amended and enacted to lower down the rate of these crimes.³

The public union helped build these laws, and majorly designed and implemented the situation. It was by their efforts the crime like trafficking and abuse was exposed. It was majorly a coordinated effort to prevent these crimes.

II. DEFINITIONS

The following are the few important definitions require to combine in one piece.

Child

As per the Oxford Dictionary a child is defined as "A young human being below the age of puberty or below the legal age of majority."

The United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child defines a child as "a human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier."⁵

As per most of the Government Programme in India and Census of India, "a child is any person below the age of 14."

As per UNCRC a child means "every human being below the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier."

The definition of Child is itself discrete but in India many laws have set different age limit of the child like:-

IPC - Below the age of 7 years till 16 years is considered as child.

Indian Constitution - From the age of 6 years to 14 years is considered as child.

Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 - 14 years and below is considered as a child.

Prohibition of Child Marriage Act- Male who has not completed 21 year and Female who have not completed 18 year of age is considered as a child.

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³A report on Trafficking on Women and Child in India 2002-2003, accessed on 24th March 2019.

⁴ https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/child, accessed on 24th March 2019.

⁵ https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx, accessed on 24th March 2019.

⁶ https://www.childrensrights.ie/childrens-rights-ireland/un-convention-rights-child, accessed on 24th March 2019.

• Abuse

As per the Oxford Dictionary, the term abuse is defined as, "Use (something) to bad effect or for a bad purpose; misuse."

As per the Duhaime's Law Dictionary, abuse is defined as, "Physical or nonphysical misuse or maltreatment or use or treatment so as to injure, hurt, or damage."⁷

Trafficking

Cambridge English Dictionary defines trafficking as, "the act of buying or selling people, or of making money from work they are forced to do, such as sex work."

Duhaime's Law Dictionary defines trafficking as, "The selling or involvement in commercial activity of something for which commercial activity is unlawful."

III. DIFFERENT KINDS OF CHILD ABUSE AND TRAFFICKING

Child Abuse

Child Abuse is one of the most heinous crime of the world. Child abuse is "any act or failure to act by a parent or a caregiver that results in actual or potential harm to a child, and can occur in a child's home, or in the organizations, schools or communities the child interacts with."

There are 4 major types of child abuse observed:-

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse is quite a wide term, it is still not constituted what kind of behavior cause physical abuse of a child. Physical Abuse mostly occurs due to constellation of behaviors like central control, paranoia - provoking actions, and lack of emotional comfort from parents.

World Health Organisation defines Physical Abuse as "Intentional use of physical force against the child that results in - or has a high likelihood of resulting in - harm for the child's health, survival, development or dignity. This includes hitting, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, strangling, scalding, burning, poisoning and suffocating. Much physical violence against children in the home is inflicted with the object of punishing."

Joan Durrant and Ron Ensom publish that perhaps the majority of physical abuse is "intention, form and effect" physical punishment.⁹

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⁷ http://www.duhaime.org/LegalDictionary/A/Abuse.aspx, accessed on 24th March 2019.

⁸ https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/trafficking, accessed on 24th March 2019.

⁹ https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/02/120206122447.htm, accessed on 24th March 2019.

"Many societies with child abuse laws recognize it unlawful to deliberately cause severe injuries or actions that put the child at apparent risk of serious injury or death." Cuts and bruises, scratch marks, burns, broken bones, wounds - as well as repeated "catastrophes" and harsh treatment that could result in physical injury;- can be physical abuse. "Numerous injuries or fractures at various times of healing can simply lead to strong suspicion of abuse."

Physical abuse as a child can sometimes lead to long term physical and mental problems, including revictimization, personality disorders, post traumatic stress disorder, dissociative symptoms, severe depression, anxiety, suicidal tendencies, bulimia, abuse of drugs, and aggressive behavior. In childhood physical abuse was also affiliated with adult poverty, drug abuse and homelessness.¹⁰

SEXUAL ABUSE

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is a form of child abuse in which a child is victimized for sexual pleasure by an adult or older adolescent. Child sexual abuse pertains to a child's involvement in a sexual activity specifically aimed at the physical satisfaction or monetary benefit of the acting person.

Categories of CSA include asking or coercing a child to perform sexual acts, inappropriate genital exposure to a child, exhibiting pornographic material to the child, actual sexual contact with a child, inappropriate touching with the genitalia of the child, watching the genitalia of the child without physical contact, or using a child to create child pornography.¹¹

Selling children for performing sexual act and treated as child sexual abuse rather than mere incarceration.

