

**Understanding perceptions and knowledge on Child Sexual Abuse within the  
Tamil Diaspora Community in the Greater Toronto Area**

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## **Abstract**

There are many studies that have explored childhood sexual abuse (CSA). However, very little research exists with examination on how race and cultural perceptions influence disclosures of CSA or exploring perceptions and beliefs of CSA among culturally specific groups. This paper reports the results of a needs assessment survey that was conducted to understand the perceptions and beliefs of laypeople regarding CSA among the Tamil population within the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Participants completed paper-based and electronic questionnaires. The aim of the study was to explore laypeople's perception and knowledge of CSA within the Tamil community. This study found that majority of the participants (70%) wanted to know more about how to support survivors of CSA, in the form of healing, emotional support and seeking help. Many of them reported that they felt very uncomfortable speaking to family about CSA and wanted to know more on ways to create awareness of CSA within the Tamil community.

## **1. Introduction**

Childhood sexual abuse (CSA) is a major health and human rights issue that affects children and adults, both worldwide and cross-culturally (Basanti-Sidhu, 2013). “ Child Sexual Abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violates the laws or social taboos of society” (WHO, 2006).

CSA has major impacts on the mental health of a survivor. Trauma caused by CSA unfortunately often has lifelong effect on the survivor. CSA is often stigmatized in the South Asian Community, as speaking about this is thought to bring shame to the individual or the family. Disclosing CSA can create negative response from others and cause embarrassment. This could also be alienating and limit you in protecting others around you from similar response. Additionally there is a fear that victims are thought to have contributed to the abuse and will be held accountable. Compared to male victims, females are more scrutinized as they can lose their virginity and get pregnant (Dasgupta et al., 2007). As a result of all these pressures, the victims are motivated to remain silent.

Moreover, aside from the tremendous psychological toll that sexual abuse has on individuals, there is a huge rate of underreporting due to the fact that victims of child sexual abuse are reluctant to speak about their experiences. This is mainly due to the strong stigma associated with speaking about child sexual abuse within the South Asian community and its association to shame brought upon individuals and their families. Other reasons why victims of CSA do not disclose abuse are due to shame, fear of negative consequences, such as losing one’s family or friends and threats from the perpetrator. Additionally, there is a lack of disclosure because victims are thought to be contributors to the incident, and therefore are held accountable for the abuse. As a result, to maintain the pretension of a cohesive family, victims of CSA feel pressured to remain silent, cover up their story and move on.

The families who live in the West, continue to be subjected to the same cultural constructs and gender roles and children who are born and raised in the West are expected to adhere to those. As a victim of CSA they continue to deal with physical and psychological trauma and pressured to keep silent to protect their identity, honor, virginity and most importantly the honor of the family and community (Basanti-Sidhu, 2013).

Furthermore, “the context of sexual abuse that South Asian women experience is further reflected in the experiences of their children who are born and raised in the West but who continue to be subjected to the same cultural constricts and strict gender roles as South Asians

living in their home countries” (Basanti-Sidhu, 2013). South Asian women born to immigrant parents who live in the West, and are victims of child sexual abuse continue to deal with psychological trauma, as well as pressure to keep silent in order to protect their identity, honor, virginity and most importantly, the reputation of their family and community (Basanti-Sidhu, 2013).

As there is a lack of literature regarding CSA in the Tamil community, we have referred to the studies done in the South Asian Community as a whole, as the Tamil community has similar culture and belief systems.

## **2. Literature Search**

A literature search was conducted using Google Scholar and University of Toronto online Library during the month of August 2017. There were several different combinations of keywords used including: Sexual Abuse, Childhood Sexual Abuse, Tamil, Attitudes, Perceptions, and Toronto, Canada. Limitations were placed during searches on the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Inclusion Criteria:

- Primary research relating to CSA among ethnic communities and perceptions and attitudes
- English language only
- Published literature only
- Articles from 2000 onwards
- Full text online articles

Exclusion Criteria:

- Research not pertaining to CSA among ethnic communities
- Non-English language
- Unpublished literature
- Articles before 2000

This literature search retrieved 117 articles and 8 were retained using the above inclusion and exclusion criteria.

## **3. Literature Review**

Over the years there have been many studies done on CSA and its impact on children and families, including those focused on adult victims of sexual abuse and the attitudes people have towards CSA. There seems to be an abundance amount of research and studies on the impact of

CSA on individuals however the cultural lens to CSA is missing in many studies. There are limited studies focusing on Tamil or South Asian minorities and CSA, some studies did look at ethnic minorities and attitudes on CSA. In Ullman and Filipas (2005) study, they found that there were different beliefs and attitudes towards CSA, mostly beliefs around the shame CSA brought on the family and the impact it has on the family's prestige in their community. Participants from this study felt that the reaction to CSA within the family was responding to outer family members as opposed to responding to the survivor of the abuse. Ullman and Filipas (2005) also agreed to the lack of studies available on South Asian communities and how acculturation may influence the perception of CSA in many different communities.

