

SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPACT OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE ON SURVIVORS: A CASE STUDY OF PUNJAB, PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

Child sexual abuse is a serious problem that has adverse sociocultural impact on survivors. The present study was aimed to find out the socio-cultural impact of child sexual abuse on survivors. The study was also aimed to find out the impact of stigma and maladjustment on survivors as well as to investigate the impact of disclosure and social support among child sexual abuse survivors. The nature of the study was qualitative and case study method was applied. The population of the study was child sexual abuse survivors from Punjab, Province. The multi-stage sampling technique was applied for the selection of districts, courts and respondents. At first and second stage, districts and courts were selected by using simple random sampling technique. At third stage, the respondents were selected by convenient sampling technique. The study was comprised of 10 in-depth case studies, and pseudonym were used. The tool for data collection was semi-structured interview guide. The data was analyzed by thematic analysis. The study concluded that the survivors of child sexual abuse face several socio-cultural difficulties such as social maladjustment, hindrance in education, disclosure, stigmatization and revictimization. They also face the problems of family discordance and family breakdown.

Keywords: Child Sexual Abuse, Survivors, Disclosure, Social Support, Revictimization, Punjab, Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION

Child sexual abuse is a widespread social problem, which impact individuals, groups and societies all over the world. According to Malhotra & Srivastava, (2016) child sexual abuse is identified as a condition of psychological, physical, sexual and economical destructive behaviors and acts against a person who is under the age of eighteen years. It is worldwide a communal problem and has serious socio-psychological and physical impact, which negatively influence on wellbeing, health and personality development of children. It refers to the undesirable sexual activity, in which abuser use threats or force against victim and took advantage of him or her in a state where victim is not able to give the consent.

Child sexual abuse is a prevalent most serious public issue globally in children based on detailed negative health impacts (Mohler-Kuo, et al, 2014). According to Monahan & Forgash, (2000) it refers to the 'sexualized behavior' between a child who is younger than the abuser. The illness and mortality are significantly caused by child sexual abuse (World Health Organization, 2002). The term 'survivor' is basically a process in which persons go through the abuse experiences and they continually live after the abuse has stopped. The process of surviving is not entirely based on positive, optimistic and self-protective attitude but it also involves the approaches which weakens safety, prolong self-harm such as promiscuousness, prostitution, disowning, resistor or overachievement" (Robinson, 2000).

Sexual abuse is a sexual activity against children, done by a mature person against the child who should be protected as per the criminal law. It is based on harmful activities such as the temptation or forcing a child to involve in any illegal or emotionally damaging sensual activity or commercial sexual abuse of the children. It also involves the usage of children for audio and visual images of sexual exploitation as well as sexual slavery, sexual abuse in travel and tourism, indulgences of children in

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prostitution, tracking of children within country or outside country for the purpose of sexual activities, forced marriages, and auction of children for sexual reasons. It also involves the abuse in cases when sexual act is done by another child who is using force, pressure or threats against a minor child for sexual purposes or who significantly older than the victim (UNICEF, Hidden in Plain Sight, 2014). In CSA the exposure of children to sexual act is inappropriate for child's age and psychosocial development. Sexual abuse can occur with or without physical contact (Mehnaz, 2018).

The most negative influence of CSA happens when it is based on the disloyalty, broken trust and the child is not listened to or believed for abuse happening (Corby et al., 2001). A comparative analysis reported that children who were sexually abused during their childhood have less level of education especially in the victim to offender cycle, whereas, the non-abuser group have higher level of education. It is also reported that males in their robust non-abuser group greater emotional support from numerous sources than the victim to offender members (Lambie et al. 2002).

The external social support is significantly found for assistance in reducing the traumatic impact of the abuse in CSA survivors. The healing services especially peer group approach was adopted in females CSA survivors of fifteen to twenty age group resulted in less psychosocial problems and general wellbeing of them (Norrington & Walker, 2001).

The support of a parent is a strong predictor of the positive adjustment of the victim following disclosure of abuse, and may be more influential on a victim's adjustment than factors related to the abuse acts. Due to the ability to intervene and change the way a parent supports the victim; the support of a parent may have a greater impact than the abuse related factors on long-term outcomes. In general, the greater the support from parents, the fewer behavioral and emotional difficulties will be displayed by the victim (Elliott & Carnes, 2001).

