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ONLINE CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN THE GAMBIA ELIMINATION STRATEGIES: THE PERSPECTIVE OF CHILD PROTECTION OFFICERS (CASE STUDY: SEREKUNDA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AREAS)

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Abstract

The digital technology has positively transformed the life and living conditions of many people around the globe. However, studies have revealed some negative socio-economic, political, cultural; and environmental impacts. This case study was conducted to interrogate online child sexual abuse and exploitation in The Gambia focusing on the motivating factors, techniques, negative impacts, victims and perpetrators support services, preventive strategies and institutional collaboration. As per the findings to effectively address online child sexual abuse and exploitation, it requires: regular public sensitization, consistent law enforcement, rehabilitation of victims and perpetrators, strengthening and tough laws enactment, stringent code of conducts implementation, strict monitoring of the TDA and environment, rapid prosecution of perpetrators, long term jailing and black listing of convicted perpetrators, strong national and international partnership, capacity building of institutions, responsible parenting promotion and practice, access to quality and relevant education for all children, budget allocation increment, child abuse inclusion in schools curriculum, poverty eradication, government blocking pornographic websites, installation of monitoring applications; and limiting internet access.

Keywords: online, child, abuse, strategies, elimination, exploitation, perpetrators, tourism



Introduction

Over the years, the world has witnessed a massive revolution in all aspects of life and society due to the unprecedented growth of the digital technology (Martin Hilbert, 2020). With the internet, communication has not only become fast but easy especially with the accessible and affordable mobile and smartphones, computer devices, social media; and messaging applications. Thus, it has resulted to more than 4.5 billion people being connected to the cyber world, 1 in 3 of whom are children and unfortunately hardly under the supervision of any responsible adult (Bracket Foundation, n.d.). Although the virtual world has positively impacted all walks of life, it has a dark side that equally demands global recognition and immediate actions to save lives and businesses (Pietro Ferrara, 2021) and (Michael Chertoff, 2015).

With the remote world, the sexual abuse of children has not only been made easy, but has substantially increased as it has become a comfortable and affordable platform for perpetrators of child abuse and exploitation to establish relationship for subsequent offline meetings and engagement in sexual activities (Choi, Wong, & Fong, 2018). The online contacts have subsequently resulted in offenders physically meeting victims and sexually abused them, (Senker, Scott, & Wainwright, 2020).

Therefore, the cyber world is increasingly becoming a dangerous platform for children and teenagers particularly those whose profiles are often on the net (Wolak, Finkelhor, Mitchell, & Ybarra, 2008). According to the National Centre for Missing and Exploited children, from 2019 to 2020, it has witnessed a 106 per cent increment in reports of online sexual exploitation while the Watch Foundation registered 77 per cent increase in child self-generated sexual materials (WeProtect Global Alliance, 2021).

Globally, the picture looks disturbing as per the number of people who had experienced at least one online sexual abuse during childhood as per disaggregated data sub-regionally: Middle East and North Africa 44%, Western Europe 65%, Eastern Europe and Commonwealth Independent States 44%, East Asia 44%, Southeast Asia 52%, Australasia 52%, South Asia 50%, Southern Africa 57%, Central Africa 31%, Latin America 49%, Central America 59%; and North America 71% (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2019), (Maestral, 2021) and (WeProtect Global Alliance, 2021).

In light of these alarming online sexual abuse and exploitation meted on innocent children, academics, parents; and politicians has developed serious interest and commitment in ensuring that children are safe online since the digital technology has become an integral part of people's life and living (Rogers, Wczasek, & Davies, 2011). Therefore, building a safer virtual world especially for the vulnerable communities including the children has become a global agenda requiring both local and international pragmatic solutions (UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2011).

In spite of this unbelievable maltreatment of our beloved children, the exact number of survivors and conditions is not scientifically well researched and documented; nevertheless what is concrete is they are in millions (Ali, Haykal, & Youssef, 2021). This lack of scholarly documentation, especially in the third world including The Gambia, beyond reasonable doubts is a huge challenge to all. Therefore, this research was meant to contribute to the addressing of this academic vacuum.

Aims and Methodology

AIMS

The primordial objective of this study was to interrogate the present scale and degree of the level of addressing online child sexual abuse in The Gambia focusing on the Tourism Development Areas (TDA) and surrounding communities, share knowledge to spark and inspire a process that will galvanise quick response from all in the battle against the menace. The Gambia is a major destination in Africa with hundreds of thousands of visitors round the year.

