CHAPTER III
SURVEY OF LITERATURE

Attitude to sex and understanding of sex varies from culture to culture. Sex had attracted deep reflection and research. In India, Kundalini Yoga says that sex being one of the most powerful life energies a clear understanding is essential. Independent of the course or the attitude that an individual takes towards sex, and independent of the level to which the sexual relationship can be elevated, the fact remains that sex is the beginning of birth. Sex is, in its basic function, bonding.

That most potential energy that is able to bring into this life must not be scattered senselessly and uselessly. Those who view sex only as a desire do not realize the consequences at different levels.

In Western culture, there is an imbalanced over-emphasis on sex. Sexual satisfaction is not the ultimate goal of human beings. The woman's point of view is naturally different from the man's due to a variety of physical and psychological factors. Emotional independence is, in any case, a desirable basis for any male-female relationship.

The Divine union is an ongoing evolution and, as such, in some lifetime the decision has to be made to cooperate with this process. This does not mean a hindrance or discouragement in the development of intellectual or mental powers. On the contrary, the whole system is one of cooperation with the evolution of the human being in all phases of life.
Kundalini Yoga offers an equal opportunity to any man or woman who is willing to pursue that Path.

Suzanne M. Sgroi, M.D. in her book ‘Handbook of Clinical Intervention in Child Sexual Abuse’, 1989 says that children lack the emotional, maturational and cognitive development to assimilate or withstand premature introduction to sexuality by an adult. Although frequently described by the perpetrators as seductive, children who have become incest victims have usually displayed no more than the usual degree of age appropriate exploratory or acting out behaviour. Despite society’s tendency to blame the victim, even when the victim is a young child, it is not appropriate to hold a child responsible for exploratory behaviour that stimulates an adult. The appropriate adult response is to acknowledge stimulation, deal with his or her own reactions on a personal level and respond to the child by setting limits on or redirecting the child’s behaviour. The grossly seductive child who overwhelms the helpless adult with a degree of sensuality that cannot be ignored or denied and thereby invites a compulsive response from the adult that inevitably ends in a sexual relationship is a myth existing only in the minds of perpetrators and some defense attorneys. In fact, most victims do not behave in a seductive fashion. By definition, the sexual abuse was initiated by an adult or by someone who occupied a position of power over the child. Nevertheless, the children tend to feel guilty about their participation as soon as they perceive the societal response to their sexual activity. Unfortunately, as Burgess and Holmstrom have described society tends to blame sexual
abuse victims of any age and children are no exception to this response. Amazingly, the perpetrator’s ascertain that a seductive child is responsible for the sexual behaviour is often given credence by judges, attorneys, police officers, physicians, social workers and the like. The rationalization seems to be that adult-child sexual behaviour is so far removed from societal norms that when it does occur, a perverted child must have been the causative factor.

Sgroi quotes the views of Burgess and Holmstrom (1975) who say that almost invariably Child Sexual Abuse is treated as a secret by both the perpetrator and the victim. When the secret is disclosed by the child victim, he or she obviously becomes responsible for the disclosure.

A common analysis of the sexual behaviour of the offender is manifested by the ‘thin-line theory’: according to which the offender, confusing love and sexuality, accidentally slips into molestation whilst cuddling the child in the ordinary way.

Just as there is a shifting and invisible line between constructive discipline and dehumanizing punishment, there is a vague borderline between loving sensuality and abusive sexuality.

It is necessary to establish clearly that thin line between what are desirable acts of affection and warmth between adults and children and what is unacceptable conduct. Incest slips over the boundary from loving cuddles to abuse.
According to the testimony of children, the offender is knowingly and deliberately committing a sexual assault. The assault may also be perpetrated on the child in such a way that exploitative behaviour is interspersed with gentleness.

Another fashionable analysis of the sexual motivation of the offender is that he is not seeking sexual gratification at all, but committing an act of aggression or violence against the child.

Sgroi quotes from Daddy said not to tell,' Aegis, Sept/Oct, 1978 that people look at sexual assault as a sexual act which it, truly, is not. It’s a violent attack. It is in fact made up of anger, emotional pain and immaturity...Most sex offenders will tell you that 90% of their needs were for sex, which is not true. They turn all their emotional needs into sexual needs.

Sgroi quotes Gerald Lubenow, ‘A Troubling Family Affair,’ Newsweek, 14 May 1984, that those who molest children do so for many reasons but the immediate and primary goal is sex. Some child molesters are quite open and unashamed about the sexual gratification that they derive from using children. She was just there and I helped myself

Sgroi quotes Harborview who cites that the mental health myth that child sexual abuse is not a sexual desire problem but is caused by low self-esteem, insecurity/ inadequacy, and confusion of affection with sex or that it is situational (it is stress-related or spontaneous).
They assert that clearly it is also a planned, premeditated act by virtue of efforts made to conceal it and to keep children from telling.