In another study, Kanukollu and Mahalingam (2011) examined perceptions and attitudes of CSA among South Asian college students in the U.S. This online survey of South Asian college students showed that many adults did not disclose CSA due to the fear, stigma and lack of support available in the U.S. Many of the participants from this study felt that there was not enough support among the family and community to feel supported to disclose their abuse. The overall findings from this study indicated that there is a clear need of cultural framework when working with people impacted by CSA.

A study conducted by Van Egeraat (2015) looked at professionals and laypeople's perceptions on CSA and the general knowledge around CSA in the Netherlands. Researchers provided a questionnaire with a vignette showing manipulated consent and a clear age difference. In the study that contained 270 participants (30 childcare staff, 106 laypeople, 31 teachers, 29 psychologists and 82 students), the findings indicated that students had very little general knowledge regarding CSA compared to teachers and psychologists, which suggested that teachers and psychologists had more training on CSA. There was also a large difference among men and women, where men scored lower than women on general knowledge and CSA myths. Similarly, in Collings (2003) research men also scored lower than women on myths about CSA, indicating that there was less knowledge around CSA among men.

In general many studies have shown that even professionals such as school counselors have difficulty recognizing indicators of CSA (Goldman and Padayachi, 2005; Pullins and Jones, 2006). It has also been shown that parents usually think that their kids will exhibit clear behavior and physical changes if they are affected by CSA (Pullins and Jones, 2006), but it has been proven that this may be incorrect, as children affected by CSA do not always present physical or behavioral changes (Shackel, 2008).

Although there is an ample amount of research conducted on CSA, none has focused on Tamil populations in North America. Many of the current research have focused on Caucasian and some on other ethnic populations. Therefore, we believe our study is a first step in understanding the perceptions of CSA in the Tamil community in the Toronto area, consisting of more than 300,000 members. This and further studies within the Tamil community will provide us with knowledge to improve understanding of CSA in this community in a culturally sensitive way. We are also hoping to use this knowledge to provide support and organize programs based on the communities needs, taking into consideration the communities believes and attitudes on CSA.

## **4. METHOD**

### **Aim**

To explore the perceptions and knowledge around CSA and to engage in dialogue and create awareness within the Tamil diaspora community.

### **Research Question**

What are the perceptions and knowledge around CSA within the Tamil population in the Greater Toronto Area?

### **Objectives**

- (1) To review the literature on CSA and the perceptions and understandings within South Asian communities' with a particular focus on the Tamil diaspora.
- (2) To distribute surveys within the Tamil diaspora to explore perceptions and understandings of CSA.
- (3) To identify knowledge and service gaps among Tamil diaspora communities about CSA in the Greater Toronto Area

### **Epistemological Approach**

This study focused on laypeople's epistemic beliefs about CSA. The purpose of this study was to get an understanding of the Tamil population's knowledge of CSA; their attitudes towards and perceptions of CSA. We aimed for an instrument, which will assess the Tamil community's epistemic beliefs of CSA.

### **Study Design**

A quantitative design was used to gain a general understanding of CSA among Tamil people residing in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). An anonymous survey comprising of thirteen questions with a mixture of multiple choice and open-ended questions was developed. Few questions included some identifiers such as gender, age and socioeconomic status etc. Other

questions were about the beliefs and perceptions of CSA, some regarding understanding of CSA and regarding the needs of the community. Survey was produced in both English and in Tamil. This anonymous survey was distributed during the ANBU campaign launch on January 20th, 2017 and people were encouraged to fill out a paper copy or electronically. The survey was made available on the Abuse Never Become Us (ANBU) website.

## **Setting**

More than 300,000 Tamil diaspora live within The Greater Toronto Area, Canada. This is the largest Tamil population outside of Sri Lanka. The organization ANBU serves the Tamil population in this catchment area, making it the most appropriate city to conduct CSA research study.

At the ANBU launch event it was announced that we are conducting a survey to understand the knowledge around CSA in our community and the attendants we asked to pick up a paper copy or directed to the online version if they were interested in participating in this study. The surveys were provided in both the Tamil and English languages to ensure accessibility.

## **Inclusions/Exclusion Criteria**

Inclusion criteria:

- Identifying yourself as Tamil
- Residing within the GTA
- 18 years or older
- 

Exclusion criteria:

- 17 years and younger
- Not residing within the GTA
- Illegible answers

## **Recruitment**

Recruitment for participants was done by making the online survey available on the ANBU media outlets such as ANBU Facebook page, Instagram page, the ANBU website and the paper copy available at the ANBU campaign launch on January 5th, 2016.

## **Data Collection**

Convenience sampling method was used for data collection. Electronic data was collected anonymously through the online survey service, Survey Monkey from date Jan 20, 2017 to 21 April 2017 and on January 20th, 2017 at the ANBU launch the paper copies of the survey could be deposited in a blind box.

Thirty-eight participants completed a paper copy survey at ANBU's Campaign Launch, held at York University, while 51 participants completed the survey online.

## **Sample size**

In this study, 89 people (19 male, 68 female, 2 other) completed the questionnaire.