Methodology

The qualitative approach was adopted to explore twenty nine child protection officers' views with regard to online child sexual abuse in The Gambia, mainly focusing on the causes, techniques of recruitment, the impacts, government and its development partners' efforts toward its eradication, strategies to eliminate it; challenges and opportunities. This approach was adopted in response to the need to generate rich and original descriptions of the respondents' views and professionals experiences in anticipation that one can discern what is exactly happening in the tourism development areas vis-à-vis online child sexual abuse and what can be done to eradicate it. The study was informed by a case study and twenty nine (29) child protection officers who are directly involved in handling matters associated with child abuse in the country were in-depth interviewed. The study lasted for six months and thematically covered the motivating factors, techniques, impacts, support services, preventive strategies; and institutional collaboration.

DISCUSSIONS

Online child sexual abuse elimination strategies

In deliberating the strategies to fight child sexual abuse in the tourism development areas, informants have highlighted varying methods namely; regular public sensitization, consistent law enforcement, rehabilitation of victims and perpetrators, strengthening and tough laws enactment, stringent code of conducts implementation, strict monitoring of the TDA and environment, rapid prosecution of perpetrators, long term jailing and black listing of perpetrators, strong national and international partnership, capacity building of institutions, responsible parenting promotion and practice, access to quality and relevant education for all children, budget allocation increment, inclusion in curriculum, poverty eradication, government blocking pornographic websites; and installation of monitoring applications; and limiting internet access as illustrated in the table below.

Identified strategies	Frequency	%
Regular public sensitization	29	8.2
Consistent law enforcement	16	5.0
Rehabilitation of victims and perpetrators	14	4.0
Strengthening of current laws and tough one enactment	21	6.0
Stringent code of conducts implementation	13	4.0
Strict monitoring of the TDA and environment	17	5.0

Rapid prosecution, jailing; and black listing of convicted perpetrators	24	7.0
Strong national and international partnership	13	4.0
Capacity building of institutions	27	8.0
Responsible parenting promotion and practice	30	9.0
Access to quality and relevant education for all children	19	5.4
Budget allocation increment	17	5.0
Child sexual abuse inclusion in curriculum	32	9.1
Poverty eradication	41	12.0
Government blocking pornographic websites	16	5.0
Installation of monitoring applications and limiting internet access	22	6.3
Total responses	351	100.00

Due to the complexity and secrecy of child sexual abuse especially the cyber one, it is critical that everybody is involved, however, for people to participate awareness must be created as amplified by some informants: “..... I will add this to what my fellow participants said, also in combating this we need to empower children and in empowering them we need to make sure we give them as much information as they require about sexual abuse.....there should be constant awareness raising because many people don’t know the dangers of the internet especially the children.....experts should go to the communities to have direct sensitization with the mass on the bad side of the internets to save our children....,” commented a female informant. This concurs with (Stanley, 2001) findings, to address or minimize the associated dangers in children being on the internet, there is a serious need for their parents to be sensitized and educated on negative consequences and the operation of the virtual world.

Similarly, to combat crimes in the communities the consistent enforcement of the laws and regulatory frameworks are paramount especially when it comes to the disadvantaged communities felt the informants: “.....yes, the laws are there, because The Gambia as a state party to some international legal instruments.....and we have our Children Act 2005 amended in 2016, the legal framework is there, we need to make sure that the laws are effectively enforced to make sure that children are protected from all abuses including online that we are talking” emphasised some informants. This substantiated (UNICEF, 2020b) findings, to fight and eventually eliminate child sexual exploitation and abuse, the ‘INSPIRE’ framework has galvanized huge commendations as it puts emphasis on seven critical thematic intervention areas: implementation and enforcement of laws, norms and values, safe environment, parents and caregivers support, income and economic strengthening, response and support services; and education and life skills. Similarly, (Livingstone, Davidson, Batool, & Haughton, 2017) found, there are series of agreements between national governments, private company policies and initiatives, and industry-level initiatives, nevertheless sufficient data

exist to suggest that more needs to be done to ensure the safety of children online especially the strengthening of collaboration with the law enforcement agencies for consistent and timely implementation of regulatory frameworks.