Mental perversion was also traced as a cause of Child Sexual Abuse. To label child abusers as ‘monsters’ is to put them at a safe distance from the so-called normal people who it is assumed, would, never do such a thing. "This false distinction does nothing to help us identify the occurrence of child abuse, which is so widespread precisely because it is frequently disguised by ‘respectable circumstances’. On the other hand, to treat child abuse as part of a routine emotional normality which is therefore acceptable is to distance oneself unforgivably from the rights and interests of children.

"It has now been accepted that sexually abusive behaviour can be described as addictive or compulsive. Perpetrators have cognitive and perceptual distortions that will eventually allow them to justify their behaviour, if only to themselves. These distortions can vary, although all tend to deny the essential human dignity and worth of children.

It is claimed by abusers, especially by the paedophiles that children benefit from sexual contact with adults.... Other perpetrators can see no wrong in what they are doing or integrate sexual activity with children into their religious beliefs or life philosophy.

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* CSA is perpetrated in the most normal circumstances by educated and normal individuals.*
Another view is that men have an inalienable right to sexual satisfaction. In the 1980’s, a judge in the UK accepted an offender’s defence that it was understandable that he turned to his 14 year old stepdaughter for sexual satisfaction since his wife was pregnant.

Perpetrators will look for validation and confirmation of their views. They will also misinterpret the actions of children. From time to time, the judiciary can be seen to be endorsing these distorted beliefs. In the UK, in June 1993, Mr. Justice Ian Starforth Hill commented that an 8 year old victim was ‘not entirely an angel’, when giving a probation order to a 21 year old male baby sitter who had attempted to have sexual intercourse with her.

A proportion of offenders have no internal inhibitions about having sexual relationships with children. Potential offenders can feel powerless and out of control in other areas of their lives and by controlling a child they can reassure themselves that they are still powerful. The absence or removal of internal inhibitors leads to an unrestrained indulgence in fantasies. Their ideas are often enhanced by the use of pornography especially with images of children.

There is a huge and insidious child pornography market. By the late 1970’s, there were more than 260 child pornography magazines in the USA alone. Child pornography leads to sexual arousal and also reassures paedophiles that what they are doing is ‘normal’ in the sense that lots of other people are indulging in the use of children for sexual purposes.
Perpetrators may capitalize on a child’s feelings of discomfort or guilt. ‘It was all your fault, look what you made me do. You wanted me to play the game with you, you started it. What did you expect me to do when you wear such provocative clothes.’ Children on the receiving end of such comments might well fear that they, rather than the abuser will be punished for the activities. Threats are likely to be used, although these can take the form of a subtle manipulation of the emotions rather than violent intimidation.

Sgroi quotes Matthews (1993) observed that of the 800 or so male offenders and 36 females she had encountered, one thing they all had in common was an abusive background: emotional, physical and sexual abuse was part of their childhood experiences.

Suzanne M Sgroi describes the profile and characteristics of various abusers. Child Sexual Abusers do not always conform to the stereotypical image of people who are social misfits. Other people will tend to mask their low self-esteem more effectively. Often they obtain jobs that give them power or a veneer of respectability. They will collect labels that demonstrate to society that they are people to be highly regarded. — Other perpetrators, who seem pleasant and engaging to the casual acquaintance, are really overbearing, aggressive and possessive. They are haunted by the idea of having power and control over situations.

Sgroi quotes Finkelhor (1984) the first to introduce the idea of four preconditions, discussing perspectives on abusive behaviour.
Sexual Motivation

It is possible that some people are born with a sexual orientation towards children. ---A preference for children may have originated in their own childhood experiences. They may have had so disrupted an emotional development that sex with children feels more natural and gratifying than sexual relationships with adults. Some people may only achieve power and control through erotic activities with children.

Overcoming Internal Inhibitors

Some perpetrators overcome any internal inhibitors relatively easily and readily convince themselves that there is nothing wrong in having sex with children.

Overcoming External Inhibitors

Perpetrators need to be able to indulge in sex with children relatively undisturbed and most do not want to get caught. In some way they have to ensure that people able to protect their chosen victims are not in a position to defend them.

Overcoming the Child’s Resistance

It may be through a gradual and gentle seduction, slowly and patiently winning the child’s trust and confidence or it may be through the use of brute force to make a child submit.

Emily Driver and Audrey Droisen in her book ‘Child Sexual Abuse; Feminist Perspectives’, 1989 says that ‘absence of consent is
crucial to our definition of child sexual abuse, because it allows us to take a clear stand on the exploitation of the child without requiring the degree of harm experienced by each individual child to define our attitude to each individual offender. The lack of consent stems from the child’s relative ignorance of the implications of adult sexuality and from absence of any real choice in a relationship where a child is forced to rely on adults for her well being. But in effect there is no choice open to the child other than to say ‘Yes’. Children lack the knowledge and experience to make a properly informed decision about the subject and do not have the freedom, legal or psychological, to give or refuse their consent in a truly independent manner.

