

A Study On Social Mediacampaigns -Using Social Media In Creating Awareness And Prevention Of Child Sexual Abuse

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Abstract: Child sexual abuse is a major social problem across the world. According to National Crime Report Bureau report 2019 1, 48,185 crime cases against children were recorded in India. The crime rate has increased by 4.5 percent as compared to 2018. Child sexual abuse is a massive challenge for public health, social justice, human rights, gender equality, and science. There is a big silence associated with child sexual abuse. Still CSA is a taboo in our society. India is facing a steady rise in cases of sexual abuse due to the absence of adequate knowledge on this issue. Educating the stakeholders by awareness programs is the main prevention strategy. Prevention strategy is moving away from individual to adult, community, society. Several organizations today utilize social media campaigns in their vision to protect children from sexual abuse. Social media campaigns are increased and designed to increase the awareness of CSA and to break the silence associated with CSA. This study is on social media campaigns and using social media in creating awareness and prevention of child sexual abuse.

Key words: Child sexual abuse, community, taboo, social media campaigns, Prevention strategy

1. Introduction

According to National Crime Report Bureau report 2019, over 1, 48,185 crime cases against children were recorded in India. The crime rate has increased by 4.5 percent as compared to 2018. According to National crime Report Bureau report 2018 revealed on January 2020 stated that 109 children were sexually abused every day. The report documented 21,605 child rapes were recorded where 204 boys are also included. The crime against children recorded from 2008 was 22,500 cases .The cases recorded in 2018 is 1, 41,764.The crime ratio has increased nearly 6 times for the past ten years. The following table gives the cases against children from 2008 to 2019. [1]

Year	No Cases against children
2006	18,967
2007	20,410
2008	22,500
2009	24,201
2010	26,694
2011	33,098
2012	38,172
2013	58,224
2014	89,423
2015	94,172
2016	1,06,958
2017	1,29,032
2018	1,41,474
2019	1,48,185

TABLE -1 Source –NCRB

BBC News reports that for every 15 minutes a child is sexually abused in India [2]. Ministry of Women and child development carried a survey in association with Non Government Organization Prayas, save the children. [3] .The survey revealed the following shocking statistics

- 53.22% children reported having faced one or more forms of sexual abuse.

- Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar and Delhi reported the highest percentage of sexual abuse among both boys and girls.
- 21.90% child respondents reported facing severe forms of sexual abuse and 50.76% other forms of sexual abuse.
- Out of the child respondents, 5.69% reported being sexually assaulted.
- Children in Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Delhi reported the highest incidence of sexual assault.
- Children on street, children at work and children in institutional care reported the highest incidence of sexual assault.
- 50% abuses are persons known to the child or in a position of trust and responsibility.
- Most children did not report the matter to anyone

Considering various alarming statistical data's from across the globe the world health organization (WHO) declared childhood sexual abuse as a "silent health emergency" of international importance [4]

As defined by the World Health Organization, "child sexual abuse is involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend is unable to give informed consent to, or that violates the law or social taboos of society. Child sexual abuse is evidenced by this activity between a child and an adult or another. Child that by age or development is in a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power, the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person. This may not be including but not limited to:

- The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful activity.
- The exploitative use of a child in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices
- The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials
- Child sexual abuse is not solely restricted to physical contact; such abuse could include non contact abuse, such as exposure, voyeurism, and child pornography. Abuse by peers also occurs".

CSA is a real and prominent problem across the world. "CSA is a massive challenge for public health social justice, human rights, gender equality" [5]

Childhood sexual abuse has been correlated with higher levels of depression, guilt, shame, self-blame, eating disorders, somatic concerns, anxiety, dissociative patterns, repression, denial, sexual problems, and relationship problems. Depression has been found to be the foremost common long-term symptom among Survivors. [6]

Child sexual abuse is a wide-spread and serious public health threat with significant long-term consequences. Wurtele, Sandy K. has listed the consequences of CSA .The Victims of CSA undergo the following difficulties which includes

- Depression,
- Anxiety, Anger,
- An impaired sense of self,
- Problems with sexuality,
- Cognitive disturbances (e.g., poor concentration, inattentiveness, dissociation)

