

Psychological Impact Of Sexual Abuse In Minors: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

This article is a systematic review about child sexual abuse, during the last decade, it has been increasing year after year having an impact on socio-emotional and cognitive development; however, a decrease in reported cases was observed, due to the state of health alert decreed worldwide by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the studies that record the impact of this problem do not go at that rate of growth, even more there are few updated longitudinal studies that reveal this impact. Objective. Carry out a review of articles between 2016 and 2022 related to the impact of child sexual abuse on children under 18 years of age. Method. The prism format was used and the database was used as SCOPUS, SCIELO and WEB OF SCIENCE. Results. 11 articles were admitted, whose authors indicate that those people who suffered this type of abuse suffered or are suffering an alteration in their biological, psychological and social development, being sociodemographic factors protective or risk agents for incidence as for recovery. Conclusions. At present there is a deficit of updated studies on the impact of sexual abuse on children under 18 years of age, being a need to train health professionals, educators, among others for detection and recuperative intervention for this age group.

Keywords: psychological impact, minor, sexual abuse, health.

1. Introduction

Abuse is violent behaviour that causes physical or moral harm; if it is exercised against a defenseless being who cannot reciprocate the act, then it takes on the dimensions of a crime, as is the case with child abuse, which will have serious future repercussions,

depending on the time and degree of violence exercised (WHO, 1999). In 2014, the World Health Organization² defined child abuse as any abuse committed against a child under the age of 18, including physical and psychological abuse, neglect, neglect or commercial or other exploitation that affects their physical-mental health and development, and puts their dignity at risk. If this violence is also of a sexual nature and takes place within the family, there is no term for such a crude act that will affect the physical, mental and sexual development of the minor. As early as 1993, Forniss addressed the issue of domestic sexual abuse and, in 2005, Habigzang and Koller, from the Department of Psychology of the State of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil, described it as a public health problem in some countries. Intrafamilial sexual abuse is triggered and maintained by a complex dynamic that comprises two syndromes: secrecy and addiction. Protecting the child should be a priority for the adult, since he is a helpless being and must learn to defend himself from the traumas of life. Intrafamilial child sexual abuse by parents, grandparents, uncles, siblings, is called incest, and the perpetrator or abuser is one of the beings who supposedly must provide protection to the minor. That is why secrecy is kept within the family and, whether for one cause or another, the members of a family become accomplices of the fact, which forces them to transgress the most sacred law, the law of morality (Kilimik et al., 2016) describes the existence of power asymmetry, lack of consent, early adversity, forced and non-contact sexual contact. Likewise, child sexual abuse (ASI) is seen from a psychosocial and generic point of view, to refer to all types of abuse of which children can be victims (NNA) in the sexual field, (Apraez, 2015; Perrone and Nanini, 1998; Canton and Cortes, 1999). As stated by Echeburúa and Guerricaechebarria (2021), for there to be (ASI) you must have the following criteria: In most cases, the abuser is a family member or someone well known to the family; may or may not be unemployed, use permissive drugs (cigarettes, alcohol) and, sometimes, has a nervous tic. The premeditation and cunning with which he acts make him somewhat subtle; He plans his acts, so he is almost never caught, deceives the victim, convinces her, works on her conscience to manipulate her and bribes her with gifts, praise, sweets. No family is exempt from these acts of violence, which will depend on several factors, such as the sense of responsibility towards that child, the characteristics of the family members and their environment, education, ignorance or cultural level, the absence of

the father figure and family disorganization, among others (Vitriol, Vásquez, Iturra & Muñoz, 2007).

According to the World Health Organization (UN), one in 5 women and 1 in 13 men revealed to see themselves as a victim of sexual abuse in childhood (UN, 2020). Other studies by Acero (2009), reports that not only adults are the aggressors, but they are other minors who use their power against the smallest and most defenseless. Thus, the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations (MIMP), (2020) reported 4,943 cases of underage girls who experienced sexual abuse for the period 2017 to 2018, with the aggressors mostly being a known person, with a relationship of trust and power over them. In this regard, in its article of June 2019, points out that 51% of the cases attended (4981) by the Women's Emergency Centers (CEM) between 2017 and 2018, were carried out by a member of the family group to which the child belonged. thus increasing even 60.5% the risk of continuity of aggression against these minors. Likewise, the National Survey of Social Relations (ENARES) (2020), indicates that rape mainly affects girls and adolescents, with 1 in 3 victims under 14 in recent years; and, the threshold of risk of rape is between 10 and 13 years.