Child sexual abuse is largely widespread but newly known societal issue in Pakistan. In Pakistan eight cases of child sexual abuse reported per day in mass media in 2019. A report revealed that almost 1300 children have had to face SA of any kind in the last six months in Pakistan. The description by NGO explicitly took into contemplation of occurrences of sexual violence against children between January and June 2019 and resulted those 1,304 cases had been testified during the said time period. The total 729 girls and 575 boys suffered sexual abuse of some kind between Jan-June 2019. It was also exposed that as many as 12 minor girls and boys suffered sexual abuse in Madrassahs (Sahil, 2019). During the year of 2021, more than 10 children were abused per day. It is reported that total 3852 cases include reported cases of CSA, cases of abduction, cases of missing children, and cases of child marriages were found and total 2275 cases were reported for child sexual abuse, in which both genders were equally victimized. A total number of 92 cases reported murder after sexual abuse. (Sahil, 2021). From Jan, 2022 to June 2022, 12 children were sexually abused on average per day, which showed an increase in the occurrences of the cases. The total ,170 cases of child sexual abuse, 803 cases of abduction, 212 cases of missing children, and 26 cases of child marriages during this six-month time period. The total 567 boys were become victimized by crimes of sodomy/gang sodomy/attempt of sodomy/murder/pornography and abduction. 551 girls were victimized by crimes of rape/gang rape/attempt of rape/murder/pornography and abduction, 59 cases of pornography and 17 cases of incest were reported. Moreover, the total 1,050 cases were acquaintances, 409 cases strangers, 39 cases relatives, 32 cases female abettors, 50 cases religious/school teachers and in 63 cases neighbors were involved (Sahil, 2022).

Convention for the Rights of Children (CRC)

Every culture has diverse cultural practices, differ in every state to deal with children. There is a universal standard-based agreement for providing the rights to every child. On 1989, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has provided a framework for all the rights and it has a consensus-based agreement worldwide established smallest standards for the humanitarian ways of handling the children. The states are held responsible and bound to for accepting some cultural practices to be carried out. On November, 1989, the agreement was approved and come into power in September 1990. The agreement is aimed to work on the notion that there are common morals of care. These ideals or morals require to be sustained so that the child can be raise well. As per the Article 1 of CRC, 'a child is an individual who has not attained the age of eighteen years without, under the law applicable to the child, widely held reach prior.' This specific description of a child is ultimate for supporting in formation of a general description of child sexual abuse. As per the article 34, every child must be protected from sexual abuse and exploitation. This provision in the Resolution is amplified by the Discretionary

Procedure on trading of children, child prostitution and child pornography as well (Malhotra & Srivastava, 2016; UNICEF, Convention for the Rights of Children). Pakistan is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and has also ratified Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. However, the overall state of child rights in Pakistan suggests that the State has to act fully in the spirit of international treaties for realization of child rights in Pakistan.

Research Objectives

The present study is aimed to;

1. To find out the demographic & socioeconomic information of the respondents.
2. To study the socio-cultural impact of child sexual abuse on survivors.
3. To find out the effect of stigma and maladjustment on survivors.
4. To investigate the impact of disclosure and social support among child sexual abuse survivors.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Monahan & Forgash, (2000) mentioned that child sexual abuse is a sexualized behavior based on contact and non-contact experience between a minor child who is younger than the perpetrator. The sexual abuse may include divulging the child to pornography or divulging private parts, contact-based abuse, such as caressing, fellatio, cunnilingus or rape.

It is reported that sexual abuse may include sexual penetration, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, extensive threat of sexual injury, or human trafficking of children (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau, 2014).

Saleem, (2021) reported that existing approach for CSA and its prevalence in Pakistan is not planned and evidence-based information but it is formulated on the basis of the incident's happenings and more general in nature. Additionally, economic, cultural, socio-political affects also stimulate the overcoming approach for speaking about CSA in Pakistan. It is found that current approach for responding the problem of child sexual abuse is not persistent with the standards of human rights and framework of United Nations Convention on the Rights of Child (UNCRC). It is also found that strategy and laws are not all-embracing, planned and civil liberties related but occurrence related and corrective that is conflicting to worthy strategy application and counter to the essence of other agreements ratified and constitution of Pakistan. The prerequisite to correspond state commandments of Pakistan with worldwide commandments. Social problems associated to restorative and protective features of CSA should be spoken properly.