These kind of crimes cause a child victim to feel shame and guilt, self - criticism, traumas, night terrors, lack of sleep, constant fear of abuse, issues in self - esteem, sexual dysfunction, chronic pain, addiction, self harm, suicidal thoughts, somatic issues, anxiety and many other problems. Children were also the victim of sexually transmitted diseases in this abuse. Scientifically speaking due to immature immune system of the children, it can risk them to have permanent damage in genital areas.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse of children is any sort of attitude, actions or inability to act that disrupts with the mental or psychological development of a child. It can be a simple verbal slur to extreme form of violence abuse that can

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¹⁰ http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/essay/child-abuse/causes-of-4-types-of-child-abuse-in-india/43960, accessed on 24th March 2019.

¹¹ https://www.rainn.org/articles/child-sexual-abuse, accessed on 24th March 2019.

cause emotional abuse to a child. Emotional Abuse actually have longer negative effects either physical or mental to a child.¹²

These kind of abusive acts are bring off by parents, siblings, teachers or school seniors or bullies.

NEGLECT

Child Neglect is a very common child abuse. It is basically non-performance of parent or caregiver responsible for the child to provide basic necessities like food, shelter, clothes, medical care, etc. It is also a form of lack of attention to the child growth both physically and mentally by the parent or caregiver.¹³

This kind of abuse lead children to develop later than at the appropriate time period and cause problems in the development of skills like social skills, memory, etc. Lack of these development lead to personality disorder in the child.

Child Trafficking

Child Trafficking is transportation, recruitment or transfer of the child for the sole purpose of forced labour, sexual exploitation, children in armed forces, etc. ¹⁴ The following are the major types of child trafficking-

FORCED LABOUR

This is considered as one of the most common and major objectives of child trafficking. Child Labour generally refers to involvement of a child or minor of less than 14 years of age in a work. In 2011, UNICEF estimated the involvement of child in labour work to be around 150 million children of developing countries. Out of this estimation, International Labour Organization claimed that 60% of the child labour are found in the agricultural field of work. ¹⁵ It was also estimated that 115 million children were involved in hazardous activities.

Therefore Child labour is of many form, it can be domestic work, farm, agriculture, industry, etc any form of work in which a child below 14 years of age is involved is considered as child labour. Trafficked children are majorly faced with these works causing them mental torture and physical abuse by the person under whom they are working.

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

The second most common form of Child Trafficking is for Sexual Exploitation. Sexual Exploitation process includes Prostitutions, Brothels, Escort Agencies, Lap Dancers, Marriage, Virtual Stripping, Phone Sex lines,

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¹² https://preventchildabuse.org/resource/preventing-emotional-abuse/, accessed on 25th March 2019.

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25465678, accessed on 25th March 2019.

¹⁴ https://www.youthendingslavery.org/types-of-trafficking.html, accessed on 25th March 2019.

¹⁵ http://planningcommission.nic.in/reports/sereport/ser/ser_nclp1709.pdf, accessed on 27th March 2019

Pornography, Sex Tourism, etc. Children are transported or lured or blackmailed into such kinds of work. 16

This kind of work puts children in high-risk for sexually transmitted disease at a very early age. This kind of work also leaves a mental trauma to children, specially those who are forced into this work.

CHILDREN IN ARMED FORCES

These are all children and adolescents who are being used for any kind of military purpose, varying from as young and naive as four to eighteen. It affects both males and females. Children might be used for frontline fighting – meaning they are made to commit violent acts – or in auxiliary power roles, such as informants. ¹⁷Most often, the children are also sexually assaulted.

In parts of Africa and Asia, this sort of practice is most widespread.

CHILDREN IN DRUG TRADE

Children are often used for drug trade purposes all around the world. In particular, children are often transported into exploitation, either as drug traders or as smugglers, and then 'compensated' in drugs, so that they become accustomed and further stranded. Because of the unlawful nature of drug smuggling, children detained are often treated as criminals when they are often the ones in need of legal aid in fact. While there are undisclosed to the comprehensive nationwide statistics on the incidence of this practice, several useful national studies have been carried out.

ADOPTION

For adoption purposes, especially international adoption, children may be transported. Children are orphaned or abducted, or parents may be conned, kidnapped or forced into custody renunciation.

Then untrustworthy agencies for international adoption coordinate international adoptions, charging extortionate fees to prospective adoptive parents.

