FOREWORD

Sahil was established in 1996 as an NGO, to ensure the protection of children as stated in Article 34 of child rights convention “state parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse”.

The utmost aim of producing this report is to equip general public and the child policy makers with the facts of child sexual abuse (CSA) in Pakistan.

In our society the issue of CSA is considered as taboo, therefore people hesitate to talk about it. Couple of years back, Sahil took the initiative of producing the statistical report based on child sexual abuse cases reported in the national newspapers. This programme was initiated with the aim to expose the bitter realities of our society, those are known to the public but due to socio-cultural values they neglect them.

Although this report is not the whole true picture of the CSA cases, happened in our country during the year 2003, but more or less this is the representation of the reality related to this heinous crime.

We hope that this report will be of interest to a wide range of people concerned with children’s issues, including health and social policy makers, social services, justice and law enforcement professionals. Also of use to those who advocate child’s rights, the non-government and research communities/research students.

This report may contribute to the knowledge of all citizens for protecting the child.

Manizeh Bano
Executive Director
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sahil is presenting the statistical report ‘Cruel Numbers’ for the year 2003, which is based on child sexual abuse cases reported in the 27 national newspapers.

The main objective of this report is to let people know the reality of child sexual abuse in Pakistan.

In this year 9 national dailies have been added to the monitoring of cases on child sexual abuse. This addition of newspapers has contributed to the increase in numbers as compared to the year 2002.

The data in this report reveals that child sexual abuse rate in Pakistan is touching the astonishing figure of five children a day.

Furthermore, it has been found that male children are equally vulnerable as the female children, to the incident of sexual abuse.

Also it has been found that the largest gender difference of victims is for the age group 15 to 18 years, where 66 per cent of victims are females as compared to 44 per cent are males.

The male children are at higher risk of being murdered after being sexually assaulted, as they may report to the police.

On the other hand, the female children are abused for a longer period as compared to the male children. As the data shows that 9 per cent of the female victims were assaulted for the period of one week to six months plus whereas, the male child is usually a one time victim.

The research under debate holds the amazing findings regarding abuser categories, as it has been found that 76 per cent of the abusers were known to the victims and their families.

Another major finding is regarding female abettors, because generally people think that only males are involved in the sex crimes although the data shows that 4 per cent of the female abettors were involved in the child sexual abuse crime.

Most of the child sexual abuse cases occur in the rural areas. As found in the analysis, cases in the rural areas were significantly higher than those in the urban communities.

One of the major finding is that no place is safe for the children. Because, children are victimized at all the places from their own homes to the outer world.
BACKGROUND

**Definition:** “Child sexual abuse is a sexual activity with a child by an adult or an adolescent. When any adult engages in sexual activity with a child, that is child sexual abuse”.

Despite the fact that the issue of child sexual abuse is often shrouded in secrecy, it is reported in the print media. Such incidents often occupy the limelight when they take a heinous turn, for instance if a child has been murdered after being sexually assaulted. Unfortunately this has led to an assumption, among others, that such incidents are rare or are committed by savage individuals who are primarily strangers. This insufficient information needs to be addressed.

In order to collect data on child sexual abuse in Pakistan, Sahil monitors the print media and collects the reported incidents of CSA. This report is compiled for the year 2003.

However, we believe that these numbers do not represent the total number of such incidents in Pakistan – because ours is a closed society, where such issues are taboo and any discussion on them is labeled as immoral.

Moreover, since sexual abuse is always linked with family honor, most cases go unreported to the police and subsequently newspapers do not access these cases. Resultantly, any attempt to quantify the issue of child sexual abuse is bound to be limited in scope.

**OBJECTIVES**

This report has been prepared under the following objectives:

- To explore the true facts and figures about CSA in Pakistan.
- To make recommendations to the policy makers and the journalists.
METHODOLOGY

Giving the shame and silence that surrounds child sexual abuse in Pakistan, newspapers are perhaps one of the tools that can be used to establish prevalence and occurrence of child sexual abuse on a national scale.

Sahil monitors a total of 27 national daily newspapers; these newspapers include nineteen Urdu, four English and four Sindhi language dailies. Sahil monitors the national newspapers from local, regional and national level for the CSA cases. Also included are the cases directly received by Sahil which were not reported in the newspapers.