Avais, et al., (2020) reported that child sexual abuse is concealed but a very distressing problem in each civilized society. In Pakistan, the situation of child sexual abuse is very alarming because it is less acknowledged and less explored as people are reluctant to disclose the details of this problem. It has been found in the Pakistani society since 1947, (its national independence date) despite of its existence, it is considered a taboo subject and to talk about sexuality immoral.

The government of Pakistan issued a census report in 2017, in which it is found that almost 39% of the population is below the age of 18 years and it is almost 80 million (Government of Pakistan, 2017). Cawson, et al., (2000) found that two to four females out of 10 females are sexually abused, whereas, half males are also sexually abused in their childhood. Laurance, (2000) concluded that there is one child found sexually abused by fathers or father's figures in every hundred number of children.

Alaggia, (2005) concluded that children who experience child sexual abuse do not tend to disclose about the incidents and they usually disclose it later in adulthood, which is considered as the delay in disclosure. There are numerous aspects which influence non-disclosure such as distress, embarrassment and self-blame.

Foynes, et al., (2009) found that the closer the relation with the perpetrator leads toward the long-time frame of non-revelation and there are a few chances to reveal the sexual abuse at all. Ullman, (2003) concluded that children have a tendency to disclose the sexual abuse incidents to the informal sources such as friends and family members, mostly in their adulthood rather than the proper expert institutes such as law enforcement agency or health specialists. The reaction on the disclosure is very significant as if the child receives the supportive reaction by the immediate listener, it could affect the persons to either remain persist about revealing to others, or regress to non-disclosure.

Ahrens et al., (2010) concluded that the helpful societal reaction is significant and helpful for disclosure of sexual abuse incidents. These positive social reactions include the feelings of being listened, believed, helpful and offering the emotional support. Whereas, the negative social reactions are comprised of accusing the victim, rejection, minimization, retorting in a conceited way and diminishing the social support. These all-social reactions resulted in harmful impacts on victim's wellbeing over disclosure and leads towards the revictimization. Campbell, et al., (2001) mentioned that not all the survivors interpreted the positive social reactions significantly.

Sanderson, (2006) found that survivors can feel "abnormal", "special", or "unlike" from others due to the self-blame, dynamics of abuse and shame associated with the incident of sexual abuse. These dynamics of child sexual abuse leads towards the "silence", and by learning about the common occurrence of the incident as people often experience, normalizing it can be helpful.

Davis & Petretic-Jackson, (2000) added that the survivors who experienced traumatic incidents of child sexual abuse can show impaired social behavior, which includes being distrustful of others, can avoid relationships, or make relationships with people in a consistent manner of not doing trust. Barnes et al., (2009) concluded that individuals who experience sexual abuse in the childhood are at the greater risk of sexual, emotional and physical revictimization later in adulthood. Finkelhor and Browne (1985) concluded that the survivors of child sexual abuse may feel powerlessness, which caused further vulnerability and they experience revictimization. Kisanga et al. (2011) reported that impediments to child sexual abuse disclosure is associated with the stigma of sexual abuse among survivors and death threats from perpetrators.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study was qualitative in nature and case study method was applied. A case study is the in-depth examination of a single instance of any social phenomenon. The population of the study was child sexual abuse survivors from Punjab, Province. The multi-stage sampling technique was applied for the selection of districts, courts and respondents. At first stage, four districts i.e., Rawalpindi, Chakwal, Sargodha and Kasur were selected by using simple random sampling. At second stage, special case court Rawalpindi, special case court Sargodha, civil court Chakwal and special case court Kasur were selected by using simple random sampling technique. At thirds stage, respondents were selected conveniently. As the respondents of present study are a sensitive group of society and their willingness was primary concern of the researcher. So, convenient sampling technique was adopted. The study was comprised of ten in-depth case studies. The tool for data collection was semi-structured interview guide containing open ended questions. The data was analyzed by thematic analysis. Using this method consents the investigator to establish and explain information in rich detail, as well as construe and interpret for intricate information.

