

Child Sexual Abuse in Pakistan: The Need for an Indigenous Scientific Knowledge Base, Effective Policy Making and Prevention

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Abstract

Child sexual abuse is a big social problem worldwide with concomitant suffering, though its acceptance as such in Pakistan is a recent phenomenon. Given the sensitivity of the issue in Pakistan, while the measures taken in this regard by various government and non-governmental organizations are commendable there is still a lot more that to be done. This entails both improving our existing efforts and addressing neglected but important issues regarding CSA in Pakistan. Effective policies in this regard need to be based on an indigenous scientific knowledge base, which in turn will be translated into effective policy formulation and interventions to curb and prevent CSA crimes in the country. Furthermore where CSA is concerned it means close liaison amongst the criminal justice system, health care professionals, researchers and community based organizations.

Keywords:

Child Sexual Abuse, Pakistan, Scientific Knowledge Base, Policy, Interventions, Prevention.

Introduction

Children are not objects to be used or misused neither are they broken toys to be discarded (Holmes & Holmes, 2002). They are the future of our society and as responsible adults we should protect them from those who want to harm them. However, the very idea of child abuse (CA) not to speak of child sexual abuse (CSA) has been historically contentious. It's being seen as a big social problem and a main cause for the suffering of many people's, is a recent phenomenon and even that too in some countries and settings only. Throughout history children have been abused but the way it's dealt with now i.e. to formulate legal definitions of CSA, to make child protection government agencies and to conduct lots of researches on it, to understand its various aspects have been a matter of time and place (Hopper, 2009). Definitely no society can tolerate the sexual abuse of children whether inside or outside the family in this millennium, given its devastating consequences (Parsons, 2000).

In a developing country like Pakistan many factors like lack of awareness about CSA i.e. its conceptual knowledge; the theoretical foundations of this phenomenon; its devastating effects on the victims; lack of knowledge about sex offender characteristics; treatment for sex offenders, and counseling for CSA victims, make

issue a challenge. Social taboos regarding sexual matters, religious sanctions, false prestige and social status as a matter of honour also explain the denial of CSA in Pakistan and the secrecy enshrouding it (Fasihuddin, 2006). Not surprisingly, the absence of legal definitions regarding CSA and accompanying laws to define these crimes, absence of true prevalence rates (the percentage of people who have had such experiences) and incidence rates (the number of new cases each year) plus other empirical researches regarding CSA, consequently result in a lack of effective policy making and effective interventions to curb these crimes and protect our children from its negative outcomes. Therefore, taken together these factors make dealing with this issue difficult, but certainly not impossible.

In Pakistan the proposed National Child Protection Policy could provide the foundation for a future child protection system. The (Draft) Child Protection Bill, under which Child Protection Bureaus, Child Protection Courts and Centers will be established throughout the country, will be a step in the right direction, though it is yet to be passed by the National Assembly. The recommendation of the Child Protection Monitoring and Data Collection System by the UN Committee is also commendable, though it is not yet functional. There are some observations and some suggestions which if considered will greatly benefit the future Child Protection System in the country particularly regarding CSA crimes.

CSA is multifarious and as such requires a multidisciplinary approach in coming up with effective policies and interventions to understand and curb this crime. This means cooperation between the legal system including the legislature and law enforcing agencies; academics, researchers and professionals especially forensic psychologists, clinical psychologists, psychologists, criminologists, psychiatrists, government organizations, non government organizations (NGOs) and other community based organizations.

CSA Definition in Pakistan

First of all a legal definition of CSA is imperative. This has practical implications for a number of things e.g. for sound statistics and empirical researches, meaningful communication on the issue between different concerned organizations, and most of all the formulation of specific CSA laws, effective policy making, and for interventions as well as prevention strategies. Currently, the definition of CSA as provided by the World Health organization (WHO) seems to be more comprehensive and unambiguous as compared to varied definitions adopted by different NGOs in Pakistan. WHO (2006) together with the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect defines CSA broadly as, " the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to or for which the child is not developmentally

prepared, or else that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Children can be sexually abused by adults or other children who are by virtue of their age or stage of development in a position of responsibility, trust or power over the victim" (WHO 2006: 10).

