



## “A SSESMENT OF CAUSES AND RISK FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH RAPE/ABUSE ON MINOR GIRLS IN YOBE STATE: A CASE STUDY OF GEIDAM L.G.A, YOBE STATE, NIGERIA”

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### ABSTRACT

#### Background

Rape/abuse on minor girls is a major global public health concern and it is universally condemned offence against children. Child sexual abuse is a crime that happens all over the world irrespective of race, religion, region or class, and each and every day there are report cases of rape and abuse on minor girls across the globe. Child sexual abuse leaves lifelong scars on the minor's life. Post victimization consequences often prove devastating for girl child as they suffer from several physical, mental, social and psychological traumas. There are several assorted causes and risk factors behind rape/abuse on minor girls which people are not aware about. Therefore, conducting research and prompt discussion on the causes and risk factors associated with rape/abuse on minor girls is essential to focus on the protection, prevention and rehabilitation strategies to overcome the stress of abuse on minor girls. This research study cynosure on the causes and risk factors associated with rape/abuse on minor girls in Yobe state: A case study of Geidam L.G.A Yobe Sate, Nigeria.

#### Objectives

To explore the causes and risk factors associated with rape/abuse on minor girls.

#### Materials & Methods

An Interview was conducted among the minor girls of 18 years' innards, this was done to explore the causes and risk factors associated with rape/abuse on minor girls in Yobe. A total number of one hundred (100) minor girls were randomly and interviewed mostly street hawking girls that are vending foods within the commercial centres of Geidam town were selected. They were tactically interviewed to discloses if they had ever experiences any sexual abuse or attempts. A friendly systematic approach was adopted to assess if these minor girls can easily be deceived by offering them some cash, or buying what their vending, or presenting them some special gifts-such as phone, cloths, etc.

This is a survey research which utilizes both primary and secondary data. The primary data were obtained through an interview of 100 minor girls while the secondary data were collected from relevant official records of police, courts, academic articles, newspapers, etc. and the data was presented and analysed using SPSS version 21 in the form of tables, variables, frequency and percentage.

#### Findings

Our findings of this research study reveals that poverty stands for 1<sup>st</sup> position (26%) and rated as the highest causes and risk factors associated with rape/abuse on minor girls, while poor parental care and monitoring stands for 2<sup>nd</sup> position (14%), whereas poor policy implementation stands for 3<sup>rd</sup> position (12%), as well as social factors (moral decay/erosion of social norms), stands for 4<sup>th</sup> position (10%), so also as myth/spiritual beliefs stands for 5<sup>th</sup> position (9%), at the same time negative peer groups stands for 6<sup>th</sup> position (8%), furthermore the death or separation of either parent stands for 7<sup>th</sup> position (6%), at the same media (porn & pornography free environment) stands for

8<sup>th</sup> position (6%), likewise alcohol/drug/substance abuse stands for 9<sup>th</sup> position (5%), moreover homelessness stands 10<sup>th</sup> position (3%), and finally globalisation (introduction of foreign culture) stands for 11<sup>th</sup> position (1%).

## Conclusions

The followings recommendations were made for strengthened interventions at different levels within the society so as to address the fountainhead of the causes and risk factors associated with rape/abuse on minor girls. These recommendations help the policy makers in making decision/measures towards curtailing the dangerous effects of rape/abuse on minor girls in our society. As such, parents should guide and monitor the affairs of their subjects, there should be need of raising public health awareness campaign towards sensitizing parents/community on proper parental up bring in the society by inculcating morals and values in the mind set of an individuals with the collaboration of traditional/religious leaders, as these leaders stands as backbone of every society, and equally government should enact a concrete law and order for punishing perpetrators of this immoral act, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) with the collaboration of other sister agencies should put more emphasis on fight against drug abusers.

## Ethical Considerations

Considering the nature of this research study that centred on girl child sexual abuse which is very sensitive in nature, a letter dated 8<sup>th</sup>/11/2021 for seeking police clearance/permission was written to the Geidam Divisional Police Headquarter with detailed explanation of the research objectives, procedures and possible risks while conducting this research study and clearance/permission was granted with Ref. No: CB:3380/YBS/GD/VOL.3/63 dated 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2021 respectively.

**Keywords:** Assessment, Causes, Risk Factors, Associated with Rape/Abuse, Minor Girls.

## INTRODUCTION

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is a major global public health concern, affecting one in eight children and causing massive costs including unwanted pregnancy, depression as well as STDs acquisition. Rape has devastated effects on child girl, it affects the body, mind and soul of the victims. It damages the humanity of the victim and dehumanizes our society. Apart from physical and psychological implications, there are also social consequences associated with rape (1). It could be total withdrawal, social exclusion or self-isolation, difficulty for the victim to get married, suffering in silence, taunting, etc. (2)

The gravity of this global issue is reflected by the United Nations' new effort to respond to sexual abuse in the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals. Worldwide, child sexual abuse is a massive challenge for public health, social justice, human rights, gender equality, and science. The Health consequences of Child sexual abuse (CSA) includes- anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and suicidality. The incidence of rape has become a source of worry to governments, development planners and researchers across the globe. In many developing countries such as India, Nigeria, South Africa, etc., hardly a day passes without reported or rumored cases of rape or gender violence. This has prompted, among other things, the passing of stringent legislations into law in some of these countries, with the hope of reducing the incidences of rape (3).