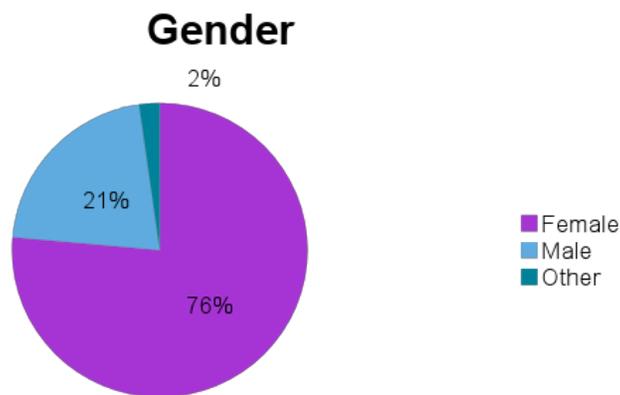
## **Background**

A.N.B.U, which translates to 'Love' in Tamil, stands for Abuse Never Becomes Us. A.N.B.U is a Toronto based not-for-profit community organization that works with survivors of childhood sexual abuse within the Tamil community. A.N.B.U.'s mission is to provide healing and empowerment through holistic support, resources, and advocacy on behalf of Tamil people who have been impacted by childhood sexual abuse. A.N.B.U's envision a future where Tamil people who have been impacted by childhood sexual abuse can find their voice. Their objectives is three fold; to provide holistic support and identify different modalities to promote healing and empowerment with survivors of childhood sexual abuse; explore and build capacity within the Tamil community to raise awareness and open dialogue on childhood sexual abuse; build service capacity through collaboration and partnerships.

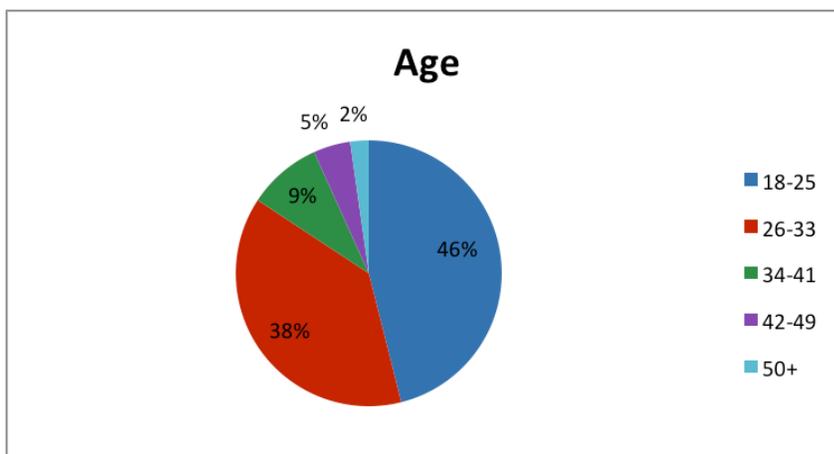
## 5. RESULTS

Of the 89 participants that participated in the research study, 76% identified as female, 21% identified as male and 2% as other (Refer to figure 1). The ages of the participants are referred to in figure 2, where majority of the participants were in the age group of 18-25 years of age. The majority of the participants (75%) reported that they have a University (B.A., M.A., PhD) or Teachers College degrees, while 14% of the participants reported to be in secondary education (Refer to figure 3).

