

Child Sexual Abuse Seen at Eastern Highlands Provincial Hospital

**Diploma in Child Health Project
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AIM

To describe sexual abuse in children seen at Eastern Highlands Provincial Hospital

OBJECTIVES

1. Find out frequency of sexual abuse
2. Find out the socio-demographic features of children who have been sexually abused
3. Identify the types of sexual abuse
4. Identify the common situations where children are sexually abused
5. Identify the relationship between perpetrator and patient
6. Identify sexually transmitted infections present
7. Find out how the cases are resolved

Background

- Child sexual abuse is a severe form of human rights abuse and the worst form of exploitation...has severe consequences on the future of the child physically, emotionally, psychologically and on their social development that can be life-threatening in some cases.
- Factors such as low status of women and children; poverty ,lack of educational and employment opportunities; little protective legislation, ...cited as contributing to making Pacific children highly vulnerable to sexual violence.

- The most important factors that were found to be consistently associated with child sexual abuse were parental absence, mother's education, parental domestic violence and parental substance abuse. *(Gwirayi, P. (2012))*
- The perpetrator was a male relative or acquaintance of the child in 61% of cases and 87% of patients were females. *(McClelland, A; Polome, H.(1990))*
- In the Paediatric Ward of Goroka Hospital in 2012 over 30 children presented with sexual abuse.
- Because of the increasing number of child sexual abuse (CSA) cases seen, this study was carried out.

Methods

- Prospective Study
 - February – August 2013
 - At presentation questionnaire filled
- informed consent
- socio-demographic background
- assault circumstances
- perpetrator information
 - Routine investigations /treatment given
 - Police medical report
 - Approval from EPH management for study

Methods cont'd

- 3 months follow up:
 - symptoms of sexually transmitted Infections/treatment
 - How issue resolved
- Data Entry and Analysis: Microsoft Excel

Results

Table 1: Distribution of Patients by Gender

Sex	2012	2013	Total
Male	2 (6%)	3 (8%)	5 (7%)
Female	29 (94%)	35 (92%)	64 (93%)
Total	31	38	69

Table 2: Distribution of Patients by Age

Age	2012	2013
Age (Years)	2 - 14	3 - 15
Median Age (Years)	5	5.5

Figure 1: Caregivers of Patients (n=31)