While conceptual ambiguities surround each term in the phrase *child sexual abuse* (Haugaar, 2000) generally, conceptual clarity in Pakistan may be achieved in the following way. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), to which Pakistan is a signatory, defines *child* using the chronological age threshold of 18 years. The term *sexual* is also problematic universally but lack of clarity of the term *sexual abuse* in Pakistan has often led to denial and prevented the community from taking the issue seriously. Aangan's (2002) explication of the phrase in the following way is helpful, since it's based on indigenous data:

- a. An adult gaining sexual satisfaction through watching naked children
- b. An adult making suggestive comments to the child that are sexual in nature
- c. An adult revealing his or her sexual parts to a child
- d. Encouraging or forcing a child to read/watch pornography, giving pornographic literature, pictures or movies to a child or using the child in pornographic material (i.e. photos, videos, etc.)
- e. Kissing a child with sexual undertones/inclinations
- f. Fondling a child's breasts or genitals or if an abuser forces a child to fondle his or her genitals
- g. Encouraging or forcing a child to masturbate with the adult as either a participant or observer
- h. Encouraging or forcing a child into oral sex (using one's own or the child's mouth in a sexual act)
- i. Vaginal penetration
- j. Anal penetration

This explanation is helpful in a country where lack of knowledge about this issue can lead to misunderstanding regarding certain forms of CSA as harmless and denying others in the name of false piety. We still need a national consensus on this issue, by agreeing on a definition and explanation of the term that is supported by indigenous empirical evidence and the expert opinion of those who are dealing with CSA issues. Moreover, a legal definition of CSA has direct implications for authentic statistics in this regard that will highlight the scope of this problem in Pakistan, another important issue, to which we now turn.

CSA Statistics in Pakistan

In order to effectively deal with CSA in Pakistan, we need to develop its true incidence and prevalence rates in the country. Unfortunately no national surveys or official statistics are available in this country. The inability of Pakistan to present proper data and statistics on CSA to the UN Committee on the Convention on the Rights of the Child is often frowned upon in the committee's reports (Fasihuddin, 2006). According to a local NGO, the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) there are no official statistics on CA and CSA in Pakistan (SPARC, 2008), neither any such statistics are provided by SPARC itself. In giving statistics on CSA, SPARC relies on Sahil's 'Cruel Numbers', an annual database of CSA cases in Pakistan based only on a number of newspaper reports (Sahil, 2007). According to the Committee on the Convention of the Rights of the Child report, an assessment of the data collection system in the country indicated that data is spread across various official agencies and is not always in an easily accessible form. Furthermore, there is no centralized system for data collection to receive input from units spread throughout the country. It's not computerized and in various instances the data is not disaggregated on age or gender basis. Another important observation was that the media is being used as a widely used source, both by the official agencies and the civil society, to report data on child protection issues. Since media usually is mostly interested in sensational news that interest the public (Wilczynski & Sinclair, 1999), statistics on only the severest forms of CSA, like rape or sodomy, murder, abduction for rape are given in Sahil's 'Cruel Numbers'. Aangan's (2002) report, 'The Bitter Truth' gives statistics on other forms of CSA also, but sample representativeness is a concern for researchers in this case. According to Aangan, rape and sodomy are not the only forms of sexual abuse that are present in Pakistan but less severe forms, though with profound adverse psychological and emotional effects, like touching, kissing and fondling are also common forms of CSA in our culture. This makes the need for national prevalence and incidence studies on CSA in Pakistan indispensable. Additionally, some of the CSA indicators too can only be measured by conducting periodic nationwide surveys (CCRC, 2009).

Roza's, 'Rabta' course for police officials while sensitizing them to violence against women and children, human rights and gender issues, was another individual effort to guide and train police officials in how to interact with children reporting crimes, especially CSA. However, according to the law enforcing agencies in the country such training workshops are geographically and temporally limited in scope, and no good training manual has been developed by anyone so far. The NWFP Police, however, have taken a much needed and concrete step forward in this regard by making the reporting of crimes against children more systematic, objective and high tech. a series of training workshops were organized by Save the

Children Sweden and Pakistan Society of Criminology (PSC) for all the 72 police stations of districts Peshawar, Nowshera, Charsadda, Mardan and Swabi for this purpose. The NWFP Police have introduced a new register called 26 (A) for this purpose which has already been printed and provided to all of the 218 police stations of NWFP. The new computerized database system will record crimes against children that are child victims and also crimes committed by Juveniles on separate pink and blue forms respectively. The data will be generated from January, 2009 and will be forwarded to the Central Police office (CPO) for compilation and analysis (PSC, 2009). This is a very commendable step and other provinces need to follow suit, in addition to a central data compilation and monitoring system on all CSA related activities in the country.

