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Breaking the Silence: Understanding Child Sexual Abuse in India through a Legal Lens

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Child Sexual Abuse, is a horrible tragedy affecting a child physically (causing serious injury or may lead to death), mentally and emotionally, by another child or adult, abusing sexually, verbally or neglecting the child. It is happening all over the world and India is not an exception to it. At first in India and worldwide, sexual harassment/ abuse and rape against women or any adult were only recognized as a general issue but not child sexual abuse specifically. This is understandable as it is rather difficult for children to understand, accept and disclose that they were sexually abused. Therefore, there were no complaints reported about this grave crime. While this issue was not reported, the children were not given the protection and assistance they required and so they were left to suffer in silence. But after 2012 Child Sexual Abuse has been taken as a serious issue with laws implicated towards the same. Nonetheless, only a little research has been done, while a few books have been written about this issue. But even now, most of our Indian society and culture does not want to talk about it. Now the main question is whether our society is aware of the crime and whether the laws help justice against this heinous crime or does it has some loopholes.

Keywords: *child, sexual abuse, legal implication, crime, POCSO.*

INTRODUCTION

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is a severe issue that has an impact on society and leaves its victims with physical and psychological damage that doesn't go away. India continues to tackle the complex issues related to addressing and preventing child sexual abuse, despite advancements in several areas. In India, there are many different types of child sexual abuse, such as molestation, rape, incest, exploitation, and trafficking. In light of underreporting, social shame, and cultural hurdles that prevent victims from sharing their stories, it is difficult to pinpoint the precise prevalence of CSA. On the contrary, several research studies and surveys suggest that a significant proportion of children in India, across various socioeconomic strata and geographic regions, are vulnerable to sexual abuse. In India, several interrelated variables lead to the sexual abuse of children sexually. Socioeconomic differences, insufficient child safety measures, patriarchal customs, a lack of sex education, family dynamics, and structural flaws in the judiciary and legal system are a few of these. Additionally, as technological advances expand, new channels for online child abuse have appeared, leaving kids even more exposed. Victims of trauma may experience disruptions in their social, emotional, and cognitive development, which may have long-term effects that last into adulthood. Accessing this demographic of CSA victims for the study is quite challenging due to the sensitive and taboo nature of the subject. Sociocultural traditions have an impact on it, and it frequently remains undetected due to a culture of seclusion, social shame, and fear of indignity.¹

India has come a long way in passing laws and putting systems in place to protect kids from being sexually abused and exploited. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act is a significant piece of legislation that offers an extensive legal foundation for dealing with crimes against children, such as sexual abuse, exploitation, and pornography. Nonetheless, there are still issues with these laws' effective enforcement and implementation, especially in rural and marginalized regions.

¹ S. Tyagi and S. Karande, 'Child sexual Abuse in India- a wakeup call' (2021) 67(3) Journal of Postgraduate Medicine 125-129

OBJECTIVE OF RESEARCH

To know how much people are aware of Child Sexual Abuse. To know whether people consider Child Sexual Abuse as a serious offence or not. To discuss whether the existing laws of CSA in India are effective or not. To know whether the current laws of CSA in India are aiding to reduce the sexual abuse against children. To know the loopholes of the existing laws of CSA. To know the effects of legal implications of CSA. To discuss and suggest the measures that need to be taken into consideration for protection against CSA.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Child Sexual Abuse has been a serious but hidden and less spoken problem in India for a very long time. It has only recently been publicly acknowledged as a problem in India. Child sexual abuse (CSA) by the World Health Organization (WHO) has been defined as 'the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violates the laws or social taboos of society'.²

Earlier, only rape was recognized as the main sexual offence against children, but with time, people have started acknowledging many other types of sexual offences and have also started discussing openly the same. Harassment and exploitation of pornography are now legally sanctioned as child sexual offences. Child Sexual Abuse can also be referred to as the misuse of power and authority, combined with force or coercion, which leads to the exploitation of children in situations where adults seek sexual gratification. Child sexual abuse is of many types: sexual, emotional and physical³. Any of these that are potentially harmful to a child's survival, dignity development and most importantly health, is a form of abuse.