Child sexual abuse is endemic worldwide: 12.7 per cent of all children experience sexual abuse (18.0 per cent of girls (16.4–19.7 per cent) and 7.6 per cent of boys (6.6–8.8 per cent) (4). Girls are two to three times as likely as boys to be victimized in Asia, Australia, Europe, and North America, (5) and higher prevalence for girls was recently found in five African nations (5). Some nations like China, however, have reported lower prevalence for girls (6). International and national communities have acknowledged the urgent need for governments and policymakers to do more to prevent, identify, and respond appropriately to child sexual abuse. The United Nations' 2015 Sustainable Development Goals has set an agenda for global human development efforts from 2015–2030 (7). Significantly, these Goals have added two new targets acknowledging child abuse as a fundamental obstacle to health, demanding concerted action. Target 16.2 aims to end abuse and exploitation of children, and Target 5.2 aims to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual exploitation. Governments will be required to report on progress against these targets. Yet, child sexual abuse has been an apparently intractable problem across societies for centuries. What impediments do governments face in their endeavours to meet the United Nations' new child sexual abuse prevention targets, and how might these problems be overcome? (7).

The world with about 67, 000 cases reported as at 2000; Nigeria has 10, 079 between 2001 to 2005, which the most affected females were aged 16–45years. In the society today, the issues of rape keep increasing as the day goes by. In some societies when even if such incidence occurs, it is not known or reported simply because of stigma and the fear that even if the culprit is reported to the law enforcement agencies actions are hardly taken and the culprits are seen working with the shoulders up high as such people feel reporting the issues of rape is some who a waste of time. In Yobe state several cases of rape have been reported from across the seventeen (17) local governments within and most of this reports are either teenagers or minors. In some cases, this victim are students who were rape by their teachers, parents or respected individuals within the society or communities. The issue rape in a predominant society like Northern Nigeria is of great concern because it contradicts the norms, values, culture and the belief system of the society. The society holds religion with high standard and as such the victims of rape ends up being traumatized due to stigma and devaluation which is always shown to them (8).

Several researches has been conducted by researchers of medical, social sciences and humanities to find out the factors associated of rape on minor girls, but yet there is no research conducted on causes and risk factors associated with rape/abuse on minor girls, as such, this research was sought to assess the causes and risk factors associated with rape/abuse minor girls. As prospering desired lasting solutions towards curtailing the rape/abuse on minor girls couldn't be achieved without findings the root causes and the risk factors.

## OBJECTIVES OF THIS RESEARCH STUDY

The main objective of this research study is to assess the causes and risk factors associated with rape/abuse on minor girls in Yobe State: A case study of Geidam L.G.A Yobe State, Nigeria. However, to achieved this objective, the following key points were put emphasises to guide our research study, as follows:

- i. Assess the effect of poverty as a cause of rape/abuse on minor girls
- ii. Asses the effect of poor parental background as a cause of rape/abuse on minor girls
- iii. Assess the effect of peer groups pressure as a risk factors of rape/abuse on minor girls
- iv. Assess the effect of alcohol/drug/substances abuse as a cause of rape/abuse on minor girls
- v. Assess the effect of myths and spiritual beliefs as a cause of rape/abuse on minor girls
- vi. Assess the effect of hawking/vending as a risk factors of rape/abuse on minor girls

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

An Interview was conducted among the minor girls of 18 years' innards, this was done to explore the causes and risk factors associated with rape/abuse on minor girls in Yobe. A total number of one hundred (100) minor girls were randomly and interviewed mostly street hawking girls that are vending foods within the commercial centres of Geidam town were selected. They were tactically interviewed to discloses if they had ever experiences any sexual abuse or attempts. A friendly systematic approach was adopted to assess if these minor girls can easily be deceived by offering them some cash, or buying what their vending, or presenting them some special gifts-such as phone, cloths, etc.

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## ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

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## LITERATURE REVIEW

To achieves the desired objectives of this research study, an assorted article, books, newspapers, etc., that are relevant to our case study were reviewed, as follows:

Child sexual abuse (CSA) has been acknowledged as a global problem. Sexual abuse includes engaging a child into sexual activities by threat, force, misrepresentations or coercion, where the child experiences, physical, mental and psychological torture. According to the World Health Organization, Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) is involvement of children in a sexual act before their legal age when they are not mature enough to give consent for this. Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) violates the laws and taboos of the society (9). Positive and crime free surrounding are needed for children to be nurtured in a healthy way and freely experience their childhood, but in the present scenario they are subjected to exploitation, violence, and abuse. Girl child is more vulnerable to sexual abuse, and number of child sexual abuse cases (CSA) are reported every day around the world. Nearly one among ten girls' experiences sexual abuse before 20 years of age. The actual figure is difficult to estimate because large numbers of cases go unreported (10). According to a data, about 15 million adolescent girls experience forced sex worldwide (11). Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) leaves lifelong scars on the minor's life. Enormous causes risk factors are associated with Child Sexual Abuse (CSA). It retards the social and emotional development of victim child. Post victimization consequences often prove devastating for children as they suffer from several physical, mental, social and psychological traumas. Discussion on various causes is essential to protect children from the future victimization. Knowing about consequences helps to focus on the protection, prevention and rehabilitation strategies to overcome the stress of abuse (10, (11).

Sexual violence can happen to anyone regardless of age, race, income level, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and education level. However, certain vulnerabilities or risk factors contribute to sexual violence victimization and perpetration; poverty is among those factors Perpetrators of sexual violence often target individuals who lack power in the larger society, such as women; people with disabilities; elders; children; teens; people of colour; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered individuals; immigrants, migrants, and refugees; individuals who speak English as a Second Language; people living in poverty; people with addictions or criminal records; the homeless; sex workers; prisoners and others. Perpetrators deliberately target individuals who will be less likely to report or when they do tell someone, less likely to be believed or deemed credible. People living in poverty are often either ignored or penalized by the larger society. Therefore, poverty often serves to silence and discredit victims/ survivors, especially when it is compounded by other forms of oppression and isolation (12,13,14).

The concept of rape has become an important issues of concern not only to government at all levels, nongovernment organization, scholars, students but also the common man in the society. On daily basis the issue of rape is on the re-occurrence as such there is need to examine the concept and how it is gradually destroying the society in a negative way.

