

**UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCES OF ADOLESCENTS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION: INFORMING  
SOCIAL WORK SERVICES**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

The impact of adolescent human trafficking for sexual exploitation is of such a nature that it interferes with the attainment of adolescent developmental tasks that would lead to the ability to become independent adults. This interference offers specific challenges to service providers. The goal of this study was therefore to develop an in-depth understanding of service providers' perceptions of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation with a view to inform social work services with a view to inform social work services. The research methodology entailed the use of the contextual, explorative and descriptive research designs within a qualitative approach. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. Data analysis led to the identification of themes, sub-themes and categories that addressed the goal of the study. A literature control was conducted to verify the data and to draw conclusions and make recommendations for social work service delivery.

### **Key words**

Adolescence, Human trafficking, Service provider, Sexual exploitation, Victim

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I hereby declare that the theses, "Understanding the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation: Informing social work services", is my own work and that all sources utilised is acknowledged in the text and listed in the reference list.

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Ms I. Anthony

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Date

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## CHAPTER 1

### General introduction to the research study

#### 1.1 General introduction and background information

**Human trafficking** should not be viewed as “something that does not happen anymore” (Kuzmier, 2010:2). Confirming the existence and problematic nature of human trafficking in current times, Skinner (2008:1) warns that human trafficking is currently a serious social problem. Every day, in many countries over the world, human beings are bought and sold, transported against their wills and forced into lives of prostitution and pornography, slave labour and “utter misery” (Bezuidenhout and Joubert, 2008:198; Redlight, 2010:1). One may also view this social issue as a modern form of slavery (Harris, 2012).

Chalke (2009:10) describes the term ‘human trafficking’ as the dislocation of someone by means of deception or coercion for exploitation. Article 5 of the United Nations Trafficking in Persons Protocol provides a definition of human trafficking to ensure consistency and consensus regarding this social issue. In terms of this definition, human trafficking is also a crime when a person a) attempts to commit a trafficking offence, b) participates as an accomplice in such an offence and c) organises or directs others to commit trafficking (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2012). Human trafficking could occur through, amongst others, forced prostitution (i.e. sexual exploitation); forced labour; forced military services; adoption and removal of organs (Bezuidenhout and Joubert, 2008:199; Redlight, 2010:4). It is an act of controlling someone through various ways including force, fraud or coercion. The aim of this control is to *gain financially through the exploitation* (Harris, 2012).

Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2008:198) place emphasis on the fact that trafficking of humans is a serious crime against humanity and a *violation of human rights*. Harris (2012) concurs with this statement and explains that human trafficking strips victims of their freedom and basic human rights. In line with these viewpoints, human trafficking is recognised as a serious crime on an international level. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2012) also describes it as a “grave violation of

human rights". To address this situation the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (2012) developed a protocol to prevent, suppress and punish human trafficking. The South African Constitution (Amended Act 34 of 2001) also acknowledges crimes against human rights. The Bill of Rights was included in this legal document. The said act specifically recognises human trafficking as an act of slavery, servitude and forced labour in Section 13 of Chapter 2.

In summary, and in order to develop an understanding of this criminal act one has to view human trafficking as a threat, an act of force or other forms of coercion and/or the abuse of power. The victim is recruited, transported, transferred or harboured in a forceful or deceitful manner, while the trafficker gains financially from some form of exploitation of the victim (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2012).

Explaining the **contributing factors** to this social issue, Bezuidenhout (2008:257) mentions one of the reasons for the existence of human trafficking as the fact that it provides perpetrators with economic benefits. In this regard, it is estimated that human trafficking is the third largest illegal industry worldwide (Bezuidenhout, 2008:257). In line with the view that the economy contributes to human trafficking, Kuzmier (2010:1) indicates that poverty is a reason for people's vulnerability to become victims of human trafficking. The author explains that perpetrators target people who are trapped in harsh circumstances, and then tempt them with promises of a better life. Although profiles of victims may differ in terms of age, nationality, socio-economic status and education, they share two characteristics; namely:

- 1) Some form of vulnerability and
- 2) Isolation from their families, social networks and sometimes also their country of origin, language and culture (Harris, 2012).

The **prevention** of human trafficking remains a difficult task. One of the reasons for this is its clandestine nature. As long as there are individuals who succeed in gaining on a monetary level, human trafficking will be difficult to eradicate (Bezuidenhout 2008:261). Human trafficking often involves organised crime groups or syndicates, who make large sums of money at the expense of their victims (Bezuidenhout 2008:247).

According to Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2008:252) human traffickers have deceitful objectives and care little about human life. Since they focus mainly on capital gain, there are also a number of factors that enhance the practice of human trafficking and that also make it difficult to prevent human trafficking. Some of the important ones are the following:

- *Exploitation by parents*: Parents of children are willing, for various reasons, to place their children in the hands of the human trafficker in order to receive financial gain and stability for their families.
- *Rebel abductions*: War and political strife in countries create circumstances that make it easier for rebels to abduct men, women and children for a variety of reasons.
- *Labour exploitation*: There is a need for unskilled cheap labour and menial work that no one wants to do. This creates the opportunity for human traffickers to recruit unsuspecting individuals, often to work for long hours with very little or no pay at all.
- *Sexual exploitation*: Children are abducted not only by human traffickers, but also by those whom they either know or respect and trust. In some cases they are taken across borders where they become victims to those who use them for work and sexual exploitation.

**Sexual exploitation** as a motivation behind human trafficking will be the focus of this present study. The United Nations describes sexual exploitation as the use of another person “for sexual purposes in exchange for cash or in-kind favours between a customer, intermediary or agent and others who profit from the trade” (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes, 2012). Sexual exploitation violates, humiliates or exploits the physical and emotional integrity or dignity of the victim through an element of a sexual nature (Spies, 2006:128).

**Sexual exploitation of adolescents** is viewed as a serious problem, and as “one of the worst forms of child labour and a modern form of slavery” (International Labour Organisation, 2005:12). Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2008:55) describe sexual abuse of children (including adolescents) as the involvement of dependent,

developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities that they do not truly understand, and to which they are unable to give informed consent. This form of exploitation involves an act whereby adults take advantage of adolescents' ignorance about sexual matters, their vulnerability in terms of their dependence on the perpetrator for care, their inability to protect themselves and/or the deliberate abandonment of values and morals that society has laid down to regulate sexual behaviour.

Against the backdrop of the above mentioned serious nature of human trafficking, and specifically focusing on the sexual exploitation of adolescents as a form of human trafficking, the researcher attempted to obtain information regarding the **prevalence** of this issue. Looking at the *international situation* and statistics regarding human trafficking, it became clear that it is not an easy undertaking. The gathering of exact data/statistics is difficult as many countries from, to or through which humans are being trafficked do not hold statistics or do not file such information. It is also an "under-cover" operating activity. This illegal nature results in the fact that available statistics are often not reliable or, at best, have to be estimated (Chwaki and Wahab, 2005).

The organisation "Redlight", that aims to raise awareness of human trafficking as a social problem, estimates that 27 million people are currently affected by human trafficking world-wide (Redlight, 2010:1). In line with abovementioned estimation, the United Nations acknowledged human trafficking as a serious, growing phenomenon (Chwaki and Wahab, 2005). The United Nations estimated that 700 000 to 4 million women and children were trafficked around the world annually (Chwaki and Wahab, 2005). In its 2005 report on forced labour, the ILO indicated that an estimated 2.5 million women, men and children were trafficked within and across international borders at any given time (International Labour Organisation, 2005:32). Statistics from the United States of America indicates that this country also experiences human trafficking as a serious social problem. It is estimated that between 600 000 to 800 000 men, women and children were trafficked during 2004 across international borders. Many individuals were also trafficked within their own national borders, and such trade was estimated to run into millions (United States of America, 2005; International Labour Organisation, 2005).

With specific focus on human trafficking of children/adolescents, the ILO (International Labour Organisation, 2005:15) reports that of the 1,39 million people who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation 40 to 50 per cent are children (under the age of 18). From 28,000 to 30,000 children under the age of 18, approximately half of them are used in prostitution in South Africa (International Labour Organisation, 2005:15).

South Africa therefore does not escape the problem of human trafficking. On the national level, the fact that the first week in September 2007 was declared 'human trafficking week' in South Africa emphasises the magnitude of the problem (Bezuidenhout and Joubert, 2008:198). According to the 2006 Trafficking in Persons Report (United States of America, 2005), South Africa is a source, transit and destination country for men; women and children trafficked for forced labour and sexual exploitation. Bezuidenhout (2008:251) however notes that it is not clear how many adolescents are trafficked internally (i.e. within the boundaries of South Africa).

### **Theoretical framework related to adolescence**

With specific focus on **adolescents** who are trafficked for sexual exploitation, it is important to consider that adolescence is the last stage of childhood. Adolescence is the period of transition between childhood and adulthood and it can therefore be seen as a developmental bridge between being a child and becoming an adult (Louw, Louw and Ferns, 2007:278). In order to grow towards adulthood, adolescents have to accomplish certain developmental tasks. The successful completion of these tasks will enable individuals to function optimally in adulthood. Adolescents need to master the following developmental tasks (Louw, Van Ede and Louw, 2005:388).

**Table 1.1:** Adolescent developmental tasks (as adopted from Louw et al., 2005:388)

<b>Focus of adolescent developmental tasks</b>			
<b>Social</b>	<b>Emotional</b>	<b>Cognitive</b>	<b>Physical</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of independence from parents and other adults</li> <li>• Development of socially responsible behaviour</li> <li>• Acceptance of and adjustment to certain groups</li> <li>• Establishment of sexual relationships</li> <li>• Development of a strong emotional bond with another person</li> <li>• Preparation for marriage and family responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a masculine or feminine gender-role identity</li> <li>• Development of an own identity</li> <li>• Development of philosophy of life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of cognitive skills and the acquisition of knowledge</li> <li>• Development of moral concepts and values that could serve as guidelines for behaviour</li> <li>• Development of a value system based on a realistic and scientific world view</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptance of changed physical appearance</li> <li>• Selection and preparation for a career</li> <li>• Achievements of financial independence</li> </ul>

Erikson's theory places the focus on the abovementioned social and emotional developmental tasks. In terms of this theory of human development, the adolescent (ages 12 to 18), if he/she mastered the developmental tasks associated with previous developmental stages, starts to form an identity and a sense of who he/she is and what he/she believes in. The peer group plays an integral part in this stage. If the adolescent is able to develop an identity he/she will feel positive about the future and devoted to following his/her dreams. If he/she is not able to develop an identity, he/she will be unsure of his/her role, become judgemental of others and try to find acceptance from negative influences (Newman and Newman, 2006:181; Steinberg, 2008:263). When the developmental task of developing a healthy identity is not mastered during adolescence, it could result in role confusion in the later developmental stages. The development of the identity should result in a healthy self-esteem, where the adolescent views him-/herself as unique. The opposite

implies that the adolescent who feels confused and uncertain about his/her own identity and worth becomes vulnerable to becoming a victim of abuse (Louw et al., 2005:388).

With regards to the cognitive development of adolescents, Piaget's theory places the focus on the formal operational stage of human cognitive behaviour. This is the final stage of cognitive development and is associated with adolescence and adulthood. At this point, the person must become capable of hypothetical and deductive reasoning. During this time, people develop the ability to think about abstract concepts. Cognitive development results in the following:

- *Deductive logic*: This type of thinking involves hypothetical situations and is often required in science and mathematics and also to solve problems effectively.
- *Abstract thought*: Possible outcomes for different situations are identified and consequences of actions are fully understood, which assists with decision-making and problem-solving.
- *Problem-solving*: The ability and skill to systematically and methodically solve problems are developed as a final result (Neman and Newman, 2006:185; Carr, 2006).

The achievement of developmental tasks in adolescents should also be viewed in terms of human needs. Maslow (1954) distinguishes between two levels of needs: A lower level which is called deficiency needs and a higher level which is called growth needs. According to Maslow's theory of basic human needs in terms of a hierarchy, an optimally developed person functions on the highest need level (which Maslow calls self-actualisation). This level can only be reached when a person's low-levels or basic needs have been satisfied. Low-level needs include physiological needs (e.g. for food), safety needs (e.g. for physical safety), acceptance needs (e.g. to receive love from people in your environment) and esteem needs (e.g. the need for respect and self-respect) (Louw et al., 2005:68).

On the other hand, Max-Neef's theory of fundamental human needs focuses on basic human needs that exist continuously within all persons regardless of culture

and life stages. The difference between life stages and culture is how these needs are satisfied (Max-Neef, Elzide and Hopenhayn, 1989:18). This theory focuses further on the vision that people have the ability to develop stages of independence, connected with the access to technology/resources; quality life and autonomy (Tay and Diener, 2011:354). According to Max-Neef's theory fundamental human needs are described in terms of existential categories of 1) to exist, 2) to have, 3) to do and 4) to interact. Within these categories the fundamental needs are classified as:

- Right of existence
- Protection
- Love
- Concept
- Participation
- Recreation and Reflection
- Creativity
- Identity
- Freedom (Max-Neef et al., 1989:18)

Social needs, within the context of adolescence, refer to the need to belong, to be cared for and to be accepted by society. In order for an adolescent to master the life task of identity formation related to self-esteem needs that lead to the ability to reach self-actualisation according to Maslow's theory, social needs is essential to provide a sense of being accepted, worthy, wanted and cared for. It can also be linked to the need for love, participation and freedom according to Max Neef's theory (Steinberg, 2008:265).

Linking the characteristics and developmental stages of adolescents and the human needs theories described above with adolescent sexual exploitation, Bezuidenhout (2008:28, 258) describes trafficking with adolescents as dangerous, seeing that these victims are exposed to HIV and AIDS and other diseases because of sexual exploitation. The author warns that human trafficking leads to a feeling of powerlessness, which could result in attempted suicide. Skinner (2008:2) supports this argument, and notes that the psychological, social and economic factors of

human trafficking impacts negatively on the victims, that presents professionals delivering services to these victims with specific challenges.

The discussion above clearly shows the negative impact of sexual exploitation of adolescents in terms of their development and within the context of human needs. With the specific focus on the role of the **social work profession**, the researcher considered the international definition of social work, as developed by the International Association of Schools of Social Work (2012). This definition provides a focus for social work as the promotion of:

- Social change
- Problem-solving in human relationships and
- The empowerment and liberation of people.

The purpose of this focus is to enhance well-being through the use of theories of human behaviour and social systems. Social work intervention furthermore takes place within the context of the systems theory, meaning that the interaction between the adolescent trafficked for sexual exploitation should be assisted with cognisance of environmental and social influences. Lastly, social work is based on the principles of human rights and social justice (International Association of Schools of Social Work, 2012). The violation of the human rights of the sexually exploited adolescent should therefore be viewed as a serious social concern by the profession.

Based on the relevance of the involvement of the social work profession in addressing sexual exploitation of adolescents, the researcher attempted to identify service providers to this group. STOP is an independent, Christian value-based organisation which aims to create awareness and educate the public about the realities of human trafficking. Their main focus areas are to provide training and resources to create awareness and advocacy (Human Trafficking, 2006). The focus is therefore mostly preventative in nature. Molo Songolo is a non-profit organisation with the aim to provide programmes to advance the rights and protection of children. The organisation provides direct support to children in need of care and protection. They empower children with skills that build their human dignity, self-esteem, social confidence, and increase their future prospects. They also educate and train those

who work with children and raise awareness and advocate about children in difficult circumstances (Mobilyn, 2005).

According to Stuurman (2004:5), South Africa does not have comprehensive **legislation** that specifically prohibits human trafficking. Under the current legislation, traffickers can be charged with offences related to kidnapping, assault, rape and immigration. However, the legislation governing these offences does not deal with related issues such as the protection of, and assistance to victims of trafficking. Furthermore, victims are often arrested and prosecuted for offences committed as a direct result of being trafficked, such as prostitution and dealing in drugs (Stuurman, 2004:5). In June 2012 the Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Bill (South Africa, 2010) was accepted by the South African Parliament. The bill addresses various topics regarding trafficking including the reporting of child victims of human trafficking and the provision of health care, but does not refer to the specific needs of an adolescent victim of human trafficking to be addressed through social service delivery. On the other hand, the South Africa Children's Act (Act 38 of 2005) acknowledges the existence of this social problem among children. According to the Children's Act, child traffickers can serve up to 20 years in prison. The South Africa Children's Act (Act 38 of 2005) states in Section 284(1) that "no person, natural or juristic, or in partnership may traffic a child or allow a child to be trafficked". The Act specifically addresses assistance to child victims of trafficking. Both South African children trafficked within or across the borders and foreign children trafficked to South Africa are included in the act. Child victims of trafficking, regardless of their legal status, will, according to this legislation, have access to protection services and will be classified as "children in need of care and protection". Section 287 of the South Africa Children's Act (Act 38 of 2005) states that, if a parent or guardian is involved in the trafficking of his/ her child, a court may suspend all parental responsibilities and rights of that parent or guardian. The child will be placed in safe care and be deemed in need of care and protection. The Act also provides specific standards for support to child victims of human trafficking. Even though South Africa does not have comprehensive counter-trafficking legislation yet, there is a well-established child protection framework which has been significantly strengthened by the implementation of the new South Africa Children's Act (Act 38 of 2005).

In order to adhere to the requirements of the above mentioned legislation, the researcher acknowledged that social workers must be made aware of the specific needs of adolescent victims. In order to obtain a better understanding of such needs, the researcher attempted to find information obtained through **recent studies** in this regard. Molo Songololo, a children's rights organisation in Cape Town, did research regarding child trafficking in South Africa with sexual exploitation for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation. The study established that South African children are predominantly trafficked within the borders of the country, with girl children being the primary target for sexual exploitation. Local gangs and syndicates forcibly recruit them to work as sex workers in brothels. They are sold by their family members as wives or brides to single men or recruited through newspaper advertisements into the sex industry. The trafficking is often localised and the exploitation takes place close to the victim's home. A link between tourism and the commercial exploitation of children was also noted through this study (Mobilyn, 2005). This study did not, however, focus on needs that should be addressed through service delivery to victims of human trafficking. A conclusion, however, was that service providers should receive training to address the needs of child victims of sexual exploitation effectively. The researcher furthermore did an internet search regarding recent studies about human trafficking, with the specific focus on focus areas of social service delivery to adolescent victims and the role of the social work profession at the websites of the Universities of Stellenbosch, Johannesburg, Pretoria, KwaZulu-Natal en Western Cape. No recent studies that focused on the local situation, and specifically related to the needs of adolescent victims of sexual exploitation to be addressed by the social work profession could be found.

Therefore, the focus areas on which social service delivery to adolescent victims of human trafficking should be based were not clearly described in literature and recent research studies. In line with this lack of understanding of the needs of adolescent victims of sexual exploitation through human trafficking, Skinner (2008:2) concurs that little emphasis is placed on supportive services to victims of human trafficking. The author notes that, although the problem is acknowledged, services are still not adequate to address the needs of these victims.

## 1.2 Problem formulation

The first steps in a research study are the selection of a research topic and the statement of the problem (Gravetter and Forzano, 2009:26). The selection of the research topic provides a focus for the research study. The formulation of the problem provides certain direct guidelines to be able to identify and formulate a research question/hypothesis, and to clearly state the focus of the research and the motivation behind this focus (Babbie and Mouton, 2009:99). The research topic of this research study places the focus on the experiences of adolescents who were trafficked for sexual exploitation to inform social service delivery. The research problem, based on the background and preliminary literature study for this study was formulated as follows:

*The seriousness of human trafficking is emphasised by the fact that this social problem was identified as the third largest illegal industry in the world. This international problem is also prevalent in South Africa. The impact of human trafficking (and specific adolescent trafficking for sexual exploitation) is of such a nature that it offers specific challenges to service providers. Subsequently, child trafficking is specifically acknowledged as a social problem in the New Children's Act (Act 38 of 2005). The specific impact of human trafficking and the sexual exploitation of adolescent victims, leads to social issues, such as putting adolescents at risk of HIV and AIDS and interfering with the attainment of the developmental tasks that would lead to the ability to become independent adults. With specific focus on the situation regarding adolescent trafficking in the Western Cape, a recent study showed that although the prevalence of human trafficking has been studied and documented, the experiences of these adolescent victims are not described to enable social workers to develop an understanding of needs to be addressed through social service delivery. Social workers could benefit from research that explore and describe the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation, as it could provide them with focus areas to address when supporting adolescent victims of human trafficking.*

The abovementioned research problem serves as **motivation for this research study**. The researcher hopes to contribute to the knowledge base of the social work

profession through the exploration and description of service providers' perceptions of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation with a view to inform social work services. As a registered and practicing social worker, she hopes to make a positive contribution to the knowledge base of the social work profession, and subsequently to the development of services to adolescent victims of human trafficking.