CSA can also lead to that can lead to

- Behavioral and academic problems at school,
- Physical problems (e.g., sexually transmitted diseases, urinary tract infections),
- Interpersonal difficulties (e.g., less social competence, more aggression, less trusting, more socially withdrawn).
- Psychological,
- Physical, and behavioral difficulties[7]

CSA being considered as a serious public health problem facing by the children, teens, parents of the victims, community and the whole society. [8]

1.1. Silences behind CSA

Every day whenever switch on radio news, television news, read newspaper headlines, turn on to face book that comes across news on child sexual abuse. The news is read, heard, commented but what action has been taken to prevent the abuse. There is a big silence associated with child sexual abuse. Still CSA is a taboo in our society. We are facing a steady rise in cases of child molestation, rape, and sexual abuse because of lack of awareness about child sexual abuses.

2. Prevention strategies

Finkelhor done a study in 1994 by comparing studies of violence against children conducted in 21 countries like Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Finland, France, Greece, Great Britain, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sur Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, United States, The Netherlands. The study revealed the rate of victimization as 7 % - 33% among women and 3 % - 19 %

among men. This study confirmed the existence of CSA in high proportions and its importance of addressing as an international problem epidemiological problem. [9]

Prevention efforts were initiated to protect children from CSA. The prevention strategies are mainly empowering children with knowledge and skills on personal safety. The educational setups are the first choice to inform and teach children about the sexual abuse. Though the child focused prevention programs keep children safe it alone is not a solution to combat CSA. CSA is sensitive social issue where children cannot single handedly responsible in context of prevention.

Prevention of children from sexual abuse is approached from various models like Bronfenbrenner's (1977) Ecological Systems Model, The Public Health Model. Eradication and prevention of CSA is a shared responsibility of all sectors of society [10]. The responsibility is shifted from child to community and CSA prevention approach is multi-faceted. It promotes interventions from micro to macro that is at each from individual, relationship, community and cultural levels [11]

Children do not disclose the abuse happened to them to various reasons like shame, fear, isolation, victim blaming etc. Even if some children disclose the abuse family will try to dig it to safeguard their family name and fame. To increase the circumstances of families and children at risk, prevention programs are focus on change of social system. The prevention of abuse needs to be in the hands of adults by educating in aware of child sexual abuse. Due to the serious nature of the issue and the complexities of defining, recognizing, and reporting the offense, public awareness, education, and support are key components to its prevention [12].

Educating the stakeholders by awareness programs is the main prevention strategy. Almost all studies emphasis the need of prevention strategies to grab the cruelty against children. Several organizations today utilize social media campaigns in their vision to protect children from sexual abuse. Social media campaigns are increased and designed to increase the awareness of CSA and to break the silence associated with CSA.

2.1. Social media

Manning defines "social media as the term often used to refer to new forms of media that involve interactive participation". Media development is divided into two different ages likely Broadcast and interactive age. In broadcast age various forms of media like Newspapers, Radio, Television, was centralized as one entity which spread messages to various people. Feedback was indirect, delayed and impersonal. But instant feedback is possible in new media age.

In new media age, interactivity was placed at the center of new media functions. Digital and mobile technologies have opened the options for citizens to share their opinions. The accessibility of new technologies has increased more options to consume media. This helps individuals to seek more information from several sources and also to interact via message forums about the information posted. [13]

"Social media can also term as a communications channel which will be integrated into a bigger social marketing campaign and includes all the varied activities that combine technology and social interaction between people. Social media is less about the actual technology, and more about the way it enables individuals to interact online. Social media has the innate ability to communicate information in real time, as well as link groups of people together around common issues. Accordingly, today's best effective public health-driven social marketing campaigns use or incorporate social media technologies to amplify awareness, and impact attitudes and health behaviors".[14]

2.2. Types of social media

Social media can take on many different forms, including online applications; forums and message boards; blogs; social networking sites such as Face book, Twitter, Snap chat, Instagram, and Pinterest; wikis; podcasts; viral image and video campaigns; and mobile applications that provide constant direct contact to a target audience.