According to UNICEF, 'violence against children can be done physically, mentally or emotionally, abuse and injury, neglect or careless treatment, exploitation and sexual abuse. Violence against them may take place in homes, schools, residential care facilities, streets,

² Laura K. Murray et al., 'Child Sexual Abuse' (2014) 23(2) Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America 321-337 <<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24656583/>> accessed 07 March 2024

³ World Health Organization, *WHO Report of the consultation on child abuse prevention*, Geneva (1999) 13

workplaces and in any other places of detention.’ Child Abuse, Child Violence in India Such violence can affect the early and normal development of a child restraining their mental, physical and social abilities to develop and, in extreme cases, sexual child abuse can cause or lead to death. Sexual abuse is a trauma that can contribute to arrested development and emotional disorders.⁴ Child sexual abuse can be in any form and pattern which indirectly or directly affects the child’s physical and mental health and weakens them as he/she grows into an adult. The legal system, even after endless legal implementations, still fails to curb the rise in numbers of child sexual abuse in India as it is a serious crime. We live in a world where we believe it is important to create a healthy environment for the seeds that are sowed and nurtured because the future depends on them to make it better. Children are very important assets for the future, and we must protect them at any cost.

The possible impact of sexual abuse is depression, sleep disturbances, nightmares, frequent urinary infections, isolation from family and friends, or withdrawal from usual activities. Tendency to become either obsessive or apathetic about hygiene anxiety, passivity or overly ‘pleasing’ behaviour, low self-esteem, self-destructive behaviour, and promiscuous activity. Adults experience the ramifications of sexual abuse through anger, rebellion, self-harm, fear, inappropriate sexual behaviour, or difficulty in developing close relationships. Many people who have been sexually abused fall into obsessive-compulsive behaviour patterns such as excessive bathing, teeth-brushing, or hand-washing due to feeling perpetually dirty. Many victims of sexual abuse turn to food as a source of comfort which often develops into an eating disorder: anorexia, bulimia, and binge-eating.⁵ Child abuse is harmful to children as well as to society. It occurs in all cultural and ethnic groups. Child abuse can be classified as physical, emotional and sexual or through neglect. In some cases, child abuse can cause serious injury or

⁴ Kriti Aeron ‘Child Sexual Abuse in India: An Understanding’, (2018) 2(1) IJLMH <<https://www.ijlmh.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Child-Sexual-Abuse-in-India-An-Understanding.pdf>> accessed 07 March 2024

⁵ Blessing Adanda Chuku et al., ‘The Relationship Between Childhood Sexual Abuse and Eating Disorders Among African American Adolescents in the United States’ (2023) 15(4) Cureus Journal of Medical Science <<https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.37949>> accessed 07 March 2024

may result in death. Gender violence – rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment is a serious issue which should be resolved as soon as possible. Major causes of CSA can be⁶⁷⁸:

- History of abuses during their childhood as abused or neglected when wanted to be open.
- Mental or physical health conditions such as PTSD, anxiety and depression.
- Must have poor child-parent relationships.
- May have socioeconomic stress from poor financial conditions, serious medical conditions or unemployment.
- Lack of understanding about basic childhood development.
- May have Substance Use Disorder (SUD) i.e. mental disorder where the person is unable to control the usage of substances such as alcohol, drugs and medications.
- May lack parenting skills.

Currently, child abuse remains a significant societal concern in India. The Indian constitution guarantees protection for children from abuse through various articles:

Article 14 ensures equality before the law and equal protection of laws for all individuals within India's territory⁹. This provision safeguards children from being deprived of equality in status, opportunities, and protection.

Article 15(3) reinforces the principle of equality before the law, extending it to all individuals within India's territory, including children, to prevent any discrimination in status, opportunities, or protection.

Article 21 guarantees the right to life and personal liberty to all individuals, thereby encompassing children's protection.¹⁰

⁶ 'Child Abuse' (*Mayo Clinic*, 19 May 2022) <<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/child-abuse/symptoms-causes/syc-20370864>> accessed 07 March 2024

⁷ Shalini Garg and Dr. Seema Gupta, 'Causes and Effect of Child Sexual Abuse' (2020) 5(5) IJISRT <<https://ijisrt.com/assets/upload/files/IJISRT20MAY650.pdf>> accessed 07 March 2024