Cooper (2000) asserts that rape is most often motivated by extreme anger toward the victim or a need to overpower the victim. The motive is rarely sexual and violence is always involved. Forced sex is intended to abuse, humiliate, and dehumanize the victim. Rape is also seen as sexual intercourse with a woman by a man without her consent and chiefly by force or deception (15). However, there are many rumoured or even reported cases of men who have been raped in contemporary societies, including Nigeria.

Teenage stage is the beginning of adulthood into maturity and it vary from country to country. Generally, the concept is place or regard as an age of a persons within 12-18 years. Arthur (2011), defined teenager as a transitional stage of physical and mental human development that occurs between childhood and adulthood. This transition according to him involve biological (i.e. puberty), social and psychological changes, though the biological or physiological ones are the earliest to measure objectively. Undiyaundeye (2012), sees

teenage period as a transitional stage of physical and psychological human, development generally occurring between puberty and legal adulthood. Within this period, the background of the individual plays active role on the emotional development of such individual. However, teenager as a concept can simply be defined as a period of life from puberty to adulthood roughly aged from 12-18-19 years, characterized and marked with physiological changes, development of sexual feelings, efforts towards the construction of identity, and progression to form concrete to abstract thought. Sometimes it may be classified as a transitional state, during which youths begin to separate themselves from their parents but still a clearly defined role in society. It is also generally regarded as an emotionally intense and often trustful period as already stated (16).

At the stage of teenage age, a lot of changes occurs within the individual and someone one cannot actually recognized this change but they are visible at this stage the individual needs to be guide and monitored at all the time so as to prevent the individual from engaging into things that may have result effect in the future and in this case rape is one of these issues. As changes in body parts occurs, so are changes in the hormones and reproductive organs (puberty). At this stage, the teenagers are influence by friends/peers and the social media and they need to be guided or restricted from a lot of activities and also there is need to sensitize and orient them on the dangers of engaging into things like rape and sexual activities at the tender age.

### THE POLICE IN YOBE STATE HAS FROWN AND RAISED ALARM OVER RISING CASES OF RAPE



Garba Haruna, the Commissioner of Police, Yobe State Command, has frowned at the level at which cases of rape are raising in the state. The CP raised the concern recently while fielding questions from newsmen in Damaturu, the state capital. He noted that in recent times, rape cases in the state have gone up astronomically, even higher than culpable homicide and armed robbery with Potiskum and Gashu'a towns as the epicentre of the crime (8).

Haruna attributed poverty as one of the causative factors as victims are mostly street hawkers from poor families. "What we intend to do to stem the tide; is to sensitize members of the public about the dangers and negative consequences of rape", he said. He stated that this can be achieved by engaging traditional as well as religious leaders to admonish parents, guardians and caregivers not to engage their children in street hawking as perpetrators are taking advantage of that to rape children (8).

"We also need to tell the offenders, the inappropriateness of their characters and that is why most of the times when they (rapists) are arrested and brought here, we don't joke with cases of rape. We get remand warrants and remand them in correctional facilities and courts in the state are also assisting with that", he added. On farmer-herder clashes, the police commissioner said the command, under his stewardship, will partner with leaders from the conflicting parties as a way of finding a workable solution to the recurring phenomenon (8).

### THE FOLLOWINGS WERE SOME OF THE RECENT CASES OF RAPE/ABUSE ON MINOR GIRLS AMONG 317 RAPE/ABUSE ON MINOR GIRLS CASES ACROSS 17 LGA OF YOBE STATE.

1. It noted that on December 26, 2020, detectives from Geidam Divisional Police headquarters arrested one 35-year-old man, Bako Umaru, of Hausari ward, who lured an 11-year-old girl, molested and raped her. It added that the victims suffered serious injuries and lost more than three pints of blood according to a report from a medical facility in Damaturu. The statement stated, "The case is currently under discreet investigation at the state CIID for subsequent prosecution (17).
2. Similarly, on December 25, 2020, at about 1100hrs detectives from Yindiski Divisional Police headquarters apprehended one 25-year-old Musa Mohammed, 27-year-old Mohammed Dahiru and one 46-year-old Adamu Saidu all from Potiskum council area for gang- raping a 13-year-old girl (17).
3. "In another development, on November 26, 2020, at about 1300hrs, one 27-year-old Mohammed Jagere was apprehended by Gashua Divisional Police headquarters for intruding into a house with the intent to rob the inhabitants but rather, the culprit raped a nursing mother recuperating from childbirth." Abdulkareem stated that as rape cases seemed to be taking a new dimension in the state, the police command had committed more resources to tackle the crime. He also called for the cooperation of the communities (17).
4. Police arrest vulcanizer for allegedly raping, killing teenager in Yobe. The Police Command in Yobe on Friday said it arrested one Sani Sale, a vulcanizer, for allegedly raping and killing a 15-year-old girl in Gadaka town, Fika Local Government Area of Yobe. The Command's Spokesman, ASP Dungus Abdulkarim, disclosed this in a statement in Damaturu. He said the incident occurred on February 10 at about 7 am, when Sale, 38, lured the teenager, a bean cake seller, into his residence under the pretext of buying the cake. Abdulkarim said Sale assaulted, abducted and raped the victim, who was later found dead in the suspect's residence on February 11. "Immediately he committed the alleged crimes, Sale fled to Gombe and it was there our detectives trailed and arrested him (8,20).

5. 66-year-old Man Who Lures, Rapes Children with Chocolate Arrested in Yobe State, Sahabi was arrested after parents noticed the girls expressing pain in their private areas, which had been damaged due to repeated defilement (18).