### **1.3 Research question**

Jansen (2007:3) mentions that the research problem supports the researcher to formulate thoughts to identify specific questions regarding the research topic, and specifically related to the research problem. The purpose of the research question is mainly to guide the researcher through the research study in order to obtain data that will enable the researcher to develop insight into the research problem (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005:54).

According to Creswell (2009:129) and Leedy and Ormrod (2005:4-5), a research question rather than a hypothesis is used in qualitative studies. In this present study the researcher was more interested in discovering the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation, rather than testing a hypothesis. The researcher was not able to formulate a hypothesis that is based on empirical findings, as she was unable to find recent studies that investigated the experiences or needs of adolescent victims of sexual exploitation through human trafficking and social work services addressing the social needs of this group. A research question was therefore identified as suitable to address the research problem. The question that resulted from the research problem is:

- What are service providers' perceptions of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation?

## 1.4 Research goal and objectives

A research goal describes what the researcher wants to achieve through the study. It must therefore be formulated in such a way that it can provide answers to the research problem and the research question (Rubin and Babbie; 2005:649; Creswell, 2009:112-13). Following the research question, the **goal** of this research study was stated as follows:

- To develop an in-depth understanding of service providers' perceptions of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation with a view to inform social work services.

Research objectives provide the researcher with specific steps to complete in the effort to attain the research goal (Fouché and de Vos, 2011:94). The following **objectives** were identified to assist the researcher to attain the goal of this research study:

- To conduct semi-structured interviews to explore the perceptions and experiences of service providers regarding the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation;
- To describe the perceptions and experiences of service providers regarding the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation based on the analyses of the data;
- To analyse and interpret the description of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation, as perceived and experienced by service providers;
- To conduct a literature control in order to verify the data and
- To draw conclusions and make recommendations for social work service delivery.

The methodology implemented in this research study to attain the research goal, to answer the research question, and to address the research problem will be discussed next.

## 1.5 Research methodology

Research methodology provides order, structure, direction and vision to the research study. The methodology followed in a research study therefore provides a scientific framework from which the research process can be applied (Neuman, 2006:451). The discussion that follows provides a description of the methodology that was utilised for the purpose of this study.

### 1.5.1 Research approach

Researchers can make use of two **types of research**, namely basic or applied research. *Basic research* supports or rejects theory. It explains social relationships and interprets the changes in the community. The value of this type of research is that new scientific social ideas are developed and insight is enhanced. Basic research is therefore often implemented within exploratory, descriptive and explanatory research designs. Although it does not always lead to immediate solutions of problems, it forms the knowledge base to develop insight that might lead to solutions (Neuman, 2006:22-23, Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee, 2006:44).

*Applied research*, on the other hand, focuses less on theory and more on specific problems and solutions for these problems. It often utilises the descriptive research design. The benefit is that the results lead to immediate implementation of the solution for the problem. Requirements are that it should be approachable and reader friendly (Bless et al., 2006:44).

This study falls in the ambit of **basic research**, seeing that it contributes to the knowledge base regarding the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation. The exploration and description of these experiences could assist the researcher to make recommendations in terms of focus areas for social services to this group as well as areas for further research that could assist social workers to address this problem in future.

Research studies can be implemented from a quantitative or a qualitative **research approach**. The following discussion will provide a description of the researcher's

motivation for the choice of research approach for the purpose of this research endeavour.

Bless et al. (2006:44] describes the *quantitative research* approach in terms of its statistical/numeric nature. The authors explain that the method of data collection in this approach is focused on measuring scales, questionnaires and investigations. It has the advantage that the results are accurate, seeing that data is obtained in a controlled and structured manner. The quantitative research approach makes use of a research question or hypothesis to address a research problem.

The *qualitative research approach*, on the other hand, assists the researcher to study human actions from the point of view of the people who are being affected or who are involved in the situation (Babbie and Mouton, 2009:210). Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:193) support this description, and add that this approach assists researchers to obtain data with more depth. The authors concur that researchers, through the implementation of the qualitative research approach, facilitates access to valuable information considering that participants share their experiences, perceptions and emotions. This approach therefore helps the researcher to obtain an in-depth conception of the world of the participants. A further description of the qualitative research approach is provided by Bless et al. (2006:79), who assert that qualitative research flows from a research question, and that it makes use of language to collect data. These authors suggest that qualitative research gives special attention to data verification.

The researcher chose the **qualitative research approach** for the purpose of this research study. The goal of this study was to explore and describe service providers' perceptions of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation with a view to inform social work services. The use of language within a natural environment was thus identified as the most suitable method for collecting data to answer the research questions formulated in Section 1.3 of this chapter. The research designs that were chosen to assist the researcher to implement the proposed qualitative research study will be discussed next.

### **1.5.2 Research design**

Considering that the researcher chose to work from a qualitative approach to develop an understanding of services providers' perceptions of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation, the exploratory, descriptive and contextual research designs were viewed as relevant to the goal of this research study (Babbie and Mouton, 2009:210). The discussion below provides a description of these designs to support the researcher's choice.

- **Contextual research design**

The contextual research design enables the qualitative researcher to obtain data within the specific context of the research problem. It places the data within the natural environment of the participants and contributes to the richness of the data (Holzblatt, Wendell and Wood, 2005:22). This research aimed to specifically focus on sexual exploitation within the context of the adolescence developmental stage and the context of human trafficking.

- **Exploratory research design**

The exploratory research design is aimed at the exploration of the research subject and research problem in order to answer the research question. Usually it is used when a gap in the knowledge base regarding the research topic exists. It is mainly focussed on a research question, and is thus often used in qualitative research (Neuman, 2006:19-20; Bless et al., 2006:43/470). During the preliminary literature study (discussed in Section 1.1 above), the researcher established that the literature and previous studies provided a limited focus on the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation. An exploration of these experiences could thus contribute towards knowledge and insight regarding the needs of these adolescents, and assist social workers to plan service delivery accordingly. Flowing from this exploration and in an effort to provide social workers with the relevant information that was obtained through

the exploration of the topic, a descriptive research design (as described below) was chosen.

- **Descriptive research design**

The descriptive research design follows on the exploratory research design, and attempts to describe a situation, environment, and/or process of relationships. It describes the data that is obtained through exploratory research, and enhances the insight regarding the phenomena of interest (Neuman, 2006:19-20; Bless et al., 2006:43/470). The researcher attempted to describe the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation and thus to support social workers in their attempts to deliver services to this group.

The sampling method and techniques used to obtain the data from the adolescents will be discussed next.

### **1.5.3 Population and sample, sampling technique and sample size**

Fox and Bayat (2007:52) describe the **population** of a research study as a total unit from which a sample is selected. Based on discussions with service providers to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation in the Western Cape, the researcher took note of the fact that obtaining the data directly from these adolescents would pose a practical problem. Firstly, these adolescents would often be involved with court cases resulting from the exploitation, and interviews might not be allowed. In addition, the ethical aspect of obtaining permission from parents and guardians could prove difficult, as most of these victims would be in the process of being placed in care by the Children's Court. For this reason, the population is formulated as follows:

- Service providers to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation in the Western Cape

A **sample** is a subset of elements drawn from the population in which the researcher is interested, while sampling is the process through which the sample is drawn (Kumar, 2005:165). A sample for inclusion in the study was selected from the above mentioned population. The criteria for inclusion in the proposed study are as follows:

- Staff members
- At service organisations working with victims of human trafficking and
- Who are working with, or have worked with, adolescent victims of sexual exploitation due to human trafficking
- In the Western Cape

The **method of sampling** which is normally used in qualitative research, and that was therefore chosen to be used in this study, is **non-probability sampling**. The possibility to be chosen to be included in the sample cannot be determined. The size of the sample can thus not be determined at the beginning of the research study (Bless et al., 2006:105-106).

**Sampling techniques** inherent to the non-probable sampling method includes the following: Purposive-, snowball-, accidental- and quota sampling (Bless et al., 2006:105-106). The researcher opted to make use of the **purposive sampling technique**, as this technique enabled her to make use of her judgement regarding the characteristics of the elements to be included in the sampling framework that could enable her to answer the research question best (Bless et al., 2006:105-106).

As explained above, the **size of the sample** cannot be determined at the beginning of the research process when the non-probability sampling method is used. Data saturation therefore determined the size of the sample when the researcher became aware that no new data was coming forward. In support of this, Bless et al. (2006:108) explain that, in qualitative research studies, the sample size is usually smaller than in quantitative research, and that the sample size depends on when no new data is obtained. Data saturation is thus a determining factor in the sample size of qualitative research studies.

The research approach and the sampling method were viewed as determining factors in the choice of how data was collected in this study. This aspect will be discussed in the next section.

#### **1.5.4 Method of data collection and recording**

Methods of data collection in qualitative research studies include the use of focus groups and interviews. Both focus groups and interviews can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured in nature (Creswell, 2009:179-181). Seeing that the research topic is of a sensitive nature, the researcher opted to rather make use of individual interviews. **Semi-structured interviews** furthermore assisted her to ensure that questions lent focus to the interviews without confining the participants' inputs (Cf. Creswell, 2009:179-181).

The researcher sent invitations to the service providers to victims of sexual exploitation as part of human trafficking (see Annexure A). The aim of these letters was to request organisations to assist the researcher with contact-making with possible participants who complied with the inclusion criteria. Once the organisations agreed to participate, interviews were arranged with possible participants at the participating organisations. The researcher discussed the goal of the research study, the reason why they were chosen to be included in the study, the nature of the interviews and the interview guide and the possible risks and advantages with them. Assurance of anonymity and confidentiality was given and permission to record interviews was obtained. The researcher furthermore informed the participants that only the researcher, translator (if necessary), independent coder and the researcher's study leader would have access to the recordings and transcripts. Those who agreed to take part in this study were then presented with an informed consent form, which was explained to them, to sign (see Annexure B). On completion, the researcher made arrangements for the scheduling of interviews.

The following **questions** were asked of the participants during the interviews:

- Tell me about your experiences when working with adolescents who have been sexually exploited due to human trafficking.
- What do they need help with?
- Who do you think can help them?
- How should these adolescents be helped?

In order to provide focus during the interviews, but also to prevent the researcher from guiding the answers of the participants, the following **interview techniques** were used to enhance communication during the interviews: Encouragement, focusing and reflection (Greeff, 2011:345).

The researcher made use of tape recordings to record the interviews. Additional data was obtained by means of field notes, focusing on aspects such as communication patterns and non-verbal communication to add to the transcripts in order to complete the data collection (Creswell, 2009:181-183). The tape recordings and the field notes were transcribed as soon as possible following the interviews.

Once data saturation was detected and all the transcripts were completed, the researcher continued to analyse the data.

### **1.5.5 Method of data analysis**

Babbie and Mouton (2009:410) describe data analysis in qualitative research as the process where data that was collected through interviews are analysed and interpreted. These authors explain that the qualitative researcher mainly make use of a coding system, but mention that computer programmes that are designed for qualitative research analysis can also be used. The coding system entails that the qualitative data is coded to assist the researcher to identify themes and sub-themes. The researcher made use of the coding system, and implemented the framework for qualitative data analysis by Tesch (in Creswell, 2009:186) to ensure a systematic manner of data analysis. This framework consists of eight steps. The implementation

of these steps to analyse the qualitative data is described in Chapter 2 of this research document.

Bless et al. (2006:79) place emphasis on the importance of data verification in qualitative research. The qualitative researcher therefore has to employ certain techniques and strategies to ensure that sampling, data collection and analysis are verified to enhance the value of the findings. These aspects will be discussed next.

## 1.6 Data verification

Data verification assists the qualitative researcher to enhance the reliability of the study to support the findings and summaries (Schurink, Fouché and De Vos, 2011:429-431). Guba's model (in Krefting, 1991:214-222) is considered as a "classic" contribution to the qualitative researcher's methodology (Schurink et al., 2011:429)). The researcher addressed the following four aspects, according to Guba's model, in order to ensure data verification in this qualitative research study. The implementation of these four aspects is described in Chapter 2 of this research document.

- **Truth value:** The level of confidence in the truth of the findings, based on the research design, participants and the context in which the study was undertaken will determine the truth value of the study (Krefting, 1991:215).
- **Applicability:** Guba (in Krefting, 1991:216) refers to applicability as the degree to which the findings of the research study are applicable to other contexts or groups.
- **Consistency:** Guba (in Krefting, 1991:216) refers to consistency as "whether the findings would be consistent if the inquiry were replicated with the same subjects or in a similar context".
- **Neutrality:** Guba (in Krefting, 1991:216-217) states that neutrality in qualitative research should reflect the neutrality of the required data, rather than that of the researcher.

In addition to data verification, the researcher attempted to work within an ethically acceptable framework throughout the implementation of the research study. The ethical aspects that informed this study will be discussed below.

## **1.7 Ethical considerations**

Attention to ethical responsibility during the implementation of qualitative research it is important, seeing that participants share their personal experiences and perceptions with the researcher. Through the implementation of ethical practice such as anonymity, confidentiality, informed consent, right to privacy, voluntary participation as well as the dissemination of findings to participants, the participants should be protected against possible negative consequences of the research (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005:101; Kumar, 2005:190). The ethical considerations in this study are described below, while the implementation is discussed in Chapter 2 of this research document.

### **1.7.1 Informed consent**

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:101) suggest that participants should be provided with information regarding the purpose and nature of the research, and that they should have a choice of either participating or not. Other information that the participants should receive is an account of the procedures that will be followed, the advantages and possible disadvantages of participation, and the credibility and role of the researcher.

### **1.7.2 The right to privacy and voluntary participation**

Welman et al. (2005:201) warn that the privacy of participants is sometimes at risk during the performance of a research study. Social research involves to a large extent, the sharing of emotions, perceptions and experiences by participants. The sharing of personal information may lead participants to feel uneasy. Therefore it is important that participants be made aware that they can decide what to share and how to share information. They must also be informed that they may leave the interview at any time.

### **1.7.3 Right to privacy and confidentiality of data**

Privacy in social research refers to those aspects which are not normally for others to observe and analyse. Therefore, the right to self-determination as to what to share and whether to share should be respected. Participants must be made aware that their anonymity would be highly considered and respected during the research study (Welman et al., 2005:196).

### **1.7.4 Protection from harm**

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:101) explain that the physical and emotional risks to participants during the implementation of a research study should not be bigger than the risks of everyday life. Finally, the researcher is a social worker, registered at the South African Council for Social Services Professions in accordance with Act 110 of 1978, and thus held to a professional code of ethics (South Africa, 197).

In order to provide clarity regarding the focus of this research study, the following key concepts will be briefly described in terms of the relevance to this study.

## **1.8 Clarification of key concepts**

For the purpose of this study the next concepts are defined:

### **1.8.1 Adolescence**

Adolescence represents the age groups of between 12 and 18 years and is the period of transition between childhood and adulthood (Louw et al., 2007:278). For the purpose of this research study, the descriptions of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation will be focused on the abovementioned age group.

### **1.8.2 Human trafficking**

Human trafficking refers to the dislocation of someone when that person is recruited, transported, transferred or harboured in a forceful or deceitful manner, while the trafficker gains financially from some form of exploitation of the victim (Chalke, 2009:10; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2012). Human trafficking is viewed as a crime against human rights (The South African Constitution, Amended Act 34 of 2001; Bezuidenhout and Joubert, 2008:198; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2012; United Nations, 2012). In the context of this research study, human trafficking will refer to the recruiting of adolescents for sexual exploitation whereby the trafficker received financial gain from the exploitation.

### **1.8.3 Service provider**

A service provider, for the purpose of this study, is described in terms of the definition of social work (International Association of Schools of Social Work, 2012). It means that the organisation that provides a service to adolescents who were trafficked for sexual exploitation that *“promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work.”*

### **1.8.4 Sexual exploitation**

Sexual exploitation is viewed as a form of human trafficking and therefore also as a crime against human rights (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2012). Sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, for the purpose of this present study, refers to the involvement of dependent and developmentally immature adolescents in sexual activities that they do not truly comprehend, and to which they are unable to give informed consent. It involves a “controller” who receives money or in-kind favours (Bezuidenhout and Joubert, 2008:55; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes, 2012).

### 1.8.5 Victim

A victim refers to a person who has been violated, attacked, injured or killed as the result of a crime, a disease, or an accident (Hornby, 2005). This term, specifically in the context of this study, also refers to a person who is deceived or cheated by the dishonesty of others.

### 1.9 Conclusion

**This chapter** deals with the theoretical background and rationale for this study. It also provides a description of the research problem, research question and the goal and objectives of the study. A description of the chosen research methodology, method of data verification and ethical issues considered for the purpose of this study is provided. The chapter is concluded with a description of the key concepts related to the research topic.

**Chapter 2** provides an overview of the research methodology followed, with a description of the procedures that were implemented to collect, analyse and verify the data obtained from the participants. It also reflects on the limitations of this study. **Chapter 3** provides the reader with a description of the biographical profile of the participants and the research findings, together with a literature control. Finally, **Chapter 4** presents the conclusions drawn from the findings, as well as the recommendations to social workers for aspects to be included when assisting adolescent trafficked for sexual exploitation.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Implementation of research methodology**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Human trafficking is described as a highly lucrative illegitimate business (The Polaris Project, 2013). It is estimated that global human trafficking accounted for R 230 million of illicit trade in 2010 (Kar and Curcio, 2011:21). The reason is based on the low risk and high profits associated with trafficking of humans. The low risk is due to the fact that communities are relatively unaware of this crime happening in their midst, and therefore government and community organisations do not respond in line with what is needed to combat human trafficking. On the other hand, the willingness of individuals to buy commercial sex creates a market where both children and adults become victims of the traffickers and the “buyers of the product” (The Polaris Project, 2013).

Sexual exploitation, as a component of human trafficking, is described as a “shocking crime in your own backyard” by Meinecke (2013). The author reports on testimonies in the United States of America government, and states that there are approximately 12 million victims of human trafficking worldwide. The average age of victims of sexual exploitation in the United States of America is 12 to 13 years.

In South Africa, human trafficking is also described as an “industry” that creates wealth for the traffickers (Bezuidenhout 2008:261; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes, 2012). In line with the international trends mentioned above, children as young as 12 years of age are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. In 2000 it was estimated that there were 28 000 child prostitutes in South Africa. In Atlantis in the Western Cape, where this study was undertaken, reported incidents escalated from 16 victims in 2009 to 35 in 2010 and 67 in 2011. It should be noted, however, that due to the clandestine nature of the human trafficking industry very few cases are reported (Bezuidenhout 2008:261; Sylvester, 2013).

This study placed the focus on the need for an exploration of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation, and the role of the social worker to

assist these victims. The reason behind this focus is described in Sections 1.1 and 1.2 of Chapter 1. In terms of the adolescent developmental stage, the following social-emotional development should take place to ensure a healthy transition into adulthood:

- Development of a firmer sense of identity,
- Physical changes that need to be accepted,
- Increased conflict with parents,
- Increased influence of peer group,
- Desire for independence and self-reliance,
- Increased emotional stability,
- Increased concern for others and
- Development of more serious relationships, including romantic relationships (American Academy of Child and Adolescent's Facts for Families, 2011:1).

Sexual exploitation hampers the achievement of the abovementioned tasks, which impacts on the adolescent's ability to become a well-balanced interdependent adult. The impact of this exploitation includes –

- unusual interest in or avoidance of all things of a sexual nature and an inability to form healthy romantic relationships,
- sleep problems,
- depression or withdrawal from friends or family,
- seductiveness,
- feelings that their bodies are damaged,
- delinquency/conduct problems,
- unusual aggressive behaviour and
- suicidal ideation or behaviour (American Academy of Child and Adolescent's Facts for Families, 2011:2).

The description provided here does provide social workers with a framework related to possible areas that should be dealt with during intervention, but there is a lack of specific information regarding the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual

exploitation that could guide services to these victims. The research questions that were formulated for the purpose of this study are therefore –

- What are service providers' perceptions of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation?

