CHAPTER-I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Prologue

Child rights are envisioned as an important aspect of human rights. Children have the right to grow up in a secure environment. Child rights include their right to association with both the parents and access to basic needs for physical protection. Children should have freedom from discrimination on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, nationality, religion, disability, colour, ethnicity and other considerations. Children’s rights need to be protected by various stakeholders such as parents, teachers, educationists, community leaders, social workers, doctors, law enforcement authorities, judicial authorities, media professionals, policy makers, government officials and organizers of non-government organizations. Children need protection from all the stakeholders and agencies until they attain the age of eighteen years. The United Nations Organization and other international agencies have given a serious thought to the subject of child rights protection and prepared grounds for child rights management across the world. The Constitution of India contains several progressive norms and guidelines for child rights protection in India. Several policies, plans and programmes are formulated and implemented in India for the protection of children’s rights in the post-independence India. The role of various stakeholders in the protection of child rights is subjected to scientific research in the present times. The present study evaluates the role of various stakeholders in the protection of child rights with special reference to Karnataka State. The salient aspects of the study such as fundamentals of child rights protection, international standards on child right protection, child rights protection in India, stakeholders of child rights protection, social significance of the study, statement of the problem and objectives of the study are amplified in this chapter.

1.2 Fundamentals of Child Rights Protection

Childhood is an important stage of human life. Children mainly depend on others for their survival and progress. The child emerges as an individual with dignity who has all the rights of a full grown human being. Child rights include physical, mental and emotional security of children. Children have the right to be free from abuse of every kind within the family or outside the family. Child rights can be
protected well within the family if the parents perform their fundamental duties such as maintenance, protection and education. Children are regarded as subjects or actors with a set of interest which they can and should define and defend for themselves.

Childhood is the most sensitive stage in the life of every human being. During this period, individuals are brought up, educated, guided and attuned to ground realities of life. The identity of an individual is formed during this period. Children comprise about 50% of the world’s population and they depend on their parents, adults, teachers and others to adjust themselves with the changing environment. Children normally encounter various disadvantages and difficulties during this critical stage. A child has the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligence, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. Child rights protection basically covers the relationship of a child with his or her parents, legal guardians or any other person who has the care of the child.

**Concept of Child Rights**

Child rights have become a strong legitimate perception since 1980s. It essentially consists of certain human values which govern child rights. Children should have freedom in matters concerning their health and progress. Age is a relevant differentiating factor in deciding the legal status of children. There are various policy documents which have adequately dealt with the concept of child rights. A child is regarded as to have belonged into or even being the property of the family in many societies. A child is also defined as an infant, a minor or an adolescent below 18 years by some people. A child is understood to have certain rights and duties in modern society.

Article 2 of the Children’s Rights Protection Law defines: “A child is a person who has not reached the age of 18 years, except these to whom, in accordance with the law, reach earlier maturity by being declared emancipated minors, or who become married before reaching the age of 18 years”.

Children’s rights’ as a concept encompasses both protection and liberation aspects (Franklin, 1986). A clear distinction may be made between children’s rights to their welfare safeguarded by adults and other stakeholders of child rights protection. Children ought to be accorded more freedom of the adult kind in deciding the course
of their lives. Children are entitled to positive protective intervention to provide good care for them, away from the biological parents if necessary, and support of the original family as a unit in order to prevent its disruption. A children’s rights perspective in the liberation sense, by contrast, involves supporting children in what they want. The Child Support Act did not make the child’s welfare the first or paramount consideration but merely says that regard is to be had to welfare (Harding, 1991).

The Child Support Act, 1991 contains certain healthy features concerning child rights protection. The newly created Child Support Agency largely superseded the role of the courts and provided a sound formula to assess child rights in general and child support provisions in particular. Certain rights are conferred upon the children and the voice of the children should be heard by the family, community and court concerning the welfare and progress of children (Lyon and Parton, 1995). Scholars have made clear distinction between protectionist and liberationist approaches to child rights.

Children’s Act does somewhat widen ‘children’s rights’ in the liberation sense, and reflects the influence of the children’s rights lobby in the 1980s (Harding, 1996). The Act in some ways strengthens the protective powers of the state, and lays stress on the importance of partnership with parents and family support through provisions for consulting parents, allowing them greater powers in relations to their children and offering them a wider range of supportive services.

Child rights are most commonly understood from the point of view of children’s autonomy. It establishes that children should have the capacity and opportunity to determine their welfare and their right should be treated rather more like adults. Children should have all of the rights of adults – to vote, to work, to live where they wish and not to be compulsorily directed by adults. The institution of childhood should not be regarded as essentially oppressive by the various stakeholders of child rights protection. Child rights are an intrinsic part of human rights but child rights basically include their right to association with various stakeholders of child rights protection. Children are entitled to food, cloth, shelter, health care, security and other necessities which uphold the child rights regardless of a child's race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, disability, colour, ethnicity, or other characteristics.
Dimensions of Child Rights

There are four categories of child rights such as civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights. The right to survival begins after twenty weeks of conception. It is inclusive of the child rights to be born, right to minimum standards of food, shelter and clothing and the right to live with dignity. The right to protection includes the right of the children to be protected from neglect, exploitation and abuse at home and elsewhere. The right to participation reveals that a child has the right to participate in any decision making that involves him/her directly or indirectly. There are varying degrees of participation as per the age and maturity of the child. The right to development involves the right of the children to have the right to all forms of development such as emotional, mental and physical.

1.3 International Standards on Child Right Protection

Children were not considered as an important constituency by the stakeholders of child rights protection. They were, for the most part, regarded as inferior and subordinate to adults and childhood was a miserable period of life. The issue of child rights has been discussed since 1920s internationally. Childhood was regarded as a relatively sacred part of life among many scholars. The Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924 clearly indicated that the children also have a right to be protected from all kinds of abuse and ill treatment in a social environment. The League of Nations adopted the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1924. It enunciated the child's right to receive the needs necessary for normal development, the right of a hungry child to be fed, the right of a sick child to receive health care, the right of a backward child to be reclaimed, the right of orphans for shelter and the right to protection from exploitation.

UNICEF was established in 1946 as the first major step to safeguard the interests of the children. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) recognized the need of motherhood and childhood to special protection and assistance and the right of all children to social protection. The United Nations General Assembly adopted the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959), which enunciated ten principles for the protection of children’s rights, including the universality of rights, the right to special protection, and the right to protection from discrimination, among other rights. This was indeed the first
The provisions of that Declaration and its two International Covenants on human rights adopted in 1966 recognized that children need protection against all oppressive features and forces. The child rights law is defined as the point where the law intersects with a child's life. The law basically includes juvenile delinquency, due process for children involved in the criminal justice system, appropriate representation, and effective rehabilitative services; care and protection for children in state care; ensuring education for all children regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, disability, colour, ethnicity, or other characteristics and health care and advocacy.

The issue of girl child was addressed in part by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women adopted in 1979. The Government of Poland submitted a draft convention to the Commission on Human Rights in 1978, prior to the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Declaration on the rights of the child during the international year of the child in 1979. This event paved the way for a series of collaborative efforts between various international organizations.

The United Nations Convention on Child Rights Protection (1989) contains about 54 articles covering a wide variety of rights of protection/welfare and autonomy aspects. The UN principles also cover various aspects of child rights such as – right to life, nationality, freedom of religion and privacy, development of welfare including a reasonable standard of living, health and education, rights requiring protective measures and rights of children in special circumstances.

Children are entitled to the same general human rights as adults. The world leaders decided that children needed a special convention just for them because people under 18 years old often need special care and protection that adults do not. The leaders also wanted to make sure that the world recognizes that children too have access to human rights. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate the full range of human rights—including civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights.

Article 12 provides that the child be given the right to express his/her views freely in all matters affecting him/her (subject to age and maturity), and that in judicial and administrative proceedings affecting him/her, the child shall be provided...
with the opportunity to be heard. Article 12 is the cornerstone of the Convention’s insistence that children must not be treated as silent objects of concern, but as people with their own views and feelings which must be taken seriously (Newell, 1991). The World Summit for Children (1991) was convened in New York in order to take stock of the universal child rights protection and adopted the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and Plan of Action.

Article 12 is the first international document which dealt with the rights of the children. It stated explicitly that children have a right to have a say in processes affecting their lives (Freeman, 1996:137). There are several dimensions of child rights protection. Child rights have been reinforced across the world in accordance with the provisions of the UN Convention. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) formulated 54 articles which covered everything from a child’s right to be free from sexual and economic exploitation, to the right to his or her own opinion, and to the right to education, health care and economic opportunity (Rai, 2000).

The National Action Plans for 1991-2000 aimed at reducing infant and maternal mortality rates, reducing malnutrition and illiteracy, providing access to safe drinking water and to basic education, combating devastating emergencies resulting from natural disasters and armed conflicts and solving the problem of children in extreme poverty. The Conference recommended that the situation of children and their human rights be regularly reviewed and monitored by all relevant organs and mechanisms of the United Nations system.

A separate Committee on the Rights of the Child was also established under article 44 of the Convention which is serviced by the United Nations Centre for Human Rights in Geneva. The Committee adopted guidelines to help States parties in the preparation of reports and initiation of suitable intervention programmes. The United Nations bodies and specialized agencies were enabled to take active part in the deliberations and provide useful norms and guidelines for the protection of children. The resolutions and recommendations of the committee serve as the basis for a national debate on how to improve the enforcement of the provisions of the Convention. The States Parties can introduce certain mechanism at the national and local levels to coordinate policies and monitor the implementation of the resolutions of the Convention.
The issue of child rights protection received universal recognition after reports of grave injustices suffered by children such as poverty, hunger, malnutrition, high infant mortality, deficient health care, child labour, child abuse, child trafficking and child prostitution. Prominent global organizations such as Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Development Project (UNDP) and a number of non-governmental organizations, took part seriously in the deliberations concerning child rights protection.

The World Conference of Human Rights (1993) adopted the modern human rights law which was later underscored at the 1993 in Vienna. About 178 countries had ratified the convention during 1995. Many states agreed that there was a need for a comprehensive principles and practices on child rights protection which would be binding under international law. It was a welcome development at the global level from the point of view of child rights protection.

