

**EDUCATOR'S KNOWLEDGE OF AND OPINIONS ON CHILD SEXUAL
ABUSE**

BY

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EDUCATORS' KNOWLEDGE OF AND OPINIONS ABOUT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

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SUMMARY OF THESIS

Sexual abuse of children occurs at a very high rate and most of the victims are young children who have never been taught about the possibility of being abused. Victims of abuse are not equipped with appropriate knowledge and vocabulary to enable them to explain properly when they experience abuse. Acquisition of a vocabulary and understanding of the concepts of sexuality would assist children in recognizing, resisting and reporting sexual abuse. The young age at which abuse occurs makes the study at primary school level important and relevant.

There is little literature on how child sexual abuse can be identified, addressed and handled by schools or what unique role the school should play in the management of child sexual abuse cases. Educators are in a position to identify sexually abused children because of their close and ongoing contact with school-going children. Therefore, young children place a great deal of trust in their teachers and look to them for protection when they feel unsafe. Teachers are trained to observe changes in the appearance and progress of individual children. Therefore, they can also assist in uncovering and reacting appropriately to disclosures of abuse.

The study was conducted in poor, disadvantaged, rural primary schools in a part of the North West Province. There is a limited access to social work services in rural areas and therefore, educators are considered to be appropriate people to educate children about sexual abuse issues because children spend most of their time at school. There is a relationship between educators, parents and children which creates a proper channel of communicating information about sexual abuse of children. That is, educators are in a position not only to educate but also to reinforce what children have learnt at home.

Educators' role have been limited in the identification and dealing with sexual abuse cases and therefore, there is a need to empower them with appropriate knowledge and skills to enable them to handle sexual abuse cases at school level successfully.

KEY WORDS

Prevalence Rate, Incidence Rate, Perpetrator, Survivors of Sexual Abuse, Behavioural Signs, Informed Consent, Operational Age, Disclosure, Theories of Child Sexual Abuse and Sexual Gratification.

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"I declare that **EDUCATORS' KNOWLEDGE OF AND OPINIONS ON CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE** is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references".

Ratlhagane
.....
(Miss K. J Ratlhagane)

30 JUNE 2002
.....
DATE

CHAPTER ONE

Research Overview

1.1. Introduction

Child sexual abuse has always been treated with secrecy, shame and taboo. In addressing cases of child sexual abuse evidence taken around the child's testimony of what happened is pitted against that of the adult. Sometimes indirect evidence is used. According to Thompson and Wyatt (1999) the perpetrator is likely to deny having sexually abused the child, which makes the investigation of the incident more difficult and also complicates treatment and prevention. Another complication to the detection of sexual abuse is the victim's hesitancy to disclose the abuse due to the emotional bond that may exist between the victim and the perpetrator. In addition, survivors of sexual abuse often experience shame, fear, guilt and embarrassment at disclosure and they sometimes feel personally responsible for their abuse. This means that there is often a considerable delay between the incident and its revelation to parents, educators and others who can assist the survivor, and disclosure may sometimes occur accidentally rather than intentionally.

All of these factors conspire to keep the problem from the public for a long time (Prusent-Marumo, 1997). Since many people have found the subject too unpleasant to talk about, it is easy for them to think it rarely happened (O.Hyde, 1984). It becomes safe and comfortable for the general public to believe that child sexual abuse occurred in other cultures, not in one's own, or that only people who are psychologically ill practise it. The problem of child sexual abuse is perceived to be in the streets rather than in the home, the perpetrator, to be a stranger rather than a male family member and the survivor, a temptress rather than an innocent child (Wurtele & Miller-Perrin, 1992).

As official reports of sexual abuse began to spread and child sexual abuse began to receive media coverage, the public quickly realized that child sexual abuse is a serious problem (Wurtele & Miller-Perrin, 1992). According to Miller-Perrin and Perrin (1999) official estimates indicate that reports of child sexual abuse have increased and this increase is attributed to factors such as divorce within the families, both parents working outside the home, the presence of step-fathers and baby-minders. An increase in reporting rates of child sexual abuse is not necessarily equivalent to the increase in the actual rate of child sexual abuse. It is also possible that the actual occurrence of child sexual abuse is not increasing but rather that child sexual abuse is reported more often as a result of an increase in public and professional awareness.

While it is true to say that in the past the subject of sexual contact between children and adults was taboo and that there was lack of information about the phenomenon, discussion about sexual abuse is no longer a taboo (Woodhouse West, 1990). With new awareness of the true dimensions of the problem, this subject is beginning to receive the attention necessary for real progress towards prevention and treatment. However, despite this greater openness, abused children themselves still do not find it easy to talk about the issue, and key groups such as educators may still not be adequately informed about the problem.