**Culprit pics 66years (Baba Sahabi)**



**victim's pics (names withheld)**

Parents and concerned residents in Yobe State are calling for justice after they found out that a man in their community had been defiling little children by luring them with chocolate and candy. Baba Sahabi, 66, a resident of Daban Kare area of Sabon Gari in Yobe State, allegedly lures the children into his compound before raping them. Sahabi was arrested after parents noticed the girls expressing pain in their private areas, which had been damaged due to repeated defilement. A resident of the area said, "He is always buying chocolates daily to use to lure the girls into his compound (18).

"The victims who live around his area were sexually abused several times by the randy man. He was said to have been very friendly with children and often offer them sweets. "Parents of the victims said that they only discovered about the incident after the girls were showing signs of being in pain. A check on their bodies showed that the victims' private parts were severely damaged as a result of repeated assault." Sahabi is currently in police custody at the Gashua Area Command. The arrest comes as cases of sexual violence against women and children is increasingly recorded across the country (18).

On Wednesday, Sahara Reporters detailed how residents in Nguru area of Yobe State expressed anger after the Nigeria Police Force set free a man, who serially raped a seven-year old refugee girl. The resident, who spoke with Sahara Reporters, said this was not the first time in Yobe that alleged rapists will be escaping justice (18).

6. Last year a traditional ruler in Gashua was suspended for repeatedly sodomising a six-year-old boy. The traditional ruler was said to have been hijacking the boy every morning while riding on his bicycle to school, luring him to a room and raped him. "Prominent politicians said to be connected to the traditional ruler were said to have been influencing the case and so far family of the victim's hope of getting justice has been dashed," he said (19).

### **DESPITE THE SIGNING INTO LAW, YOBE STATE PENAL CODE 2018 AMENDMENT BILL, STIPULATING LIFE IMPRISONMENT FOR PERPETRATORS OF RAPE, THE STATE RESPONSE COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL ASSAULT HAS RECORDED 317 RAPE CASES ACROSS SIX CENTRES IN THE STATE.**

The chairperson of the committee, Fatsuma Hassan, disclosed this at a one-day public policy dialogue with stakeholders in Damaturu, the state capital. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has reported that one in four girls and one in ten boys in Nigeria had experienced sexual violence before the age of 18. Another survey also shows, over 31.4 per cent of girls had their first sexual encounter through rape or forced sex (19).

The situation prompted Managing Conflicts in the Northeast, European Union programme in partnership with Yobe state government to establish 6 Sexual Assault Response centres to address gender based violence related issues in the state (19).

According to the chairperson, "the rape cases are prevalent in Gashua, Potiskum, Nguru Geidam and Damaturu local government councils therefore we are calling on government and groups partnership. There is slide in increase in the rape cases, however with the establishment of the centres, survivors are now opening up despite the fear of stigmatization" he said (19).

British Council Team Leader in the state, Sambo Abdulkadir said the dialogue to help the stakeholders in the state to rob minds and find a lasting solution to the problem which is gradually affecting almost every part of the state (19).

As for the Yobe state Attorney General and the commissioner of justice, Barrister Saleh Samanja, the delay in prosecution were as result of witnesses who will testify in the court of law while as many are afraid of stigmatization. The dialogue which drew participation of security agents, religious and traditional leaders, civil society groups, judiciary among others admitted there is much to be done to reduce or eliminate the menace (19).

### **STIFF PUNISHMENT BEATS DOWN YOBE RAPE CASES**

In September, Gov Ibrahim Gaidam signed a law stipulating life improvement for rape offence in cases involving minors and 25 years imprisonment where the victim is an adult (21).



## FACTS ABOUT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE (CSA)

1. A common myth is that child sexual abuse is perpetrated by strangers and paedophiles. But most people who sexually abuse children are our friends, partners, family members, and community members. About 93 percent of children who are victims of sexual abuse know their abuser. Less than 10 percent of sexually abused children are abused by a stranger (22).
2. Children are at heightened risk for sexual violence. Nearly 70 percent of all reported sexual assaults occur to children ages 17 and under (23).
3. One in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually abused before they turn 18 years old (24).
4. 12.3 percent of women were age 10 or younger at the time of their first rape/victimization, and 30 percent of women were between the ages of 11 and 17 (25).
5. More than one-third of women who report being raped before age 18 also experience rape as an adult (26).
6. Survivors of child sexual abuse are also more likely to experience rape and intimate partner violence in adulthood (27).
7. 96 percent of people who sexually abuse children are male, 76 percent are married men (28), and 76.8 percent of people who sexually abuse children are adults (29).
8. The younger the victim, the more likely it is that the abuser is a family member. Of those molesting a child under six, 50 percent were family members. Family members also accounted for 23 percent of those abusing children ages 12 to 17 (30).
9. Abusers tend to utilize a manipulative process called “grooming” in order to gain the family’s and victim’s trust, providing them with more access to the child. Grooming behaviours may include (31):
  - Special attention, outings, and gifts
  - Isolating the child from others
  - Filling the child’s unmet needs
  - Filling needs and roles within the family
  - Treating the child as if he or she is older
  - Gradually crossing physical boundaries, and becoming increasingly intimate/sexual
  - Use of secrecy, blame, and threats to maintain control
10. Child sexual abuse can have lifetime impacts on survivors-especially without support. It can impact educational outcomes, lead to heightened symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder, higher suicidality, drug abuse, higher likelihood of teen pregnancy and chronic health issues (32).
11. More than 90 percent of girls in juvenile justice systems self-disclose trauma (33), in fact, justice involved girls are victimized by sexual violence at an earlier average age, and for a longer average duration, than other forms of abuse (34).
12. In primary care settings, physical or sexual abuse in childhood is reported by approximately 20 to 50 percent of adults; among patients with depression, irritable bowel, chronic pain, or substance abuse, prevalence of reported childhood physical or sexual abuse runs as high as 70 percent (35).