Doyle Celia in her book ‘Working With Abused Children, 1990 says that it is likely that physiological and biological difference is emphasized by the socialization of the sexes. Small boys are presented with an image of manhood that is associated with taking control of situations and being powerful and dominant. Traditional male attributes such as independence, competitiveness and emotional strength mean that boys are taught to suppress the expression of emotion, intimacy and dependence. Doyle Celia quotes Gilgun and Connor, 1990 that this leaves many men with difficulties in forming close relationships, resulting in feelings of isolation and alienation. Such men find that sex is one way they can gain a sense of closeness with out threatening their masculinity. Closeness with intimacy can mean that sex becomes a means of gratification without any regard to
the feelings and needs of a partner. This leads to the objectification of the victim, which is one of the key features of child sexual abuse.

Doyle points out that in most societies, children lack any real power. They may be seen in a negative light, as incomplete human beings, having to be dominated and control until they are able to control themselves. It is not unusual to hear adults refer to a child as ‘it’. Women, however, are socialized to take care of children. Little girls are expected to look after their dolls and play nicely with them. In this way, they are taught to be caring of small figures and maturing into womenhood, to regard childcare as important to their status. Boys and men are not trained to adopt a caring role and may find it easier to objectify children, seeing them of no value unless they serve their needs.

Celia Doyle in her book ‘Child Sexual Abuse; A guide for Health Professionals, 1994’ quotes the Oxford English Dictionary explanation of the word ‘abuse’ as improper use, perversion, a corrupt practice, deceit, violation, defilement.’ The verb ‘to abuse’ means as ‘to take bad advantage of, to violate’. Abuse does not exist where there is mutual consent and the activities are mutually satisfying. Children of roughly the same age engaging in sexual games in which there is no coercion, shame or suffering are not abusing one another. By definition, in child abuse there has to be at least one person, perhaps more, taking ‘bad advantage’ of a child.
Some perpetrators will maintain that their victims consented to the activities, maybe even initiating some sexual contact. However, such consent has to be 'informed'. Children and young people will rarely be aware of the long term physical and emotional effects of such activities over which they have no ultimate control. Sexual activities are therefore abusive if one person with greater power, whether due to age, physique, status, understanding or knowledge, takes advantage of another person's vulnerability, fears, weaknesses, lack of understanding, helplessness or need.

Kenneth Maxwell in his book "A Sexual Odyssey; From Forbidden Fruit to Cybersex" (1996) says that the modern attitude towards sexuality is believed to have had its roots in the thinking of early Greek philosophers who espoused the dualistic nature of mankind, and had an impact on subsequent generations, especially those of the early Christian era. Pythagoras, who lived in the sixth century BC, taught that people should not be dominated by the flesh.

Plato thought of love as dualistic: the sacred and the profane—the former of the mind, the latter of the body. True happiness could be achieved only through the non-physical, the higher form of love. Other philosophers, as well, argued that pleasures of the senses were of no lasting virtue and were harmful; Lucretius advised men to avoid sex completely.

The theme of restraint was carried into religion by others, especially Philo, a Jewish philosopher of Alexandria of the first
century BC, and Plotinus, writer on Christian matters in the third century AD. Early Jewish law was probably derived from Babylonian law, encoded by Hammurabi and the main features written in stone by Moses. Two of the Ten Commandments relate to sex: adultery and coveting a neighbour’s wife.

Christianity tightened the noose on sex and expanded the definition of sin. The Christian religion had strong elements of submission, guilt, masochism, punishment, sacrifice and denial. In twelfth and thirteenth century England churchmen made valiant attempts to crack down on sin. They denounced everything they could think of that was pleasurable: racing horses, the theatre, dancing and mutton chips. Their most urgent mission seemed to be to restrict sexual intercourse. Several inhibitions were laid down on the position of practice and even the number of days to have sexual intercourse, etc. Clerics denounced masturbation. Sodomy, especially anal intercourse and bestiality and all forms of unnatural sex were termed the worst sins.

Maxwell narrates about the variety of aphrodisiacs and the money involved in the business. The modern word, aphrodisiac, is from the Greek aphrodisia, meaning sexual, and the corresponding aphrodisiakos, referring to something that excites sexual pleasure. In Greek methodology, Aphrodite was the goddess of love and beauty.

The number of items touted as aphrodisiacs at various times in history would probably fill a small encyclopaedia. The ability to promote love or sexual desire was attributed to wide variety of animal,
plant and mineral material. Most of them were fake expect possibly for their placebo effect, which, after all, is often the most important attribute of a drug.

Maxwell says that this was prevalent even during Pliny’s times. Pliny [23-79 BC] in his Natural History described numerous aphrodisiac drugs, animal parts, and methods that would “mightily provoke fleshly lust”: make the user “lusty and able to perform the act of generation youthfully.”

He also quotes from the Kama Sutra of Vatsyayana, an ancient Hindu treatise of uncertain vintage on love and social conduct, describes several bizarre “tonic medicines” for subjecting others to one’s own will, and for increasing sexual vigor. The Kama Sutra is of unknown date but is believed to have been written between the third century BC and the third century AD.

Today in the Orient, as in century past, a variety of wild animal parts are deemed to be aphrodisiac: horns, antlers, gallbladders, and penises, for example, even crocodile semen. Bear bile is in such great demand that 100’s of so-called bear farms containing an estimated 10,000 caged bears have come into existence across China.

