

Prevalence, effects and coping strategies of non-reported adult survivors of child sexual abuse



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Research Project:

Prevalence, Effects and Coping Strategies of non-reported Adult Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse

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Declaration

I, Ms. KanwalShoukat, Student No: 13003141002, student of BS in the subject of psychology, session of 2013 - 2017, hereby declare that the material printed in this thesis, titled **“Prevalence, Effects and Coping Strategies of non-reported Adult Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse”** is original work and has not been printed, published or submitted as research work or thesis in any university or research institution in Pakistan or abroad.

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Research Completion Certificate

It is certified that the research work contained in this thesis titled “**Prevalence, Effects and Coping Strategies of non-reported Adult Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse**” has been carried out and completed by **Ms. KanwalShoukat, Student No: 13003141002**; Student of BS Psychology, session 2013-2017, under my supervision. This study is an independent research work and carried out under given instruction and consideration.

Dated: _____

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Table of Contents

Abstract	9
1. Introduction	11
1.1 Prevalence of Child Sexual Abuse in Pakistan	11
1.2 Increased CSA Reporting Trend	14
1.3 Legislation of Pakistan: CSA Laws	15
1.4 Definition(s) of Child Sexual Abuse	16
1.5 Theoretical Framework	18
1.6 Rationale	24
1.7 Personal Statement	24
1.8 Objectives	25
1.9 Research Questions	25
2. Literature Review	26
2.1 International Studies	26
2.2 Indigenous Studies	35
3. Method	47
3.1 Phase I: Prevalence Survey	47
3.2 Phase II: Qualitative Study of Effects & Coping Strategies	49
4. Findings	53
4.1 Phase I: Prevalence Survey	53
4.2 Phase II: Qualitative Study of Effects & Coping Strategies	58
Summary of Findings	106
5. Discussion	109
Conclusion	119

Implications	121
Suggestions	122
Limitations	123
10. References	124
11. Appendices	128

List of Appendices

Titles

Appendix-A Detailed Information Sheet for Participants

Appendix-B Informed Consent

Appendix-C Retrospective Measure of Child Sexual Abuse

Appendix-D Questionnaire Booklet with Demographics

Appendix-E Recruitment Form (English)

Appendix-F Recruitment Form (Urdu)

Appendix-G Interview Guide

Appendix-H Focused Codes to Categories

M1: Focused Codes to Categories

M2: Focused Codes to Categories

M3: Focused Codes to Categories

M4: Focused Codes to Categories

F1: Focused Codes to Categories

F2: Focused Codes to Categories

F3: Focused Codes to Categories

F4: Focused Codes to Categories

Appendix-I Plagiarism Report

Abstract

Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) occurs when an older adolescent or adult uses a child for sexual pleasure or gratification. It is a known fact that child sexual abuse has severe impact on child's life and the violation can affect the survivors for the rest of their lives. Prevalence of child sexual abuse (CSA) is hard to assess because it is often not reported, and it is believed that the number of actual cases is far more than the reported. The Study 1 aimed at exploring the prevalence of CSA in Pakistani general population. Sample consisted of 762 undergraduate and postgraduate students from six institutes of five cities of Punjab (ages 18-38, 368 males and 394 females), recruited using convenient sampling. Retrospective Childhood Adversity Measure, that consists of six items, first two items assessing physical abuse, third incest abuse and following three different forms of CSA, was used. The results of total 765 cases revealed 52.3 % CSA prevalence (52.6 % females & 52.2 % males), 59.1 % Physical abuse (56.2 % females & 62.3 % males) and 23.1 % incest abuse (25.1 % females & 21.4 % males).

The Study 2 was conducted to explore the psychological impact of child sexual abuse and coping behavior used by the non-reported adult survivor of CSA in Pakistan. Semi-structured interviews were used within qualitative method for in-depth exploration of the same. Purposive sampling was used to collect data from 8 non-reported adult survivors of CSA including 4 males and 4 females. Analysis of in-depth interviews using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, indicated a number of cultural barriers for not disclosing abuse to any authorities and not seeking any legal or therapeutic assistance. Participants reported self-harming behaviors leading to suicidal ideation and attempts. It was revealed that childhood sexual abuse had critical emotional and psychological impact on varied domains of survivors' life causing trust issues and suppression of emotions, thereby leading to further problems. Use of adaptive coping strategies

such as positive reframing, positive growth and support seeking also at times got overshadowed by the traumatic impact of CSA. The study concluded that there is a dire need of awareness in order to manage and prevent Child Sexual Abuse at country level.

Keywords: Child Sexual Abuse, Prevalence, Coping, Psychological Effects, Punjab, Pakistan

Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Prevalence of Child Sexual Abuse in Pakistan

Prevalence signifies the quantity of a population that has experienced a behavior or particular event. One of the aims of this research is to shed light on the high prevalence of child sexual abuse(CSA) in general population. The prevalence of CSA is hard to assess because it is often not reported, and it is believed that the number of actual cases is far more than the number of cases being reported. A number of published investigational studies showed a consensus on major number of CSA going unreported.