## CONSEQUENCES OF RAPE/ABUSE ON MINOR GIRLS

1. **Sexual Violence and Social Stigma:** The most impactful content of stigmatization is shame (36). Victims rather than perpetrators face dishonour and shame in the society. They are blamed for abuse they went through (37). This stigmatization is very severe and traumatic for the abused victims (38). Stigmatization is carried forward in future life of the victim child, more often in non-abusive

intimate relationships (39). Considerable per cent of parents of abused children don't consult doctors for their children's health issues due to social stigma (40).

2. **Sexual Violence and health Outcomes:** Effects of child sexual abuse can be very deleterious and long lasting on the physical health of the child. General health of the victim is deteriorated. Females, who experienced sexual abuse, suffer from chronic pelvic pain rather than the females who are not subjected to such crime (41). Other physical outcomes are genitourinary problems, fatigue and headache (42). Brutal child abuses result in genital injuries such as hymen lacerations. Inserting blunt object in the genital region of the girl child victim damages the genital organs and causes long lasting hymenal scars that prove the penile insertion (43). Pelvic fractures, urethral injuries (44), urinary retention (45), injuries or bruises on neck, head or thighs and many other body parts are some physical consequences of sexual abuse committed on children (46).
3. **Sexual Violence and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs):** These are disastrous outcomes of sexual abuse. Sexually abused children are highly vulnerable to the STDs, such as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). When child is abused multiple times by the perpetrator, it can cause mucosal trauma and result in STDs. Sexual abuse by multiple perpetrators is also a risk factor for the transmission of STDs (Sexually Transmitted Disease Evaluation and Care, 2019). Syphilis and Gonorrhoea are also infectious sexually transmitted diseases (47).
4. **Sexual Violence and Unwanted Pregnancy:** An adverse physical consequence of the sexual abuse against adolescent girls is teenage or unintended pregnancy. According to a study, near about 11-20 per cent of the teenage pregnancies are due to sexual abuse of adolescent girls (48). It has a painful impact on the physical and mental health. It gives rise to poor health of the victim and other medical complications during the childbirth, and this also turns lethal in many cases. Maternal mortality, systemic infection and unsafe abortions are some of the harmful health issues associated with teenage pregnancy (49). Unwanted pregnancies are often forced by the families for termination of pregnancy. This process many times proves lethal for victim. Only 22 per cent of pregnancy termination is done under medical experts or health experts and 78 percent termination/ abortion is done without the health facilities, causing around 10 deaths per day in India. As mentioned in a study, about 16.7 per cent of the adolescent or young women seeking termination of pregnancy were sexual abuse survivors (50).
5. **Sexual Violence and Mental Outcomes:** Child sexual abuse disturbs the psychological and mental wellness of the child. Mental injuries do not heal early and it deeply impacts the behavioural and social life of the victim. Depression, low self-esteem, trouble in maintaining relationships, distrust towards people and fear are some common behavioural consequences (51). Crime against children and trauma occurred due to this, cause harmful effects to the developing brain of the child (52).
6. **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders:** Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSDs) are usually experienced by sexually maltreated children. This psychiatric disorder is faced by victims and survivors of sexual violence, accidents, militant attack or other traumatic events (53). Highest rate of PTSD is linked with sexual abuse or rape (54). Re-experiencing thoughts where victims get repeated memories of the trauma again and again through nightmares, disturbing dreams, flashback and repetitive experience of traumatic thoughts are different symptoms or signs of PTSD (53).
7. **Sexual Violence and Employment:** The effects of sexual violence can impact victims' and survivors' employment experiences in both the short- and long-term. Many sexual violence victims struggle on the job due to trauma; persistent fear; physical complications; need for time off for counselling, court dates, and health care services; depression and anxiety; and other hardships created by their victimization. Losing a job can compound the challenges of the healing process and increase feelings of blame, shame and isolation. It can also increase the risk for or sustain poverty. Sexual violence can interrupt a person's education, which can decrease their earning and employment opportunities in the long run. Employers are not always equipped to address the effects of sexual violence in the workplace; many victims and survivors do not receive the time or healthcare they need to survive in the aftermath of sexual violence (53,54).
8. **Sexual Violence and Education:** Sexual violence can seriously undermine a person's education, decreasing their earning potential and economic stability throughout the course of their lives. Child sexual abuse can severely reduce a child's school readiness and ability to concentrate. Teens and young adults also experience interruptions in their education as a result of sexual violence, often dropping out and entering the workforce without the skills they need to compete for well-paying jobs (39,40).

