

Cultivating Minds: Pakistani Media's Influence on Parental Awareness Regarding Child Sexual Abuse

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Abstract

Child sexual abuse is a pressing issue that poses a grave threat to the well-being of children. The UNCRRC recognizes the role of provoking awareness, knowledge, and information. However, concerns about the ethical considerations remain there. Recent incidents of child incest and pornography have sparked debates. This research paper focuses on the portrayal of child sexual abuse in electronic media and its impact on parents' awareness, knowledge, and information. The study aims to investigate the disparities between parents who watch HUM TV and private news channels in terms of their understanding of child sexual abuse. The study is conducted in Muzaffargarh and Islamabad; quantitative and qualitative methods are utilized, including surveys, group discussions, and interviews with various stakeholders. The researcher used cultivation theory to accomplish this study. For data analysis, SPSS was used to perform a descriptive analysis method to find out the outcomes of the reported question. The study finds a 95% confidence interval and 5% margin of error and collected an additional 10% sample to account for attrition, while stratified random sampling is employed. Results of this study show that 63% of male parents and 53% of female parents used TV as the primary source of information about child sexual abuse. 38% of male parents and 11% of female parents use news media, and 32% of male parents and 84% of female parents use entertainment media as their primary source of awareness about child sexual abuse. The findings from this study will contribute to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence of the impact of media coverage on parental awareness and understanding of child sexual abuse.

Keywords: Child Sexual Abuse, Pakistani Media, Cultivation Effects, Parental Awareness.

Introduction

The research paper highlights that Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) is any sexual activity that involves a child under the age of 18 who is unable to comprehend or provide informed consent. *Child sexual abuse* is a grave issue that happens when an adult or older person makes a child do sexual things (Ali et al., 2020). It can hurt the child both physically and psychologically, and the effects can last a long time. With the rapid use of technology and the ease of access to electronic media, the concern for child abuse on electronic media has become a significant debated topic in the recent

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decade (Ishaq et al., 2021). Electronic media has played a key role in shaping the global culture and providing an opportunity for people of all ages to learn, connect, and share information (Ahmed, 2019). However, with all its benefits, some ethical issues raise fundamental questions about its impact on children, highlighting the growing concern about child abuse in electronic media and its ethical dimensions, such as privacy, mental health, identity theft, cyberbullying, exploitation, and exposure to inappropriate content (Khan, 2018). The investigation explores the challenges and implications of child abuse on electronic media for children, parents, policymakers, and society, backed by available research (Rizvi et al., 2021). However, it revealed that the portrayal of child sexual abuse on electronic media can negatively impact parents' knowledge of this issue. The definition of a child, as per UNCRC, is any individual under 18 (Khalid et al., 2021). The UNCRC Article 34 emphasizes the children's protection from sexual abuse, while Article 17 highlights their right to access information. The demographics of Pakistan illustrate that over 60% of the population comprises youth under 25 years of age, and approximately 25% are between the ages of 10 and 19 children (Hassan et al., 2020). Parents are responsible for educating their children on personal safety, good and bad touch, and comprehensive sexuality education (Butt et al., 2020).

In this research, we examine the media's role in society and children's rights and particularly investigate the responsibility of parents and the government's responsibility for children's psychological and physiological well-being, as outlined by UNCRC as outlined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC). The media's impact on individuals and society is significant, and UNCRC serves as a guiding document for the development sector organizations working on children's rights (Saeed & Khan, 2020). The research aims to explore how exposure to instances of child sexual abuse on electronic media can alter the attitudes and practices of parents toward their children's safety, ethical considerations, and educating their children about sexual abuse (Mansoor et al., 2019).

Rights of Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) is the guiding document for almost all the development sector organizations working on the rights of children, including UNICEF. UNCRC was adopted and made open for ratification under a 44/25 resolution of the General Assembly of the UN in 1989 and came into force on September 02, 1990. UNCRC delineates that anybody below the age of eighteen falls under the definition of child and is thus entitled to the rights of a child enlisted in UNCRC (Anwar et al., 2019).

Role of Media As Per UNCRC

Pakistan is also among those countries that have ratified UNCRC in 1990. Article 34 of UNCRC states about sexual exploitation that "governments must protect children from all forms of sexual abuse" (United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner UN OHCHR). Further, article 17 of UNCRC talks about access to information that a child shall have access "to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual, and moral well-being and physical and mental health (Anwar et al., 2022)

Youth and Demographics of Pakistan

A quick analysis of the demographics of Pakistan shows that the population of youth in Pakistan who are below the age of 25 years is approximately 103.698 million, which leads to the fact that

it constitutes 63% of the total population (164.6 million). Adding to this, the population of youth in the age bracket of 10-19 years is 24% of the total population of Pakistan (Khan & Ali, 2019).

Rationale of the Study

This study examines how parents' knowledge and attitudes towards child sexual abuse, as well as their practices in ensuring their children's safety, may be influenced by exposure to instances of child sexual abuse on electronic media. It recognizes parents as significant stakeholders in promoting the well-being of children and highlights the importance of their role in educating and protecting their children from such abuse. The study considers the potential impact of media portrayals on parents' knowledge, attitudes, ethical considerations, and practices related to child sexual abuse prevention (Naeem & Iqbal, 2019).

Significant of the Study

The significance of the study lies in its findings that the portrayal of child sexual abuse on electronic media influences the attitudes and behaviors of parents, particularly in relation to their children's safety and ethical considerations. The research highlights the need for comprehensive sexuality education and emphasizes the roles of media and parents in protecting children from sexual abuse. It calls on NGOs, INGOs, and media organizations to utilize electronic media as a platform for public education while adhering to ethical guidelines when reporting on child sexual abuse (Awan et al., 2019).

Study Objectives

1. To explore the knowledge level of parents towards UNCRC in general, the right of protection of a child, and the role of media regarding the well-being of children in particular.
2. To find out the attitude of parents towards the alignment of coverage of child sexual abuse on electronic media in terms of ethical considerations.
3. To gauge the extent to which parents alter their practices towards the upbringing of their children after coming across the news of child abuse on electronic media.
4. They narrate the extent to which parents consider their children more vulnerable to sexual abuse after watching news reports on electronic media.

Research Questions

1. What are the trends of exposure of parents to electronic media in general and news stories/news bulletins/enactments/featured morning shows in particular?
2. Are there any differences in the knowledge, attitude, and practices of parents (both male and female parents) towards the vulnerability of their children (both girls and boys) in terms of the likelihood of falling victim to sexual abuse?
3. Has the concern of parents towards their children increased due to their repeated exposure to the portrayal of incidents of child sexual abuse on electronic media?
4. What is the extent to which parents teach their children about protecting them from sexual abuse and 'good and bad touch'?
5. What is parents' comfort level while watching news stories of child sexual abuse on electronic media?

Literature Review

The World Health Organization defines *child abuse* as any mistreatment of children that can cause physical or psychological harm to their development (Hussain et al., 2018). Although different professionals may have varying definitions of child abuse, there are efforts to clarify these definitions to enhance our understanding of this issue (Malik et al., 2018). This includes situations where the child is not developmentally ready and cannot provide support or situations that go against cultural values or norms (Mahmood & Zahoor, 2018). Examples of CSA could include engaging or forcing a child to participate in illegal sexual activities or exploiting a child for commercial sexual purposes (Tariq et al., 2017).

It is essential to understand the two main types of child sexual abuse. The first is non-contact abuse, which includes exposing a child to pornography or exhibiting one's genital organs to a child. The second is contact abuse, which can involve a range of behaviours, such as fondling a child's genitals, forced sexual acts, masturbation, and sexual intercourse (Khan & Raza, 2017). Awareness of these types of abuse is vital to prevent and address child sexual abuse (Zaman & Rana, 2017). It is essential to understand parents' critical role in providing Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) to their children, protecting them from sexual abuse, and building their self-esteem (Rehman et al., 2016). It is also significant to recognize the media's influence on young people and their behaviours related to sexuality and the potential for media literacy education to support CSE efforts (Ayub & Khan, 2020). A comprehensive approach to parental involvement and media literacy education can help ensure that young people can access the accurate and relevant information and skills they need to make healthy and informed decisions about their sexual health (Khan & Riaz, 2020). As a professional researcher, ethically reporting on child sexual abuse in electronic media is essential to consider (Bari & Khan, 2020). The Pakistan Coalition for Ethical Journalism (PCEJ) addresses these concerns following the Kasur Incident in 2015, where children were sexually abused over an extended period (Mahmood & Aslam, 2020). While the media is essential in finding and punishing responsible individuals, sensationalized coverage risks further harm to victims if their cases are not adequately reported (Raza & Khan, 2020). PCEJ advocates for best practices in ethical journalism, including protecting victim privacy, reporting sensitively, distinguishing facts from opinion, providing context, regular follow-up, and supporting preventative education and reform (Saeed & Malik, 2020). Researchers must recognize the media's role in reporting child sexual abuse, like the Kasur scandal, to increase public awareness and prevent future misuse (Shahid & Ramzan, 2021). This statement highlights the Pakistani television series "Udaari," which aired in 2016 and focused on social issues such as child sexual abuse, parental retaliation against music careers, police interrogations, and blind support of politicians (Saleem & Iqbal, 2020).

