



A LITERATURE SEARCH ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT: A CASE OF PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to throw some light on child abuse worrisome social ill. The research focused on secondary data available of different countries, particularly Pakistan. Content analysis is carried out. Various forms of malpractices on children such as sexual abuse, neglect, physical and emotional harm were mentioned as some of the ills perpetrated against them by step mothers, uncles, non-relatives and sometimes their parents. Even though the most frequent forms of these abuses varied from one region to another, some of them such as neglect, sexual abuse and physical harm were reported in almost all the regions. Early and forced marriage was declared by some discussants in the northern regions especially among the Moslem community. The reported causes of these ill-treatments are jealousy from childless step mothers, ignorance, false accusation of witchcraft and stealing, polygamy, poverty, consumption of alcohol and substance abuse.

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INTRODUCTION

The C.D.C. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) defines child abuse and neglect (also referred to generally as child maltreatment) as " any one act, or a series of acts, by a parent or other caregiver (such as a clergy, coach, or teacher), which causes injury to a kid or raises the possibility of harm or a threat of harm to a child." Federal law creates a minimum definition for child abuse and neglect but gives states the authority to define what constitutes child abuse and neglect in their jurisdictions (Abbasi et al., 2015). The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) (42 U.S.C. Section 5106g) requires that, at a minimum, states define child abuse and neglect to mean: " Any recent behavior by a parent or caregiver that ends in a death, severe physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation is considered to be recent behavior."; or "An act or failure that poses an immediate threat of significant damage" (Jackson et al., 2015).

Physical abuse is any non-accidental physical injury to a child brought on by a parent, caregiver, or another person with parental responsibility (Hansen & Ainsworth, 2020). It can be punching, kicking, biting, shaking, throwing, stabbing, choking, hitting (with a hand, stick, strap, or another object), burning, or other physical harm. As long as it is appropriate and does not harm the kid physically, physical punishment like spanking or paddling is not seen as abuse. Minor bruising, serious fractures, or even death are possible injuries due to physical abuse.

Neglect is when a parent or other adult caregiver neglects to meet a child's fundamental requirements (Maguire-Jack & Showalter, 2016). Typically, neglect falls into the following categories:

1. Physical (e.g., failure to provide necessary food or shelter, lack of appropriate supervision)
2. Medical (e.g., failure to provide necessary medical or mental health treatment, withholding medically indicated treatment from children with life-threatening conditions)
3. Educational (e.g., failure to educate a child or attend to special education needs)
4. Emotional (e.g., inattention to a child's emotional needs, failure to provide psychological care, permitting a child to use alcohol or other drugs)

A family may require information or assistance if perceived maltreatment is sometimes a result of cultural values, community standards of care, or poverty. It is crucial to remember that being poor is not the same as neglecting or abusing children (Maguire et al., 2015). However, suppose a family neglects to use the information and resources at their disposal to care for their child. In that case, the child's health or safety may be at risk, necessitating child welfare intervention. Additionally, a lot of States offer an exception. The infliction of a non-accidental injury by a person who is not a parent, guardian, relative, or another caregiver (i.e., a stranger) is regarded as a criminal act that is not the responsibility of child protective services (Mathur & Chopra, 2013).

Sexual abuse encompasses touching a child's genitalia, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure, and exploitation through prostitution or the creation of pornographic material by a parent or other care give (Chopra & Chopra, 2015). CAPTA defines sexual abuse as "the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person in engaging in, any sexually explicit conduct, or simulation of such conduct to produce a visual depiction of such conduct; or the rape, and in cases of a caretaker or interfamilial relationships, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or another form of sexual (Woika & Bowersox, 2013).

A behavior pattern known as emotional abuse (or psychological abuse) affects a child's emotional growth or feeling of worth. Along with withholding affection, support, or direction, this may involve unrelenting criticism, threats, or rejection. Kid protective services may not be able to help in cases of emotional abuse without proof of damage or mental injury to the child since emotional abuse is frequently difficult to show (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 2016).

Impact of Neglect

Even though child neglect accounts for almost two-thirds of all complaints of child maltreatment, there is a paucity of Research on the association between neglect and child maltreatment (Kovler et al., 2021). Researchers and practitioners focus on physical abuse, which accounts for less than a third of all accusations. Child neglect is considered less of a problem than physical and sexual abuse (Evans & Burton, 2013).