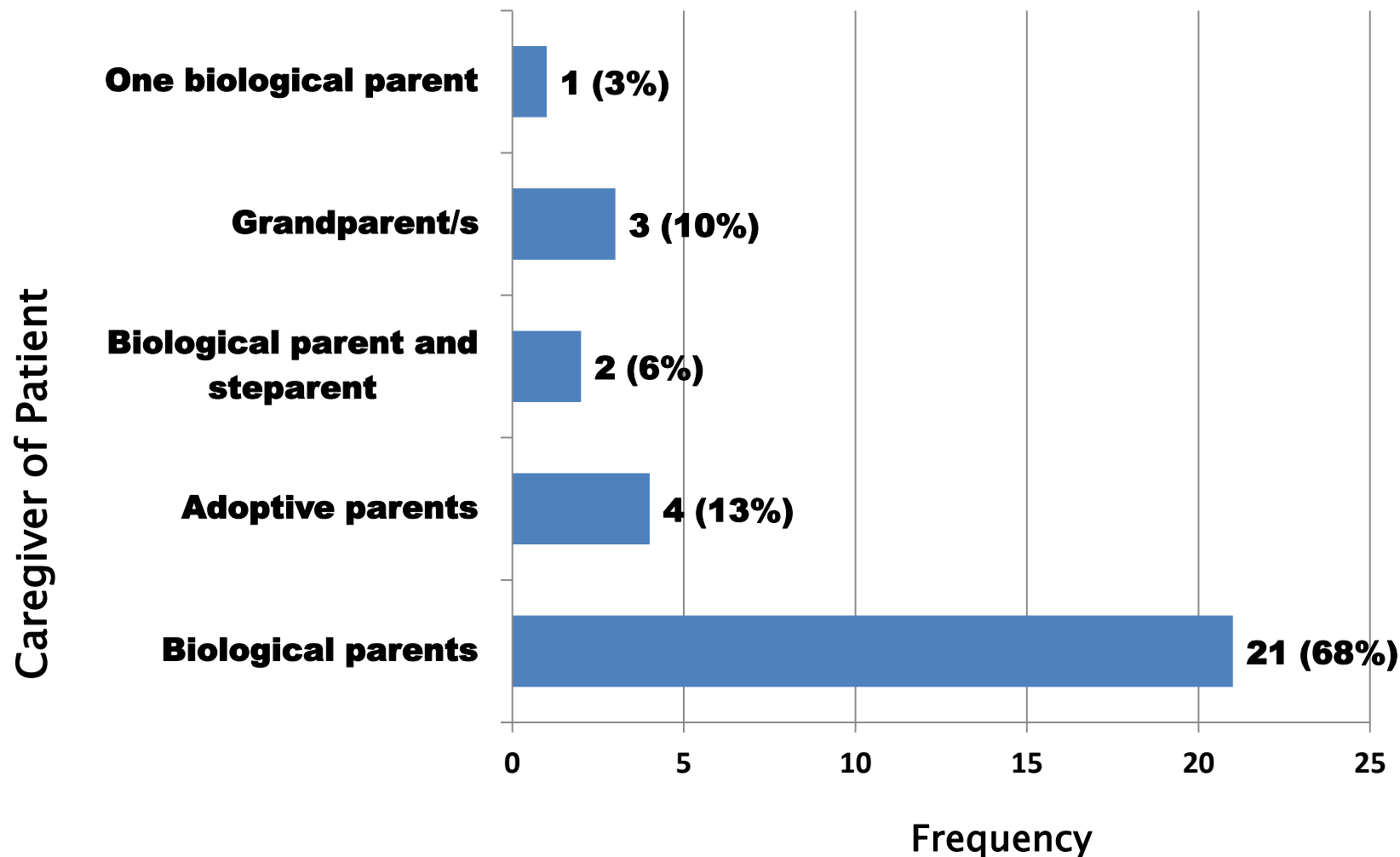


Figure 2: Patients' Residence (n=31)