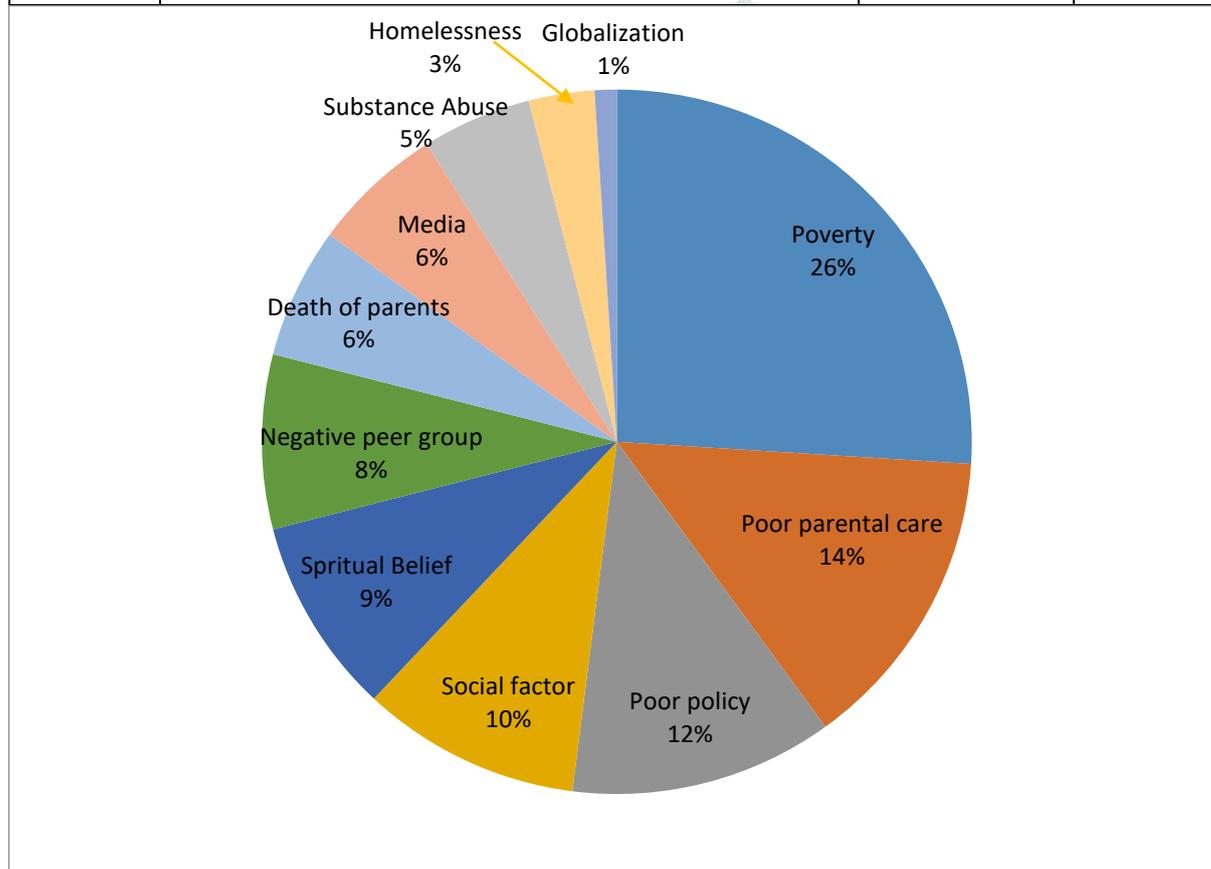
## RESULTS

### Data Presentation, Analysis, Description

Our finding reveals that the causes and risk factors associated with rape/abuse on minor girls in the study area were associated with a numbers of causes and risk factors ranging from poverty (poor economic status), myths/spiritual beliefs, poor parental guide/care/monitoring, social factors (moral decay/erosion of social norms), media (free access to porn and pornography environment), globalisation (introduction of foreign culture), drug/alcohol/substances abuses, negative peer groups, homelessness, corruption/poor of policy implementation, as well as, death of a parent or the abandonment of the family by either parent.

**Table1.1: Percentage/Rank of Each Causes & Risk Factor Associated with Rape/Abuse in Case Study Areas.**

ITEM NO	CAUSES AND RISK FACTORS	PERCENTAGE	RANK
1	Poverty	26%	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	Poor parental guide, care and monitoring	14%	2 <sup>rd</sup>
3	Corruption/Poor Policy implementation	12%	3 <sup>rd</sup>
4	Social factors (moral decay/erosion of social norms)	10%	4 <sup>th</sup>
5	Myth/spiritual beliefs	9%	5 <sup>th</sup>
6	Negative Peer groups	8%	6 <sup>th</sup>
7	The death of parents or separations	6%	7 <sup>th</sup>
8	Media (Porn and pornography free environment)	6%	8 <sup>th</sup>
9	Alcohol/Drug/Substance Abuses	5%	9 <sup>th</sup>
10	Homelessness (war, conflict, mental problem, poverty, etc.)	3%	10 <sup>th</sup>
11	Globalisation (introduction of foreign culture)	1%	11 <sup>th</sup>



## RESULTS DESCRIPTION

Our findings of this research study reveals that poverty stands for 1<sup>st</sup> position (26%) and rated as the highest causes and risk factors associated with rape/abuse on minor girls, while poor parental care and monitoring stands for 2<sup>nd</sup> position (14%), whereas poor policy implementation stands for 3<sup>rd</sup> position (12%), as well as social factors stands for 4<sup>th</sup> position (10%), so also as myth/spiritual beliefs stands for 5<sup>th</sup> position (9%), at the same time negative peer groups stands for 6<sup>th</sup> position (8%), furthermore the death or separation of either parent stands for 7<sup>th</sup> position (6%), at the same time media (porn & pornography free environment) stands for 8<sup>th</sup> position (6%), likewise alcohol/drug/substance abuse stands for 9<sup>th</sup> position (5%), moreover homelessness stands 10<sup>th</sup> position (3%), and finally globalisation (introduction of foreign culture) stands for 11<sup>th</sup> position (1%).

## HIGHLIGHTS ON CAUSES AND RISK FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH RAPE/ABUSE ON MINOR GIRLS

The following are the major causes and risk factors associated with rape/abuse on minor girls, as follows:-

### 1. Poverty

People living in poverty experience daily stressors in meeting the basic needs some of us take for granted, such as obtaining food, shelter, transportation or clothing and keeping themselves and their families safe. Poverty can make the daily lives of women and children more dangerous and make them more dependent on others for survival and, therefore, less able to control their own sexuality, to consent to sex, to recognize their own victimization or to seek help when victimized; poverty can necessitate high-risk survival activities (55). For instance, according to the World Health Organization's World Report on Violence and Health (2002), poverty increases one's vulnerabilities to sexual exploitation in the workplace, schools, and in prostitution, sex trafficking, and the drug trade (56). Individuals who lack sufficient economic resources to meet their basic needs, specifically women, may have to resort to bartering for essential goods with sex (57).