The UNICEF has added a new dimension to child rights protection which means preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse against children – including commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking, child labour and harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage. The child rights protection programmes also target children who are uniquely vulnerable to these abuses, such as when living without parental care, in conflict with the law and in armed conflicts. Violations of the child’s right to protection take place in every country. Children have to be protected from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect either by the family members or civil society.

National Legal Systems for Child Rights Protection

The global convention had created new consciousness among the various stakeholders all over the world about the ways and means of child rights protection. In particular, the four general principles enshrined in the Convention in articles 2, 3, 6 and 12 had facilitated the identification of national programmes of implementation. Article 2 deals with non-discrimination, article 3 deals with best interests of the child, article 6 emphasizes the right to life, survival and development and article 12 covers the views of the child concerning various aspects of child rights protection.
The Convention prepared grounds for the protection of children and called upon the parents and states to provide than with appropriate upbringing facilities and develop suitable child – care institutions. The States were also persuaded to provide parentless children with suitable alternative care on humanitarian grounds. About five human rights bodies such as – human rights committee, committee on economic, social and cultural rights, committee on the elimination of racial discrimination, committee on the elimination of discrimination against women and committee against torture were also constituted to monitor the implementation of treaties by States which have ratified or acceded to the instruments.

The national governments have upheld the principles and practices of UN Convention on Child Rights Protection (1989) and formulated national policies, plans and programmes concerning the child welfare and progress. Ideas such as Ombudspersons or Commissioners, and Ministers for children, while not currently government policy, are also relevant as schemes which may enhance children’s rights. Many national legal systems recognize the limited legal capacity of children relating to various activities. The states have adopted special codes or laws on the legal status of the child. Practically, the states have many common futures reflecting the contents of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

The child’s wishes and feelings should be ascertained and considered. The Act strengthened the existing provisions for separate representation of children in public law proceedings, even though the child’s position in private law proceedings was less favourable with respect to the autonomy of the children. The Act paved the way for enabling the child to initiate legal action on his or her own behalf (Children Act, 1989). The children’s rights in a moderate sense were extended by the Act and that children were making use of new powers subsequently.

The social and economic policies of various national governments have emphasized the government support for children. In the age of globalization, neo-liberalism wishes the family to take more responsibility for itself from the point of view of child rights protection. The notion of parental responsibility is also used to legitimate the state’s withdrawal from corporate social responsibility. The child rights need to be examined by the stakeholders of child rights protection in order to make them a boon for children and liberate them from all oppressive features and forces.

An increasing number of states adopt special codes or laws on the legal status of the child. It is noteworthy that they have many common features reflecting the
contents of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Hence it is important that
the Convention is known and understood by adults as well as by children. The
Convention on the Rights of the Child is to be understood, interpreted and
implemented in the context of all existing international norms in the field of human
rights, including customary contractual, universal or regional norms. All the rights of
the child are of equal importance (Kolosov, 2002).

The international provisions relating to the protection of children’s rights exist
within various legal systems across the globe. These international laws have been
developed rapidly over a period of time. Several international agreements were
concluded to frame various international customary rules for child rights protection.
All the rights of the child set forth in the Convention should be respected and ensured
by states for each child within their jurisdiction (irrespective of citizenship) without
discrimination of any kind on the grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion,
political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or
other status.

Child protection has neither a vaccine nor a universal blueprint for interventions. Country by country, situation by situation, the systematic factors that enable violence, exploitation, and abuse against children to continue unchecked—policies, practices, and the absence of systems and institutions—have to be understood and addressed. This task is circumstance specific, and highly labour intensive (Landgren, 2005).

The international convention had set out on rights that must be realized for children to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. The Convention and its acceptance by so many countries have heightened recognition of the fundamental human dignity of all children and the urgency of ensuring their well-being and development. The child rights are violated in both industrialized and developing countries. The task, however, must engage not just governments but all members of society. The standards and principles articulated in the Convention can only become a reality when they are respected by everyone—within the family, in schools and other institutions that provide services for children, in communities and at all levels of administration (UNICEF, 2014).

Child rights protection has become an important challenge and concern all over the world. International conventions have inspired countries to incorporate human rights principles into legislation; target child survival and development and
widen justice mechanisms for children. America will have to shoulder the crucial responsibility of restoring their status as human rights leader and bolster their credibility across the globe. The U.S. ratification of the international treaty would become a powerful symbol of their commitment to children everywhere (Stern, 2016).

Children continue to suffer from violence, exploitation and abuse across the world. They are the most vulnerable community in the world because of poverty and low resilience in life. Children are unable to exercise their fundamental rights to food, shelter, adequate health services and education. Child rights protection practically demands sharing resources, knowledge and experience which will have a greater impact on child rights. The rate of poverty and vulnerability among children in the less developed country is highest when compared to the children in Europe and America. Concerted efforts are required to ensure global action for child rights protection.

1.4 Child Rights Protection in India

Children in India

Inequality has become an unhealthy feature of Indian society despite 70 years of independence and even after implementation of several development programmes. Social and economic inequality continues to exist in India. Children and other vulnerable sections of Indian society have become the worst victims of circumstances. Child rights are violated due to these constraints manufactured by the system in India. In reality, about 12.6 million children are engaged in hazardous occupation which has India is home to the largest population of child labourers under the age of 14. Children below the age of 18 years account for nearly 40 per cent of India’s population. In reality, enabling all these children to realize their full creative potential is critical for sustaining India’s economic growth and accelerating human development. Millions of children in India continue to face basic challenges of survival and healthy development since they belong to families and communities that need to have access to resources and services, as well as capacities to ensure realization of their rights.

The number of girls in the 0-6 age group is declining in India. For every 1000 boys there are 927 girls in the country. About 20 children out of every 100 are school
drop outs. About 70 out of 100 children leave school at the secondary level. There are about 66 girls out of 100 children who are drop outs. About 65% of the girls in India are married by the age of 18 and become mothers soon after. India is home to the largest number of child labourers in the world. India, also is, the world’s largest number of sexually abused children.

Children constitute the most vulnerable section of society in India. Socio-economic conditions are mainly responsible for the violation of child rights in different forms. The practice of child protection has undergone a significant change when seen from a historical perspective in India. The Indian Constitution accords rights to children as citizens of the country. The Constitution encompasses most of the rights of the children included in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child under the headings of Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy. India has made significant commitments towards ensuring the basic rights of the children.

Despite Constitutional guarantees of opportunity and civil rights, millions of children face wide-spread deprivation and discrimination. A large part of this stems from being seen through the lens of adults who make decisions for them, and who prefer to address their welfare rather than their rights. The children face discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, ethnicity and religion despite several constitutional provisions and enactment of laws in India (Thukral, 2004).

India continues to have the highest percentage of child labour in the world. The existing laws on child labour are not able to prevent children from working in unsafe sectors and occupations. Children continue to remain at the receiving end in India even after the enactment of Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 (Ali et. al. 2005).

Indian children lag behind children from other countries in terms of healthcare, education and other facilities even though India races towards becoming a super power in the new millennium. Indian children are confronted with malnutrition, anaemia and other health disadvantages. Educational and health status of Indian children is not satisfactory according to the human development index. Early marriage and low immunization are also some of the factors impeding the development of children in India (National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, 2014).

India is home to 472 million children under the age of 0-18 years, comprising 39 percent of the country’s total population. Out of the 128.5 million children residing in urban areas, close to 7.8 million children under the age of 0-6 years still live in
abject poverty and poor conditions in informal settlements, making it imperative that we plan and build sustainable and inclusive cities from their perspective. The 2011 Census data was a wakeup call for urgent action, as this indicated that the girl child is increasingly being excluded – not just from economic development and growth– but from existence itself (Cool, 2015).

Failure to capitalize on new opportunities will not only leave many millions of Indians living in poverty - especially the 7.8 million young children growing up in slums - it will jeopardize the overall economic potential of cities. The solution to the sprawl, inadequate amenities and lack of proper social infrastructure lies not only in effective service delivery but in improved planning. The stakeholders of child development should develop a new perspective to child development in India (Patnaik, 2016).

**Constitutional Provisions**

The Constitution of India has accorded certain rights to children as citizens of the country. The Constitution practically encompasses most rights included in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Directive Principles of State Policy. Unfortunately, the Directive Principles of State Policy are not justifiable rights under the present situation. The government is free to undertake suitable legislative and administrative measures to ensure children’s rights in India. But, these directives have enabled the judiciary to give some landmark judgments promoting children’s rights.

The specific constitutional provisions for the protection of children in India include:

- Article 14 guarantees equality before law to all citizens including the children.
- An article 15 guarantees right against discrimination and affirms law to one and all.
- Article 24 states that no child below the age of 14 shall be employed to work in any hazardous employment.
- Article 29 ensures the rights of minorities for protection of their interest.
- Article 37 ensures that the government be flexible to undertake appropriate legislative and administrative measures to ensure children’s rights.
• Article 39 (e) of the Directive Principles of State Policy provides that children of tender age should not be abused and that they should not be forced by economic necessity to enter vocations unsuited to their age or strength.

• Article 39 (f) of the Directive Principles of State Policy requires children to be given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth be protected against exploitation and moral and material abandonment.

• Article 45 of the Directive Principles of State Policy provides for free and compulsory education for all children until their complete the age of 14.

• Article 46 recognizes the right of weaker sections of the people to be protected from social injustices and all forms of exploitation.

• Article 47 provides the right to nutrition and standard of living and improved public health.