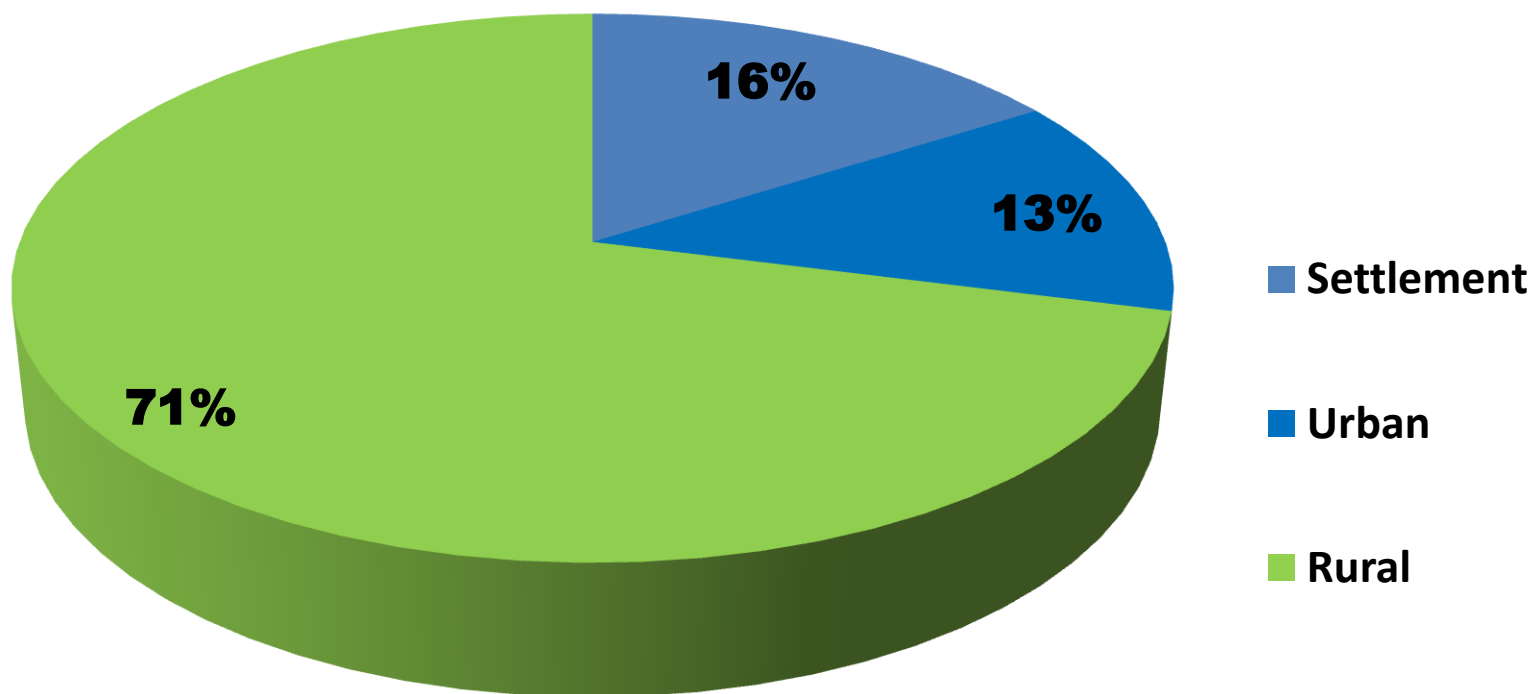


Table 3: Parents/Caregivers Literacy (n=31)

Literate/Not	Father	Mother
Literate	52% (16)	45%(14)
Illiterate	35%(11)	55%(17)
Unknown	13%(4)	0

Table 4: Parents /Caregivers Employment (n=31)

Employment	Father	Mother
Formal Employment	39% (12)	16% (5)
Self Employment	26% (8)	16% (5)
Subsistence Living	35% (11)	52% (16)
Homemaker	0	16% (5)

Figure 3: Types of Sexual Abuse (n=38)