The situation in Peru shows that violence suffered in childhood affects health and well-being throughout life (MIMP, 2020).

In this sense, despite the efforts made by the different entities of the Peruvian state, the statistics to date are not updated both for detection and recovery of the victim, which could be due to the late disclosure of the acts of aggression against him (Penso et al., 2019). Thus, the (ASI) is considered one of the aggressions that generates the greatest impact on the victims, even more so if it occurs in childhood and / or adolescence, an evolutionary stage where the threats of the aggressors gain greater credibility, making it difficult, among other factors, to reveal the facts of violence (UNICEF, 2017). According to (Cruz et al., 2021) the repercussions of (ASI), were seen as cases of , depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, sleep disturbances, self-harm, suicidal behaviors, psychotic disorder and auditory hallucinations.

In that sense, the authors Balletho, 2017; Lopez, 2020; Taquetteres et al., 2020) agree that the victim of sexual abuse in the short, medium or long term does not have adequate emotional development. That is why it is important to know the predisposing factors that occur in the family system, the studies reviewed report dysfunctional families, school dropout, history of consumption of

psychoactive substances, as well as experiences of domestic violence among other factors (Balletbo et al., 2017).

2. Method

The study used the PRISMA method, taking into account the quality steps in the systematic review. We searched the scientific literature until December 2022 for its great content in the research topic, three sources (databases) were chosen, SCOPUS, WEB OF SCIENCE and SCIELO, considering articles in English, Portuguese, Spanish and others of public access or payment using institutional emails licensed for reading, Limiting the search period from 2016 to 2022, the search strategy was employed using field adjusters and Boolean operators, for the title, abstract and keywords. Continuing with the analysis plan, the search strategy was carried out and the information was searched, the search results were organized in a database developed in the Microsoft Excel 2016 program. After that, we proceeded with the technique of documentary analysis, which allowed us to select the articles that met the inclusion and exclusion criteria. For inclusion first author, year of publication, type of article, study design, objective, instrument, sample and results. For exclusion, duplicate articles, studies, experimental, quasi-experimental that are not related to the study variable were excluded.

After the search, the total number of articles found in the three databases mentioned was obtained, categorized and proceeded to the critical evaluation and analysis of results.

3. Result

The present systematic review had a cut-off date of July 2022, 20 articles were found in SCOPUS, 16 in WEB OF SCIENCE and 14 in SCIELO, achieving a total number of studies of $N = 50$. After crossing the documents and evaluating the inclusion criteria, a sample of $N = 11$ articles was achieved, of these studies 05 were descriptive, 01 qualitative, 01 Quantitative, 02 systematic, 01 exploratory and 01 Integrative review. The articles reviewed were mostly case studies about minors girls, boys and adolescents between the age ranges of 06 to 18 years, who were sexually abused and the consequences were observed in the short, medium and long term, other studies were related to risk factors and sociodemographic factors.

It is estimated that, of the total cases of child maltreatment reported annually, about 26% are exclusively from (ASI), prevalence data vary greatly in the literature, and can range from low to really

alarming; indicates that 1 in 12 children have experienced some form of sexual abuse. While it has been observed that approximately 7-36% of women and 3-29% of men have been victims of some form of sexual abuse during their childhood (Ballethol, 2017; Taquette, 2021).