**Figure 1:**

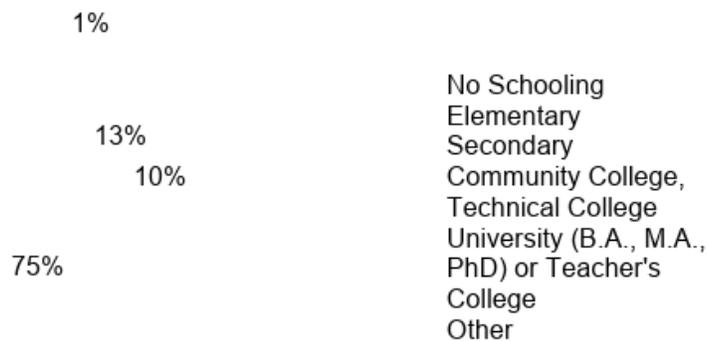


**Figure 2:**



**Figure 3: What is the highest grade or level of education you have attended or completed?**

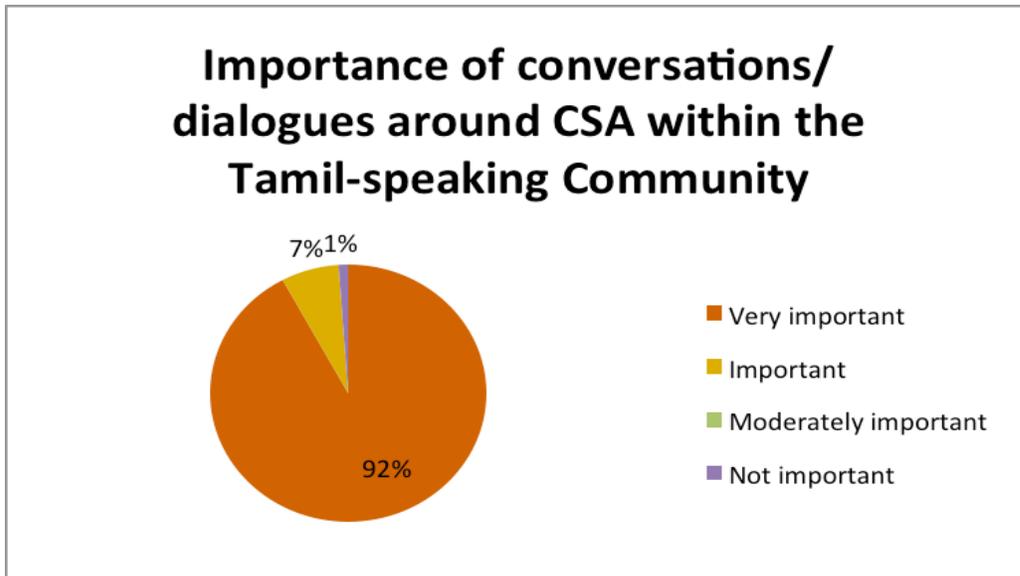
## Highest Level of Education



According to the results from Question 4 (please see in appendix) in this study, majority of the participants (73%; 65 out of 89 participants) answered that they have heard recent news of disclosures on personal experiences of childhood sexual abuse and or sexual assault. 23 out of 89 participants reported that they have not heard anything in the news regarding CSA and sexual assault while only one participant responded as not applicable. It is clear from this study that many people do hear about CSA and are able to relate to these conversations and carry on these discussions in a larger form. However, many have addressed not being able to speak about it as there is not much clarity and knowledge on the issue itself as addressed in Question 5. Out of the 89 participants 68 answered this question on their understanding of CSA in Question 5. Of the 68 participants, 9 participants felt that they had a good understanding of CSA whereas 18 felt that they had very minimal knowledge and understanding of CSA and felts that the community needs more knowledge around CSA. Since this question was open-ended many participants also shared some of their concerns around CSA, where many felt that it was wrong and CSA is something that is condonable. Majority of the participants mentioned that CSA happens within the Tamil community but felt that no one ever talks about it and it is mainly due to the stigma associated with talking about CSA.

Question 6 asked participants how important they thought conversations and dialogues around CSA within the Tamil-speaking community, according to Figure 4, 92% of the participants felt that these conversations were very important. Similarly as we saw in Question 5, although these conversations are important, participants identified that they were difficult conversation and that many did not feel they had the understanding and knowledge around CSA to speak about it.

**Figure 4: Importance of conversations/dialogues around CSA within the Tamil-speaking community**



**Figure 5: What is your comfort level in speaking about CSA within your family?**

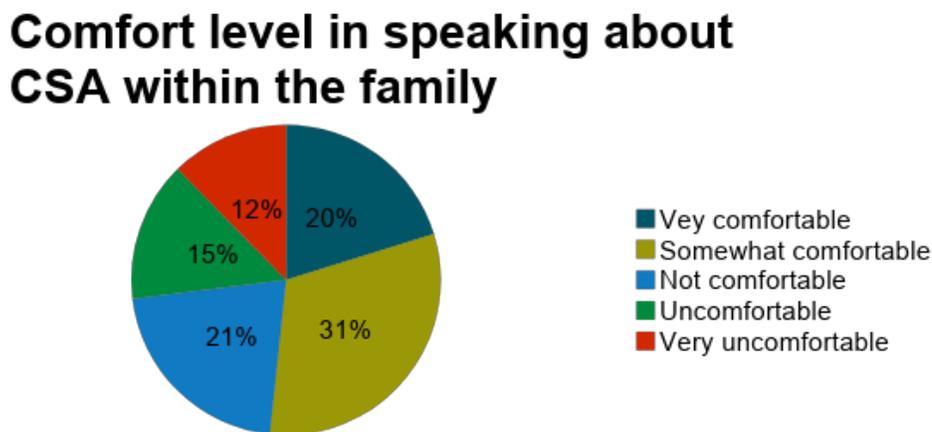
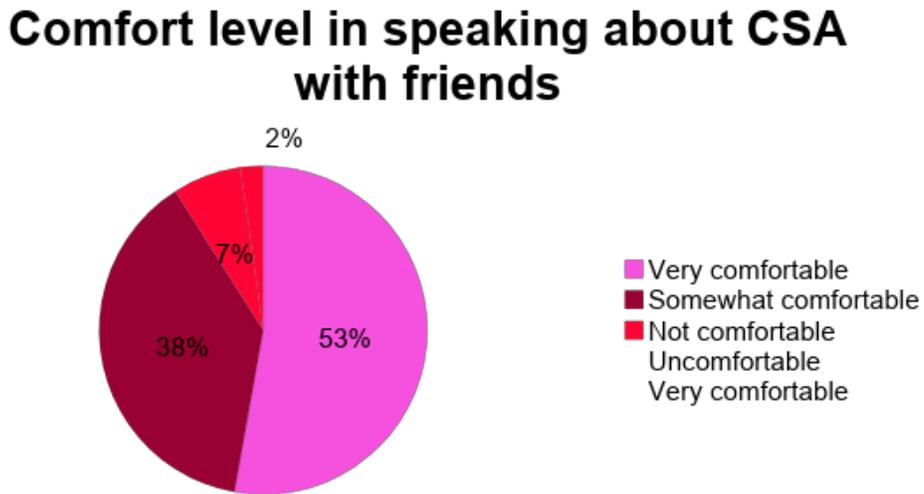