Inclusion Criteria of the study

The inclusion criteria for the respondents of the present study will be survivors of child sexual abuse from Sargodha, Rawalpindi, Kasur and Chakwal districts of reported the occurrences and the proceedings of their cases are under trial. Furthermore, only those children were included in the criteria of selection, who along with their guardians allowed researcher to consider them as a part of study.

Ethical Concern of the study

The ethical concerns of the study were kept as priority and no sensitive data was revealed that can harm the respondents and their families. The identities of victims and their families were not revealed and pseudonyms were used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Child sexual abuse is a worldwide serious problem which impact the wellbeing and growth of the children, throughout years. The socio-cultural impact of child sexual abuse on survivors is discussed as;

Disclosure, Social Support, Delayed Disclosure & Revictimization

The study revealed that disclosure, response on disclosure and social support are the significant truths creating impact of child sexual abuse among children. The first person with whom the disclosure happened and his/ her immediate response towards the child also affect the sexual abused survivor significantly. It is also found in some cases that parents came to know about the incident without child's disclosure as well. The disclosure of such serious problem also affects the immediate person and the

family of children significantly as well. The supportive behavior of the immediate person helps positively, whereas, negative response such as yelling, and blaming generate negative impacts on children. The study revealed that many respondents got the response of shock, crying and embellishing the situation, which negatively impact the wellbeing of the survivors.

As a respondent reported as;

“When I told my mother about the incident (gang rape), she was shocked and devastated. She was frightened, helpless for not being able to support me emotionally & socially because of her second marriage and other family. My real brothers did not support me and they considered me a reason of shame for entire family. They also blamed me for not being careful. However, my maternal uncle supported me to report the incident.”

(Hina)

Hina, 15 years old girl lived in a village Behkari, District Chakwal. She was kidnapped, molested and gang raped by three men (Unknown). One of the perpetrators also recorded the video of occurrence.

Another respondent reported as;

“I revealed the incident after such traumatic suffering by my own father to my mother over the time period of two years. I was fearful, in extreme pressure of secrecy by my father as he threatened me with knife for not revealing it to my mother, otherwise, he will kill both of us. Several times, I tried to tell her but could not out of fear. I was abused, sexually over multiple times in two years. She was shocked.”

(Sonia)

Sonia, 10 years old girl, lived in district Rawalpindi. She was molested & raped multiple times by her real father over the period of two years.

It is found that after suffering sexual abuse incidents, the survivor could lack the social support from the family on disclosure. They were blamed for the incident happening and ruining the social image of them and family. This lack of emotional and social support leads toward the disturbing impacts of the trauma. In previous study, it is found that social support of family, friends are important contributors in the development of linked effects of child sexual abuse (Fassler et al., 2005). A study also found that harmful responses like retorting in a vain way, ‘accusing the targeted person and retreating societal assistance was believed to contribute to poor emotional health and re-victimization (Ahrens et al., 2010).

Another male respondent also reported as;

“I was sexually abused three times during three years before disclosure. I could not reveal it soon due to blackmailing and death threats by the abuser. Later, I felt safe (when several reports registered against the perpetrator) and disclosed it to my parents. They were and reported the incident to the police. All of my family members were supportive towards me.”

(Zahid)

Zahid, 13 years old boy lived in Nandna Jattal, tehsil Kalar Syedan, District Rawalpindi. He was sexually abuse, blackmailed and revictimized multiple times at the age of 10 years. The perpetrator was neighbor and 21 years old male.

In the study, it is found that late disclosure of incident to family and friends leads towards the revictimization of sexual abuse suffering among children. It is also revealed that children also feel safe to share with friends and they disclose with friends as well. Usually boys disclose it with delay, which became the cause of further revictimization. It is also found that fear of disclosure, threats and blackmailing by the perpetrator caused the delayed disclosure, which turned into the happening of revictimization. Alaggia & Millington, (2008) concluded that although both men and women feel fearful about not being believed or get blamed about child sexual abuse incidents, so, they may refuse

the revelation. It is found that males face more challenges about the disclosure, which leads towards the less prospects of disclosure about experiencing the child sexual abuse.