Four main types of studies provide large scale CA statistics including CSA (Hopper, 2009).

- a. Studies based on official government statistics.
- b. Studies based on official government statistics plus other sources of data like data from community professionals including such children who are included in official statistics and those who are not.
- c. Adult and adolescent surveys of a representative sample (e.g. from a country, province etc.) regarding child abuse incidence in the respondents' own house in the past year.
- d. Adult surveys of their own child abuse.

Such national surveys seem indispensable if we want to have authentic statistics on CSA in Pakistan. Additionally, we also need to conduct different empirical studies to understand the concept indigenously for effective policy making and evidence based interventions. This means research on different dimensions of CSA, like CSA offender characteristics including, but not limited to such relevant variables as age, gender, persistence, criminal versatility, the offender's modus operandi; CSA victim characteristics like gender, age, outcomes for CSA victims and situational factors that facilitate CSA, etc.

Very little empirical research has been done in Pakistan on many CSA offenders issues mentioned above, not to speak of CSA offenders' treatment, rehabilitation and prevention programmes which are almost completely ignored by all concerned. Some limited statistics in this regard are provided by Sahil and Aangan (2002) like offender types, though the statistics on offender types are somewhat different for Sahil's (2007) *Cruel Numbers* and Aangan's (2002) *The Bitter Truth*. The acquaintance category is not clear in *Cruel Numbers* as many of the acquaintances are given as separate categories too. In Aangan's *The Bitter Truth*

the highest percentage of perpetrators was that of family members while in Sahil's 'Cruel Numbers' they are acquaintances. Consensus regarding the definition of these offender types will result in gathering more authentic data on them which can then be communicated in a meaningful way between different organizations and individual researchers. Nonetheless they throw light on offender types and the different CSA crimes committed by them in Pakistan. The differences in statistics regarding offender types may be a function of the victims socio- economic status (SES) and the seriousness of the CSA offence. However more empirical research is warranted to substantiate these observations. Some statistics on CSA victim characteristics like age, gender are also provided by Aangan and Sahil, however a clearer picture can emerge from national incidence and prevalence studies. Also, while statistics regarding various places where CSA takes place is available for a limited number and some types of CSA, situation characteristics that play an active role in the initiation and maintenance of CSA behaviour (Smallbone et.al, 2008) are totally unaccounted for in these two sources of data.

Unless empirical studies with methodological soundness are carried out on these issues, we will not be able to design more effective intervention as well as prevention programmes regarding CSA, for both the offenders and victims. Empirical research methods like surveys, interviews, grounded theory and ethnographic approaches are some ways to study these issues scientifically.

CSA Laws in Pakistan

The dearth of relevant CSA laws is another issue, which if addressed can render the role of the law enforcement agencies more effective. In 2006, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), Ministry of Interior and UNICEF commissioned an analysis of enforcement gaps in child related protection laws in Pakistan. The review found that full protection to the child is not guaranteed by the current laws. Either the laws are not sufficient or they are vaguely applied (CCRC, 2009). Secondly, the police, who are basically responsible for enforcement of laws, are not fully sensitized to child rights and child protection (Fasihuddin, 2006), not to speak of the lack of knowledge regarding CSA crimes and the skills to report such crimes. Further there are delays experienced in the judiciary and recommendations have been made for making the justice system more efficient and capable to respond to the protection needs of the child. It is expected that findings of the review will help in greater understanding of the gaps in the child protection environment in the country (CCRC, 2009).

Some progress has been made in this regard e.g. the Pakistan Penal Code and Hadood Ordinances of 1979 can be used to prosecute some child sexual abuse cases. The Pakistani Criminal Justice System does not deal with sexual offences against

children any differently than sexual offences against adults. Similarly the abuse of children or sexual abuse not involving penetration could be dealt with under Section 511 of the Pakistan Penal Code.

Likewise the police normally register a case of sexual abuse (only the severe form) under section 377 of the Pakistan Penal Code which deals with unnatural offences. This section does not cover all aspects of CSA and a new section 377-A is proposed in the new amendments (not yet passed by the legislature). There should be specific laws regarding different kinds of sexual crimes against children so as to make law enforcement efforts more effective.