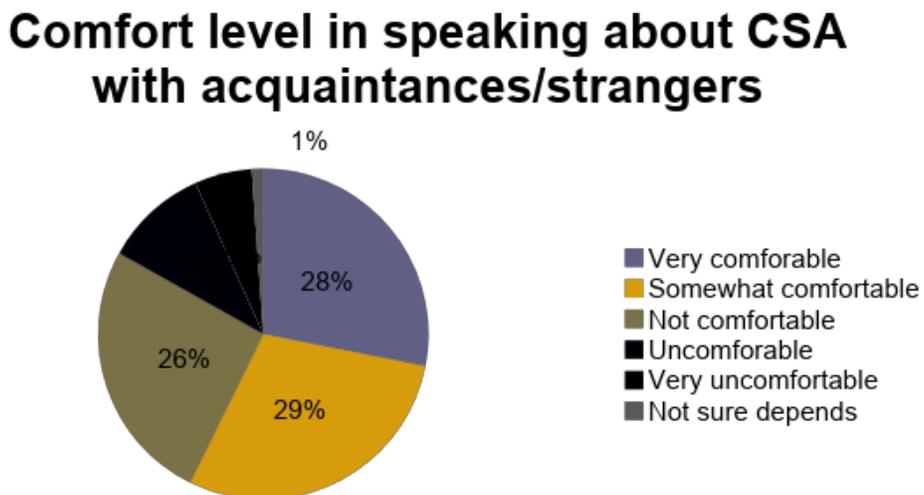
Figure 5 shows the comfort level the participants had in discussing CSA with family members and it demonstrates that of the 89 participants only 20% felt comfortable whereas 21% felt not comfortable speaking about CSA with family. However the comfort level speaking about CSA with friends was very different, 53% of them felt very comfortable speaking to friends about

CSA. This clearly defines the differences between how comfortable people feel about talking about sensitive topic with family. Figure 7 demonstrates the comfort level of speaking about CSA with acquaintances and 28% of the participants felt very comfortable which is still much more compared to the comfort level with family.

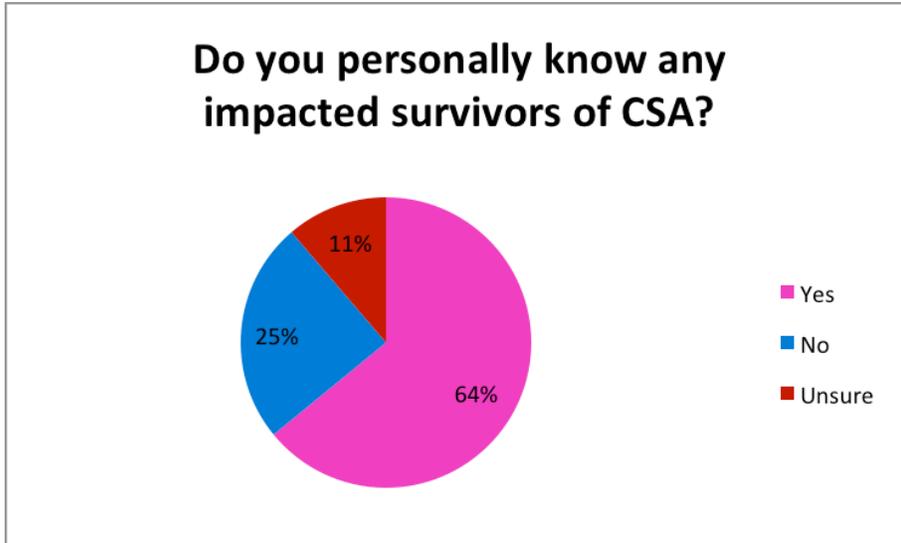
**Figure 6: What is your comfort level in speaking about CSA with friends?**