The main focus of the study is therefore to establish the expertise that educators have regarding resolving child sexual abuse issues, that is, identifying and dealing with sexually abused children as well as exploring educators' opinions on what should be done at school level to prevent children from being sexually abused. Since the role of educators has been limited in the prevention of child sexual abuse, it would also be important to determine if the educators themselves feel that it is their responsibility to handle sexual abuse cases in school.

The study was conducted in disadvantaged, rural primary schools in the North West Province. The reason for focusing on such an area is that resources such as clinics and hospitals in rural areas are limited and poorly equipped. Sexual abuse occurs at an alarming rate and most of the survivors of abuse are young children who never receive the necessary help and protection after being abused. As a result of the young age at which abuse occurs, this makes a study at primary school level important and relevant.

Children are not informed and educated about the possibility of being abused due to poor communication between parents, educators and children. Survivors of sexual abuse are not equipped with the right vocabulary and are unaware that sexual contact between themselves and the abuser is unusual. The acquisition of a vocabulary and understanding of the concepts of sexuality can assist children in recognizing, resisting and reporting sexual abuse. Therefore, the researcher is of the opinion that educators can play a pivotal role in educating children about sexual abuse.

There is little literature on how child sexual abuse should be identified and reported by schools or what unique role the school should play in the management of child sexual abuse cases (Wurtele & Miller-errin, 1992). Most recent data supports the idea that educators have a poor referral record on child

sexual abuse cases (Tite, 1993). Therefore, there is a need to empower educators on how to identify and deal with sexually abused children.

1.2. Prevalence Rate

Prevalence rates refer to the number of people experiencing child sexual abuse in the population, while incidence refers to the number of new cases of child sexual abuse over a specified time period, usually a year. Information about the incidence and prevalence of child sexual abuse is also important to convey an accurate perception of the magnitude of the problem.

Prevalence statistics is often used to show the seriousness of the problem of adult-child sexual contact. Estimation of the percentage of sexually abused children is difficult because most cases of sexual abuse are not reported to clinics, welfare agencies or to other professionals such as educators. The secrecy, shame and criminal nature of this deed, compounded by the young age and dependency status of its survivors, inhibit and discourage voluntary reporting (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986). It is widely agreed that the numbers reported are just the “tip of an iceberg” and are therefore a gross underestimate of the actual numbers.

Variations in the definition of child sexual abuse may also lead to variations in estimates of prevalence since there is no unique and universal consensus on definitions of child sexual abuse that clearly demarcate between abused and non-abused children (Ferguson & Mullen, 1999). The figures, as indicated in this study, vary considerably depending on the definitions of sexual abuse adopted by various researchers, the size and type of sample used and other methodological variations. Detailed information on the prevalence of child sexual abuse will be reviewed in the literature review chapter.

1.3. Motivation

When looking at how prevalent child sexual abuse is and the manner in which people react with disbelief to the child's report and, to some extent, failing to protect the child from further abuse, one needs to state that the issue of child sexual abuse requires immediate attention. The school system is an area in which sexually abused children spend more of their time with educators than with any other adult and therefore teachers potentially represent a very useful resource in discovering and preventing sexual abuse of children.

Educators' ongoing contact with children allows them the unique opportunities to educate and perhaps protect the child. Therefore, young children place great trust in their teachers and look up to them for protection when they feel unsafe (Briggs, 1993). Teachers are trained to observe changes in the appearance and progress of individual children. Therefore, educators can also assist in uncovering and reacting appropriately to disclosures of abuse.

Child sexual abuse survivors cannot be protected and assisted unless they are first identified. Identifying survivors of sexual abuse is an important secondary prevention goal, and educators are in a critical position to assist for several reasons. First, many children do not disclose the abuse on their own initiative, necessitating detection by others. Second, involvement by individuals outside the family is often necessary for detecting survivors of intra-familial sexual abuse. Third, many educators have frequent contact with children and their families. Therefore, it is important that educators have appropriate knowledge which will enable them to identify survivors of sexual abuse so that they can intervene to terminate the abuse and protect the children from further abuse (Wurtele & Miller-Perrin, 1992). Educators are not only in a central position to implement programs in the classroom, but they can also reinforce the children's application of the prevention concepts taught in both classroom and home based programs (Wurtele & Miller-Perrin, 1992).