CSA From a Forensic Psychological Perspective

In order to understand the pivotal role that forensic psychology can play in issues related to CSA a definition of Forensic Psychology will be enlightening. Forensic Psychology, sometimes called criminological and legal psychology, is the application of psychological theories and methods to the understanding of crime, criminal behaviour, policing and the legal system (School of Psychology, Module 1: Psychology, the Legal System and Criminology, 2008). By the late 1980s CSA was recognized as a serious social problem. The myth that children fabricate allegations of CSA was dispelled by research (Goodman, 1984). The short and long term effects of CSA are detrimental and as such child victims should be supported and counseled (Morgan & Zender, 1992).

1. Effects of CSA

According to research the following factors influence the effects of abuse (Hopper, 2009):

- Child's age at the time of the incident. Younger age at adverse experiences is more harmful, but different developmental periods are associated with different effects.
- If the abuser is a parent, grandparent, step-parent or another trusted adult than a stranger, the abuse effects are really drastic.
- In case the child tells someone, the person's doubting, shaming, ignoring, and blaming responses can be extremely harmful, even more than the abuse itself.
- The duration of the abuse, extended periods of abuse are more detrimental.

According to Aangan's (2002) analysis of 200 letters from victims and survivors of CSA, among the effects reported, feelings of guilt rated the highest for

both genders followed by depression but a higher percentage of females reported it as compared to males. The third highest rated effect was fear. Manipulation by the abusers plays a great part in inducing fear in these individuals. In addition to these effects feelings of shame, lack of confidence, anxiety, suicidal ideation, helplessness, feelings of abusing others and problems in interpersonal relationships were also reported. CSA may also lead to girl's delinquency and women crimes (Siegel & Williams, 2003). Fifty percent of women mental health clients are CSA survivors (Bryer, Nelson, Miller, & Krol, 1987; Jacobsen & Herald, 1990). While these women have multiple mental health problems and diagnoses (Pettigrew & Burcham, 1997) mostly they are diagnosed as having borderline personality disorder (Laporte & Gutman, 1996). Interfamilial CSA (ICSA) or more commonly incest also results in personal space boundary (PSB) violations leading to subsequent poor PSB regulation (Geanellos, 2003). Personal space has four levels (Scott, 1998) and perpetrators of ICSA penetrate every boundary to reach the core of a child's being, every boundary, physical, psychic or spiritual is exposed and broken and the evolving self is thrown into chaos. PSB regulation problems can lead to dire consequences, which cannot be portrayed more accurately than in Peck's (1997) personal space boundary analogy to a drawbridge. According to him, "his patient's (mental health patients) drawbridges were either laid down open all the time, or stuck shut. If open, virtually anyone and everyone could amble into their personal space, stay as long as they like, and do whatever harm they would. If shut, their drawbridges prevented everyone and everything from penetrating their isolated solitude. Neither case was healthy".

2. Dimensions of CSA

While CSA is regarded as a distinct and singular phenomenon, it is actually multifarious. Its multiple empirical dimensions like the *where, when, how, to whom and by whom* may seem to make the task of prevention extremely difficult if not impossible. The pattern of variations in these dimensions and the interactions between them should be reliably identified for prevention strategies to be narrowed and appropriately prioritized (Smallbone, Marshall & Wortley, 2008). While some data on these dimensions is available in Pakistan in the form of Sahil's 'Cruel Numbers' and Aangan's 'The Bitter Truth' report. These statistics have certain limitations like representing only particular socio economic strata, only particular type of CSA crimes, sample representativeness problems, limited information on the who and by whom dimension, which means victims characteristics and offender characteristics. These shortcomings can only be addressed effectively in empirical indigenous researches on these dimensions.