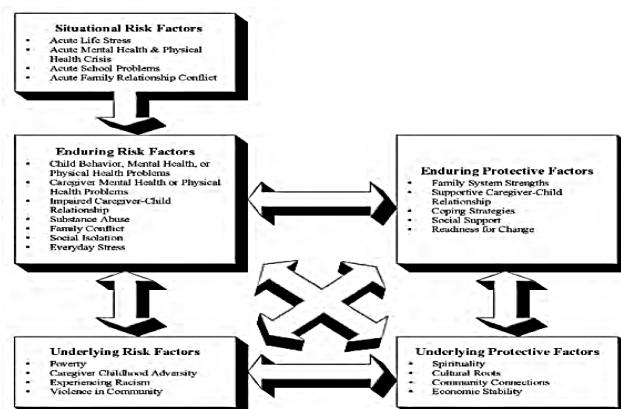


Figure 1. Model agreed by Evans and Burton, 2013

Although neglect is the most reported problem, it is rarely the primary focus of study. Others believe that neglect has the greatest influence on young or older victims, while others believe neglect has the least impact on young or older victims. Early childhood is considered the most appropriate period to treat the relationship components of neglect. Relational intervention is particularly necessary throughout the latter stages of childhood (Cicchetti & Toth, 2015). Both situations necessitate relationship interventions for distinct reasons, with correspondingly disparate outcomes. It is necessary to have a secure bond during childhood to progress appropriately. Teens require healthy connections during a period when developmental milestones emphasize the importance of interpersonal interactions (Gamble & Gamble, 2013). Adolescent neglect manifests itself in various ways, not the least of which is involved in child welfare. The engagement of the juvenile justice system is also a means of revealing the consequences of neglect.

Teens in chronic neglect cases are more prone to being involved in the juvenile justice and adult penitentiary systems for the rest of their lives. Rather than physical abuse, child neglect may be a more significant predictor of juvenile crime and reoffending than physical abuse. Teenage neglect manifests itself differently than early childhood neglect. Adolescence is a period of transition and growth in one's interpersonal connections. Neglect negatively impacts peer interactions, and as a result, adolescent delinquency is frequently the result. In addition, the kind and timing of child neglect and offending are governed by the interactions between the kid and his or her parents and peers. Establishing these kinds of connections is tough in the face of neglect.

Even though child neglect accounts for almost two-thirds of all complaints of child maltreatment, there is a paucity of Research on the association between neglect and child maltreatment (Min et al., 2013). Researchers and practitioners focus on physical abuse, which accounts for fewer than a third of all accusations (Herrenkohl et al., 2013). Child neglect is considered less of a problem than physical and sexual abuse.

- a. Health and physical development;
- b. Intellectual and cognitive development;
- c. Emotional and psychological development;
- d. Social and behavioral development.

Child Abuse and Neglect Worldwide

Moreover, every year, one billion children are subjected to emotional, physical, or sexual assault. Despite its high prevalence, violence against children is sometimes veiled in secrecy and socially acceptable, making it difficult to address its causes and risk factors. The establishment of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, which includes a particular aim (SDG 16.2) to end all kinds of violence against children, has given increased impetus to efforts to achieve every child's right to live free from fear, neglect, abuse, and exploitation.

With twice as many children living in countries experiencing complex situations as two years ago, the challenge to these children's right to protection is particularly urgent. While nations in fragile and warlike circumstances are among the most impacted, additional settings, such as poverty, loss of livelihood, violence along migrant routes, and, increasingly, violence in the virtual realm, amplify risks to children's safety. Furthermore, children experience prejudice and neglect due to disability, racism, xenophobia, sexual orientation and gender identity, and ethnicity.

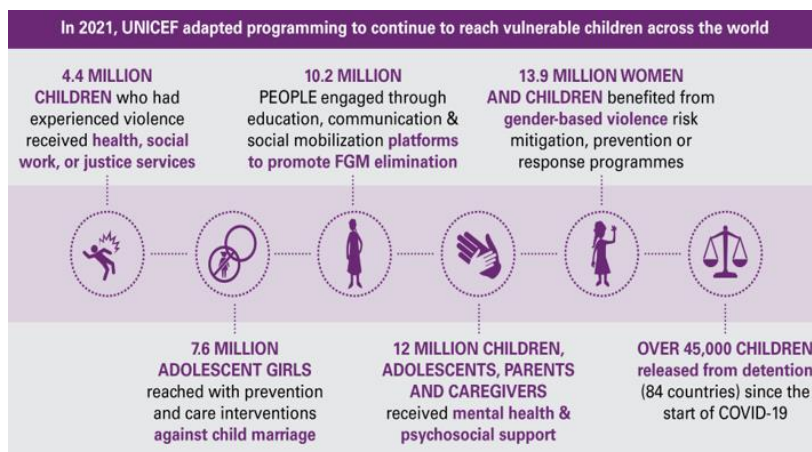


Figure 2. UNICEF Adapted Programming to Continue to reach Vulnerable Children across the World

UNICEF Child Protection collaborated with partners from 153 countries to sustain success in the last year of its Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. UNICEF changed programs to address vulnerable and disadvantaged children worldwide, reaching more children than ever in several areas of UNICEF's child protection work.