**Government Policy and Laws**

The Government of India has enacted certain laws to protect the interest of children before and after independence. Prominent among them include -

- Reformatory Schools Act, 1897
- Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929
- Children (Pledging of Labour) Act, 1933
- Young Persons (Harmful Publications) Act, 1956
- Children Act, 1960
- National Policy for Children in 1974
- Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986
- Infant Milk Substitutes Act, 1992
- Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles & Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply & Distribution) Act, 1992
- National Nutrition Policy 1993
- Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Act, 2000
- National Policy for the Empowerment of Women 2001
- Infant Milk Substitutes Act, 2003
- Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles & Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply & Distribution) Amendment Act, 2003
- Commissions for the Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005
- Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Amendment Act, 2006
- Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006
- Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012
- National Policy for Children 2013
- National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy 2013

These policies were formulated with a view to ensure women’s safety, protection and empowerment, improving child sex ratio, ensuring child protection and preventing and reducing maternal and child under nutrition and controlling anaemia. There was a shift of focus from child welfare to child development. The policy was intended to ensure effective services for children in the areas of education, health, nutrition and recreation with special emphasis on the weaker sections of society. The Government of India has taken a number of measures related to child rights protection and child development in India. The Ministry of Women and Child Development was established on a full-fledged basis.

The National Plan of Action for Children (NPA) was prepared by the Government of India under the title ‘A Commitment to the Child’ with a focus on various target groups of vulnerable children and called for improved protection of these children. The plan was indeed an outcome of an inter-sector, inter-department coordination and covered areas of health, nutrition, water and sanitation, education, children in need of care and protection, girl child adolescent girls, children and environment, women advocacy and people’s participation, resources monitoring and evaluation.

The National Charter for Children (2003), National Plan of Action for Children (2005) and enforcement of the National Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act (2006) were formulated and established with a view to protect the interest of children in India. The National Plan of Action was mainly responsible for a comprehensive study of child abuse and initiation of the amendment of law on child marriage. The Prohibition of Child Marriage Bill (2006) enhanced the punishment for those who involved in child abuse and child marriage activities.

The various five year plan documents also emphasized the need and importance of child development in the country. The Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79) ensured the integration and coordination of services after the implementation of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) in 1975. The Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) strengthened child welfare and development processes in the country which led to the spatial expansion and enrichment of child development services through a variety of programme. The Eight Five Year Plan (1992-97) saw a shift of focus from child development to human development through advocacy, mobilization and community empowerment. The Government of India declared its commitment to every child development in the Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002).

The Tenth Five Year Plan (2003-2007) advocated convergent / integrated rights based approach to ensure the survival, development, protection and participation of children. Certain progressive measures such as reduction in gender gaps, literacy promotion, reduction in infant mortality rate, reduction in maternal mortality rate, arresting the decline in the child sex ratio, internationalization of ICDS scheme and so on were implemented all over the country. The Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12) emphatically stated that ‘development of the child is at the centre of national development approach’. The plan document emphasized the child rights based approach and highlighted the holistic approach to child development in the country.

The most prevalent risks are sexual and/or related to other forms of aggressive behaviour, while commercial and value oriented risks currently play a marginal role in child rights protection. There is an imminent need for more research and capacity building, both in the developing and developed world for effective child rights protection (Gasser, et. al. 2010).

The child labour has become an important concern for the policy makers in India. Media have reported that children are employed in the industrial houses and

The increased crime rate against the children, even after enacting so many laws and implementing them, has raised an alarming concern all over the world as children are being misused for fulfilling some people’s illegal purposes. So along with various laws, it is also our social responsibility to take care of the children and to protect their rights in India and rest of the world (Indian Child, 2015).

**Child Rights Protection in India**

The children are treated in India as holders of rights on par with other citizens. Child rights in the family, school and community are examined by the scholars, policy makers and other stakeholders of child rights protection. The family is the core unit of society and the major source of development of children. An enriching and nurturing family life is essential in the protection of child rights and development of child’s personality. The stakeholders have also realized that there is a need to integrate various policies to strengthen the family as a unit, enhance child development in the family and prevent child destitution. The school is also another important institution which is responsible for child rights protection. The educational institutions are required to focus on compulsory universal elementary education, strengthen the school system, reorient curricula and promote girl child and other vulnerable groups of children. The community is also responsible for protecting the interest of children through dissemination of information, awareness generation, training, documentation, publication, lobbying, policy development, mobilizing resources and monitoring the progress.
It is mainly because of the increasing tendency of people including parents, guardians and teachers to abuse and exploit children that the attention of the entire world community has been drawn towards this problem which is gradually assuming alarming proportions. India has ratified the UN Convention and stands committed to protect her children against all forms of abuse and exploitation. India has provided protection to children by enacting two specific pieces of legislation namely, Juvenile Justice Act, 1986 and Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986.

In this 21st century, when we Indian are busy counting our economic and political success both at national and international level, still is much needed to be done to improve the status of children in India for the coming future (Narula, 2005). Persistent child abuse creates a number of problems in the personality of the abused child. The problem of child abuse, particularly in terms of child labour, child sex abuse and organized involvement of children in begging and drug trafficking has become fairly wide-spread in the country and it has taken the form of a burning social problem (Singh, 2008). The scholar has discussed the issue of prevention of child abuse in India extensively.

Despite constitutional guarantees, government’s schemes and allied child development initiatives, a vast majority of children in India are still suffering from series of hazards and deprivations. Child rights activists in India have noted that millions of children face wide spread deprivation and discrimination mainly due to adult centred decisions and actions concerning child rights protection in India. The media report increasing instances of child abuse and child exploitation despite constitutional guarantees and civil rights. The growing number of ‘poor children’, ‘working children’ and ‘marginalized children’ indicates the existing sorry state of affairs in the country with respect to child rights protection especially in the age of privatization, liberalization and globalization. Violations of child rights occur more in respect of the children representing the poor and downtrodden communities as compared to middle class and upper class children.

The children do not constitute a homogeneous community in India which is divided into different categories based on social and economic divisions. The approaches of the government basically remain welfare centred and child rights are examined from the point of view of adults rather than children. The governmental initiatives are indeed adult-centred but not child-centred in letter and spirit. The Indian laws are also either child friendly or child-oriented since family laws make
distinction between legitimate and illegitimate children depending on the status of their parent’s marriage or relationship.

The children are not enjoying the benefits of universal education, basic education and vocational education in India. A large number of children in general and girls in particular dropout of school due to various reasons. An examination of state policies and programmes reveals that child education in India suffers from series of constraints and limitations. There are more number of children who have the benefit of access to mainstream schools which are not properly equipped in terms of men and materials. The Free and Compulsory Education Bill, 2003 has also attracted Sever criticisms of the educationists and activists for several lapses and constraints. The recent 93rd Amendment bill intends to make education a fundamental right of the children.

The health of Indian children continues to be a matter of grave concern, especially in the age of globalization. The privatization of health services has caused a death blow to the health and progress of a vast majority of Indian children who represent socially and economically weaker sections. There is increasing environmental degradation and pollution which have led to deterioration in children’s health. The children are suffering from food crisis, starvation, malnutrition, health disorders and other constraints. There is no specific law which addresses the issue of public health in India. The primary health care system still remains malnourished in India. The population policy continues to remain as children unfriendly. There is no mention of child health in the National Health Policy, 2000 and other health programmes of the central and state governments.

The children in rural and urban areas continue to work in hazardous working conditions even though The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act was enacted in 1986. The Act leaves out a large range of activities that children are engaged in and are exploited and abused. The child trafficking has assumed an alarming proportion in India. The adoption of children continues to be determined by religion, caste, colour, creed and other extraneous factors which impede the progress of children. The personal laws of the religions do not allow healthy adoption of children who are victims of circumstances. The instances of selling of babies from poor families are reported in the media frequently. Many children are homeless or living in unhealthy conditions on account of displacement in the name of development and progress. In times of natural calamities, the children are worst affected.
Child participation in the process of child rights protection programmes is yet to become a reality in India. The child’s right to participation as not being actualized in India mainly due to lack of political will and social activism. The children have to go a long way before the inclusion of children’s participation is internalized and accepted widely in a developing country like India. Most of the children are not aware of their rights, constitutional safeguards, government policies, welfare measures and other activities. The right to education, the right to expression, the right to information, the right to nutrition, the right to health care, the right to protection from abuse, the right to protection from exploitation, the right to protection from neglect, the right to development, the right to recreation, the right to name and nationality and the right to survival are not fully and properly guaranteed to the children of India for various reasons.

The plummeting sex ratio in India clearly reveals that the very existence of the girl-child is under threat. The female – male balance in India has been adverse to females for at least 100 years. The juvenile sex ration in the 0-6 age group has fallen down over a period of time in India. The re-emergence of infanticide is taking a heavy toll in the country due to lack of political will and social responsibility. About 50% of Indian children aged 6-18 do not go to schools and that the dropout rates increase in case of boys and girls after the secondary level in India. Many children drop out after the elementary level due to several factors. Prominent among them include – economic backwardness of the parents, inadequate school infrastructure, poor quality of education, gender unfriendly educational system, disabled-unfriendly services, caste-discriminatory education and so on. Hence, the right to children’s education is not fully honoured.

The children are not encouraged to express their views in a free and fair atmosphere within and outside the family because of their tender age and other limitations. Most of the children in India are not allowed to enjoy their right to expression. In the age of information explosion and right to information, most of the children representing the under privileged section of society are not in a position to exercise their right to information.

A majority of the children representing socially and economically weaker sections of the society are facing the problems of hunger, starvation, ill health, malnutrition and so on. They are deprived of their right to nutrition. The child malnutrition is generally caused by a combination of inadequate are inappropriate
food intake, gastrointestinal parasites and other childhood diseases. A majority of Indian children do not receive any form of vaccination, remain anaemic and suffer from low birth weight in the country.

About 50% of the below the poverty line families in India are out of the purview of the targeted public distribution system. Many families and children in India are facing the problem of food insecurity. The direction of Supreme Court of India to provide adequate and nutritious food to the citizens and children assumes great significance in order to enable the people to stay alive and healthy. Child health care facilities are not decentralized in the country. Children are also suffering from ill-health due to lack of public health services in remote and interior regions of the country, poor access to subsidized healthcare facilities, declining State expenditure on public health, lack of awareness about to prevent to child healthcare and other constraints. India has the world’s largest number of sexually abused children. They are subjected to both physical and mental abuse. They are not fully guaranteed the right to protection from abuse.

India is home to the highest number of child labourers in the world. The children are made to work by compulsion and not by choice. The parents also sell their children for employment in hotels, workshops, brothels and domestic work. There is more number of children who are not protected from various forms of exploitation. The children working under exploitative and inhuman conditions are not loved and protected. The children are neglected by the parents, relatives and other members of the society. The unfavourable and inhuman living conditions of underprivileged children are responsible for the deprivation of the right of the children to development.