IV. EFFECTS OF CHILD ABUSE AND CHILD TRAFFICKING

As for now we know that Child Abuse and Trafficking cause a lot of harm to the victimized children. But even the effect on children are divided into 3 categories:-

PHYSICAL EFFECT

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¹⁶ https://www.stopthetraffik.org/about-human-trafficking/types-of-exploitation/, accessed on 27th March 2019

¹⁷ https://childlineindia.org.in/CP-CR-Downloads/Global%20Report%202008%20child%20soldeirs.pdf, accessed on 29th March 2019.

¹⁸ https://www.du.edu/korbel/hrhw/researchdigest/trafficking/Trafficking.pdf, accessed on 29th March 2019.

The very first visible effect on the victim are the physical bruises they suffer. Especially in cases of child abuse, the victims are beaten, harassed so badly that it causes a major impact on their body and lead to permanent bruising. In cases of child trafficking, the victims especially used in labour get severe burn and scratched and sometimes causes a loss of their limbs. These are some permanent health damages like the inhalation of harmful gases in industry sector child labour causes them to suffer from serious diseases like cancer.

In cases of Child Abuse, children also faces maltreatment by parent or caregiver, this cause some serious body damages and sometimes even death.

EMOTIONAL EFFECT

The other effect is emotional effect on the victims due to these crimes. Child develops in various stages of their life and understand and feels different emotions in life. The victims of these crimes are so badly treated, that it cause them to continue the same treatment with others. The feeling of humiliation, ignorance, pain, etc, emotionally damage them. These memories haunt the aspect of the child throughout his life cycle and even continues to grow with him.

The illicit treatment and constant beating causes a major impact on child's emotional health. The child abuse victims gets emotionally imbalanced and the child trafficking victims started feeling numb at certain point of their life.

The treatment for physical abuse is their and even emotional abuse can be treated but the third effect is something in which the victim grew till their lifetime.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT

One of the most major effect which any surviving victim of the crime faces is the psychological effect. The victims of child abuse and child trafficking, even after surviving the crime, lives under a constant fear. It has been largely observed that the surviving victims had constant nightmares of the crime and even going through anxiety, depression, eating disorders. The psychological effect isn't considered much in the society, but it is one of the most deadliest effect that can change the whole cycle of life of the child victim.

It is not necessary that the crime had negative psychological effect only on the victims. Sometimes it has been observed that the surviving victims had become strong after the incident and more determined to work on to make sure nobody else suffer what they had.

But the positive psychological effect mostly occurs after quite a long time period of the negative psychological effect.

Majorly at first the surviving victims, lack the social skills, live in constant fear, have a traumatised image of the crime in their mind all the time, etc, leading them to take time to adjust in normal life style.

The effects is negative can also lead to suicidal tendencies at one point and some of the victims had even committed suicide after a while.

A child who have a full lifetime, going through such crimes puts a really hard time to adjust in the normal life. Some of the surviving victims were abducted or abused in their childhood and were found when they became adult, their whole life has been taken away from them to do illicit work.

The child victim grew up in this fear and even when they become adult they live in the fear that it will happen again.

These effects are something which ruin a child life and causes them difficulty in future.

V. STORIES OF THE VICTIMS

- 1. "I was five-years-old and had gone to my *bua's* (aunt) place. They had a permanent servant with whom I would often play with as a kid. He was pretty old. One day, he asked me if I wanted to go to a nearby stable. Being an over-excited kid and a lover of animals, I jumped at the opportunity and instantly said yes. When we reached the stable, he took me inside and felt me up. As a young kid, I had no idea what was happening. I couldn't even cry. Now that I think of the incident, it disgusts me to the core. He was so old and I was probably his granddaughter's age. The incident left a permanent fear in my mind and ever since, I have been afraid going to my aunt's place. I even started staying away from my aunt's sons fearing that they would do the same to me." 19
- 2. Dee Dee said "her abuse first started when she was 4 years old when her father a native of a developing nation where prostitution is legal started letting his male friends get into bed with her. The name of the country is not being named for Dee Dee's safety." As a child, Dee Dee said "her father often would remain in the room so he could 'keep an eye' on the men who molested her. After each incident, her father would tuck her into bed, kiss her on the forehead and tell her she had done a good job and he was proud of her." It was confusing. He was protecting me, but he was exploiting me," Dee Dee said. As she grew up, Dee Dee's father motivated her to accept presents and spend time with some older men. Those meeting started with 'talking' and then converted into trafficking. Eventually, Dee Dee's mother found out about one man and reported it to police. Her mother told Dee Dee's father, not aware about the fact that he is involved too. Dee Dee's father warned his client, who fled the country. The abuse continued until Dee Dee turned 18. Dee Dee didn't realize the toll her childhood trafficking

¹⁹https://www.youthkiawaaz.com/2017/04/child-sexual-abuse-victims-narrate/, accessed on 30th March 2019.

