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Perceptions about child sexual abuse in relation to virgin cure among convicted prisoners in Lusaka

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Statement of the Problem: Sexual abuse in children of all ages including infants happen every day all over the world. Hence, millions of minors are effectively sexually subjugated, forced into sex which is risky without condoms. Despite stiff government measures to reduce sexual abuse cases, incidences of defilement are not reducing. According to literature review the “virgin cure” concept has led to an increase in sexual abuse of minors worldwide. Study focused on sexual abusers who have rarely been studied. The purpose of this study was to explore convicted prisoners’ perceptions about child sexual abuse in relation to virgin cure and to understand why child sexual abuse is on the increase.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: This was a qualitative study that utilized focus groups. Data was analyzed by performing content analysis. The Precede-Proceed Model allowed the research to use the sexual abuse perpetrators to analyze the problem.

Findings: showed that the main factor that made the children vulnerable to sexual abuse was poverty. Hence, orphans and street children who lacked basic needs including food were vulnerable to sexual abuse. The five years and below, age group was identified to have more health problems including tearing of the private part, STIs and HIV/AIDS, and mental health problems. According to the findings child sexual abuse had some benefits for the sexual abuser like sexual relief and “virgin cure”. “Virgin cure” is ritual sex with girls aged ten and below for supernatural powers, cure of diseases like STI, HIV/AIDS, getting rich fast and sexual cleansing after a loss of a spouse or after a miscarriage. The study revealed that the nation has adequate laws and policies that protect the child and therefore, the existence of child sexual abuse was attributed to the laxity in the law enforcement agents.

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