In the same vein, informants felt that the current laws and code of conduct need some strengthening while more stringent laws are enacted as without such perpetrators will never feel scared and children will never be saved online. Apparently, the internet has become something we cannot do without as ranging from buying food items to lectures are sometime conducted online proclaimed some informants: “.....we should make sure there are tough laws that are protecting these children so they will not be abuse onlinesome are weak need to be review..... some are even obsolete,” asserted a female informant. “.....I think there must be strong policies and codes put in place for creating and controlling a website we are losing our future.....and tourism codes strictly implemented and even the cultural one too.....we are a religious and cultured society.....defaulting hotels and destinations seriously sanctioned.....” furiously lamented another female informant. These conform with (Davy Deanna, 2017), revelations, for nations to protect their children against sexual abuse and exploitation, they must strengthen their domestic legislations, extraterritorial laws, criminal justice systems, ensure cooperation between all law enforcement agencies, eradicate corruption in the law enforcement institutions and the consistent inefficient law enforcement practices. Additionally, (Cant, Harries, & Chamarette, 2022), found, restorative justice in which all parties including perpetrators and victims will have the opportunities to talk to each other openly and frankly, has the power both to minimize the negative impacts of abuse and to prevent future occurrence. To effectively protect the children on the internet, developers and companies must pay the cost associated to the downside of the various applications and websites and also be forced to strictly abide established codes and ethics as required of most companies, industries, academic communities; and other institutions (Stanley, 2001).

Similarly (Ali et al., 2021) revealed, to combat and subsequently eliminate online child sexual abuse governments must enact tough legislations that criminalised it, intensify collaboration with all stakeholders, invest in national database on child sexual abuse, increase public sensitization, parents and schools through the mass media; and support the building of digital resilience.

To pick up the pieces after such traumatizing experiences, victims and perpetrators deserve adequate psychosocial support, however, the immediate prosecution of perpetrators is another cardinal support communities’ need. This is fundamental to fight stigma and discrimination, prevent relapse, restore communities’ confidence in the justice system and furthermore to motivate them to report sexual abuses and consistently support the prosecution team.

“.....adequate support including psychological ones are quickly and rapidly made available to victims and families as without which it can result in relapse,” asserted a male informant. In the same vein commented another male informant “.....without such.....families and communities will not report cases we not win the war.....i must add,” he concluded. These are in congruent with (Abdulraheem & Oladipo, 2010), the fight against the commercial sexual exploitation of children and their trafficking can only be conquered without victims recidivism if there are well funded rescue,

recovery, rehabilitation; and reintegration services in the communities. Because rehabilitation of rehabilitees is not a plus for them alone but rather for the entire society, as they become assets instead of liabilities, it is fundamental that perpetrators of child sexual abuse and exploitation are included in rehabilitation and reintegration programmes especially the juveniles ones (EU, 1996).

Additionally, according to other informants, the quick prosecution of perpetrators, is a must: “ the implementation of the law and the fast prosecution of perpetrators and announcing their names everywhere without unnecessary delaydiscourages victims’ families and communities from reporting cases must be seen as core in online abuse fight,” elaborated a female informant. Similarly, another male informant holding almost the same opinions: “.....that government should ensure perpetrators of child abuse quickly prosecuted and punish heavily including jailing, this is more than urgent... any delay can result in people not having confidence in the system causing them not report cases and also not to actively participate in the trials.” These views concur with (Mitchell, Boyd, Mitchell, & Boyd, 2014) findings, for any meaningful breakthrough in the prevention of online sexual abuse to occur, these obstacles must be addressed with urgency, the rapidly changing nature of the technologies, lack of trained personnels, inadequate funding and equipment for child protection institutions; inadequate legislations to investigate and prosecute abusers to secure jail terms and blacklisting of perpetrators, inadequate sharing of information between law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders; and lack of age verification and child trafficking. Similarly, (Cant et al., 2022) elaborated, well thought preventive programs must consider approaches that entail primordial, primary, second, tertiary prevention techniques; and restorative justice.

According to another female informant, long term jailing of abusers is unavoidable otherwise, the children will continue to be unsaved as he asserted: “.....I strongly support jailing to change behaviours and deter others, but also the parents shouldn’t give a child a phone at the tender age, let the parents not allow the children to access that phone and internet at that age.” This buttresses (Vrancken & Chetty, 2009) and (ECPAT, 2016) findings, winning the battle against child sexual abuse and commercial exploitation requires ratification and domestication of international conventions, enactment of harsh laws, vibrant law enforcement agencies, immediate investigation and prosecution of perpetrators and associates, bilateral and multilateral cooperation, imposition of tough punishment including jailing, but equally important is nations having national register of sex offenders and blacklisting of all alleged and convicts.