The series was co-produced by Momina Duraid and Kashaf Foundation, written by Farhat Ishtiaq, and directed by Muhammad Ehtesham Uddin. The show broke stereotypes and taboos around these issues to raise awareness and find solutions.

Table 1: Quick Overview of Caste of Drama Serial Udaari of HUM TV

Original Names	Names in drama series Udaari	Characters in Drama Series Udaari
Ms. Hina Altaf Khan	Zeb-un-Nisa Parveiz / Zebo (Komal)	Child sexual abuse survivor and daughter of Sajjo/Tahira
Ms. Samiya Mumtaz	Sajida Bibi (Sajjo/Tahira)	Entrepreneur and mother of a survivor of child sexual abuse Zebo
Mr. Ahsan Khan	Imtiaz Ali Sheikh	The perpetrator of child sexual abuse, step-father of Zebo, and second husband of Tahira
Ms. UrwaHocane	Rasheeda Bibi (Sheedan)	A folk singer and mother of Meera
	Meera Majid	Singer, daughter of Sheedan, and friend of Zebo

The TV series "Udaari" tackled the issue of child sexual abuse in Pakistan, raising awareness and encouraging victims not to be ashamed. However, some viewers complained about the portrayal of the case. Heavy and light TV viewing can affect viewers' beliefs and perceptions, with exposure to violence linked to fear and dysphasia. The media's focus on sensational crimes can cultivate an overstated fear of crime, and domestic and child abuse often goes unreported. Media reports often portray rape as being committed by strangers, when in reality, many are committed by familiar people. Women are at a higher risk of domestic and sexual abuse.

Theoretical Framework

Cultivation Theory

Cultivation theory, developed by George Gerbner, focuses on "Syndromes", which means the long-term effects of media exposure on individuals' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours (Gerbner, 1998). Cultivation theory provides a useful framework for understanding the societal influences on parental attitudes and behaviour towards child sexual abuse portrayal on electronic media in Pakistan. To understand the impact of media on individuals' perceptions and behaviours, cultivation theory is utilized as a theoretical framework. This theory describes the future effects of television. This theory's primary aim is to determine if more people are watching television. They will have more belief in the reality being shown on Television (Gerbner, 1998). As more people watch television for more extended periods, thus, conceptual messages are being circulated to the people by using television. George Gerbner used this term to explain that heavy TV viewing leads to a belief that the world is dangerous, called the Mean World Syndrome (Shah & Haider, 2020). This syndrome is the primary result of cultivation theory. Heavy viewers are vulnerable to media messages, believing them to be accurate representations of reality (Zahid & Sarwar, 2020). Cultivation theory suggests that media reflects societal attitudes and can shape viewers' perspectives on violence (Zia & Khan, 2020). This work argues that TV does not create anything new and that viewers often need to be made aware of how much media they consume.

Media has a small but significant impact on society, especially on heavy viewers (Ahmed & Khan, 2021). Cultivation theory suggests that exposure to media content may shape parental attitudes towards child sexual abuse portrayal (Ali & Raza, 2021). Parents who are heavy viewers of media content that includes such depictions may perceive child sexual abuse as more prevalent or normative (Butt & Khan, 2021). This can influence their attitudes by either sensitizing them to the issue or desensitizing them to its severity (Hussain & Malik, 2021). Cultivation theory suggests that media shapes attitudes based on perspectives already present in society, as the media re-

presents them to viewers (Khan & Ahmed, 2021). The approach emphasizes that TV and media do not create anything new but package existing perspectives. Viewers may not realize how much media they consume, often assuming they are light viewers when they are heavy viewers (Malik & Raza, 2021). The theory concludes that while media has a minor effect on society's perspectives and feelings about itself, heavy media consumers are the most affected (Naeem & Iqbal, 2021).

Research Methodology

Research design for the research in hand, the researcher has used both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools aimed at triangulation and generalizability of the results. PAPI and CAPI methods were employed for data collection, where quantitative data was collected through CAPI and qualitative data was collected through PAPI.

Oversampling and Attrition

As per the formula, a sample of 384 respondents was deduced to be gathered for the study through a quasi-experimental model of treatment and control group; however, oversampling of 10% was done by keeping in view possible attrition and loss of information in case of further follow-ups in future. Therefore, a total sample of 422 respondents for the quantitative survey was taken. Further, the details of qualitative and quantitative data samples are detailed under the head of 'sample of the study.'

Sampling Design

A standard formula of 95% confidence interval and 5% margin of error for deducing the sample size was used.

Sample of the Study

The segregation of quantitative data collected from parents is given in the table below:

Table 2: Segregation of Quantitative Data Collected from Parents

	Muzaffargarh		Islamabad	
	Educated	Illiterate	Employed	Unemployed
Male Parents	13	14	13	13
Female Parents	13	14	13	13
Married Women without Children	13	14	13	13
Married Men without Children	13	14	13	13
	Muzaffargarh		Islamabad	
	Educated	Illiterate	Employed	Unemployed
Male Parents	13	14	13	13
Female Parents	13	14	13	13
Married Women without Children	13	13	13	13
Married Men without Children	13	13	13	13

The segregation of qualitative instruments of data collection is given below:

Table 3: Segregation of Qualitative Sample

Instruments Exercised	Islamabad	Muzaffargarh
FGDs		
Male Parents	2	2
Female Parents	2	2
Married Women without Children	2	2
Married Men without Children	2	2
In-depth Interviews		
Teachers (Gender Segregated)	2	2
Imam of Mosque	1	1
CSO/NGO Representatives	2	2
Journalists	1	1

Study Instruments

Quantitative Method

For a quantitative survey with parents, a closed-ended questionnaire (attached in Annex-) was used using a closed-ended questionnaire on Liker-Scale.

Focused Group Discussions

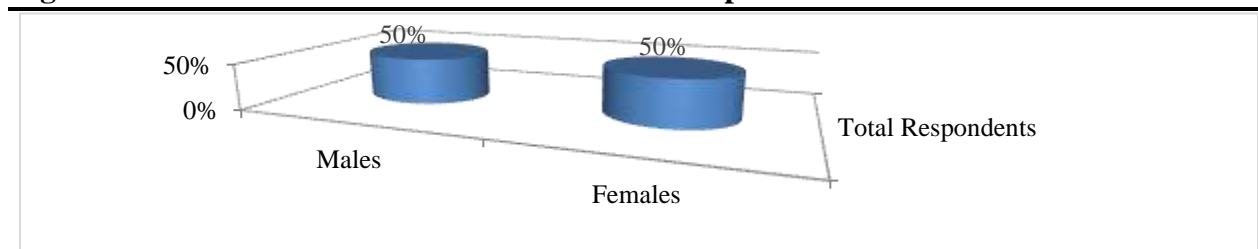
An open-ended semi-structured questionnaire for male and female parents for focused group discussions was developed (attached at Annex-) to probe deeper into the reasons behind the community's existing knowledge, attitude, and practices towards portraying child sexual abuse on electronic media.

In-depth Interviews

An open-ended semi-structured questionnaire was developed (attached in Annex-) for the key stakeholder, including teachers, the imam of the mosque, CSO/NGO representatives, and journalists, to seek their points of view about the subject matter.