Figure 3. Out of Shadows Report

The top ten countries on the index were all high-income, with a score of 100 representing the best environment for children: the United Kingdom (82.7), Sweden (81.5), Canada (75.3), Australia (74.9), the United States (73.7), Germany (73.1), South Korea (71.6), Italy (69.7), France (65.2), and Japan (63.8). Brazil is ranked second and is classed as upper-middle income by the World Bank. The Research indicates that the frequency of child sexual abuse and exploitation is not related to a country's financial level. Several high- and middle-income nations, including China, Argentina, and Russia, fell into the index's lowest quartile, and just three of the top ten achieved a score of at least 75. According to the Research, there are still "significant disparities in the protective environment for children in even the wealthiest nations."

Media Coverage Reporting Of Child Abuse In Different Countries:

By reporting on, analyzing, and intervening in news stories involving child sexual abuse (CSA), the media not only raises public awareness of the issue but also puts it on the political and social agenda. Because it clarifies what CSA is and the need for child protection and safeguarding policies and services, media coverage of the issue has a significant impact.

In India

Sensitive information, such as the child's identity and the family's location, was discovered to have been unnecessarily broadcast or shared on social media in several incidents of child abuse reported from India. Such reporting contributes to social stigma of shame or secondary victimization of the non-offending family members instead of portraying the crime in the appropriate light, which also becomes one of the reasons for not reporting abuse incidents. Both mainstream and local media frequently ignore certain requirements, such as observed ethics and laws, facts, presentation, terminology, language, objectivity, topical information, and follow-up. Even though certain child safety authorities have recommended appropriate standards for journalists covering child abuse cases, most journalists, especially those working in the vernacular press, are still unaware of these guidelines. The media has a huge opportunity to impact institutional responses to child abuse and neglect as well as prevention strategies. A well-targeted media advocacy campaign can frame the CSA issue to alter social norms in addition to putting it on the community's agenda. It can further raise community members' awareness of their own attitudes toward abuse and neglect as well as their responsibility to speak out against such behavior.

In Bangladesh

South Asia was identified as the third-largest location for child abuse after Western-Central Africa and Eastern-Southern Africa. Child abuse is a prevalent occurrence in Bangladesh. Bangladesh consistently experiences various natural catastrophes, such as floods and cyclones; therefore the risk of child maltreatment, such as parental separation, early labor, and trafficking, became quite predictable for this nation.

Asian media has frequently been accused of compromising children's privacy by exposing their private information to large audiences (Steinberg, 2016). South Asian nations expose the real state of unethical kid news reporting. According to ideas, media outlets tend to focus on sensational news. Sri Lankan media had been abusing children's privacy (Atiqul Haque et al., 2020). Over time, Sri Lanka demonstrated a lack of interest in covering children's issues in the media. The majority of the population relies solely on the media to learn about child sex crime. However, the victim's privacy was not routinely protected by the media while reporting. In the course of reporting on child sex offences, the victim's name, family history, age, gender, religion, race, and other details were made public. According to a UNICEF research, Bangladeshi media frequently portrays young women who have been sexually and physically abused in ways that compromise their privacy. The Bangladeshi government, lawmakers, and child welfare organizations should exercise greater caution and implement modernized media reporting norms (Donovan, 2020).

Hong Kong

Children's voices are rarely consistently heard in the media in Hong Kong. Most of the time, it is adults advocating on behalf of the kids. The journalistic ethics for children of doing no harm and not disclosing the identities of children who are abused or in conflict with the law were observed by both print and broadcast media. Pictures of youngsters were meticulously manipulated by both newspapers to remove any details that would give away the identities of the subjects. The media has a creative part in the process by highlighting the issue of child abuse in Hong Kong, defining the idea, pushing interventions, and distributing finances, to name just one indirect consequence in the more specific situation of child abuse. One of the most important prerequisites for an event to happen is labeling. An act of abuse must first be recognized as such by the judicial system and the general public in order for it to be committed. The conceptual limits of abuse are shaped in part by the media, which plays a significant role in the labeling process. Inscription, which refers to the media's exploitation of socially outcast persons, is a crucial element in this process (Crawford, 2021).

It was emphasized that it is crucial that the partnership between ICH and the media be maintained in order to increase the journalists' awareness of cases of child abuse and neglect, with the hope that this will enable them to handle stories, interviews, and reports about child abuse and neglect more accurately, tenderly, and appropriately.