3. Some CSA Offender Characteristics

As regards the *by whom* dimension criminal justice and victimization surveys have identified males as responsible for the vast majority of CSA offending, though a very small percentage of females are also involved (Cortoni & Hanson, 2005). A similar gender pattern of the perpetrator is also evident in Pakistan, albeit in limited and specific samples (Sahil, 2007; Aangan, 2002). This calls for research on female CSA offenders also. As regards the age of the offender adolescence and early middle age seems to be the two main risk periods for the onset of CSA offending (Bourke & Donohue, 1996; Finklehor & Dziuba-Leatherman, 1994). This calls for different prevention strategies when dealing with these two offender groups. Prior to detection and conviction, CSA offending is persistent though recidivism rates after conviction are low, except in a small number of persistent CSA offenders. CSA offenders show criminal versatility and are often convicted for a number of other nonsexual offences. Research on these factors regarding the CSA offender has not been done in Pakistan. Offender identification and incarceration is indispensable to save our children from this heinous act. The perpetrators of such crimes should be properly assessed and appropriate punishment meted out and/ or rehabilitation services provided. Mental health services should be provided to these incarcerated child abusers and their release should be conditional upon the mental health professionals certain assessment that they will not reoffend. It is better to keep such an abuser for an indefinite period of time in jail/correctional facility than to release them to abuse another innocent child. Provincial/local websites displaying information about convicted sex offenders especially pedophiles should be launched thus enabling people residing in those areas to protect themselves and their children (Risley, 1997). In Pakistan, amidst all the hue and cry for children rights, efforts definitely need to be directed towards the understanding, identification, incarceration and treatment or punishment of people who sexually abuse our children. If this issue is not addressed properly this means that the very perpetrators from whom we are trying to protect our children are allowed to roam freely to target more victims. Furthermore, the fact that certain CSA offenders can be treated successfully can greatly help us in reducing CSA recidivism rates.

4. Some CSA Victim Characteristics

As regards the *to whom* dimension girls are twice as likely to be victims of CSA offences as compared to boys (Finklehor & Dziuba-Leatherman, 2001). This research finding is supported by 'Cruel Numbers' statistics for the year 2008 (Sahil, 2008), however according to Aangan's (2002) statistics girls and boys are equally vulnerable to sexual abuse. This disparity may be either due to the type of CSA offences, Sahil's statistics related to serious CSA offences while Aangan's statistics

include other less serious CSA offences too. But according to Ketring and Feinaur (1999) sexual abuse of girls predominantly involves sexual touching and fondling, which makes us question Aangan's statistics as it included both serious and less serious CSA offences and as such girl victims should have been more. It may be assumed that Aangan's victims belong to the middle and upper middle class and coming from urban or peri urban settings as compared to the bulk of Sahils' CSA victims coming from rural areas, may explain these differences. Caution in interpreting these data as such is again warranted since these data are limited to certain geographical locations and in the case of media reporting of CSA in Pakistan many cases don't get reported, due to many reasons including to preserve the family honour. Victimization surveys are needed to throw light on these CSA victim characteristics. Girls being abused for longer periods of time and in familial settings (Gold, Elhai, Lucenko, Swingle & Hughes, 1998) are also confirmed in Pakistan. Similarly, when force and violence is used adverse outcomes are associated with more adverse effects for the victims (Hebert, Parent, Daignault & Tourigny, 2006).

5. CSA Settings

Most CSA offending occurs in settings like homes, schools etc. where victims and offenders encounter each other on a regular basis. According to Wortley and Smallbone (2006) there are three types of settings in which CSA occurs,

- ☞ Domestic settings, like the victim's or offender's home, which in the case of incest is the same place.
- ☞ Institutional settings, such as hostels, schools, recreational clubs and so on.
- ☞ Public settings, such as parks, play areas, public swimming pools etc.

Most CSA occurs in domestic settings and the least in public settings. In Pakistan this fact is supported by Aangan's and Sahil's statistics too. The NWFP Police have done an exercise on the registered cases of child sexual abuse and it was observed that no place was safe in this regards.

6. CSA Reporting

For various reasons sexually abused children are reluctant to tell parents who in turn are reluctant to tell law enforcing agencies like the police (Smallbone et.al. 2008). The latter has been attributed to parent's harmful experiences with the criminal justice system like police insensitivity and the stress of the court process (Sauzier, 1989). In the former case children may be too young to tell in the first place or if they are old enough may fear blame and disbelief from non offending adults (Finklehor & Ormrod, 2001). In order to increase reporting one sensible policy

would be to make the experience more positive for CSA victims and their families, however obviously what is more preferable is to prevent CSA offences from occurring in the first instance. In Pakistan some other reasons in addition to these are, lack of knowledge regarding the different forms of CSA, denial due to the perception that Pakistan being an ideological state following Islamic ideals, the society is somehow immune to immorality and even if there is a problem of CSA it is on a very small scale (CCRC, 2009). Furthermore people may also not report CSA cases so as not to dishonor the family's name (Fasihuddin, 2006).