Social marketers consistently believe on strong, formative research with target audiences to determine the potential reach and influence of their messages. But like commercial marketers, social marketers have remained

limited in their ability to engage consumers through traditional, one-directional mass media channels. Case in point, mass media public service announcements have long been the communications channel of choice within the social marketing community, preventing marketers from targeting niche audiences of providers and consumers.

Today, two-way conversations about social issues are happening through a spread of digital communications channels including social media. Public health social marketing campaigns can now deliver more targeted messaging to a greater range of audiences, and receive feedback from those audiences in real-time. [15]

Understanding traditional vs. Digital communication channels	
Traditional channels	Digital channels
Direct mail	E -Mail
Print	Text messaging
Radio	Websites
Television	Optimized press releases available via the Internet
One to one outreach	Social media-Network such as face book, message boards like blogs, podcasts, video service such as YouTube, status update services such as twitter
Media campaigns and traditional media outreach	Social media campaigns -Insta live, Face book live, YouTube live streaming, webinars etc

TABLE-2

Source-(Hughes, 2010).

2.3. Why social media is especially helpful for sexual violence prevention

“Social media has become a primary communication medium in the developed world over the past decade. Due to increased globalization, facilitated in part by widespread use of the Internet and social media, this medium allows for the widespread and fast dissemination of information and ideas. Social media can serve to change norms about sexual assault and sexual violence by diffusing and disseminating ideas, attitudes, and knowledge among a large population or target audience”. [16]

2.4. Objective

To study the usage of social media for the campaigns initiated by NGO’S to give awareness on prevention of child sexual abuse among the public.

2.5. Methodology

Case study on

1. Social media campaign by NGO with a motto of break the taboo in society
2. A video launched in social media in Tamil language to instruct children about good touch and bad touch Tamil Actor Sivakarhikeyan.

3. Review of literature

Archana Sharma [17] in her study about the role of media in creating awareness on child sexual abuse among school students suggested utilizing social media to educate students about CSA. The same study also reveals that nearly 92 percent of respondents access Internet after television for while responding to the question to know about their media habits. Nielsen and internet mobile association of India report 2019, reveals a statistics that out of 451 million 66 million users are active internet users till March 2019 in India. The age groups are from 5 to 11 years [18]

Paek Hove, Jeong, & Kim, [19] quoted that young people acquire knowledge (51.7%) related to social issues from online resources. organizational campaign websites through social media are increasingly used to relay such information. Rheingold et .al [20] quoted Social media campaigns which are working with a vision of child abuse prevention are designed to increase public awareness educate, elicit support and funding, and provide resources for reporting and intervention. The study also highlighted the usage of social media by the government, businesses, and non-profit organizations to create awareness of names, logos, policies, and legislation in today’s technological society. Social media are used to inform, educate, and elicit support, both personal and financial.

Several organizations today utilize social media campaigns in their vision to protect children from abuse. A study by Nuszkiwicz .K.L [21] titled using social media in the prevention of Child abuse: An Analysis of Wisconsin's Campaign Programs evaluated the usage of social media for the campaigns by stop it now and darkness to light in prevention child abuse. The study examined how "stop it now" utilize online resources.

Stop It Now! An organization uses a public health framework and a variety of media venues including radio and online resources to promote their services and reporting to their available helpline [22] the study also examined about Darkness to Light, a non-profit organized with the mission of using public awareness and education to reduce child abuse. The public awareness is conducted via social media, to reduce child abuse [23]

The SCPCR in Andaman Islands has made 30 -40 videos for what's app platform on children's rights. Since no single approach to the prevention of child abuse is going to be effective in the elimination of child abuse, it is important to utilize campaign components that are proven to have positive effect on awareness and knowledge and also the potential to create involvement and support, to give prevention efforts momentum and continued funding. The interaction and communication available to individuals through social media sites can mean greater audience reach than many other venues.

Paek [24] suggests that the campaign must first create awareness, then interest, then evaluation, and conviction. Thus, an ideal media campaign designed for child abuse prevention might utilize an organized website with organization information and educational materials, linked to the additional social media venues such as Face book, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube or other UCGs, and blogs.