A majority of the poor and needy children in India do not enjoy the right to spend time on recreational pursuits like sports, entertainment and hobbies in India. A vast majority of underprivileged children in India are treated like commodities and exported to other countries as labour or prostitutes. They are deprived of their right to name and nationality. The children die in good number between the age of 1-5 due to poverty, ill health, malnutrition, gender discrimination and other problems. They are not in a position to enjoy the right to survival due to several social and economic constraints.

Millions of Indian children are deprived of their rights to survival, health, nutrition, education and safe drinking water. It was reported that about 63% of
children go to bed hungry and 53% of them suffer from chronic malnutrition. About 147 million children live in kuchcha houses under miserable conditions while about 77 million do not use drinking water from the tap. About 85 million are not immunized and another 27 million are severely malnourished and under weight. About 72 million children in India between 5-14 years do not have access to basic education. The girl child is the worst victim of circumstances in Indian society (UNICEF, 2005).

The Convention on the Rights of the Child has been incorporated into national legislation around the world. The national governments have successfully incorporated the norms and guidelines of the convention into diverse legal systems. There is an improved alignment of national legislation with human rights instruments with a focus on child rights protection across the globe. As such it provides practitioners with a tool for supporting the legal aspects of implementation of the CRC as a foundation for implementation overall (UNICEF, 2007).

The children have a right to live with dignity and self-respect. Poverty, lack of access to education, nutrition, health, prevalence of violence and abuse against these groups compound their vulnerabilities to trafficking. The Government of India has accorded the highest priority to combating trafficking and in this process adopted a multi pronged, multi stakeholder approach to tackle a problem which is primarily multi dimensional in nature (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2008).

Policy approaches are needed that address both the income and non-income dimensions of children’s deprivations. Continued neglect of material, human and psycho-social dimensions of child well-being can prevent children from living a full life and from making informed decisions later on in their life. India too would miss out on the dividends that can accrue from a full expansion of children’s capabilities (Bajpai, 2010).

Child rights and its accordance is the pillar for national construction, a brighter tomorrow (Shehla, 2012). Children have the right to practice their constitutional rights, to obtain education and live at par with others in the society, without facing any discrimination. The Right to Education Act is a tool for a child to obtain his right to elementary education and is an important medium to bring all children, who are still out on the roads, to school by the year 2013. The Act pays equal emphasis on good quality education (Paul, 2013). In India, the Child Rights Day is celebrated every year on November 20 to take stock of the situation and explore new possibilities of
child rights protection. It is a nationwide programme which is intended to create awareness among the various stakeholders of child rights protection.

The court directed the district administration and child welfare committees at the district-level to ensure that proper legal procedure is followed while bringing children from other states. The judgment squarely fixes the responsibility of the state in ensuring the fundamental rights of the child. The courts have duly recognized that every child as an integral part of the state and the role of the state in ensuring their integral rights of protection, survival and their development. The judgment has ensured a check on the ever mushrooming orphanages which have become centres of exploitation since they are managed by the vested interests (Raju, 2015).

Despite some recent positive momentum, the pace of progress in realizing women’s safety, protection and empowerment has not been adequate. The recently formulated Draft Nation Action Plan for children (NPAC), critical for achieving monitor able targets for child survival, development, protection and participation, is a major step in this direction. The latest schemes of the Government of India have also addressed the criticality of ensuring the prevention and management of diseases, through universal access to health care in the National Health Mission and ensuring hygiene, sanitation and universal access to safe drinking water through Swachh Bharat. The Indradanush programme aims to achieve full immunization coverage for all children in the country by 2020 (Cool, 2015).

In spite of numerous statutes, conventions and Acts to safeguard the child rights in the country, cases of frequent child trafficking, kidnapping, physical assaults, sexual abuses, deprivations, hunger, illiteracy and after-all emotional insecurity occur unabated due to lack of awareness and commitment on protection of child rights. There is an urgent need for stringent laws to deal with irrationality among the humans arises. Every citizen of the country is responsible for ensuring that children around him/her are safe and protected. It is the ardent responsibility of the related government and non-government agencies to spread mass awareness on child rights to the people through continued mass media campaigns across the state (Neken, 2016).

The Constitution of India provides a comprehensive understanding of child rights. A fairly comprehensive legal regime exists for their implementation. India is also a signatory to several international legal instruments including the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC). The government has adopted the approach of child-well being rather than active child rights approach in the post independence era. The
inclusive growth must begin with children and women- breaking an intergenerational cycle of inequity and multiple deprivations faced by women and girls, as related to poverty, social exclusion, and gender discrimination and under nutrition. The child rights activists are faced with challenges of promoting and protecting rights as a positive social value. The judicial activism has also enabled the children to avail necessary amenities, facilities and protective measures from the state.

1.5 Stakeholders of Child Rights Protection

Integrated child development demands active involvement of various stakeholders. Government, civil society, educational institutions, non-government organizations, media institutions, law and order organizations, health care institutions, corporate houses, local community, parents, teachers and others are required to play a decisive role in the process of child right protection in modern society. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) identified the various stakeholders of child rights protection across the globe and called upon them to put forth integrated efforts for the protection of child rights.

The Constitution of India provides series of safeguards for the protection of child rights under the Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy. Series of legislations such as Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 also provide for the care and protection of the rights of the children there are certain judicial pronouncements which have highlighted the role of educational institutions, government organizations, media organizations and non-government organizations in the protection of child rights in India. There are specific safeguards to the children rights from media onslaughts in India.

Intervention of State

The legislature is responsible for making laws that would benefit the citizens of the country. Parliaments are responsible for representing the interests of all sectors of society, articulating these interests into relevant policies and making sure that these policies are implemented efficiently. The executive is responsible for the implementation of the government policies and programmes. The judiciary examines the omissions and commissions and safeguards the interest of the people. The media
institutions are known as the fourth estate of a democracy. They are also the voice of the people in a democracy.

The term ‘government’ applies to all organs of state at national, provincial and local levels. The government institutions have an obligation to respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights of the children. The children are entitled to have their rights fulfilled regardless of region, religion, race, creed, caste, gender and so on. The governments are also responsible for taking special measures to check the discrimination of marginalized children in society.

The legislature is responsible for meaningful legislating for child protection. Scholars have noted that parliamentarians should ensure suitable national legislative standards which offer the best possible protection for children from violence, abuse and exploitation. The state is primarily responsible for formulating suitable policies, facilitating institutional reform, training of professionals, mobilizing social action and modification of attitudes and social values which are essential to achieve the goal of child protection in a civil society. The national constitution also contains progressive child protection principles and practices. The experts have also designed certain parliamentary mechanisms and governmental intervention programmes in order to fulfil the obligations of the state with regard to child rights protection. Some countries have also established national commissions on children over a period of time.

The governments must align the laws of their country with international or regional treaties. Most governments are very good at taking legislative measures, but are less good at delivering programmes that translate the child rights into realities. The plans should be drafted jointly with civil society actors and coordinate the work of government at all levels. The result would be locally integrated development plans that show how the range of duty bearers can partner to improve children’s rights delivery (Jamieson, 2008). The scholar has emphasized the role of government in the protection of child rights.

In times of need, the government should also act as a mediator of intra-family disputes. The government should play a crucial role in setting the ground rules for family dissolution and the restructuring of the post-divorce family. The government has an obligation to protect children from the damaging economic and emotional effects of parents’ divorce. The children should be enabled to have good contact with both parents and gain adequate moral and material support for their growth and development. The government should also strike a meaningful balance between the
The Government is responsible for amending existing laws and enactment of new laws in order to protect the interest of children. There is also a need for uniform definition of child in the context of age in order to create infrastructure and train the required human resources to implement the National Plan of Action for Children. The government is called upon to ensure that all the laws pertaining to children are strictly implemented within a proper time frame. The government is also required to make adequate budgetary provisions to fulfil its commitment to children and launch suitable campaigns for the dissemination of information about child rights protection in the country.

India is home to the largest number of children in the world. The diverse socio-economic, cultural and geographic conditions of the country result in diverse needs of children. It is necessary to facilitate mind-set changes and address long standing social norms and traditions that violate the rights of children. Inclusive growth must begin with children and the fulfilment of children’s rights through nurturing and protective policy, programme, and community and family environments. There is widening gap between the children of developed families and under – developed families in India. This gap needs to be addressed so that evidence-based policy-making, planning, programme design and programme review are enabled (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2011).

In India, the number of children needing care and protection is huge and increasing. Uncontrolled families, extreme poverty, illiteracy result in provision of very little care to the child during the early formative years. In India, the State should ensure that all vulnerable children have access to school, basic health care, nutrition, besides social welfare and juvenile justice systems. These child protection systems can contribute to break down cycle of inter-generational poverty and exploitation.

The state is responsible for undertaking appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to prevent and protect children from maltreatment. In the last two decades, the government has taken several steps for child rights protection but there is a wide gap between policy and implementation. The government should increase the funds for effective implementation of child development programmes. The officials should also ensure that Governmental funds are properly utilized (Seth, 2013).
There has been a flurry of activity on the personal law front in our country in the recent past. The issue of child custody continues to languish as a neglected corner of our jurisprudence. There are certain matters which are complicated by a legal process that does not view legal guardianship to be conterminous with physical custody of a child. Usually mothers win custody battles in our country. The Supreme Court of India has consistently held that in deciding cases of child custody the first and paramount consideration is the welfare and interest of the child and not the rights of the parents (Jayant, 2013). The higher judiciary in India should formulate a specific set of guidelines on the matter to ensure justice to the children.

Government naturally plays a crucial role in the areas of social service and human development. The government has the direct contact with citizens who are responsible for active participation in child rights protection. It is necessary to generate enforceability procedures and spaces for proposals through which all of society, not just the government, commits to guaranteeing basic rights of the citizens and children. The child development strategies acquire social sustainability if they are appropriated by people (Osvaldo and Seiras, 2014).