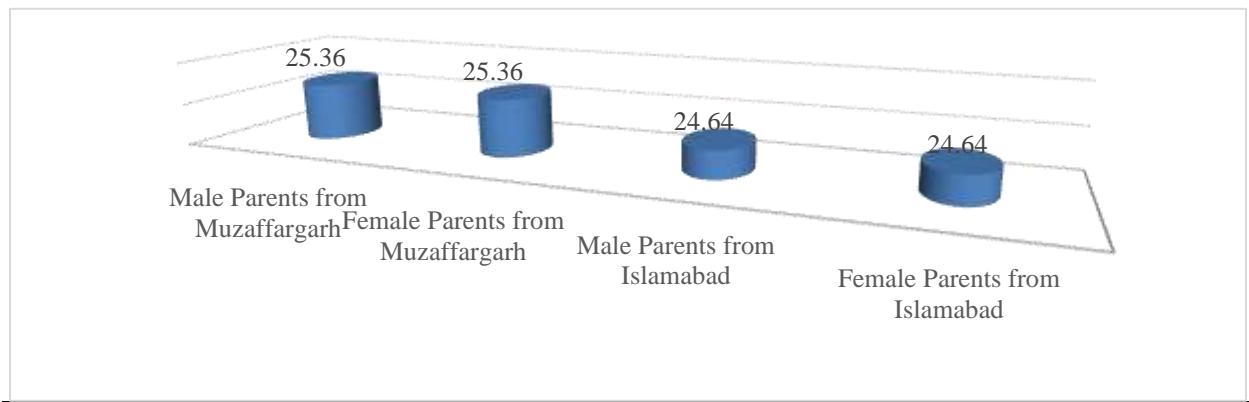
Data Analysis

Figure 1: Data Collected from Male and Female Respondents



The data for this research was collected from both male and female parents, therefore, in total 422 respondents were interviewed. In terms of demographic, the researcher has taken the data from 50% male and 50% female as shown in the figure.

Figure 2: Segregation of Parents in Islamabad and Muzaffargarh



Additionally, in terms of gender and cities, the data was taken from both male and female parents of two cities; Islamabad and Muzaffargarh. 25.36 % of the male and 25.36 % of female parents of Muzaffargarh was the respondents of this research. However, from Islamabad, 24.64 % of male and equal percentage of female parents was taken as respondents for the interview.

Knowledge

Figure 3: Awareness of child sexual abuse among parents

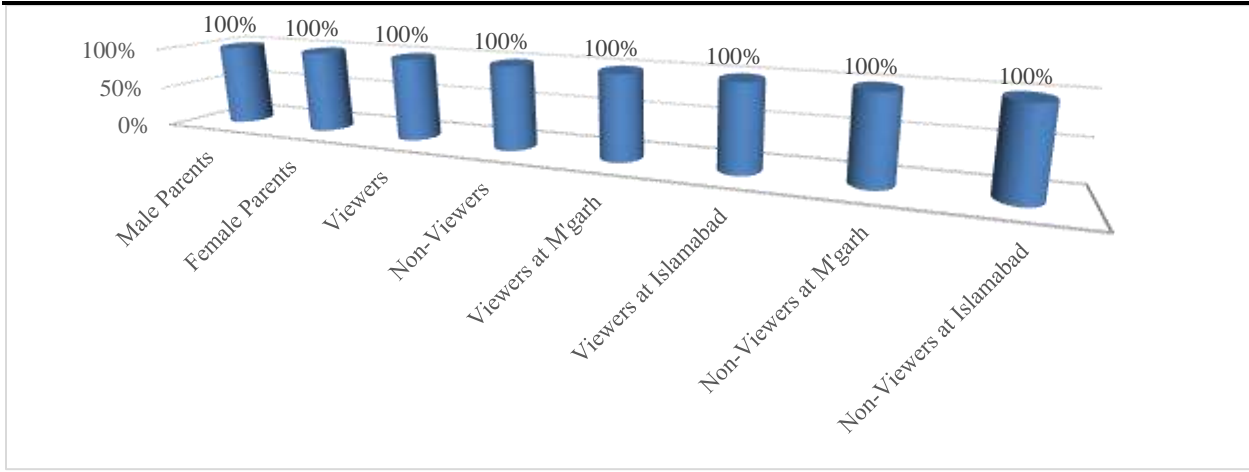


Figure 3 shows that response rate of viewers and non-viewers parents at Islamabad and Muzaffargarh on awareness about child sexual abuse. The statistics reveal that all male and female parents, viewers, and non-viewers from both Islamabad and Muzaffargarh were already familiar with the term ‘child sexual abuse’. This suggests a high level of awareness among the target audience regarding child sexual abuse. Regardless of their TV viewing habits, parents from both cities were knowledgeable about this issue. It can be concluded from the data that child sexual abuse is not a new topic for the target audience. This understanding of child sexual abuse through various media forms provided a basis for further questions and discussions in the research.

Figure 4: Sources of information on child sexual abuse

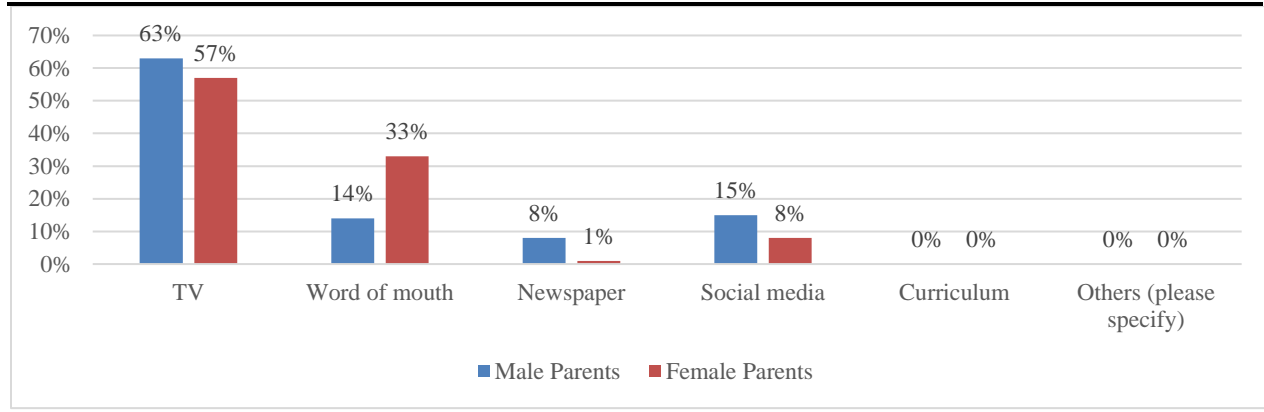


Figure 4 shows that different sources of information through which parents come to know about child sexual abuse. The statistics indicate that 63% of male parents and 57% of female parents acquired knowledge about child sexual abuse through television. This suggests that TV is the primary source of information on this issue, as highlighted in various programs. Additionally, 33% of female respondents learned about child abuse through social gatherings, possibly due to their higher involvement in social activities and gossip. The findings from in-depth interviews with community representatives, such as teachers and community workers, supported the results of the quantitative survey.

Figure 5: Segregation of viewers and non-viewers of Islamabad and Muzaffargarh on the basis of the sources of information on child sexual abuse

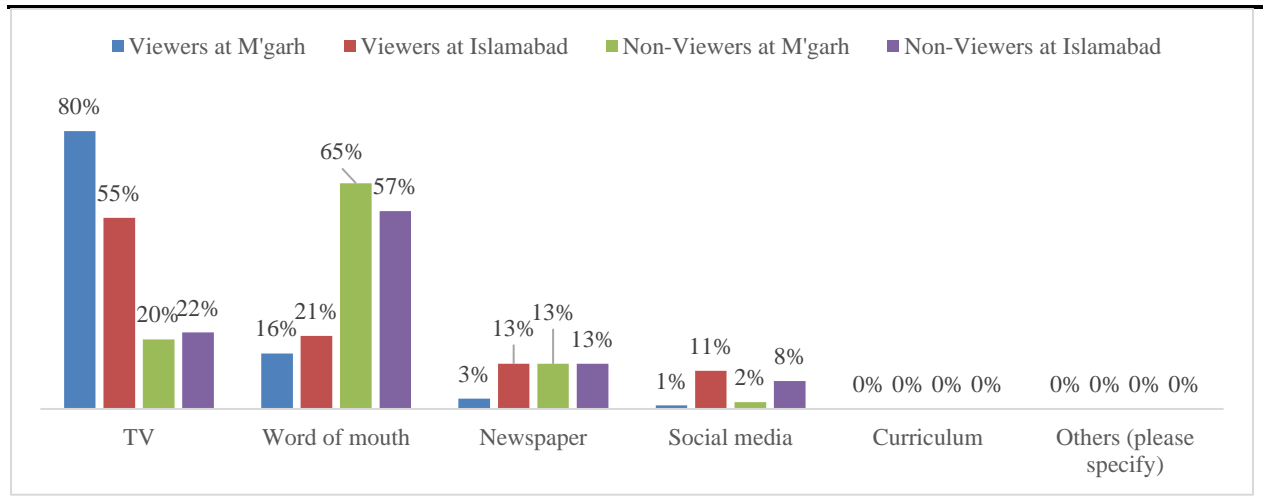


Figure 5 shows that segregation of viewers and non-viewers of Islamabad and Muzaffargarh on the basis of the sources of information on child sexual abuse. The statistics show that the majority of non-viewers in Islamabad and Muzaffargarh obtained information on child sexual abuse through word of mouth, with 57% and 65% respectively. TV was the second most common source of information for non-viewers, with 22% in Islamabad and 20% in Muzaffargarh relying on it. Among viewers, TV was the primary source of information in both cities, with 55% in Islamabad and 80% in Muzaffargarh. Word of mouth was the second most common source for viewers,

followed by newspapers and social media. Neither the curriculum nor any other options received significant support from the respondents.