**Figure 7: What is your comfort level in speaking about CSA with acquaintances/strangers?**

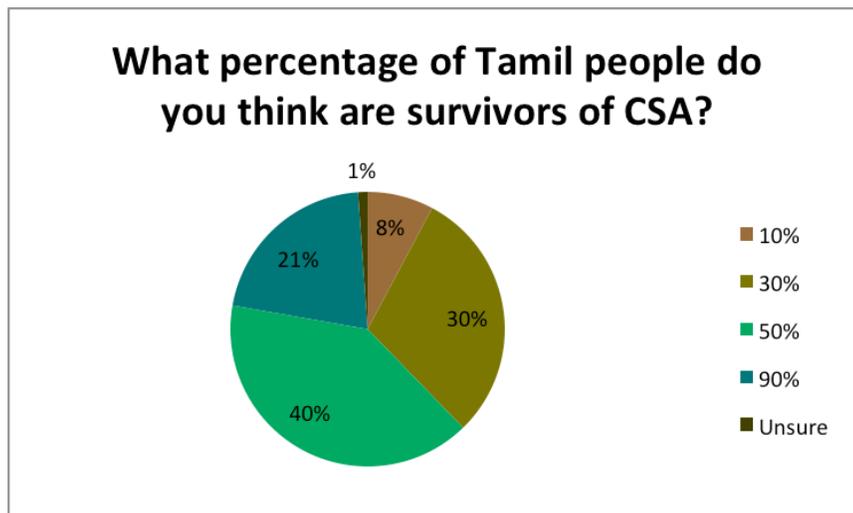


**Figure 8: Do you personally know any impacted survivors of CSA?**

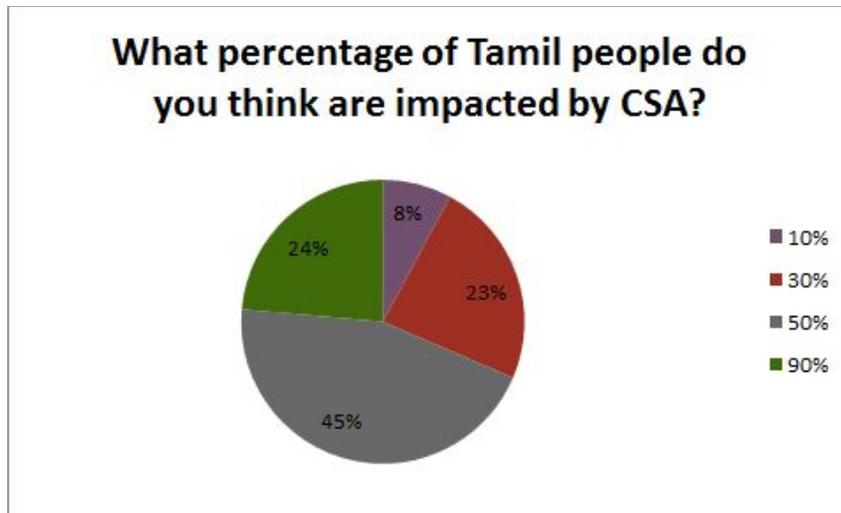


It is evident from our study that many of the participants personally know someone who is impacted by CSA, our study found that 64% of them have identified as knowing a survivor of CSA (Figure 8). Participants were also asked to if they thought Tamil people were impacted by CSA and if they thought that Tamil people were survivors of CSA. Participants from the study thought that 40% of the Tamil people might be survivors of CSA (Figure 9) and 45% of the Tamil people might be impacted by CSA (Figure 10).

**Figure 9: What percentage of Tamil people do you think are survivors of CSA?**



**Figure 10: What percentage of Tamil people do you think are impacted by CSA?**



The needs assessment asked participants what they would like to know about CSA, majority of the participants (70%) wanted to know more about how to support survivors of CSA, in the form of healing, emotional support and seeking help. Majority of the participants also discussed on ways to create more awareness of CSA within the Tamil community, as it is a taboo subject and breaking through this would allow more people to feel comfortable speaking about sexual abuse and CSA. One participant indicates the following;

“More on how CSA has impacted the Tamil community and culturally sensitive ways to raise awareness and create safe spaces” (Question 13, Appendix).

Many of the participants’ indicated the need for more culturally sensitive approaches of addressing CSA as many felt a discomfort is beginning the conversations.

“How to start the conversations with families to create awareness, how to approach the situation when one is aware of CSA and how to protect the child and how to teach children what’s appropriate and inappropriate behavior and where to access service”

Moreover, many participants wanted to know more about healing for survivors of CSA and

being able to move on with the trauma they have endured. Participants addressed the need for having supportive networks and being able to provide a safe environment for survivors to reach out for help and seek support.

## **6. Discussion**

CSA happens worldwide, and as it is clear, there is no culture, religion, race or ethnic group that is particularly immune to its effects. It happens in many different countries and cultures, however, there are clear differences in how CSA is sometimes spoken about in different parts of the world and how perceptions of CSA vary across cultural backgrounds.

The goal of this study was to explore and understand laypeople's knowledge around CSA. Although there has been much research done over the last couple of decades regarding CSA, there are very few that focus on ethnic minorities, and in particular the Tamil diaspora population. This study had three main objectives: i) to review current literature on CSA ii) to investigate and explore some of the perceptions of CSA within the Tamil diaspora and iii) to identify perceptions, needs, knowledge and service gaps within Tamil communities in relation to CSA. The three objectives were met with the current study with very significant findings.

The results from the present study have indicated some major themes, which help to address some of the current issues and concerns around the attitudes and knowledge about CSA. Some of the major themes that came out of the survey were the cultural impacts that influenced the attitudes that people had towards CSA, the lack of knowledge about CSA, and the lack of research and culturally appropriate services available for the Tamil diaspora community in the Greater Toronto Area.