On the same token, the informants felt the promotion of strong national and international cooperation and capacity building of critical institutions is fundamental in prevention strategies as asserted by some informants: “ I believe this war is beyond the capacity of all nations therefore, regional and international cooperation should be strengthen.....I know it is happening but we need more these abusers are powerful both in terms of money and connections.” Similarly, another male informant felt the same: “.....coordination and collaboration has to be intensive to ensure institutions can quickly come to the aid of victims while perpetrators are chase and punish to the fullest.....we cannot success when we don’t punish ” These are corroborated by (Bracket Foundation, n.d.) findings while the digital technology has the power to reduce if not to eliminate online sexual abuse of children through the rapid sharing of information, quick mobilization of resources; and cutting-edge knowledge, all

stakeholders collaborating at different levels is a must to do thing (Bracket Foundation, n.d.).

According to some informants, eliminating child sexual abuse particularly virtual one, requires intensive and extensive capacity building and well resourcing of institutions: “.....government should ensure units in the law enforcement agencies are well trained and funded, because is also important if the laws are there but the persons are not well trained to do the required preventive job, for example, I can lock my computer they wouldn’t be able to see anything, they will come and say we search everywhere but we cannot find anything, so they need to be well trained in dealing with modern sophisticated gadgets.....” This is in agreement with (Bracket Foundation, n.d.), for the fight against online sexual abuse of children to have any meaningful impacts especially with the application of different strategies including the digital ones in ensuring the full enforcement of the law and quick prosecution of perpetrators, it requires investment in the capacity of public and civil society organizations. To expedite investigation and prosecution to avert unnecessary delays, law enforcement personnels require to be trained in social communication, computer and computing systems, child sexual abuse materials (CSAM), investigation skills, legislations, types of offenders, CSAM, social media platforms operation and management, emotional resilience, inter-agency collaboration and motivation to work on CSAM. Similarly (Foundation, 2016) found to ensure rapid prosecution and conviction of perpetrators, the problems being encountered by the law enforcement agencies such as inadequate knowledge of cyber laws and limited enforcement capacities, limited cybercrime cells and cyber forensic capacities and needed resources, inadequate specialized skills, capacities in prosecution must be addressed with urgency (Leclerc, Cale, Holt, & Drew, 2022). Accordingly (Edwards, Christensen, Rayment-McHugh, & Jones, 2021) revealed, though the law enforcement agencies have difficulties in identifying and rescuing victims, identifying and quickly prosecuting perpetrators is a must to deter the uploading and sharing of new CSAM in the internet.

Equally, the eradication of online sexual abuse and exploitation demands responsible parenting as elaborated by some informants: “.....in ensuring children are saved and secured, responsible parenting entailing strict monitoring of children access to the internet and places of visit, has become must, however, the government and its partners interventions in the form of increase budget allocation and capacity building of families and child protection institutions, consistent delivery of accessible and quality education for all children, incorporation of child abuse in curriculums; and fostering of international partnership is well overdue,” lamented a male informant. This dovetail with (Sengupta & Chaudhuri, 2011), in addition to the outreach programs to sensitize the teens about the dangers of the virtual world, parents should adopt responsible parenting which requires among other to take the responsibilities to educate their children on the negative consequences of the internet rather than banning them from being online.

According to another key informant strict monitoring of children in the cyber world is indispensable: “ when your children know you are monitoring her in and out on internet,they will not go beyond the boundariesthey will understand you are watching..... children have rightsbut we should exercise parental control, because parental control is just a mentorship towards his potentials, becoming responsible and a knowledgeable person in the society

instead of a liability.....very important in parenting..... this is not parental control,” lamented a male informant. This endorses (Phelan, 2022) findings, with the versatility of the perpetrators and vast opportunities in the virtual world to abuse children, no single strategy will be sufficient enough to protect the children, instead, multifaceted approaches are required which include the strict and constant monitoring and regulation of all environments including the travel and tourism industry. Additionally as revealed by (Edwards et al., 2021), peer-to-peer monitoring, automated multimodal CSAM detection tools, using web crawlers to identify CSAM sites, pop-up warning messages; and facial recognition are all critical stay safety online strategies. In view of the soaring cases of cyber sexual abuse, governments should commence strict monitoring of the virtual world through strict legislations, policies, service standards, etc. that regulate the posting of materials and cyber world behaviours. However, this requires striking a balance between children rights to protection and the full realization of their right to freedom of expression, access to information; and right to privacy which ‘safety by design’ solution is capable of delivering (To & Alliance, 2022) and (Stanley, 2001).