⁸ Karen Gill and Kimberly Holland 'Understanding causes of Child Abuse' (*Healthline*, 03 December 2018) <<https://www.healthline.com/health/causes-of-child-abuse>> accessed 07 March 2024

⁹ Constitution of India 1950, art 14

¹⁰ Constitution of India 1950, art 21

Article 21(A) mandates compulsory and free education for children below 14 years of age, as established by the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) enacted by the Indian Parliament in August 2009.¹¹

Article 24 prohibits the employment of children under 14 years of age in factories, mines, or any hazardous occupations, providing them with protection from exploitation and unsafe working conditions.¹²

*Articles 39(a)*¹³, *(e)*¹⁴ and *(f)*¹⁵ outline specific policies for the State to follow for the welfare of children. *Article 39(f)* emphasizes the importance of ensuring children's development in a healthy environment, protected from exploitation and neglect.

Article 45, directs the State to strive towards providing free and compulsory education to all children until the age of 14 within ten years of the constitution's commencement. This underscores the constitutional framers' commitment to children's education as fundamental for their holistic development.¹⁶

Until 2012, the only sexual offences against children that were recognized by the laws were covered under only 3 sections of IPC which were not even specific to children. The only crimes that used to be registered were rape which was covered under *Section 376*¹⁷, outraging modesty of a woman under *Section 354*¹⁸ and unnatural acts which were defined as 'carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal' under *Section 377*¹⁹. Eventually, other forms of offences like non-penetrative sexual assaults, harassment and exploitation were too recognized as crimes and not reported and even when reported, they were not recorded. The government of India passed a special law in 2012 called, 'The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO)²⁰ 2012' which criminalizes sexual assaults, harassment and

¹¹ Constitution of India 1950, art 21A

¹² Constitution of India 1950, art 24

¹³ Constitution of India 1950, art 39(a)

¹⁴ Constitution of India 1950, art 39(e)

¹⁵ Constitution of India 1950, art 39(f)

¹⁶ Constitution of India 1950, art 45

¹⁷ Indian Penal Code 1860, s 376

¹⁸ Indian Penal Code 1860, s 354

¹⁹ Indian Penal Code 1860, s 377

²⁰ The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) 2012

pornography involving a child under 18 years of age and mandates that Special Courts should be set up to expedite trials of these offences.

Initially, the POSCO Act maintains gender neutrality, rendering the consent of the child irrelevant under its provisions. Furthermore, this legislation mandates the compulsory reporting and documentation of instances of sexual abuse against minors, as stipulated in *Section 19(1)* of the POSCO Act²¹.

The legislation enumerates various sexual offences against minors. *Section 3* of the POSCO Act defines ‘penetrative sexual assault’ inclusive of acts such as penetration into the vagina, mouth, urethra, or anus of a child. Notably, the inclusion of the phrase ‘any other person’ in *Section 3(a)* implies the potential involvement of women as perpetrators or victims under certain circumstances.

Additionally, the act offers safeguards to minors throughout the judicial process. *Section 5(j)* delineates penalties for penetrative sexual assault, specifying consequences such as pregnancy in the case of female victims. It's worth noting that women may also be implicated as abettors under *Section 16* of the POCSO Act in such offences²².

Provisions of the POSCO Act:

- i. Upon receipt of a report, law enforcement must present the case before the Child Welfare Committee within 24 hours.
- ii. The statement of the minor must be recorded in a safe and familiar environment, preferably at their home, and only by a female police officer.
- iii. The legislation ensures expeditious trials and confidentiality through in-camera proceedings.
- iv. Minors should not be subjected to repeated court appearances and may testify via video link from their residence.

²¹ The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) 2012, s 19(1)

²² Pavithra KM, ‘Data: POCSO cases increased by 30% in 5 years while pendency rate in Courts crossed 94%’ (*Factly*, 14 June 2022) <<https://factly.in/data-pocso-cases-increased-by-30-in-5-years-while-pendency-rate-in-courts-crossed-94/>> accessed 08 March 2024

- v. Medical examinations of minors should be conducted by female doctors, with the presence of a trusted individual if the parents or guardians are absent, or consent from a medical professional on behalf of the minor.
- vi. The defence is required to direct all questions through the judge, prohibiting aggressive or character-damaging inquiries toward the juvenile.
- vii. Measures should be taken to prevent any exposure of the minor to the accused during the evidence recording process.