Figure 6: Information gained through electronic media on child sexual abuse

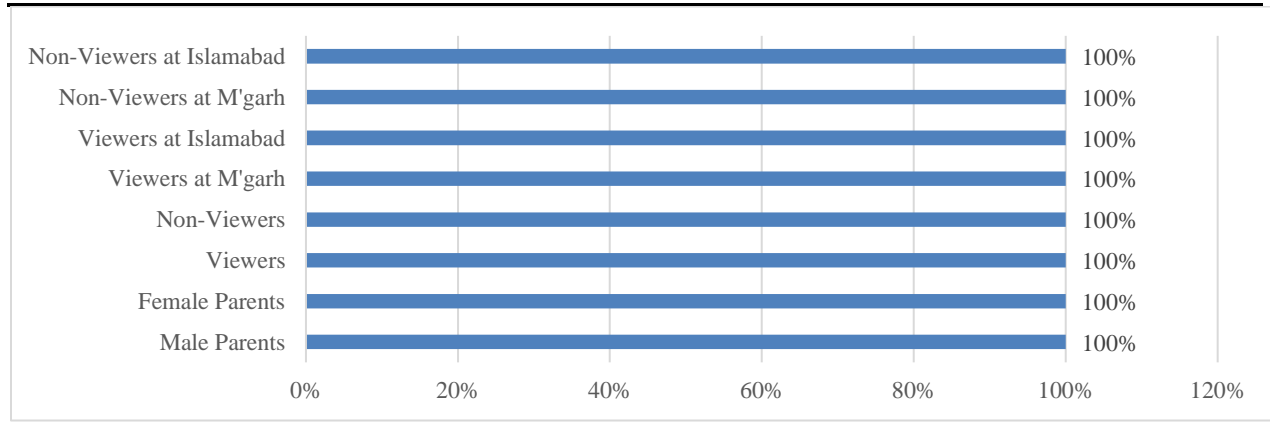


Figure 6 shows that information gained by viewers, non-viewers, male and female parents through electronic media on child sexual abuse in Islamabad and Muzaffargarh. In response to this question, 100 % respondents replied that they had seen child sexual abusive cases in the Television. Out of all respondents, the result was 100 % which shows that 100 % male and female parents, 100% viewers, 100% non-viewers. Then again 100 % respondents from Islamabad and Muzaffargarh said they have seen child sexual abuse cases on electronic media. This again shows that electronic media is the most influential source that is highlighting the issue and creating awareness among people. Moreover, during the FGDs with male and female parents, the parents again explicitly mentioned about portrayal of child abuse of electronic media.

Figure 7: Learning of abuse through entertainment media or news media

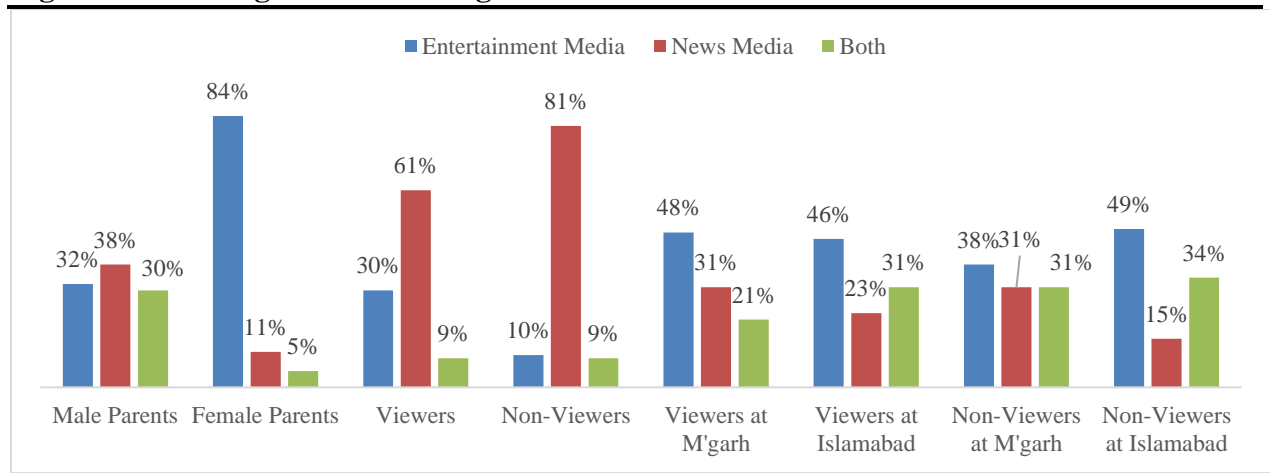


Figure 7 shows that response rate of viewers, non-viewers, male and female parents gathering information in through entertainment and news media. According to the statistics, 84% of female respondents and 32% of male parents reported seeing child sexual abuse cases on entertainment media. In contrast, 38% of male participants stated that they saw such cases on news channels. This pattern was also observed among parents from Islamabad and Muzaffargarh, where a

significant majority witnessed these cases on entertainment media. During in-depth interviews, a teacher mentioned the drama serial “Udari” and how students frequently discussed it at school, indicating the influence of such programs on raising awareness about child sexual abuse.

Figure 8: Acts considered as child sexual abuse

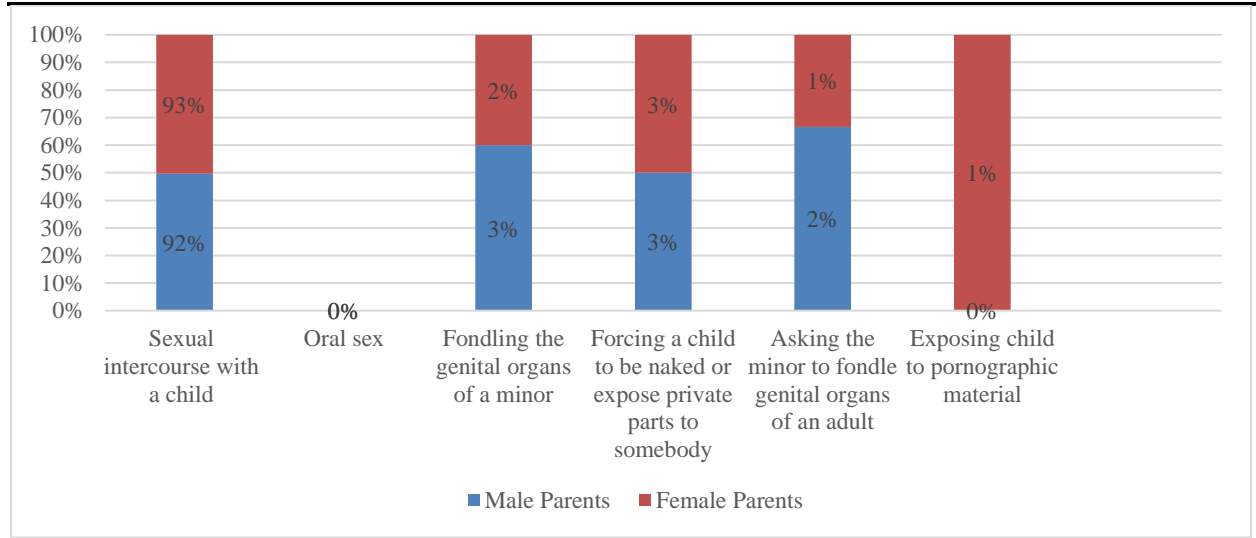


Figure 8 shows that response rate of male and female parents on their understanding of child sexual abuse. According to the statistical data, 93% of female parents and 92% of male parents believe that child sexual abuse refers to sexual intercourse with a child. Only 2% of females and 3% of males consider fondling the genital organs of a child as sexual abuse. Additionally, 1% of females and 2% of males think that asking a minor to fondle genital organs of an adult is child abuse. Furthermore, 3% of both females and males view forcing a child to be naked or exposing private parts as child abuse. Only 1% of females think that exposure to pornographic material constitutes child sexual abuse. Among non-viewers of TV or other entertainment mediums, 90% believe that child sexual abuse involves sexual intercourse with a child, while 3% consider it as forcing a child to be naked or exposing private parts.

