

PREVALANCE OF SEXUAL ASSAULT AT DISTRICT PESHAWAR

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To determine frequency, percentage and distribution of child sexual abuse among reported cases.

Material & Methods: This cross sectional retro prospective study was conducted in department of Forensic Medicine Khyber Medical College, Peshawar Pakistan from Jan 2017 to Dec 2017. Eighty samples with police inquest were included in the study, limitations and exclusion criteria were defined. Pre designed questionnaire was used for data collection while SPSS.20.0 was used for data analysis.

Results: Out of 80 female samples 29 (36.3%) were cases of child abuse where as age group between 11-30 years was the most vulnerable age group. Urban areas proved to have maximum reported cases while among seasons many cases were reported in winters. Police station Bana Mari had maximum cases of sexual assault followed by Faqirabab and Phari Pura.

Conclusion: Sexual assault being important but neglected social issue was well addressed through this study, and enlightened the places, age groups and reason which are mostly involved in increasing such number of cases.

Key Words: Assault, Sexual Violence, Abuse.

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INTRODUCTION

Sexuality is important aspect of life, health and normal well being of a human, a healthy sexuality is considered as human right where violence has been acknowledged as a violation of human rights^{1,4}. World Health Organization defines "sexual violence" as any coerced sexual act, involving: sexual act, any such attempt, commenting, or acts meant against a persons' sexuality using coercion, by any person irrespective of his/her relationship to the victim, at any point, including home and work while anything involving physical contact comes in category of sexual assault^{5,6}. Sexual assault is defined to be as any physical contact having a sexual nature without voluntary consent or in accordance with law of country including inappropriate touching, penetrations (oral and anal), rape, attempted rape and child molestation⁷. It is a major problem affecting millions every year where victims are at high

risk of abuse again and again. The perpetrators of this act are at high risk of repeating this act again which includes harassment and assault too⁸⁻⁹. It is traumatic at the time it occurs and can have long lasting effects on physical health, lifetime history of sexual abuse is estimated to range between 15% - 25% in general female population^{10,13}. True prevalence in female's ranges from one place to other, available data is due to different sexual violence measures in which non reporting is a limitation^{14,15}.

Childhood is thought to be an important phase of development having high vulnerability to physical and psychosocial risks¹⁶. Sexual abuse of a child is considered to be violation of child basic rights, it is the outcome of a set of interrelated familial, social, psychological with economic factors which is one of the most critical matters on international human rights agenda. It also referred as to be an activity for which the child is unprepared and can't give consent and under 18 years of age¹⁷.

Health researchers are increasingly focusing on violence & assault against women at all levels i.e local, national, and international levels, few of them has given their lifespan on such (i.e., violence experienced prior to, during, and after migration) in communities & demographic area. In this study our main objective will

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be to find the age distribution among sexual assault cases reported (which is just the ice berg of total cases), urban: rural distribution, month wise and police station wise distribution of these cases.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This cross sectional descriptive study was conducted in department of Forensic Medicine Khyber Medical College, Peshawar from Jan 2017 to Dec 2017. 80 female subjects having different ages were presented to the department with police inquest, were examined in the medico-legal clinic after obtaining proper informed written consent with assurance to keep their confidentiality were included in this study. Any female of any age presenting without police inquest were excluded from study. Cultural, social and religious norms were among few limitations being faced. Data was collected by using pre designed questionnaires including questions related to bio-data and examination; further it was analyzed by using SPSS version 20.0. Mean \pm standard deviation was calculated for numerical variables like age. Frequency and Percentage was calculated for categorical variables. Results were presented in form graphical and tabulated forms.

RESULTS

Out of these 80 samples 29 (36.3%) were below 18 years of age that puts them in the category of child abuse while rest age group wise distribution is shown in Table No: 1 having mean age of 23.94 ± 9.894 years making age group between 11-30 most vulnerable to such cases. The month wise distribution clearly shows maximum number of cases 14 (17.5%) in December followed by April 10 (12.5%) and July (11.3%) as shown in Fig # 1. 5.8 (7.25%) cases were reported per month in summers (May to Sep) making total of 29 (36.25%) cases where as 8 (10%) per month cases were reported in winters (Nov to Jan) making total of 24 (30%) cases reported. Out of 80 cases reported 56 (67.5%) cases were from urban area where as rest 24 (32.5%) were from rural area suggesting maximum case reporting from developed areas. Among police stations maximum cases were reported from P.S Bana Mari 16 (20.0%) followed by P.S Faqirabad 13 (16.3%) and P.S Phari Pura 9 (11.3%) as shown in Fig # 2