Before 2012, there was only one child protection act i.e. Goa Children's Act²³ (2003), which only subjected the whole Goa state in India.

Some case studies showed positive results for the victims:

In the case of *Satish Ragde v State of Maharashtra (2021)*²⁴, Bombay HC ruled that grabbing a child's breasts without making skin-to-skin contact constituted molestation under the POCSO Act, 2012. An appeal was filed in the SC and in the present case of the Attorney General for India versus Satish and another (2021). The issue was how Section 7 of the POCSO Act, 2012 be interpreted. The present judgment observed that Section 7 covers both direct and indirect touch thereby highlighting that the logic in the High Court's opinion quite insensitively trivializes and indeed legitimizes a whole spectrum of undesirable behaviour that undermines a child's dignity and autonomy, through unwelcome intrusions.

Also, In the case of *Alakh Alok Shrivastava v Union of India and Ors (2018)*²⁵, The Apex Court laid guidelines that are to be followed by the Special Courts while trying a case under the POCSO Act, 2012 so that the trial is completed within the period of one year, as provided under Section 35 of the POCSO Act.

Despite being this one side of the judgments against child sexual abuse little positive, the other side is a shocker for the victims and society such as:

²³ Goa Children's Act 2003

²⁴ *Satish Ragde v State of Maharashtra* Crl App No 161/2020

²⁵ *Alakh Alok Shrivastava v Union of India* (2018) 17 SCC 291

In the case of *Prem Rajendra Prasad Dubey v State of Maharashtra (2022) and Anr.*²⁶ the Bombay High Court held that touching private parts and kissing the lips of a male child would not constitute an unnatural offence under Section 377 of IPC. The Hon'ble judge granted bail to the applicant i.e. the accused on grounds of Sections 8 and 12 are punishable by a maximum imprisonment of up to 5 years.

Not only this but, in another case of *Sonu Kushwaha v State of U.P. (2021)*²⁷ Allahabad HC held that apparently, oral sex is not under the law's definition of 'aggravated form of crime' or 'penetrative sexual assault'. The penetrative sexual assault under Section 4 is a lesser offence than aggravated penetrative sexual assault under Section 6. So, the Court reduced the sentence of the appellant from 10 years of rigorous imprisonment to 7 years and neglected Section 5(m) that penetrative sexual assault on a child below 12 years can be added to the aggravated penetrative sexual assault list.

HYPOTHESIS

Sexual abuse of a child is sometimes very confusing for the family members of the child. The victims face a difficult time talking about the abuse because of the unpredictability of the response by the family. About one out of every four girls and one out of every five boys face sexual abuse before they even turn 18. Getting treatment for a victim becomes a difficult process because the child has a lack of trust. Some of the families may not even know their child has been subjected to sexual abuse. When the victim's family has a difficult time talking about the abuse it leads to the family pretending that it never happened which affects the victim even more because they have to face their worst fears by themselves. The abuser is usually a person whom the child trusts and knows well. It becomes very traumatizing for the victim and the family and it becomes hard to cope with it. Many of the victims avoid talking about it not only to their families but also to anybody else. The laws in India are not providing complete justice. Even some of the sexual abuse and harassment are not being recognized yet which makes it an even worse situation for the victims and their families.

²⁶ *Prem Rajendra Prasad Dubey v The State of Maharashtra and Anr* Bail Application No 3731/2021

²⁷ *Sonu Kushwaha v State of U.P.* Crl Misc Bail Application No 37036/2023

SCOPE AND LIMITATION

CSA has impacted the lives of too many families, adolescents, children and communities. To highlight this as an important public health problem, we have defined and estimated the scope of CSA over the last several decades. A more precise understanding of the number of children affected by CSA would improve the ability of the paediatrics, child welfare and public health, including other communities, to respond to and prevent this social justice problem and significant public health problems.