Figure 9: Understanding of child sexual abuse among viewers and non-viewers of Islamabad and Muzaffargarh

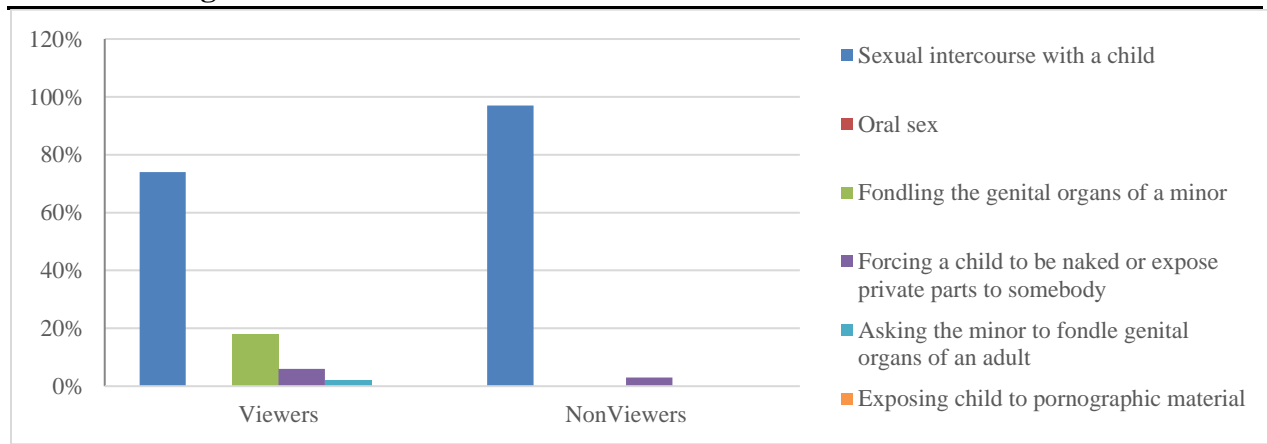


Figure 9 shows that child abuse is considered as sexual intercourse with a child by both viewers and non-viewers of Islamabad and Muzaffargarh. Only 9% and 18% viewers of Muzaffargarh and Islamabad also associated child abuse with fondling the genital organs of the minor. Exposure of private parts to somebody was a child abuse for only 7% viewers of Muzaffargarh and 16% viewers of Islamabad. 99% non-viewer of Islamabad, 64% viewer of Islamabad, 100% non-viewers of Muzaffargarh and 84% viewer of Muzaffargarh were considered sexual intercourse with a child both by viewer and non-viewer of Muzaffargarh and Islamabad.

Figure 10: Possibility of child sexual abuse in absence of physical contact

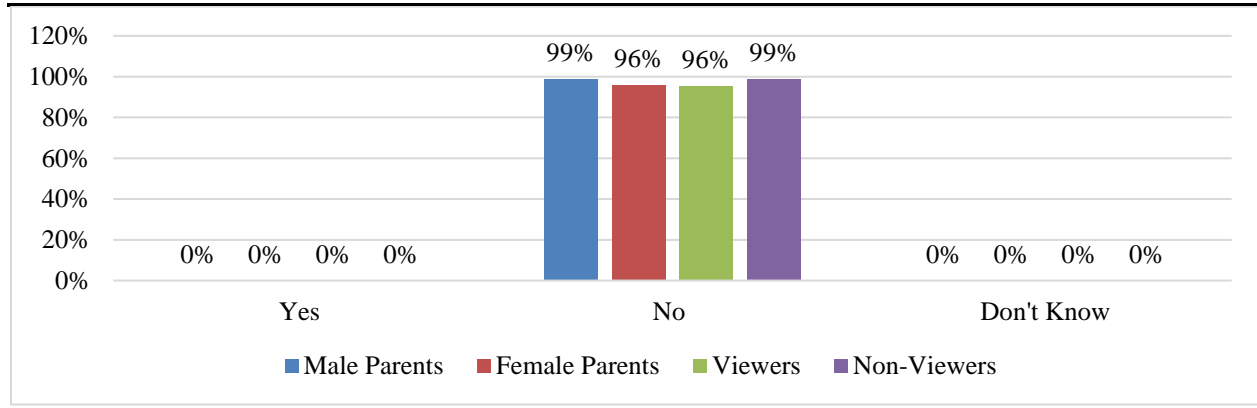


Figure 10 shows the response rate of male and female parents and viewers and non-viewers of electronic media on possibility of child sexual abuse in absence of physical contact. The response of this question assures that a child sexual abuse cannot be happen without intercourse or physical contact. The statistics shows similarity in the response, such as 99% male parents, 96% female parents, 96% viewers and 99% non-viewers respondents strongly disagreed on the possibility of child sexual abuse in absence of physical contact.

Figure 11: Gender-orientation that is more exposed to child sexual abuse

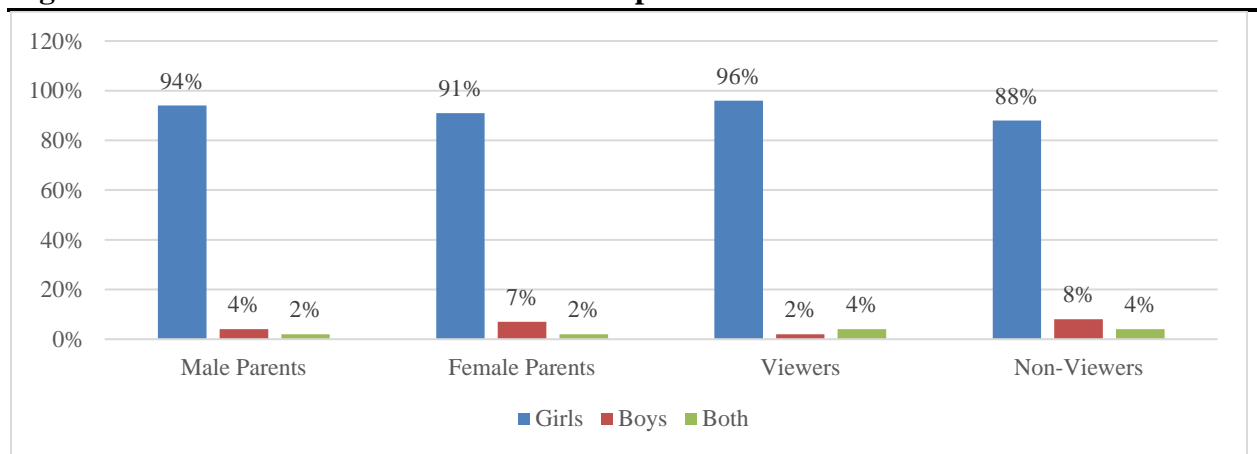


Figure 11 shows that response rate of viewers, non-viewers male and female parents on the gender that is more exposed to child sexual abuse. Considerably, majority of the respondents claimed that girls are more vulnerable to child sexual abuse cases. According to 94% male parents, girls are

vulnerable to child sexual abuse. The similar 91% ratio of the female parents’ response indicated that girls are the victims of child sexual abuse as compared to boys. 96 % of the viewers agreed with the girls’ vulnerability. Similarly, 88 % of the non-viewers also agreed for girls. 4 % male parents, 7 % female parents, 2 % viewers, and 8 % non-viewers said that boys are vulnerable for child sexual abuse. Thus, majority of the respondents voted for girls.

