

Chapter 12

Cultural Context of Human Rights Violations Against Children in Asian Countries: Why Do Children Become Easy Targets? Human Rights Violations in India

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ABSTRACT

Asian countries have a culture that is diametrically opposite to European Culture. In India, China, Thailand, etc., mothers are more attached to their children than husbands. There are certain religious practices that amount to human rights violations. Chinese children are deprived of enjoyment to the fullest. Trafficking, disparities, problems in Tibet, etc. are causing serious threats to the lives of children in China. This chapter analyses human violation against children in some of the Asian countries. It is not easy to cover all the countries, so some countries that have representative character are included for a detailed study. This chapter analyses various cultural contexts that aggregate child victimization and also suggests measures to stop it.

INTRODUCTION

Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world, from birth until death. The concept of Human Rights concerns cultural context, i.e., social, political, economic and cultural milieu. In other words, it must necessarily be premised on a particular cultural framework (including philosophical and religious perspectives as well as material circumstances) of specific human societies in their respective historical context. Children and young people have the same general human rights as adults and also specific rights that recognize their special needs. Yet, violence against children

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is endemic. Each day, terrible abuses and acts of violence against children are committed worldwide. They suffer as many of the human rights abuses as the adults, but may also be targeted simply because they are dependent and vulnerable.

Five Asian countries – India, China, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Japan have opted for this study. For this study only five countries from Asia are selected as some peculiar types of human rights violations are prevailing in this region and they are to be established significantly. Selecting more number of countries for the study may deviate from the attention of these peculiar types of human rights infringements. These countries are selected and the rest of the Asian countries are not selected is based on certain peculiar characteristics of these five countries. Generally, these countries are politically very familiar to the world. Specifically, there are some reasons for selecting these countries. India is a country with the second largest population in the world and a wide variety of terrains, climate, civilization, and language. China is the largest populated country in the world and the largest of all Asian countries. Sri Lanka was just liberated from the clutches of quadricentennial civil war and many inconsistencies suffered due to it. Pakistan is facing internal pressure from various religious fanatic groups and famous for military governance for a long time. Japan is the only developed country in this list and human rights violations against children prevail in Japan also shocked the world society and that is why it is included in the list. In each of these Asian countries, children face a different set of human rights violations besides generally prevailing and commonly identified types of human rights violations. A different set of human rights violations persisting in these countries may be due to reasons such as high population, underdeveloped conditions of the country, constant war, refugee status, malnutrition, etc.

BACKGROUND

Though most of the children grow up in a safe and beneficial environment, with the support and care of their respective families, too many children are vulnerable to gross violations of their rights, including violence, sexual exploitation, trafficking, and child labor. Some groups of children – children with disabilities, indigenous children and refugee or asylum-seeking children – are at particular risk of discrimination and marginalization. Children are more vulnerable because of their physical incapacity; they cannot escape from crime scenes. In some cases, children are targeted, to invite more public attention; some of the massacres that happen in schools in various parts of the world are as a result of this attitude. Sexual assault against children happens everywhere. Children can't resist, and then they become easy prey to sexual offenses. In each country listed for the study - India, China, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Japan, unique situations of human right violation against children besides the commonly identified human right violation issues such as child marriage, civil registration issues, children separated from their families, justice for children, violence against children and child labor exist.

In these countries, over 50 percent of women between the ages of 20-24 married as a child. Marrying as a child has a lifetime effect on a person's social, educational, and health wellbeing, and threatens the fulfillment of human rights¹ and sustainable development. Around 62 percent of South Asian children under the age of 5 are registered and have a birth certificate. Being registered is a person's first recognition before the law. Without it may limit a person's access to protection – through the enforcement of age-related legislation or to ensure a child can be identified and remain with their families - to services, to participate in society. Children can be separated from their families during a crisis. Children may also be inappropriately separated and placed in foster care or an institution, due to a perception of family

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