The government has recognized the different approaches of the devolved administrations and the challenges of child rights protection in order to achieve a coherent overarching implementation of the Convention. The recent moves in the UN to encourage greater parliamentary involvement in its human rights machinery are welcome trends in regard to child rights protection. The legislative actions particularly with regard to the children and families have facilitated better child rights protection in the United Kingdom (Joint Committee on Human Rights, 2015). The government has to identify the best practices in consultation with the experts and beneficiaries for child rights protection.

The government has put in place measures to try and address the increasing violence against children across the country. The national child helpline enables the children to seek necessary remedies in times of emergency. There are family and child protection units at all police units that can immediately respond to any reported violation of the children’s rights. There are trained police officers, probation officers and community development officers to intervene in times of need. Child protection is still not viewed as a core development ingredient which can enhance national social economic development. Adequate stakeholders and resources are required to effectively work and eradicate the vice of child abuse in India.
The government has the responsibility of setting humane standards for the protection of child rights in accordance with the UN Convention. The Convention calls for government action to promote the health, education and welfare of children. The central message of the Convention is that every child deserves a fair start in life without any discriminatory tendencies. The government has the moral duty and responsibility of protecting the rights of the children through effective implementation of welfare programmes. The government has to establish law and order institutions to ensure early prevention and intervention services for the benefit of children. The government should have adequate support initiatives by placing the child’s best interest prominently and create a nurturing environment, free from violence. The government should also cultivate the culture of community involvement and enlist active people’s participation in the child rights protection programmes.

**Intervention of Civil Society**

The role of civil society in the promotion and protection of human rights has gained increasing attention of the scholars and various stakeholders. Children's status in society, among many other factors, also means that they are more vulnerable to sexual abuse and other forms of violence and exploitation and they do not have any political inconsistency to represent their interests (Sandeep and Madhumati 2003). The civil society has a major role to play in the protection of child rights in modern society.

In transgressing the traditional concepts of state centred international regimes, the new approach adopts a perspective that goes beyond nation states and takes into consideration these non-governmental actors in the form of global public policy networks. The notion of global civil society therefore reflects cross boundary networks and relations of private actors and their interests (Fuchs, 2007). The global civil society also symbolizes a space of social self-organization within the triad of state, market and the private sphere.

The civil society can also play a decisive role in raising public awareness about the prevention of child rights violation and promotion of child rights. The civil society can also be an effective forum for the participation of the children in various progressive activities concerning the child rights protection, according to the report of Save the Children Sweden and the International Bureau for Children’s Rights (2008).

The bifurcated pattern of civil society engagement entailed the adoption of divergent policy frames on children's rights at the Commission level and limited the
Europeanization effects at the domestic level. The fallout of civil society stakeholders regarding EU internal policy has undermined the Commission's capacity to translate the abstract principles contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into concrete measures for child rights protection (Lusmen, 2012).

The children of the poorer countries suffer from hunger, malnutrition, child mortality, and disease, lack of basic education, abuse and exploitation. The civil society has to play an important role at the community level to protect the rights of the children. The Sarvodaya movement in Sri Lanka carried out child protection and development programmes including nutrition, health care and psychosocial development. No top-down programmes will benefit the children if they do not take civil society into full confidence and engage their full participation in child rights protection activities (Ariyaratne, 2014). The governments should also give full freedom to voluntary and field sector organizations to be partners in the fight against injustice imposed on children.

The issue of guardianship systems for child victims of trafficking has attracted the attention of various stakeholders of child rights protection. The civil society plays a crucial role in the protection of child rights. The policy makers and civil society representatives are required to prepare grounds for implementation of various child rights protection programmes in modern society (Human Rights Monitoring Institute, 2014).

An empowered civil society is a key indicator of the sort of open, inclusive and accountable governance, which is necessary for the realization of children’s rights. The child rights activists are committed to safeguarding the space that exists for civil society actors and to dedicating resources towards the further expansion of civil society space. There is a need for an enabling environment for children as actors in civil society. Safeguarding civil society space is not an easy task in modern times (Save the Children, 2015). The social activists have to continue to champion the role of civil society in working for children and their rights across the world.

The civil society can monitor the implementation of child rights centred preventative and protective community based services. Advocacy for child rights protection should begin under the banner of civil society. The civil society should also be encouraged to develop partnership with the responsible state institutions in order to meet the emotional, physical and social development needs of children (Reena, 2016).
The government is prioritizing aspects of policy and framing issues of children’s rights in ways that contrast with the discourse of civil society organizations. The state-centric and bureaucratic model is not conducive for the active participation of civil society in child rights protection. The civil society organizations have to adapt their action repertoires in order secure greater progress in the realization of children’s rights in North Africa (Chaney, 2017).

The civil societies can prevail upon the government and non-government organizations for development of networks and strengthening their capacity for the empowerment of children. Efforts are made in various developing countries for the active involvement of civil society in the protection of child rights. The civil society can also facilitate meaningful networking, advocacy, mainstreaming and sustainability of child rights protection and child development.

The civil society can sensitize the government to fulfil Constitutional directives and implement the various provisions and programmes relating to the protection of child rights. The civil society can play a vital role in increasing the budgetary provisions to implement child development programmes. The civil society can exercise checks and balances to the participation of children in unorganized sector as labourers. The members of the civil society can contribute writings to the media on real instances of child abuse or child rights violation. The civilians should also take active part in the rehabilitation of the exploited children. The civil society has the responsibility of launching innovative child protection programmes in modern times.

**Intervention of Family**

The basic institution in society for the survival, protection and development of the child is the family. The UN Convention reflects different family structures arising from various cultural patterns and emerging familial relationships. The Convention refers to the extended family and the community and applies in situations of nuclear family, separated parents, single-parent family, common law family and adoptive family. Such situations need to be studied in the framework of the rights of the child within the family. As a matter of fact, the civil rights of the child begins within the family which has an important role to play as to the right of the child to be registered with a name, to a nationality and so on.

The socialization and acquisition of values are developed within the family for freedom of expression and association, for privacy and discipline and for the child not
being subject to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The scholars have also upheld that the family is an essential agent for creating awareness and preservation of human rights and respect for human values, cultural identity and heritage and other civilizations.

The privacy of the family automatically confers on parents the ability to make correct and informed judgments with respect to the responsible upbringing of the children who are the future citizens. The committee also concluded that the children’s rights will be meaningful in the context of the rights of parents and other members of the family – to be recognized, to be respected and to be promoted (Committee on the Role of the family in the promotion of the rights of the child, 1994).

Children have a right to have their basic needs met – including their needs for food, clothing, medical care and housing. Children also have a right to be educated and trained for independent citizenship. They have a right to bodily integrity and to be protected from harsh treatment and exploitation. The parents should also learn to respect children as human beings and remain open to learn from children regarding the protection of child rights. The parents should also provide them space and freedom of expression and treat their children as equal partners (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989). The parents should also consult their children regarding the delivery of children-friendly goods and services at home.

The intervention of the government becomes imperative in times of abuse and neglect of the children by their parents. The parents should teach certain humanitarian values and behaviours to the children in order to enable the children to understand the basics of human life and adapt themselves to the environment. The children should be enabled by their parents to enjoy the educational rights and make intelligent choices of their own for future progress. The children should also be enabled to enjoy the benefits of food security, nutrition, healthcare and allied facilities at home.

The children are seen as the responsibility of their parents with the State offering only limited support to parents in their parenting role. They are affected by the outcomes of policies that are developed to meet the needs and rights of others, such as women, employers and trade unions. The UNCRC offers a framework within which such a move could be planned, implemented and evaluated. There has been a noticeable increase in reference to children’s rights in policy documents and comment over the last decade in various countries (Hayes, 2002). There is a need of protection
towards developing strategies that encourage the protection of the rights of all children with their active involvement in the process.

There is a need to uphold children’s rights and the human rights of all members of the family to ensure child welfare and child protection in modern society. The state is responsible for promoting a balanced and complementary set of services across the child–family policy divide. The stakeholders of child rights protection should be guided by a set of principles that adhere to international human rights, social as well as civil (Henricson and Bainham, 2005).

The child rights are inextricably linked to the rights of the family and there is no explicit Constitutional recognition of children as rights-holders independent of their parents. The UN Convention was unequivocal about the importance of the family to the child, role of parents and duty of the state regarding child rights protection. The importance of parents and family to a child’s development and well-being is widely accepted all over the world (Kennan and Keenaghan, 2012).

The parents should protect the child’s rights by creating positive environment in the home and children must get an opportunity to live comfortably and realize their full potential in life. Their natural development rests on proper nurturing of their innate abilities. Families can support the care and development of children, discuss with children issues affecting them, and report child rights abuses to the local authorities. The parents should encourage them to put forward their views before the adults and the community (Gupta and Lata, 2013).

The modern parents can shape their children’s digital identity by using new communication technologies. The social media and blogging have dramatically changed the landscape facing today’s children as they come of age. The parents act as both gatekeepers of their children’s personal information and as narrators of their children’s personal stories. A conflict of interest exists as children might one day resent the disclosures made years earlier by their parents (Steinberg, 2016). Scientific evaluation of potential legal solutions to this issue offers a set of best practices for parents to consider when sharing about children online.

All people including children have a right to learn well and live well. The state should provide children and youth with a nurturing environment for the full realization of their rights and capabilities. The children should be enabled to realize their rights and capabilities. There is need to stimulate interdisciplinary and cross-national collaboration and approach to various family issues (Abhuja, 2016).
The parents are required to function as children’s agents in the great outside world. They should also function as the true guides in the transition from infancy to adulthood. The parents have certain obligations towards their children and carry out their social responsibilities as the true ‘trustee’ of the child’s welfare. The convention as also called upon the parents to guide the child in actualizing his / her rights, consistent with the child’s evolving capacities. The parents are also responsible for protecting the best interest of the child by balancing the interests of one child against those of another in the family. The child’s welfare and the welfare of the family go hand in hand.

