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Child victims of anal rape

[Fiili livatanın çocuk kurbanları]

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Abstract

Objectives: The aim of this study is to investigate the profiles of anal rape victim cases among children. Demographic information of the cases were gathered in addition to the effectiveness of the analysis of medical examinations and forensic reports performed by physicians other than specialists of forensic medicine in comparison to medical evaluations of the same cases performed by forensic medicine specialists. **Nature of the study:** Descriptive study. **Material and methods:** 222 cases of anal rape allegation which were asked by the courts in any part of Turkey for a final diagnosis were retrospectively reviewed from the database of the Institute of Forensic Medicine, Istanbul, from 1998 till 2000. The data of randomly selected child victims (3 -18 years of age) were analyzed on the basis of demographic features and also by the adequacy of the medical examinations and forensic reports of physicians other than specialists of forensic medicine. **Statistical analysis:** Descriptive statistical analysis methods were applied. **Results:** The age range of child victims of anal rape was 3 to 18 years with a mean of 10.77 (SD: 4.11). For the assailants, age range was 11 to 67 years with a mean of 20.83 years (SD: 10.51). 63 % (n = 162) of the child victims were male showing a male / female ratio of 2/1. Re-occurrence was seen in one of four cases by the same assailant. The data revealed that victims were medically examined 2 to 6 times with a mean of 2.64. Consistency among the forensic reports of the same cases was found to be only 20.3 %, with a remaining of 79.7 % being completely or partially inconsistent. **Conclusion:** The medical report, which is one of the main elements to clarify the allegation of sexual assault, must be effective. High rates in medical re-examination of child anal rape victims and insufficiency in medical forensic reports of the physicians other than specialists of forensic medicine has shown the need of specialized multi-disciplinary medical centers (there is only a few in Turkey) for the forensic medical evaluation of sexual assault cases.

Keywords:

Anal rape, child abuse, sexual abuse.

Özet

Amaçlar: Bu çalışmanın amacı çocuk anal ırza geçme mağdurlarının prevalansını araştırmaktır. Bazıları adli tıp uzmanları, diğerleri ise adli tıp uzmanı dışındaki doktorlar tarafından yapılmış muayenelerin etkinliklerine ek olarak olguların demografik bilgileri toplanmıştır. **Çalışmanın şekli:** Betimleyici çalışma. Gereç ve yöntem: 1988 -200 yılları arasında, anal ırza geçme mağduru olduğu iddia edilerek mahkemeler tarafından son karar için Adli Tıp Kurumu'na gönderilmiş ve Adli Tıp Kurumu (İstanbul) 'nda muayene edilmiş 222 olguya ait veriler gözden geçirilmiştir. Random olarak seçilmiş (3-18 yaş arası) kurbanlar, demografik özellikleri ve adli tıp uzmanları dışındaki doktorlar tarafından düzenlenmiş adli raporların ve muayenelerin yeterliliği yönlerinden irdelenmiştir. Betimleyici istatistik yöntemleri uygulanmıştır. **Bulgular:** Anal ırza geçme mağduru çocukların yaş aralığı 3-18, yaş ortalaması 10.77 (SD: 4.11) idi. Saldırganların yaş aralığı 11-67, yaş ortalaması 20.83 (SD: 10.51) idi. Çocuk kurbanların 63 % (n = 162) ü erkekti ve erkek/kadın oranı 2/1 di. Olguların dörtte birinde aynı saldırgan tarafından saldırı tekrarlanmıştı. Veriler kurbanların 2-6 kez, ortalama 2.64 kez muayeneye maruz kaldığını gösterdi. Olguların yalnız 20.3% ünde adli raporlar arasında uyum bulunurken, geri kalan 79.7% si uyumsuzdu. **Sonuç:** Irza geçme iddialarının açıklığa kavuşmasında ana öğelerden biri olan adli raporlar yeterli değildir. Anal ırza geçmenin çocuk kurbanlarının muayene tekrarlarının yüksek oranı ve adli tıp uzmanları dışındaki hekimlerce düzenlenmiş adli raporların yetersizliği seksüel saldırı olaylarının muayeneleri için özel, multidisipliner tıbbi merkezlerin (Türkiye' de yalnızca birkaç tane vardır.) gerekliliğini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler:

Anal ırza geçme, çocuk istismarı, cinsel istismar.

1. Introduction

Sexual assault is a serious, uncomfortable topic that needs to be better addressed by physicians. Yet, when the victim is a child, it needs more sensitive approach since it is a serious crime and causes long-term severe psychological and physical health problems throughout adulthood. So, the physician's role in alleviating this problem is obvious. But, unfortunately, child sexual assault doesn't receive adequate emphasis during medical training. As a result, many physicians feel inadequately prepared to address this problem.

