

# Preface

The genesis of the book lies in the days when my dear daughter left for pursuing her management degree from Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad in 2010. I was distraught without her. That is when I first started writing this book, primarily to fill up my time and to divert my attention away from missing her. In the early days of this book, it resembled more like a report and was primarily a collection of relevant material from the Internet. Yet, it did act as a resource to some extent in my classroom teaching. Reading new things on the net and putting them as a compendium was not such a bad activity after all!

By 2012, Delhi University had started working on the semester mode and most of the courses had been overhauled. The subject that I had been teaching for 20 years with a welfare approach, was now called 'Child Rights'. It had an altogether new perspective and meant that the material that I had collected needed to be turned around. In 2013 somewhere in October, I picked up the chapters again and started to relook. The first thing I did was that I wrote a very basic chapter on Introduction to Child Rights. Then a chapter in the previous book had demographic information based on Census 2001. That needed an update as per Census 2011. Please remember, I was using all this for my teaching purposes too. So the information that I was to share with my students had to be the latest and the best. Rework on the book had begun. Concerted effort on completing the book started only after Springer agreed to publish the work. This was in August 2014, and till the submission of the manuscript which was in February 2015, I was on an average devoting 5–6 hours on the book every day. The journey of writing this book has been very pleasurable for me. The research that went into writing the book also contributed immensely to the content of my lectures, and further improved me as a teacher.

The book is a comprehensive compendium on the Child in India, the challenges which the child faces in survival, development, education or by virtue of a disability or lack of care by the society. The book in a simple manner introduces the concept and meaning of child rights and subsequently puts forth measures taken by the government and civil society to help achieve the child rights. The major themes expounded are infant and child survival, early child development, street and

working children, children in conflict with law, children with disabilities, child trafficking, child sexual abuse, amongst others. It raises the question of survival, development and participation of these special groups of children and how their chances of achieving full potential is severely compromised. The book also documents the responses of the society for the care and protection of children.

The book presents a commentary on the situation of children in India and the difficulties in living faced by them due to the especially hard conditions that they live in. Each chapter gives the magnitude of the problem and clarifies the major policy framework which the government has adopted. Major legislations providing legal support are included. At certain places, attempt is made to even cite some legal cases in an attempt to emphasise how legislations are providing succour to children facing challenges in development. Relevant newspaper articles are interspersed in the text. Each chapter has a section that presents the innovative and credible work of social organisations, which can suggest ideas to emulate for further action in the field. Efforts of exemplary NGOs working in the field are profiled in the chapters. The topics covered are such that they would generate social awareness amongst the youth.

The broad purpose of the book is to comprehensively discuss the roadblocks which the child in India faces, what the causes of these roadblocks are and what the government and the social sector are doing to help children in India achieve their potential.

The aim of writing this book is to explain the concept of child rights and to highlight the plight of children in India. The book is likely to find readership amongst students pursuing higher education in the universities of India. 'Child Rights', 'Child Welfare', 'Child and the Law' are common courses offered by universities across the country. The book should fit in the various curriculums.

A book on Child Rights is urgently needed as this course is now being offered in undergraduate studies in many Delhi University colleges in the least. This book would be useful for numerous home science colleges and agriculture universities which offer courses in Child Development, Child Welfare, Child and the Laws, NGO Management, Human Development and Family studies across India. This book should also find readership amongst social work students. The NCERT is also proposing to include Child Rights and Human Rights as a course for classes XI and XII. A publication on this subject is much needed and appropriate and this book should come as a sigh of relief for students studying this course.

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Child Rights in India

Challenges and Social Action

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