Only those news stories were recorded where the victim’s age was 18 years or below. Age for the child victim was chosen in accordance with the age defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Mainly five forms of sexual abuse crimes were identified to record information. These include abduction for sexual purpose, molestation, rape/sodomy, gang rape/gang sodomy, murder after sexual assault.

A definition for each category can be seen in the section “Crime Categories in the Child Sexual Abuse”.

A quantitative module has been developed to record the data. This module records gender and age of the child victims, the nature of the sexual crime, abuser’s categories, place of abuse, period of abuse, identification of the victims, identification of the geographical areas with urban-rural divide, and finally case status. Original newspaper cuttings of all the incidents of child sexual abuse are compiled and recorded.
REPORTED CASES-YEAR 2003

After the whole year monitoring of the 27 national newspapers, the 1775 cases were found. Although the actual analysis of the data based on the 1788 cases, which also include the 13 cases directly received by Sahil during the year 2003 which were not reported in the newspapers.

* Monitored two issues of the same newspaper, one from Islamabad and other one from Lahore.
SEXUAL ABUSE ON THE RISE

The number of reported cases of child sexual abuse in the year 2003 exceeded the total number of cases in the year 2002 by 1109 incidents. During 2002 a total of 679 children were sexually abused. This figure jumped to 1788 in the year 2003.

There could be a number of reasons for this upward trend:

- It could be argued that this is because more children are being sexually abused.
- At the same time one cannot rule out the possibility of increased reports of the incidence. Alternatively, this could also point towards increased sensitization of the media that has resulted in more frequent coverage of such incidents.
- It could also be a combination of all the above mentioned factors.

![Comparison of CSA Cases in the Year 2002 and the Year 2003](image-url)
THE GENDER DIVIDE

Out of the total 1788 child victims, 526 (30 %) are male and 1262 (70 %) are female children in the year 2003. This could be due to the fact that:

- The female gender is seen as a sex object.
- Females are more vulnerable and are also “dishonored” by men.
- They are considered means to settle outstanding scores with rivals.

The print media has reported numerous incidents of rape and gang rape where men raped or gang raped girls.
CRIME CATEGORIES

The fact that 1788 children have been sexually assaulted in a year means that every day approximately five children are being subjected to sexual assault. He/she is either being molested, raped, sodomized, gang raped, gang sodomized, murdered after sexual assault or abducted for purposes of sexual assault.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Crime</th>
<th>No. of Incidents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abduction</td>
<td>616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molestation</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molestation Murder</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape/Sodomy</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape/Sodomy Murder</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gang Rape/Sodomy</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gang Rape/Sodomy Murder</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Crime Categories of CSA 2003

*In order to the severity of the crime

What is not recorded and therefore hidden are the cases of voyeurism, child pornography and commercial sexual exploitation.
DEFINITIONS OF CRIME CATEGORIES

1. Abduction for Sexual Purposes

Definition: When a child is carried off unlawfully. However, there is an implicit high danger of sexual abuse.

Out of 1788 cases, 616 were abducted with implications of sexual abuse.

2. Molestation

Definition: When a child is sexually violated but no penetration takes place. These are reported as attempted rape or sodomy.

There were 213 molestation cases reported in the year 2003, 55 (26%) were males and remaining 158 (74%) were females.

3. Rape/Sodomy

Definition: When a child is penetrated.

Rape and sodomy has exceeded in numbers as compared to all other forms of sexual violation. There were 460 (57% females; 43% males) reported cases of rape and sodomy in the year 2003.

4. Gang Rape/ Gang Sodomy

Definition: When two or more persons penetrate a child.

Out of total 1788 child victims 359 children were gang raped or sodomized. Once again the number of female children (227) is more than the number of male children (132). It seems that these abusers not only lack an individual conscience but also a collective conscience.

5. Murder after Sexual Assault

Definition: An act where a child, male or female, is murdered after rape/sodomy/molestation.

Out of the total 1788 child victims in a year, 33 (2%) children of the total were murdered after being sexually assaulted. These 33 victims include both male and female children. There could be certain reasons why the number of males are higher in this category than number of females:

- Male can take the revenge.
- Can report to the police.
Why are children being murdered after being sexually assaulted?