Need For Reliable Data on Child Abuse Cases

Systematic data relating to child protection is crucial if scholars and policymakers understand the issue's nature and provide evidence of the scale of protection problems that many Pakistani children experience. Such data informs national child protection policy, planning, and practice, and some countries, such as the United States, conduct national incidence studies of child abuse and neglect regularly. Others, such as the United Kingdom, rely mainly on official data from child protection registers or child protection plans. However, large-scale data collection, analysis, and maintenance demand specialized human, financial and organizational resources, which many countries worldwide lack.

In such a situation, one of the key data sources remains the empirical Research on the incidence and prevalence of child abuse and maltreatment. Such incidence and prevalence studies are most frequently undertaken in the health field, especially as part of the Research investigating the epidemiology of the disease. However, they are also increasingly used in child abuse and protection research¹. Such Research covers various forms of child abuse at local, regional, and national levels, though these studies have mostly been limited to the developed world of the global North.

In the developing countries of the global South, the need for a rigorous evidence base for child protection has been only a recent realization. The United Nations Secretary-General's study on Violence Not only initial evidence about violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children around the world; it also highlighted the need for the further collection and analysis of data to inform evolving child protection policy and practice in many developing countries (Cappa & Jijon, 2021).

Role of Media In Reporting Child Abuse Cases

Some authors postulate that coverage of child maltreatment by the news media increases public awareness about this issue and helps individuals realize the need to report such situations (Britto et al., 2018). Research highlighted that in the media field, particularly health communication, the communication of risk to the public is an important part of the process leading to changes in societal treatment and conditions for improved health for the public (Weatherred, 2015). The media needed to continuously remind the policymakers about their duties toward children's rights and the international commitments made in this regard. "It is the media's responsibility to inform the people about the government's spending on education, child health and nutrition, and child protection (Javed et al., 2021).

Media coverage has a major impact on the interpretation of news events and the response to these events by the public and policymakers. Media intended to investigate the extent of children's rights representation in newspapers in Pakistan. Media play a due role in highlighting child rights. The Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC), a child rights body, emphasizes the 'Role of Media on the State of Child Rights in Pakistan. 'Representatives of print and electronic media, government officials, and social activists participated in the event to devise a joint strategy for highlighting and solving child-related issues. Badar Jamil, the provincial human rights secretary, had passed several bills to ensure children's rights, which restricted child marriages and corporal punishment at schools, and made provisions for free education. However, the non-implementation of the bills is the main issue.

Newspapers Framing the Child Abuse Stories

The media is a medium via which public knowledge of responsibilities and rights may be spread. It may empower the public about their basic rights and oblige the government to protect those

fundamental rights. The newspaper covers just a tiny fraction of all abuse and neglect in child abuse cases. The events described are often sensationalized or may have disastrous results, like death or injury. The media generally concentrate on distinctive, unusual, or distressing instances when they cover child abuse. Considering the assumption that child welfare agencies often intervene in carelessness and public awareness of domestic violence, this kind of media coverage creates a skewed picture of abuse. Many social problems, like child abuse, may be framed in such a manner as to impact how people think about and react to the situation, and this is especially true when it comes to complicated social issues like this one. A broad range of concerns have been investigated in the past, but only lately has the framing of child abuse begun to get significant attention. A list of those frames, along with a short explanation, is given below:

- a. Failure of child protective services: Attempting to protect children from abuse cannot be trusted when bureaucratic organizations and incompetent caseworkers are involved.
- b. Sexual predators: "Stranger danger" is reinforced because perpetrators are not family members.
- c. The confusing line between discipline and abuse: Determining whether or not a parent has passed the difficulty of defining the line between punishment and abuse may be challenging.
- d. The sanctity of the family: Families' parenting decisions should be respected, while children must be protected by organizations responding to abuse.

It is difficult for reporters to put child abuse in a broader perspective because it is less fascinating to speak about the complex circumstances that lead to abuse or neglect (e.g., parenting knowledge, the family's social or economic position), and it is more difficult for reporters to put child abuse in a broader context because of the difficulty in doing so.

METHOD

The study is qualitative in nature. The data was gathered from external, secondary sources. From books, reports and newspapers. The researchers have analyzed the child abuse case studies of different countries and then particularly the case studies of Pakistan. The technique used is content analysis and descriptive analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Child Abuse and Neglect- Case Studies Of Pakistan

Children in Pakistan face daily physical, psychological, and sexual abuse and exploitation, including human trafficking and economic exploitation. According to UNICEF -Pakistan, about 3.3 million Pakistani children are trapped in labor, stripping them from their education, childhood, health, and dreams and convicting them towards a life of hunger and poverty.

