



A Study of Sexual Abuse among Adolescent Girls: Issues and Concerns

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Abstract:

There has been an increase in the amount of attention paid to the sexually coercive experiences of young people in developing countries like India over the course of the last several years. The study that is being done in this relatively young field is producing fresh evidences that urge for therapies that are more specialised. “It is imperative that the findings coming from qualitative and quantitative research should be assimilated in order to present the perspectives in this context for a diverse group including married and unmarried young people aged It is imperative that the findings coming from qualitative and quantitative research should be assimilated.” As a result, an investigation into sexual misconduct committed against young females in Delhi was carried out. A comprehensive search was conducted by using important search engines, manually searching grey literature and websites, and consulting cross references of publications researched in the English language. Girls in their younger years are more likely to be victims of sexual abuse and physical assault.

Introduction

The age range from 10 to 19 years old is regarded to be that of teens according to the World Health Organization (WHO), a definition that is utilised throughout the book. Adolescence is the transitional stage between childhood and maturity that young people go through on their way to becoming adults. They continue to go through changes after puberty, but they do not automatically embrace the adult rules, rights, and obligations throughout this period. Teenage



years are a cultural limitation that has been defined in many different ways around the globe. In addition to the emotional growth that takes place throughout adolescence, also physical development takes place. Teenagers are reaching puberty at earlier ages and spending more time in school than ever before. Getting married and having children at a later stage in life than their peers. According to figures provided by the “Planning Commission of India as of March 2000”, teenagers in India ranging in age from 10 to 19 made up around 23 percent of the total population, or almost 230 million individuals.

Sexual Abuse

An adult who engages in any form of sexually suggestive behaviour towards a kid under the age of 18 for females and 16 for boys is called sexual abuse “(who is significantly older than the victim and is in a position of power or control over the child or may even be an acquaintance or an unknown person).”

Physical symptoms alone, however, are not often sufficient to make the diagnosis of sexual abuse. Adolescents often tell a trusted third party about being sexually abused or molested by a family member, employer, caregiver, lover, or family acquaintance (such as the mother, a friend, a neighbour, a relative, etc.). The perpetrator of the sexual assault or molestation may have been a family member, an employer, a caregiver, On the other hand, here are some physical indications that a person has been sexually abused. These include issues with walking or sitting, ripped, dirty, or bloody underwear, complains of discomfort or itching, bruising or “bleeding mineral illness, and pregnancy (during the early stages of puberty) (Sloan Irving, 1983, 6).”



Scenario in India

Simply uttering the word "sex" is enough to excite people's senses and quicken the pace of blood flow in their brains and hearts. Sexual fulfilment, according to Sigmund Freud, is comparable to hunger satisfaction. "Sex is a natural phenomenon that is required for the survival of the human species on this planet, and sexual exploitation is the most heinous kind of degradation." In the Indian context, a woman's virginity is a source of great shame and disgrace. Sexual exploitation is carried out in a variety of methods and forms. Rape is the most perverse and disgusting. The word "rape comes from the Latin word rapese, which means to take, grab, or carry away." It refers to a guy concealing and assaulting a girl or woman in order to satisfy his sexual desires. Rape is recorded virtually every day, especially among young and teenage females. It not only humiliates and empowers women, but it also takes a long time for many of them. Personal connection capability is harmed, and unending worry is developed. A total of 12, 204 instances were recorded in the counting (Hindustan Times, 2004a), compared to 11,204 cases in 1993 and 12,351 cases in 1994. In terms of molestation, a total of 20,985 incidents were recorded in 1993, rising to 24,117 in 1994 and reaching a peak of 25,446 in 1995.

Despite having the greatest per capita income in the country, more than 2.1 million individuals in Delhi are considered to be living below the poverty line. Diseases, criminality, and sexual exploitation affect the majority of girls and women.

The majority of the victims are uneducated and unskilled. "With a crime rate of 341 per million compared to 9.5 for all of India in 1993", the city is becoming more dangerous for women and teenage girls.



There were 233 rape instances recorded in 1993, which increased to 322 in 1994, 377 in 1995, and 470 in 1996, representing a 28.38 percent increase in registered crime (Hindustan times, 1997) the number of crimes recorded is unknown. According to numerous research, the reporting of horrific crimes such as rape is higher than that of other “sexual crimes such as harassment and exploitation.” According to an examination of 470 rape incidents, 88 percent of the rape crimes were perpetrated by the victim's family or close friends. Doctors, boyfriends, slaves, and other travellers are among those who have illegally molested young females “(Hindustan times, 1996 b) (Source: Aggarwal N.K, Bhatia M.S Aggarwal B.L. Sexual crime against women scenario in Delhi.”

Sexual crime in Delhi

A report by the “Delhi State commission for women found that out of 470 cases of rape, 60%” of the victims were girls younger than 16 years old. Additionally, a report found that approximately 42 percent of rape victims were in the age group of 10-16, which was higher than the national average of 23 percent.