took on her until later in life. But growing up, she looked to men for affirmation, developed an eating disorder and fell into an abusive relationship. At the end of that relationship, she sought therapy for codependency. Hearing the stories of other women helped her find the courage to share her own, and during that process she first realized she had been trafficked.²⁰

- 3. "I was 9-years-old. We had gone to my father's best friend's place, whom we fondly called *tau* (uncle). One of his cousin's had come home from a village. We called him *chachu*. I was getting ready to sleep, along with two of my other cousins. *Chachu* came to our room and said he had no place to sleep and lay beside me. Minutes after lying down, he slid one of his hands inside my T-shirt. As if that wasn't enough, he then moved it down towards my underwear. I got up from the bed and saw him masturbating. Of course, I had no clue what he was doing back then. I went to a corner of the room and started playing with toys. He followed me and said we both could also play games if I wanted to. When I refused, he said if I decided to tell this to my parents, they would beat me and marry me off. 'I am an elder and your relative. Nothing will happen to me,' I still remember him saying."²¹
- 4. "We were visiting some old family friends for dinner. My brother and I were really excited when we went to his room and found out that he had a video game console. We wanted to play but he had other things on his mind. He took us out for walk to an abandoned building nearby, took us up the steps and started talking about incredibly depraved sexual acts. We were really small and had no clue what he was talking about, so all we did was laugh. We got back home and he took us to his room, to 'play video games.' There, he stripped and molested us. No one ever found out. I am now a 28 year old man. And my blood boils in shame and horror whenever I think about what happened to me. All I can do now is pray that it doesn't happen to anyone else."
- 5. "My sister was around 7-years-old when this happened. However, she shared it with me only recently, when I was in college. She had gone to our *maasi's* (aunt) place where her son, our first cousin, molested her. He took her to the washroom and tried to feel her up and down. This happened whenever she went there. She kept mum, because it was our very own brother!"
- 6. "I was 10-years-old and was busy playing near my house when a courier guy asked me for a nearby address. I told him the way, but he asked me to come and show it to him. As I went into a narrow

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²⁰ https://womenagainstchildtrafficking.weebly.com/stories-of-victims-of-child-trafficking.html, accessed on 30th March 2019.

²¹ https://www.vouthkiawaaz.com/2017/04/child-sexual-abuse-victims-narrate/, accessed on 30th March 2019.

https://www.scoopwhoop.com/inothernews/child-molestation/#.bbmxc5619, accessed on 30th March 2019.

corridor, he came closer and slid his hand in my panties. I just ran to save my life. I have never trusted strangers since."²³

- 7. "We were kids. She was two years elder to me and *'Sexy ghar ghar'* was her favourite game. She always became the husband and made me the wife. She would often kiss me while playing. I felt uncomfortable, but she was also a girl, so I ignored the awkwardness. Once, she asked me to wear a skirt and dress up. I remember I wore a blue skirt and a blue top with yellow flowers. She tried to kiss me on the lips. I was just confused as to what was happening. I never told anyone about this until this day."²⁴
- 8. "When we were kids, no-one really taught us what a good touch or a bad touch meant. Our parents probably presumed that we were always in safe hands, which is far from true. I remember this one incident when I was 12 and was at a crowded market where people did not even have enough space to walk without elbowing someone. I was sitting on a rickshaw when a filthy middle-aged man with grey hair felt my thigh. My outfit was as 'appropriate' as it gets. I was fully covered. I was not courageous enough to speak out. Today, I wish I did. It left a deep impact on the mind of a 12-year-old."
- 9. "One of my friends went to Bangalore to visit another friend. One late afternoon, she was sexually molested by a neighbour who grabbed her boobs. It was very evident that it was intentional. When she started shouting, people in the neighbourhood came out and started thrashing him. The molester was constantly asking for forgiveness. My friend being a soft-hearted person, forgave him. Maybe forgiveness was her way of dealing with this traumatic experience. She feels it has not impacted her. But judging by the shadow on her face when she was telling me this, I think it has."
- 10. "I was a student of Class 6 and used to sit with a boy because that's how it went in our school one boy and one girl were made to sit together. We were in the middle of a science lecture when the guy sitting next to me put his hand on my knees. I looked at him from the corner of my eye and he was looking at the blackboard. Just when I thought it was a mistake, his hand moved upwards towards my thigh. He lifted my skirt and felt my thigh. I was stunned. I stayed away from him throughout the rest of our school years."²⁶

https://www.scoopwhoop.com/inothernews/child-molestation/#.bbmxc5619, accessed on 31st March 2019.

https://www.scoopwhoop.com/inothernews/child-molestation/#.bbmxc5619, accessed on 31st March 2019.