Although anyone can be a victim of sexual abuse, there are some risk factors directly related to children: age, gender, physical appearance, physical, mental or developmental disability, hyperactivity, being a child with greater emotional needs or being more expressive. In addition, some sociodemographic factors are recognized, such as the presence of outsiders in the family home, the difficulty of the caregiver to get along with the child misunderstanding, the use of strong and physical disciplinary methods, social isolation of the family, low socioeconomic status, belonging to large families or unemployment (Balletho, 2017; Gaspar, 2018; Hohendorff, 2017). Also, Balletho, 2017; It indicates that the economic resources of the families where the victims come from are limited to those obtained from informal jobs, which could reveal coincidentally unemployment rates in this vulnerable population. Similarly, López et al. (2020) adds that, as for families living in rural areas, they seek to migrate from the countryside to the cities, so they often end up living in an overcrowded manner, staying for long periods away from home in search of economic sustenance, since they live from day to day, this economic condition does not favor protective networks, but on the contrary increase the risks of suffering an ASI since the minors would be in the care of the extended family or failing older siblings (sometimes also minors in adolescence), at this point the aforementioned author agrees with Penso et al. (2019) and López et al. (2020), where the authors point out that the sex offenders would be in the family environment, which makes it difficult to reveal the facts since the victims are often threatened and sometimes they are made to believe that they will not be heard because of the disbelief of their listeners or the prejudices of the families from which the victims come, This is even more aggravated when the victim is male since many of the countries still live under a macho scheme. Taquette et. Al (2021) highlights the dangerous access that the aggressor has with the victim since both share the family environment thus facilitating the perpetration of the aggression and / or rape. Similarly, Lopez et. Al (2020) mentions that the aggressor is often a relative or acquaintance of the family, this could reveal that the economic conditions of these families do not allow them to acquire

housing with adequate conditions and therefore must be crowded in them. The highest incidence occurs in girls between 10 and 14 years of age. As for the time in which it was possible to warn of the occurrence of the fact, in many cases the manifestation is very late. More recurrent is the stepfather, followed by other relatives, and biological father. The highest incidence occurs in girls between 10 and 14 years of age. As for the time in which it was possible to warn of the occurrence of the fact, in many cases the manifestation is very late, persisting during this time a syndrome of accommodation of abuse. Repercussions of sexual abuse on minors the main psychological symptoms define; low self-esteem, depression, (PTSD), sleep disturbances, self-harm, suicidal behaviors, psychotic disorder, auditory hallucinations (Cruz et al. 2021).

Table 1. Related Risk Factors for Underage Sexual Abuse

AUTHORS	TYPE OF ARTICLE – DESIGN	OBJECTIVE	SAMPLE	RESULTS
Penso et al (2019)	Descriptive	Identification of family members with children who experienced sexual violence.	35 cases were analyzed, over a period of 13 years. Brazilia, Brazil	It is proposed to generate registries that identify risk factors in order to prevent sexual abuse in minors
Hohendorff et al (2017)	Descriptive	Analyze the different conditions of sexual violence in children	4 children between 6 and 10 years old Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil	The study found that males in adolescent conditions are the facilitators of abuse.
Taquette et al (2021)	Epidemiological, descriptive, cross-sectional study	Comparison of sexual violence in children of different ages between 10 and 13 years.	Girls aged 10 to 13 pregnancies occurred at this stage of life between 2012 and 2018. Brazil	When making the comparison, it was found that between 2012 and 2018, 46,548 sexual abuses were reported among children under 10 and 13 years of age, being that within the range

				of the years studied, the cases rose in recent years.
Balletbo et al (2017)	The type of study developed was descriptive and cross-sectional.	Analyze the social conditions of families with cases of sexual abuse	Minors of both sexes during 2014 to 2016.	Rates of reported sexual abuse in minors of both sexes increased relatively and are associated with their social conditions.
Gauthier et al (2021)	Quantitative	Analyze the self-esteem of minors with cases of sexual abuse	The sample population was 8,194 children at the secondary school level between the ages of 14 and 18 years.	In their results, a good significance of adolescents with cases of sexual abuse were provided.
Shahali et al (2020)	Systematic Review with a Narrative Synthesis approach.	Analysis of the consequences of sexual violence.	Sexual violence diagnosed in women. Statistical data.	In data, cases of sexual abuse in women were reported, being a serious phenomenon, which shows evidence in minors and their possibilities of being intervened.
Cruz et al (2021)	Integrative Review	Alert health professionals to the importance of investigating the signs and symptoms of sexual abuse given the multiple impacts of abuse on victims' lives.	16 articles based on the inclusion criteria (open access published between 2013 and September 2018 in Portuguese, whose collaborators are adults who would have suffered SIA during childhood and/or adolescence)	Studies show that sexual abuse in childhood and adolescence has lifelong psychological, physical, sexual and social impacts.
Franco et al (2018)	Exploratory Design	To assess the effects of SIA on the subjective appropriation	It consists of eight adolescents, seven women and one man, who have been sexually abused in	Sexual inhibitions and generalized inhibitions and refusal to have sexual experiences. Eating