Hindrance in education and Learning difficulties

The educational impact is considered one the strongest impact on the lives of child sexual abuse. The present study found that most significant impact of such incidents are hindrance or leaving the education due to incident happening, lack of socioeconomic support, uncomfortable environment and behaviors by peers caused changing the school after reporting such incidents.

As a respondent reported as;

“I left studies in class one after the disclosure of the incident, because my educational performance got affected badly. After reporting the incident against my father (who was the only bread winner in the house), I do not have any economic support to continue my education.” (Sonia)

And;

I was sexually molested & abused by the Maulvi at Madrassa and I left the madrassa. I lost interest in performing religious activities, offering prayers, and left memorization of the Holy Quran. I am also studying in class 5th, I was a good student but after the incident, I am facing the problem in memorizing & concentrating.”

(Faisal)

Faisal, 14 years old boy, lived in Jhaital, District Chakwal. He was molested and sexually abused at his Madrassa by the age of 12 ½ Years. The perpetrator was male, mentor figure, cleric (Maulvi) of Madrassa.

It is found that child lost socioeconomic support, if the perpetrator is breadwinner in the household settings, and it leads towards the hindrance in educational activities. The study also revealed that sexual abuse is found as a major impact on learning difficulties in children which leads toward poor school performance.

Another respondent also reported as;

“When incident occurred, I was studying in class 3. The abuser was my senior school fellow. After the incident, my parents changed my school. My educational performance got affected due to the incident and facing difficulties in new school. I also find it difficult to concentrate and learn.”

(Ali)

Ali, 9 years old boy lived in Bhulay Hajial, District Chakwal. He was sexually abused at the age of 8 years by a senior school fellow. The perpetrator was 16 years old boy.

It is revealed in the study that associated learning problems became worse, if the perpetrator is mentor figure. In such cases, the incidents of child sexual abuse lead towards the lack of motivation and interest in religious and academic activities. The results of the study also showed that changing of the school is also linked with the poor educational performance due to sexual abuse incidents especially in those cases, where shifting of school in essential or culprit is found with the same school environment. Some children left education after the happening of the incident, disclosure or reporting of incident as well as getting threats by the culprits, which make it difficult for survivors to continue their education in the same learning settings or created difficulties in learning. The findings of present study are consistent and concluded as the suffering of CSA is strongly influenced on educational achievements of all children. The studies concluded that important adversative effects on academic performance, behavior, social skills, cognition and attendance (Daignault & Hebert, 2009), and learning disabilities such perceptual and processing problems may eventuate (Jonson-Reid et, al., 2004).

Interaction pattern and Social Maladjustment

It is found that children after experiencing the incidents of child sexual abuse can face difficulty in social interaction with relatives and people, and feel socially withdrawn due to safety measures, shame, embarrassment, difficulty in trusting, and uncomfortable vibes, which leads toward the social

maladjustment. Some of the children leave all the activities like attending the schools, interacting with people and social gatherings after the incident happening.

As a respondent reported as;

“I do not meet with anyone outside the family, neither attend family gatherings as I do not feel comfortable around them and due to their disdainful behavior, I felt helpless & reserved. Sometimes, I felt insulted for me and my family, which make me withdrawn. These situations upset me and make me angry.” (Asma Alia)

Asma Alia, a 10 years old girl lived in Chak 19 NB, District Sargodha. She was raped at the age of 8 years by a shopkeeper of her neighborhood. The perpetrator was 30 years old man.

After suffering of sexual abuse, children may face disdainful behavior of the people which caused them to limit their social interaction and socially withdrawn. They feel hard to trust people around them and have problems regarding social maladjustment. These findings are consistent with the existing studies as Davis & Petretic-Jackson, (2000) also reported that the survivors who experienced traumatic incidents of child sexual abuse can show impaired social behavior, which includes being distrustful of others, can avoid relationships, or make relationships with people in a consistent manner, who could not conjure one’s sense of distress and suspicion. Consequently, the survivors can assume deceitfulness from other individuals and they face hardships for building the truthful relationships (Finkelhor & Browne,1985).

Attribution of Blame

The study found that the attribution of blame is associated with the incidents of child sexual abuse. The majority of the respondents reported that it has negatively affected their self-image and self-worth for getting blamed but they considered the perpetrator is accountable. Neither of them blamed themselves. In some cases, the survivors were blamed for incidents happening by their close relationships which also affected negatively on their self-perception and self-worth.