DISCUSSION

In our unique study only 80 female samples were presented to this department which is not the representation of actual number of cases because of cultural, social and religious norms in the area; however on basis of this data we can extract that the incidence of age on comparison with study by Sweta Lal et al and Namita et al showed almost same result having maximum number

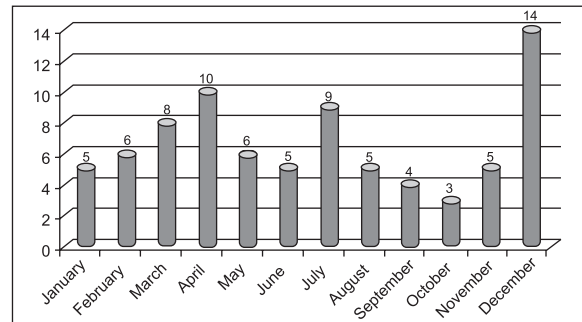


Fig 1: Month wise distribution of cases for the year 2017

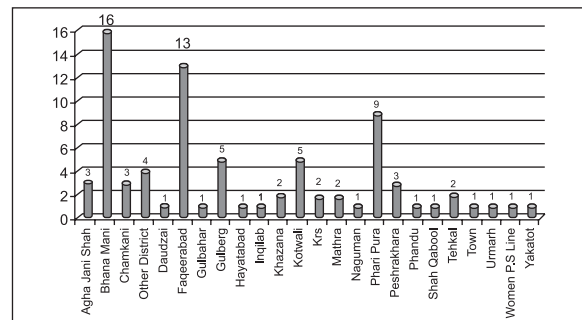


Fig 1: Police Station wise distribution of cases in Peshawar District.

Table 1: Age wise distribution of sexual assault cases

Age Group (Years)	Frequency & Percentage of cases
1 - 5	2 (2.50%)
6 - 10	1 (1.25%)
11 - 15	11 (13.75%)
16 - 20	22 (27.50%)
21 - 25	12 (15.00%)
26 - 30	15 (18.75%)
31 - 35	8 (10.00%)
36 - 40	6 (7.50%)
41 - 45	1 (1.25%)
46 - 50	1 (1.25%)
51 - 55	1 (1.25%)

of cases reported between 11-20 years whereas less number of cases are being reported between 0-10 years^{18,19}. Age group of early puberty, college going, initial job time, etc proved to be most vulnerable ages for such cases in female sexual assaults, demonstrated by Cybulska B in a study conducted at UK between year 2005 & 2006 similarly another study by Rawat et al working on a 10 Years data from 2004-2013 showed the same age group involved in activities as mentioned above were the key target for sexual assaults cases

which coincides the results extracted from our data^{20,21}

Child abuse sexually is thought to be an alarming condition for the well-being, safety, prevention and grooming of a child in all aspects, a multi dimensional approach with all possible efforts and coordination among all sectors to control it^{22,23}. In present study out of total sample 80 cases 29 (36.3%) cases were of child abuse in which if we focus about 18 (62.06%) cases from age group of 15-18 years, reported in similar statistics by Hagraas AM et al in a 6 years at Egypt²⁴. The risk factors of child abuse includes many but socioeconomic conditions, residential schooling, early puberty, child labor proves to major in many studies, where as in more than 90% of studies perpetrators are male²⁵.

The study proved that maximum number of cases were being reported from urban areas i.e is 67.5% cases which may be due to lack of education at rural areas for reporting or limitations as mentioned in methodology and it may be due to modernization at urban areas more than rural areas. The ratio of 3:1 between urban and rural is same as recorded and demonstrated by a study conducted at Egypt between 2012 and 2013²⁶. In the study maximum cases were reported from police station Bana Mari which is also an urban area.

LIMITATIONS

There is a little information available for sexual assault cases always in our region but this study has enlightened and shown local taboos hindered our study population, unnecessary interference of the police department delayed reporting of cases in pressure of accused party.

CONCLUSION

The vulnerable age group among females which is mostly young age, who become victim of this disaster with comparison of rural and urban areas showing maximum reported cases from urban areas.

RECOMMENDATION

Parents/Family of the affected females should be taken in confidence so that maximum number of cases may be reported in time. This can only be happen, when the cultural myths in the minds of the people are removed and they develop confidence in the system (Police, Doctors & Judiciary).

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AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

Following authors have made substantial contributions to the manuscript as under:

Alam N: Conception and design, final approval and guarantor of the article

Naveed S: Collection and assembly of data

Ahmad MS: Drafting of the article, statistical expertise

Aziz I: Critical revision of the article for important intellectual content

Authors agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.