

Book Review

Child Abandonment-A Social Tragedy

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Abandoned children appear to be nobody's children. The term abandonment has been used to specify subcategories of street children with reference to nature of their ties with the family. Child abandonment is the practice of abandoning one's child outside legal adoption. An abandoned child is called a foundling. Child abandonment is a criminal offense under state laws. Child hope (1993) differentiated three groups: children, on the street, who stayed regular with their families, children of the street, who lived away from home but maintained irregular contact and ,abandoned and neglected children, left entirely on their own.

A person commits the offense of child abandonment when he or she, as a parent, guardian, or other person having physical custody or control of a child, without regard for the mental or physical health, safety, or welfare of that child, knowingly leaves that child who is under the age of 13 without supervision by a responsible person.

It is not merely a matter of grave ill-luck but also a social tragedy that children are abandoned due to unfavorable circumstances. Abandonment of the children and turning back upon them has become a usual routine today. There are many factors

responsible for the abandonment of children. This social evil is not restricted to a particular country, geographical area or a sect.

Developed and under developed countries are approaching towards this abominable large scale abandonment by dint of the attitudes engendered by their particular state of affairs and circumstances. These unlucky children are deprived of shelter and permanent inhabitation, found to be starving in the streets under the relentless open sky. Carelessness and acute indifference of society dispossess their human rights and finally lead them toward the baneful destructive activities like begging and drug addiction.

Dr Hussain Mohi-ud-Din Qadri has shed considerably light on the root causes and factors and motives behind the social vice of abandonment of children. Facts and figures of several domestic and foreign institutions prove that millions of the children are abused in hotels and recreational spots just for the enjoyment of tourists. They are sexually harassed and these practices have transformed into a filthy business. The author has revealed the new types of torture being given to children in the modern epoch.

The book has been divided into two chapters. The book not only unveils the eye-opening facts about the exploitation of children, but also pertains to the golden tenets of Islam. Islam protects the children and gives them due rights which other religions fail to award.

First chapter deals with the root causes of child exploitation. How and in what circumstances, children have to take the responsibilities like adults. Every country, developed or under developed has its unique and peculiar state of affairs which may lead to the carelessness and un interestedness regarding children gradually.

The author has discussed a lot of factors behind child exploitation. The book includes the detail how unwanted increase in birth rate ratio affects the health and welfare of individuals and families and how this state of affairs emerges as a hurdle in the way of social and economic uplift of a country. Poverty of parents, unbalanced mutual relations, segregations and lack of interest in the education of the children and para-extremism are the factors accountable for mental stress and emotional flows in the children.

Children have to face sexual harassment in west and physical or oral torture in the east which aggregates their adversity in life. The author has elaborated these sublime principles of Islam by virtue of references to different Hadiths. It also includes the selection of good names for children, breast feeding of the child and balanced moral training is responsibility of parents.

The author has also discussed the causes of child exploitation in developed countries. He unearths the reasons that cast negative social impacts upon them. The author has provided statistical data and references of countless children who confront dreadful state of affairs in which the children are shorn of Love and affection. They have to go through the horrible experiences which stage a vital role in the development or impairment of their personality.

He also dilates on the number of children exploited by sexual harassment, and the vice of pornography in various developed countries. This chapter also highlights the brutal torture by Israel and its impacts on the lives of children.

Israel is brutally killing innocent children and violating human rights, whereas welfare organizations stay dumb-founded. The author also throws light on abortion and Islamic teaching in this regard. Islam safeguards the rights of children. At the end of the chapter, the attention of the global world has been

diverted to child exploitation in under developed countries like Cambodia, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand and other South-eastern, Asian Countries.

The writer describes how in these countries sexual harassment, Trade and labour of children in abominable circumstances and blackmailing for sexual trade have become the order of the day.

Second chapter deals with problems of children in Pakistan. Like other under developed countries, Pakistani children are also facing exploitation and abandonment to their worst.

The author has elaborated the root causes of child exploitation in this chapter. He has provided data and references of various governmental and non-governmental organizations about the children being exploited for different causes. Rights of Children in Islam have been discussed with reference to the holy prophet's sayings. Furthermore, children are becoming drug addicts and pickpockets because of parent's passive role.

Reasons for child exploitation in Punjab, Sindh and K.P.K have also been logically explained. The author explicates how helpless and poor children are hoodwinked by the crooks of the society. Children are also prepared for suicide attacks by religious exploiters.

Sahabiyaat and women having command of literature and arts have also been discussed in this chapter. It entails a long list of Mohadsaat, Moalimaat (Educators) and Faqeehat (Having knowledge and authority about Fiqah), who earned repute for their noble acts. In few, the author suggests certain remedial measures for the protection of children's rights.

Various governmental and non-governmental organizations have been veritabily mentioned. Orphan House, Edhi Center, S.o.S, Aaghosh and other N.G.O, s and their role in the development of exploited children are discussed in brief. At the

end, author has suggested various steps that should be initiated by the government in order to check injustice done to starving, helpless children. The author has marshalled forth the reasons behind the tendencies of children abandonment at national and international levels.

The situation of children in foundling homes, in exile, in refugee's camps or war zones engaged in prostitution or in other ugly affairs attracts much of political and journalistic attention.

This book attempts to show that presentation of children abandonment tends to take for granted ethnocentric ideas about what children can and should do, and about what their relationship should be with family or society.

The writer also suggests the feasible solution of these problems. Problems have been discussed from Islamic point of view with references. All researchers had better consult this valuable and productive book. The author has wisely suggested that the gradual evolution of attitudes, policies and procedures provide the necessary prop and foundation on which to construct the new programs empirically regarding the Procedures for coping with the grave issue of child abandonment on the large scale. To E. B. Browning, "The child's heart curses deeper in the silence than the strong man in his wrath."