In order to answer these questions, the researcher aimed to develop an in-depth understanding of service providers' perceptions of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation with a view to inform social work services with a view to inform social work services.

The research methodology that was implemented, in order to answer these research questions, are discussed in this chapter.

## **2.2 Research methodology**

According to Berg (2009:5) research methodology is the “systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study”. It consists of the methods and principles that are used during the research process; and the paradigm, theoretical model, phases and quantitative or qualitative techniques that are implemented. The researcher followed the following research process for qualitative studies, as described by Moriarty (2011:2-3):

- Utilise explorative and descriptive research designs directed at “...providing an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world of research participants by learning about their social and material circumstances, their experiences, perspectives, and histories”.
- Draw a purposive sample on the basis of criteria that would ensure that the participants represent the population and are able to answer the research question.
- Utilise data collection methods which involve “...close contact between the researcher and the research participants, which are interactive and

developmental and allow for emergent issues to be explored; data which are very detailed, information rich and extensive”.

- Utilise a method for data analysis which is “...open to emergent concepts and ideas and which may produce detailed description and classification, identify patterns of association or develop typologies and explanations”.

The rationale for the choice of methodology was provided in Chapter 1, while a theoretical discussion together with a description of the implementation will be provided in this chapter.

### **2.2.1 Research approach**

The researcher chose the qualitative research approach for the purpose of this research study, based on the nature of the research problem and research questions (see Sections 1.2 and 1.3 of Chapter 1). The goal of this study was to explore and describe the service providers’ perceptions of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation with a view to inform social work services.

The qualitative research approach was furthermore viewed as appropriate for the goal of this study, based on the following characteristics of this approach, as described by Kreuger and Neuman (2006:16):

- It assists the researcher with the construction of social reality and/or cultural meaning,
- It focus on interactive processes and/or events,
- The authentic nature of the qualitative data is viewed as the key criterion of scientific excellence,
- It is done within a specific context (situational constrain),
- The population and sample size are not as big as in quantitative research studies,
- It consists of a thematic analysis that leads to increased understanding of the topic under investigation and
- The involvement of the researcher is acceptable.

These characteristics related well to the purpose of this study. The researcher wanted to develop a better understanding of the social reality of the participants by means of an exploration of their lived experiences. This study was also focused on a specific context of adolescents in the Western Cape who have been trafficked for sexual exploitation. It was envisaged that the analysis of the qualitative data would lead to a thematic description of the situation of the participants, and that this description could inform social work services.

The mentioned characteristics of the qualitative research approach also informed the researcher's choice of research designs, which will be discussed next.

### **2.2.2 Research design**

Babbie (2007:112) explains that a research design involves:

- A set of decisions regarding what topic is to be studied,
- On what population the study will focus,
- What research methods and techniques will be used and
- For what purpose these methods and techniques will be used.

Based on the research goal, and in order to answer the research questions, the researcher chose the contextual, exploratory and descriptive research designs to guide her choice of methods and techniques during this research study. The discussion below provides a description of these designs to support the researcher's choice, and to provide an illustration of how these designs informed the researcher's choices of research methods and techniques.

- **Contextual research design**

This research design enabled the researcher to obtain qualitative data within the specific context of sexual exploitation, as a form of human trafficking, of adolescents in the Western Cape, South Africa (Holztblatt et al., 2005:22). Maxwell (2008:234) explains that the contextual research design assists the researcher to make choices

regarding the population and sampling, as well as regarding the method of data collection. The researcher used this design to develop a deeper understanding of the research problem. The design furthermore assisted her to identify unexpected needs or challenges experienced by the participants. The value of this design was therefore that assumptions related to the experiences of the participants could be re-evaluated as the “voices” of the participants (i.e. the people who are living within the research problem) could be heard. The use of this design asked for a semi-structured method of data collection, to ensure rich data that would contribute to a better description and understanding of the participants’ situation.

- **Exploratory research design**

The explorative research design was used to guide the process of exploring the experiences of the participants. This design is specifically appropriate when little knowledge is available in a specific field. Although the prevalence of sexual exploitation of adolescents is documented and the impact of sexual abuse is described in literature, a specific lack of information that describes the experiences of adolescents who are victims of sexual exploitation was identified. This identified lack of information points to a need for further exploration of the research topic (Rubin and Babbie, 2005:123; Kumar, 2005:10). An exploration of the participants’ experiences would thus contribute towards knowledge and insight regarding the needs of these adolescents, and assist social workers to plan service delivery accordingly. The use of this research design specifically assisted the researcher with the choices related to sampling and the method of data collection.

- **Descriptive research design**

The decision to include the descriptive research design was based on the goal to inform social services. The researcher aimed to describe the perceptions and experiences of service providers regarding the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation to enhance insight in their needs and to enable social workers to plan and implement social services based on this newly acquired knowledge (Rubin and Babbie, 2005:124; Bless et al., 2006:43).

The research designs guided the researcher with regards to the methods of sampling, data collection and data analysis. These aspects will be discussed in the following sections.

### 2.2.3 Population and sampling

Babbie (2007:190) describes the population of a research study as the whole group from which a sample is selected. It means that the population must relate to the research topic, and specifically to the research problem. The sample is the elements selected to take part in the research study that also represent the population. In this study, it meant that the population, and therefore also the sample, had to include service providers who were able to describe the experiences of adolescents who were trafficked for sexual exploitation. The population was therefore identified as:

- Service providers to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation in the Western Cape.

The following table provides a description of the terms sampling, sampling method and sampling techniques and of how it was implemented in this research study:

**Table 2.1:** Sampling concepts

	Description	Implementation
<b>Sample</b>	A sample comprises of elements or a subset of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study. It can also be viewed as a subset of measurements, drawn from a population in which the researcher is interested (Unrau, Gabor and Grinnell, 2007:279).	The researcher identified the criteria for inclusion in the sample as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff members</li> <li>• At service organisations working with victims of human trafficking and</li> <li>• Who are working with, or have worked with, adolescent victims of sexual exploitation due to human trafficking</li> <li>• In the Western Cape</li> </ul>
<b>Sampling method</b>	In the non-probability sampling method, the odds of selecting a	The possibility to be chosen to be included in the sample could not be

	particular individual are not known; because the researcher does not know the population size or the members of the population at the beginning of the research study (Gravetter and Forzano, 2009:118).	determined at the onset of this research study. The size of the sample could thus not be determined at the beginning of the research study, and was determined by data saturation.
<b>Sampling technique</b>	Rubin and Babbie (2005:247) states that the purposive sampling technique, typically used in the non-probability sampling method, is also called judgemental sampling, as it requires the judgement of the researcher (as an integrate part of the qualitative research approach – see Section 2.2.1) to identify who would be most suitable to answer the research question.	The researcher sent invitations to the service providers to victims of sexual exploitation as part of human trafficking. The purpose of the research study, the criteria for inclusion and the ethical aspects were provided; and they were asked to identify possible participants.

Bless et al. (2006:107) explain that, in qualitative research studies, the **sample size** is usually smaller than in quantitative research studies, and that the sample size depends on data saturation. In this study it meant that the researcher continued with data collection, until no new data emerged from the interviews. The final sample size was 11 participants.

#### 2.2.4 Data collection

Methods of data collection in qualitative research studies include the use of individual interviews (which could be face-to-face, telephonic, etc.) and focus groups. The fundamental types of interviews used in both methods are structured, semi-structured or unstructured in nature (Creswell, 2009:179-181). These types are distinguished from one another by means of the following characteristics of each (Gill and Stewart, 2008:292):

- **Structured interviews:** This type of data collection could be viewed as essentially a verbally administered questionnaire. It consists of a list of

predetermined questions, with little or no variation and scope for follow-up questions or further elaboration. This is a quicker way to gather data, but the richness of the data could be less, because of the fact that clarification and probing cannot take place.

- **Semi-structured interviews:** The qualitative researcher develops a list of questions related to the research problem and research question. These questions are used to ensure focus, but are not preventing the participant to elaborate or to provide information that was not asked. It could be viewed as a “focused discussion of the research problem/topic”. The researcher makes use of interview techniques to ensure that the participant explores all possible answers/viewpoints that could contribute to the richness of the data.
- **Unstructured interviews:** Unstructured interviews take place when the researcher provides the participant with one broad question related to the research problem. The researcher then makes use of interview techniques to stimulate the exploration of the research problem and topic. This type of interview could, however, lead to deviation from the specific focus of the interview.

Based on the above description, the researcher opted to make use of semi-structured interviews. The sensitive nature of the research topic led to the decision to conduct these interviews individually, and face-to-face. This ensured that the researcher could detect when a participant became upset during the data collection process, and that such participants could be referred for debriefing (see Section 2.3 regarding ethical issues).

The value of the semi-structured type of interview was that the researcher could ensure that the focus of the discussion remains on the research topic and the research problem. In addition, it provided enough scope for further elaboration and expansion to ensure richness of data that related to the goal of this research study. This goal was specifically aimed at exploring the participants’ experiences, in order to obtain a deeper understanding of their social reality (Gill and Stewart, 2008:293).

The implementation of this method of data collection will be described in the subsections below.

#### **2.2.4.1 Gaining access to the participants**

The researcher sent invitations to the service providers to victims of sexual exploitation as part of human trafficking. The aim of these letters was to request organisations to assist the researcher with contact-making with possible participants who complied with the inclusion criteria (see annexure A). The following information was also included in the invitation letters:

- The research topic
- The research goal
- The questions that would be asked
- The way in which data would be collected
- The ethical considerations
- The information of the researcher and the university involved.

Once the organisations agreed to participate, interviews were arranged with possible participants at the participating organisations. The researcher discussed the following with the prospective participants:

- The goal of the research study,
- The reason why they were chosen to be included in the study,
- The nature of the interviews and the interview guide and
- The possible risks and advantages.

Assurance of anonymity and confidentiality was given and permission to record interviews was obtained. The researcher furthermore informed the participants that only the researcher, translator (if necessary), independent coder and the researcher's study leader would have access to the recordings and transcripts. Those who agreed to take part in this study were then presented with an informed consent form, which was explained to them, to sign (see Annexures B and C).

#### 2.2.4.2 Pilot study

The researcher first conducted one interview with a participant who adhered to the inclusion criteria to ensure that the questions that were asked were understood, that the participants would be able to answer and discuss these questions and to ensure that the research question was answered (Cf. Maxwell, 2008:227). This data was then transcribed and analysed. A discussion with the study leader followed, after which it was decided that the method of data collection, as well as the questions, would indeed assist the researcher to answer the research question and to attain the research goal.

Following this pilot interview, the researcher continued to make contact with other participants to collect the qualitative data.

#### 2.2.4.3 Collecting the data

As described above, the researcher made use of semi-structured face-to-face interviews to collect the qualitative research data. The interviews were conducted at the service organisations, and in private and comfortable areas. The researcher started the interviews with casual conversation to put the participants at ease. She then again explained the purpose of the interview with the participants and placed emphasis on the fact that they could withdraw from the interviews at any time, and that a social worker would be available to them for debriefing if needed. Once the researcher was sure that the participant was comfortable, she continued with data collection. The following **questions** were asked of the participants during the interviews:

- Tell me about your experiences when working with adolescents who have been sexually exploited due to human trafficking.
- What do they need help with?
- Who do you think can help them?
- How should these adolescents be helped?

In order to provide focus during the interviews, but also to prevent the researcher from guiding the answers of the participants, the following **interview techniques** were used to enhance communication during the interviews:

- **Encouragement/probing:** The researcher made use of this technique to encourage the participant to pursue a line of thought. For instance: “I find that very interesting. Tell me more”.
- **Focusing:** The researcher used this technique when a participant moved away from the research topic. For instance: “I would like us to discuss this question: ..... “
- **Reflection.** Reflection was used to ensure that the researcher understood the participant correctly and also to stimulate further thoughts about the specific area. For example: “So you think that is how they can help you?” (Greeff, 2011:289-290).

#### **2.2.4.4 Recording the data**

The researcher made use of tape recordings to record the interviews. Additional data was obtained by means of field notes, focusing on aspects such as communication patterns and non-verbal communication to add to the transcripts in order to complete the data collection (Creswell, 2009:181-183). The tape recordings and the field notes were transcribed as soon as possible following the interviews.

Once the data was collected, the researcher proceeded with the analysis process.

### 2.2.5 Data analysis

The analysis of qualitative data requires some kind of transformation. The qualitative researcher starts with the bulk of the data, and then makes use of analytic procedures to process this data into a “clear, understandable, insightful, trustworthy and even original analysis” (Gibbs, 2007:1).

In this study the researcher used the scientific procedures described through the eight steps of qualitative data analysis in the framework provided by Tesch (in Creswell, 2009:186). These steps ensured a systematic manner of data analysis. This framework consists of eight steps. The steps, and the implementation thereof, are described and discussed below.

1. The researcher forms an overall picture obtained by carefully reading through all the transcripts and jots down in writing the ideas that emerged. The researcher went through all the transcripts after data saturation was detected. She wrote down ideas and those aspects that stood out next to the scripts.
2. The first transcript is then selected and read once more. The researcher asks him/herself: “What is this about?” Thoughts are plotted in a margin. The researcher started again with the reading process, and wrote down main words that stood out in the text that related to the research problem.
3. The rest of the transcripts are overviewed by working in the same way. Next, a list is made of all the topics indicated in the margin. Similar topics are grouped together into columns, which consist of main themes and sub-themes. All the main words that were identified were written down, once all the transcripts were examined. These words were then grouped in topics which became the main themes. The researcher carefully looked at the words in the different topics, and identified the sub-themes that emerged from each topic.
4. The list of themes and sub-themes are returned to the transcripts. Codes are given to the topics and sub-topics are added along the appropriate segments in the text. There is also at this stage, a check-out for new/hidden topics or codes. The researcher then gave code names to the themes and sub-themes and placed this next to the words in the margin of the text in the transcripts. During

this process she made sure that all the main words were placed in a theme/sub-theme, and identified new themes/sub-themes in the process. She then gave codes for the themes and sub-themes and added it to the text.

5. The most descriptive wording is selected for topics and converted into categories. Similar topics are sub-themed under the relevant category. The researcher then continued to provide a description for each theme and sub-theme that described it the best.
6. A final decision is made regarding which categories to be included. A discussion with the study leader and independent coder (who followed the same process) followed to identify what themes and sub-themes to include in the final analyses. This decision was based on the goal of the study to ensure that the research questions would be answered.
7. Corresponding data is placed under each category to highlight the themes and sub-themes. The themes and sub-themes were then placed in an order that would serve as the story line to describe the experiences of the participants. Verbatim responses that related to the themes/sub-themes were then placed under each theme/sub-theme.
8. The themes and sub-themes are then discussed and described. The content of each theme and sub-theme was then discussed, based on the responses of the participants, and verified with the literature (literature control).

The researcher also took note of the verification of the qualitative data to ensure the validity of this study. The aspects that were considered and implemented will be discussed in the next section.

### **2.3 Data verification**

Schurink et al. (2011:429) explains that qualitative research studies do not make use of the traditional criteria for validity of research, namely internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity. The authors refer to credibility, transferability, reliability and conformability as criteria to use in qualitative research studies. Guba's model for the verification of qualitative data (in Krefling, 1991:214-222) is used as a framework to ensure the validity of a qualitative research study. Based on the latter model, the criteria that were used in this present research study were: Truth value, applicability,

consistency and neutrality. The implementation of the criteria is illustrated in the table below.

**Table 2.2:** Data verification

<b>Method of data verification</b>	<b>Strategy that was followed</b>	<b>Implementation</b>
<b>Truth value</b>	The level of confidence in the truth of the findings, based on the research design, participants and the context in which the study was undertaken will determine the truth value of the study (Krefting, 1991:215).	The researcher implemented this strategy of data verification by using the interview techniques to determine the truth value of the study (see description in Section 2.2.4.3). The researcher also made use of different service providers to obtain access to a wider variety of participants to ensure the truth value of this study.
<b>Applicability</b>	Guba (in Krefting, 1991:216) refers to applicability as the degree to which the findings of the research study are applicable to other contexts or groups.	The researcher provided a thorough description of the research methodology implemented in this chapter to ensure that the research data and findings could be applicable to other contexts. The purposive sampling technique further contributed to the applicability of the data.
<b>Consistency</b>	Guba (in Krefting, 1991:216) refers to consistency as “whether the findings would be consistent if the inquiry were replicated with the same subjects or in a similar context”.	The researcher implemented this strategy of data verification by using the coding system that entails the qualitative data is coded to assist the researcher to identify themes and sub-themes. The same coding system was implemented by the independent coder, which further ensured the consistency of the findings.
<b>Neutrality</b>	Guba (in Krefting, 1991:216-217) states that neutrality in qualitative research should reflect the neutrality of the required data, rather than that of the researcher.	The researcher transcribed the verbatim responses of the participants, and added field notes to the transcripts. The transcripts ensured that the “voices of the participants’ led to the findings, and that the researcher’s own interpretations did not

		influence the results.
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This study also included the implementation of principles of ethical social research, which will be discussed next.

## 2.4 Ethical aspects

The term “research ethics” implies the following:

- Preferences that influence behaviour in human relationships,
- Conforming to a code of principles,
- The rules of conduct,
- The responsibility of the researcher and
- The standards of conduct of a given profession (Babbie, 2007:62).

Ethical aspects that were taken into consideration during this study, together with the implementation will be illustrated in the table below.

**Table 2.3:** Ethical aspects

<b>Ethical consideration</b>	<b>Implementation</b>
Informed consent	The researcher provided the participants with information regarding the purpose and nature of the research study. The participants were also informed that they had a choice of either participating or not.  The participants also completed an informed consent form before they participated in the research.
The right to voluntary participation	The researcher made the participants aware that they can decide what to share and how to share the information. They were also informed that they may withdraw from participation at any time.

Right to privacy and confidentiality of data	The researcher informed the participants that their anonymity would be highly considered and respected during the research study. The researcher furthermore informed the participants that only the researcher, translator (if necessary), independent coder and the researcher's study leader would have access to the recordings and transcripts. The protection of the privacy of the information was also ensured in that the names of the participants did not appear on the transcripts. The transcripts and tape recordings were furthermore stored in a safe place.
Protection from harm	The researcher explained the emotional risks to the participants before they decided to participate or not. It was also arranged that a social worker would be available to them after interviews should they need debriefing and/or support.

The implementation of the research methodology and the findings of the study should be viewed within the context of the limitations that were experienced during the course of the research process. This will be discussed next.

## 2.5 Limitations to the study

The researcher experienced the following constraints/limitations regarding this research study. Based on the research topic, it would have been ideal to collect the data directly from adolescents who have been trafficked for sexual exploitation. Due to the fact that access to victims was problematic (as explained in Section 1.5.3 of Chapter 1), the researcher collected the data from the service providers who worked with adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation. Once data analysis took place it became clear that the participants were able to answer the research questions. Another constraint was to arrange meetings with participants that suited them best. The data collection phase of the research process was planned to take place over a three month period, but took six months in the end. Although data saturation was detected after the first six interviews, the researcher wanted to ensure that a thick description of the research results would be ensured. Another five interviews were therefore done, which lengthened the process further.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

Chapter 1 provided a background to the research study, and also a description of the choice of research methodology. This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology followed, with a description of the procedures that were implemented to collect, analyse and verify the data obtained from the participants. It also reflects on the limitations of this study. Chapter 3 that follows will provide the reader with a description of the biographical profile of the participants and the research findings, together with a literature control.

## CHAPTER 3

### Research findings

#### 3.1 Introduction

This study was based on The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's (2012) description of the trafficking of persons, namely: "*...the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs*". With the specific focus on sexual exploitation of adolescents as part of human trafficking, it is estimated that 6 million children are globally victims of slavery, of which 1.8 million are victims of sexual exploitation (Van de Glind and Kooijmans, 2008:156).

The traumatic events associated with sexual exploitation during adolescence should not be ignored. The unattended emotional and physical damage could very well cause victims who were rescued, but who did not receive treatment, to be constantly reminded of and distressed by their pasts. This will negatively influence their functioning in adulthood, as their ability to form trusting relationships is harmed (Kleinschmidt, 2009:262). Although human trafficking is acknowledged by different legislations, both internationally and nationally, it does not provide a framework for the treatment of victims. The reality is that support by social workers is needed to assist adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation to re-integrate into society and to become able to live healthy lives. To be able to do this, social workers need resources and knowledge about the needs of these adolescents (Thorpe, 2011).