7. CSA Prevention

To develop effective preventive strategies for CSA we need not only to empirically determine the key dimensions of CSA just discussed above, but we also need an unambiguous theoretical basis that will organize and make sense of the available researches and to make defensible inferences about causal mechanisms and processes. Without it, evidence based preventive strategies may only be managing CSA consequences rather than targeting its causes (Smallbone et.al. 2008). This seems to be completely neglected in Pakistan as no reference to scientific theories regarding CSA is made on the different organizations website working to curb CSA in Pakistan, neither does it seem to be guiding their different activities when dealing with CSA issues. This is not surprising in the case of community based CSA organizations, because community based CSA prevention programmes make very little reference to scientific theory (Smallbone et.al. 2008). There is a need for a direct involvement of professionals and researchers in community focused CSA prevention. There are many theories of sexual offending but those particularly developed to explain CSA (Brown, 2005) are:

- a. Hall and Hirschman's quadripartite model
- b. Finkelhor's integrated theory of child sexual abuse
- c. Ward and Siegert's pathway model
- d. Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley's integrated theory of CSA (Smallbone et.al. 2008)

CSA theories generally throw light on the many individual, ecosystemic and situational factors and their interactions that result in CSA. Such knowledge and understanding can guide us in planning and conducting research on CSA in Pakistan in a meaningful way. We can test the validity of these different theoretical CSA underpinnings in our culture, and seeking guidance from them we can come up with our own evidence based theoretical formulations regarding CSA in Pakistan. Current approaches to CSA prevention use interventions that are employed only after the offenders have already started offending, and children have already

experienced sexual abuse. Smallbone et.al. (2008) based on their integrated theory of CSA, have identified key prevention targets in this regard by putting forward a comprehensive evidence based approach to preventing CSA. Four distinct sets of prevention targets according to this model are:

a. Offenders and Potential Offenders:

- Treatment programmes should be in response to the risks, needs and responsively of individual offenders.
- Different treatment programmes should be developed for adolescent and adult CSA offenders
- Proper research on risk assessment of potential abusers is needed

b. Victims and Potential Victims

- By developing interventions that increase resilience among CSA survivors.
- Responsible adults whether in the family or friends and professionals in the child protection and criminal justice system should ensure the child's protection from sexual abuse

c. Situations in Which Sexual Abuse Occurs

- Situations play an important role in initiating and maintaining CSA, as evident from the Situational Crime Prevention strategies and Environmental Design Theories of crime prevention of the modern day criminological literature.
- Altering these situations/ environments can play an important role in preventing CSA
- Research is needed in this area regarding CSA prevention

d. Communities

- Prevention campaigns for community awareness and providing a wide range of public education resources including different forms of media, religious scholars, school administration, NGOs, etc.
- Telephone help lines, either of police or social welfare departments or community based organizations
- Professionals and researchers involvement

Using the Public Health model, Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley (2008) gave an outline of how offenders, victims, situations and communities may most effectively be targeted at the primary secondary and tertiary prevention levels. At the primary level it will mean taking measures and developing programmes that will prevent offenders from offending in the first place; save children from becoming victims in the first place; remove or reduce the situational variables that initiate CSA; and in the community target public education, community services development etc. At the secondary level it will mean CSA risk prevention. For offenders it will mean identifying and preventing at risk offenders from actually offending by developing risk assessment instruments for CSA offenders, counseling for at risk offenders and developmental prevention; counseling and support for at risk victims; situational interventions in at risk places; support for at risk families and interventions with at risk communities. At the tertiary level it means prevention from occurring again. With offenders it will mean early detection, deterrence and offender treatment; with victims also it will mean early detection, harm reduction and preventing becoming victims again; regarding settings where CSA has occurred developing safety plans to prevent such incidences from occurring again and with high prevalence communities it would mean developing interventions to curb CSA. However, the strength of any CSA prevention model will be based on the theoretical and empirical knowledge and practice experience regarding its conceptual and applied domains indigenously. This calls for the need for extensive empirical research on CSA in Pakistan and its application therein.

Conclusion

CSA is a heinous crime and it is our duty to protect our children from its detrimental effects. CSA is multifarious and needs the concerted efforts of professionals and experts from different organizations like the criminal justice system, the health care professionals, researchers and community based organizations. While in Pakistan some work has been done in this regard which is encouraging and commendable. We need to do more to improve our existing efforts and address others which have not yet been addressed despite their importance for CSA. In this regard first of all there is a need for the development of an indigenous scientific knowledge base which will guide effective policy formulation, interventions and prevention, regarding CSA offenders, CSA victims, CSA settings and communities, targeted at the primary, secondary and tertiary prevention levels.

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