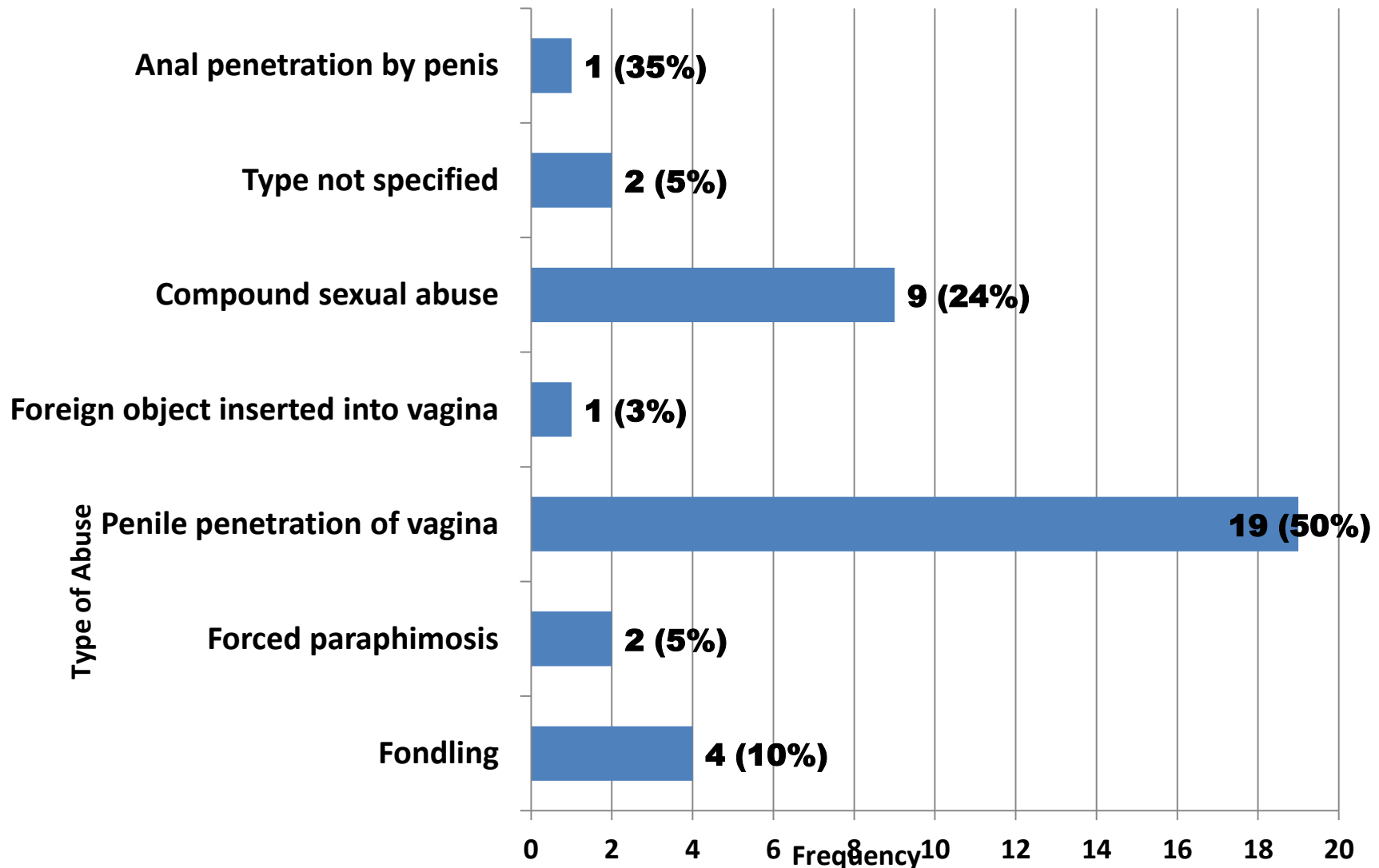


Figure 4: Activity of Caregivers at Time of Abuse (n=31)