The implementation of the Child and Family Welfare Policy requires a well-defined institutional framework to translate the goals and objectives into actual programmes at national, regional, district and community levels. It requires political leadership and commitment to sustain and support the reform of the Child and Family Welfare System. The government is responsible for formulating child and family welfare programmes and activities to more effectively prevent and protect children from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

**Intervention of Educational Institutions**

The schools inflict corporal punishment on students for various reasons and most parents beat their children. In the name of discipline, children are physically ill-treated and humiliated. The time has come to re-examine the saying ‘spare the rod and spoil the child’ Children are the most vulnerable members in society. A teacher’s role in the life on an individual crucial and a good teacher occupies a very significant place in the minds of young students. After parents, it is the teacher who influences a child most, and contributes to the shaping of his or her personality.

The important stake-holders are the teachers, the children, the parents and the community, the education departments and the State. The idea of ‘positive discipline’ techniques concentrate on reinforcing positive behaviour of children. It is based on the idea that children are born without knowing about the expectations of the society. Positive discipline is considered to be a nonviolent approach which respects the inherent dignity of the child, and seeks to find solutions based on child’s evolving capacities. It is an approach to teaching that gives them information and supports their growth based on their age specific needs. A community social audit of the school will increase awareness amongst the community about the school practices, regularity of
teacher attendance and teaching, condition of school amenities, etc. (Working Group on Corporal Punishment, 2008). The educational institutions have an obligation towards the children, parents and society.

The children continue to be the most vulnerable section of modern society. Most of the children representing poor, homeless children; children with special needs and minority ethnic groups are the victims of child rights protection. The teachers and other educationists are required to educate the children about their rights by using the interactive technologies including children’s website about bullying. The Internet and social media can be used for the purpose of undertaking information campaigns for parents on the damage alcohol or drug influenced neglectful behaviour can cause (European Union, 2011).

Children in every society are deprived of their rights by parents and teachers beating children in the home and classroom or discriminating against them because of their caste, religion or physical and intellectual inability. Children can be subjected to neglect, abuse, violence and exploitation anywhere. There is some abuse that may happen inside the school premises, while a lot of it is what children suffer at home and in non-school environments. The children should receive the very best protection, opportunities and assistance in order to ensure them the best future (Gupta and Lata, 2013).

The teachers also have a significant role to play in promoting child rights by providing leadership to students in research and other curricular and co-curricular activities. They can play a significant role by enabling the teachers and teacher educators at all the levels to have conceptual clarity about child rights so that they can further the cause of children. The academic institutions should also integrate child rights in the curricula of schools and colleges. These institutions should also plan and organize activities in schools and colleges to create awareness and promote child rights in association with Government Organizations and non-government organizations. The academic institutions are also required to sensitize the various stakeholders of child rights protection and familiarized them to the remedial measures. The academicians should also organize series of campaigns against child trafficking, child abuse and violation of child rights. The teachers should also educate the parents on healthy aspects of parenting and caring for children.

The growing interest in the realization of children’s rights has focused particularly on the implementation of Article 12 of the UNCRC (1989) within
educational context. Adoption of inclusive policy would prevent the marginalization of children who are the most vulnerable section of society. The educational institutions have a corporate social responsibility of protecting child rights through constructive ideas, norms and practices (Robinson, 2014).

There is a challenge in getting policy alignment to support CRE from government down to schools. Many states do not have adequate legislation or policy frameworks in place to enact child rights education. The teachers and policy makers need to be conscious of how children’s rights are embedded in other subjects and/or projects. In most other countries implementation was judged to be mixed, both with regard to the number of schools where school councils operated and the type of participation they facilitated for child rights protection (Jerome, 2015).

A combination of law and strong policy initiatives has given a strong thrust to the protection and welfare of children in India. The Government has introduced several schemes for the development and welfare of the Children. Of those, the two-fold Schemes that concentrates on the development and well-being of the children are; Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) and Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS). The state Governments and the respective education Departments have directed the educational institutions for the functioning of child rights clubs, Child Rights protection committees, and other safety measures to ensure care and protection for children (Pushpam and Solomon, 2016). Hence it is imperative for every teacher to be aware of the many prevailing social evils which impact adversely on the development of children, and also of the legal provisions which exist and which can help in safeguarding the interests of the child.

The educational institutions should enable the children to learn in a safe and respectable environment. Schools need to provide an environment where child rights are promoted and protected. Schools should notice when a child might be unsafe outside school, and take steps to make them safe. Schools should enable the children to reach their full potential, regardless of their background. Experience demonstrates that improvements in education quality go hand-in-hand with inclusion and access, flexibility, quality and responsive learning environments for the benefit of children.

The educational institutions should include marginalized groups like disabled children in educational endeavours. The educationists and service providers should develop inclusive education practices, focusing on disabled children in schools. In developing countries, the children are prevented from growing up in a healthy
environment due to lack of political will and civil society support. The children are the central actors in changing environmental awareness and learning how to adopt an environmentally friendly lifestyle. It is not possible to meet the ecological challenges facing the stakeholders of child rights protection in the new millennium without strengthening the normative and institutional foundations of child rights protection.

**Intervention of Non-Government Organizations**

The NGOs are the third force all over the world since they have played an active role as instruments of development. The NGOs have also taken the lead and strengthened the initiatives for the protection of child rights. Scholars have also examined the relationship between the NGOs and child rights protection and noted that NGOs have implemented the projects to facilitate the rehabilitation of the children who are subjected to human rights violation. The studies have reported that conduction of research can supply intervention programmes and policy document with significant information and understanding regarding trafficking in women and children.

The NGOs should sensitize key stakeholders i.e. parents, teachers, community leaders, medical practitioners, law enforcement officers, judiciary and children about children rights. These agencies should also enhance capacity of selected stakeholders including the representatives of the government and non-government organizations about issues concerning child rights. The NGOs are also required to play a major role in the transformation of the lives of children who are subjected to child abuse or violation of child rights. The activists of NGOs should also report the crime against the children to the law and order agencies. They should also work actively on prevention of crimes against children and rehabilitation of the victims.

The children struggle for their survival and development during their formative years. Sixty per cent of the world’s children live in the Asian region. There are gaps between the underprivileged and the wealthy children across the region. The weak implementation and enforcement of relevant laws remains pervasive throughout the region. The non-government organizations and national coalitions create a vibrant fabric within most Asian societies. These organizations have put forth untiring efforts to mobilize actions of various stakeholders of child rights protection (Sekulovic,
2010). These groups are required to produce resources and practical tools for monitoring the implementation of child rights.

A large number of NGOs are working in the field of child welfare and child protection. However, because of the huge numbers of children requiring protection, their efforts can make only a marginal impact. However, they should coordinate their child welfare activities and need to work together. They also need to oversee implementation of various government measures that are already in place (Seth, 2013). The crucial ones include basic right to health, education, infant and young child development and prevention of child abuse and neglect.

The modern non-government organizations have to undertake constructive social welfare works including child rights protection. The organizations must spend in areas like literacy, women empowerment, environment, water, sanitation, child rights etc. These organizations are dependent on corporate houses which are major source of strategic resources (Save the Children, 2016). The NGOs and corporate houses should work together and achieve the goals of child rights protection and child development in modern times.

**Intervention of Media Institutions**

Media institutions are the fourth estate of democracy, informal university and opposition party outside the parliament. Media professionals are also called upon to assume the role of watch dogs of public interest in a democracy. The communications media have to play an effective role in different contexts toward protecting child rights. The media professionals have a social obligation to create public opinion and sensitize various stakeholders on several issues or cases concerning the child abuse or exploitation.

Media can create mass awareness about significant issues pertaining to child rights such as compulsory registration of birth, providing health care, reducing malnutrition and exploitation and abuse of children through publishing articles, special features, interviews, case studies in print media, airing radio jingles, songs, series of programmes on issues related to children, telecasting spots, special features, serials to project child rights, producing films, documentaries, feature films on children’s issues, curbing misuse of children in advertisements on TV and films and creating public opinion to prevent violence against children and value the girl child.
The media have some influence in helping to construct people’s knowledge of child abuse – of its extent, characteristics and cultural meaning. But no matter how limited the base of media ownership nationally, and indeed internationally, the media are not monolithic, playing out a pre-deterrent party line and child protection which a gullible public then acknowledge en masse. The main coverage about child rights violation came not from newspapers but popular magazines. The dominant media accounts were responses to a radical feminist influenced analysis of child sexual abuse. The real issue of power became the witch-hunt of these families, and particularly fathers, by the state and powerful families. The media coverage focused on stories of men falsely accused. Harm to children was presented as occurring through wrong diagnoses of child abuse. Child protection researchers and practitioners have much to contribute to this field (Atmore, 1996).

The children are addicted to the social networking without understanding the implications. It is common among the school students to create a page on their teacher on a social networking site in order to make fun of themselves or others. The children are also exposed to pornography which might incite children to act out sexually against other children. The social networking sites should be governed by the law of the land in which it operates. The most important thing is that new policies and social networking are required to check the menace of child abuse (Kesavamoorthy, 2003). India needs to sign memorandum of understanding to ease the process of the investigation with other countries.

The journalists act as the eyes, ears and voices of the public and draw attention to abuses of power and human rights. They can encourage governments and civil society organizations to effect changes that will improve the quality of people’s lives. Their writings expose the plight of children caught up in circumstances beyond their control. The way in which the media represents, or even ignores, children can influence decisions taken on their behalf, and how the rest of society regards them. The media often depicts children merely as silent ‘victims’ or charming ‘innocents’ (Jempson and Searle, 2005). The media professionals can remind the public that children deserve to be respected as individual human beings. The media professionals have an obligation to respect children’s human rights, in how they operate and how they represent children. It is important to plan carefully for children’s involvement in all forms of media production so that everyone understands what can and cannot be done.
The effect or impact of the media on child is in multi-levels – positive and negative impact and as general and specific impact. The media also leads to positive reforms and adjudications which protects the rights of the child. The negative impact of the media is the influence of the media in such a way that it corrupts the child viewers and does evil than good. The media portrayal of crimes is exaggerated many a time. The pornography is readily accessible to youngsters through Internet and movies.

The media portraying violence and sex has an influence on the young minds. The cable television has produced a harmful influence on young persons. The present day television serials also teach the young boys and girls modern techniques of deviance and ways to achieve high goals in life and earn money. The media should educate the stakeholders of child rights protection about various legislations and judicial decisions which prevent the irresponsible role of the media in child rights protection (Premkumar, 2008).