As shown in many studies, child sexual abuse prevalence estimates suggest that 20 - 25 % of females and 10-15 % of males are sexually abused by age 18 (1-3).

According to the Turkish Penal Code, forceful anal intercourse is treated as a rape crime. If the victim is under the age of 18, willing anal intercourse is also accepted as rape crime and the presence of physical violence, threatening, being under age of 11 or 15, mental deficiency, lack of ability to discrete, number of assailants (more than one), related ness of the assailant (such as father, teacher, etc.) are the factors that increase the punishment from 7 years to 20 years and up.

The aim of this study is to investigate the profiles of anal rape victim cases among children. Demographic information of the cases were gathered in addition to the effectiveness of the analysis of medical examinations and forensic reports performed by physicians other than specialists of forensic medicine in comparison to medical evaluations of the same cases performed by forensic medicine specialists.

2. Material and methods

222 cases of anal rape allegation, which were asked by the courts in any part of Turkey for a final diagnosis, were retrospectively reviewed from the database of the Institute of Forensic Medicine, Istanbul, from 1998 till 2000. The data of randomly selected child victims (3 -18 years of age) were analyzed on the basis of demographic features and also by the adequacy of the medical examinations and forensic reports of physicians other than specialists of forensic medicine.

3. Results

The age range of child victims of anal rape was 3 to 18 years with a mean of 10.77 (SD: 4.11) (fig.1). The youngest victims were a 3 years old female and a 4 years old male. Assailants' age range was 11 to 67 years with a mean of 20.83 years (SD: 10.51) (fig.2). In 13.5 % (n: 30) of the cases there were more than one assailant. 4.4 % (n:12) of the assailants were younger than the victim with a mean of 2 years (SD:1.35), 1.8 % (n:5) were at the same age, whereas 93.8 % (n: 257) of the assailants were older than the victim (mean: 10.42 years; SD:10.31). 63 % (n = 162) of the child victims were male showing a male / female ratio of 2/1. In one third of females there were both anal and vaginal rape histories. Re-occurrence was seen in one of four cases by the same assailant. 44 % (n: 98) of the sexual assaults had occurred within 24 hours and 67 % (n=150) within 72 hours of the first physical examination (fig.4). The data revealed that victims were medically examined 2 to 6 times with a mean of 2.64 (fig.3). Physical findings were the main diagnostic criteria and unfortunately, forensic evidence collection was performed only in 6.3 % (n: 14). Consistencies among the forensic reports of the same cases were found to be only 20.3 %, with a remaining of 79.7 % being completely or partially inconsistent (table 1).

Table 1. Diagnostic variations of the same cases

	Rape (+)		Rape (-)		Attempted Rape		Undetermined	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Local Hospitals	187	85.8	35	68.6	-	0.0	-	0.0
Council of Forensic Medicine	31	14.2	16	31.4	79	100.0	76	100.0