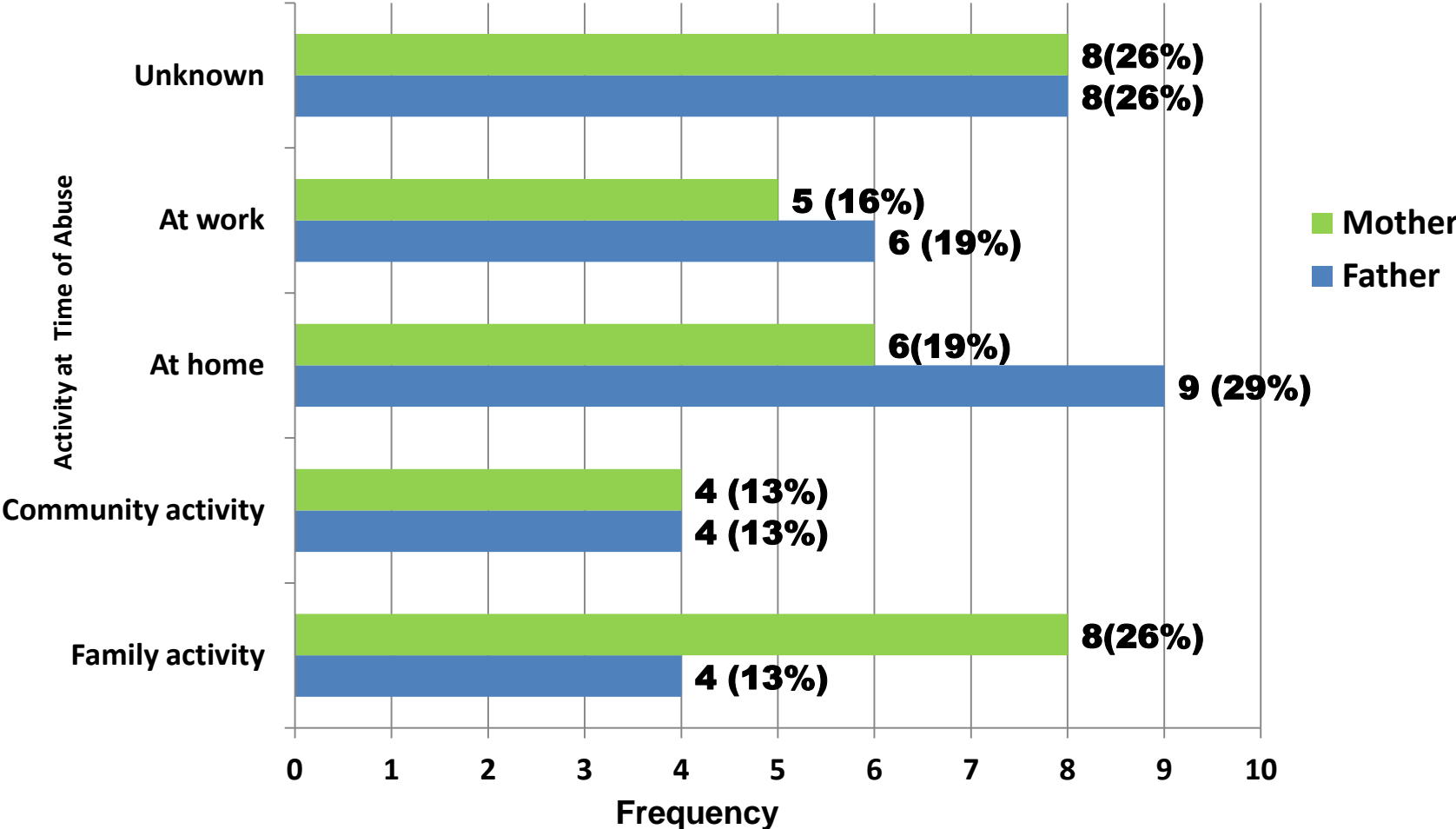


Table 5: Perpetrator's Relationship to Child (n=38)

Perpetrator	Incidence
Relative or Acquaintance	95% (36)
Unknown	5% (2)

Figure 5: Use of Coercion by Perpetrator (n=38)