Although human trafficking has gathered a high amount of media attention, it seems that there is not much awareness regarding experiences or needs of adolescent victims of sexual exploitation through human trafficking and social work services

addressing the needs of this group (See Section 1.2 of Chapter 1). The following research question was identified during the preliminary review of the literature:

- What are service providers' perceptions of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation?

For this reason, the goal of this research study was to develop an in-depth understanding of the service providers' perceptions of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation with a view to inform social work services. In order to achieve the said goal of this study, the researcher worked within the framework of basic research in order to contribute to the knowledge base of the social work profession regarding the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation. The exploration and description of these experiences could assist the researcher to make recommendations in terms of focus areas for social services to this group, as well as areas for further research that could assist social workers to address this problem in the future.

This research was conducted from the qualitative research approach to develop an understanding of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation. The exploratory, descriptive and contextual research designs were furthermore utilised to assist the researcher with a framework that assisted her to attain the research goal.

The researcher was not able to obtain data directly from adolescents who were trafficked for sexual exploitation due to the following reasons: 1) Adolescents who were trafficked for sexual exploitation are often involved with court cases resulting from the exploitation, and interviews would not be allowed during the legal process. 2) It would be difficult to obtain permission from parents and guardians as most of these victims would be in the process of being placed in care by the Children's Court. For this reason, the population were identified as service providers to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation in the Western Cape. A sample for inclusion in the study was selected from the above mentioned population.

The criteria for inclusion in the proposed study were staff members at service organisations, working with victims of human trafficking and who are working with, or

have worked with, adolescent victims of sexual exploitation due to human trafficking in the Western Cape.

The non-probability sampling method, together with the purposive sampling technique, was used to obtain a sample from the population to participate in this study. Data saturation determined the sample size, and was identified after six interviews, but the researcher continued with five more interviews to ensure that no new themes or sub-themes were identified.

The data was collected by means of semi-structured interviews after informed consent to participate was obtained from the participants. The following questions were asked of the participants during the interviews:

- Tell me about your experiences when working with adolescents who have been sexually exploited due to human trafficking.
- What do they need help with?
- Who do you think can help them?
- What is your view regarding a victim who experience sexual exploitation?

The demographic profile of the participants will be provided next, after which the findings will be presented.

### **3.2 Demographic data**

Eleven participants, who met the criteria for inclusion into the sample, participated in this study. The demographic data discussed in this section provides a description of the context within which the findings were procured. The table below describes the demographic data of the participants:

**Table 3.1:** Demographic data of participants

Participant	Age	Gender	Ethnic group	Years' experience
1	37 years	Female	White	18 years
2	47 years	Female	Coloured	9 years
3	25 years	Female	White	1 year and 6 months
4	25 years	Female	White	3 years
5	28 years	Female	Coloured	3 years
6	37 years	Female	Coloured	2 years
7	33 years	Female	Coloured	2 years
8	35 years	Female	White	5 years
9	29 years	Female	White	2 years and 6 months
10	28 years	Female	White	1 year and 2 months
11	30 years	Female	Black	4 – 5 years

**Gender:** From the table above it is concluded that all of the participants were women. Therefore Sanderson's view that services to victims of sexual exploitation are mainly delivered by women was confirmed in this study (Sanderson, 2006:385). The author explains that most of the adolescents who are reported to be victims of sexual exploitation are female. It is assumed that the female victims will feel safer with a female social worker, as the victims might associate men with their experiences. This could result in fear, anger, rage and aggression towards all men. The author concludes this argument by stating that female social workers are frequently perceived to be more empathic, attuned and sensitive to victim feelings (Sanderson, 2006:385-386).

**Age:** The participants were between the ages of 25 and 47 years of age. This places the participants in this study in the developmental stages of early and middle adulthood. According to Erikson (as cited in Louw and Louw, 2009:154), these stages represent the time in human development where one of the major developmental tasks is to establish a loving relationship with another human being. During both these stages the individual focuses on the establishment of a career as well as a family life. The combination of the abovementioned developmental tasks and focuses, combined with the discussion of female social workers above, lead to a

conclusion that the participants were able to build a trusting relationship with clients within the professional framework of their careers.

**Ethnic groups:** Six participants were White, while four were Coloured and 1 was Black. It should also be noted that three of the participants from the White ethnical group were not born in South Africa. This data does not correspond with the ethnical distribution in the Western Cape, where 48.8% of the people are Coloured, 32.8% are Black, 15.7% are White, and 1.0% are Indian or Asian (Statistics South Africa, 2012).

It should also be noted that only two of the participants have been working in the field of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation for longer than five years. The findings are therefore mainly related to the perceptions of participants with between one and five years' experience in this field.

Within the context of the description of the participants above, the themes and sub-themes that were identified during the data analysis process will be discussed in the following sections.

### **3.3 Empirical findings: The experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation as described by service providers**

The themes, sub-themes and categories will be described, together with verbatim quotations and the literature control. The majority of the participants (7) provided the information in Afrikaans. This is in line with the demographic profile of the Western Cape. According to the Census 2011, most of the people in the Western Cape are Afrikaans speakers (49.7%) (Statistics South Africa, 2012). In order to ensure that the findings are presented as accurately as possible the Afrikaans quotations were not translated for the purpose of this document.

Five main themes provide the story line for the data obtained from the participants, namely: 1) A description of the sexually exploited adolescent; 2) Availability of services, or lack thereof, to the sexually exploited adolescent; 3) A description of social services to sexually exploited adolescents; 4) A description of impact of

working with sexually exploited adolescents and 5) Challenges faced by service providers. **Please note** that some of the themes, sub-themes and/or categories might overlap. The researcher decided to present them separately to provide a thick description of the data, and therefore made use of cross-references between them in the text. The themes, sub-themes and categories are illustrated in the table below:

**Table 3.2:** Themes, sub-themes and categories

Themes	Sub-themes	Categories
Theme 1: A description of the sexually exploited adolescent	Sub-theme 1.1: A description of how sexual exploitation through human trafficking occurs	
	Sub-theme 1.2 Sexually exploited adolescents have a poor self-image	
	Sub-theme 1.3: Sexually exploited adolescents manipulate to protect themselves	
	Sub-theme 1.4: Sexually exploited adolescents display behavioural problems to obtain attention	
	Sub-theme 1.5: Sexually exploited adolescents come from low socio-economic backgrounds	
	Sub-theme 1.6: Sexually exploited adolescents find it difficult to build trusting relationships	Category 1.1: The nature of the professional relationship with the sexually exploited adolescent
	Sub-theme 1.7: Description of the adolescent's relationship with the trafficker	
	Sub-theme 1.8: Sexually exploited adolescents experience trauma during the legal process	
Theme 2: Availability of services, or lack thereof, to the sexually exploited adolescent	Sub-theme 2.1: Stigmatisation of the victims of sexual exploitation	

Theme 3: A description of social services to sexually exploited adolescents	Sub-theme 3.1: The service provides a safe environment for sexually exploited adolescents	
	Sub-theme 3.2: The nature of services to sexually exploited adolescents	Category 3.1: Services are focused on building trust and providing hope
		Category 3.2: The ideal of long-term services
		Category 3.3: Services aim to expose the sexually exploited adolescent to pleasurable experiences
		Category 3.4: The ideal of a multi-disciplinary service
	Sub-theme 3.3: Assessment of the sexually exploited adolescent's background	
	Sub-theme 3.4: Assessment of the sexually exploited adolescent's needs	
	Sub-theme 3.5: A description of the types of support provided to the sexually exploited adolescents	Category 3.5: Services focussing on psychological and emotional aspects
		Category 3.6: Services focussing on physical aspects
		Category 3.7 Services focussing on skills development
		Category 3.8: Services focusing on family reintegration
Theme 4: Description of impact of working with sexually exploited adolescents		
Theme 5: Challenges faced by service providers	Sub-theme 5.1: The costs related to services for special needs of sexually exploited adolescent	
	Sub-theme 5.2: Service providers need access to resources	

These themes, sub-themes and categories are presented next.

### **3.3.1 Theme 1: A description of the sexually exploited adolescent**

The following comment provides an explanation of the ages of child victims of sexual exploitation:

*“Alle ouderdomme, die jongste was 2 en ‘n half die oudste was 14 op daai stadium.”*

This description is in line with a study by Richter, Dawes and Higson-Smith (2005:169) where it was found that the primary targets of traffickers of children in South Africa were girls between the ages of four and 17. On the other hand, Lloyd (2005:6) states that the average age at which girls first become exploited through prostitution in the local context is 12 to 14 years old. The author, however, continues to report that direct service providers around the country reported that they have been encountering increasingly younger victims over the past decade. The mentioned findings are also supported by a police investigation into its operations that indicated that girls that were rescued from sexual exploitation due to human trafficking were as young as 10 years old (Activists Networking against the Exploitation of Child Domestic Workers, 2006:8-11; Budlender and Bosch, 2002).

This theme provides a description of the sexually exploited adolescent as perceived by service providers to this group. The following eight sub-themes and one category were identified:

- A description of how sexual exploitation through human trafficking occurs
- Sexually exploited adolescents have a poor self-image
- Sexually exploited adolescents manipulate to protect themselves
- Sexually exploited adolescents display behavioural problems to obtain attention
- Sexually exploited adolescents come from low socio-economic backgrounds
- Sexually exploited adolescents find it difficult to build trusting relationships

- The nature of the professional relationship with the sexually exploited adolescent
- Description of the adolescent's relationship with the trafficker
- Sexually exploited adolescents experience trauma during the legal process

### **Sub-theme 1.1: A description of how sexual exploitation through human trafficking occurs**

Some participants reported that sexual exploitation occurs through violent abductions, or that victims are not aware of the fact that they are being recruited for sexual exploitation.

*“Kinders wat van die huis af weggevat word, ‘gunpoint’ en dan aangehou word twee of drie jaar net vir seksuele misbruik.”*

*“Victims are mostly not aware of exploitations when they got involved.”*

This information is supported by literature. Lackzo (2002:1) describes the trafficking of children as *“...a process that involves the recruitment of vulnerable individuals and the movement of those individuals from one place to another, often against their free will, with the sole purpose of exploiting them for the benefit of the trafficker.* The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2006:49) and Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2008:199) point out that the trafficking of children takes place in different forms. It is noted that some children are forcibly recruited through abduction; some are misled; and others allow themselves to be trafficked by believing false promises of a better life, including economic prospects *“...without realising the level of exploitation that they will suffer at the other end of the recruitment chain”.*

Other reports indicated towards parental involvement in sexual exploitation of adolescents:

*“Kinders wat deur hulle ouers gepimp word sodat, uhhh, die persoon wat die kinders gebruik, betaal die huur, die skoolgeld, kos.”*

*“It’s happening on our doorstep right now as we speak, families are giving children away because they cannot look after them.”*

*“Up the West-Coast recently, traffickers and recruiters go up to the West-Coast and taking groceries for families in exchange for children.”*

*“Very, very often in most cases actually victims of trafficking are trafficked by someone they know. Whether it’s the uncle or the parents themselves.”*

*“Some of them come from dysfunctional families.”*

Crosson-Tower (2005:135) states that the most severe types of abuse involve perpetrators who are family members or people known to the adolescent. Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2008:204) argue that adolescents involved in sexual exploitation are often sold by their family members due to poverty. This argument supports the statement by the ILO (International Labour Organisation, 2005) that family poverty, low family education and family dysfunction were primary causes for commercial sexual exploitation of children. In terms of the consequences of parental involvement in the sexual exploitation of adolescents, the adolescent will experience a loss of trust in care givers and feelings of fear and anxiety (Spies, 2006:51). In line with the latter viewpoint, a participant also explained that fear for the safety of family members lead victims to stay within the situation:

*“Sometimes some of them stay with the perpetrator out of fear for their families to get hurt.”*

The United States Department of Health and Human Services (2006) and the Human Trafficking Organisation (2006) state that victims of human trafficking are broken down through a number of ways to ensure that they will not reach out for help; including rape, gang rape, threats to harm the victim or the victim’s family, and forced drug use. Laczko (2002:1) explains that threats, intimidation and violence are used by the trafficker to *“break the spirit of their victims and to overcome their resistance”*. Loyalty to a family often leads to sacrifices where the person (in this case the adolescent) ignore own needs in order to address the needs of the family

(Richter et al., 2005:371). Spies (2006:51) also reflects on this aspect and argues that the presence of threats lead to fear and anxiety that will prevent adolescents from disclosing the exploitation and/trafficking.

In line with the above comments, the participants highlighted the fact that victims of sexual exploitation due to human trafficking are often vulnerable.

*“You often find that victims of trafficking are there because they are vulnerable.”*

*“...that can be vulnerable from poverty, vulnerable because they are from child-headed households, vulnerable because of a lack of education, vulnerable because they are females, vulnerable because they are children.”*

*“A lot of the victims I worked with started out as orphans.”*

*“Some of them are very vulnerable so they get mixed up with the wrong people.”*

*“Hierdie kinders is ook baie meer kwesbaar en al uitgebuit in die verlede so hulle sal, hulle sal gou iets glo.”*

The International Organisation for Migration (2003:15) identifies armed conflict, poverty, lack of education, unemployment and the general lack of opportunities as the main aspects that render a large portion of the population in Southern Africa vulnerable to trafficking. Estes and Weiner (2001) add to this list by stating that adolescents in dysfunctional families are vulnerable because they can easily be tempted to leave by promises for a better life. Clawson, Dutch, Solomon and Goldblatt Grace (2009:8) list the following risk factors that cause vulnerability to become victims of trafficking:

- Age
- Poverty
- Sexual abuse
- Family drug/physical abuse

- Individual drug abuse
- Learning disabilities
- Loss of parent/caregiver
- Runaway/throwaway
- Sexual identity issues
- Lack of support systems

### **Sub-theme 1.2: Sexually exploited adolescents have a poor self-image**

Most of the participants reported that some of the victims have a low self-image and self-esteem:

*“Hulle voel in hul omgewing [where the exploitation takes place] word hulle afgekraak en hulle is nie goed genoeg nie en daar is niks waardering nie.”*

*“Hulle moet net gaan en hulle liggame gaan verkoop en geld terugbring.”*

*“Hulle selfbeeld vat baie van jou intervensie.”*

*“Selfvertroue is ‘n baie groot leemte in hierdie kinders se lewens.”*

*“They’re treated like a commodity. So they’re treated like ‘I am something that can be bought and sold, I’m valuable because I earn money for someone’. So their whole value in which they are as a person is completely broken down.*

*You will find that have almost no sense of self-value or self-worth.”*

*“You’re working with someone who doesn’t see themselves as valuable, who doesn’t see themselves as worth at all.”*

*“In order for them to be effective especially in a sex trade industry they need to just be compliant and in order to be compliant with what their traffickers*

*want their breakdown, their complete breakdown, their sense of self-worth, their sense of self-dignity.”*

A participant continued to explain that some victims might act as self-assured, but that it does not mean that they have a positive self-image.

*“Hulle kan soms voorkom hulle het baie selfvertroue deur hulle manier te wil hê maar as dit kom by net in die spieël kyk, basies wat is jou sterkpunte, wat is jou swakpunte, hulle kan nie dit identifiseer nie.”*

The International Organisation for Migration (2006:21-24) draws a link between feelings of fear, guilt, shame and hopelessness associated with sexual exploitation and a poor self-image.

The organisation, as well as Clawson et al. (2009:12) warns that, if untreated, post-traumatic stress disorder, multiple personality disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder might occur. A participant supports this statement as follows:

*“Post-traumatic stress disorders are very common.”*

Richter et al. (2005:370) support this viewpoint and explain that the exploitation leads to feeling of *“being looked down upon, being damaged, not good enough and therefore ugly, unacceptable and unworthy”*. A result of the above feelings is, according to Richter et al. (2005:371) a poor self-image that may lead to an increased tendency to engage in risky behaviour.

One statement also indicates that the adolescent might blame themselves, which also impacts negatively on his/her self-image

*“Some also blame themselves for what happened to them.”*

Spies (2006:54) links a poor self-image among sexually exploited adolescents to self-blame. The author explains that a low self-esteem results in a constant feeling of worthlessness, *“a nagging voice that tells them they did not do enough, did not do it*

*right and do not deserve anything*". This results in an acceptance of blame for the situation the adolescent is in. Therefore they often struggle with feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt.

### **Sub-theme 1.3: Sexually exploited adolescents manipulate to protect themselves**

The participants described some victims as manipulative, as well as emotional:

*"Dan daardie 'victims', hulle is baie manipulerend uhhh...hulle hou daarvan om hulle manier te kry en as hulle nie dan sal hulle 'n 'tantrum' gooi uhhh...en ook manipulerend wees."*

*You know, blocking out and not wanting to remember what's happened to them before, but then coming out in anger outbursts. You know your typical response to trauma."*

These statements above are supported by the International Organisation for Migration (2006:21-24) that explains that some adolescent victims of sexual exploitation may exhibit highly sexualised or aggressive behaviour, dissociation, self-harm and drug abuse in order to cope with the stress and anxiety.

The participants noted that they viewed this manipulative behaviour as self-protection by the sexually exploited adolescents.

*"Dit het ek ook al baie agtergekom; dis hulle manier is om hulself te beskerm die heelyd teen mense wat hulle seermaak."*

*"Dis amper wil ek sê, die profiel van 'n tipiese 'human trafficking victim' om haarself heelyd te beskerm."*

Richter et al. (2005:373) concur that sexually exploited adolescents experience a need to protect themselves as the exploitation results in the mistrust of the self, others and the environment.

#### **Sub-theme 1.4: Sexually exploited adolescents display behavioural problems to obtain attention**

Linked to the sub-theme above, other reports indicated that the victims display behavioural problems, and link this with a need to receive attention:

*“lets steel van ‘n ander resident, onbeskof optree net om weer daai aandag te kry al is dit negatiewe aandag.”*

*“Other victims are very irritated, aggressive and communicate non-stop.”*

*“Some of them are also very aggressive and violent.”*

*“Net enigiets om daai aandag te kry.”*

Anger, that results in violent behaviour, among adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation has been identified as a consequence by various authors (Spies, 2006:55; Richter et al., 2005:371). In line with the discussion in Sub-theme 1.2 above, Spies (2006:58) links a low self-image of adolescent victims of sexual exploitation to behavioural problems such as theft, and lies. The low self-image also results in a vulnerability to abuse drugs, as also confirmed by the following statement:

*“Drug addiction also plays a big role to these victims. Some of them are addicted to drugs and that causes aggressive behaviour.”*

Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2008:205) go further to link drug abuse by these adolescents with the fact that traffickers supply them with highly addictive drugs (e.g. crack cocaine) to control the victims.

It was also reported that some of the victims would look for inappropriate comfort from staff members:

*“They will constantly want to be with someone like for example the staff members. They would like to be touched inappropriately by the staff and that puts the staff members in difficult situations.”*

Spies (2006:57) explains that if the exploitation was the adolescents’ sole means of being close to another human being, the adolescent does not know how to act appropriately and in a non-sexual way within relationships with other people.

### **Sub-theme 1.5: Sexually exploited adolescents come from low socio-economic backgrounds**

Linked to the discussion regarding the vulnerability of the adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation in Sub-theme 1.1, the participants reported that poverty plays a big role in the lives of victims who are sexually exploited:

*“Geld speel ‘n groot rol, want dis in die eerste plek hoekom hulle dit doen [referring to how the adolescent became a victim of sexual exploitation].”*

*“Ja, hulle het nie geld nie ....”*

*“Dis juis die minderbevoorregte kind wat hierdie ding gebeur mee.”*

*“It is heart-breaking to see that a lot of children and even boys are being sexually exploited due to their impoverished circumstances. And then they end up broken, bruised and unable to work passed the traumatic experience.”*

*“They get involved because of poverty and the fact that people made promises by giving those jobs and that they will pay all expenses according to travel fees etc.”*

*“Victims of poor areas are targeted for sexual exploitation.”*

Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2008:203) refers to Article 9 (4) of the Trafficking Protocol where the need to address poverty as a cause for vulnerability to become a victim of human trafficking is identified. According to Mobilyn (2005) the economic situation in South Africa, breakdown in family structures and the demand for sex with children are the major contributing factors to trafficking. Poverty provides the trafficker with a motivating aspect to lure victims away from safety. Bales and Lize (2004) concur that when people are poor and desperate; they are more vulnerable to trafficking tactics.