		of genital sexuality in adolescents who have been sexually abused in childhood. To explore the relationship between child sexual abuse and the libidinal investment/disinvestment of the genitally sexed body.	childhood and who perform or have undergone psychotherapeutic treatment.	disorders, especially bulimia. In all materials loss of confidence in peer links. Embarrassment and discomfort with your body from evidence of feminine attributes
Lopez et al (2020)	Qualitative research	Understand the conditions that generated rape in adolescents and the needs that arose from it.	25 interviews were conducted with adolescents who were women between 12 and 18 years old, who have made the street their home and who were raped.	When rape is not overcome, it generates anger that leads to revenge, this leads to adolescents always keep in mind what happened to them. The teenagers were raped in their homes and this led them to decide to go out on the street. The rape generated physical and psychological needs, which, if not met, produce mixed feelings.
<u>Dannia et al (2021)</u>	Systematic Review	To assess whether there is a relationship between the occurrence of physical and/or sexual violence	54 articles were initially reviewed and 32 were excluded based on the criteria. 22 articles were thoroughly reviewed. Finally, 5 articles (years	The results indicate that having been exposed to physical and/or sexual violence in childhood and/or adolescence increases the risk of

		in childhood and/or adolescence and the development of MRMD in adulthood.	of publication 2014, 2013, 2012, 2007 and 2003) were included	experiencing MRMD in adulthood 1.99 times compared to women who did not experience such violence
Murillo et al (2021)	Non-experimental , correlational descriptive	Increase knowledge about early sexual abuse (experienced before the age of 18) and its impact on the current well-being of those who have experienced it	641 participants	The data found in the study showed that the socioeconomic level on the well-being of minors who suffered sexual abuse present the need to be attended to early..

4. Discussion

The different literatures analyzed in the research give different positions regarding the impact of child sexual abuse, in that sense Balletho, (2017) and Murillo, (2021) consider increasing early knowledge in children under 18 years of age and its consequences. As well, the author Penso, (2019) considers that the victim of sexual abuse in the short, medium or long term does not have an adequate emotional development, triggering depressive symptoms, as well as other forms of mental illness that can be related to the trauma caused by the abuse. Also, it is the recurrence of violence, an increased risk of alcohol consumption and an increased risk of drugs, unprotected sexual activity and commercial sexual exploitation (Taquette et al. 2021). Rape also generates psychological needs (López et al. 2020) and these are, talking, as a way to vent and for this they require people who listen to them and to whom they can tell everything that happened to them, without being pointed out or judged, for this they look for people who have suffered the same experience. On the other hand, Cruz et al. in 2021 on physical repercussions, point out that these are related to somatization due to the transfer of mental problems to the body, evidencing headache and metabolic disorders, as well as the

transmission of HIV. According to Preciado et al. (2021), it can be observed that experiences of physical or sexual abuse double the presence of premenstrual emotions disorder during adulthood.

5. Conclusions

We found few investigations considering the research variables (sexual abuse, children, adolescents, consequences, impact).

It is necessary to train health professionals in the protocol for dealing with cases of abuse and sexual violence against minors, and to develop specialized intervention protocols at the national level.

There are no studies that deal with the impact and repercussions of sexual abuse in minors, researchers who have an interest in this field can carry out longitudinal and / or experimental studies to have a greater amount of knowledge about it.

Regarding the follow-up of these cases in our country, there is no updated information, which would imply that specialists could identify these characteristics, as well as the screening of aggression against women and / or members of the family environment, thus generating the need to be able to carry out a longitudinal study of minors with a history of abuse.

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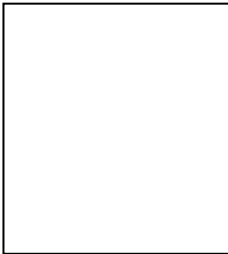
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