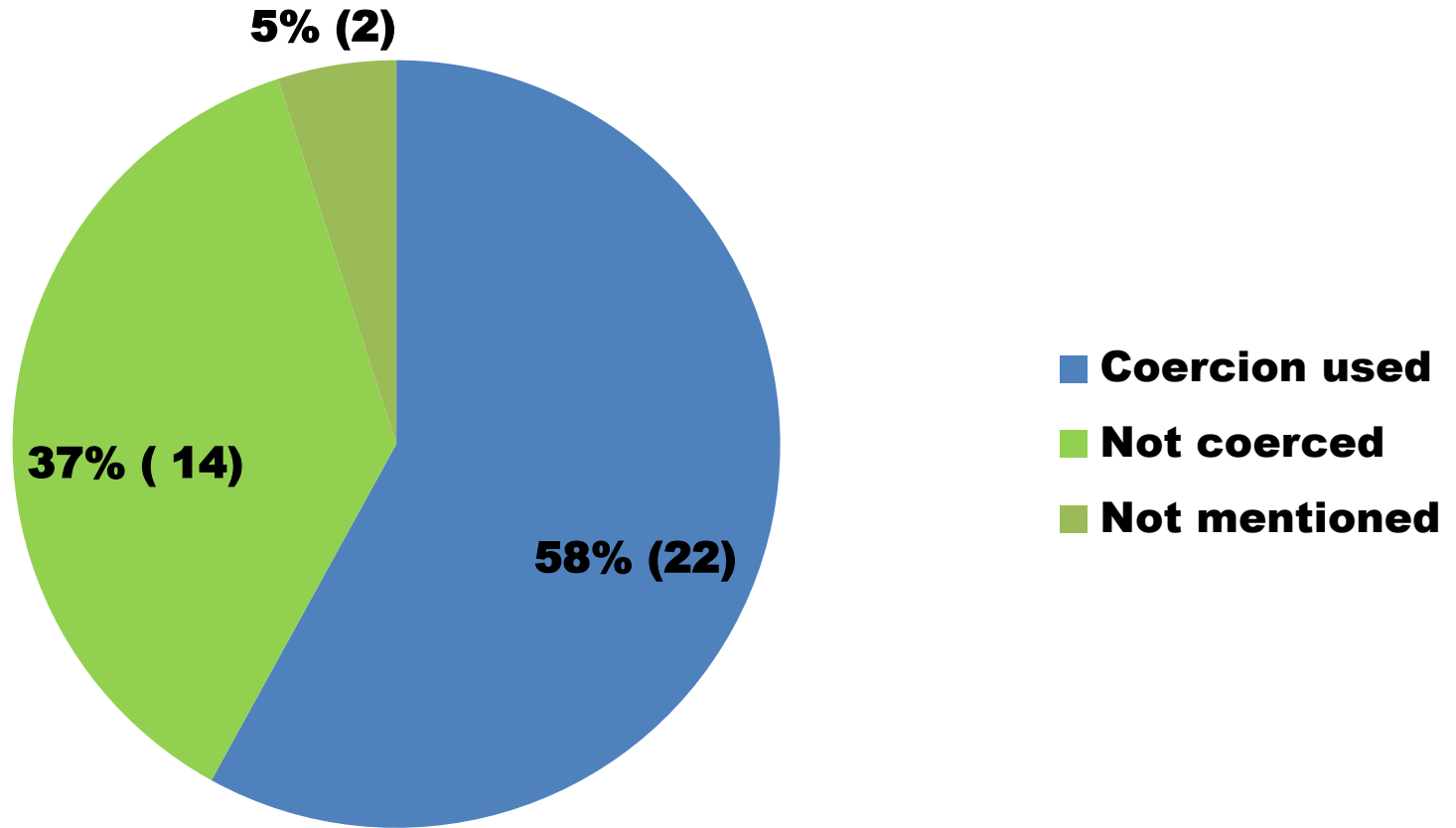


Figure 6: Type of Organism isolated from vaginal swab gram stain (n=28)