Poverty among adolescents could also be viewed as a lack of support and care. The participants, in addition to the descriptions related to poverty above, also mentioned that a lack of supportive family systems render victims vulnerable to sexual exploitation. In addition, these adolescents have nowhere to return to once they have been rescued.

*“Dis mense wat nie ‘n goeie familiesisteem het nie, geen ondersteuningsisteme nie, wat verwerp is van ‘n klein ouderdom, wat al in die verlede verkrag is of ook enige seksuele mishandeling van die verlede, verwerping deur ouers, geen familie, broers, susters of wat dalk by die tannie opgecindig het waar die tannie daai persoon mishandel het so dis werklik ‘n siklus en herhaling van mishandeling of dit nou fisies, verbaal is maar meeste van die tyd seksueel.”*

*“En ook dan ‘n ondersteuningsisteme is baie belangrik om ‘re-unification’ te doen te doen met familiede, uit te reik na hulle, saam te verduidelik jy weet dit was nie haar skuld nie, dit was nie ‘n keuse nie.”*

*“Dan hierdie meisies het spesifiek het nie familie gehad nie.”*

The failure of caregivers to ensure that adolescents experience security and that basic needs are met may lead them to form attachments with other people in the community, which may make them vulnerable to exploitation and illegal activities such as prostitution (Demmer, 2004:297).

### **Sub-theme 1.6: Sexually exploited adolescents find it difficult to build trusting relationships**

The participants reported that sexually exploited adolescents find it difficult to build trusting relationships. The comments below indicate towards a specific need to build a long-term trusting relationship with one person after the exploited adolescent is rescued and as part of the helping process.

*“Die mensehandel slagoffers hulle is, hulle....met jou eerste ontmoeting hulle ‘connect’ met een persoon.”*

*“Die persoon wat hulle eintlik maar gered het uit daai situasie uit en daai is die eerste persoon wat hulle vertrou en met wie hulle eintlik verkies om die hele proses mee te verloop en om ‘n hegte verhouding met daardie persoon te bou.”*

*“So enigiets wat daai professionele verhouding oorskry of ‘n negatiewe invloed daarop het gaan uhmmm...gaan hulle weer verwerp voel deur daai persoon wat hulle vertrou.”*

*“Jy moet meer, jy moet 100% elke dag bewus wees van wat jy vir daai persoon sê want enige klein bietjie kritiek kan hulle as negatief ervaar.”*

The participants continued to explain that the difficulty in building relationships also impacts on the ability to communicate, and link this with a lack of trust and an emotional consequence of the sexual exploitation.

*“Victims appear quiet, withdrawn and don’t like to communicate.”*

*“Some of them appear to very quiet. They try to deal the traumatic experience by themselves. They are sad and just want to go home and leave the safe houses.”*

*“Some of the victims are also very difficult and don’t want share their traumatic experience. They have a lack of trust in the staff or the people working with them.”*

*“Mostly victims are introverts. You struggle to get them to communicate. They appear to be in their own world.”*

*“There is a massive lack of trust.”*

*“They are emotionally numb.”*

*“They don’t want to socialise or communicate with anyone.”*

Trust, as a basic foundation for the therapeutic relationship between the social worker and the sexually exploited adolescent, is accentuated by Spies (2006:248) and Geldard and Geldard (2009:9). In further support of the above statements, Spies (2006:48) concurs that adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation choose to withdraw rather than form relationships with inconsistent people. Due to the lack of trust of the professional person, the adolescent might choose not to communicate.

The following discussion was identified as a category under this sub-theme.

### **Category 1.1: The nature of the professional relationship with the sexually exploited adolescent**

The participants reported that the professional relationship with adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation is sensitive in nature and that it needs time to develop.

*“So dis ‘n baie meer wil ek sê sensitiewe professionele verhouding.”*

*“En om ‘n verhouding ook te bou, die proses vat ook bietjie langer uhm...om daai vertrouwe te wen maar al kommunikeer hulle nie in die begin so sterk nie maak hulle nog die heelyd staat op jou so dis die heelyd verhouding bou en*

*selfs al het jy teen drie maande al 'n goeie verhouding een 'setback' wil ek amper sê kan daai verhouding weer beïnvloed en dan moet jy weer 'n verhouding bou."*

*"So dis die heelryd ontwikkeling van verhouding en werk daaraan vir altwee en ook vertrouwe vir die persoon en ander persoon."*

Research, predominantly focused on adolescents, has shown that supportive and trusting relationships are a key factor in the development of quality of life (Hedin and Mansson, 2003; Raphael, 2004). The relationship building between the social worker and sexually exploited adolescents requires consistency over time, coupled with a non-judgmental approach and "significant perseverance" on the part of the social worker (Rabinovitch, 2003:239). In support of the viewpoints in literature, the following statement by a participant in this study highlights the fact that gaining trust in the professional relationship requires perseverance:

*"It also takes a long time to gain their trust. It really requires patience."*

The statements below link the professional relationship with the behavioural problems experienced by the sexually exploited adolescent (as discussed in Sub-theme 1.4).

*"One second you're completely fine with the people you're working with [the sexually exploited adolescent], they trust you and the next second you're their worst enemy. They're shouting at you, they're violent."*

*"Very often victims of trafficking can be labelled as very difficult and it's true. They are incredibly difficult. You know one day you're the best friend, the next day they can't stand you. You know one day you're making progress and the next day they've gone back to step minus one, you know what I mean."*

*"They struggle to trust the professional who wants to help them. Others on the other hand are very aggressive and moody."*

Obstacles in the professional relationship with victims of human trafficking are often based on the victim's inability to trust that the professional person has his/her interest at heart and does not expect anything in return (Caliber Associates, 2007). Related to this aspect is the relationship between the sexually exploited adolescent and the trafficker, which will be discussed in the next sub-theme.

### **Sub-theme 1.7: Description of the adolescent's relationship with the trafficker**

The following discussion provides a description of the adolescent's relationship with the trafficker. On the one hand, the participants described the relationship from the perspective of the trafficker and on the other hand from the perspective of the adolescent. Firstly, the trafficker appears to be unaware of, or unconcerned about the damage done to the sexually exploited adolescent.

*“OK maar hulle [referring to the exploiter] weet nie die wreedgeid wat daar agter aangaan nie en wat die kind deurmaak om vir hulle daai geld te bring nie.”*

Thorpe (2011) explains that adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation is viewed as human commodities by the traffickers.

From the adolescent's perspective the participants described that the sexually exploited adolescent sometimes have a misperception of the relationship with the trafficker.

*“Hulle gaan terug. Dan ook die vals persepsie van die ‘trafficker’ was eintlik hulle ‘boyfriend’. So hulle het ‘inloved’ geraak met die persoon en hulle vorm ‘n hele sindroom rondom die persoon van hy het my gered, hy het my eintlik lief gehad uhhh, hy het my so goed versorg.”*

*“They stay with this people because they are longing for love and acceptance. These people give them money to buy for example clothes, food etc.”*

*“Stockholm-syndrome is very common. They don’t want to gain assistance. They want to return back to the trafficker.”*

Friedman (2005) explains that, as a means of emotional and physical survival, the victim identifies with his/her trafficker. The author identifies this aspect as the Stockholm syndrome and describes the syndrome as follows: *“She expresses extreme gratitude over the smallest acts of kindness or mercy (e.g. he does not beat her today), denial over the extent of violence and injury, rooting for her pimp, hyper-vigilance regarding his needs, and the perception that anyone trying to persecute him or help her escape is the enemy. She may lash out at law enforcement or anyone attempting to help her exit, and insist that she is fine and happy in her current situation”*. In further support of the above descriptions, Spies (2006:47) notes that the adolescents often refer to their perpetrators as *“loving fathers, grandfathers and uncles who took care of them and who did not really want to hurt them”*.

The following comments reflect on the adolescent’s perceived idea that there is no alternative solution available and link this with the lack of self-worth, as discussed in Sub-theme 1.2.

*“I think the rate of human trafficking, someone whose been trafficked and rescued, the rate of human trafficking or going voluntarily back to it is more than 50% and I think people wonder why it is because that very core thing. It’s that you’ve been broken down to your absolute core. You think that it is all that there is for you.”*

*“No sense of self-worth that they only identify with their trafficker and they fall in love with them because that’s where their food comes from, that’s where their protection comes from, that’s where their guidance comes from.”*

Clawson et al. (2009:19) identify a learned helplessness (as a consequence of sexual exploitation through human trafficking) and a fear of retaliation by the trafficker as contributing factors to the maintenance of the relationship between the adolescent and the trafficker. In addition, a participant concurred that the adolescent

might feel obliged to protect the trafficker, similar to the fact that they want to protect their families (as discussed in Sub-theme 1.1).

*“Very often the children may not want to talk about whom recruited them, they may not want to talk about how they have been trafficked because it’s someone they know.”*

Crosson-Tower (2005:126) acknowledges that traffickers make use of different methods to ensure the cooperation of the adolescents, such as their need for human contact and affection, their need for adult approval and their interest in material rewards. Traffickers further use his or her power to dominate, bribe, threaten or blackmail the adolescent emotionally into non-disclosure.

The vulnerability of the adolescents, as described in Sub-themes 1.1 and 1.5 also contribute to the inability to break free from the relationship with the trafficker.

*“Some of them don’t have a home and return to the trafficker.”*

The last sub-theme reflects on the impact of the legal process on the sexually exploited adolescent.

### **Sub-theme 1.8: Sexually exploited adolescents experience trauma during the legal process**

The trauma related to the legal process following the disclosure of sexual exploitation due to human trafficking is described by a participant as follows:

*“Die trauma na die misbruik is erger as die trauma van die misbruik want baie keer word die persoon vrygelaat of borgtog en dan sien jy [i.e. the sexually exploited adolescent] hom loop. Sy familie weet daar saak aan so as jy huiswinkel toe stap dan sien hulle jou en sy susters gooi jou met klippe en sy...so in ‘n droomwêreld sal die kanse op borg skraler wees.”*

The fact that the legal process is lengthy and that the victims cannot undergo intensive therapy during this time were voiced as further concerns.

*“Al die goed drag aan en aan en aan.”*

*“Ons mag glad nie leiding gee aan die kinders nie [referring to lack of emotional support while a court case is pending].”*

*“Van die sake hang al jare, letterlik jare nou ek kan nie onthou watter kleur sokkies ek ‘n jaar terug op die 1ste Januarie aangehad het nie en die kinders word verwag om goed te onthou.”*

*“Intussen leef daai kind in vrees, die familie bly oorkant die pad.”*

*“I know why court processes are slow because they are not just looking for one person; they are looking for an entire ring. It is organised crime.”*

*“The longer it [the legal process] takes, the longer you’re keeping them in that in that limbo.”*

*“The longer the court process takes, the more frustrated the victim becomes, because they can’t move forward.”*

The mentioned lengthy process leads to the fact that the adolescent does not want to continue with the process.

*“They are so frustrated with the system that they leave the safe house.”*

*“Sometimes it takes too long then the victims get frustrated and thinks no one believes them or don’t want to testify anymore.”*

The victims are often reluctant to testify because of the stigma they face from communities, their trauma, and because of trafficking are normally linked to incredibly powerful members of organised crime (Thorpe, 2011). Letherby, Williams,

Birch and Cain (2008:140) continue with this line of thought and mention that the fact that victims cannot be fully supported during the legal process negatively impacts on the healing process.

This theme forms a foundation for the discussion of services, or the lack thereof, in the next theme.

### **3.3.2 Theme 2: Availability of services, or lack thereof, to the sexually exploited adolescent**

Clawson et al. (2009:13) distinguishes between emergency and long-term services to adolescent victims of sexual exploitation. Emergency services refer to safety and basic needs (e.g. food and clothing), while long-term services include an intensive case management to address the needs of the victim holistically. However, the participants in this study reported a general lack of available services to the sexually exploited adolescent. The following statements attest to this viewpoint:

*“Maar die ander kinders daar buite wat nie by ‘n X [service provider organisation] uitkom nie of waar ‘n X nie in hulle gebied is nie. Nee, daar is geen hulp vir hulle nie want die sielkundiges vra geld en die mense het nie geld nie.”*

*“Behalwe die kinders wat X [service provider organisation] mee werk dink ek daar is kinders daar buite wat deur die ‘system’ agtergelaat word.”*

Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2008:205) also refer to a lack of knowledge related to available support services for victims or any preventive measures (Bezuidenhout & Joubert, 2008:205). Other reported barriers regarding services to sexually exploited adolescents are: *“Restrictive rules at shelters; concerns regarding confidentiality, including concerns about being reported to child protective services; lack of age-appropriate therapeutic groups; lack of culturally appropriate services; inability to establish trust with staff members due to high staff turnover; and the need for emotional, financial, and other support that will help empower these victims to leave the streets and exploitation”* (Aviles and Helfrich, 2004: 331-337).

The participants specifically noted that a specialised service to these victims is needed.

*“As so geval sê nou maar by X [service provider organisation] uitkom, by ‘n Y [service provider organisation] uitkom kom ons wees eerlik die mense doen goeie werk maar hulle gevallelading is so hoog dit is maar net een van die gevalle. Daar word nie spesialiteitsdiens gelewer nie.”*

*“Dit word dieselfde gehanteer as enige ander kind wat moontlik seksueel gemolesteer is of wat se oom naweke kom en aan haar vroetel. En dis nie omdat hulle nie wil nie, dis omdat hulle nie tyd het nie.”*

*“I really don’t feel like children who’ve been trafficked can be dealt with and handled in the same manner than children who are victims of other forms of abuse.”*

*“Are they putting the same amount of policies and efforts into dealing with children victims of trafficking in a specialised manner or are they just being taken under the whole umbrella of abuse, neglect etc.?”*

*“Are we paying the children the same amount of attention in specialised services as we pay with adults?”*

The ILO (International Labour Organisation, 2007:16) emphasises the need for specialised training of professionals dealing with victims of human trafficking. In addition to the reported lack of available services, the participants also referred to the obstacle that stigmatisation poses during service delivery. This aspect was included in the theme as a sub-theme.

### **Sub-theme 2.1: Stigmatisation of the victims of sexual exploitation**

The ILO (International Labour Organisation, 2007:16) asserts that adolescent victims of commercial sexual exploitation should not be viewed as “perverse or delinquent “. The emphasis should be placed on 1) the fact that they are victims of a crime and 2)

that they are vulnerable to other forms of exploitation. However, the statements below indicate how general stigmatisation of adolescents who were trafficked for sexual exploitation takes place.

*“Die stigma rondom dit is ook nog baie groot want hulle dink dis prostitusie, jy het gekies om dit te doen.”*

*“Jy het die geld vir jouself gehou en so.”*

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (2006:21-24) concurs that stigmatisation by families and communities have a negative impact on the adolescents' ability to deal with what happened with them, develop healthy self-images (also see Sub-theme 1.2) and reintegrate into society. The United States Department of Health and Human Services (2006) postulates that the stigmatisation is related to sexual exploitation being perceived as prostitution, as well as to the sexually transmitted diseases associated with high-risk sexual practices. The stigma associated with sexual exploitation in general, and prostitution in particular, also increases the difficulty in identifying victims. Victims of sex trafficking are not likely to disclose their involvement in prostitution to social workers and other service providers due to shame and fear (Lloyd, 2005:6-18).

A participant explains the reason behind stigmatisation as follows (also see Sub-theme 1.1):

*“Ek dink deel van dit is omdat hulle uhm...nie noodwendig die term verstaan nie ..... en baie van die mense getraffick word besef self nie eers hulle is getraffick nie.”*

Linked to stigmatisation is the fact that sexual exploitation is perceived as normalised in our society by the participants.

*“En ek dink hulle...een van die dinge wat ook as dit nou by ‘sexual exploitation’ kom van kinders - dis half genormaliseer en dis baie hartseer*

*want omdat daar so baie kinders is wat seksueel misbruik word is dit maar net nog 'n kind."*

*"Dis asof die geweld teen kinders is genormaliseer en dis 'n groot probleem omdat dit gesien word as net deel van ons samelewing neem baie min mense aksie daarteen. Sommer net iets wat gebeur."*

The term "normalising" is also known as desensitising. This refers to a diminished emotional responsiveness towards a specific situation, in this case sexual exploitation (Paludi, 2011). In the context of this present study, and with specific reference to the participants' responses above, it implies that families and communities are becoming less emotional about cases of sexual exploitation, due to the fact that the occurrence thereof is not unique, and therefore do not respond to this social issue in a sensitive manner.

The first two themes answered the first research question of this study, namely: What are the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation? The description of the sexually exploited adolescent, combined with a description of the lack of services to this group provided a platform for the next three themes that will address the second research question, namely: How should adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation be assisted by social workers? The participants firstly provided a description of current services to sexually exploited adolescents.

### **3.3.3 Theme 3: A description of social services to sexually exploited adolescents**

This theme is illustrated in terms of five sub-themes and eight categories:

- The service provides a safe environment for sexually exploited adolescents
- The nature of services to sexually exploited adolescents
  - Services are focused on building trust and providing hope
  - Services are long-term in nature
  - Services aim to expose the sexually exploited adolescent to pleasurable experiences

- Assessment of the sexually exploited adolescent's background
- Assessment of the sexually exploited adolescent's needs
- A description of the types of support provided to the sexually exploited adolescents
  - Services focussing on psychological and emotional aspects
  - Services focussing on physical aspects
  - Services focussing on skills development
  - Services focusing on family reintegration

### **Sub-theme 3.1: The service provides a safe environment for sexually exploited adolescents**

The need to be able to build a professional relationship with adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation, described in Sub-theme 1.6 and Category 1.1, is addressed by creating a safe environment within which service delivery can take place.

*“Sommige van hulle moet net wegkom daar waar hulle is en weet dat hulle het ‘n reg om veilig te wees.”*

*“Sommige se omstandighede is so erg laat ons hulle uit daai ‘environment’ moet gaan uithaal en in ‘homes’ sit. Maar dan laat ons hulle deurkom wanneer ons programme aanbied.”*

*“When I’m talking safe care I’m talking it’s separate from community. its 24 hour care, it’s full on comprehensive support.”*

*“Basically a place of safety so that they can reflect on everything that happened to them. Sometimes it takes a while for them to realise what happened to them.”*

The following statement emphasises that the safe environment includes a person who will listen to the adolescent:

*“Hulle het mense nodig wat bereid is om te luister in die eerste plek.”*

The difficulty to trust and the fact that the building of a trusting relationship takes time, as discussed in Sub-themes 1.3, 1.4 and 1.6, must also be taken into consideration, as described by the statement below:

*“Sommige dae is hul vir dae ‘missing’ en waar ons nie weet waar hulle is nie en dan kom hulle net weer aan.”*

The need to create a safe environment is based on the fact that the adolescent trafficked for sexual exploitation had to learn to cope and survive in a threatening environment. This behaviour can only be replaced once the threat is no longer experienced (International Organisation for Migration, 2006:21-24). Spies (2006:248) emphasises that both physical and emotional safety is needed to ensure that the victims of sexual exploitation is able to develop trust, which would lead to engagement in the healing process. Clawson et al. (2009:27) furthermore advises that a safe environment could be created through the use of an informal environment where the participants have a say in what they want to do, how they want to do it and when they want to do it. The social worker will act as a guide to mediate a process where healthy decisions can be made. The authors also note that interactive and experimental processes help the adolescents to test new ways of behaving, thinking and perceiving. This aspect was also highlighted as a valuable tool in service delivery by the following statement:

*“Ons het jare terug laat die kinders met wie ons gewerk het ‘workshop’ rondom ‘n plek van veiligheid vir hulle, want daar is nie en die organisasie in die Kaap wat die ‘workshop’ gedoen het ..... en die kinders het self ‘n plan uitgewerk van hoe die plek moet lyk, wat daar by die plek moet aangaan en waar die plek moet wees.”*

### **Sub-theme 3.2: The nature of services to sexually exploited adolescents**

Four categories were identified related to the participants’ descriptions of the nature of services to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation. These categories focus

on 1) the building of trust and hope, 2) long-term services, 3) exposing the adolescent victims to pleasurable experiences and 4) the aim to provide a multi-disciplinary service.