The most highly prized animal-derived aphrodisiac is rhinoceros born popular for at least 2000 years as a medicine and aphrodisiac. National Geographic reported in 1993 that the continuing slaughter had sent the number of African rhinos plummeting from 20,000 to 8200.
Asians are noted for the variety of natural products they favour as aphrodisiacs. Not surprisingly, serpents are still doing their biblical work of promoting human sexual activity.

A botanical aphrodisiac is ginseng, an Asian plant used for centuries as an herbal remedy and tonic. Because of its popularity in China and other parts of the Orient, the plant generated sporadic interest in the West as a booster of virility.

A practice in America during the 19th century was smoking cubeb, a powered berry. The use of cubeb had an ancient origin. The famous Persian physician of the eleventh century, Avicenna, recommended eating cubeb as a sexual stimulant and it is still used for that purpose and as a medicine in parts of Asia.

A former practice by women in Europe to enhance their attractiveness was to take a small dose of belladonna— an extract of the deadly nightshade, Atropa belladonna. The most prized botanical aphrodisiac to come out of the New World is the chocolate bean, said to be historically a more valuable find than all other loot taken by the conquistadores. Today, Americans on average consume about 10 pounds of chocolate confection per year. But the Swiss are even bigger users of chocolate, consuming more than double that of Americans. More than 300 chemical compounds used as stimulants have been identified in chocolate.

Current medicinal drugs claimed by some users to have aphrodisiac qualities include: trazodone (an antidepressant),
bromocriptine mesylate (a fertility drug), L-dopa (a treatment for Parkinson's disease), parachlorophenylalanine or PCPA (a migraine treatment), Naloxone (a treatment for narcotic addiction), clomiphenecitrate (a fertility drug), etc.

Maxwell proceeds to comment that a remarkable thing about the information superhighway is how people seized on cyberspace to express one of the oldest forms of art and literature—pornography. Online services came on strong in the early 1990s and have become the fastest growing segment of the world media market. CD-ROM has turned the smutty side of cyberspace into a $ billion-plus business.

One of the first police busts of purveyors of electric porn was in California, where a man and woman were put in the lock-up for transmitting kiddies porn—sexually obscene pictures of children—through interstate telephone lines to an undercover agent in Memphis.

Parents and police are deeply concerned about the ready availability of porn to children and the use of the Internet by paedophiles to make contact with potential victims. Anyone, even small children, with access to a computer can obtain it, and this gives paedophiles the ability to communicate freely with them. There is the real possibility that children could be lured into illicit sex, prostitution or worse. Cases of paedophiles making the acquaintance of minors and luring them away from home are increasing.

Pinky Virani in her book ‘bitter chocolate, Child Sexual Abuse In India, 2000’ poignantly asks why there should be an entire book on
CSA in India when it is perpetrated only by the lower classes upon their unfortunate children?

Because there is this misconception among several in the so-called upper classes that what happens among 'People Like Them', especially 'People Like That' does not touch and therefore should not concern, 'People Like Us'. Those people do not come in contact with our children and us? Where do you suppose—if you incorrectly insist that CSA comes only from People Like Them and That—drivers hired for cars and other vehicles, bus conductors, cooks, peons in school and offices, mailmen, watchmen, come from? Because you need to know, especially if you are a concerned parent, that the People Like Them are not as much the People Like That as they are the People Like Us. The former do not have constant physical access to our children as the latter do.'

Virani presents statistics from Indian Studies. A 1996 Survey—now considered a landmark in work on CSA—conducted by Samvada in Bangalore among 348 girl students from 11 schools and colleges threw up startling data. Conducted scientifically by Anita Ratnam with Lucy Kumar, Dr. Arun Kotenkar and Dr. Shekhar Sheshadri, the first doctor in the country to scientifically study CSA, it found:

- 83% of the girls had been subject to eve teasing, 13% of these had been vocally and visually sexually harassed when they were less than 10 years old.
• 47% had been molested, 15% of these when they were less than 10 years old: they were used for masturbation, mostly by male relatives.

• 15% had been seriously sexually abused as children, 31% of them when they were less than 10 years old, they had been raped, forced into oral sex or penetrated with foreign objects and 75% of the abusers were adult family members.

• Around 50% of these CSA cases involved family members and close relatives, and they happened at home.

Sakshi, the Delhi based organization which spearheaded work on CSA in the early 1990's, has a study of 357 school-going children. 63% have been victims. around half had abusers from within their homes and close family circles.

Rahi another organization based in Delhi has run a survey among 600 English speaking middle and upper class women in Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta, Goa and Chennai has women of ages ranging from 15 to 66.

• 76% of these 600 women had been sexually abused in childhood.
Out of these 457, 40% had been sexually abused by at least one family member.

71% had been sexually abused by relatives and family friends.

2% of the 457 were sexually abused before they were 4 years of age.

17% between 4 and 8 years of age.