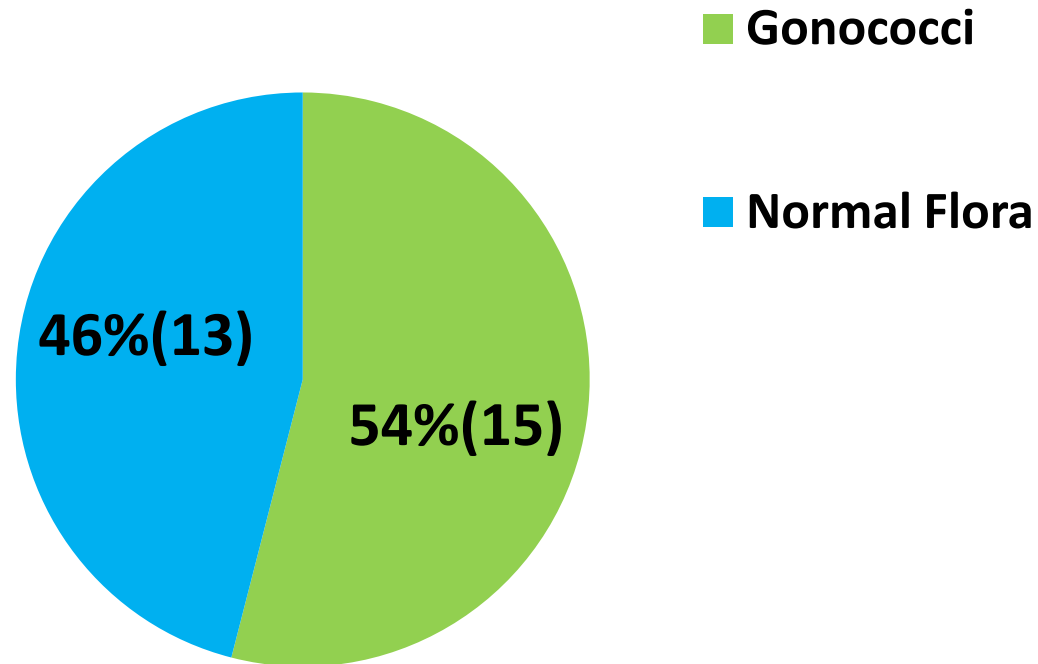
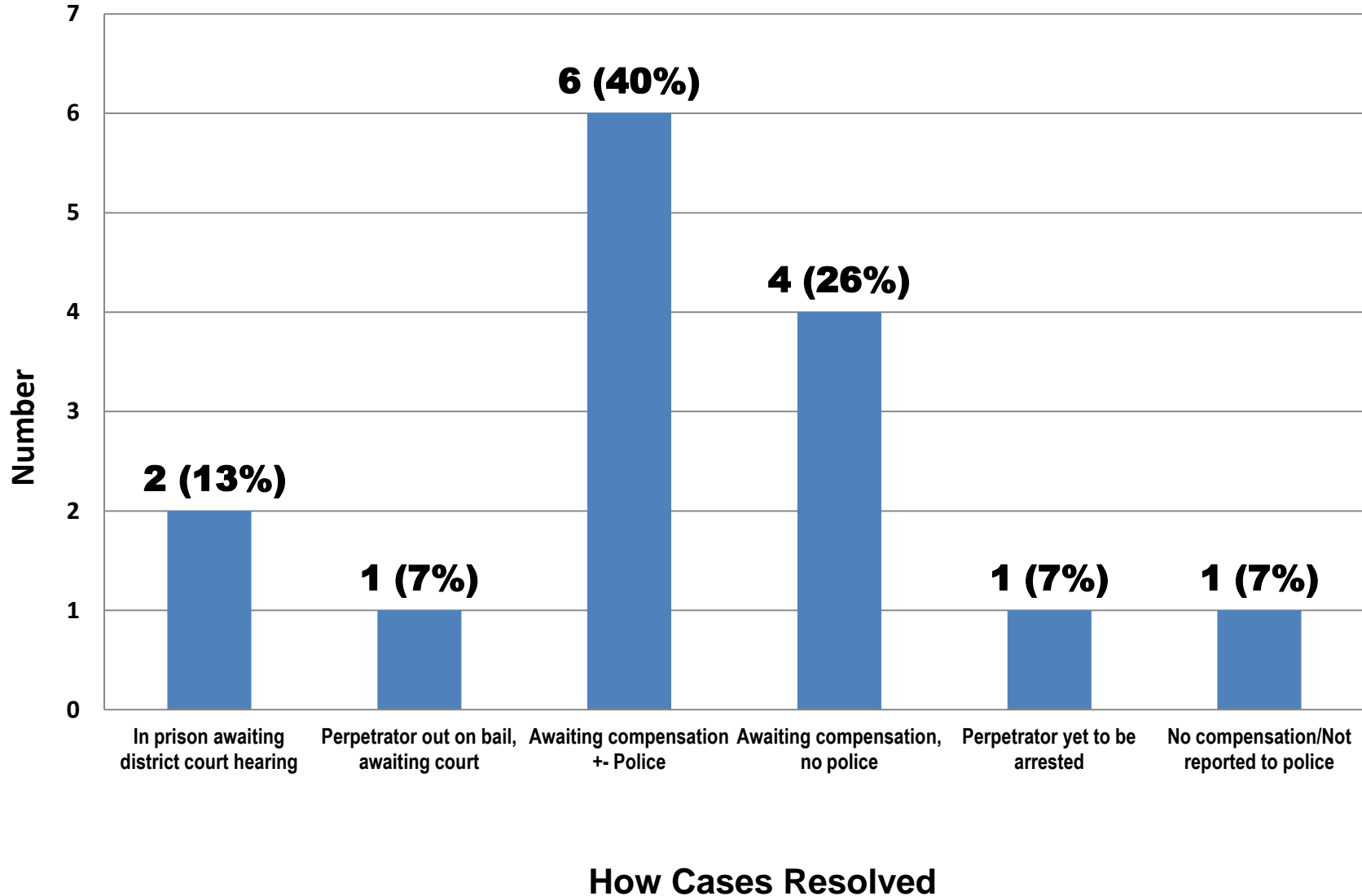