### **Category 3.1: Services are focused on building trust and providing hope**

Building on the need for a safe environment, discussed above, the following comments highlight the need to build trust and provide hope for sexually exploited adolescents:

*“Ons wys vir hulle dat hulle kan.... Daar is mooi dinge daar buite.”*

*“Ons wil net daai menswees in hulle navore bring.”*

*“Baie van hulle kom die verskriklikste goeters oor daar buite en vertrou wen en dit te behou is die ‘ultimate’, want dan sal hulle aanmekaar terugkom. Want ‘nevermind’ wat het gebeur hulle sal weet ek kan nou na daai ‘aunty’ toe gaan of na X [service provider organisation] toe gaan en ek sal gehelp word, en hulle sal daar wees vir my.”*

*“Hulle weet hulle word nie ‘gejudge’ nie.”*

*“Hulle moet gehelp word deur dieselfde persoon. Hulle moet nie ‘chop’ en ‘change’ in ‘service providers’ nie. Selfs organisasie.....Ja want dit veroorsaak regtig ‘confusion’ met die kinders.”*

Aviles and Helfrich (2004:331) emphasise the need for limitations of staff turnovers to ensure that the adolescent victims are able to build a trusting professional relationship with social workers. The authors note that consistency of the persons involved in the helping process leads to the empowerment of adolescents to create change. Clawson et al. (2009:39) agree with the above and highlight the need to provide the adolescent victims of sexual exploitation with an age-appropriate programme. The ILO (International Labour Organisation, 2007:15-16) further highlights the need to address both the emotional and the socio-economic needs of

adolescents with a specific focus on prevention of re-entering the sexual exploitation context (due to a perceived lack of options). In further support, Richter et al. (2005:373) advise that the poor self-image of adolescent victims of sexual exploitation (also see Sub-theme 1.2) could be improved through consistent encouragement and recognition. The consistency leads to a clear message that the adolescent is being appreciated and viewed as worthy. The authors, however, warn that the social worker should always be open and honest in communication with these adolescents to contribute to a feeling of safety and trust.

### **Category 3.2: The ideal of long-term services**

The participants emphasised the need for long-term services as follows:

*“Jy kan nie net dink jy haal daai kind uit daai situasie uit en jy het niks om te offer nie.”*

*“Dis ‘n verskriklike lang pad wat moet geloop word met daai persoon.”*

*“Dit is nie ‘n ‘once of thing’ nie, want jy dink jy het die een situasie ‘getackel’ dan is daar net weer iets anders wat volg.”*

*“It’s a long road, it’s a long process.”*

*“It’s not a quick fix.”*

*“It’s not an easy solution oh I will take you out of your own environment, I will take you somewhere else and you will be fine.”*

*“Then I think not just that interim from 3-6 months of you know safety, trauma counselling and all of that, but what is the long-term goal, what is the facilities in long-term in the Western-Cape that can walk a road with these victims?”*

However, the participants admitted that this did not take place in practice:

*"[Describing the reasoning of the trafficked adolescent] ...'I've been stabilised in my shelter you know in the shelter that I've been in now. I'm placed in a home or I'm placed with safe family or I'm placed in foster care', whatever the situation is.' What is term long-term support with that?"*

*"En die kinders, daar word nie 'n langtermyn plan geskryf vir die jongmense en die gesin nie. Daar is miskien 'n 5 jaar plan maar daar is nie 10/15 jaar plan nie en dis 'n groot probleem."*

*"Ja, vir so 2-5 jaar en dan is hulle op hul eie maar dan is hulle oor 18 jaar. En dan is daar nie meer X, Y, Z [social service organisations] en wat aan hulle sal vat nie tensy hulle, hul kinders mishandel of iets. So daar is nie die ondersteuning of terapeutiese dienste langtermyn is daar nie."*

*"Ek was twee weke terug by een van daai meisies in Bonteheuwel en die grootste probleem is die system het haar gefail. Daar is nou nog...toe dit gebeur het en dit was in die media toe was daar ondersteuning maar nou 10 jaar later.... Ja, sy het nie terapie nie, haar gesin word nie ondersteun nie. Daar is geen finansiële ondersteuning nie. So herintegrasië sien mense as korttermyn maar dit is nie, dis langtermyn."*

*"Sometimes they only receive assistance/support when they are in the safe houses but if they leave they don't get it so intensive anymore. Sometimes it takes years to come over this traumatic experience so aftercare is very important."*

*"There are only focus on the rescue and needs now but there is now focus on what to do after the rescuing."*

One participant did refer to a long-term treatment programme for sexually exploited adolescents.

*“Daar [referring to where the programme is presented] sal hulle gesond raak, daar sal hulle ook leer om nie net oor hulleself maar ook om om te gee vir ander mense want hulle word so beroof van baie dinge.”*

The following description bear further testimony for the need to engage in long-term service plans.

*“Then I think not just that interim from three to six months of, you know, safety, trauma counselling and all of that, but what is the long-term goal, who are the facilities in long-term in the Western-Cape that can walk a road with these victims?”*

Long-term support is needed from non-judgemental persons who are willing and available over a period of time (Protection of Sexually Exploited Children and Youth, 2010). Clawson et al. (2009:13) provide the following focus areas for the treatment of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation that is all long-term in nature:

- Legal assistance
- Medical care
- Alcohol and drug abuse counselling/treatment
- Mental health counselling
- Life skills training
- Education
- Job training/employment
- Family reunification

### **Category 3.3: Services aim to expose the sexually exploited adolescent to pleasurable experiences**

The participants shared activities that they provide to adolescents who were trafficked for sexual exploitation as part of their services as follows:

*“Ons gaan wys plekke in die Kaap soos die ‘slave lodge’, uhm ‘beach’ toe.”*

*“Ons neem hulle vir ‘masagges’ en ‘facials’.”*

*“Recreation, obviously you need recreation. If you look at the normal life role of an adolescent, a facility for a victim of trafficking needs to be able to speak to all the life roles of the child and be able to supply them in a therapeutic manner.”*

The need to develop a new, age appropriate lifestyle is also associated with pleasurable experiences that would lead to hope (also see Category 3.1). Bales and Lize (2004) discuss this aspect and emphasise the importance of developing personal efficacy. This means that activities should be age appropriate and that the adolescents must feel free to identify activities that they would like to take part in, as also discussed in Sub-theme 3.1 (Clawson, et al., 2009:37).

#### **Category 3.4: The ideal of a multi-disciplinary service**

The ILO (International Labour Organisation, 2007:15-16) acknowledges the importance of a multi-disciplinary service to victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. It is furthermore specifically emphasised that *“care programmes for victims require various conditions in order to be effective: they should be sustainable over time, have sufficient resources to execute plans, be coherent, realistic and monitor their direct impact on the victims”* (International Labour Organisation, 2007:16).

Participants described an ideal of a multi-disciplinary service, as well as existing multi-disciplinary services:

*“DECAP se mense is bekwaam, hulle het ondervinding, hulle weet presies wat hulle doen. As jy ‘n kind daar inkry het jy toegang tot ‘n psiagter, sielkunde, medies, kliniese maatskaplike werkers, ‘psychiatric nurses’, ‘educational psychologists’, ‘psychometric testing’.”*

*”In ‘n droomwêreld is daar meer as een DECAP wat tot toegang is.”*

*“You need a well-rounded daily program with the victim that incorporates life skills training; basic skills and you know psychological counselling and psychological psychiatric assessment.”*

*“I think it’s really a multi-disciplinary and inter-sectoral response is needed.”*

Some of the above statements did indicate that such services are indeed operational, but the following statement reflects on the lack of accessibility of such services:

*“Maar dis 7 tot 9 maande waglys om daar in te kom. ...hulle het die regte mense maar hulle het te min mense vir die volume hulp wat hulle nodig het.”*

The participants continued to identify the following service providers that should form part of a multi-disciplinary team:

*“Honestly you need Department of Health on board especially for drug-detoxification. That is the biggest, biggest thing.”*

*“You need Department of Social Development on board, not just for dealing with cases but identifying cases. Yes, that’s the key issue actually how to identify the victim. But also the adequate safe care for a child - knowing what adequate safe care is for a victim of trafficking.”*

*“Then obviously the police - especially if it [the exploitation] comes from a trafficking ring, there are court cases involved. You need protection for the child. You know swift investigations and knowledge of how do you draw the right kind of information out of a child.”*

*“The education system needs to come on board. I think reading through all the policy and legislation at the moment Education Department is probably the only one without any real mandate to do anything. You know they may not be able to have a school day like a normal child. What services are provided to*

*them to be able to still continue schooling or at least something in that certain time?”*

*“Specifically though you know in my mind if I’m thinking ground level social workers and ground level police officers. You know they know the word ‘human trafficking’ but not necessarily how to identify what it actually is.”*

*“Coordinate law enforcement; coordinate all of these things in the society to get them out.”*

Thorpe (2011) confirms the need for a multi-disciplinary approach, where all stakeholders work together. The need for the involvement of health sectors are also noted and accentuated by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (2006), while the Florida Coalition against Domestic Violence (2004:14) emphasises the need for a community response that involves the collaborations of all persons and institutions/organisations that could address the needs of the adolescents holistically.

The next two sub-themes provide a descriptions of how the service providers assess the backgrounds and the needs of the adolescents

### **Sub-theme 3.3: Assessment of the sexually exploited adolescent’s background**

The participants described how they assess the backgrounds of the adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation as follows:

*“Die kinders se ‘backgrounds’ is baie belangrik om te weet wat aangaan by die huis waarheen hulle moet teruggaan.”*

*“Ons doen ‘home visits’; so ons gaan kyk wat by die huis aangaan.”*

*“Ons gaan kyk die familie. Is daar ander enige ander soort ‘abuse’ soos ‘drug abuse’ uhm...en hoe is dit daar.”*

*“Wie werk in daai woning en wie werk nie.”*

*“Hoe die gesindheid is en die ‘relationship’ met die kind en die ouers of die mense in die huis.”*

*“Die omgewing word ook na gekyk.”*

*“Sommige se omstandighede is so erg laat ons hulle uit daai ‘environment’ moet gaan uithaal en in ‘homes’ sit.”*

*“Yes, if in a perfect society we had the kind of services to walk a road with the family on rehabilitation. Then you can put the child back with the family, but you have to investigate the circumstances of how they were trafficked and that is where the tricky part comes in.”*

Clawson et al. (2009:39) propose that a comprehensive assessment regarding the adolescents’ backgrounds should focus on family functioning, mental health and medical problems and learning disabilities. The authors explain that this information directs the treatment plan for each individual adolescent. Additionally, the ILO (International Labour Organisation, 2007:19) notes that it is important to obtain information about the *“life conditions that children and adolescents lured into the sex trade have been subjected to are repeated time and again; poverty, family violence, abandonment, recurrent cycles of abuse against women over several generations, desperation and unscrupulous adults who take advantage of these conditions”*. It is important that these aspects should be included in the treatment plan to ensure that the adolescent is not again exposed to the reasons that caused the trafficking and the sexual exploitation in the first place.

#### **Sub-theme 3.4: Assessment of the sexually exploited adolescent’s needs**

Even when adolescents do succeed in leaving the situation where sexual exploitation took place, the reintegration into society is often associated with *“feelings of loneliness, alienation and lack of connection with their families, former friends, schoolmates and community”* (Protection of Sexually Exploited Children and Youth, 2010). Therefore a comprehensive needs assessment is needed to ensure that relevant and appropriate services are provided to the adolescent.

The following reports were made regarding the assessment of the sexually exploited adolescent's needs:

*“Sommige van hulle is op ‘drugs’, so dan sal ons praat van ‘rehab’.”*

*“Al daai goed in plek kan sit soos die sielkundige help, die ‘therapy’, die voorsiening van die nodigste, die ‘need’ wat die kind daai moment het totdat daai kind kan weet vanaand is daar kos, ek het klere aan my lyf, ek gaan skool hier en ek is ‘safe’ hier. Daai ‘pimp’ gaan my nie in die hande kry nie of my familie...dinge soos daai.”*

*“Daai kind se need is so groot en is so baie.”*

*“Daarmee begin ‘n mens deur basiese assessering ook te doen, wat is jou behoeftes, wat wil jy bereik in die lewe, waarvan het jy gehou voor hierdie lewe om hulle te motiveer dat hulle het ‘n lewe voor dit gehad.”*

The social worker should use the assessment period to establish a trusting, non-judgemental relationship to set the platform for the transition to a healthy lifestyle. Needs that might occur include support from peers and family members, obtaining access to resources such as hospitals and schools, finding role models and developing new interests (Protection of Sexually Exploited Children and Youth, 2010). In this regard, Clawson et al. (2009:39) identify the focus on drug abuse, victimisation, anger management, depression, medication management, educational needs and medical conditions as those areas that should receive attention during the needs assessment. Together with the background assessment, the social worker will be able to compile a treatment plan that assist the adolescent to address the challenges related to reintegration into society.

### **Sub-theme 3.5: A description of the types of support provided to the sexually exploited adolescents**

Yee (2013:3) postulates that the emotional and physical impact of victims of sexual exploitation, combined with their backgrounds need to guide the decisions regarding

the treatment of victims. Support to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation has to be based on the assessment of their backgrounds and individual needs. The statement below serves as support of this statement:

*“You are not just working with that [the sexually exploitation]. Now we worked through that healing but now I want to work on rehabilitation and getting you back into society but you have to go back to step one and do basic life skills - how to know all that basic life skills that make you efficient and effective in society. Those are things you have to work on as well in order to fully work full circle rehabilitation with someone in order to get functional in society again and not vulnerable to becoming a second time victim.”*

### **Category 3.5: Services focussing on psychological and emotional aspects**

The following comments focus on services that address psychological and emotional aspects:

*“Ons het ‘counselling sessions’ by die ‘office’ met hulle.”*

*“Daar word goed in ‘poems’ geskrywe.”*

*“.....[referring to building a self-image] wat is jou sterkpunte of nie sterkpunte, waarin is jy goed, wat kan jy doen. Soos kan jy kook, kan jy jou gesig was, kan jy tandeborsel....”*

*“Baie keer is ‘n sielkundige dienste ook nodig dan sal ons uitverwys en ook ‘n psigiatriese evaluasie vir as daar dwelms is net om chemies wanbalanse te kyk, depressie te kan diagnoseer, dalk enige ander psigiatriese siektes te evalueer.”*

*“The victims have to get their personal identity back.”*

The daily mental abuse associated with sexual exploitation results in a multitude of psychological symptoms, including depression, a low self-image and self-worth,

stress-related disorders, disorientation, confusion, phobias, and panic attacks. The emotional and psychological harm furthermore includes shame, grief, fear, distrust and self-loathing (United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2006). As also confirmed by the participants' responses above, the need to include psychological and/or psychiatric services in the comprehensive treatment plan becomes clear. The social worker therefore serves as a case manager, making sure that the adolescent has access to the said services.

### **Category 3.6: Services focussing on physical aspects**

According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services (2006) adolescent victims experience various physical problems due to the *“inhumane environments and work under dangerous conditions”* that are associated with sexual exploitation. The following comments provide an explanation of the physical aspects of a sexually exploited victim:

*“As daai kinders aankom en hulle wil bietjie meer ‘presentable’ maak; dan is daar ‘n bad waar hulle kan was en so nou en dan ook iets om te eet.”*

*“By die ‘office’ is ‘toiletries’, want dis wat grootteendeels wat die kinders nodig het.”*

*“Basiese versorging, gesondheid, om te kyk na hulle gesondheid is ook iets wat ons agtergekom het.”*

*“Die hele proses van die dwelms, die detoks daarvan, uhhh om skoon te bly. Ons het al gevalle gekry waar die kinders of vrouens na ‘n week uitslip want die onttrekkingsimptome is so erg.”*

*“Hulp wat hulle nodig het eerstens as daar dwelmgebruik is wat ongeveer 80% van die kere is moet hulle definitief vir ‘n detoks gaan uhhh maar dit is ook ‘n uitdaging vir organisasies want daar is waglyste. Jy kry hulle nie in ‘n ‘rehab’ vir drie maande nie en dis amper soos ‘n krisisintervensie. Hulle moet nou gehelp word.”*

*“Defnitief ook ‘n behoefte waardeur die kinders of vrouens moet gaan is ‘n mediese ‘check-up’ en basiese HIV en VIGS toets, ook word daar gekyk na die TB, ‘n swangerskaptoets ook want hulle weet nie.”*

*“Wanneer hulle hier kom moet ons dadelik vir hulle ‘n gebalanseerde ete gee, genoeg slaap gee uhhh want dis maar fisies uitputting ook van ‘n gebrek aan slaap.”*

*“I think what they need is someone who manage their case effectively. You know medical needs, sexually transmitted deceases, neglect, malnutrition, forced abortions.... All of those things need to be checked out so you need comprehensive medical care.”*

*“If they’ve been addicted to drugs they definitely need drugs detoxification. I think it’s ridiculous, this year alone 50% of the victims we had, no I’m lying more about 80% of victims that we have collectively within our groups of NGO’s in the Western-Cape have been addicted to drugs. Last year we lost 50% of our victims. We couldn’t help them because they had drug addiction. There were no way that we could detox them it’s too expensive. They would go back to their trafficker.”*

*“Usually the victims are addicted to drugs so after they have been saved from their perpetrators they sometimes turn to drugs for comfort.”*

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (2006:21-24) identifies malnutrition, which could encourage disorders such as anaemia, stunted growth, dermatological and dental problems as a common physical need that should be addressed. The United States Department of Health and Human Services (2006) adds to list of physical needs as *“broken bones, concussions, pregnancies, burns, and vaginal or anal tearing”*.

The United Nations’ Office on Drugs and Crimes (2012) confirms that the link between sexual exploitation of youth and drug abuse are evident. It is argued that adolescents who are victims of sexual exploitation may use drugs to alleviate there

hardships, while it should also be noted that the traffickers may force the adolescents to use drug to create dependence. The addicted adolescent now has to deal with the trauma of the sexual exploitation and trafficking, as well as with the drug addiction. This makes reintegration and recovery a difficult task for both the adolescent and the social worker.

The descriptions provided by the participants in the previous and this category support the identified need for a multi-disciplinary service to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation as also highlighted in Category 3.4.

### **Category 3.7: Services focussing on skills development**

The development of skills must, among others, aim to address the low self-image of the sexually exploited adolescent. A poor self-image is associated with the belief that they do not have any skills that could enable them to leave the situation where the sexual exploitation takes place. This then leads to feelings of shame and worthlessness (Protection of Sexually Exploited Children and Youth, 2010). The United States Department of Health and Human Services (2006) advises that the following skills be developed: Language training, career planning, socialisation skills/adjustment training, education/training, and ethnic/religious preservation.

In this regard, the participants reported the following services focussing on skills development:

*“Hulle het ‘n program op ‘n Vrydag waar geleer word om te ‘act’ soos om te dans en so.”*

*“Ons probeer kyk wat is hulle talente wat hulle het.”*

*“Dan is daar die wat ons probeer om ‘n ‘skill’ te leer, soos om ons te help in die ‘office’ met ‘admin’.”*

*“Ons vat hulle op kampe waar ons mense inkry. Waar ons sekere aktiwiteite met hulle het. Soos ‘sometimes’ het ons somer celebraties, mense wat*

*‘songs’ geskryf het ... net om hulle meer te ‘motivate’, want baie dinge het daarom [motivation] gegaan.”*

*“Dan ook vir die wat kinders het..... die ‘parental skills’ met hulle doen.”*

*“By die ‘shelters’ het hulle mos maar die ‘skills development’ wat hulle leer om naaldwerk te doen en ‘beadings’ en sulke goedjies nou doen.”*

*“Die kinders het trauma gehad so hulle leeftegnkeke het verander.”*

*“...life skills, teaching them life skills: are there the ability to learn about health care, what is basic hygiene, what is...how do I look after a house, how do I plan a meal?”*

*“They also need to be trained through life skills. The life skills are needed to empower the victims.”*

The participants placed specific emphasis on the need to develop educational skills. The following comments attest to this:

*“Die kinders het skool gemis.”*

*“’n Ander aspek is uhhh, ‘n groot aspek is die opvoeding, die ‘education side’.”*

*“Die spesiale skoolonderig is wonderlik, dit wat daar is maar hulle is vol.”*

*“So jy mag miskien ‘n kind hê met ‘n spesiale onderrig behoefte maar die Onderwys Department is so oorvol dat hulle nie die bronne het nie.”*

*“Van die spesiale skole het reeds waglyste toegemaak.”*

*“Daar is nie tensy jy omtrent tussen R 3000 en R 6000 het. Is daar nie maklik skool sielkundiges wat psigometriese toetse kan doen nie.”*

*“You know, can they study even if it’s not going into school but are there some forms of lessons that they can learn?”*

The comments above firstly identify the need to include educational systems in the multi-disciplinary team (see Category 3.4) and secondly explain that access to special educational services is currently limited.