28% between the ages of 8 and 12 years.

35% between 12 and 16 years.

In most cases of the survey of this section of Indian society, the abuser was a part of the victim’s everyday life, in the form of a father, brother, male cousin, uncle, male family friend, male neighbour and servant. More than 50% cases happened at home.

The police unofficially peg CSA in India at 40% of girls and 25% of boys under the age of 16, cutting across class and community lives.

Given the furtiveness of the perpetrator, the secrecy by society and the silence of those lambs, the sexually sacrificial children, it would be well nigh impossible to run a confirmation on any kind of statistic. It would also be very difficult, even with the most sophisticated co-relates without the presence of an exhaustive
nationwide survey on kids below 16-to indicate whether CSA is on the increase. The one point that can definitely be made from international data and sociological experience is that CSA does not increase exponentially if there is an intensive awareness on the subject and immediate intervention by concerned adults in potential situations.

Child sexual abuse is an Indian family’s deepest and most jointly held secret. What is the likelihood of these secrets finding their way out of the family while the child is still in a position to be rescued from the abusers within it? And how is this family to be identified when social, economic and educational status is no barriers to CSA: neither are caste or religious background. Thus almost all CSA cases remain unreported in a country where only 25% of the rapes on adult women reach a police station.

Nahida Sheikh and Trupti Panchal, TISS have compiled data from a handful of police stations in Mumbai’s inner city areas. The study reveals that 68% of CSA on ‘lower’ class little girls had been perpetrated by male family members and acquaintances trusted by the victims. More than half of this CSA cases has taken place at home.

The perpetrators tend to coldly calculate the time for the act, when they are free. Normally, they are gainfully employed males. Only 27% of this survey has non-working offenders, the rest have their own business or are employed. Alcohol is used as a pretext to belittle the gravity of the crime committed by the abuser.

All- India statistics show;
• 3,393 children were raped in 1993; 634 of these were below 10 years.

• 3,986 children were raped in 1994; 727 of these were below 10 years.

• 4,067 children were raped in 1995; 747 of these were below 10 years.

• 4,083 children were raped in 1996; 608 of these were below 10 years.

• 4,414 children were raped in 1997; 770 of these were below 10 years.

That is an 8.1% increase in 1997 over 1996, of children of 16 years of age and below. And it is a 30% increase in 5 years, from 1993. That is: there are 12 children being raped every single day in India.

From the basis of the findings, she arrives at some conclusions.

Child abuse is still sanctioned, indeed, held in high regard in our society as long as it is defined as child rearing; 'for your own good' as the child is told when it is slapped hard or when a school teacher is allowed to whack a cane on its palms.

Children are taught that a feeling of duty invariably produces love.
Children are told that parents deserve respect simply because they are parents, children don’t deserve respect for the same reason.

Children are told that parents and elders are always right.

Children are taught to be hypocrites, liars and hiders of truth, for e.g. 'the way you behave is more important than the way you really are.'

Children are not taught to be autonomous; they are expected to be obedient to adults.

Children are not encouraged to question adult actions; such behaviour is seen as rebellious.

Children are perceived as ‘belonging’ to adults and family members.

Children’s duties are emphasized rather than rights.

Childhood itself is not valued by adults, it is seen merely as a phase of training to enter the adult world and any ‘discipline’ as part of this training is deemed normal and justifiable.

Children do not realize what is happening is sexual and incorrect since the abuser has disguised it as a special privilege or an intimate game.

The abuser has both, access and authority over them since they are not strangers, so the sexual abuse is not commonly preceded by physical violence.
The abuser uses his power and position to silence the child including threats and blackmail.

A few of the children 'enjoy' what is being done to them as part of the sexual awakening of their bodies.

A Review of Media’s Portrayal of Child Sexual Abuse

The Editor of a reputed Malayalam daily newspaper said that they are a capital-intensive industry depending heavily on advertisements. They cannot express frank and strong opinion. They have to be diplomatic. This sums up the nature of the modern press.

Then how do we expect justice for children who have no voice for themselves, no unions or associations, are dependent on guardians and the state for protection, are vulnerable and easily exposed to attacks.

In a state like Kerala with its high literacy levels and insatiable craze for newspaper reading, media plays a very influential role in cultivating public tastes and opinion. Incidents of child sexual abuse are on the rise. Children are being converted into commodities to be bargained, sold and abused, especially so with the advent of tourism. No moral values or qualms deter us either in selling, buying and using our children. Reading and listening to such horrendous “tales” fill people with sensationalism similar to perusing a detective novel. It seems people love to drench ourselves in such sadistic and horrifying
news, they love to believe that 'it' only happens in the neighbourhood, they are never pricked to act, to save their children—the victims.

A newspaper is a great industrial enterprise demanding an enormous capital usually obtained from the public in the shape of share subscriptions, whose owners regard their investment as a mere dividend earning operation. It may be said that the modern newspaper is in a sense provided for the public by the advertiser. The amount of space devoted by newspapers to the various commodities, which they advertise is determined not on the basis of their relative public utility but on the basis of profit making.