²⁵https://www.scoopwhoop.com/inothernews/child-molestation/#.bbmxc5619, accessed on 31st March 2019.

²⁶https://www.scoopwhoop.com/inothernews/child-molestation/#.bbmxc5619, accessed on 31st March 2019.

VI. CONCLUSION AND REMEDIES

It has always been said that 'everything takes time to recover', but does it really? The rising crimes in our society and youngsters as the target of the crime, does not show that the crime is ever going to end. The term 'recovery' means progress from the negative state of the person, the child who had gone through such crimes at such an early age had been given only medical care for physical harms but not a psychological help. In countries like India going to a psychologist or psychiatrist is considered only when a person is mentally retarded. The terms depression, anxiety, etc is something which is considered will get over by time. People have to provide support to these victims and even if the parents or relatives are not able to support to seek help from psychologist, then government should add it and provide the help they need, specially to the surviving child victims as it helps to recover from the fear of the crime and nightmares of the crimes grow with them and they need to put into attention for this particular purpose.

Till now we have learned that these crimes lead to the growth of fear, anxiety, depression, but it also harms the development skills of the children like social skills, thinking skills, etc. The children suffer and sometimes grew into that crime. The forced labour and the children used for drug trade are forced to consume drugs to become addicted and this lead to a life threat for them. The addiction is basically forced to them and these things takes more than just a rehab to get over with. There are cases where after rehab also the victims faced the same difficulties even after being properly treated.

The child victims incident clearly shows how much terrified they are to still share the story they had gone through to loved and close ones. People should understand that them listening and giving support to the victims might help them to get over their fear and anxiety.

There are no such law provision in which they provide mental health facilities to the victims. The government provides money and by far medical treatment for physical wounds but no importance is given to the mental health treatment. Some provisions should be provided in law and even psychologist should be appointed by the government for this particular purpose.

The term 'justice' means full proper treatment and if the victims of the crime are only getting physical treatment of the crime then justice hasn't been served. The government had passed Protection of Children from Sexual Offence Act but passing an act doesn't mean that the whole crime will stop. We still observe in everyday news such abuse happening.

Children are our future and if they are victims of this they should overcome the psychologically negative effects of the crime because there future shouldn't be negative. If proper treatment should be given to them they can change this into awareness. Even some child victims who have opened up about their stories got courage and

spread awareness in the society for the same. They opened NGO and provided funds to the victims of such crime.

Also some basic legal knowledge should be taught in school so the children can figure if the things happening to them is right or wrong, as some victims of this crime didn't even knew that they were being treated wrong, it was later in the future when they grew up they got to know.

The incest abuse have majorly been recognized, parents and relatives should take major care of these things because a child is dependent on them. They should notice the behavioral changes in their children around particular person and speak with them if something is wrong and why they are behaving like this in front of that particular person.

The behavioral change in the child victims sometimes are so much that parents doesn't consider to communicate with the child but send them to boarding school for their behavioral change but if they would have consider to communicate directly with the child, they will understand the problem directly.

A child only needs love, care and understanding from their parents and guardians. By giving this a child can overcome any difficulties they faced in their life. The parents are responsible for them and no matter what they had gone through if they need attention and care, parents should provide them. This way they are helping their own future and their children's future. Children shouldn't live in a constant fear and parents need to provide the help to their children specially when they had gone through such a difficult time of their life.

Those things which can't be taught by parents should be taught or added to the curriculum of children studies. Government should recognize the need of this as a subject and also on the need of the psychologist treatment.

Child abuse specifically doesn't mean sexual intercourse or beating, it also means any kind of bad touch whether hug or touching a person thigh or personal areas. Same way Child trafficking doesn't mean a person getting transported to another country for the abuse but also being treated in any wrong way in other places where they had been held.

This paper is our way to express the changes that are required and an awareness for people to understand the concept of psychological help is nothing to be ashamed about and should be considered when it is required. We strongly believe that the child can recover from any difficulties if such things are given importance and proper care are provided to them.

It is rightly said that 'Violators cannot live with the truth and survivors cannot live without it. There are those who still, once again, are poised to invalidate and deny us. If we don't assert our truth, it may again be relegated to fantasy. But the truth won't go away. It will keep surfacing until it is recognized. Truth will outlast any campaigns mounted against it, no matter how might, clever, or long. It is invincible, It's only a

matter of which generation is willing to face it and, in so doing, protect future generations from ritual abuse.'