The new media have contributed to some level of empowerment of rights holders to becoming ‘chief advocates’ of their rights. They have also strengthened advocacy efforts with them, and by them, not necessarily for them, as in the past. The use of the new media accentuated the voice and the image of the children with more children being seen and heard, different from traditional context where children can only be seen and not heard (Oluseyi, 2010).

The international development institutions have emphasized the critical importance of the mass media in enhancing supportive a public attitude to human rights issues. The new media platforms offer considerable opportunities for achieving three main elements of child rights agenda: child participation, service provision and protection of young people. The new media contributed to the narrowing of the digital divide between rural and urban youth with respect to their participation rights. The new media are used for mass mobilization and strategic engagement of various stakeholders of child rights protection. The development agencies and NGOs in Nigeria are running social media and hotline projects to provide care and support for children and women who are victims or survivors of human rights violation (Fayoyin, 2011).

The public and private television channels should teach the children modern techniques of deviance and ways to achieve high goals in life and live a life free from exploitation and discrimination in the new millennium. Television has powerful
influence on the lives of contemporary children who are the future builders of nation. The future agenda for broadcasters must deal with the corporate social responsibility of media and integrated development of children through meaningful broadcasting services (Nabi, 2012). The provision of decency or morality is far more a safeguard to the rights of children in India and elsewhere.

Many of the creative, informative, interactive and participatory features of the digital environment remain substantially underused even by well-resourced children. The untapped opportunities to benefit from the Internet are particularly challenging in lower income countries and among socially excluded groups of children. The Internet may compound offline risks and negative experiences by children, such as unwanted sexual solicitation, bullying and harassment and exposure to pornography and other potentially harmful materials (Livingstone and Bulger, 2013). The UNICEF can develop an agenda for children’s rights in the digital age to ensure a sufficient evidence base on children’s engagement with ICT for policy and action worldwide.

The young journalists are trained in the art of reporting. They are unlikely to reach much of an audience beyond those who are already very aware of and interested in child rights. It is therefore crucial to broaden the outreach of youth-generated content to new audiences in order to strengthen its wider impact on the public debate (Burton, 2014).

A patronizing attitude towards children and youth severely limits the space that children get in the mainstream media. There is an absence of meaningful, realistic and socially relevant media coverage or information flows on child rights issues. The reporting on child rights and children’s issues is not widely recognized as a specialized field. This neglect starts right from journalism school and extends to almost all newsrooms. Increase of children’s media literacy levels and those of children/youth could amplify the voices of children in the media (Inter news Europe, 2014).

In addition to addressing issues of child protection in the online space, policy and governance should now ensure children’s rights to access and use digital media and consider how the deployment of the Internet by wider society can enhance children’s rights across the board. Any innovation must recognize that one in three users (or more or less) is likely to be a child — both an independent rights-holder and a legal minor possibly lacking adequate parental or state protection. The Internet governance principles, discourses and practices must, therefore, be reshaped to
accommodate this knowledge (Livingstone et. al. 2015). The online media publish too much personal information about the children. The parents are concerned about the well being of their children in the wake of new media revolution and harmful effects of new media on children. The parents should be very careful of understanding what their children have put in online (Wiggins, 2016).

The media have to sensitize the stakeholders of child rights protection through proper reports, analyses, criticisms and other constructive suggestions. The media should also educate the people about various constitutional, legal and governmental provisions for the protection of child rights. The media are criticized for their onslaughts all over the world. The provision of decency or morality is far more a safeguard to the rights of children. The media should also enable the children to access information and material from a diversity of national and international sources. The media should also protect the privacy and identity of the child victims and prevent inappropriate dissemination of information that would lead to the identification of child victims.

The media professionals have a social responsibility of reporting the real cases of child abuse, child labour, child trafficking and child exploitation in order to bring the culprits to the book and ensure rehabilitation of victims of child rights violation. Scholars have commonly opined that the children should be protected from the negative or monster face of the media. The law and order agencies, professional organizations and judicial institutions should ban harmful advertisements, porn and adult only material. The various stakeholders should also take up issues of media violation of the rights of child and campaign strongly against it. Effective checks and balances are required to stop the media transgressions into the realm of child rights.

Intervention of Law Enforcement Agencies and Judiciary

The law and order organizations have a social responsibility of protecting the rights of the children with due respect to the principles of UN Convention and constitutional obligations. The judiciary also plays an important role in the protection of fundamental rights of the citizens including the children (Basu, 1996). The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act, 2000 aims at the protection of children below the age of 18 years and clearly states that Juvenile offenders shall be segregated from adults and be accorded treatment appropriate to their age and legal status. The
court in Sheela Barse v/s Union of India observed that children in jail are entitled to special treatment since they are national assets.

The law enforcement authorities and judicial personnel should sensitize police personnel at different levels, personnel of juvenile homes and lawyers about child rights. The courts have also rightly held that the right of the child to development hinges upon elimination of prostitution. The Supreme Court in Vishal Jeet v/s Union of India observed that it is highly deplorable and heart rending to note that many poverty stricken children and girls in the prime age of youth are taken to the ‘flesh market’ and forcibly pushed into ‘flesh trade’ in utter violation of all cannons of morality, decency and dignity of mankind. The courts have also directed the state to rehabilitate the child prostitutes in a proper manner. There are several instances which demonstrate the active judicial activism to protect the children from various types of exploitation.

They should also orient the above-mentioned personnel to treat children with respect and compassion. These authorities are required to assume the role of watch dogs of child interest and provide necessary social security and support to the children who are in need of such services. The judicial organizations are also responsible for speedy disposal of marital disputes and respect the perspective of the children with regard to the choice of custody and child rearing. The judiciary should also protect the children and their caretaker from any kind of intrusion. The intra-family disputes should not threaten the family autonomy in general and the future of affected children in particular. The vindication of children’s rights depends on a delicate balance between government intervention and family autonomy. The child rights become meaningless if the judicial organizations fail to rise to the occasion and protect the interest of the needy children.

Many states have taken legislative measures to address the problems of children in conflict with the law according to the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. There is the lack of implementation of the improved law and regulations due to lack of political will and social commitment. In future, more systematic attention should be paid in order to bring it in compliance with the CRC and the UN Standards. There is a need for substantial improvement in the practice of juvenile justice in many States parties to the CRC. The juvenile justice system should be reformed in full compliance with the CRC (Alianza, 2004).
The goal of the justice for children approach is to ensure that children are better served and protected by the justice system. It specifically aims at ensuring full application of international norms and standards for all children who come into contact with justice systems as victims, witnesses and alleged offenders; or for other reason where judicial intervention is needed for example regarding their care, custody or protection. This can be achieved by ensuring children’s access to justice, to seek and obtain readiness in criminal and civil matters. Access to justice can be defined as the ability to obtain a just and timely remedy for violations of rights as put forth in national and international norms and standards, including those set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Musonda, 2010).

The minor dependent children are a non-factor in sentencing and statutory visitation guidelines. There is no formal mechanism for family status or dependent children to come to the attention of a judge. The interest of children is not factored into criminal justice determinations involving their parents. The fact that parent-child visitation can help children overcome the challenges of parental separation and reduce recidivism rates. International law offers a range of approaches to children’s rights that may provide a basis for children to claim a relationship with incarcerated parents (Boudin, 2011). Children must have a voice, either by themselves or through representation while factoring the interests of the child into the criminal justice processing of parents and suggesting possibilities for change.

The judiciary plays an important role in the protection of fundamental rights of the citizen and non-citizens alike. The Constitution of India provides the basis for child rights protection. The Directive Principles of State Policy have adequately provided constitutional protection to the children of Indian society. The judiciary has called upon the government to ensure that children do not engage in hazardous work. There are specific decisions where the judiciary had shown enough courage to uphold the interests of the children and spared no one to improve the working conditions of the child workers (Bhosle, 2011).

The judiciary has always made concrete efforts to safeguard them against the exploitative tendencies of their employer by regularizing their working hours, fixing their wages, laying down rules about their health and medical facilities. The judiciary has even directed the states that it is their duty to create an environment where the child workers can have opportunities to grow and develop in a healthy manner with full dignity in consensus of the mandate of our constitution.
The problem of child trafficking cannot be handled in isolation but requires vigilant policing, civil society support, government intervention and active involvement of other stakeholders of child rights protection. The non-government organizations can act as a watchdog on government programs for controlling child trafficking which is a pernicious and long standing social ill in India (Sambhar and Ray, 2012).

There is need for legal reform which is in conformity with the convention on the rights of the child, and ensures that newly developed legislation protects all children irrespective of their status in the country. The child’s rights should be part of educational curriculum so that children have knowledge of their rights from school (Obiechina, 2014). The communities and non-governmental organizations should embark on programmes including advocacy and social services on child’s rights.

Corporal punishment needs to be prevented in the home, care settings, day care, schools, penal institutions and other places. The corporate punishment has affected the morale and well being of the children. There is a distinct need for legislation to repeal provisions which allow corporal punishment in schools and other places. The teachers need to be trained on the consequences of severe punishment and alternative methods of disciplining students (Childreach International, 2014). The media should be involved to disseminate information and educate people about the dangers of physical and emotional and abuse and promote positive ways of disciplining and raising children.

Child abuse is a multidimensional problem that requires a multidisciplinary team approach for successful intervention. The law enforcement, CPS, mental health workers, medical personnel and attorneys must communicate and coordinate with one another. A child’s best interests can be served only when the various professionals who are involved understand and respect each other’s roles. The law enforcement authorities should be knowledgeable about their state statutes and local guidelines (Holder Jr., et. al., 2014). Adequate training, sensitive and consistent application of established policies and procedures is essential for an effective alliance in the protection of child rights.

There is a well established co-relationship between poverty and children coming in conflict with law. The law and order authorities should be actively involved in the process of diversion partners in all regions/ provinces. Studies have also underlined the need for extensive training of all participants in the child justice system.
in order to eliminate the maltreatment of children in contact with the law. The judiciary is responsible for the protection of child rights through proper implementation of legal guarantees and safeguards which are set forth in relevant and national and international standards. The child friendly courts should be established in order to conduct trials of children in a manner that reinforces their respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of others.