The print media has identified different reasons for this gruesome eventuality:

- One reason that emerges was the fear of the perpetrator that the victim might identify him.
- An attempt to conceal the crime the abuser tends to take extreme measures.
- Revenge from the child's family.
- Failure in the sexual assault led to anger and culminated in the murder of the victim.
THE AGE COMPOSITION

Age of the victim was divided into four categories; 5 years and below, 6 to 10 years, 11 to 15 years, and 16 to 18 years. The total break up with in each category is shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Limit</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 years &amp; below</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- 10 years</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11- 15 years</td>
<td>402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16- 18 years</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age not reported</td>
<td>861</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 Years and below
Data in this category shows that 54 (68%) female and 25 (32%) male children are victims. The children in this age group are easily exploited due to their innocence and vulnerability. Female victims are more than two folds; this may be because of the reason that physical visibility of damage is more in females then males at this age group.

6-10 Years
This category includes 115 (45%) male and 143 (55%) female child victims. The reasons here may be that they are at a stage of development where greater exposure to the world around them, sociability, and curiosity makes them vulnerable to sexual assault.
11-15 Years
The data reveals that the vulnerability of female children 246 (61%) increases at this age bracket. The male victims are 156 (39%) in this category.
This is the phase when a child reaches puberty and needs information about his new biological changes and feelings.
Parents, teachers and guardians generally tend to ignore this very vital aspect of child development; by not providing information on puberty and associated emotional problems. Parents pay less attention to the children of this age group, treat them as adults and often do not check their activities.
Children are left vulnerable, as they seek emotional support from other adults, who give children distorted information and then exploit them.

16-18 Years
The age analysis of the victims depicts that the age bracket of 16 to 18 years is most vulnerable, where 146 (78%) female and 42 (22%) male cases falls. Fewer cases of male children at this age group may be due to facts that at this stage male children generally manage to defend themselves against any unwanted advances as they are taller, stronger and may display “manly” attributes such as beard, and moustaches. They may also be a willing partner.

Age not mentioned
This category includes 673 (79%) female victim cases. The print media refers a girl as Naujawan larki (young girl), Dosheza (beautiful girl) and Hasina if the age of the victim is above 14 or 15, especially the Urdu media does not mention the exact age.
To circumvent this problem attempts were made to ascertain the age of the victim from the news coverage of the same incident from other newspapers, or from other indicators provided in the detail of the story, for instance school grade. On the other hand 188 (21%) male children fall into this category shows that it is difficult to categorize age of male children, usually only the school grades are mentioned in the reports.
ABUSER’S CATEGORIES

There are numerous myths prevalent in our society regarding child abusers. One popular myth is that children are mostly abused by strangers. Moreover, people tend to deny existence of incest, because:

➢ It is a very difficult situation to deal with.
➢ A child sexual offender is generally perceived as a psychopath or looks evil.
➢ It is also thought that abusers are generally illiterate people. Therefore, people belonging to certain professions and having a certain kind of appearance are dismissed as being ‘safe’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abuser’s Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance</td>
<td>2338</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Abettor</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moulvi</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incest</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Abusers</td>
<td>3086</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the year 2003, there were a total of 3086 abusers who sexually assaulted 1788 children; none of them was reported as mentally ill or psychotic.
DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE ABUSERS

a) Acquaintances
In the period of one year, out of the 3086 perpetrators, 76% of the abusers were acquaintances of the victims. They were family friends, neighbors, relatives or the people known to the victims and their families.

b) Strangers
The 16 per cent abusers were strangers to the victims. Surprisingly, despite the low percentage of abusers in this category, people generally perceive them to be the major threat or strangers are usually highlighted from which the child should be careful.

c) Incest
Another important aspect of child sexual abuse is incest. It is often perceived that this phenomenon is practically non-existent in our society. Our data shows 1.16 per cent of incest in the year 2003. Mostly in these cases, the mother was the one who mustered up enough courage to finally take action and approach the police. In all the reported cases the crime was rape.

Given the fact that our family structure is totally dependent economically and otherwise on the male head of the family, and the indisputable status that a husband enjoys, makes it most likely that cases of incest will not get reported. However, these statistics confirm the existence and regular occurrence of incest in our society.

d) Female Abettor
One of the interesting finding is that there is an increase in the number of female abettors. According to the statistics of year 2002, the female abettors were 5. This has taken a great leap up to the number of 132 in the year 2003. It has serious consequences since women have so far been considered as safe custodians of children.

e) Other Abusers
In the year 2003, there were a total of 90 perpetrators which include 45 moulvis, 31 policemen, and 14 teachers. These low numbers of reported incidents in this category does not necessarily mean that this is reflective of them as being extremely few. Individuals belonging to these professions wield a great amount of power, influence and authority not only vis-à-vis the children but also in society. Moreover, there is an element of sanctity involved in professions such as teaching religion, which also prevents disclosure.
TIME PERIOD OF ABUSE

This category shows the duration of the crime committed against the children. Out of 1788 cases, 1369 children were victim of a one time assault. Where as in 419 cases, the sexual assault was carried out from one day to more than 6 months.