Over a decade, India has pledged to 'protect our nation's children from offences like pornography, sexual harassment, sexual assault' through the act known as the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), but POCSO has been in deficiency or controversy once or the other time. Another fundamental flaw with POCSO is its incapability to deal with historical cases. India must and should revise its procedural and legal methods with growing international jurisprudence around these issues, and in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, with historical child sexual abuse. The main limitations of such abuses can be because of the following reasons:

- Less awareness about Child Sexual Abuse among people.
- Lack of implementation of laws relating to Child Sexual Abuse.
- Lack of education in schools and families about Child Sexual Abuse.
- Lack of communication about Child Sexual Abuse between victims and their parents/teachers.
- Even some courts or judges claim/rule out that abuse and harassment are lesser offences.
- Victims of CSA can become the NEXT ABUSER.
- It leads to trauma and PTSD among the victims.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: RESEARCH DESIGN

This research paper was designed to describe the five aspects as follows:

1. Whether people are aware of CSA.
1. Whether people consider CSA as a serious issue.

2. Are the current laws of CSA in India effective or not?
3. Are the current laws of CSA in India helping in reducing sexual abuse against children?
4. If those laws are not effective then what are the loopholes in it?

For this research paper, quantitative data have been used. It includes primary data which is the data collected firsthand by the researchers themselves. Here the primary data was collected through a survey using a questionnaire.

The survey consisted of 9 multiple-choice questions where only the suitable answer according to the respondents need to be selected and 5 free space questions where respondents are free to write their views on the respective questions.

POPULATION OF STUDY

The goal was to collect survey responses from all those age groups who are capable of understanding the question and who are affected by the matter of CSA in some manner. Hence, ages from 12 years to 55 years have been used in this survey.

Here, in this research paper, 60 targeted respondents who are normal citizens of the nation were randomly provided with the survey irrespective of their age, gender, religion, caste and profession. In total, 57 respondents took the survey which was fully completed and therefore the survey results of all 57 respondents were used in the respective analysis. 3 among those 60 targeted respondents were reluctant to take the online survey and did not turn up.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE & METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

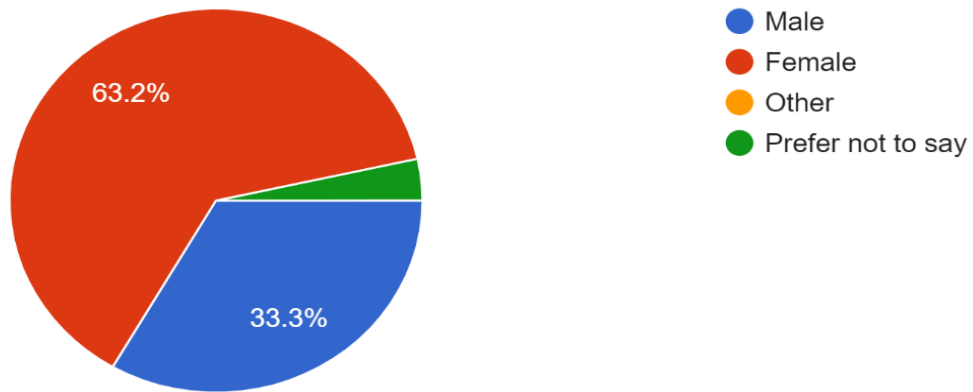
For this research paper, a simple random sampling technique was used and 57 respondents between the age group of 12 years to 55 years were issued with structured questionnaire online through Google Forms. The reason for selecting this particular age group is that they are capable of understanding and answering the questions asked in the questionnaire. And also, they are the ones who can take action against this issue.

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire on Child Sexual Abuse, 'This questionnaire is solely for research purposes and the information provided by you will be kept at utmost confidentiality'. *Required