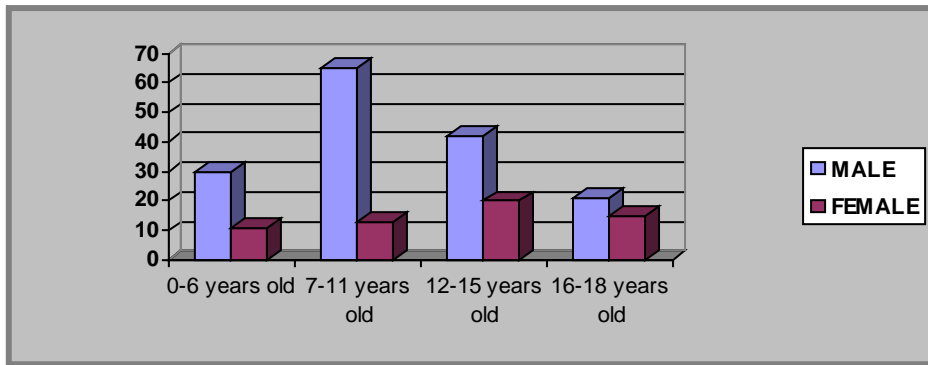


Figure 1. Age and sex distribution of the participants

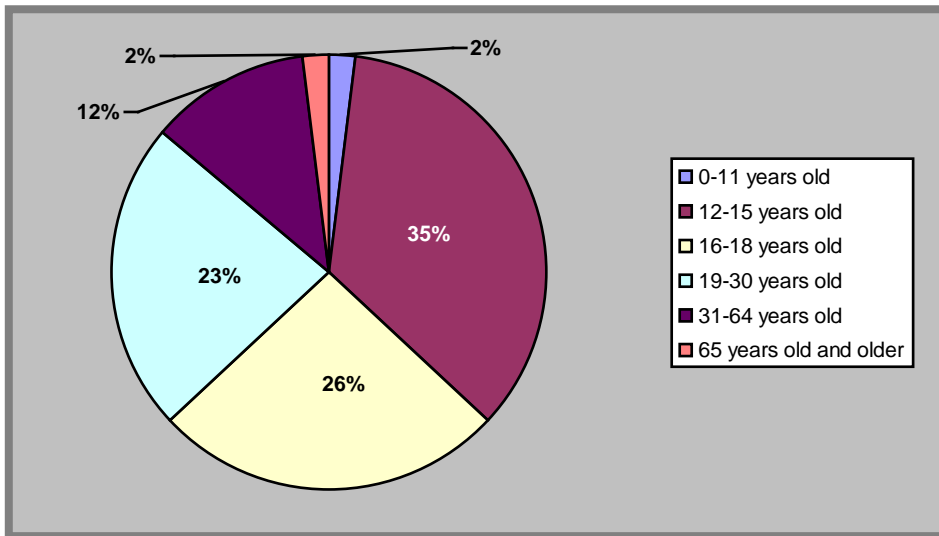


Figure 2. Age distribution of assailants

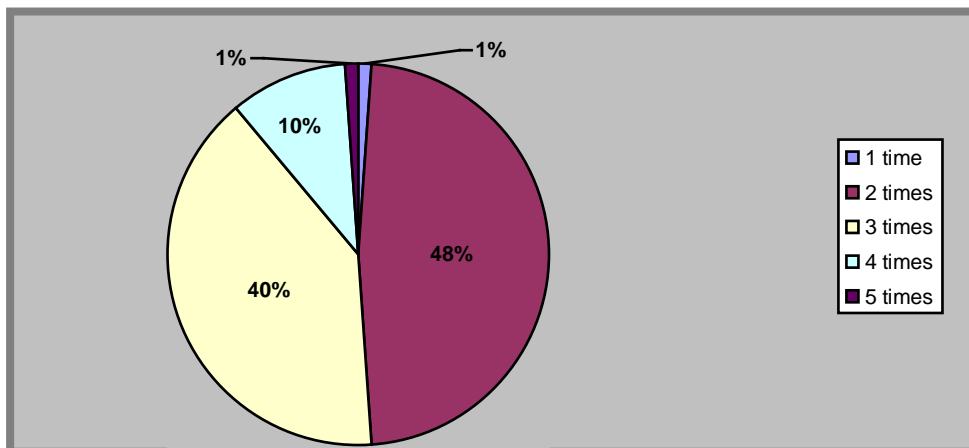


Figure 3. Frequency of medical examination

4. Discussion

The medical report, which is one of the main elements to clarify the allegation of sexual assault, should be sufficient. As an uncomfortable subject, sexual assault does not receive adequate emphasis during medical training, resulting many physicians seems to be inadequately prepared to address this problem (4). High rates in medical re-examination

of child anal rape victims and insufficiency in medical forensic reports of the physicians other than specialists of forensic medicine has shown the need of specialized multi-disciplinary medical centers (there is only a few in Turkey) (5) for the forensic medical evaluation of sexual assault cases.

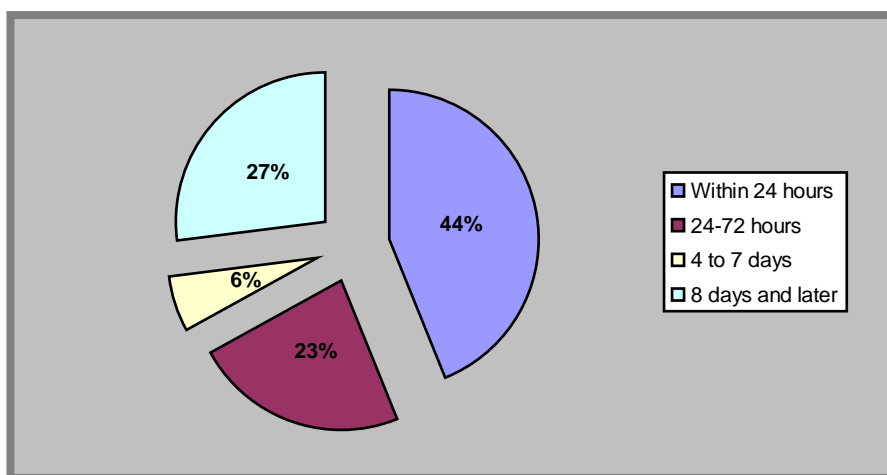


Figure 4. The assault /medical examination time interval

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