Another aspect that was accentuated by the participants was the need to develop socialisation skills.

*“So ‘n kind moet hersosialiseer word.”*

*“To be able to communicate appropriately using appropriate language.”*

*“Die kinders is blootgestel aan vloekwoorde, aan aggressiewe taalgebruik, aan aggressiewe selfs aksies en hulle projekteer dit aan hulle sosiale ‘setting’.”*

*“Victims of human trafficking are multi-layered. You know human trafficking is a result of a long line of social issues or social problems.”*

Adolescents that need to reintegrate into society must overcome feelings of shame and fear, they must alter behaviour that assisted them to survive during the sexual exploitation and they need to develop a new sense of self that is separated from the sexual exploitation (International Organisation for Migration, 2006:21-24).

### **Category 3.8: Services focusing on family reintegration**

The importance of family reintegration as part of service delivery was described as follows:

*“Die grootste uitdaging is die hereintegrasië terug by die gesin.”*

*“Hoe om...watter gedrag die kind dalk gaan openbaar en hoe hulle dit hanteer.”*

*“So daar word nie net ouerleiding gegee nie maar daar word ook nie uhhh terapie gegee sodat ouers kan werk nie en die emosies wat daarmee gepaard gaan nie.”*

*“Yes, let’s say you have to put the victim back with the family - of course you need support for the family. I don’t think you can put a child back to their family without that any support.”*

*“They [the family] need support. An idea is support groups for families where they are able to say: ‘I’m struggling with this, please can you help me?’ Or, ‘this is what I’m seeing my child presents or these are the things I’m struggling with.’”*

*“Like awareness-raising on what they need to be sensitive to. How they can handle their children.”*

The sexually exploited adolescent has the right to be reunited with his or her family. However, reunification should take place only if the parents or guardians have not been involved in the trafficking process. (United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), 2006; International Labour Organisation (IOM), 2007:28). Liu (2005:706) advises that the social worker considers the adolescent’s early perceptions of the family system. The way the adolescent perceived and experienced the family before the trafficking took place will impact on his/her expectations during the reunification process. The long-term nature of the reunification process is also noted, as continuous assessment is needed to establish the needs of the different family members during the different stages of adjustment (Liu, 2005:707).

The next theme elaborates on this theme as it provides a description of the impact of working with adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation on the social workers.

### 3.3.4 Theme 4: Description of impact of working with sexually exploited adolescents

This theme was included to be considered when planning services to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation.

*“Jy [referring to person working with sexually exploited adolescents] moet ook hulp kry as mens nie net daai kinders.”*

*“Ons is almal mens en om te luister na wat daai kind vertel en jy sien die groot seer...”*

*“Sometimes in the longer term it is frustrating to deal with victims, but it’s because of the multi-level layered trauma and often sits on previous abuse or previous neglect or previous vulnerability. And you must understand that it is more difficult because of that.”*

*“So, people who are working with victims of human trafficking I think they need an understanding of that [the multi-layered nature of services] as well.”*

The statements above highlight the need to consider that the social worker who works with sexually exploited adolescents are exposed to the emotional trauma of the adolescents. The last theme builds on this aspect and provides a description of challenges that need to be addressed to ensure effective service delivery to sexually exploited adolescents. A study by Kanno (2010:123-124) revealed that social workers who are continuously exposed to victims of trauma (in this case adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation) may over time suffer from secondary stress symptoms. In efforts to prevent this, it is advised that those social workers rotate. In this present study it was however noted that the adolescents need long-term contact with one person they trust. Other ways to support the social workers are peer group support, continues training and administrative support in terms of adequate funds and resources. The challenges faced by service providers that will be discussed in the last theme are specifically related to the latter.

## **Theme 5: Challenges faced by service providers**

Two specific challenges were highlighted by the participants, and are presented in two sub-themes:

- The costs related to services for special needs of sexually exploited adolescent
- Service providers need access to resources

### **Sub-theme 5.1: The costs related to services for special needs of sexually exploited adolescent**

The social worker acts as case manager. In terms of the multi-disciplinary approach discussed in Category 3.4, this entails that the social worker links the adolescent with the various service providers. It becomes necessary that the social worker has access to funds and resources to ensure that the adolescent has access to all the needed services (Clawson et al., 2009:39). The statements below, however, indicate that the service providers do not have access to needed funds.

*“Om groepe by te woon wat adolessente hersosialiseer/blootstel en gedragsverandering benadering ‘issues’ kos geld.”*

*“Uhhh terapie kos geld, education kos geld, medies kos geld.”*

*“Dan is daar die grootste challenge wat die ‘service providers’ het is die koste verbonde daaraan.”*

### **Sub-theme 5.2: Service providers need access to resources**

Additional to the reported lack of funding, the complex needs of victims of human trafficking create tremendous challenges for providers trying to deliver integrated services (Van Leeuwen, 2004:455). The participants reported that service providers need access to the following resources:

*“Jy moet iets het in plek om vir daai kinders te gee.”*

*“So daar moet ‘n plan wees maar dit is geld.”*

*“Dit kos geld want dit is nie net die toiletries nie. Jy moet klere ook koop.”*

*“Mense wat met hierdie meisies wil werk moet ook weet watter ‘resources’ daar in die ‘community’ is.”*

*“Befondsing vir as die victims moet teruggaan na hulle familie toe. Die vlugkaartjies is maar duur.”*

*“Hulle het nie net een risiko faktor nie dit is regtig **verskillende sisteme** soos daai van die ekologiese perspektief.”*

*“So dis regtig waar ‘n netwerk van mense wat moet saamwerk om hierdie victims te help.”*

*“**Departement of Home Affairs**’ met die ID’s .....Die slagoffers het nerens heen om te gaan nie. Hulle moet ‘n inkomste kry, hulle moet blyplek kry so die ID op die oomblik is ‘n groot probleem want die werkgewers stuur hulle almal terug en sê hulle het ‘n ID nodig so dit is nogals ‘n probleem. en dit is ook ‘n terugslag vir die kinders of vrouens want hulle is nou na 6 maande het hulle nou daai ‘self-confidence’ om werk te gaan soek en ons verduidelik vir hulle, hulle het ‘n ID nodig maar ons wil hulle steeds motiveer want hulle het die inkomste nodig veral as hulle nie familie het nie.”*

*“Waarmee ons baie ook sukkel of ‘n uitdaging is, hulle het nie n ID nie. Het dalk voorheen nog nie ‘n ID gehad nie. So om in die proses te kom...ek het 3 maande terug gekontak om hulp te kry met ‘n ID. Nog geen terugvoering gekry nie.”*

*“Firstly they need to get their ID Documents to get a Place of Safety.”*

*“Wat ons nogals agtergekom het is die mense op die **lughawens**, die werkers daar want ‘n vrou of kind kom sê nou maar op die lughawe, verduidelik die situasie en dan weet hulle nie wat om te doen nie, hulle weet nie wie om te bel nie so daar kort ook opleiding.”*

*“So dit is maar private en publieke sektore, jou **dokters**, jou **klinieke**. Hulle moet almal opgelei word om ‘n victim te kan identifiseer deur as hulle daar aankom met ‘n miskraam as hulle swanger is of HIV of hulle is dalk fisies aangerand ook dalk deur iemand en dan ook jou polisie.”*

*“‘n Ander behoefte is ook die **hofsake** want dit vat so lank. Ek meen die een ‘victim’ het Januarie ‘n saak gemaak, ons het nou nog nie ‘n datum gekry wanneer die saak gaan voorkom nie. So hulle verloor ook maar moed.”*

*“Natuurlik jou **rehabilitasiesentrums**. Amper wil ek sê van die staat se kant af om iewers ‘n bed oop te hou of om net te help laat gaan hulle gaan vir drie dae detoks in die staatshospitaal waar hulle nie daai onkoste het nie.”*

Dennis (2006) notes a common difficulty among service providers is the lack of adequate resources. This influences the social worker’s ability to provide intensive case management and follow-up/aftercare services for extended periods of time. Clawson et al. (2009:19) explains that resources are needed to address the following aspects related to services to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation:

- Access to police and justice systems
- Access to translators
- Access to psychological/psychiatric support systems
- Transport services
- Access to medical services
- Access to administrative support (e.g. Department of Internal Affairs)

In terms of the social worker’s role as case manager, he/she has to coordinate services.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

This chapter provided the reader with a description of the demographic details of the participants, a detailed description of the findings related to the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation from the perspectives of services providers. The findings also focused on focus areas that need to be included when services to these adolescents are being planned. A literature control was included to verify the findings by means of a review of relevant literature.

To finalise the research document, Chapter 4 will provide the reader with a summary of the research methodology that was implemented, as well as of the findings based on the analysis of the qualitative data. The summary will be followed by concluding remarks related to both the implemented methodology and the findings. This document will then be concluded with recommendations related to the findings, the research methodology, and future research related to the research problem.

## CHAPTER 4

### Summaries, Conclusions and Recommendations

#### 4.1 Introduction

Human trafficking is viewed as an international and national problem by the United Nations (2012) and various South African legislation and policy documents (cf. South African Constitution, Amended Act 34 of 2001; South Africa Children's Act, Act 38 of 2005; South Africa Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Bill, 2010).

The impact of human trafficking on adolescent who are trafficked for sexual exploitation is of such a nature that it offers specific challenges to service providers (cf. Skinner, 2008:2). Trafficking for sexual exploitation puts adolescents at risk of HIV and AIDS and interferes with the attainment of the developmental tasks that would lead to the ability to become independent adults (cf. Louw et al. 2005:68, 388; Newman and Newman, 2006:181; Steinberg, 2008:263-265). Relevant literature and recent studies did not provide the researcher with a description of the experiences of these adolescent victims to enable social workers to develop an understanding of needs to be addressed through social service delivery. This research study therefore focused on an exploration and description of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation. Based on the research problem (see Chapter 1, Section 1.2), the following two research questions were formulated:

- What are service providers' perceptions of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation?

In order to answer these questions, the primary goal of this research study was to develop an in-depth understanding of the service providers' perceptions of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation with a view to inform social work services. The researcher was not able to collect data from the adolescent victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, due to reasons provided under Section 4.2.2 below. The goal led to a qualitative inquiry to explore and describe the perceptions and experiences of service providers regarding the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation through semi-structured

interviews. The interviews were transcribed and analysed, and the findings were verified with relevant literature.

In this chapter the research process and methodology, and the research findings are summarised and conclusions are made. This is followed by recommendations regarding the research process and methodology, research findings, and further research on the topic.

## **4.2 Summary and conclusion regarding the research process and methodology**

In Chapter 1, the background to this study was presented together with the research problem, -questions, -goal and –objectives. The planned research methodology and process was also described. The implementation of the research process and methodology are described in Chapter 2 of this document. The section below provides a summary thereof.

### **4.2.1 Summary of the research process and methodology**

This study fell in the ambit of basic research, seeing that it contributed to the social work profession's knowledge base regarding the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation. The exploration and description of these experiences assisted the researcher to make recommendations in terms of focus areas for social services to this group, as well as areas for further research that could assist social workers to address this problem in future.

The researcher chose the qualitative research approach for the purpose of this research study. The qualitative research process (cf. Moriarty, 2011:2-3) was followed and methods and techniques typically associated with the qualitative research approach were implemented. The table below provides a summary of these methods and techniques.

**Table 4.1:** Summary of the application of research methods and techniques within the qualitative research approach

<b>Research Designs</b>	
<b>Designs</b>	<b>Application</b>
Contextual research design	This research design assisted the researcher to specifically focus on sexual exploitation within the context of the adolescence developmental stage and the context of human trafficking.
Exploratory research design	This design provided the researcher with a framework to identify the sampling methods and techniques and data collection methods and techniques to ensure an exploration of the research questions.
Descriptive research design	The descriptive research design assisted the researcher with the choices of the method and techniques for data collection and data analysis to ensure that the findings are presented in a descriptive manner.
<b>Population and Sampling</b>	
Population	Service providers to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation in the Western Cape
Sampling method	Non-probable sampling where the researcher was not able to determine who from the population would be included in the sample at the onset of data collection
Sampling techniques	Purposive sampling technique to ensure that participants were able to answer the research questions and that they are representative of the population
Criteria for inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff members</li> <li>• At service organisations working with victims of human trafficking and</li> <li>• Who are working with, or have worked with, adolescent victims of sexual exploitation due to human trafficking</li> <li>• In the Western Cape</li> </ul>
Size of the sampling	The size of sampling was determined by data saturation. Data saturation was identified after six interviews, but the researcher conducted five more interviews to ensure that no more data were coming forth. The sample size was therefore 11 participants.

<b>Data collection</b>	
Data collection method	Semi-structured interviews
Guiding questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell me about your experiences when working with adolescents who have been sexually exploited due to human trafficking.</li> <li>• What do they need help with?</li> <li>• Who do you think can help them?</li> <li>• How should these adolescents be helped?</li> </ul>
Interview techniques	Encouragement Focusing Reflection
Documentation of data	<p>The semi-structured interviews were documented by means of tape recordings. Additional data was obtained by means of field notes.</p> <p>The tape recordings and the field notes were transcribed as soon as possible following the interviews.</p>
<b>Data analysis</b>	
Method of data analysis	<p>Tesch's eight steps for qualitative data analysis (in Creswell, 2009)</p> <p>This framework was employed by both the researcher and the independent coder.</p>
<b>Data verification</b>	
Method of data verification	Guba's model for qualitative data verification (Krefting, 1991)
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
Truth value	The validity of the truth in this study was increased by the use of interview techniques.
Applicability	The applicability of the findings was enhanced through a thick description of the implementation of the research methodology (Chapter 2) and the use of the purposive sampling technique.
Consistency	Consistency of the findings was ensured by using the coding system that entailed that the qualitative data was coded in such a way that it assisted the researcher to identify themes and sub-themes. The same coding system was implemented by the independent coder, which further ensured the consistency of the findings.
Neutrality	Neutrality in this study was achieved by full transcripts of interviews, field notes and the use of an independent coder.

<b>Ethical considerations</b>	
Informed consent	Participants were presented with letters of invitation which provided them with relevant information regarding this study, such as the goal, the method of data collection and ethical practice. They were provided the opportunity to ask questions and thereafter were requested to sign informed consent forms. See Annexure A, B and C
The right to privacy and voluntary participation	The participants were informed that they can decide what to share and how to share the information. The researcher also informed them that that they may leave the interview at any time.
Right to privacy and confidentiality of data	Confidentiality and anonymity was a respected at all times to protect the privacy of the participants. The participants' names did not appear on the transcripts, and the informed consent forms, together with the transcripts and field notes were stored in a safe place. The tape recordings will be destroyed as soon as the study is completed.
Protection from harm	The participants in this study were previously notified by letter regarding the goal and nature of this study, and informed again at the beginning of the interviews so that they could determine whether they would feel threatened by the study. In addition, the interviews were conducted at times and locations determined by the participants.

#### **4.2.2 Limitations of the study**

The following constraints/limitations were experienced regarding this research study:

- Based on the research topic, it would have been ideal to collect the data directly from adolescents who have been trafficked for sexual exploitation. Due to the fact that access to victims was problematic (as explained in Section 1.5.3 of Chapter 1), the researcher collected the data from the service providers who worked with adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation. Once data analysis took place it became clear that the participants were able to answer the research questions.

- Another constraint was to arrange meetings with participants that suited them best. The data collection phase of the research process was planned to take place over a three month period, but took six months in the end.
- Although data saturation was detected after the first interviews, the researcher wanted to ensure that a thick description of the research results would be ensured. Another five interviews were therefore done, which lengthened the process further.

Based on the summary of the research process and methodology, as well as the limitations that were experienced, the researcher was able to draw the conclusions that will be discussed next.

#### **4.2.3 Conclusion regarding the research process and methodology**

The **qualitative research process** (cf. Moriarty, 2011:2-3) enabled the researcher to work in an orderly manner. It provided her with a framework to manage the limitations that were experienced, and guided her with the choices related to the methodology and thereby contributed to the verification of data (i.e. the use of data collection techniques, the purposive sampling technique and the framework for data analysis).

The conclusions related to the **research methodology** below are linked to the research process that was followed, namely the research approach and designs; population and sampling, data collection, data analysis, data verification and ethical practice.

- The **qualitative research approach** enabled the researcher to explore and describe the experiences of the persons lodged in a particular situation (i.e. social workers working with adolescents victims trafficked for sexual exploitation). This approach was particularly appropriate seeing that the researcher wanted to add to the knowledge base of the profession. The qualitative inquiry enabled her to provide a description of the experiences of the adolescents trafficked for sexual

exploitation from the perspectives of social workers working with them. Together with the literature control, focus areas for future service delivery could be identified. It was also concluded that this approach enabled the researcher to answer the research question, despite the fact that access to the preferred population (i.e. the adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation) could not occur. The researcher was able to explore and describe the experiences of the adolescents from the perspective of people who are knowledgeable about their experiences (i.e. social workers working with them).

- The **contextual research design** assisted the researcher to work within the specific context of adolescence and human trafficking for sexual exploitation. It informed the decisions related to the method of data collection, the sampling technique and the identification of criteria for inclusion into the sample. The **exploratory and descriptive research designs** were used in combination – the exploration of the research topic was followed by a description of the findings. Both these designs assisted the researcher regarding choices related to the methods of sampling, data collection and data analysis.
- The **sampling method and techniques** utilised in this study are viewed as efficient when working within the above research designs. It ensured that data was collected from persons who were best able to answer research question (also revisit the section above related to the limitations of the study). The fact that data saturation was detected, but complemented with more interviews was viewed as a consideration to be made in qualitative studies where the sample size is relatively small. In this study, it enabled the researcher to ensure that no new themes, sub-themes or categories were identified, and to obtain rich data.
- The use of Tesch's **framework for qualitative data analysis** (Creswell, 2009 189) ensured that the qualitative data in this research study was analysed in a scientific manner. This framework worked well to ensure that data was processed to a collective story by the participants.

- In terms of the descriptive nature of this study, the **literature control** that complemented the empirical findings resulted in a thorough description of the research findings.
- Guba's model for **data verification** (Krefting, 1991), although an older model, ensured that the value of the data and the research findings was increased. The researcher consistently took cognisance of the criteria and strategies related to this model during the course of the research process and conclude that it provided her with clear guidelines to ensure data verification in this study.
- The **ethical considerations** in this study enabled the researcher to ensure that the participants were treated fairly and with respect. The use of the invitation letter and the consent form provided both the researcher and the participants with a safe context. The researcher felt comfortable that the participants were well informed and not forced to participate, while the participants were aware of the fact that their participation was voluntary, and that they could withdraw at any time. The issue of confidentiality and privacy further provided them with a safe environment in which to share their stories.

The research findings, that will be discussed below, were obtained through the research process and methodology described in this section.

#### **4.3 Summary and conclusion regarding the research findings**

The qualitative data was obtained through semi-structured interviews. The data was tape recorded and field notes were taken. The tape recordings and the field notes were transcribed directly after the interviews took place, and then analysed once it was determined that data saturation took place. The findings, along with a demographic description of the participants and a literature control are provided in Chapter 3 of this document. The following sub-section provides a summary of the findings.

### 4.3.1 Summary of the research findings

The research questions that guided this research study focused on exploring and describing a) the **experiences** of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation, and b) how they should be **assisted by social workers**. This information is based on the *experiences and perceptions of social workers who deliver services to this group*.

The themes, sub-themes and categories that emanated from the data provided answers to the above research questions in terms of a description of –

1. The sexually exploited adolescent,
2. Availability of services, or lack thereof, to the sexually exploited adolescent,
3. Social services to sexually exploited adolescents,
4. The impact of working with sexually exploited adolescents and
5. Challenges faced by service providers.

The themes, together with sub-themes and categories, are summarised below.