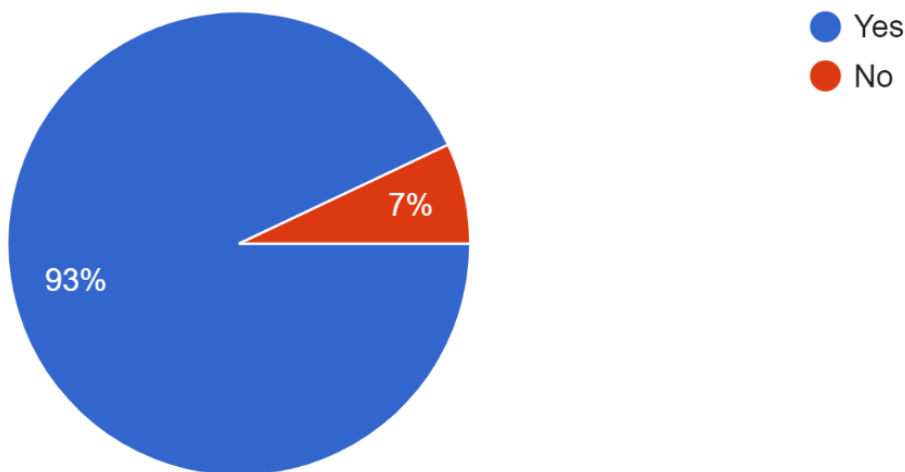
1. How old are you? * _____
2. What is your Gender? * (Mark only one option)
 Male Female Other Prefer not to say
3. Are you aware of Child Sexual Abuse? * (Mark only one option).
 Yes No
4. Do you think it is a prevailing concern in India? (Mark only one option).
 Yes No
5. Have your parents ever talked with you about Child Sexual Abuse? * (Mark only one option).
 Yes No
6. Have you ever been subjected to this? * (Mark only one option).
 Yes No Prefer not to say
7. If YES, how old were you when it happened the first time? _____
8. Did you ever inform or talk to anybody about it? (Mark only one option).
 Yes No
9. If you wish, you can use the space below to elaborate on it.
_____.
10. Select the statement that you agree with. * (Mark only one oval)
 Only girls can be victims of sexual abuse.
 Only boys can be victims of sexual abuse.

2. Gender: Out of 57 respondents 36 were female, 19 were male and 2 preferred not to say.



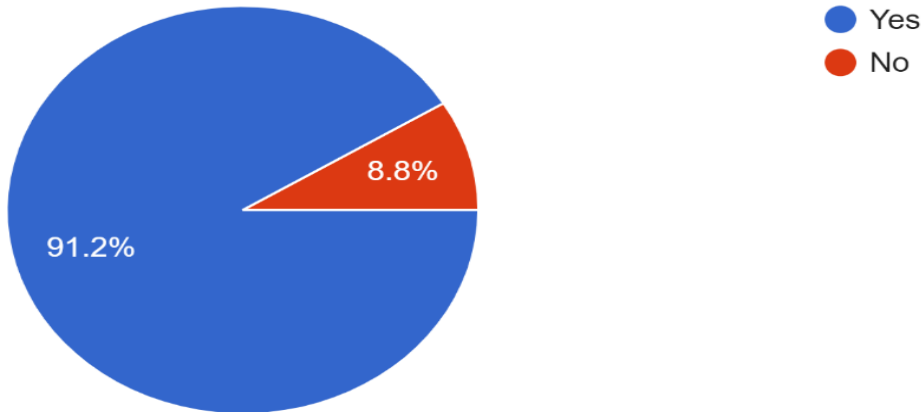
Graph 2: Gender of the Respondents

3. Awareness about CSA: Out of 57 responses, 7% of respondents did not know about Child sexual abuse, where most responses were from the minor age group between 12-18 years.



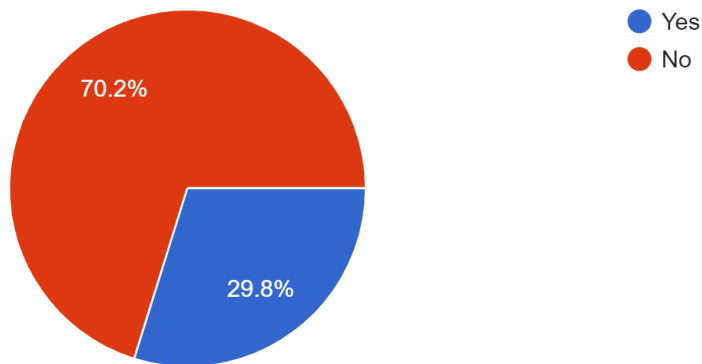
Graph 3: Awareness of CSA in Respondents

4. Prevailing concerns: Out of the 57 responses 8.8% think it is not a prevailing concern which again has minor age groups involved whereas most respondents understand the crime’s gravity towards the child’s mental and physical well-being.