### 2. Poor Parental Guide, Care and Monitoring

Parents generally do not discuss sensitive issue of sexual abuse with their children as they consider their child young enough to understand this issue, also many of them are not aware that how to discuss this matter. Many think that they do not have adequate skills or material which can help them to discuss it with their child (58). Absence of a capable guardian increases the risk and chances of commission of crime (59). Many times parents lack information about sexual abuse which is crucial regarding children's wellbeing. Parents do not make themselves aware about the fact that, potential perpetrators in maximum cases are the acquainted or trusted people, and unknowingly parents increase the chances of CSA as they lack the knowledge about this important fact (60). About 90 percent of the children are abused by an acquainted person. They can be relatives, family members, neighbour or friends. Sexual abuse by the strangers can be found in only 5 percent of the reported cases (61).

Parents sometimes avoid this intra-familial sexual abuse where perpetrator can be a trusted part of family (National Child Traumatic Stress Network Child Sexual Abuse Committee [62]. parents' poor economic status might force girls to engage in risky sexual activities in order to solicit financial support from boyfriends or engage in prostitution.

### 3. Corruption/Poor Policy Implementation

Gap between policy and its implementation is the major cause that gives the perpetrators a free chance of mustering up the courage to commit such a brutal offence. Insensitive treatment by police in reporting the cases, delayed trails, convictions and tampering with evidence leave the offender unpunished. This makes the offender free to repeat such offences in the society again (69).

### 4. Social Factors (moral decay/erosion of social norms)

Uncontrolled and unplanned birth in economically disadvantaged sections of society where parents are not capable of providing the care, protection and nutrition to the children is one of the critical problems that exposes the children to abuse, violence or exploitation (67). Poverty strongly correlates with child abuse. Children of poor people living on roadsides get prone to such abuses. Parents engage their children in begging on streets, where children could experience violence and exploitation (68).

### 5. Myths/ Spiritual Beliefs Factors

Some perpetrators were abusing minor girls simply because of myth and spiritual beliefs for becoming rich, while others afraid of getting HIV/AIDS and other STDs from prostitute, as well as, some were misled by their fortune-tellers, especially politicians and business men. Child sexual abuse myths comprise incorrect beliefs regarding sexual abuse, victims, and perpetrators. Relations among myth acceptance, responses to disclosure, legal decisions, and victims' subsequent psychological and health outcomes underscore the importance of understanding child sexual abuse myths. Despite accurate knowledge regarding child sexual abuse among many professional and other individuals, child sexual abuse myths persist.

### 6. Negative Peer Group Factors

Negative peer pressure can lead teens in bad directions. It could lead them to try alcohol or drugs, skip school or engage in other poor behaviours that could put their health at risk, as teenager's brain is only about 80 percent developed so they can be easily deceived by peer groups. At the stage of teenage age, a lot of changes occurs within the individual and someone one cannot actually recognized this change but they are visible at this stage the individual needs to be guide and monitored at all the time so as to prevent the individual from engaging into things that may have result effect in the future and in this case rape is one of these issues. As changes in body parts occurs, so are changes in the hormones and reproductive organs (puberty). At this stage, the teenager are influence by friends/peers and the social media and they need to be guided or restricted from a lot of activities and also there is need to sensitize and orient them on the dangers of engaging into things like rape and sexual activities at the tender age. Peer pressure to engage in adult-like activities can encourage adolescents to engage in various levels of sexual experimentation. Adolescents who engage in sexual experimentation are at increased risk for sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and pregnancy.

### 7. The Death of a Parent or Separation

Lack of communication and poor relationship between child and parents is also strongly associated factor (63). A house with single biological parent is highly risky place for a child (64). Role and presence of a protective mother is an important factor to reduce or recover child sexual abuse (65).

## 8. Media Factors (free access to porn and pornography)

A major factor that is hidden behind the increasing rate of juvenile delinquency all around the world is the exposure to sexual content or pornographic content on internet. Children or juveniles accessing pornography become more violent and a distorted view about sexuality and relationship is developed in them, and 'child on child' sexual abuse has become an international problem due to increasing trend of watching pornography among juveniles (70).

## 9. Alcohol, Drug, Substance Abuses Factors

Substance abuse depresses the mental stability of the individual and he commits the offence which later he may regret to. Substance abuse such as alcohol is strongly associated with child maltreatment (WHO). Alcohol consumption is involved in majority of sexual offences. Perpetrators those who consume alcohol and intoxicate themselves use their physical force more confidently to get sexual contacts (66).

## 10. Homelessness Factors (war, conflict, mental problem, poverty, etc.)

There is a strong relationship between sexual violence and homelessness. Sexual violence can be both an antecedent to and consequence of homelessness. Victims and survivors are often dependent on their perpetrators for basic needs such as housing and shelter. This is particularly salient for children, teens, immigrants and refugees, migrant workers, victims of sex trafficking, sex workers, and victims of marital and intimate partner rape. Escaping sexual violence often means becoming homeless. Once on the streets, individuals are at greater risk for sexual victimization.

## 11. Globalisation Factors (introduction of foreign cultures)

The major concern of each society is the future of its next generation, which is the main player in its future development. In spite of the benefits of globalization in distributing online technology, its negative aspects in the form of mass media have dramatically destroyed the moral values of societies with pornography and have attracted the attention of school students to such programs (71). According to Prins (2011), one of the threats posed by the internet is to the privacy of the victim since offenders can easily track victims; with just a click of the mouse, most of the victims' information can be readily accessed (72). A very good example is Facebook which has a lot of users such as students, teenagers, youngsters and other international users. Photos, films and pornographic texts (comic, romantic, adventurous, dramatic, and other kinds) can be exchanged through online channels and between peers, however, another downfall is that some digital tools like the internet have the ability to make it easy to download, save, and send programs with sexual content to others (73).



## SOLUTIONS DISCUSSION

Having known the causes and risk factors associated with rape/abuse on minor girls, the following solutions can help in curtailing the rate of rape/abuse on minor girls.