Sexual crime Against women

Particular	2001	2002
Dowry Death	107	158
Rape	233	322
Molestation of women	-	521
Cruelty by in-laws	-	985
Eve Teasing	-	1668

(Source: - A report of sexual crime against women scenario in 2005)

The victims endure additional stress throughout the judicial process (Carman, 1984), in addition to the initial trauma caused by the rape itself. The victim is not only forced to relive



through the painful event, but she is also forced to do it in a completely neutral environment while the whole criminal court system is focused upon her. This makes the experience much more distressing for the victim. Therefore, the victim goes through two traumatic experiences: The rape, and the trial that follows.

Not only does she need assistance from a lawyer, but also compassion, protection, comfort, and the appropriate kind of “rehabilitation. Burmanet al, 1988) In addition to rape, there are other other types of sexual exploitation”, such as the sexual assault of women and girls, eve teasing, and so on.

These kinds of crimes leave victims with additional forms of psychological distress. As can be seen from the data shown in table I, the total number of cases falling under these categories is likewise rising.

Experience from Psychiatry outpatient Department

It has been shown that women who have been the victims of sexual assault “are at an increased risk of suffering from mental diseases, and the converse is also true. In the psychiatry outpatient department of a tertiary care Teaching hospital in Delhi, India”, we have found that sexual offences committed against mentally ill patients are all too common. This is based on our own personal experiences.

Either a person is more likely to be subjected to sexual torture because they have a psychiatric condition, particularly psychosis or mental retardation, or being sexually exploited may cause someone to develop a psychiatric illness. Both of these scenarios are possible. Tables 2 and 3 provide a summary of the outpatient department's activities throughout the last five years'



worth of data.

S.No.	Psychiatric disorder	Sexual torture No of cases
1	Schizophrenia	20
2	Mania	08
3	Endogenous depression	15
4	Generalized Anxiety Disorder	05
5	Neurotic Depression	07
6	Hysteria (conversion / Dissociation)	12
7	Post traumatic stress disorder	04
8	Psychalgia	12
9	Somatoform Disorders	15
10	Sleep Disorder	10
11	Elimination disorder	05
12	Eating Disorder	05
13	Attention Deficit Disorder	05
14	Mental retardation	12
15	Drug dependence	03
16	Attempted suicide	15
17	Others	05
	Total	158

Perpetrators of sexual crime

Sr. No	Perpetrator	No. of cases
1	Parent	40
2	Uncle of relative	80
3	Sibling	15
4	Teacher	12
5	Warden	10
6	Stranger	30
7	Physician	05
8	Police	05

Source: A report by national crime records bureau of India (2004)

An Account of the Sexual Exploitation of Adolescent Girls in the Rural Areas of Delhi

In this study, the author discusses the work done in a family counselling centre by an



organisation known as the Navjyoti India Foundation. A qualitative study was carried out by the researcher in the region of Delhi, namely in the villages of Bawana, Holmi Khurd, and Narela. This was accomplished by having participants attend counselling sessions, field research programmes, and house visits. The purpose of this research was to investigate the information requirements and networks related to teenagers' sexual behaviour.

This article discusses the several forms of pressure that teenage females are subjected to, as well as the social elements that contribute to these forms of pressure. In the context of the phrase "sexual exploitation," researchers recognised teenagers as a specific student cohort ranging from eighth to twelfth standard. It is possible that sexual abuse of teenage females is a widespread issue that has major ramifications for the mental health of the victims.

Methods

In order to accomplish this goal, the research collected ethnographic data from the young people's perspective by recruiting them as participants from 48 different rural community outreach programmes. These data were used by the researcher in the process of developing criteria for in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. She visited ten homes and performed 65 in-depth interviews throughout her research. The majority of the women who lived with them were not married. In the end, the researcher conducted five separate focus groups in order to collect data on migratory behaviour. A researcher did a translation of the data from "Hindi into English" and then coded any problems that arose throughout the process of translating the data.



Key Findings

Bawana, Narela, and HolambiKhurds, as well as villages in Delhi, are mostly from the middle-lower and upper socioeconomic strata. All of them come from a Hindu household. The dominant culture is patriarchal, with females seen as the family's "Izzat (Honour) and referred to as Paraya Dhan or elase property (i.e. their future husband's). Arranged weddings are the standard, and any perceived misdeed on the girl's marriage is frowned upon. As a consequence, families limit the mobility of girls and their connections with guys who are not family members.