History

During movement for Indian Independence the press with its "reforming and crusading zeal" was used as a vehicle of the national movement. Gandhiji’s papers published no advertisements yet they enjoyed a wide circulation. Gandhi defined the objects of journalism as follows: "One of the objects of a newspaper is to understand the popular feeling and give expression to it; another is to arouse among the people certain desirable sentiments and the third is fearlessly to expose popular defects." But after independence, the press assumed a supportive attitude towards the state.

A major break with this tradition came in 1975 with the imposition of internal emergency restrictions including press censorship.
Viewed from one angle, the emergency experience signalled the end of one kind of journalism and heralded a more vigorous investigative style of news gathering and writing. It also paved the way for greater coverage of human rights issues and the condition of marginalised social groups.

The period also coincided with increased awareness about women's oppression and the need for their emancipation, both globally and nationally. The year following the emergency witnessed the beginning of nationwide campaign by women's groups who coalesced to demand changes in laws of special concern to women, beginning with those related to dowry.

What Makes News?

Dominant perceptions of what constitutes news are among the most important determinants of coverage. Events rather than processes make news. Event as opposed to process orientation necessarily results in the neglect of issues concerning women because many of them are linked to processes rather than news – making events.

Consequently, reporting the exceptional has come to pre-occupy the press for over a century. Trends and long-term currents are hardly reported, explanations rarely given. What happens or is made to happen at the top i.e. in centers of power gets excessive publicity. What happens at the grassroots is hardly examined. Such lopsided news coverage impairs both the reach and effectiveness of the medium.
The English newspapers ranging from The Hindu, Deccan Herald, Asian Age and The Times of India publish articles giving analytical information on CSA and child prostitution.

The findings of various research studies have been reported in the newspapers. Anuja Gupta's study for Rahi says that the assumption that children of influential families are not victims of sexual abuse is wrong. Majority of the victims belongs to nuclear family. Study conducted by Samvada, Bangalore revealed that three out of every twenty girls interviewed had experienced serious forms of sexual abuse including rape and third of these had occurred when they were less than ten years old.

Most survivors had been left with long standing scars such as depression, anger, helplessness and a deep-rooted distrust of men. But, perhaps, the most upsetting finding was that as many as fifty-five percent of the men responsible for the abuse were family members—uncles, fathers, brothers, cousins or close relatives (India Today, 31 July 1994). In a study conducted by Campaign Against Child Labour it was revealed that thirty percent of the sex workers are children who earn a huge sum of Rupees Eleven Thousand Crores.

Some space in the newspapers has been set apart to cover action and suggestions made by prominent figures to stimulate changes. A toll free phone-in-service, child-line is being launched in the city on October 2nd 1998 by the National Human Rights and the UNICEF (Asian Age, 13/9/98).
Speaking at a conference on child prostitution, Mohini Giri, Ex-Chairperson National Commission for Women said that capital punishment should be given to brokers who kidnap children and take them for prostitution. A separate bureau should be formed to confront underground groups who abduct children. Natives should be made aware of Sex Tourism. In a public hearing on minor rape held by All India Democratic Women Association at Tamilnadu, it was explained that Indian crime statistics for 1990 showed that twenty five percent of the 10000 reported cases of rape concerned the children below sixteen years of age. One fifth of minor rapes were perpetrated on children below ten.

**Information from Other Countries**

Newspapers widely reported incidents and provide information from other countries. Child prostitution in Thailand and other South East Asian countries began in 1967 when the U.S. Government, occupied with the Vietnam war, signed an agreement with Thailand enabling its soldiers to come ashore for R & R (Rest and Relaxation) providing an international sanction to this vice. As a result of which more than 30,000 brothels where girls from the age of 9 and women up to the age of 40 engaged in commercial sex practice.

End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism’s report states that around 6000 to 8000 young Nepalese girls with the average age being 10 to 14 years are being trafficked across the borders to India. Nepalese girls are transported to Bombay and Delhi where they are
subjected to sub-human treatment including rape, starvation, branding and beating after which the girl children give in when they face this trauma for about a week.

It is reported that in Northern Thailand and Northeast Brazil and many other impoverished regions of the developing world, entire villagers are bereft of teenagers. Some have ended up in brothels of Bangkok and Ranong, locked in tiny cement cubicles, servicing 10 to 15 disease ridden clients everyday. Some have ended up in Rio, bought by wealthy ranchers who gang rape them to death in a regular set-night ritual.