Despite the numerous advantages of involving educators in preventative strategies, their involvement has been limited. Their limited involvement in the prevention movement stems from a variety of reasons, one being that, educators lack the appropriate education and training in child sexual abuse. Little has been done in preparing teachers to identify, report and prevent child sexual abuse. Educators tend to leave the responsibility for sexually abused children primarily to child welfare professionals.

According to Wurtele and Miller-Perrin (1992), educators often feel unsupported by their superiors such as principals, in dealing with sexual abuse cases. Educators need support at many different levels so that they can learn to recognize sexual abuse when it occurs and be able to read warning signals (Porter, 1984).

1.4. Theoretical Framework

For a long time child sexual abuse has been approached from a single perspective, the psychiatric model. This made understanding of this issue difficult (Wurtele & Miller Perrin, 1992; Woodhouse & West, 1990; Doyle, 1994; Finkelhor, 1986). There is agreement among various theorists now that child sexual abuse is too complex to be explained by a single theory (Adams-Tucker, 1981; Finkelhor, 1979). The issue of child sexual abuse in this study has therefore been approached from different models such as the social systems, social learning and family systems models to allow for better understanding of the phenomenon. Various theories on the causes of child sexual abuse are reviewed in detail in chapter two.

1.5. Research Problem

The high rate of sexual abuse, especially among young children and the exploitation of children's ignorance and innocence by people who are supposed to be taking care of them make education about sexual abuse at primary school level poignant. As educators have been targeted for this purpose, it is important to establish whether the educators have identified cases of sexual abuse in their schools, to establish circumstances of occurrence at which problems are experienced in identifying and dealing with sexually abused children. Furthermore, it will also be important to assess whether educators possess the necessary skills and knowledge to identify sexually abused children and deal successfully with abuse cases. Therefore, this study aims at assessing the knowledge and opinions that educators have with regard to identifying and dealing with sexually abused children.

1.6. Delineation of Chapters

Below is a cursory view of the layout of this study:

Chapter two deals with the definitions, causes and models of child sexual abuse. It explores the issues of identifying sexually abused children, behavioural indicators in sexually abused children, managing sexual abuse cases, educating parents, teachers and children about the issue of sexual abuse. Chapter three explains the methodology, the measuring instrument to be used for collecting data, reliability and validity of the measuring instrument and methods which will be used to analyse data. Chapter four is the presentation, discussion and interpretation of the results (quantitative and qualitative) obtained during data collection. Finally, chapter five presents the conclusions, shortcomings and recommendations for the study

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE SURVEY

2.1. Introduction

Child sexual abuse is a complex phenomenon which cannot be explained by a single definition or model. In order to have a clearer understanding of this phenomenon, various definitions and models have been adopted in this study and prevalence estimates will vary from study to study due to the type of definition used. The following issues will be discussed in this chapter:

definition and prevalence rate of child sexual abuse;

aspects that characterize sexual abuse of children, this includes both the profile of the perpetrator and survivor (gender and age) and causes of child sexual abuse;

models of child sexual abuse like the biological, psychodynamic, social systems, socio- cultural, socio-situational and family systems;

factors (barriers) that impede victims of abuse from reporting the abuse;

behavioural indicators that can be used to identify the possibility of sexual abuse in children such as sexual behaviour, sexual language and sexual drawings;

management of child sexual abuse in schools, and

educating children, parents and educators on child sexual abuse issues.

2.2. Definitions of Child Sexual Abuse

Any attempt at defining child sexual abuse is fraught with difficulties as all definitions are time and culture bound (Wurtele & Miller-Perrin, 1992). Wurtele and Miller-Perrin (1992) further point out that definitions of child sexual abuse are usually direct reflections of the values and orientations of communities and societies. Other factors such as the perception of the observer, an individual's personal values, professional training and experience tend to affect the definition. Child sexual abuse is often casually defined as an act that involves intercourse or attempted intercourse between the

abused (a child) and the perpetrator (adult). Wurtele and Miller-Perrin (1992) confirm this by explaining that sexual abuse involves the exploitation of children's ignorance, trust and obedience by an adult.

According to Gillham (1991) age is an important factor in the operational definitions of child sexual abuse. The child/adult or immature/mature dimensions largely define abuse. Many operational definitions of sexual abuse therefore require a five-year difference between the perpetrator and the abused child. Glaser and Frosh (1996, p. 4-5) define a child as anyone under the age of sixteen, which is regarded as an operational maximum age for child sexual abuse. A child is sexually abused when a sexually mature person involves him/her in an activity that leads the matured person (sexual abuser) into sexual arousal and gratification. Children's dependence on adults is what defines them as children and therefore, sexual activity between an adult and a child can be seen as constituting an abuse of power (Schechter & Roberge, 1976). Child sexual abuse does not need to involve violence or any form of coercion. Violence is in fact not usually a part of child sexual abuse, but seduction and enticement are often the main means for the adult to achieve control.