**Theme 1:** A description of the sexually exploited adolescent

**Sub-theme 1.1:** A description of how sexual exploitation through human trafficking occurs

**Sub-theme 1.2:** Sexually exploited adolescents have a poor self-image

**Sub-theme 1.3:** Sexually exploited adolescents manipulate to protect themselves

**Sub-theme 1.4:** Sexually exploited adolescents display behavioural problems to obtain attention

**Sub-theme 1.5:** Sexually exploited adolescents come from low socio-economic backgrounds

**Sub-theme 1.6:** Sexually exploited adolescents find it difficult to build trusting relationships

**Category 1.1:** The nature of the professional relationship with the sexually exploited adolescent

**Sub-theme 1.7:** Description of the adolescent's relationship with the trafficker

**Sub-theme 1.8:** Sexually exploited adolescents experience trauma during the legal process

**Theme 2:** Availability of services, or lack thereof, to the sexually exploited adolescent

**Sub-theme 2.1:** Stigmatisation of the victims of sexual exploitation

**Theme 3:** A description of social services to sexually exploited adolescents

**Sub-theme 3.1:** The service provides a safe environment for sexually exploited adolescents

**Sub-theme 3.2:** The nature of services to sexually exploited adolescents

**Category 3.1:** Services are focused on building trust and providing hope

**Category 3.2:** The ideal of long-term services

**Category 3.3:** Services aim to expose the sexually exploited adolescent to pleasurable experiences

**Category 3.4:** The ideal of a multi-disciplinary service

**Sub-theme 3.3:** Assessment of the sexually exploited adolescent's background

**Sub-theme 3.4:** Assessment of the sexually exploited adolescent's needs

**Sub-theme 3.5:** A description of the types of support provided to the sexually exploited adolescents

**Category 3.5:** Services focussing on psychological and emotional aspects

**Category 3.6:** Services focussing on physical aspects

**Category 3.7:** Services focussing on skills development

**Category 3.8:** Services focusing on family reintegration

**Theme 4:** Description of impact of working with sexually exploited adolescents

**Theme 5:** Challenges faced by service providers

**Sub-theme 5.1:** The costs related to services for special needs of sexually exploited adolescent

**Sub-theme 5.2:** Service providers need access to resources

The abovementioned themes, sub-themes and categories enabled the researcher to describe the qualitative data through verbatim quotes by participants, together with a literature control in Chapter 3 of this document. The conclusions are described in the next sub-section.

#### **4.3.2 Conclusions regarding the research findings**

The conclusions of the research findings will be discussed in terms of the identified themes.

##### **Theme 1: A description of the sexually exploited adolescent**

- The ages of victims of sexual exploitation varies between two and fourteen years of age, according to the participants in this study. It is therefore concluded that the data obtained in this study is related to the early stages of adolescence (cf. Louw et al., 2007:278). This information is in line with descriptions in literature (cf. Lloyd, 2005:6; Activists Networking against the Exploitation of Child Domestic Workers, 2006:8-11).
- Sexual exploitation through human trafficking of adolescents occurs through violent abductions and parental involvement. Literature confirms these two causes (cf. Crosson-Tower, 2005:135; International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2005; Spies, 2006:51; United Nations Children's Fund, 2006:49; Bezuidenhout and Joubert, 2008:199, 204).
- Another cause of trafficking of adolescence for sexual exploitation is the vulnerability of these victims. This vulnerability is described by the participants and literature as, among others, poverty; a lack of education; a lack of care and support; victims being orphaned and the age of the victims (cf. Demmer, 2004:297; Bezuidenhout and Joubert, 2008:203; Clawson et al., 2009:8).
- According to the findings of this study and references found in literature, adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation are often coerced into participation

because the safety of their family is threatened (cf. Richter et al., 2005:371; Spies, 2006:51; United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2006; the Human Trafficking Organisation; 2006).

- Poor self-images among adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation is based on the lack of acknowledgement of their needs, the fact that they see themselves only as worthy in terms of their willingness to participate in the sexual exploitation, a lack of self-assurance, self-blame and the fact that they are treated like a “commodity”. These adolescents might act in a self-assured manner to hide their feelings of worthlessness. In addition, signs of post-traumatic disorders were identified (cf. Richter et al., 2005:370; Spies, 2006:54; International Organisation for Migration (IOM), 2006:21-24; Clawson et al., 2009:12).
- As a result of the trafficking of adolescents for sexual exploitation, the adolescence might display behavioural problems and behave in a manipulative way. It includes anger outbursts, drug addiction and mood swings and sexually inappropriate behaviour (cf. Richter et al., 2005:373; International Organisation for Migration (IOM), 2006:21-24, Spies, 2006:55-58; Bezuidenhout and Joubert, 2008:205).
- Another result of the exploitation is that the adolescent victims find it difficult to build trusting relationships and to communicate effectively. The lack of trust makes it difficult for these adolescents to engage in personal conversations. It was concluded that there is a specific need for a long-term trusting relationship with one person (i.e. social worker) (cf. Geldard and Geldard, 2009:9).
- The trafficker established a controlling role with the adolescents who were trafficked for sexual exploitation, and the adolescents learn to trust and even care for the trafficker within this context. This relationship is also influenced by the low self-image, vulnerability and the coercion described above (cf. Friedman, 2005; Crosson-Tower, 2005:126, Spies, 2006: 47; Clawson et al., 2009:19).

- The adolescent victims of sexual exploitation through human trafficking are further exposed to trauma due to the lengthy legal process. Due to legal requirements they cannot receive intensive counselling during this time, and this influences the healing process. It was noted that often the rescued victims lose hope during this time and then return to “the life they know”, meaning returning to the trafficker (cf. Letherby et al., 2008:140; Thorpe, 2011).

**Theme 2:** Availability of services, or lack thereof, to the sexually exploited adolescent

- It was concluded that services are not readily available to adolescents who were trafficked for sexual exploitation, and there is a need for specialised services to this group. The literature identifies emergency services that provide for safety and basic needs (e.g. food and clothing and long-term services that include an intensive case management to address the different needs of the victim holistically (cf. Clawson et al., 2009:13). In support of this conclusion, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2007:16) emphasises the need for specialised training of professionals dealing with victims of human trafficking.
- Organisations and professionals that deliver services to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation should be careful not to stigmatise these adolescents, and also engage in awareness programmes to address stigmatisation by families and communities. A reason why the adolescents do not reach out for help is due to shame and fear related to stigmatisation (cf. Lloyd, 2005:6-18; the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), 2006:21-24).
- The participants in this research study referred to the normalisation or desensitisation of the topic of sexual exploitation to be addressed in communities. It is concluded that social workers should address the fact that families and communities are becoming less emotional about cases of sexual exploitation, due to the fact that the occurrence thereof is not unique, and therefore do not respond to this social issue in a sensitive manner (cf. Paludi, 2011).

**Theme 3:** A description of social services to sexually exploited adolescents

- The findings of this study, and the literature control, highlights the importance of a safe environment for services to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation (cf. Spies, 2006:248; International Organisation for Migration (IOM), 2006:21-24; Clawson et al., 2009:27).
- The nature of services to adolescent victims of sexual exploitation should be focused on the development of trust that would lead to hope for a better future. The conclusion is that trust can be built in a non-judgemental environment, a long-term relationship with a social worker and age-appropriate long-term intervention programmes that address emotional and socio-economic needs (cf. Bales and Lize, 2004; Aviles and Helfrich, 2004:331; Clawson et al.; 2009:39; Protection of Sexually Exploited Children and Youth, 2010).
- It is concluded from both the findings of this study and literature that the nature of services should include multi-disciplinary focus areas for the treatment of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation that are long-term in nature (cf. International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2007:15-16 Clawson et al., 2009:13; Thorpe (2011)).
- The conclusions point towards the need for assessment of both the background (cf. International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2007:19; Clawson et al., 2009:39) and the specific needs (cf. International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2007:19; Clawson et al., 2009:39) of the adolescent victims.
- Together with the background assessment, the social worker will be able to compile a treatment plan that assist the adolescent to address the challenges related to reintegration into society (cf. Yee, 2013:3).
- Linked to the nature of services, the types of support to be provided to adolescent victims of sexual exploitation through human trafficking should include psychological and emotional support (cf. United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2006), address physical needs (cf. the International

Organisation for Migration (IOM), 2006:21-24; the United Nations' Office on Drugs and Crimes, 2012), the development of skills (cf. the United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2006; Protection of Sexually Exploited Children and Youth, 2010) and family integration (cf. Liu, 2005:707).

**Theme 4:** Description of impact of working with sexually exploited adolescents

This theme was included to be considered when planning services to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation. It is concluded that the emotional nature of services to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitations leads to a long-term exposure to secondary trauma, which could lead to secondary stress symptoms (cf. Kanno, 2010:123-124).

**Theme 5:** Challenges faced by service providers

The two specific challenges that were highlighted by the participants are a) the costs related to services for special needs of sexually exploited adolescent and b) the need for access to resources.

- In terms of costs, referrals to relevant services and resources can only be done if the social worker has access to funding.
- In order to provide an holistic service that addresses all the needs of the adolescent victims, access to resources should be ensured (cf. Dennis, 2006; Clawson et al., 2009:19):

The conclusions related to the research process and methodology, as well as the research findings assisted the researcher to make the recommendations that will be discussed in the next section.

## 4.4 Recommendations

### 4.4.1 Recommendations regarding research process and methodology

- The researcher recommends that the qualitative approach is considered as suitable when service delivery by the social work profession related to a specific social issue is explored. It is an especially valuable approach to use when little information exists on the topic and when participants' perceptions and experiences should be explored in order to answer the research question.
- The qualitative research approach is also recommended when the researcher is not able to gain access to the preferred population (in this case adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation) and when a population is included based on their knowledge about another population's experiences (in this case social workers who worked with adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation). A thorough exploration is needed to ensure that the research problem could be addressed and that the research question could be answered.
- The contextual research design is recommended when a research study aims to obtain data related to the participants' natural environment. The exploratory and descriptive research designs complement this design well, because it provides the qualitative researcher with a framework to ensure that the data is explored and described within the specific context of the study. All three these research designs are helpful to make choices regarding the population and sampling methods and techniques, as well as regarding the methods of data collection and analysis.
- In the case of a qualitative study, it is recommended that the non-probability sampling method be used. The use of data saturation as a method to determine the sample size ensures that data is collected until no more themes, sub-themes and categories are identified. The purposive sampling technique, within the contextual, explorative and descriptive research design, is an especially valuable technique when the population is small, as it enables

the researcher to select participants who are best able to address the research question.

- The use of semi-structured interviews is valuable as personal experiences, perceptions and opinions can be provided about a specific situation.
- The ethical considerations to be addressed when utilising interviews as a method of data collection should include prevention from harm, privacy, confidentiality and informed consent.
- The criteria for data verification in Guba's model (in Krefting, 1991) are viewed as helpful to guide the qualitative researcher in terms of methods and techniques for sampling, data collection and data analysis that increase the validity of the findings of a qualitative research study.

#### **4.4.2 Recommendations regarding the research findings**

The conclusions regarding the qualitative findings led to the following recommendations:

- Prevention of the trafficking of adolescents for sexual exploitation should be linked to addressing associated social issues that causes vulnerability and high risks for adolescents. Social issues that should be addressed are –
  - poverty;
  - a lack of education;
  - a lack of care and support;
  - victims being orphaned and
  - the age of the victims
- Awareness programmes to families and communities should be aimed at the prevention of human trafficking of adolescents, and also to address issues of stigmatisation and normalisation. The latter is aimed at supporting adolescents

who were trafficked for sexual exploitation to reintegrate into families and communities as part of service delivery.

- A distinction should be made between –
  - emergency services that provide for safety and basic needs (e.g. food and clothing and
  - long-term services that include an intensive case management to address the different needs of the victim holistically.
  
- Service delivery must be based on the importance of the relationship between the social worker and the adolescent. In this regard, the following is recommended:
  - The relationship is long-term in nature.
  - Trust must be built in a non-judgemental, age-appropriate and non-threatening environment.
  - The vulnerability of victims, the violent and coercive nature of the crimes against them, the dependent nature of the relationship with the trafficker, and also; where applicable; the involvement of family members in the trafficking should be noted and dealt with in a sensitive manner.
  
- The social worker should use the assessment period to establish a trusting, non-judgemental relationship to set the platform for the transition to a healthy lifestyle.
  
- Needs that might occur include –
  - support from peers and family members,
  - obtaining access to resources such as hospitals and schools,
  - finding role models,
  - developing new interests,
  - treatment for drug abuse,
  - dealing with victimisation,
  - developing anger management skills,
  - identifications of depression and medication management and
  - Addressing educational needs.

- Services to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation should be based on assessments of their backgrounds and specific need.
  - Assessment of their backgrounds should focus on:
    - family functioning,
    - mental health,
    - medical problems,
    - learning disabilities and
    - those factors that made the adolescent vulnerable for human trafficking for sexual exploitation.
  
  - Assessment of specific needs should focus on:
    - drug abuse,
    - victimisation,
    - anger management,
    - depression,
    - medication management,
    - educational needs and
    - medical conditions.
  
- Assessments should direct the treatment plan for each individual adolescent.
  
- Poor self-images associated with adolescent victims of sexual exploitation must be addressed. Social workers should take cognisance of the fact that these adolescents need support to work on issues that led to these poor self-images, including:
  - their willingness to participate in the sexual exploitation,
  - a lack of self-assurance,
  - self-blame and
  - the fact that they are treated like a “commodity”.
  
- Behavioural problems and manipulative behaviour should be viewed against the context of the need to develop a trusting relationship within which the adolescent

can feel safe to experiment with new behaviour and can engage in the healing process. To address this aspect, the following should receive attention:

- The development of anger management skills,
  - Treatment for drug addiction,
  - Addressing mood swings and
  - Development of sexually appropriate behaviour.
- Services should be available and accessible to adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation.
    - It is recommended that the social work profession engages in debates with relevant role-players (e.g. South African Police and The Department of Justice) regarding the fact that the lengthy nature of the legal process impacts negatively on the adolescents' ability to break free from their situations and to engage with the healing process.
- Psychological and emotional needs of adolescent victims of sexual exploitation psychological and emotional should be addressed in terms of focusing on –
    - depression,
    - a low self-image and self-worth,
    - stress-related disorders,
    - disorientation,
    - confusion,
    - phobias,
    - panic attacks and
    - feelings of
      - shame,
      - grief,
      - fear,
      - distrust and
      - self-loathing.
- Physical needs should be addressed in terms of –
    - the provision of toiletries,

- nutrition,
  - physical rest,
  - medical tests and treatment (related to sexually transmitted diseases, Tuberculosis, HIV and AIDS and pregnancies) and
  - the treatment of drug addiction;
- Skills development should focus on -
    - language training,
    - career planning,
    - socialisation skills/adjustment training,
    - education/training, and
    - ethnic/religious preservation;
- Family reintegration should be long-term in nature and should take the specific needs of the family members and the adolescent, as well as the reasons behind the trafficking that took place into consideration.
- A multi-disciplinary approach is recommended, focusing on the following –
    - Legal assistance,
    - Medical care,
    - Alcohol and drug abuse counselling/treatment,
    - Mental health counselling,
    - Life skills training,
    - Education,
    - Job training/employment and
    - Family reunification.
- In this regard, the social worker needs access to funding and resources, i.e.:
    - Access to police and justice systems
    - Access to translators
    - Access to psychological/psychiatric support systems
    - Transport services
    - Access to medical services
    - Access to administrative support (e.g. Department of Internal Affairs)

- Social workers working with adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation should be provided with peer support and continues training and administrative support to prevent secondary traumatisation.

#### **4.4.3 Recommendations for future research**

- Although it is noted that access to adolescent victims of sexual exploitation through human trafficking is problematic, it is recommended that future research aims to explore and describe these victims' own experiences.
- It is recommended that current legislation and policy by the South African government are analysed and compared with the conclusions in this study to inform future policy development.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

The conclusions and recommendations in this chapter address the goal of this research study. The qualitative research findings and the literature control assisted the researcher to develop an in-depth understanding of the service providers' perceptions of the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation with a view to inform social work services. The participating social workers were able to provide answers to the research questions. They were able to describe adolescents who were trafficked for sexual exploitation, which provided the researcher with an understanding of the challenges faced by these adolescents. The description of current services and needs related to service delivery provided further information to develop recommendations for future service delivery.

The researcher hopes that the description of the research findings, the literature control and the conclusions and recommendations will add to the social work professions knowledge base; and that it would be utilised to inform the planning and implementation of future services to adolescent victims of sexual exploitation.

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## Annexure A: Letter of invitation to organisations

**For attention:** \_\_\_\_\_

I am a social worker with a special interest in the field of human trafficking. I am currently doing research on the following topic: **UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCES OF ADOLESCENTS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION: INFORMING SOCIAL WORK SERVICES**. I am doing this research under the guidance of the University of South Africa.

You are hereby requested to participate as a “gatekeeper” in this project, regulating access to possible participants. The purpose of this research study is to explore and describe the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation, and to make recommendations to social workers regarding focus areas for service delivery to this group.

The reason why your organisation was chosen to be invited to assist me with my research is the fact that your staff members have the necessary knowledge and experience to give me a better understanding of the social needs to be addressed through service delivery.

Criteria for inclusion in this study:

- Staff members
- At service organisations working with victims of human trafficking and
- Who are working with, or have worked with, adolescent victims of sexual exploitation due to human trafficking
- In the Western Cape

I intend to provide you with the information you will need to understand what this project will be about during an introduction interview with you and identified participants at the organisation. I will then explain how the interviews will be conducted and the possible questions they will be asked. Be assured that their

opinion and views will be respected and appreciated and that it will make a valuable contribution to this research project.

Participation is voluntary and the participant will be requested to complete the attached consent form. However, they have the right to withdraw from the project at any time.

If you are unclear about anything in this letter, you are welcome to contact me at 072 4077 880, or my study leader Dr M.A. van der Westhuizen at [mvdw@hugernote.com](mailto:mvdw@hugernote.com).

Thank you

Inge Anthony

## Annexure B: Letter of invitation to participants

For attention: \_\_\_\_\_

I am a social worker with a special interest in the field of human trafficking. I am currently doing research on the following topic: **UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCES OF ADOLESCENTS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION: INFORMING SOCIAL WORK SERVICES**. I am doing this research under the guidance of the University of South Africa.

You are hereby requested to participate as a participant in this research study. The purpose of this research study is to explore and describe the experiences of adolescents trafficked for sexual exploitation, and to make recommendations to social workers regarding focus areas for service delivery to this group.

The reason why you were chosen to be invited to assist me with my research is the fact that you have the necessary knowledge and experience to give me a better understanding of the social needs to be addressed through service delivery.

Criteria for inclusion in this study:

- Staff members
- At service organisations working with victims of human trafficking and
- Who are working with, or have worked with, adolescent victims of sexual exploitation due to human trafficking
- In the Western Cape

I intend to provide you with the information you will need to understand what this project will be about during an introduction interview. I will then explain how the interviews will be conducted and the possible questions that will be asked. Be assured that your opinion and views will be respected and appreciated and that it will make a valuable contribution to this research project.

Participation is voluntary and you will be requested to complete the attached consent form. However, you have the right to withdraw from the project at any time.

If you are unclear about anything in this letter, you are welcome to contact me at 072 4077 880, or my study leader Dr M.A. van der Westhuizen at [mvdw@hugenote.com](mailto:mvdw@hugenote.com).

Thank you

Inge Anthony

## Annexure C: Consent forms

### TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCES OF ADOLESCENTS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION: INFORMING SOCIAL WORK SERVICES.

REFERENCE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANT: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINCIPAL RESEARCHER:

Contact number: 072 4077 880

Declaration by participant:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, ID/date of birth \_\_\_\_\_, hereby confirm as follows:

- I am not forced to participate and understand that I enter voluntary and can change my mind at any time.

I have been informed by \_\_\_\_\_ of the following:

- The purpose and structure of the interview;
- What the information will be used for;
- Where and when the interview will take place;
- That I can speak in my preferred language;
- That the researcher will make use of translators, should the interviews not be conducted in Afrikaans or English and
- The interview guidelines and list of possible questions were explained to me.
- I understand the content of the above and have no questions.
- I understand that, should I have any questions, I am invited to contact the above-mentioned researcher.
- I identify the following concerns and possible risks in this study:

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- I identify the following possible benefits in this study:

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I understand that I will have access to the results of this project.

- My permission to tape-record the interviews was obtained. I am aware that only the researcher, translator (if needed), editor, independent coder and the researcher's supervisor and joint supervisor will have access to the tape recordings and transcripts.
- I understand all the information given to me.
- No pressure was placed on me to give my consent.

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_ (place) on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Signature/Thumb print: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_