Similarly, some informants felt access to education is a significant strategy in the fight against child sexual abuse and commercial exploitation: “.....basic quality and relevant education is made available to all children as it has both short and long term prevention mechanism especially with inclusion of child abuse in the lessons taught, with that we can be assured a safe environment as the children themselves will be at the forefront of the battle,” added another informant. This is congruent with (Kotrla & Wommack, 2011) findings, while the provision of professional rescue, recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration services at accessible and affordable cost for survivors of child abuse and exploitation is a must, the access to quality and relevant education for all children at all ages is indispensable in tackling the menace in all strata. In UK, studies have consistently highlighted an increase in children using the internet, thus, to ensure their safety in the cyber world, it is fundamental that schools are engage to teach them digital and media literacy plus internet safety, (Livingstone et al., 2017). Similarly (Stanley, 2001) found in the existing modules of ICT instructions, there is high need that the downsides of the internet are included in school curriculums.

To make impacts on children online safety crusade, some informants felt that it will remain a dream without increase budget allocation, eradication of poverty, blocking of dirty websites; and parents installing monitoring application in their respective gadgets as furiously lamented by an informant who is a mother and struggling to make end meets like the majority of the Gambians: “.....government increases the budget allocation for child protection institutions and units to deliver effective and efficient standard services including food which has the potential to prevent relapse as the victims and perpetrators will be motivated to stay for treatments in rehabilitations centre.” This substantiates (Stanley, 2001) findings, to curb the downsides of the internet, governments and development partners should consider allocating enough resources to child welfare institutions for capacity building and research to inform policies and legislations and their respective enforcement. For the criminal justice system to have impacts on the elimination of online child sexual abuse, through investigation and prosecution of perpetrators, the institutions require capacity building and sufficient financial investments, (UNICEF, 2020a).

According to some informants for Gambian children like all other children around the globe to remain secured both online and offline, governments and partners must attack poverty head-on: “.....I think we need a strong intervention from the government.....family strengthening programs could help families example if you go to pipeline mosque you will see some people begging and there are children beside them and they will send them telling them use this bowl go as fast as traffic light, so during that period that child might be exposed to issues of sexual abuse, so if you ask why they are there, they will say they don’t have anything to eat, so if there are family strengthening programs that help those families to have something at home that could sustain them maybe they might not be on the streets and in the case also if a tourists wants to exploit them they will have something at home that would not allow that tourists to do such a thing,” advanced a female informant. “.....state and partners intensive their efforts in reducing poverty in the country especially at the community and family level as it is a key contributor,” added another informant. These assertions concur with (ECPAT, 2006) for government and partners to succeed in creating a child sexual abuse and exploitation free communities, they must eliminate the widely spread grinding poverty, unemployment, lack of basic needs and amenities, poor access to quality and relevant healthcare and education services; and children being separated from their families in disastrous situations.

However, one female key informant had a different perspective “..... poverty could also be the state of mind, you might think you don’t have something but in reality you have something, so if we invest in civic education the minds of people will be more enlighten on some of those issues so they could have a very mature brain that will help them to see how they will engage in activities that will generate them income rather than being in other activities that will introduce their children to abuses, some people are poor but they don’t beg or expose kids to abuse,” she concluded. This perspective of poverty has been seriously refuted by (Elizabeth A. Throop, 2019) as she found it to be worthless because herein, poverty is not seen to be caused by a structurally unjust economic system but rather a defect of character in the poverty. Thus, it was a pure capitalist approach to deny the poor access to essential social services. However, (Adria Molotsky, n.d.), found serious positive impacts on the life and living conditions of needy people in Malawi because of benefiting from cash transfer programs since it was able to help them to make rational economic decisions which they couldn’t before joining program due to stress and negative behaviours as result of their state of poverty.