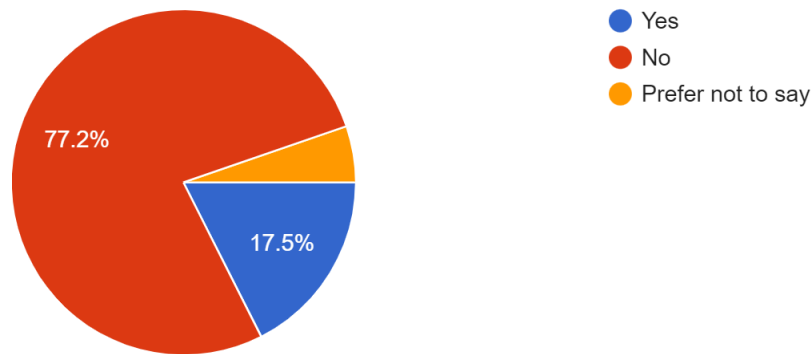
Graph 4: Understanding the concerns related to CSA.

5. Conversation with parents: Out of 57 responses 14 responses were positive as the respondents had the conversation with their parents openly, while still the majority is respondents were not open up with the family members, which needs to be changed.



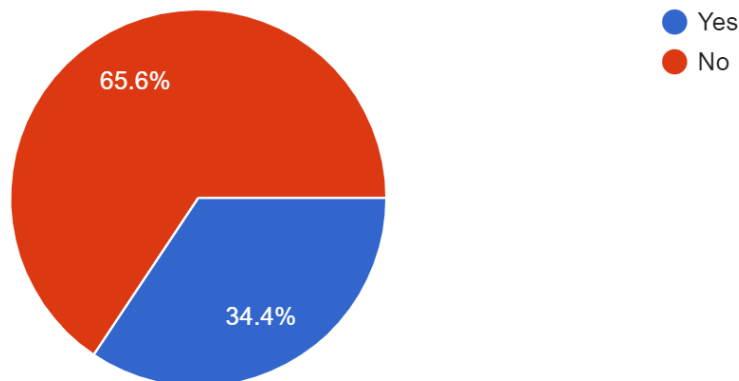
Graph 5: Percentage of conversations parents had with their child regarding CSA.

6. If subjected to CSA and what was the age: 13 responses were subjected to CSA where 3 did not prefer to say and 10 openly admitted their assault. The victims were aged between 5-17 years.



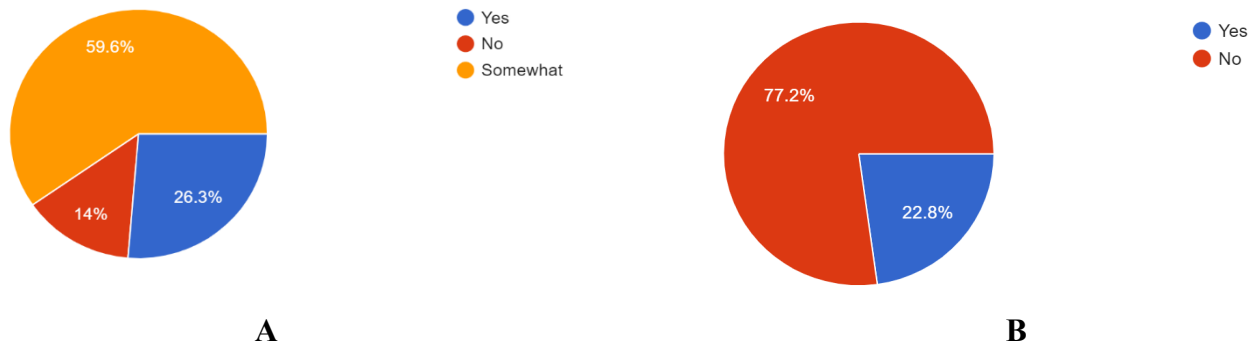
Graph 6: Respondents subjected to CSA

7. If subjected to CSA, was it mentioned and if they wish to elaborate about the CSA suffered: There were 32 responses regarding if they were ever subjected to CSA, which was more than half of the responses and only 11 talked about it to someone. And only 3-4 responses openly mentioned the same.



Graph 7: Percentage of victims who talked about the abuse to anyone.

8. Awareness about the CSA laws and if they serve justice: Out of 57 responses only 15 respondents knew about CSA laws while 8 were not aware. Others were aware but not fully. Overall 13 responses think the laws serve justice which again includes the minor-age group.



Graph 8: A) Awareness of CSA laws; B) If the CSA laws served justice to victims.