Child abuse may be distinguished as any involvement by the child in behaviors that are out of character for his or her age and stage of psychosexual development, that the child is unable to comprehend, that the child is forced to engage in through coercion, violence, or that transgress social taboos (Debowska & Boduszek, 2017). The following are examples of child abuse: pushing them to engage in sexual activity or supporting another individual while engaging in activities that delight adults. Children who have experienced abuse frequently fear physical and psychological harm, sexual abuse, and severe neglect, all of which can affect a child's physical and mental development. When a child is mistreated or abused, their social behavior is altered. The youngster feels excluded from society, fearful, and feels threatened.

Child Sexual Abuse- A Case Study by Shah Saud Tour

The location of this case is a well-known village of the Mardan district of K.P.K., Tour. Ishrat Ali (synthetic name) was the victim of sexual assault. At the age of 11, he was abused and also raped

at a family ceremony by his relative. This incident left him with awful memories. At the age of 27, he tells his story and desires humankind to know how badly he wants to kill himself each time he leaves his bed in the morning. He stated, "that hour of darkness was the evil night of my living." From the story of Ishrat Ali, vital sociological points are driven:

- a. It is easy for a relative than a non-relative to abuse due to unceasing access sexually. Society and the family wear a cultural ribbon over the eyes, due to which the perpetrator unnoticeably manipulates the situation and satisfies his/her lust.
- b. Due to cultural respect, such cases are not reported to law enforcement, depriving society of such information; as a result, criminals openly run their businesses.
- c. Families keep such cases under the carpet due to the dangerous cultural shame they could face throughout their lives.
- d. Failure of government support and police also play an important role in putting down the victim. Sometimes, flaws in a legal procedure, like no witness, are bribed and intentionally support the criminal. There are no scientific techniques for the investigation of such cases.
- e. Jirga, mosque, and neighborhood have many socio-cultural functions, but the occurrence of such cases shows the failure of these institutions.

Child Sexual Abuse is a crime against children (Miller, 2013). Victims are left with the adverse shed tears associated with it, sometimes for life. This case study indicates that sexual abuse of the child coexists with physical, emotional, medical, and educational neglect; these methods of ill-treatment occur at high levels and are repetitive, and require the protection of the abused child.

A Minor Home Worker Was Killed, Brother Was Injured

The incident takes place in the defense area of Lahore. Two minors, 11 years old Kamran and 7 years old Rizwan from Karachi, had been working in the house of Nasrullah for a year. Both brothers were tortured and severely beaten by Nasrullah and his family, and they were taken to the hospital after their condition had deteriorated. The older brother Kamran could not resist the injuries and die. The staff subsequently called the law enforcement authorities upon noticing the severity of their condition. Police arrested Nasrullah, his wife Shabana, and his son Mahmood on charges of torture.

In contrast, his other son Abul Hassan and daughter-in-law Hina managed to escape and are currently being pursued by the police. Police confirmed that Kamran's body had been sent for autopsy. The accused told the police they were tortured for allegedly "eating things out of the fridge." Taking notice of the incident, the Child Protection Bureau chairperson Sara Ahmed directed the concerned personnel to contact the two brothers' families and requested strict legal action against the accused by the police.

The Express Tribune Bureau Chairperson stated, "There are cases in other districts too, but they often go unreported. Often, the child's relatives or family friends are involved in the crime, which hinders reporting and punishment. The Child Protection Bureau is currently pursuing dozens of such cases province-wide. We are trying to ensure that no such culprit is bailed out and is punished to the full effect of the law,"

Domestic Help Is Starved And Beaten By The Employer

Sana worked at Hammad Raza's home in Wapda Town and was regularly punished by her employers through physical abuse. 8 years old son had been working for seven months at Hammad Raza's house for Rs 5,000 per month. The child was allegedly kept hungry for five days and beaten up after being accused of stealing milk. When she was rescued, there were severe marks of torture on her body, and her limbs were swollen because she was beaten while a deep knife cut her wrist. The back of her neck was burned with hot water. She said they gashed her stomach with a heated knife and bruised her ankles with a stick beat.

Although there are no official statistics, it is estimated that more than 250,000 children work in homes across Pakistan as domestic workers. Under the lockdown, unemployment of domestic laborers has increased, and while domestic help is needed, usually only children are employed as they are 'cheaper' and 'easier to deal with.'

Kanizan's Story: From Child Labor To Death

Kanizan had to take on the role of a breadwinner for the family when her mother died. At a very young age, she was forced to accept work as a housemaid for a wealthy and landowning family. Kanizan had to take care of five children when she was a child herself.