A respondent also reported as;

“After reporting the case against my father, my paternal relatives blamed me for ruining the image of my family and for divorce of my parents. They stated that I have destroyed the ‘honored status of the family’ by revealing the matter.” (Sonia)

It is found that rather than getting empathetic behavior and support from people, some of them were blamed for the incident happening. Despite of getting blamed by other people around them, they reported that their self-image is badly affected by the incident happening and the perpetrator is responsible for this. These findings are consistent with the existing researches as it is concluded that due to the destructive impact of child sexual abuse, the individuals either held themselves responsible or the abusers (Filipas & Ullman, 2006).

Social Isolation & Powerlessness

It is revealed that social isolation and powerlessness are the significant impact of adverse experiences of child sexual abuse and children may feel neglected, helpless and alone. It is also found that child sexual abuse is associated with clearly violating the child’s boundaries, which negatively impact on the personality and social development of the children. The condition of being unable to protect their social boundaries leads towards the feeling of powerlessness and isolation. The fear of danger recurrence and not being able to protect their social boundaries make them less powerful than the perpetrators and leads towards the social isolation. They are lacking the ability to trust others and continuous disempowerment is associated with the possible danger recurrence along with revictimization.

As a respondent reported as;

“I was feelings isolated and helpless for not being able to disclose due to death threats for me and my mother, which caused revictimization for a long time period two years with multiple episodes. Sometimes, I felt that my future hopes about a protected life will not come true, because I have experienced severe abuse within family by my real father. The disclosure leads to the familial breakdown by the divorce of my parents (I was blamed for the incident and parent’s divorce as well).” (Sonia)

It is found that such adverse experiences are associated with certain fears like being unable to protect their boundaries. They feel isolated for not being able to reveal it to anyone on time, due to possibility of threats and blackmailing which leads toward the revictimization. The existing literature also found that powerlessness, or disempowerment is a state of helplessness or a course in which the individual's willpower, wishes, and feeling of worth are repeatedly breached" (Finkelhor & Browne, 1985). By the stories of the respondent, study found that children experience lack of social and emotional support from their families and friends which became consequent as social isolation. It is found that the findings of the study are consistent with the exiting literature as Barnes, et al, (2009), it is asserted that the child's limitations are frequently violated by the abuser which force them to think that such individuals are powerless to halt such happening. It is found that being incapable to halt the exploitation could aggravate distress and strengthen their feeling of helplessness in such circumstances.

Patriarchy and Power Struggle

The study found that the relation between sexually abuse children and perpetrators is based on power struggle. It is also revealed that power struggle is based on gender and age of the perpetrators. All the perpetrators of present study were males and elder from the survived children which showed that there is a power dynamic has been created among abusers and child survivors as children were found submissive and unequal with their perpetrators. The narrations of the respondents also showed that mostly children can be sexually abused by authority figures such as fathers or father figures or mentors due to condition of the power dynamic.

As a respondent reported as;

"I have faced a terrible experience of sexual abuse at the age of eight years by my real father and it happened continuously for the time period of two years with multiple episodes of revictimization." (Sonia)

Another respondent also reported that;

"I became the victim of sexual abuse by cleric (Maulvi 25 years old male) at my Madrassa."

(Faisal)

Another respondent reported that;

"I was sexually abused at the age of 15 by a gang of three men." (Hina)

The study found that individuals experience sexual abused during their childhood by their teachers or mentor figures at madrassa etc., where they are in power relations. This also revealed that it has created a power dynamic among the child survivors and abusers as they were somehow in unequal and submissive relations with the abusers. These findings are also consistent with existing research as Castle and Diallo, (2010) also concluded that sexual abuse by teachers is principally seen as an abuse of power. Mbagaya, (2010) asserted that in SSA, children are taught to be unquestionably obedient and respectful to their elders, which put them at the greater risk of the becoming child sexual abuse victims.

Betrayal and Trust issues

Child sexual abuse has also impact survivors with close relations due to betrayal and harm from the perpetrators. It happened, if child is dependent on perpetrator or assumed to be protected but get betrayal and harm.

