
SUMMARY of the Article “Child Abuse Alert,” Dawn, August 10th, 2024

Child abuse in Pakistan remains a persistent and alarming issue, with incidents showing no signs of abating. Despite the severity of the problem, there has been a noticeable lack of strong response from the authorities. For example, in 2023, Sahil, an NGO, reported 4,200 cases of child abuse, with an average of 11 cases per day, yet this shocking data did not provoke the necessary action from the government. The conviction rates for perpetrators remain dismally low, and the environment remains unsafe for children. In the first half of 2024 alone, Sahil’s SixMonthsCruelNumbers report documented 1,630 cases of child abuse across Pakistan, including 862 cases of child sexual abuse, 668 cases of abduction, 82 cases of missing minors, 18 cases of child marriage, and 48 instances of pornography following sexual exploitation. Of these victims, 59% were female, and 41% were male, with Punjab accounting for 78% of the total cases, followed by Sindh with 11% and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) with 3%. The article stresses the need for a recognition of the widespread acceptance of abuse and the imbalance of power that fuels this epidemic. It calls for authorities, law enforcers, and the judiciary to listen to survivors and experts, tighten and enforce laws on child exploitation, and develop robust preventative mechanisms. The piece concludes by urging every section of society to consistently respond to and combat the violations against children, who are considered the most valuable resource for the future.

Easy/Short SUMMARY:

Child abuse in Pakistan is a serious problem that is not being properly addressed. Despite many reported cases, including 4,200 cases in 2023 and 1,630 cases in the first half of 2024, there has been little action from the government. Most of

the victims are girls, and most cases come from Punjab. The article calls for stronger laws, better enforcement, and more attention from society to protect children and stop this abuse.

SOLUTIONS to The Problem:

Strengthen Law Enforcement and Judicial Response

Authorities should enforce existing child protection laws more rigorously, ensuring that cases of child abuse are thoroughly investigated and prosecuted, with higher conviction rates.

Public Awareness Campaigns

Initiate widespread public awareness campaigns to educate communities about the signs of child abuse, its consequences, and the importance of reporting such incidents.

Training for Educators and Health Professionals

Provide specialized training for teachers, healthcare workers, and social workers to recognize and report child abuse, ensuring they are equipped to support victims and prevent further harm.

Community-Based Child Protection Programs

Establish community-based child protection committees that involve local leaders, parents, and youth to monitor and prevent child abuse in their neighborhoods.

Collaboration Between Government and NGOs

Foster closer collaboration between government agencies and NGOs to pool resources, share expertise, and implement comprehensive child protection

strategies across the country.

Support and Rehabilitation for Victims

Create support centers for child abuse victims that offer counseling, medical care, legal aid, and rehabilitation services to help them recover and reintegrate into society.

Mandatory Reporting Laws

Implement mandatory reporting laws requiring all adults to report suspected child abuse to authorities, with penalties for failure to do so.

Digital Safety Education

Introduce digital safety education in schools to teach children how to protect themselves online and report any inappropriate behavior or content they encounter.

Address Root Causes

Tackle the root causes of child abuse, such as poverty, lack of education, and social inequality, through targeted social welfare programs and economic development initiatives.

Regular Monitoring and Data Collection

Ensure regular monitoring and data collection on child abuse cases to track progress, identify trends, and adjust strategies as needed to better protect children.

IMPORTANT Facts and Figures Given in the Article:

- 4,200 reported cases of child abuse in Pakistan in 2023, with an average of 11 cases per day.

- In the first half of 2024, 1,630 cases of child abuse were recorded.
- 862 cases of child sexual abuse, 668 cases of abduction, 82 cases of missing minors, 18 cases of child marriage, and 48 instances of pornography following sexual exploitation.
- 59% of victims were female, 41% were male.
- 78% of cases were reported from Punjab, 11% from Sindh, and 3% from KP.