On July 27, a mother was killed along with her children when Kanizan was far from the crime scene. Later she was accused of their killing. After some days, she was accompanied to the police station to help with the probe. She was tortured and interrogated for 15 days by the police. Kanizan maintained her innocence and was confident that the justice system would be on her side at least, but she was wrong. Outside the jail, a completely different narrative was being drafted against her. According to this version of events, the maid was romantically involved with the husband of the murdered wife.

A man from a law enforcement authority knew that the girl was a teenager and not educated enough to know her legal rights and to read the legal documents. Moreover, she was from a low-income family that could not afford to access legal protection, and her father could not afford her bail. In due course, they broke Kanizan and forced her to confess a crime she did not commit.

In spite of maintaining her innocence and hold in court, the confession was void as it was extracted through torture. Despite being innocent, Kanizan was sentenced to death. All of her appeals were taken down. In the next few years, her mental health declined rapidly. Later she was diagnosed with schizophrenia, and due to the severity of the disease, she was shifted to the hospital. Still, the threat of capital punishment looms over her head. A black warrant could be issued if the case is concluded against her. We have all been conditioned to accept domestic child labor to a far too great extent. These young boys and girls clean homes, do laundry and prepare meals. We convince ourselves that we are their saviors and that a child born into poverty has no choice but to work from an early age or starve to death. Children born into poverty are more vulnerable to exploitation and rely on other parties to stand out for their rights. Pakistan must demand, as a whole improved application of laws protecting helpless children. Kanizan would not have had to spend almost her entire life in jail cells and psychiatric hospitals if she had been granted any of these rights.

Zainab Amin Ansari Case Study

Zainab Amin Ansari was a seven-year-old Pakistani girl who was abducted in her hometown of Kasur, Punjab, while on her way to Quran recitation classes on January 4, 2018. Her body was discarded five days later at a garbage disposal site near the city of Lahore on January 9, 2018; an autopsy report disclosed that she had been her rapist and murderer.

24-year-old Imran Ali was arrested and identified as a serial killer responsible for at least seven previous rapes and murders of prepubescent girls in the region. Ansari's murder incited widespread protests and outrage throughout Pakistan. It ultimately led to the passage of Pakistan's first national child safety law, the Zainab Alert Bill (similar to the AMBER Alert system in the United States). The bill directs that any individual found guilty of child abuse faces a minimum mandatory sentence of life imprisonment and stipulates instigating legal action against law enforcement officials who cause unnecessary delay in investigating such cases within two hours of a child being reported as missing.

Child abuse is a very shameful thing for us, but the measures taken by our government regarding the Zainab case are considerably good. However, the major thing is that Pakistan's child abuse cases are increasing daily. The major factor is that when someone rapes a girl who does not belong to a strong

background, he is immediately sentenced to jail. However, if a person has a strong background, then laws for him are different because, in Pakistan, the person who has power has everything. The impact of this thing on our society is that other people also do this thing. After all, they know that justice in Pakistan is a joke that is the main reason for increasing abuse cases day by day. The only way to stop these types of things is that our courts should deal with every person on equal grounds. That is the only possible way to stop these cases.

Case Study Of Kainat Soomro (Sindhi)

Pakistani woman struggling to obtain justice for her gang rape at 13 drew international attention. Kainat was steadfast in her determination to obtain justice against her alleged attackers. In 2007, Soomro claimed that she stopped at a local store to buy a toy for her niece while walking home from school. She alleged that she was drugged, kidnapped, and subsequently gang-raped by four men, among them a father and son. Soomro claims to have escaped three days after being taken captive. After receiving his daughter back in his home, Soomro's father was allegedly rebuffed by the police. A local tribunal determined her to be Kari, a "black female," having lost her virginity outside marriage. Soomro was potentially subject to Karo Kari, synonymous to honor killing; however, this notion was rejected by her father, brother, and mother. Fearing the subsequent backlash of this ruling after being subject to several attacks, however, Soomro's family fled to Karachi. Defiant of traditional norms, Soomro took her alleged perpetrators to court, where the judge ultimately ruled that they were innocent, stating that "There is no corroborative evidence available on record.

The village elders judged that she should be punished. Only when the men were accused and stood trial did they raise that defense. The accused believe she should be silent about her ordeal. Ahsan continued to insist that he would take her from her family. Kainat's brother was killed a month after the court ruling, allegedly for having defended his sister during the ordeal. The Soomro family has been subject to attack, Soomro's brother and father having been beaten by iron rods; Soomro herself also received death threats.