Preventing children from sexual abuse can be achieved by changing attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Increase in knowledge and awareness is a means to achieve the overall goal of changing normative attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. For this purpose, social media is tool by allowing searching for more information online, join face book groups, watching extra videos on YouTube. Campaigns or programs targeting for attitude, behavior or overall norms change can achieve its goal by using social media as a part to spread campaign's message. It is expensive. It could increase its effectiveness at spreading awareness and knowledge because social media sites allow users to see the actions of other users within or connected to their networks, engaging even a single user have a significant ripple effect that extends the reach of the content and encourages further user interaction. For example, a user who "likes," comments on and shares the content or "re-tweets."

Also, social media increases the opportunities for the victims of sexual violence and any one to safely speak out.

[25]. Research in the field related to social media and prevention of child abuse is new. There is a greater need for evaluative study particularly on the long-term behavioral effects of campaign exposure and training.

4. Case studies

4.1 Case study 1 -Social media campaign -Child safety week 2020 with theme breaks the taboo.

Arpan the NGO working with the addressing the phenomenon of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in the country. It provides prevention and intervention services to children and adults. It services directly to children, adolescents, and adults to prevent Child Sexual Abuse and helps appropriately to deal with disclosures of children and adolescents through Personal Safety Education program. They cater this program to children and adolescents in schools, communities, NGOs, and institutions.

Arpan has directly touched lives of over 186,405 children and 154,690 adults through prevention, healing, and training programs from 2006.

It also works with partnership programs .Through the partnership program it has reached out over 341,095 children and adults. Nearly 106 individuals are working as team. It works for Children, Parents, Teachers, Schools, Adult Survivors, NGOs, Social Workers, Counselors and Government Duty Bearers including Police.

Initiated people led movement –Child safety week.



Fig -2



Fig-1

Arpan has initiated child safety week campaign from 2019 which is a people-led movement to raise awareness and encourage collective action towards addressing the issue of Child Sexual Abuse. The whole week in the month of November, is dedicated towards highlighting the importance of this issue through conversations and events for child safety. This year 2020 struck up with pandemic 2020 child safety week from November 14 to November 20 was a social media campaign with an objective to break the taboo around conversations on child sexual abuse and make such conversations mainstream. It also aims to empower stakeholders to be vigilant and provide safe environment for children through conversations on social media, webinars, and various other activities.



Fig-3



Fig-4



Fig-5



Fig-6

The digital campaign has gathered more than 120 organizations to participate in this movement. More than 90,000 pledges have been taken. More than 190 activities to spread awareness on various educational aspects in prevention of child sexual abuse were organized. More than six lakhs' people have digitally engaged in the awareness programs. The campaign linked with all types of social media like –YouTube, face book, website, twitter, insta etc. 90,000 pledges were taken in the social media campaign to protect children.

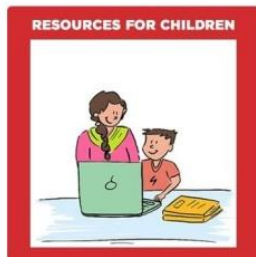


Fig-7

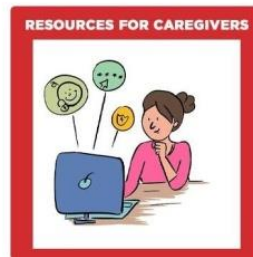


Fig-8

Various organizations working on prevention of child sexual awareness has gathered in one platform. The campaign has made available various organization services as resourceful information to the stakeholders. Arpan, e-Learn, Committee for children, my body Is my Body, Kid's health, Internet Matters, Responsible Netism are some organizations who participated to recourse children. Tulir, Protsahan, Arpan, E-learn, Committee for children, Sneha, Child safety week, Kid's health, Aarmabh, Save the children, A platform for Good, Internet matters, Responsible Netism, HAQ centre for child rights, Protsahan, Lehar are some organizations who serve the recourse needed for caretakers.