Figure 7: How Cases Were Resolved (n=15)



Discussion

- This study shows Child Sexual Abuse is prevalent.
- Already in 6 months in 2013, cases exceeded 2012 cases
- 150 million girls, 73 million boys under 18 experienced forced sexual intercourse or other forms of sexual violence during 2002 (*WHO, 2004*).
- Illiteracy amongst mothers is a common feature in this study and *Gwirayi, 2012 & CSEC 2006*
- In contrast to common findings (*WHO 2004*) most children lived with their biological parents.

Discussion cont'd

- Gonococci was predominant organism seen.
- Predominant STI isolated from culture of vaginal swabs. 85% of cultures were positive for gonococci (*White et al 2002*)
- Main form of assault- penile penetration of vagina.
- Australian study 4.0 – 12% of female children had penetrative sexual abuse (*Rosenman, et al 2004*)
- 95% of perpetrators were related to the child or known to the child vs 61% McClelland & Polome, 70-90% (*Finkelhor 1994*)

Discussion cont'd

- Coercion was used in 58% of cases.
- Only 15 cases followed up on resolving the issue. Majority solved through village compensation.
- Reporting to police – not followed up by families -Means of threat to claim compensation from perpetrators family.
- Families resolve problem to keep peace but future of child is not main issue
- The Lukautim Pikinini Act not serving its purpose in these cases

Limitations / Challenges

- Small sample size/time limitation for study
- Longer waiting time for CSA patient- no room for privacy
- Doctor and Pathology staff shortage – medical report required by police within 24 hours
- Follow-up difficult
- Families refusal to have perpetrators prosecuted
- Increasing trend of claiming compensation as a means to resolve crimes

Conclusion

- Child Sexual Abuse is becoming an increasing problem
- We need to find ways to solve this problem
- Widespread use of compensation method of solving problems used in child sexual abuse
- The Lukautim Pikinini Act needs to be strengthened
 - Social aspects
 - Avenues to help affected families

Recommendations

- Separate section in the hospital for CSA cases to be seen, treated and counseled.
- Social worker to be employed at the hospital.
- Increase public awareness of child sexual abuse prevalence
- Faster police action
- Discourage village compensation payments
- Long term counseling and follow up study on patients

References

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Thank you

Case Study

- F/11, Grade 4 Student.
- Recurrent sexual abuse by biological father for 1 yr
- In family home while mother is at work & child returns from school
- Father arrested. In Bihute awaiting court
- 1 older sibling, 2 younger siblings and mum currently pregnant
- Family initially angry & wanted district court action so had father arrested
- Perpetrator-possibility of being sentenced to life in prison
- Now want to “sidaun lo hauslain na stori pastaim”
...”narapela pikinini slip lo bel tu na husait bai lukautim mama na fifpela pikinini”