The only idea we get from this is that instead of supporting them, people stand against them. People of his town account for the punishment for Kainat's family instead of helping them. If they stood with her, she could stand more bravely against the animals inside the humans who raped her. Soomro was the subject of an Outlawed in Pakistan documentary depicting her story as an alleged rape victim. The film casts her struggle as a documentary of her and her family's struggle for justice, showcasing the subsequent losses they encounter in defying cultural conventions. Her struggle for justice taught the world that if someone does anything bad to you, you have to take revenge on them according to the law, but the thing which hurt her the most was that the 4 people who raped her were acquitted.

Case Study of Child Being Sexually Assaulted In Chowk Steel Bagh Area, Kasur, Pakistan

A boy was found dead on February 8, 2021, after being sexually assaulted in the Chowk Steel Bagh area after remaining missing for five days. The family protested against the killing by placing the body on Ferozepur Road.

According to the police report, the 15-year-old son of Mustafa, a resident of Pirwala, Kasur, went to a poultry farm in Raukhanwala area for work. Reportedly, five days had passed, and the boy had not returned home. On Friday, the boy's parents got a call that their son had committed suicide by hanging himself in a room. When the victim's relatives arrived at the scene, they saw signs of torture on the body. They applied action against seven suspects, including the victim's colleagues named Abid, Shakir, Ashraf Mohammad Shoaib, and Mohammad Aslam. The police registered a case against the suspects on murder and other charges. However, the family placed the body at Steel Bagh Chowk and blocked Ferozepur Road for traffic.

They also chanted slogans against the police and demanded that the charge of sexual abuse is included in the case against the suspects and that justice is served. Police said the section of the law about sexual abuse would be added when the complete report was received and the allegation was medically proven. However, all the suspects were arrested and were being interrogated.

The problem is not that the police are not adding sexual abuse section against the suspect, but the problem is that how dare these people rape a boy? I know the answer, and the answer is that they know that justice is just a name in Pakistan and the second reason is that they know Pakistani families submit a case against them due to fear of society. I am adding this because there are many more cases of such type, and their family did not submit a case against the suspect because they are afraid of society and their culture (Gallo et al., 2018).

Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

This media coverage is based on exercises in news insurance and journalists' and publishers' goals and practices. To recognize this, it is extremely important to analyze the information methods collected by the media and to remember the strategies used to inform the press agenda via prevalent ideologies (including their link between the assets and rituals of "daily production of news." As a result, the media benefit the broader public, which child safety may leverage to keep the public informed. More monitoring of the abused children and the suffering families led to a greater understanding and a role for the media.

Press reportage helped break the C.S.A.'s quiet, raised the voice of victims, stirred up an international, national and local response, and made it easier for people to be prosecuted for crimes. Furthermore, not all C.S.A. coverage in the media is currently credible. According to communication studies, the media's coverage of C.S.A. is often erroneous. A better understanding of the C.S.A. and its values will allow you to make improvements to public health within that context. You should also examine how the media may affect public opinion regarding the C.S.A. To investigate media impact, communications academics developed the belief in framing combined with the agenda-setting theory. Frames are "principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation composed of tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters".

The process of identifying societal issues through framing plays an important role, "selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues and making connections among them to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and solution"; this shows how individuals should consider and deal with problems. In the 2009 Meta-Study by the University of Barcelona published by the Clinical Psychology Review, 65 studies were analyzed from 22 countries to estimate the "overall international figure" for child sexual abuse as a result of their relative abuse, entitled "The prevalence of child sexual abuse in the community and student samples: a meta-analysis."

The following are some of the results of the Research:

- a. Approximately 7.9% of males and 19.7% of females suffered sexual abuse before the age of 18.
- b. Males were affected at 7.5%, while females were affected at 25.3%.
- c. Regarding geography, Africa has the highest rate of child sexual abuse (34.4%). Europe's prevalence rate was the lowest (9.2%). Prevalence percentages ranged from 10.1% to 23.9% between America and Asia.

Who is responsible for sexually abusing children? Victims of abuse may be coworkers, neighbors, or relatives. In homes, schools, mosques, churches of the Mosques and leisure centers, young sports rallies, and other children's meetings, some sexually abused children. In essence, abusers may and often are a variety of youngsters. The report states (Characteristics of crimes against juveniles. Durham, NH: Crimes against Children Research Center) approximately 90% of children victimized by sexual assault recognize their abusers. Stranger abuse is just 10% of children sexually assaulted. Their

families molest roughly 30% of sexually abused children. The abuser is more likely to be a family member if the victim is young. About 50% of those who molested a child under six were family members. Of the abused youngsters aged 12 to 17, 23% were family members. Family members molest about 60% of sexually abused children.