### **Lack of understanding about CSA within the Tamil community and need for more information**

The participants from the study have indicated the need for more information and education on CSA due to the lack of information that is available to them. The findings from the current study indicate that the majority of participants felt that the prevalence of CSA in the Tamil community is immense, however, many also felt that CSA is hidden and not spoken about publicly. One participant felt that CSA is an ongoing problem, but this issue is not accurately represented in data and research. Similarly, Pereda et al (2009) showed the prevalence of CSA in the United States as common as 1 in 6 girls and 1 in 12 boys being affected by CSA. Nevertheless, these are results from reported statistics and it is evident that child sexual abuse is not always reported to authorities for many conflicting reasons. Therefore, data and reports are not always able to attain accurate statistics.

Some participants from the current study addressed that the lack of knowledge from CSA does not necessarily come from not knowing but rather not wanting to know and talk about it. Many participants mentioned that speaking about CSA within the Tamil community was not the norm, but more so a taboo topic to discuss. CSA is considered a taboo for multiple reasons of which some surround the idea that the topic is not a comfortable or an appropriate one to be discussed. Many felt that it is not culturally appropriate, according to some religious beliefs, and feared moral judgment from society. Breaking a taboo can cause alterations in people's lives, they can be shamed by society and people might be subject to moral judgment from their own community. Similarly, Finkelhor (2009) discusses that speaking about CSA may sometimes bring shame and stigma to the family and many families keep child sexual abuse hidden within their family to manage the issue from inside the home as opposed to reaching out for help. As a result, sometimes the lack of knowledge and understanding regarding CSA is not caused by a shortage of information, but more so around the social barriers of obtaining resources and seeking help.

However, the current study does indicate that more awareness is needed on CSA for the Tamil community as a whole, which can start to create more knowledge and change the attitudes towards CSA and provide ways to support someone who is disclosing CSA. In studies conducted by Hebert et al (2002) and Paranal et al (2012) that researched people's attitudes by targeting CSA education programs for adults, there was an indication of strong changes in behavior intentions towards CSA after educational programs, which brought some awareness of the issue.

An evidence-based education program study done by Martin and Silverstone (2016) in Alberta, Canada demonstrated a clear increase in knowledge and positive attitudes after participants went through a series of workshops, and after three months, there were immense changes in behavior. Thus, some of these studies align with the current study's results, suggesting that there needs to be more education to cultivate awareness about child sexual abuse in order to help change people's perceptions and create positive attitudes towards survivors of CSA.

### **Cultural impact on attitudes towards CSA**

Culture plays a vital role in how someone views CSA and the attitudes that people have towards it. Results from this study clearly show that there is an absence of speaking about sexuality in general within the Tamil community. Speaking about sexuality is taboo within the Tamil community, hence making CSA a harder conversation to have. This also makes it more difficult for young people to talk about their experiences, as it is clear to them that sexuality is a conversation that is often avoided. In many ways, culture impacts the attitudes towards CSA; as the findings from this study show that many felt that the cultural and societal pressures people face make it more difficult for them to disclose CSA. Enfield (2003) discusses that these attitudes and values about sexuality that children see and understand are generally absorbed from parents, hence, negative attitudes towards the body, specifically private body parts, start to also become an attitude that children will absorb very unconsciously. As Anderson (2011) explains, many parents grew up during a time where sex and sexuality were taboo subjects and definitely something that is not discussed with children. Despite the fact that even when children ask

questions it is avoided or children start to understand that these are not conversations to have. Hence, they are able to understand from a young age that it is not culturally appropriate to discuss this. This makes it even more difficult for children to disclose any form of CSA. Similarly, many participants from the current study indicated that CSA was not appropriate to discuss due to the attitudes towards children knowing anything about sex or sexuality as merely being wrong and not age appropriate.

### **Lack of research and need for culturally appropriate services**

Considering the impact of culture in speaking about sexuality within the Tamil diaspora community, the need for culturally appropriate education and services is vital. According to the current study, many participants wanted to know more about how to support someone disclosing CSA in a way that will be culturally appropriate. Most participants want to begin the conversation about CSA within their Tamil community and within their own families without the fear of being judged or dismissed. Therefore, many participants felt that there is not enough research to show why there is a need for such education about CSA within the Tamil diaspora community, as there are no statistics available to show the prevalence of CSA within Tamil communities around the world. However, it is important to be mindful that not many people will disclose CSA until they feel safe to do so, hence the need for culturally appropriate and safe spaces are vital for individuals. Fontes and Plummer (2010) in their study emphasized that cultural norms may affect whether a child will disclose sexual abuse to family or authorities. They found that cultures may silence CSA disclosures based on the heavy emphasis placed on it, such as shame attached to children learning or knowing anything about sexuality or speaking about private body parts or sexually related topics. These topics become taboo for children and hence, children have a harder time to converse about sexual topics. In many cultures, sexuality is very rooted in modesty and this becomes a part of their life that they have to uphold. Fontes and Plummer (2010) discuss that such cultural norms make it harder for children to disclose or feel comfortable enough to speak to someone about it. Similarly, Gilligan and Akhtar (2006) in their study found that children from the South Asian background withdrew from disclosing due to the strong values placed on honor and respect for the older community members and shame placed on girls expressing their sexuality. Furthermore, culture impacts many people and creates a hesitancy to disclose incidents of CSA to family members or authorities. It especially impacts a child's ability to feel comfortable and safe enough to speak openly about their abuse. As a result, it is vital that services and programs are available for individuals and families that come from specific cultural backgrounds to help create a safe space for them to feel comfortable to disclose their concerns. Only by creating these supportive environments will we start to obtain accurate data and get a realistic picture about the prevalence of CSA within various ethnic communities. More importantly, it will highlight the need for culturally sensitive services for survivors and those who support them. This could develop a more comprehensive understanding of CSA and encourage community education and awareness initiatives. In addition, it is essential to have service providers who are knowledgeable about CSA and are able to understand the complexities of the cultural factors that play a vital role in people's lives as they disclose.