DISCUSSION

Among the targeted 60 responses only 57 respondents participated, while the other 3 responses did not turn up as they were reluctant to talk about the following matter. Out of the 57 responses which were irrespective of their age, sex, religion, caste and profession, where almost 67% of respondents were adults i.e. <18 years old till the age of 55 years. Genders including Males, Females and others were included to take every possible opinion. 7% of respondents were unaware of CSA and also 28% of respondents thought that CSA is not a prevailing concern of our nation, and the respondents were mostly between the ages of 12-18 years which proves that they need to be informed about the same. The abuse rate of children in the last 5 years (2016-2020) rose by 30% while in 2019 and 2020 47,000 cases were reported under the POSCO Act. An average of 127 cases are reported daily.

70% of respondents never got any awareness talks regarding the CSA from their parents. 23% of respondents were subjected to the CSA when they were in between the age group of 5- 17 years, out of which also only 37% of respondents could talk about the same to someone either parent, family, teachers, or friends whom they found it comfortable to talk with. All 57 respondents did agree that CSA could happen to anyone regardless of their gender. Between 2017-2020, 97% of victims were constituted of girl children, while the remaining 3% with a boy child.

When asked about why they think CSA could happen, the responses consisted: Pleasure, mentally retarded, lack of proper education, PTSD, maybe a past victim.

The CSA reported under POSCO were majorly on 'rape' and 'sexual assault', where rape cases increased by 59% almost with 99% of girl victims.

When asked about the CSA laws, only 26% knew about the laws, while others either had some knowledge or no knowledge. 77% of respondents think that the laws do not serve justice while others think they do. The truth is that more than 90% of cases under the POSCO Act are still pending. Now the numbers have decreased still more pending cases with the registering cases increasing day by day.

Many respondents took the initiative and shared suggestions like increasing awareness, increasing law implications more strictly, encouraging talks related to the grave issue and making the victim more comfortable and stronger to deal with the coming mental, physical and emotional pressure and health. Not neglecting the child's signal as the abuser may be someone close or known may stop a child from letting the issue come to light.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

There needs to be better legislation against Child Sexual Abuse for the protection of minors. Child sexual abuse has always been the biggest stigma. No doubt that child abuse and its negligence hinder to healthy development of children but it also causes a traumatised childhood and may lead to the emergence of criminal thoughts by those who suffered this heinous crime. Lack of care, attention, communication, supervision etc. from the dependent source of minors that is the legislation, government, family, education and other institutions have steered the wheel toward most crimes against them. Any kind of act of sexual abuse/harassment/assault leaves a long-term impact on the mental psyche of a victimized child creating hindrances at his/her normal social growth and development stage progressing to various psychological problems and taking command over their thoughts for years to come. Even the lack of proper implementations, awareness, trauma and recent judgment can affect the victims adversely. Although progress to create awareness regarding CSA and protection against it has been made

there is still more to be done. Even the results of all the data collected show that people are hesitant and unassertive in communicating or taking a step against CSA.

The extracted results as well as the conclusion suggest that the laws regarding the protection of children against Child Sexual Abuse must be commonly available and explained to everyone. Implementation of strict laws must be there to severely punish those abusers for their heinous crimes. In many cases of CSA, the abusers can be a part of family, friends or close/distant relatives. Also, any gender irrespective of age, colour, religion, caste, or place of birth may be subjected to CSA. Children need to be made aware of sexual abuse in the family and elders should make children comfortable around them to talk about it if they need to. At the school level, openly teaching CSA should be made a part of extracurriculars as 80% of abusers are among people they have known. Laws and rights regarding CSA and its protection must be taught to both parents and children. Teaching good touch and bad touch to every gender is also one of the necessary aspects to be carried out in an awareness drive through media like television, advertisements, banners, posters, podcasts, social media applications etc. so that they know how to act in such situations. Furthermore, minors depending on sources that is the legislation, government, laws and rights, family, school and other institutions must be approachable enough to ask for help without hesitation. This can reduce a person's risk for future victimization. Similarly, reporting the abuse and punishment to the accused at the earliest can help the victim not feel suppressed and depressed and providing some kind of reward to victims who report it encourages other victims to come forward as well. Hence, it is urged by victims as well to open up and raise their voices to it rather than stay still and put.