Figure 12: Vulnerability of boys to sexual abuse

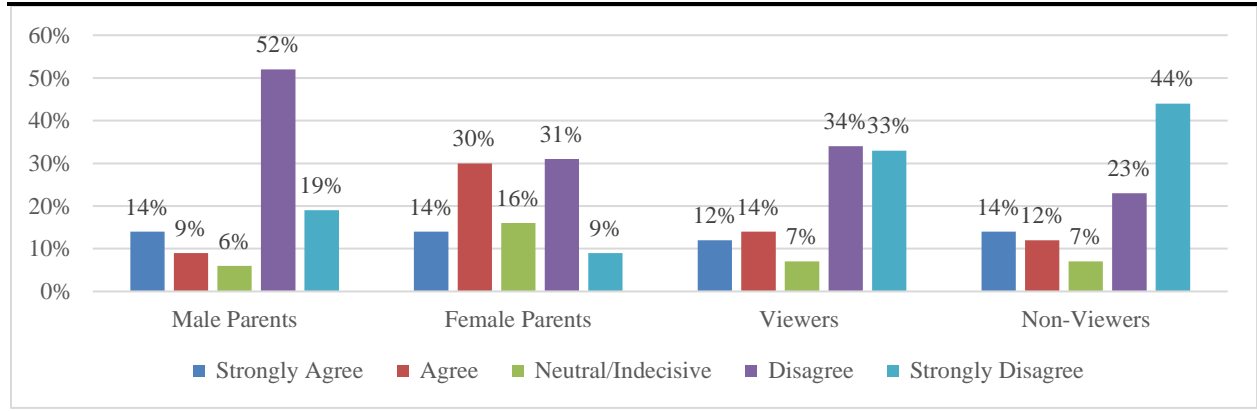


Figure 12 response rate of viewers, non-viewers, male and female parents on vulnerability of boys to child sexual abuse. In this question, female parents gave equal response 30% were agreed and 31% were disagreed. However, 52% of the male parents, 31 % of female respondents, 34% viewers, and 23 % non-viewers disagreed while 19% males, 9% females, 33% viewers and 44% non-viewers strongly disagreed with the statement that boys can also become the victim of any child sexual abuse. 9% males, 30% females, 14% viewers and 12% non-viewers agreed to it. 6% male, 16% female, 7% viewers and 7% non-viewers remained neutral.

Figure 13: Child sexual abuse at school premises

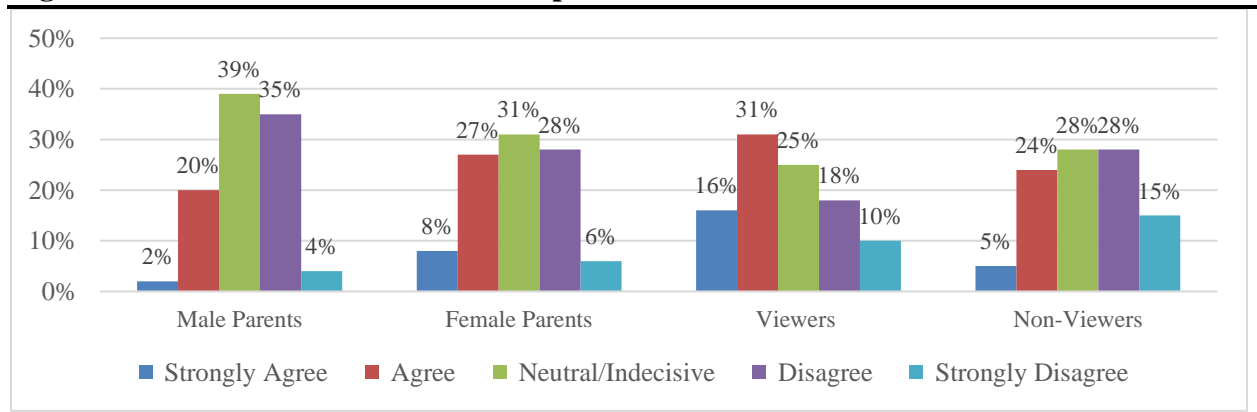


Figure 13 shows the response rate of viewers, non-viewers, male and female parents on child sexual abuse at school. Incidents of child sexual abusive cases can be happened anywhere, therefore, majority of the respondents were not sure about their reply. 2% male parents, 8% female parents, 16% viewers and 5% non-viewers strongly agreed while 20% male parents, 27% female parents, 31% viewers and 24% non-viewers agreed that child abuse can occur at school. 39% of

male parents, 31% of the female parents, remained neutral, 25 % viewers, and 28 % non-viewers haven't responded. However, 35% male and 28% female parents, 18% viewers and 28% non-viewers disagreed and only 4% male, 6% female, 10% viewers and 15% non-viewers strongly disagreed.

Figure 14: Gender that is more likely to be abused at school

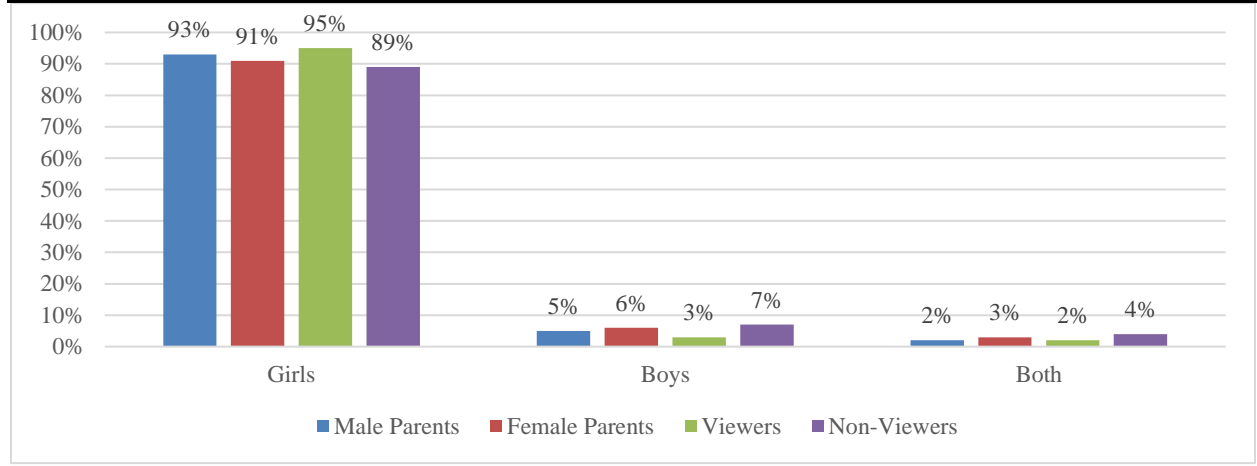


Figure 14 shows that response rate of viewers, non-viewers, male and female parents on the gender that is more likely to be abused at school. The statistics reveal that a majority of respondents, including 93% of male parents, 91% of female parents, 95% of viewers, and 89% of non-viewers, believe that girls are more likely to experience sexual abuse at school. Only a small percentage (5% of males, 6% of females, 3% of viewers, and 7% of non-viewers) believes that both genders face an equal risk. Similarly, small percentages (2% of males, 3% of females, 2% of viewers, and 4% of non-viewers) consider the risk to be the same for both genders. However, teachers in the in-depth interviews shared a different perspective, emphasizing that the vulnerable path to school, especially in rural areas with dense crops and barren streets in urban areas during summers, makes children, particularly girls, more susceptible to sexual abuse.

Figure 15: Likelihood of gender to be abused by a family member or relative

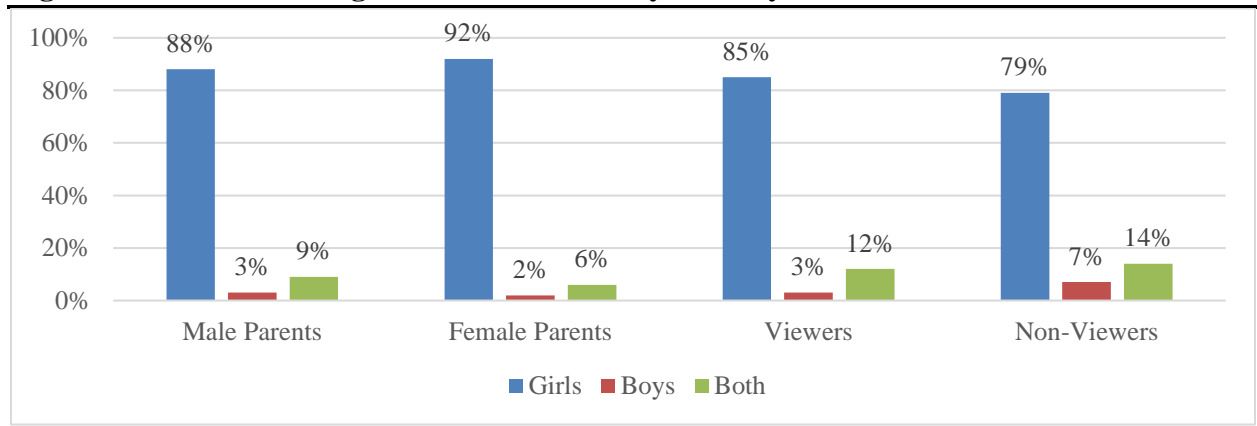


Figure 14 show that response rate of viewers, non-viewers, male and female parents on gender that is likely to be abused by the family member. With regard to this question, again, 91 % male parents,

93 % female parents, 95 % viewers and 82% non-viewers regarded girls as a victim. 7% male parents, 7% female parents, 3% viewers and 9% non-viewers considered boys as victim of abuse by relatives. Majority of the response shows that girls become the victims of child sexual abuse either at school, on the way to school, or by relatives as well. Just 2% male, 3% female, 2% viewers and 9% non-viewers considered both boys and girls as victims.

