

## **Sexually abused Girl children: Experiences in the Institutional Setting**

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**Abstract:** Child Sexual Abuse is reported to be a rampant problem in India at the institutional level. It is widely covered by media in recent times. What seems to be missing, however, is a concrete attempt to unravel the day-to-day realities of Child Sexual Abuse from the larger socio-political perspectives which in themselves emanate from various cultural practices. Studies suggest that girls and women are more vulnerable to sexual abuse, and this vulnerability increases exponentially in the case of children, girls and women with disabilities (Mehrotra and Nayar, 2020). Studies in the recent past also began to focus on sexual identity of disabled in general and sexual and reproductive rights of disabled women in particular. But there is very little academic exercise made on the problems of girls with disabilities at institutional level *viz.* family and school. It is in this context that the present paper attempts to discuss these aspects of sexual abuse against girl children with disabilities. The findings are drawn from an intense ethnographic study conducted in selected schools (both government and private) run for children with visual impairment. The schools are located in Hyderabad and Mahabubnagar districts of Telangana state. A total of 434 participants — 370 children and 64 teachers — were interviewed. Of 370 children aged between 6-20 years, 208(56%) were boys, and 162(44%) girls. The relevant data were collected using a scheduled interview method, along with in-depth conversations with children, teachers and care takers in the selected schools. It is observed that child sexual abuse is one of the major challenges facing children with disabilities, which hardly gets reported.

*Key words :* Child Sexual Abuse, Children with Disabilities, Institutional setting, Indian context.