

Psychological Impacts on Women with a History of Sexual Abuse

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Abstract

Around the world, abuse on the women of all age groups has seen increase drastically. Sexual abuse has an unprecedented impact of psychological, mental health of women who had a past history of sexual trauma of different forms. Studies show that women who have been sexually assaulted have experienced trauma that affects their lives. This article provides an insight into mental issues seen in most of the saviours of sexual abuse.

Keywords: Sexual Abuse; Sexual Trauma; Depression; Psychiatric Disorders

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Introduction

Global estimates published by WHO indicate that about 1 in 3 (35%) of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime [1].

Many studies indicate psychiatric disorders in women is most common than in men. The reason behind this remains unknown. Molnar BE, et al, (2001) study has reported 13.5% of women with a history of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA), has experienced an onset of psychiatric disorders [2]. Exposure to sexual abuse of any kind has shown an increased risk of psychological disorders including anxiety, psychosis, depression, substance abuse, personality disorder.

The age group plays a crucial role in determining the rate of effectiveness in the person. Women with a history of CSA trauma have seen experiencing an early onset of psychological disorders of depression and a border line risk of suicidal behaviour. It is a widely known fact in the medical community that most of the psychological disorders in human beings account for sexual and physical abuse. Sexual abuse survivors make up to an estimated 13%-26% of primary care practices [3].

Effect in Children

Child Sexual Abuse is associated with increased risk of adult psychiatric disorders including major depression, substance abuse, social anxiety disorders, and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and personality disorders. Studies have shown that women suffering from psychological disorders due to CSA has seen experiencing suicidal tendencies. There is evidence that child sexual abuse is a significant, although general and nonspecific, a risk factor for anxiety disorders, especially posttraumatic stress disorder, regardless of the gender of the victim and severity of abuse [4].

Li et al, has conducted a controlled study and have developed a theory suggested that CSA is an independent predictor of negative psychological consequences in adulthood [5]. Another study by Paolucci EO, et al., (2001) depicts that at any given time, 20%-40% of psychiatric patients carry with them a history and burden of CSA, which is a initial point of disorder [6].

Effects in Adult Women

Although men are also sexually abused and abused, the fact that women are more vulnerable to oppression in today's society is still controversial. As said by Mental Heal Alliance, 1 of every 6 women in the world is being abused in many forms. The psychiatric disorders in adult women is comprised of 2 states. More than half of female victims of rape reported being raped by an intimate partner and 40% by an acquaintance.

- Trauma of CSA in adulthood: This scenario is result of CSA trauma in childhood.
- Trauma caused in adulthood: This scenario pertains to assault happened in the adult life of the women.

Women with sexual trauma have seen the effects of major clinical depression, anxiety and psychosis. Community acceptance and community pressures have stopped women from foaming and complaining to authorities. Not receiving the justice is also one of the causes of increasing pressure redundant.

Unlike the olden times, the doctors and psychiatrist's are more aware of the possible connection of the patient's psychiatric disorder to that of the person's sexual trauma.

The impact of such abuse can cause a person to radically change their ideological behaviour. The parents or legal guardians are entailed



to understand their children and be approachable enough for them to convey the seriousness of the situation.

Women of legal age are recommended to understand their laws and how to protect themselves in most situations. When the abuse has already been happened, consulting a psychiatrist will help them get in touch with their pain and learn about handling it. This will help them lead their life with ease. Battling with psychiatric disorders followed by sexual abuse is rough, but a strict schedule and following your psychiatrist will definitely improve the condition.

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