Knowledge: Only from viewers and nonviewers

Figure 16: Before watching drama “Udaari”

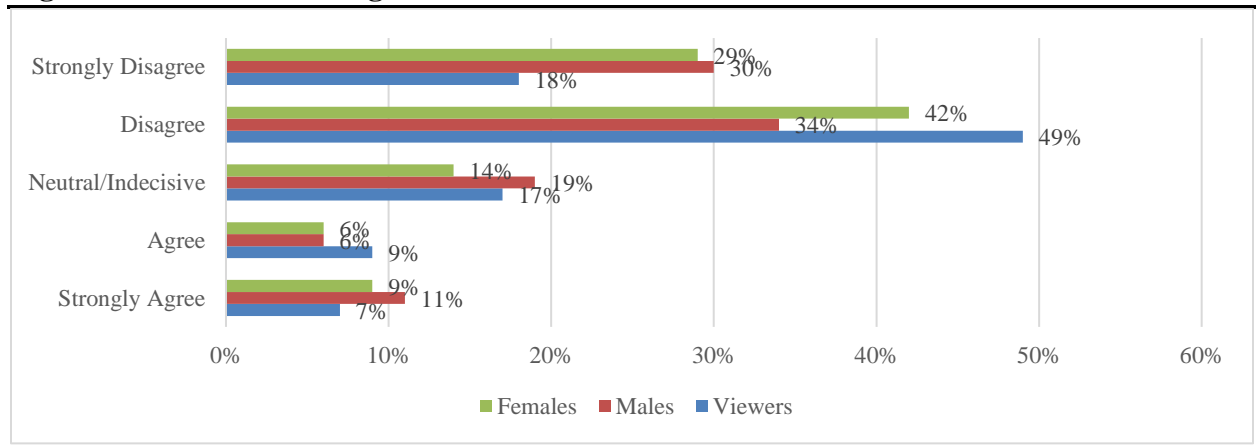


Figure 16 show that response rate of viewers, male and female parents on their awareness about sexual abuse by step parents before watching drama Udaari. Before watching Udaari, the majority of respondents (29% females, 30% males, and 18% viewers) strongly disagreed that step-parents could sexually abuse a child. However, after watching the drama, a significant percentage (42% females, 34% males, and 49% viewers) encountered this issue for the first time. Only a small percentage (6% males, 6% females, and 9% viewers) had some prior knowledge about child sexual abuse, while a notable percentage (14% females, 19% males, and 17% viewers) remained undecided.

Figure 17: Knowledge about child porn films before seeing news of Kasur incident over TV

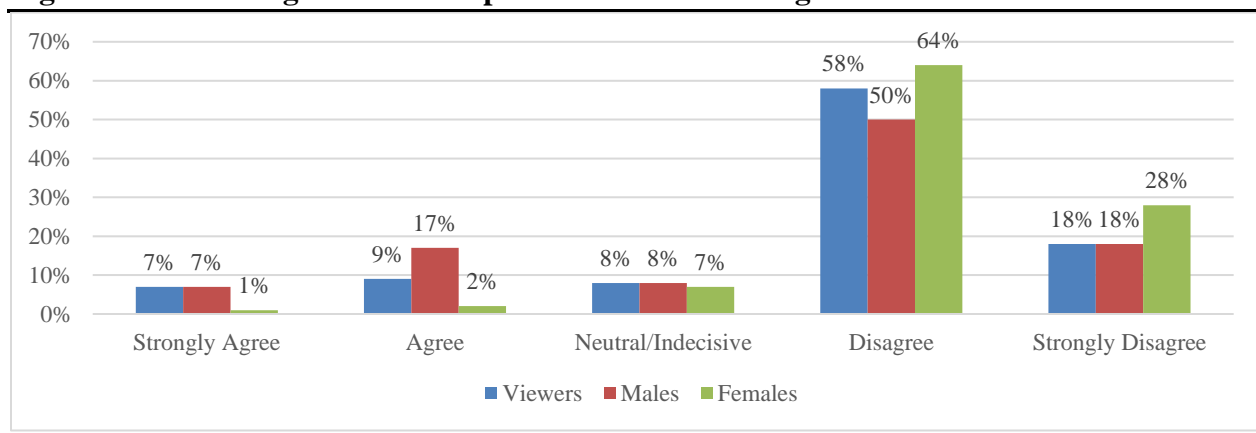


Figure 17 shows that response rate of viewers, male and female parents on knowledge about child porn films before seeing news of Kasur incident over TV. When inquired about the child porn

films, 64% female respondents, 50% males and 58% viewers were confused because they heard this topic for the first time through Kasur Scandal's news, which shows that through news channels they got the idea of child porn movies. Similarly, only 7% males, 1% females and 7% viewers had an idea about such grave issues. The statistics also show that 17% males, 2% females and 9% viewers only had idea about this while 18% males, 28% females and 18% viewers did not about child porn films before watching it on new channels. By keeping in mind this problem, the next question was asked from the respondents.

Knowledge: Only from non-viewers

Figure 18: Knowledge about step parents abusing their step children sexually

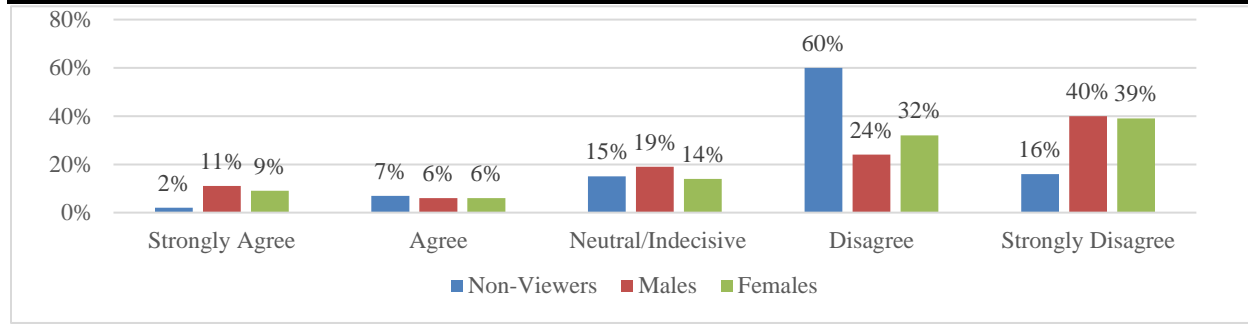


Figure 18 shows that response rate of non-viewers, male and female parents on knowledge about step parents abusing their step children sexually. Considerably, 16% non-viewers, 40% male, and 39% female parents of the total respondents disagreed with the statement above. It means the Drama of Hum TV and other news channels gave such news and stories which were not familiar by the general public. Only 2% non-viewers, 11% male, and 9% female parents strongly agreed with the above statement and showed their serious concern on this social issue. 7% non-viewers, 6% males and 6% females agreed to the statement while 60% non-viewers, 24% males and 32% females disagreed to the statement. 15% non-viewers, 19% males and 14% females were neutral in their response. To get the best response, the next question was asked.