Respondents cited teasing 150 times in 65 in-depth interviews and indicated 30 unique incidents of more severe sexual exploitation. Usually, a group of two or four lads teases girls passing by on the street. Comments, singing movie tunes, whistling, shorting, provocative hand gestures, and facial expressions" are all examples of teasing. While teasing is minimal in comparison to the other difficulties described in this article, it is used by boys who lack other chances to engage with females. As boys grew aware that society tolerates male dominance, it may encourage beliefs regarding male dominance. The majority of teasing goes unnoticed, but in a select instances, it might lead to friendship between boys and females. Boys' attitudes toward females were defined by the girls in the survey as being friend girls with a physical connection being the most important factor in their minds. According to a 17-year-old girl, "most males do friendship for the purpose of physical connections." "Some boys retain friendship till friendship," she said, "but most boys (to) make physical relation as early as feasible." From forced kissing to forced intercourse, respondents reported a variety of interactions that began as consensual but ended in sexual exploitation. In certain



circumstances, they grow more violent. Consider the following scenario: My uncle kissed me forcibly at my residence when I was alone, and this led to excessive hostility, a 15-year-old girl said. After some time, he forced anal and vaginal intercourse on me. When I protested, he threatened to inform everyone and have my parents beat me and refuse to feed and clothe me. A 17-year-old girl said her relative assaulted her as a child. We've been sexually involved for a long time. He kissed my breasts hard. I was in a lot of anguish, but he continued doing it until he was pleased. If I don't cooperate, he'll kill or disgrace me.

However, as the following example indicates, society tolerates exploitation and throws the blame firmly on the victim. "Once I was going down the street and this kid approached from the front, a 14-year-old girl told how a male on the street attacked her." I had not wrapped a chunni and had pressed my breasts and ran away. In India, the chunni (scarf) is a sign of modesty, and without it, women are frequently accused of having loose morals for exposing their breasts. The kid was beaten up by the girl's mother, but the neighbours said, "Fault lies with your daughter since she did not wear a chunni. The neighbor's remark demonstrated tolerance for the boy's actions by blaming the girl's lack of character.

One 17-year-old married woman said that her husband pushed her to have sexual contact with his brother" and other family members. When I declined, he assaulted me and threatened to murder me. One 19-year-old girl told how her uncle repeatedly raped her and threatened to murder her. She added that one day she made a daring step and told her family about her situation. They, on the other hand, did not respect her and were not prepared to listen to her properly. They attribute the girls' lack of character to her Dhamki (threat) not to disclose the



situation with anybody in order to retain izzat.

Table 1

No. of cases who reported sexual abuse during last 4 years by type of abuse from the police stations:

Particulars	Kanjhawala	Narela	Bawana	Total
Rape	18	52	23	93
Molestation of Women	22	28	42	92
Evetearing	-	17	6	23
Kidnapping/Abduction	17	63	53	116
Total				324

“Sexual crime in villages of Delhi.

Accordingly to collected data from the police stations of villages Kanjhawala, Narela and Bawana 80% of cases were of girls below 17 years of age.

Type of perpetrator and action taken by victim among adolescents who reported in police station and experience of sexual abuse with the past 4 year as number of abuser with type of abuser”

Type of perpetrator

Student/friend/lever	119
Parent/Relative	60
Stranger	65
Neighbour	80
Total	324

Table 2

Even though most go undetected, the real incidence rate is rising. Many more crimes go unreported than are recorded. “Few people report regular axis symptoms due to family pressure (particularly when the head of the family or a close relative is involved), societal pressure, and peer pressure (especially when an important member of the society is involved) Personal reasons due to lack of awareness or inability to report due to psychosis or fear of further ridicule and rejection; cultural factors (where incestuous or premarital sex is culturally



acceptable); legal reasons (due to lack of faith in law – fear of being exploited); and judicial factors (when enforcement law is boxed and judicial decision takes a very long time or fear of further torture by repeated and prolonged interrogation).

Conclusion

The study's main results suggest that sexual abuse and violence are frequent among this” group. Many teenage girls have been subjected to a variety of kinds of sexual abuse, and there is a significant link between sexual abuse and other forms of violence. Friends, lovers, neighbours, and relatives were more likely to abuse teenage females. Despite their desire for sex's pleasure, boys have a negative perception of it as unpleasant, unclean, and humiliating. Nonetheless, they are open to discussing sexual issues. Sexual coercion among teenage females is a kind of status maintenance. Society encourages males to become more aggressive and violent by accepting certain forms of compulsion.

Girls face slander while guys receive permission from society to take advantage of sexual possibilities. Crimes are common in all societies, yet the majority of them go unnoticed and unrecorded. A community-wide awareness campaign must be launched to encourage victims to report, and additional “reporting centres (in collaboration with NGO's or hospitals) must” be established to alleviate victims' fears and restore trust in the law enforcement authorities that will assist them.

According to the findings of this study on adolescent girls and sexual assault, these vulnerable concerns are upsetting and need to be addressed as soon as possible. As a direct result of this, the “appointment of a school social worker in schools who is properly educated in techniques



of working with people and equipped with skills and knowledge” may play a significant part in the process of dealing with hazardous behaviour in teenagers. When networking with people and organisations that may play a significant role in contributing to the problem, it is possible to achieve this goal by using different modalities that are multidimensional in their nature and multi-disciplinary in their approach. It is vital that greater opportunities for personal and professional development be made accessible to teenage females in both the public and private sectors. This is something that must be done immediately.

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