Sex has become a multi billion dollar industry and today children are being bought, sold and traded like any other mass produced good. Brazil alone has between 2,50,000 and 5,00,000 children involved. There are 60,000 child prostitutes in the Philippines, about 4,00,000 in India and about 8,00,000 in Thailand. Most of the children are under 16 and most are girls but almost all of Sree Lanka's child prostitutes are boys. There are alarming indicators that paedophiles from Britain, U.S., Germany, Canada, Australian and the Scandinavian countries are zeroing in on Goa in the garb of Tourists. Brothel owners in South Africa say they receive four or five calls a week requesting children as young as eight. In fact, because children have soft tissues that are easily bruised, they are more susceptible to sexually transmitted diseases like HIV. The 1989 convention on the Rights of the Child ratified by 187 countries ensures children protection from unlawful sexual practices but fails to define what is unlawful. (World Affairs. Children for Sale. Newsweek, September 2, 1996).
Sex Tourism

Though three women foreigners lodged complaints with the Women's Commission, Thiruvananthapuram against the sexual abuse of children at Thiruvananthapuram the Commission failed in rounding up children or their brokers as they had escaped. These children are brought from Karnataka and slowly trained to meet the foreign tourists need (The Malayala Manorama, 16/4/98).

Varkala beach near Trivandrum also turns active after 10 p.m. Natives have formed a Tourism Development Association to stop such activities (Rengi Kuriakose, Malayala Manorama, 27/3/97).

Child Prostitution

Abject poverty and social ostracism never led to any change in the lives of traditional prostitutes. The End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT) campaign which began in '91 to counter flesh trade in children estimated prostitution as a five billion-dollar industry (Smeeta Mishra Pandey).

While in rest of Asia is facing the problem of sex tourists from Europe and America where stringent laws check to some extent the exploitation of children for commercial purposes, in India the demand for children is largely local. Here, there is a superstition that having sex with a child would cure STD's and would increase sexual potency and vigour ensures that the demand for children increases every year.
The child in sex trade works throughout the year at an average of 25-28 days a month, their working hours varying between 3 to 10 hours a day. (Lalita Panicker, Little victims of an adult business, The Times of India, 30/11/95).

Newspapers have quoted in detail the opinion of Dr. Shekhar Sheshadri of NIMHANS about child sexual abuse. He says that there are cultural blocks preventing reporting and most of the aggressors are from family circles.

English newspapers do not restrict themselves to mere narration of an event (as in the general style of vernacular dailies) but do analysis and present information, studies and implications of the problem. They also make efforts to build up public opinion.

**Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse**

Now it is necessary to examine the purpose of reporting news of child sexual abuse. Do the newspapers report it to generate sensationalism and consequently increase subscription? Or do they intend to educate public opinion and conscientize the people about this danger? In the present study Malayalam Newspapers like Mathrubhoomi, Manorama and Deepika are reviewed.

Information has been classified into individual sexual abuse cases and sex scandals. Around 60 cases of sexual abuse were recorded within the time span of three years i.e. 1997 to 1999. The age of children ranged from 3 years to 18 years. Some children had been
raped; some sexually abused in other ways and some subjected to attempt of rape. Most of the reports narrate only the event.

Abusers belonged to varying age groups and all of them were known and trusted by children. Most of them had used the trust reposed in them, the power they exercise to abuse children. Many of the abusers were neighbours, some were relatives, most of them were married and have children, tenants in child’s house, teachers, doctors, policemen, one postmaster, one siddhan (sanyasi), young men, one college student, a student activist and even the child’s own father. For example, a teacher abused students and instigated them to perform “unnatural activities” and threatened them of informing their parents.

While most of the complaints of sexual abuse were lodged by parents, there were instances in which the local people have initiated action to arrest the criminals. In a case in which a teacher abused a student, local people did not let the teacher enter the school. In another case, the local people convened a meeting in the school to discuss the issue of rape of a 3rd standard student by her teacher and demanded his immediate arrest.

In most of these cases, police initiated action in arresting criminals while in some they were hunting for criminals. There were very few clippings to show what action the court had taken.

In some cases, there were reports of political and other interventions. In majority of the cases, known people abuse children on the basis of threats. Reports do not mention the mental state of the
child and parents, action by police & the court, lapses and loopholes in the legal system. The incidents are narrated interestingly but there is no effort to conscientize people about the issue or raise public opinion against it. A spirit of enquiry as to why this crime is committed or why it is on the increase is wanting.

Sex scandals have become a regular feature in Kerala, the tendency is on the increase in society here. When a poor, helpless girl is abused by several men including high ranking politicians or bureaucrats and the issue is subsequently exposed, newspapers report them in such a way that the girl alone is made the laughing stock and the perpetrators of the crime are deliberately painted in very mild colours. Very often this brutal event is sensationalized and even made a controversy. Of such sex scandals, the Suryanelli, Vidhura and the so-called Ice Cream Parlour cases are taken up for review here.

The suryanelli case which created a controversy before election in Kerala had 41 accused. Several people at 15 places abused the girl. After 11 months of investigation, charge sheets were submitted which court refused and demanded further investigation. As the police took the girl around for proof taking, court order was issued to stop exhibition of the girl in public places. A special court was set up at Kottayam. It is expected that cross-examination will finish by March 2000. Twenty lawyers are to be present for the accused. The trial, which stretched for more than a month ended up in conviction and granting of bail to the accused.
Abusers ranged from former cabinet minister to advocates, zilla panchayat members, railway commercial inspector, film star, car brokers, auto drivers, food stall owner, peon, taxi driver, etc. The investigators have closely followed up the number of people arrested, their designation, etc. Newspapers report in detail about how many were remanded and for how long. As the police took the girl around for proof taking, court order was issued to stop exhibition of the girl in public places. The issue was most politicized and used by one political front to capture votes.

