

# Assessment of Child Abuse Cases Applying for Age Estimation



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## Abstract

Child abuse is defined as; Behaviours that are made by an adult knowingly or unknowingly and affect the child's health, physical development, psychosocial development in the negative direction". Abusive may be the closest individual of the child, or may be an entirely foreigner to the child, and sometimes the abuse, as noted in the definition develops after the different intentions of the adult; such as early marriages.

485 cases who applied for age estimation to Cukurova University the Department of Forensic Medicine were examined and 215 cases of abuse were determined and examined retrospectively. 3 of the cases were male, the youngest 10 (identity), the oldest 18 (identity) years old cases applied to us. While 81 cases indicate that the age of their identity is correct, 131 cases claimed that they are older/trying to enlarge age. Since 8 cases were pregnant age estimation couldn't be done, 85 cases were found to be compatible with the bone age record of the population. 133 cases indicating they had religious marriage/ self-willing marriage, and 111 cases were detected pregnant/had childbirth.

Early marriages are one of the important problems of children and women in society. Regardless of the cause, prevention of early marriages and the elimination of contradictions in this issue, raising awareness on the issue and pursuing the state should be ensured in terms of public health.

**Keywords:** Child; Abuse; Age estimation; Marriage

## Introduction

Child abuse is defined as; Behaviors that are made by an adult knowingly or unknowingly and affect the child's health, physical development, psychosocial development in the negative direction". It is clear from the definition that it's not important what the adult thinks or his intention for the child, the obstruction or restriction of the child's development is sufficient [1,2].

The most difficult type of abuse is sexual abuse, which is mostly confidential. Abusive may be the closest individual of the child, or may be an entirely foreigner to the child, and sometimes the abuse, as noted in the definition develops after the different intentions of the adult; such as early marriages. Marriages that are common in our country and especially after a religious marriage, cause an abuse both to the bride who is still a child and has not been able to complete her development and education and in different ways to the child who's born after this marriage and can't be raised by his mother/father just a child, like their baby is. This situation especially emerges in the health institution that the mother applies after the pregnancy [3].

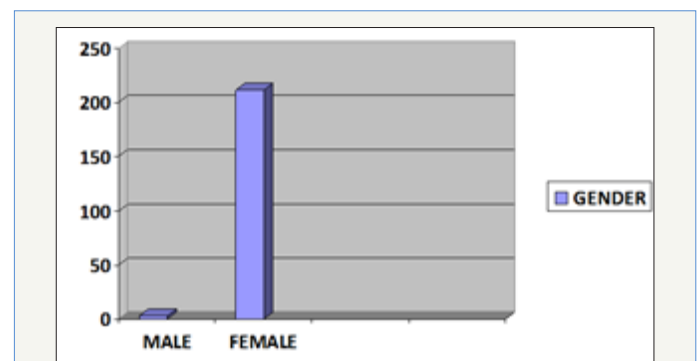
## Material and Methods

By examining the cases of sexual abuse in the cases applying for age estimation, the frequency of the concept of 'child bride'

emerging after the religious marriage / family consciousness / other marriage in these cases will be revealed, the process of emerging from this concept will be unfolded.

In our study, 485 cases who applied for age estimation to Cukurova University the Department of Forensic Medicine were examined and 215 cases of abuse were determined and examined retrospectively.

## Findings



**Figure 1:** Gender distribution.

Of the 485 cases who applied for age estimation to Cukurova University the Department of Forensic Medicine, 215 cases under legal process within the scope of sexual abuse were examined retrospectively. It was seen that only 3 of the cases were male (Figure 1), it was determined that the youngest 10 (identity), the oldest 18 (identity) years old cases applied to us. While 81 cases indicate that the age of their identity is correct, 131 cases claimed that they are older/trying to enlarge age. Since 8 cases were pregnant age estimation could not be done, 85 cases were found to be compatible with the bone age record of the population. 133 cases indicating they had religious marriage/self-willing marriage, and 111 cases were detected pregnant / had childbirth.

## Discussion



Figure 2.

The phenomena detected in the visible part of the iceberg of sexual abuse cases, are often sent for age determination with the efforts of the other party to justify himself (Figure 2). Children who are victimized repeatedly during the period of examination-age determination in cases of rape, in early marriage, sometimes under the pressure of the family, sometimes with the intention of protecting their husbands pass through different processes in childhood [4].

Marriages in childhood are also considered as an abuse. These marriages are expressed in different terms such as 'early marriages', 'child brides' or 'child marriages'. Although it is not possible to reach

definite figures, it is thought that 10-12 million girls are married at an early age in developing countries every year. When we deal with this subject specific to Turkey, it's possible to say that one out of every three woman made a child marriage. Misunderstanding of traditions, customs and religious beliefs can accelerate early marriage. The traditional family regards the girl as an entrusted entity to the family for a certain period and thinks that the original home of the girl's is the home of her husband [3,4].

When it comes to early marriages, the accusations are mostly "child brides". Girls are married much earlier than boys and these marriages create more serious problems for girls. While many problems seem to be influential in the emergence of early marriages, these problems vary from country to country and from culture to culture. Early marriages, emerging with various reasons like economic inefficiencies, lack of education, tradition and religious practices, wars, catastrophes, domestic violence and social pressure, as well as unemployment, poverty, increases in maternal / child mortality bring negative consequences. At early ages and forced marriages take the lives of thousands of women [4].

## Conclusion

Early marriages are one of the important problems of children and women in society. Regardless of the cause, prevention of early marriages and the elimination of contradictions in this issue, raising awareness on the issue and pursuing the state should be ensured in terms of public health.

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