Various corporate, NGO's, Schools has joined the movement to educate their community where serve through Panel discussions. All were linked through the website which connects to each resource site for awareness materials. The whole event was through social media. [26]

4.2 Case study -2 -Awareness Video Modhivilayadu pappa –what's up sharing.

Raghini Muralidharan and ArasiArul running a nonprofit organization decided to create awareness among children and educate them on sexual abuse. They conceptualize the video with the concept of a five –minute, user friendly film that can be shared through what's up messages.



Fig-9

Fig-10

They shot a film and named as Modhivilayadu pappa. The concept was where Actor Sivakarthekeyan will come and introduce himself to the school children and teach about good touch and bad touch. Poorvika mobiles sponsored to produce the film. This film was launched in social media in November 2018. [27]

4. Key findings

- Prevention of CSA is turning as a movement
- Social media act as a catalyst among the stakeholders to educate and give awareness about child sexual abuse.
- Social media try to break the silence and change the mindset of public to join hands to prevent the cruelty.

- Social media campaigns reach more target audience.
- Materials to create awareness and teach abuse prevention skills are available with online makes the campaign effective and teach the stakeholders about child sexual abuse prevention skills.
- Video or PSA messages can also be produced for user content generations such as you Tube by any organization to spread awareness about prevention of child sexual abuse spread instantaneously.
- The messages can potentially reach the audience who untapped the television slots.
- The organizations working on prevention of child sexual media incorporates the combined use of user content generation like booklets, brochures, audio messages, video and other innovative content which can be retrievable whichever desirable for them.
- Social media campaigns allow all the organization who are working on same goal of prevention of child sexual abuse can join in a platform to reach more people to achieve the goal.
- Social media campaigns allow joining or collaborating with organizations for a social cause and exchange and share of ideas, content.
- Social media campaigns increase social interaction and communication.
- The stake holders can obtain educational materials, learn about the abuse, and learn to step in to protect their children from abuse, parenting skills, different methodology to teach about prevention and other any relevant topic at a click of a button.
- Social media campaigns give confident for the stakeholders to seek help or to report about the abuse.

4.1. Discussions

The use of social media has immense potential to reach a large and diverse population that is affected directly and indirectly by the public health issue of child abuse. [28]

Social media targets the audience and influence the public to do awareness programs. It educates individual to change the attitude or to break the silence, stigma and to reach the community in their unique way. Social media campaigns influence more volunteers to do campaigns in huge or small way. With available materials or with partnership educational institutes, apartments, corporate, Community leaders can initiate any campaigns in their area or for their target group. Additionally, encouraging engagement of target audiences in social media messages and content may be a cost-effective tool because it saves in the costs of production and placement.

Social Activist Mrs.Kalyanasundarai who is teaching school children about good touch and bad touch screens the Video Modhivilaydu pappa and do the awareness programs. She expresses in her Interview quotes that children listen to the favorite actor telling something good to them. [29]

Times of India has shared an article in its E edition about news story of a women constable Mrs.R.Sasikala of Gummidipoondi police station creating awareness on child sexual abuse through music. She writes lyrics and uploading the album in social media goes viral. The songs educates parents to teach about good touch and bad touch, to put up an end for child marriage, about POCSO Act, and seek help through Kavalan app introduced by Tamil Nadu police. She also warns the perpetrators that they cannot escape the law after committing an offence. Sasikala started this awareness through music says people listen to music rather than a speech. [30]

Actress Varalakshmi in her interview with Behind woods, YouTube channel speaks about child sexual abuse and appeal to all parents to teach good touch and bad touch. She also requests to teach martial arts and about good touch and bad touch in PT period.

A math teacher who replied in comment section will utilize PT periods to teach about prevention of child sexual abuse in their school.[31]

Various NGO'S are trying to teach prevention of child sexual abuse in different ways. Using cartoons, animated characters, through art forms, Docudramas, Flashcards, jingles etc. So, parents can choose any type appropriate to their children age and understanding level.

5. Conclusion

Government and non-profit organization serve the purpose of its vision and mission of prevention of child sexual abuse by encouraging social media campaigns and active participation. Social media provides an effective tool for creating public awareness, promoting adult responsibility, promoting positive adult-child policies, promoting policy advancement, and educating adults in an effort to reduce child sexual abuse.

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