The Suryanelli girl has become the Suryanelli woman now. She is a typical symbol of the stark violation of human rights under a perverted system. The threats to her life forced the Government to allot 6 policemen, including two women constables to guard her. Unfortunately, her saviors have become her tormentors. She suffers from panic syndrome, insomnia, nightmares and blood pressure. She has a host of gynaecological problems needing specialised attention. There is only one analytical and reflective article to appear about suryanelli case in Indian Express written by Leela Menon. The articles, which appeared in Malayalam newspapers merely, recount facts and sometimes repeat information. Some newspapers trace the history of what happened.

The girl child from Vidhura was taken away from home on the pretext of being given a job and sold in Ernakulam where they earned 3000 rupees for an affair of hers.
She belonged to a poor Muslim family and had studied only up to 4th standard, but was introduced as Maharaja’s College student. Abusers included bureaucrats in high positions. The newspapers report in detail about police investigation, arrests, lapses, etc.

It is alleged that the Chief Minister’s son was also involved. Controversy shook when her marriage certificate was produced declaring age as 18 before 4 years.

Government filed a special permission petition in Supreme Court to cancel the judgement of High Court cancelling Vidhura case investigation. The High Court had ordered that this was not a rape case and so criminal proceedings should be cancelled. The court said she was above 16, never tried to escape being abused, parents did not make any attempt to find her, and so criminal proceedings should be cancelled. The case has not yet come up for trial.

Newspapers devote large space for the surrender of the accused film star, his remand in the prison and his release. How he coped up in the prison is mentioned in a very sensational manner. There is no mention of the mental status of the girl child and no attempt has been made to formulate public opinion.

Ice Cream Parlour case was exposed due to the intervention of Anweshi, an NGO. Several girl children were used for sexual servicing of customers and the Ice-Cream Parlour served as the centre. Anweshi submitted writ petition in Kerala High Court to transfer investigation of sex scandal to CBI. The organization believed that there was an
attempt by vested interests to communalise the sex scandal case. Yuvajanavedi, Democratic Women's Associations and other groups protested against the Chief Minister's statement that sex scandals take place where women exist.

Muslim League State General Secretary revealed that the party demanded explanation from Mr. Kunjalikutty - who was a former M.L. minister in the state cabinet and present M.L.A- regarding his alleged involvement in the sex scandal. CPM Kozhikode Zilla Sammelan demanded that all accused in relation to sex scandal should be brought under trial. They wrote letter to state leaders of their party pointing out that though action was taken against CPM leader involved in sex scandal; no action has been taken against opposition leader.

Ex Zilla Collector was questioned in relation to sex scandal and illicit money. Police did a good job in finding evidence regarding the change of statements. Two DYSP's had been suspended from service. Police have initiated some measures to arrest some Government officers.

The newspapers report in detail to whom the court gave anticipatory bail, who were remanded for how long and the people who were refused bail. The application made by a junior advocate to the Advocate General to cancel the sex scandal case became controversial. This was an effort to save the minister. It was alleged that there was a lot of corruption in the handling of the case also. One of the victims turned hostile and rejected her earlier statement. It is alleged that she
did so on being intimidated and threatened with dire consequences if she stuck to her earlier statements. Newspapers reported in detail the events but not her statements.

The sex scandals reveal how insecure a child is. Her life is of practically no value to the state. A single child is used as plaything by several, even those who should serve as role models in public life. After the incident, instead of doing justice and punishing criminals, all the centers of power join hands to politicise the issue and have fun at the expense of the victims.

This barbarity of modern society is not pictured in our newspapers. They report merely like narrating stories. The ethical approach is lacking and they are not keen on putting an end to this crime against children. News reads like a piece of gossip. It gives the feeling that such crimes will be over looked or even appreciated. There are cases where the accused is accorded public receptions.

In countries where power is centred in state bureaucracy, the state exercises monopolistic control over the media. This is often supplemented by official censorship and the media often serves the needs of a dominant elite. In addition, an advertising based system will tend to drive out of existence or into marginality the media companies and types that depend on revenue from sales alone. The advertiser’s choice influences media prosperity and survival.

Ammu Joseph and Kalpana Sharma have coined the term ‘feminization’ to describe the process of paying as much attention to
the inarticulate minority’s views as much as to the powerful and the elite minority opinion. The need for at least a fraction of the zeal and reforming spirit exhibited during the national movement for independence is inevitable today in combating such obnoxious crimes. Though in an illiterate country where the majority is illiterate the media plays an influential role in cultivating public opinion and socialization of the minds. The atrocities against children are increasing unabatedly especially since the advent of sex tourism. In such a grave scenario, the media should take care not to report mere events and create sensation by highlighting the movements of abusers but to analyse the issue, viewing it from a proper perspective and help to develop a vision which abhors such crimes and strive to create a safe and conducive future for our children.