A respondent also reported that;

"I was sexually abused by my real father with multiple episodes of revictimization over the time period of two years. I could not reveal it to anyone due to threats and fear. I do not like and trust him. Not all children get good parents. He is a very bad person and I do not call him dad. I do not trust anyone expect my mother."

(Sonia)

In this study it is found that some children became sexually abused victims by their trusted relations, which negatively impact the survivor's wellbeing. They found it difficult to trust on other closed ones by getting harm from the persons, who should protect them. Existing literature found that mostly, a child attains by surroundings that adults are to be reliable and offer supervision and safety. The exploitation occurrences effectually abolish this discernment as child converts progressively mindful that the culprit was deploying and deceitful to them for defending their own benefits. The consequence of such ultimate disloyalty may last into adulthood and is related with problems about the

development and conservation of all attachments, as well as close associations (Abdulrehman & De Luca, 2001).

Stigmatization, Disdainful Behaviors and Self Harm

It is found that child sexual abuse experiences are linked with blames, disdainful behaviors, mocking and stigmatization. The stigmas are attached for being victims throughout their lives linked with disdainful behaviors which negatively impact the lives of survivors. The study also concluded that receiving negative behaviors from family, relatives, peers and other people contribute in the distressful thoughts leading towards suicidal thoughts and self-harm. The disdainful behavior is related to mocking, disrespect, disbelieve, shame and badness.

A respondent reported as;

“I do not like meeting with my people and some other people of my area as people are not good towards me. They gossip that say she was raped. I felt stigmatized.”

(Hina)

And

“I felt that my life has been ended. I cannot face my relatives and some people around me due to their uncomfortable expressions and vibes. I felt isolated, powerless & negative behaviors of people made her feel less worth. I had distressful and suicidal thoughts, and wanted to end my life. I am tired of constant threats by perpetrator even after reporting the matter and negative behaviors made me suffocated.”

(Rashida)

Rashida, 15 years old girl lived in Dhok Gangal, Rawalpindi. She was raped at the age of 14 years. The perpetrator was 21 years old male (Family's friend).

These findings are consistent with existing literature as Leahy et al, (2003) concluded that provenance of blame is associated with facing hostile impacts of CSA. Finkelhor & Browne (1985) revealed that stigmatization is based on the damaging meanings such as immorality, disgrace, blame which are connected with the child about experiences and become fused into the child's self-perception. Rabinovitch, et al. (2015) reported that earlier sexual abuse is strongly associated with behavior in regards to self-harm and suicidal attempts in young females. The outcome of stigmatization might linger into later upcoming years of lives and is related to problems about self-esteem and self-damaging behaviors (Mullen & Fleming, 1998). Long et al., (2006) reported that sexual abuse is associated self-harm behaviors.

Domestic Violence, Family Discordance, Conflicts and Family Breakdown

The study identified that the contributors and impact of sexual abuse associated family functioning are connected with each other. It is revealed that domestic violence is a significant cause of sexual abuse which generate other aspects of family discordance, conflicts, fights and family breakdown. The children who face or have exposure to domestic violence are at the greater risk of being vulnerable for abuse. If the sexual abuse occurred within home, the disclosure is quite challenging, and in that case domestic violence is linked with adverse childhood experiences due to parental disputes, arguments and conflicts leading towards the family breakdown while disclosure occur. It is also found that when children expose the perpetrators outside the home and about happenings of sexual abuse, family conflicts, discordance and breakdown could occur due to blaming the spouse for lack of responsibility. It is also identified that child sexual abuse happened due to family dysfunction and could also be considered an outcome in the form of discordance, conflicts and breakdown. The findings of present study also concluded that domestic violence and associated impact is significantly found in the cases of the female children.

As a respondent reported that;

There was intense discordance and conflict among parents over my kidnaping and sexual abuse incidents.

(Saman)

Saman, a 14 years old girl resided at Dhulla Village, Adayala Road Rawalpindi. She was kidnapped for 18 days and sexually abused multiple times by a gang of two man at the age of 12 years.