### HOW ADVOCATES AND NONPROFITS CAN HELP

It is important not focus our attention on prevention efforts that place the expectation of abuse prevention on children. It is the job of adults to protect children. Talk about child sexual abuse in your communities to help break the silence and stigma.

- Children who have experienced abuse often keep it a secret. One of the best ways to prevent child sexual abuse and to act as supportive first responders when a child discloses is by maintaining healthy, open relationships with children in your life—so they know you are a safe adult they can tell if something happens.
- Believe them—very few allegations of child sexual abuse are false. If a child discloses abuse, believe them, support them, and know the mandated reported laws in your community.
- Try to remain calm, so that the child doesn't blame themselves for the abuse. If you react with anger, the child may change or recant their story to avoid the feeling that people are "angry at them" when abuse is still happening.
- Help set boundaries for children, and pay attention when you feel that other adults are crossing boundaries with children, like demanding physical touch (hugs, kisses), spending alone time with a child in a school or church setting. Help uphold and model boundaries and allow children to create boundaries for themselves.

- Advocate for organizational policies (within your organizations and in other community organizations) that reduce one adult/one child interactions—group settings are safest

## THE NEED TO DEVELOP PUBLIC HEALTH AWARENESS OUTREACH

Community outreach and public awareness are cornerstones of an integral part of community sensitizing in achieving the desired of public health. The first challenge is the awareness problem. Even in Western nations, individual and societal sensitization to child sexual abuse is still only several decades old and remains incomplete. Knowledge gaps and misperceptions about child sexual abuse are widespread amongst the general public, professionals, and societal opinion leaders. Yet, awareness of the nature of child sexual abuse and its multiple dimensions is an essential condition for prevention, recognition, and action, and is required at individual, institutional, and societal levels.

At the individual level, awareness must be developed in: children themselves, who may be victims, perpetrators, and confidante's parents and caregivers, whose supportive reaction is a cornerstone to the child victim's adjustment and professionals in education, childcare, health, law enforcement, social welfare, and other youth-serving organizations, as they are often the trusting adults to whom children turn. At the institutional level, it is important for managers and leaders of youth-serving organizations to possess this awareness, if they are to train their staff and establish clear policies regarding abuse prevention and response. At the societal level, leaders in community, religious, media, government, and judicial organizations are essential bearers of this knowledge, and awareness is necessary in the general public.

## REPORTING CULPRIT OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

the vast majority of child sexual abuse incidents are never reported to authorities. Reporting the perpetrators to the appropriate authority and bringing them to book is only solution in curtailing the rape/abuse on minor girls. by so doing it serves as a lesson/deterrent to those with similar character.

## CONCLUSION

Determined efforts are required to reduce the growing evil of child sexual abuse. Relying on government machinery and policy implementation is not sufficient to safeguard our minor girls. It is therefore, a concerted efforts have to be made from the ground level itself by the family and parents to create a fearless and safe environment for the girl child. Primary efforts incorporated with stringent rules, policies and laws can prove a satisfactory way to fulfil the objective of child protection worldwide. There is an urgent need to take a strict measure in preventing this evil act and menace of in our society. This can only be achieving with concerted efforts of all and sundry- at individual level, family level, societal level, religious leaders level, traditional leaders level, NGOs level, as well as, Government level at large through poverty alleviations, family support, and gingering girl child education, as well as, enacting strict law on minor girls hawing, developing awareness campaign that sensitising community about the effects of child sexual abuse, and empathy towards victims is necessary to enhance healthy behaviour, responses, and societal change.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our findings of this research study, the following recommendations are made, as follows;

- Regular conversations between parents and children about sexual offences or sexual abuse in an appropriate manner can prove to be a very important step for preventing children from this harmful offence. Parents are the most trustworthy people for a child. Therefore, they can help more than the professionals to guide, care and protect.
- Parents and care givers ensure the safety of their children by guiding them about the appropriate and inappropriate touch and also about the sensitive parts or private parts of the body and make them understand about the risk and vulnerabilities.
- Parental involvement is very less in many families to guide their children for the risk factors that surround them. Therefore, Parents must check and find whom their children are spending time with, and also should ask about their activities. Activities of the child, such as concern, feelings, being out of the house overnight and social activities must be monitored by parents. Children go through multiple feelings. These feelings must not be neglected to prevent further damage to their childhood.
- If a child reveals or discloses about the sexual abuse he/she went through, parents must assure the support and must not blame the child for this crime. Support of parents can heal the mental injuries of the victim more easily and quickly.
- There is need for proper parental guidance and up bring among their wards and children so as to teach them the right morals and give them proper up bring based on the morals and values of the society.

- vi. Parents must console the child that his/her relationship with them will be intact after the disclosure. Victim can experience nightmares, depressions, mood swings etc., and parenting can be very difficult after the disclosure.
- vii. Government through the legislative arms of government should create laws and orders that will provide strict punishment for those who engaged in rape/abuse on minor girls so as to serve as deterrence to others with similar habits.
- viii. There is need for traditional/religious leaders and teachers to sensitize and orients people on the dangers and effect of rape/abuse on minor girls.
- ix. Workshops need be organised for children as well as adults in school, where they are informed about the vulnerabilities and measures for protecting them from sexual abuse.
- x. Teachers should create awareness among school going children must be raised by child-friendly methods which are easier for them to understand.
- xi. Active policing and specialized officials to deal with the corruption in matters of sexual abuse must be the prior concern of policy makers. Delays in conviction decreases and often shatters the confidence of victim and family in the prevalent judicial system.
- xii. There is need to strengthen the drug/substances abuses law enforcement agency, such as, National Drug and Law Enforcement Agency and other sister agencies to strictly engages in the fight against drug/substance abuses in the society. as it was reveal in the findings that drug abuse is one among the major causes of rape among the perpetrators

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