Principles and Guidelines for Media Reporting On Children by UNICEF

Preventing and responding to child abuse necessitates a multifaceted approach. Among the effective and promising therapies are:

- a. Parent and caregiver support: information and skill-building sessions offered by nurses, social workers, or trained lay workers through a series of home visits or in a community setting to assist the development of caring, nonviolent parenting.
- b. Increase enrollment in high-quality education so that children can get knowledge, skills, and experiences that will help them develop resilience and lower their risk factors for violence.
- c. This is a program to prevent sexual abuse that builds awareness and teaches skills to help children and adolescents understand consent, avoid and prevent sexual abuse and exploitation, and seek help and support

Child Laws in Pakistan

There is not many reliable data on prevalence within Pakistan, although it is believed to be approximately 30%, comparable to neighboring countries. Pakistan is noteworthy for having a highly youthful population with 70 million children under 18, high malnutrition rates, child labor, and homelessness. Conservative cultural values and corporal punishment further contribute to the social taboo and difficulty in broaching this delicate subject. This is made worse by a lack of institutional and national financing for child protection and a lack of knowledge in the field, all of which create an environment where children are exposed to abuse (Sattar et al., 2022).

Pakistan has faced various challenges, and the Government of Pakistan South Asian Beijing Report admits that resources intended for child protection have not been appropriately supported. The government has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and produced a National Child Protection Policy to address these concerns and improve the legal structures in place to protect children.

The National Commission for Child Welfare and Development (NCCWD) was established by the government on December 16, 1979, through a resolution that became effective on January 1, 1980 (Yasmeen et al., 2022). And as amended from time to time until it was finally established in 1991 under the then Ministry of Health and Social Welfare as an advisory body to the government of Pakistan on child-related matters. Its purpose is to investigate the impact of constitutional, legislative, and administrative provisions on children's welfare and development and to propose actions to ensure their complete development.

- a. To develop a national policy for the welfare and development of children in the country.
- b. To develop legislation to prevent child abuse in all of its manifestations, including physical violence, child mutilation, drug exposure, child labor, and protection for children who are disabled (mentally or physically) or otherwise in need of social protection and services.

According to Article 25(1) of the Pakistani Constitution, "all citizens are equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection of the law." The Convention says in Article 37(a) that "no child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment." Torture and other forms of ill-treatment are not adequately protected by Pakistani law (Al Imran & Mian, 2014).

Children's rights to protection and self-defense education should be emphasized in addition to legislative and societal reforms since they are of utmost importance. At the same time, it's important to educate parents and teachers about the issue and give those tools for speaking with kids in a way that

fosters openness and trust, as well as for knowing how to react correctly if a kid discloses having been abused. However, the Federal Government may have a better strategy for safeguarding kids from violence. The necessity for a detailed conversation between mental health professionals and the federal and provincial authorities is only highlighted by this, which is a good notion in a democratic system. Any careless disregard of unofficial child protection suggestions would result in the state being summarily indicted for having abandoned its children, seriously weakening the populace's future. Suppose you have reason to believe that a youngster is suffering physically or emotionally. Allow the youngster to share their narrative. Above all, pay attention and report.

The problem of child abuse in Pakistan is strongly related to the socioeconomic position of its residents and the severity of poverty in the nation. One of the main causes of child abuse is poverty. Some important prevention techniques to stop child abuse in Pakistan: The Government should develop a national action strategy to address the issues of poverty and socioeconomic differences in the country and allocate sufficient budget to relevant ministries for achieving this goal. Low-income families exploit their children to earn a living and involve them in labor, underage marriages, drug abuse, prostitution, pornography, and trafficking, among other things. The Government should adopt a strategy to create awareness against child maltreatment amongst the general public, legislators/policymakers, and children. Seminars, training, and awareness material about child protection issues must be publicized to sensitize people about this human rights violation.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, media plays a pivotal role in addressing the issue of child sexual abuse (CSA) by reporting, analyzing, and intervening in news stories related to it. Media coverage raises awareness, places CSA on political and social agendas, and shapes public perceptions. However, there are challenges in ethical reporting, as seen in incidents where sensitive information is shared, leading to stigma and secondary victimization. Media outlets often fail to adhere to recommended standards, impacting the portrayal of child abuse cases. South Asia, including Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, faces specific challenges in this regard, with media compromising children's privacy. While media can have a positive impact by advocating for institutional responses and prevention strategies, the responsibility to maintain ethical reporting and protect children's identities remains crucial. The media's role extends to shaping perceptions, framing issues, and influencing societal attitudes, emphasizing the importance of responsible reporting on child abuse and neglect. Collaboration between child protection agencies and the media can lead to accurate, sensitive, and effective coverage of these critical issues..

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