Another respondent also reported that;

“My father was constantly in polygamous relationship and there were always fights and arguments between them. Several times, my father has beaten my mother during their fights. Few years ago, I became victim of sexual abuse by my real father at my own home with multiple episodes of revictimization over the period of two years. The disclosure of this incident caused the family breakdown as my mother supported me & reported the matter to police. In revenge, my father divorced my mother. He kicked us out from the house.”

(Sonia)

The findings of the study revealed that family disputes are both the reasons and the consequence of sexual abuse. The identified facts are consistent with a study conducted by Opobo & Wandega, (2011), in which it is asserted that sexual abuse in children occur due to the domestic violence. It is found that CSA is strongly related with the family disfunction. Sinanan, A. N. (2011) also conclude that domestic violence and disputes are associated with child sexual abuse.

Abuse Using Technology/ Pornography, Blackmailing and Revictimization

The study found that CSA is also resulted in blackmailing by the perpetrators by recording videos of children, which negatively impact their wellbeing. It is also found that recorded videos and images are used by the perpetrators for blackmailing the victims for sexual desires and money demands.

As a respondent also reported that;

“I was molested and sexually abused by a serial abuser, who had recorded the whole happening in his mobile. He threatened me not to reveal otherwise he will kill me. He also strictly threatened me for not sharing it with anyone, otherwise my videos will viral on internet. He called me three other time slater and sexually abused me. I was so fearful and could not reveal it till six months.” (Zayan)

Zayan, 13 years old boy, lived in a slum area of district Kasur. He was sexual abuse at the age of 12.5 years. This incident is consisted of four episodes of revictimization till disclosure. The perpetrator was 21 years old male and lived in the same locality.

The study also found that abuse using technology, recording videos and images, blackmailing, revictimization and financial demands are significantly found in the cases of male children. The existing study also found that media is conducive to CSA and considered a threat to the protection of children (Opobo and Wandega, 2011).

Impaired Self esteem

CSA is an intricate social issue which negatively impact the wellbeing of the survivors in regards to the ways they see themselves. In this study, it is identified that child sexual abuse is a cultural taboo and survivors may assume that they are unfit with the expected societal norms, which leads towards feeling inadequacy and low self-esteem.

As a respondent reported as;

“I felt that I am less worthy, excluded and my image towards people around got affected badly due to the incident happening. I cannot face the society.”

(Asma Alia)

It is concluded that CSA is linked with impaired sense of self among the survivors due to feeling inadequate in the society. These findings are consistent with the existing literature as Hobfoll, (1989) also concluded that childhood sexual abuse seems to destructively influence the way that survivors see themselves (i.e., self-worth, feelings of inadequacy).

CONCLUSION

Child sexual abuse is a type of abuse which occurs in private, remains unrecognized and less reported but leave long-lasting impact on survivors. It is an intricate social issue which negatively impact

children throughout years in regards to the ways they see themselves after such awful experiences. It is a cultural taboo and survivors may feel that they are unfit with the expected societal norms, which leads towards the feeling of inadequacy and low self-esteem. Their self-image/ self-worth is also negatively affected due to getting blame for the incident happenings. The study concluded that disclosure, response on disclosure by immediate persons and social support are the significant realities impacting victims. The supportive behavior of the immediate person helps positively, whereas, negative responses such as blaming, yelling, and not believing create negative impacts of child sexual abuse. Mostly, boys adopt the method of “silence” as a defense mechanism, which ultimately leads towards the delayed disclosure and revictimization. The disclosure among most of girls is indirect and immediate but linked with negative responses and lack of social support. The lack of social support by family members on disclosure is associated with delayed disclosure and revictimization. Most of the children are blackmailed and demanded by the perpetrators to keep silence, which prolong the sexual abuse duration and negatively impact the well-being of the children. The adverse experiences of child sexual abuse effect the school performance and learning skills. They also face learning difficulties, hindrance in education and lack of socioeconomic support. The situation gets more worse, if the perpetrator is found within household setting and the breadwinner of the family. The study also concluded that such children may face the problem of social maladjustment due to limited social interaction and disdainful behaviors of people around them, which also make them socially withdrawn. Children also face blackmailing, power struggle, powerlessness due to being unable to protect their boundaries, social isolation, betrayal, trust issues, and stigmatization. They also face the family dysfunction in the form of domestic violence, discordance, family breakdown.

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