Robertson (1989, p.3) defines sexual abuse in general terms as "... any sexual activity with a child who cannot give informed consent of the activity." Morris and MacEachron (1989, p.33) suggest that sexual abuse should include "all sexual stimulation inappropriate for the child's age, level of psychosexual development and the role of the family."

In an attempt to address this definitional problem, Glaser and Frosh (1988) contend that the best definitions currently in use combine a clear specification of what is meant by "sexual" with some specification of the age and developmental level of the abuser and the abused. Glaser and Frosh (1993) acknowledge the difficulty in defining the term "sexual", and for this reason, they propose the term "intention of the abuser" as criterion for what is to be called sexual abuse. This intention is detailed in Finkelhor's (1983) assertion that in order for sexual abuse to occur, the potential offender must have some intention to abuse.

Oiver and Droisen (1989) note that child sexual abuse should be seen as any sexual behaviour directed to a person under the age of sixteen without that person's consent. Sexual behaviour may involve touching parts of the child or requesting the child to touch him/her, requiring the child to look

at parts of the body, sexual acts which result in self-arousal. Absence of consent is therefore crucial to the definition of child sexual abuse because it allows us to take a clear stand on the exploitation of the child without requiring the degree of harm experienced by each individual child to define the attitude to each individual offender (Diver & Droisen, 1989).

Schechter and Roberge (1976) provide a more inclusive definition of child sexual abuse, explaining that: "child sexual abuse is the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children in sexual activities they do not truly understand, to which they are unable to give informed consent, or that violates the social taboos of family role (1986, p. 60)." This definition implies that a child can be abused without being aware of it. Underlying this assumption is the normative notion that sexual relationships between children and adults constitute child sexual abuse because sexual relationships should be performed out of free will and without coercion.

Considering various definitions given in the study and the difficulties experienced in defining child sexual abuse, the researcher considered the definition provided by Schechter and Roberge (1986) to be appropriate for this study in the sense that it indicates who the abused child is and reasons for considering children as victims in sexual abuse for example, lack of understanding sex issues and their inability to give consent on information of what is happening.

2.3. Sources of Bias in Child Sexual Abuse Estimates

Child sexual abuse is still being associated with shame, threat, fear or taboo by many families and societies. Many cases are not reported to mental health workers, social workers or to the law enforcement agencies. With the above attitude, the perpetrator continues to go unreported and the problem of child sexual abuse continues in many families.

Doyle (1994) explains that there may be several reasons why estimates of the prevalence of sexual abuse have varied from study to study. According to Levett (1988), the variations in related prevalence of sexual abuse are difficult to interpret because they depend on the sort of definition being used (a broad or a narrow one), sampling techniques, response rates, that is, how many subjects comply with the request for information and the way the questions are formed.

2.3.1. Response Rates

Bias in estimates of prevalence of child sexual abuse comes from a non-response in survey investigations. It is possible that individuals who have been exposed to child sexual abuse may more frequently decline to participate in population surveys because they find the discussion of issues relating to sexual abuse, upsetting or embarrassing. Conversely, those not exposed to sexual abuse may decline to participate believing that they have little to contribute (Fergusson & Mullen, 1999). The study results will therefore, underestimate the true prevalence of abuse in the population.

2.3.2. Bias as a Result of Question Type

Variations in prevalence of child sexual abuse reflect variations in the extent and intensity of questioning about sexual abuse experiences. It is notable that studies using a single question to define abuse reported the lower rates of child sexual abuse than studies based on multiple questions and items. It would seem that question type is the most important factor and in particular, the specificity or generality of the question. More specific questions yielded more responses of abuse. A specific question may define particular behaviours which ordinarily an individual would not label as abusive (Mayes, Currie, Macleod, Gillies & Warden, 1992). Comparisons of prevalence rates for child sexual abuse are likely to be most meaningful if they control for definitional and methodological sources of variation.

2.3.3. Sampling Techniques

Sample selection factors may also have profound effect on the prevalence estimates. This is evident from the studies that have reported on the prevalence of child sexual abuse based on participants drawn from groups such as attendants at psychiatric and child guidance clinics and children coming to the attention of welfare agencies. Such studies suggest a high prevalence of abuse in which the majority of those questioned disclose some form of exposure to child sexual abuse. Such estimates do not reflect the prevalence of abuse in the population at large.