Figure 19: Knowledge about children porn films

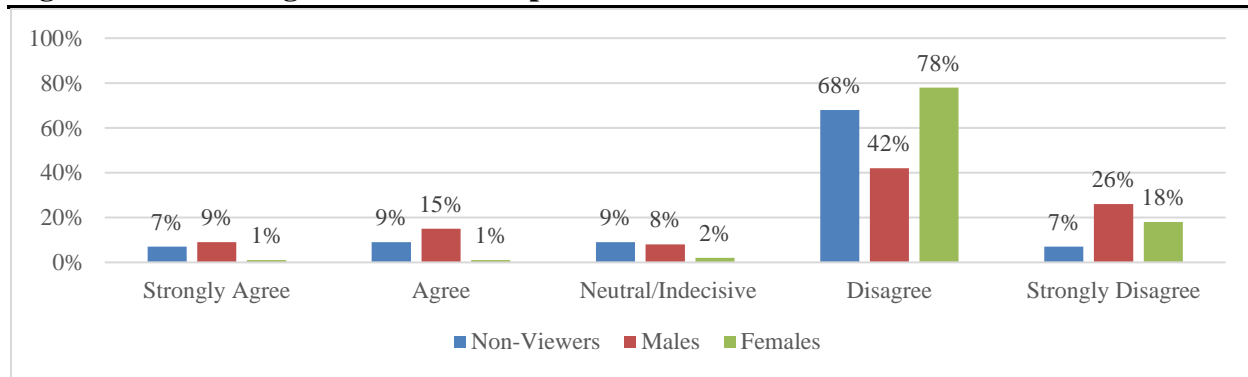


Figure 19 shows that response rate of non-viewers, male and female parents on knowledge about children porn films. As compared to 9% of males, only 1% of female respondents and 7% of non-viewers were aware of child porn films. 9% of non-viewers, 1% of women, and 15% of male respondents agreed. However, 78% of women, 42% of male respondents and 68% of non-viewers

disagreed, and 18% of women, 26% of males, and 7% of non-viewers strongly disagreed with the statement mentioned above. The neutral respondents were 2%, 8% and 9 % males, females and non-viewers, respectively, out of the total respondents.

Findings

One significant finding from the research is that all male and female parents, regardless of their city of residence (Islamabad and Muzaffargarh), were already familiar with the term “child sexual abuse,” indicating a high level of awareness among the respondents. The study involved 422 participants, with equal proportions of male and female parents. The majority of parents, both male and female, identified television as their primary source of information on child sexual abuse, highlighting the influential role of television in raising awareness and educating individuals on this sensitive topic. The graph demonstrates the differing sources of information used by viewers and non-viewers of child sexual abuse in Islamabad and Muzaffargarh, emphasizing the need for targeted awareness campaigns that consider the specific behaviors and preferences of each audience group. 100% of respondents reported seeing child sexual abuse cases on television, indicating the influential role of electronic media as a source of information on this topic. This response was consistent across male and female parents, viewers, and non-viewers. Highlights the differentiation between entertainment and news media as sources of information on child sexual abuse. It reveals that female respondents showed a higher preference for entertainment media (84%) when compared to male parents (32%). Additionally, 38% of male participants mentioned news channels as their source of information.

The study found that the majority of both male and female parents (92-93%) correctly identified sexual intercourse with a child as child sexual abuse. However, there was less awareness regarding other forms of abuse, such as fondling the genital organs of a child or exposing them to pornographic material. Among both viewers and non-viewers, 90% of non-viewers correctly associated child sexual abuse with sexual intercourse, while 3% mentioned forcing a child to be naked or exposing private parts. This understanding of child sexual abuse remained consistent even among those who were not regular viewers of electronic media. However, there were some differences between viewers in Muzaffargarh and Islamabad. Only 9% of Muzaffargarh viewers and 18% of Islamabad viewers associated child abuse with fondling the genital organs of a minor. Additionally, only 7% of Muzaffargarh viewers and 16% of Islamabad viewers saw the exposure of private parts as abuse.

There is a strong consensus among respondents, including male parents (99%), female parents (96%), viewers (96%), and non-viewers (99%), that child sexual abuse cannot occur without physical contact. Additionally, the majority of respondents, including male parents (94%), female parents (91%), viewers (96%), and non-viewers (88%), believed that girls are more vulnerable to child sexual abuse than boys. However, the figure demonstrates that a significant percentage of male parents (52%), female parents (31%), viewers (34%), and non-viewers (23%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the notion that boys can be potential victims of child sexual abuse, indicating a lack of acknowledgement of boys' vulnerability to abuse. A significant portion of respondents, including male parents (20%), female parents (27%), viewers (31%), and non-viewers (24%), agreed that child sexual abuse can occur in school settings. The majority of respondents, including male parents (93%), female parents (91%), viewers (95%), and non-viewers (89%), believed that girls have a higher likelihood of being sexually abused at school. Additionally, a considerable proportion of male parents (74%), female parents (84%), viewers

(94%), and non-viewers (64%) agreed that children are likely to be victims of child sexual abuse at school. However, the strongly agreed ratios were lower.

The majority of respondents, including male parents (88%), female parents (92%), viewers (85%), and non-viewers (79%), believe that girls are more prone to being victims of child sexual abuse at school. Parents, whether viewers or non-viewers, mostly disagree with the involvement of family members or relatives in child sexual abuse, with male parents (78%), female parents (52%), viewers (44%), and non-viewers (77%) expressing this sentiment. The findings also reveal that a majority of respondents consider girls more likely to be abused by a family member or relative, with percentages ranging from 91% to 95% across different respondent groups. In contrast, only a small percentage of respondents perceive boys as victims, ranging from 3% to 9% across different groups. A small percentage of respondents view both boys and girls as potential victims of abuse, with percentages ranging from 2% to 9% across different groups. Before watching "Udaari," a significant portion of respondents had limited knowledge about child sexual abuse cases. 29% of females, 30% of males, and 18% of viewers strongly disagreed that step-parents can sexually abuse children. However, after watching the drama, 42% of females, 34% of males, and 49% of viewers reported that they became aware of child sexual abuse for the first time through the drama. Before watching the drama, a small percentage of respondents (11% males, 9% females, and 7% viewers) already knew about child sexual abuse. Prior to hearing about the Kasur incident, the majority of respondents (64% females, 50% males, and 58% viewers) were not aware of child porn films. Prior knowledge about child porn films was only evident in a small percentage of respondents (7% males, 1% females, and 7% viewers). A significant proportion of respondents, including 18% of males, 28% of females, and 18% of viewers, did not know child porn films before learning about it on news channels. A majority of respondents, including 68% of females, 52% of males, and 56% of viewers, were not aware of boys being sexually abused before hearing about the Kasur incident. After the incident, a small percentage of respondents strongly agreed (8% of males, 1% of females, and 6% of viewers) that boys can be sexually abused. In comparison, a larger percentage agreed (18% of males, 2% of females, and 16% of viewers). A portion of respondents did not respond to this question.

Discussion

The discussion of this research study will focus on the significant findings and their implications. The study explored how the portrayal of child sexual abuse in Pakistani electronic media affects parents' understanding and awareness of the issue. Based on the above obtained result, it is clear that the researchers collected data from 422 respondents, with an equal distribution of male and female parents from Islamabad and Muzaffargarh. All parents, regardless of gender or city, showed a high level of knowledge about child sexual abuse, with 100% awareness among both viewers and non-viewers. The majority of parents, especially females, obtained information about child sexual abuse through television and social gatherings. 100% of respondents replied that they had seen child sexual abusive cases on television. The findings show that all parents used TV as a primary source for awareness about child sexual abuse. The result was 100%, which shows that 100% male and female parents, 100% viewers, and 100% non-viewers. Then again, 100% of respondents from Islamabad and Muzaffargarh said they had seen child sexual abuse cases on electronic media. Non-viewers relied more on word of mouth, while viewers primarily relied on television for information about child sexual abuse. According to the statistics, 84% of female respondents and 32% of male parents reported seeing child sexual abuse cases on entertainment media.

In contrast, 38% of male participants stated that they saw such cases on news channels. When questions were asked about the possibility of child sexual abuse in the absence of physical contact, the response to this question assures that child sexual abuse cannot happen without intercourse or physical contact. The statistics show similarities in the responses, such as 99% of male parents, 96% of female parents, 96% of viewers and 99% of non-viewers respondents strongly disagreed. The majority of respondents disagreed with the statement, indicating their lack of knowledge or awareness of child porn films. Specifically, 78% of females, 42% of males, and 68% of non-viewers disagreed. Additionally, a small percentage of respondents remained neutral in their responses.

In summary, the data indicates a high level of awareness about child sexual abuse among parents, with television being the most influential source of information. The findings from this research demonstrate that both male and female parents from Islamabad and Muzaffargarh have a high level of knowledge about child sexual abuse. The fact that 100% of the respondents, including both viewers and non-viewers, were aware of this issue indicates a widespread understanding within the target audience. Moreover, the data clearly shows that television plays a significant role in disseminating information about child sexual abuse, especially among female parents. Social gatherings also emerged as a crucial source of information, particularly for females. The reliance on word of mouth among non-viewers further emphasizes the importance of interpersonal communication in spreading awareness about this sensitive topic. These findings underline the need for continued focus on utilizing television and social gatherings as effective platforms for educating parents about child sexual abuse. This finding suggests that entertainment media, particularly television dramas like *Udaari*, have played a significant role in raising awareness among parents, as supported by the insights shared by teachers during the in-depth interviews.

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