This casts some light over the existing grievous conditions. It may be connected to the power that the abuser exerts and weak police aid that is available. Girls are not only the most targeted (1154) but are abused for the longer period. In fact 1 month and 6 months contain majority of female victim cases.
GEOGRAPHICAL BREAK DOWN OF CRIMES

a) Provincial Break Down
The print media has reported a predominant number of cases from Punjab (71%), followed by Sindh (21%) and the Federal Capital (5%). As far as N.W.F.P. (2%) and Balochistan (1%) are concerned, there are very few cases of child sexual abuse reported from these provinces.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Province</th>
<th>Total Cases</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>1282</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindh</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Area</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.W.F.P</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baluchistan</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1788</td>
<td>614</td>
<td>1174</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lesser number of reported cases from N.W.F.P. and Balochistan does not indicate the absence of child sexual abuse from these provinces. It may be because Sahil does not monitor local language newspapers of these provinces. Moreover, the social customs of these areas accept child-adult sexual relationships. May be the people of these areas consider ‘hiding’ a matter of honor.
b) Rural-Urban Divide

Rural and urban divide of the Federal Capital and four provincial capitals show that 65% of cases have been reported from rural area and 35% from urban areas. It indicates that the ratio of occurrence of child sexual abuse in rural areas is higher than urban areas. This may be due to the fact that the majority of the population resides in rural areas. However, in urban areas, people may avoid disclosure, which may be more difficult in rural areas due to close community living.

The cases in the rural communities are more as compared to the urban areas, because of the joint rural communities, larger family sizes in the rural areas, and elite cases in the urban areas are hidden.
PLACE OF ABUSE

The perception that is prevalent in the society is that children are generally safe in familiar surroundings. For girls, it is thought that they should not be let out of the house alone for purpose of safety. This perception is proven wrong. Out of the 1788 child victims, 26% were sexually assaulted at the acquaintance’s home. Seven percent of children were sexually assaulted at their own homes, a place that is considered most safe for a child.

According to the statistics a potentially vulnerable place for children in the rural areas is in the fields. The 11 percent cases of sexual abuse took place in the fields. It is because villages lack toilet facilities and people use fields for such purposes.

The rest of the places which were identified were jungle (3%), street (3%), hotel (1%), mosque and workshop (2%). This shows that no place is really safe from the danger of sexual assault.
VICTIM’S IDENTIFICATION

Out of total 1788 cases, 531 cases (41 males and 490 females) have not shown any identification of victims. In the 1181 cases (237 males and 944 females) the victims were identified by their names. The picture of victim was printed in 28 cases including all of the female. There were 48 cases (3 males and 45 females) showing name and pictures of the victims.
POLICE REGISTRATION OF CASES

Out of the total 1788 reported cases, 1434 (80 %) were registered with the police. The number of cases which were reported by print media but not registered with the police was 130 (7%). The cases whose status was not clear in the print media numbered 224 (13%).

Since most cases reported by the media are taken from police stations. There is no evidence as to why the majority of status of cases not mentioned whether they are directly reported by the news reporters or taken from police and some other sources like non-government organization concerned with child issues.
RECOMMENDATIONS
The following recommendations should be implemented to make this world a better place for the children:

- Policy makers should prepare and implement policies to protect every child from sexual abuse.
- There should be effective strategies to aware the general public about this heinous crime.
- The course related to child’s body safety must be included in the curriculum, so to equip the child with the knowledge of body safety.
- The police department should smooth the process of registering the First Investigation Report (FIR), especially for the victims of CSA.
- It is essential for the media to incorporate into their reporting policies that name and picture must not be mentioned as stated in the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance 2000 (JJSO)*, “the trial proceedings involving a child cannot be published in any form, unless specifically authorized, which may disclose the name, address, school or any identification which could lead to the identification of the child concerned, nor can any picture of the child be published (sec. 8).”

* Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC), Pakistan.