## **7. Limitations**

This study was a survey-based needs assessment study to acquire the knowledge and understandings within the Tamil diaspora community in the Greater Toronto Area on child sexual abuse. Considering the findings, this study has some limitations that are worth noting. First, the data is limited to a specific geographic region, hence the study cannot be generalized to all parts of the world where Tamil communities exist. Most of the surveys were anonymously completed and collected at the ANBU campaign launch, which indicates that the sample may be biased as those present for the ANBU launch were also supporters of the organization and somewhat had an understanding of CSA. The survey was also disseminated online, which allows limited accessibility for those who may not have access to the Internet or are unable to access and use a computer. There was also an age restriction; no one under the age of 18 was able to participate, which limits many young people who might have wanted to participate.

## **8. Recommendations and Future Direction**

Future research should look into having more focus groups and interview style studies, which can develop a more in-depth understanding about attitudes, values and beliefs regarding CSA. Survey-based studies are not able to get an in-depth understanding of attitudes or beliefs. Future research should also expand the research area and have more diverse populations represented, such as Tamil communities in different parts of the world, as it will be interesting to see the similarities and differences between Tamil populations in Sri Lanka compared to Tamil populations living in Western countries. Moreover, it is important to discuss CSA with diverse populations, such as people with differing abilities.

In setting priorities for future directions, there is a strong need for more educational programs for the general public and more specifically, programs that are culturally appropriate for ethno-specific communities, such as the Tamil diaspora community, to eliminate the stigma and negative attitudes towards speaking out openly about CSA. There is also a need for more research to be conducted on Tamil populations in different countries as these populations are underrepresented in research. This ensures that these populations are represented in mainstream research with the emphasis of how culture and other beliefs impact and add value to discussions around CSA.

## **9. Conclusion**

Child sexual abuse remains a serious social concern in the Tamil diaspora, and is also relevant among other various ethnic groups around the world. The current study indicates that there is a strong need for more awareness and education on CSA within the Tamil community as there is a strong disassociation when talking about sex and sexuality. Thus, CSA needs the special attention it deserves, as this is a complex topic when dealing with individuals that come from various ethnic backgrounds with differing values, attitudes and beliefs. Breaking barriers and being able to support people from all ethnic backgrounds to provide a safe and nurturing space to discuss these issues is extremely important. These discussions need to be addressed and discussed in the open to ensure that people who are affected by CSA get the support they need.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Questionnaire**

1. Gender

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

2. Age

- 18-25
- 26-33
- 34-41
- 42-49
- 50+

3. What is the highest grade or level of education you have attended or completed?

- No schooling
- Elementary
- Secondary
- Community college, technical college
- University (e.g. B.A. M.A. PhD) or teacher's college
- Other:

4. Have you heard of any recent news disclosing personal experiences of childhood sexual abuse and/or rape?

5. What is your understanding of childhood sexual abuse (CSA)?

6. How important do you think are conversations and dialogues around CSA within the Tamil-speaking community?

- Very important
- Important

Moderately important  
Not important

7. What is your comfort level in speaking about CSA within your family?

Very comfortable  
Somewhat comfortable  
Not comfortable  
Uncomfortable  
Very uncomfortable

8. What is your comfort level in speaking about CSA with friends?

Very comfortable  
Somewhat comfortable  
Not comfortable  
Uncomfortable  
Very uncomfortable

9. What is your comfort level in speaking about CSA with acquaintances/strangers?

Very comfortable  
Somewhat comfortable  
Not comfortable  
Uncomfortable  
Very uncomfortable

10. Do you personally know any impacted survivors of CSA?

Yes  
No  
Unsure

11. What percentage of Tamil people do you think are survivors of CSA?

10%  
30%  
50%  
90%

12. What percentage of Tamil people do you think are impacted by CSA?

10%  
30%  
50%  
90%

13. What would you like to know about CSA?

If you would like to be involved in our future focus groups, please provide us with your email.  
Thank you!

## **References**

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