The children may be involved in the justice system in either civil or criminal proceedings. There is need for framing guidelines to make the judicial proceedings child-friendly. The issues and concerns need to be examined from the perspectives of the professionals involved and children affected by the unhealthy developments. Further, focus needs to be brought to bear on those professionals operating in the justice system to ensure that they are appropriately skilled and trained in dealing with children and cases concerning children (Shannon, 2016). The judicial process should have the child’s best interests at its core.

The child rights protection policies are made across the globe with due respect to various judicial pronouncements which have upheld that the child has the right to be fed and to live, to be reared and educated, to have the opportunity of working and of realizing his or her full personality and dignity as a human being. The child support issues are normally handled by local courts with the help of private attorneys. The parents need support for establishing the paternity and obtaining necessary benefits. The states must also enter into cooperative arrangements with courts and law enforcement officials to assist the child support agency in administering the program. Adequate reporting system, monitoring system and administrative system should be created by the state for effective child rights protection.

**Intervention of Health Organizations**

The extent of childhood morbidity and mortality in the developing world caused by several conditions should be understood by the health professionals. Modern health strategy combines improved management of childhood illness with aspects of nutrition, immunization, and disease prevention and health promotion elements. Conscious and systematic efforts are required to reduce deaths and the frequency and severity of illness and disability and to contribute to improved growth and development.
The programme planning, including the selection of indicators and the setting of targets should be designed in consultation with experts and veterans. Integrated approaches to child health development deserve support at various levels. They should not be seen, automatically, as a convenient way of reducing expenditure (Tulloch, 1999). The medical and Para medical professionals are called upon to diagnose the ills of child development and prescribe suitable Medicare facilities which would protect the children against disease and disorders. They should also play a major role in the implementation of constitutional provisions, welfare measures and allied programmes which would safeguard the interest of children.

The state is responsible for ensuring that children’s voices are heard in the healthcare setting. There is a need for auditing the education and teaching curricula of a range of health professionals in modern times. The health professionals have the responsibility of understanding the perspective of children and implement the health programmes which directly benefit them. Future research is essential to understand as to what extent the children with disabilities are listened to in the healthcare setting (Kilkelly and Donnelly, 2006).

The benefits for health professionals in learning to use the norms of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child would ensure the minimization of diseases and health hazards of children. The children's health needs are changing and paediatricians’ priorities will have to change with them. The paediatricians transcend the geography of their practice and confront with child health issues rooted in a global society. The investment in the health and development of children will pay significant dividends for the stakeholders of child rights protection including the health professionals (Waterston and Goldhagen, 2007).

The child-friendly health care facilities are required in modern health institutions. The active participation of children in the legal and policy making activities is essential in order to have the voice of children heard and taken into account in matters that affect them. The health professionals should design the delivery system in consultation with the experts and children (Kilkelly, 2011). The child-friendly nature of the health care setting to children across the globe would facilitate children friendly development and delivery of health care services.

The Human Rights Council (2012) focused on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health. It had prepared grounds for close collaboration with relevant stakeholders. The civil society organizations and
networks, national human rights institutions (NHRIs), scholars, research institutions and policy think tanks, private sector businesses, community movements, children and youth organizations were invited for discussions in order to receive inputs for implementing children’s right to health across the globe.

The policy makers have not properly understood the need for incorporation of traditional health teachings and practices into programs committed to children’s rights to health. The starting point for child health policy should be the traditional system with a focus on the basic good, positive elements. More time should be devoted to teaching parents and everyone directly or indirectly associated with the upbringing of children including nurses, medical students and junior doctors (Tagoe-Darko and Gyasi, 2013).

The healthy growth and development of children is crucial to the future of any society. Health and wellbeing are an integral part of the child’s right to life, survival and development. Children have the fundamental right to health without distinction of race, religion, and political belief, economic or social condition. The state has the responsibility of mainstreaming the rights based approach to health and nutrition of children in modern times. The health professionals have the social responsibility of promoting the health security of children across the globe.

The prevention of childhood obesity demands greater awareness and analysis of the obligations under the rights to health and play. In light of the lack of clarity of state obligations, it is recommended that the committee on the CRC takes a leadership role in further elucidating and crystallizing the obligations of States Parties. A rights-based approach has its foundation in international law, not beneficence or political ideology. The UN initiative can support public health by providing additional tools to motivate governments to act to achieve public health goals and reframe health concerns into political claims, and a social movement that can press such claims. The child rights allow that full responsibility should not be placed on parents; the state, schools and media also have obligations in fulfilling the rights to health and play (O’ Cathaoir, 2016).

The stakeholders of child rights protection should enhance the investment on existing and new health interventions in order to facilitate better health system for women, children and other vulnerable sections of society. The health workforce is a critical area for investment since health system needs to be reformed in terms of
programme management, human resources management, infrastructural development, health information system management and good health governance.

**Intervention of Corporate Houses**

Corporate Social Responsibility has become an institutionalized obligation of modern corporate houses. There is a recognition that CSR should be congruent with the mainline business strategies of the corporations and should not be seen as a nonstrategic, public relations type of exercise. The Indian Corporate sector has adopted certain healthy practices for child rights protection. Though the initiatives are specifically targeted at children, the approach is still very welfare oriented (Karkara, 2007). Today more and more consumer goods industries especially either western multinationals or those having western links seem to have adopted a cohesive strategy which addresses the issue of child labour from a child rights perspective.

The CSR initiatives of modern corporate houses simply follow the welfare approach. The programmes seldom involve children as social actors and partners in their own development. These organizations should build partnerships with the government and civil society institutions to make the initiatives more effective. They should enter into a dialogue with some of the companies having a very progressive outlook both in its management philosophy and CSR initiatives (Godbole, 2007). They must adopt healthy practices of other houses in order to achieve the goal of child rights protection and enhance their reputation in modern times.

The business policy and action can have a very significant impact – both positive and negative – on children’s rights. The impact is felt through policies and practices in the workplace, the products they produce and how they market them, and the way they act in the communities in which they operate. The use of aggressive marketing may exploit children’s vulnerability since the unsafe products in the marketplace can be dangerous for children. Proactive steps need to be taken to make children aware of non-judicial mechanisms available to them (Sheahan, 2011). The children should be informed of progress at all stages of the process giving due weight to the child’s maturity for effective protection of child rights.

The corporate social responsibility deals with the protection of the quality of life of people and planet for future generations. It is indeed a child-friendly concept which matters most in the present times. The large corporations have undertaken the marketing activities which are consistently and deliberately targeted at children in a
way which puts their lives at risk. The continuous stream of stories in the media of human rights abuses of children in supply chains should alert us to the fact that business can and does pose many threats to our future generations (Cohen, 2012). In the age of globalization, the corporate houses are required to demonstrate Corporate Social Responsibility by providing children-specific goods and services. These corporate houses are also responsible for creating necessary opportunities for the empowerment of children in association with government agencies and non-government organizations.

The recent survey on the role of corporate houses in child rights protection reveals a different picture. During the last couple of years, the corporate houses have resorted to corporate engagement beyond the philanthropic approach. These houses have become more aware of the rights of the children which are an important focus as part of sustainability. The corporate houses have not accorded a high priority for child rights protection which is revealed by the budgetary allocations and implementation of child rights centred programmes (Smedley, 2013).

The business activities adversely impact the rights of children more than adults. Modern corporate houses have not given a serious thought to the positive and negative impacts they cause indirectly on child rights through suppliers, customers and other business partners. They have not realized the fact that children are both rights holders and stakeholders as companies interact with them on a daily basis as workers, consumers and community members. The incorporation of children’s rights into business policies and codes of conduct is often limited to child labour. The corporate houses have to prioritize focus areas for children’s rights based on its assessment of impact, materiality and stakeholder relationships (Rutgers, 2013).

Consideration of the rights of children should be integral to any Corporate Social Responsibility strategy or policy. The companies should keep in mind that respecting and protecting children’s rights extends far beyond the use of child labour. A robust CSR strategy should reflect a comprehensive understanding of the many ways by which businesses may adversely impact children’s rights. The children should have access to clean water, sanitation, food, or health care which affect a child’s growth and development. The CSR principles illustrate that companies can impact the rights of the child through actions in the workplace, the marketplace, the community, and the environment. The corporate houses should contribute to the elimination of child labour, including in all business activities and business
relationships. Developing and implementing strategies or policies to protect the rights of children can improve a company’s reputation and reduce its risk of liability (Stewart, 2015).

The protection of child rights and ensuring equal opportunities to them required a strong and robust partnership between public and private agencies. The parents, teachers, members of civil society, NGOs, volunteers, philanthropists, international development partners, media and corporate houses have to play their constructive role towards promotion and protection of the rights of children (Hussain, 2016).

The child rights can be protected on the basis of active stakeholder engagement which is a never ending mission. The state should interact with the affected groups and other relevant stakeholders for designing suitable strategies for child rights protection. Constant monitoring and evaluation of child rights violation can effectively contribute to potential or actual impacts on children’s rights. The state should therefore consider children as a priority stakeholder group since they are the most vulnerable population, requiring specific attention. The organizations or individuals who are in close contact with children should create opportunities to promote a positive group dynamic in the present times.

1.6 Summary

A new generation of social workers has emerged on account of scientific social work management in the world. The present study evaluates the role of various stakeholders in the protection of child rights with special reference to Karnataka state. The children are regarded as subjects or actors with a set of interest which they can and should define and defend for themselves. The scholars have made the distinction between protectionist and liberationist approaches to child rights. The United Nations Convention on Child Rights Protection (1989) contains about 54 articles covering a wide variety of rights of the protection/welfare across the globe. The global convention had created new consciousness among the various stakeholders all over the world about child rights protection. The children constitute the most vulnerable section of society in India. The socio-economic conditions are mainly responsible for the violation of child rights in different forms. The practice of child protection has undergone a significant change when seen from a historical perspective in India.
There are specific constitutional provisions, laws and programmes for the achievement of the goals of child rights protection and child development in India. The organizations or individuals who are in close contact with children should create opportunities to promote a positive group dynamic in the present times.