Similarly, the fight requires governments and partners to be courageous enough to block dirty websites and encourage parents to monitor their children in the internet by the installation of appropriate applications while continuously promoting and protecting children rights. “.....they need to provide clear laws that are banning it and even blocking accessing to dangerous websites because as we speak now, I am not aware of any law if there are but they are not specific.tough laws and closing bad websites is very helpful because with online only the government can help,” asserted a male informant. This conform with (Maestral, 2021), to ensure the children are saved and secured in the internet, content blocking is critical which can be done both nationally and by internet service providers, however, it must not be the blanket blocking because it can be regarded as infringements of people’s human rights. The law enforcement agencies in addition to lobbying telecommunication companies and service providers to take up with seriousness their social responsibilities they

should obliged them to block and report websites identified with pornographic contents (Ali et al., 2021). Similarly, (Edwards et al., 2021), for children to stay safe in the virtual world of which they cannot be denied, it is important that more efforts are made to make it difficult to commit crime in the cyber world, increase the risk of being caught, significantly reduce the rewards from committing such crimes, decrease the provocations to offend; and eliminate all excuses for criminal activities in the internet. With the blocking of pornographic websites by Google and Microsoft, there has been significant dropped in the search and access to CSEM but because other countries and companies have neither criminalized online child sexual abuse nor blocked pornographic contents, especially in Russia; searchers located in such countries are continuously using these services with ease to access CSEM and children for abuse and exploitation (Steel, 2015).

Apparently as felt by majority of the key informants that safety and security of the children cannot be entirely left with the government, parents must be involved but because of the cunning nature and digital smartness of the children, digital monitoring systems can be viable alternative to continuous spot checking: “.....such applications are very important, so as to prevent children from using unwanted websites.....also they can be control by creating a google account whatever, that child does will reflect on the parents phone,.....then you will know what she is up to and with that children are safe and careful with their rights too,” added another male informant. This substantiates (Choi et al., 2018) findings, for the children to be save online, since stopping them from using gadgets like smartphones and computers for example, is not feasible and practically possible, while child protection officers are urged to intensive their sensitization, apps developers and companies must take child safety online as a serious social responsibility by all means possible. Tthe use of the splash page as a warning page for users not to access child sexual abuse materials has significantly encourage reporting of bad contents and has also deterred many offenders as they regard this application risky. So too are other softwares currently use by the FBI namely onion router, riffle, frenet and 12P, according to (Maestral, 2021). To ensure children are secured online, pop-ups, age verification and assurance should be fortified by applying different methods such as uploading users’ identity cards, passports, parents’ identity cards as part of the user registration process especially for the minors are critical. However, it demands to be back by transparent reporting systems and referral mechanisms for children experiencing cyber abuse, all geared toward risk detection and mitigation (To & Alliance, 2022). Similarly (Bracket Foundation, n.d.) observed, computers and related gadgets like Artificial Intelligence (AI) has the capacity to enhance the protection of children online through monitoring and the prosecution of perpetrators because it has the power to process large volume of data in addition to its ability to do some basic human duties.

However, one informant was quick to condemn children being denied to access the internet in the name of parents’ rights to control and monitor their remote activities. “.....switching off the Wi-Fi is not the solution, they may also need the internet to do certain things to research and so on, but you should also monitor whatever they are doing, you should engage them at the end of the day to educate them about the dangers because they cyber intelligent.....” highlighted an informant. This dovetails with (To & Alliance, 2022), for the safety of all especially the children and other disadvantage groups, the monitoring and ensuring limited access to the internet is fundamental as in the absence of such, online platforms will continue to compete

for massive profit at the expense of customers without strengthening the current measures that are not sufficient to shield children from being abused and exploited. With the versatility of the perpetrators and vast opportunities in the virtual world to sexually abuse and exploit children, no single strategy will be sufficient enough to protect the children, instead, multifaceted approaches are required which include the strict and constant monitoring and regulation of the children and all critical environments including the travel and tourism industry, (Phelan, 2022). In addition to the search engines like google, the Facebook and other social media making the “5 ‘S’s of accessing children online in Kenya mostly via the smartphones, tablet, computers, etc. sometimes connected to home Wi-Fi, requires serious review and regular monitoring digitally (Maestral, 2021).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In a nutshell, to elimination online child sexual abuse and exploitation demands: regular public sensitization, consistent law enforcement, rehabilitation of victims and perpetrators, strengthening and tough laws enactment, stringent code of conducts implementation, strict monitoring of the TDA and environment, rapid prosecution of perpetrators, long term jailing and black listing of convicted perpetrators, strong national and international partnership, capacity building of institutions, responsible parenting promotion and practice, access to quality and relevant education for all children, budget allocation increment, child abuse inclusion in schools curriculum, poverty eradication, government blocking websites, installation of monitoring applications; and limiting internet access.

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