MCQs from the Article:

1. How many cases of child abuse were reported in Pakistan in 2023?

- A. 3,200
- B. 4,200**
- C. 5,200
- D. 6,200

2. What percentage of child abuse victims in the first half of 2024 were female?

- A. 41%
- B. 50%
- C. 59%
- D. 78%**

3. Which province reported the highest number of child abuse cases in the first half of 2024?

- A. Sindh
- B. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
- C. Punjab**
- D. Balochistan

4. How many cases of child sexual abuse were recorded in the first half of 2024?

- A. 862

B. 668

C. 82

D. 18

5. What is the primary cause of child abuse mentioned in the article?

A. Endemic acceptance of abuse and imbalance of power

B. Lack of laws

C. Poor education system

D. Economic instability

VOCABULARY:

1. **Inexcusable** (不可原谅): Too bad to be justified or tolerated.
2. **Malaise** (不适): A general feeling of discomfort, illness, or unease.
3. **Expendable** (微不足道的): Of little significance when compared to an overall purpose.
4. **Conviction** (定罪): The act of finding someone guilty of a crime in a court of law.
5. **Abysmal** (极其糟糕): Extremely bad or appalling.
6. **Exploitation** (剥削): The action of making use of and benefiting from resources.
7. **Testimonies** (证词): Formal written or spoken statements, especially ones given in a court of law.
8. **Robust** (强壮): Strong and healthy; vigorous.
9. **Preventative** (预防): Designed to keep something undesirable such as illness or harm from occurring.
10. **Tandem** (同时): Working together or in conjunction.
11. **Endemic** (地方性的): Regularly found among particular people or in a certain area.
12. **Imbalance** (不平衡): A situation in which different things do not occur in equal or proper amounts.
13. **Plague** (瘟疫): A thing causing trouble or irritation.
14. **Survivors** (幸存者): People who remain alive after an event in which others have died.
15. **Mechanisms** (机制): Processes or systems that are used to produce a

particular result.

16. **Violation** (□□□□ □□□□): The act of disregarding a rule or agreement.
17. **Harm** (□□□□□): Physical injury, especially that which is deliberately inflicted.
18. **Endemic** (□□□□□□□): A condition regularly found and very common among particular people or in a certain area.
19. **Recognition** (□□□□□): The action or process of recognizing or being recognized.
20. **Power** (□□□□□□): The ability or capacity to do something or act in a particular way.

□ *Attention Please!*

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Editorial

EVEN a single child harmed is inexcusable, yet incidents of child abuse in Pakistan do not show any sign of dying out. Frequent and shocking reports on child abuse point towards a deep-rooted malaise that is not being dealt with.

Increasingly, the sentiment of being expendable for the state is building up among citizens, particularly the weaker and vulnerable populations. For instance, last year's data by Sahil — 4,200 reported cases of children abused in 2023, with 11 being violated daily — failed to arouse a strong response from the rulers. As a result, conviction rates were abysmal and the environment was not made safer for the young. Children continue to get the rough end of the stick. New data in Sahil's SixMonthsCruelNumbers shows that 1,630 cases of child abuse were recorded from across Pakistan in the first half of 2024, with 862 cases of child sexual abuse, 668 of abduction, 82 of missing minors, 18 of child marriage, and 48 instances of pornography after sexual exploitation. Of these, 59pc were female victims and 41pc were boys. It is important to highlight that while Punjab threw up 78pc of the total cases, 11pc came from Sindh and 3pc from KP.

We have little choice but to recognise that all research shows an endemic acceptance of abuse and the imbalance of power, which forms the core reason for child abuse. In addition, the authorities, law enforcers and the judiciary ought to pay heed to survivors' testimonies and to expert opinions. Laws on all forms of child exploitation should not just be tightened but implemented to ensure conviction. The plague of child cruelty is poised to destroy our future. Hence, NGOs, government departments and security personnel need to operate in tandem to formulate robust preventative mechanisms for a lasting protective environment. Every section of society must respond with a consistent reaction to violations against our most valuable resource.

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