Studies which rely on surveys of College or University students may produce unsatisfactory samples as it excludes those individuals who do not attend College or University and also those students who, for whatever reason, are absent on the day of data collection. Such exclusion may lead to an underestimation of the prevalence of child sexual abuse within the general population (Fergusson & Mullen, 1999). The studies reviewed have been based on samples drawn from different societies,

communities or population groups. It is possible that some apparent variation in prevalence rates may reflect genuine differences in rates of child sexual abuse in different cultures, communities and population groups.

2.3.4. Age as a Source of Bias in Prevalence Rate

Variations in the age range used to define child sexual abuse may also influence prevalence estimates.

Russel's 1984 study revealed that 16% (152 of 930 female subjects) reported at least one experience of incestuous abuse before the age of eighteen (Russel, 1984). Of these, 12% (108 women) had been sexually abused by a relative before reaching fourteen years of age (Russel, 1984).

2.4. Prevalence Rate

One of the most consistent findings to emerge from prevalence research is that females appear to be at higher risk for abuse. Coetzee, Howard and Marumo (1991) revealed that, of the 140 cases of abused children during a twenty-one month (21) period reported at Alexandra clinic, 90% were girls and 81.5% (114 patients) were sexual abuse cases (Coetzee, Howard & Marumo, 1991). Finkelhor (1979) conducted a study in the United States of America among 800 college students which revealed a prevalence of 19.2% of females and 8.6% of males who had been sexually abused as children. In South Africa, a similar study undertaken by Levett in 1986 at the University of Cape Town revealed that of the 94 students surveyed, 43.6% (41 students) reported 61 personal experiences of sexual abuse as children under eighteen years of age (Levett, 1988).

In a study conducted by Goldman and Padayachi (1997) with a sample of 427 Sociology and Psychology undergraduate students in the University of Queensland, 18.6% of males and 44.6% females reported at least sexual experience before the age of seventeen. The prevalence figures for child sexual abuse using a broad definition found in this survey was 19% for males and 45% for females, while approximately 10% of all males and 26% of all females reported at least one incident of sexual experience with a non relative.

Faller (1989) conducted a comparative study with a sample of 87 boy victims of child sexual abuse and 226 girl victims where 55 (63.2%) of boy victims cases were classified as intra-familial sexual abuse and 32 (36.8%) as extra-familial. The percentage of intra-familial sexual abuse was found to be high for female victims (89.1%). Studies conducted with 796 Women University and College students at New England provided information about child sexual abuse with 19.2% women students indicating

experience of sexual abuse that involved genital touching and fondling.

The abuse of female is more common, but there are cases of male child sexual abuse. Collings (1991) notes that girls have been found to be at higher risk for abuse and, as a result, they have been subjected to more intensive investigation and research than boys. Collings (1991) also observes that rates for male child sexual abuse tend to be higher in cases where less restrictive definitions of child sexual abuse are employed. Finkelhor and Baron in Fergusson and Mullen (1999) estimated the rates of child sexual abuse were 2, 5 times higher in females than in males.

A study was conducted by Madu and Peltzer (2000) with 414 grade 11 and 12 learners in three secondary schools in the Limpopo Province (South Africa). Participants were required to fill in a questionnaire and they were asked for physical contact forms of sexual abusive experiences before the age of seventeen (17) with an adult at least five years older or a person in a position of power. Grade 11 and 12 learners were chosen because the researchers believed that they were mature enough to have the courage to report their sexual abusive experiences, while at the same time, their ages were expected not to be too far above the operational maximum age for child sexual abuse (16 years).

Of the total number of respondents (N=414), the number of respondents who indicated any form of (physical) contact sexual abuse was 225, with a prevalence rate of 54.3%. The number of male victims was 108 while female victims were 115, giving a prevalence rate of 53.2% for males and 56% for females. The prevalence rate for contact forms of child sexual abuse among participants (54.3% for all, 60% for males and 53.2% for females) was very high. Madu and Peltzer (2000) explain the above high rates against the following factors:

parents who work very far for extended periods leaving their children alone or with relatives. This exposes children to all sorts of abuse especially sexual abuse;

single mothers who (re) marry take their children along. The step-father, knowing that the children are not their blood relatives, might find it easy to abuse the children sexually;

abandoned children who go begging for food are at risk to sexual abuse by adults who help them, and

the very poor economic and living conditions in which some children live make it difficult to resist being lured with gifts into illicit sexual engagements.

In another study conducted by Meursing, Moyo, Vos, Coutinho, Mpofu, Oneko, Mundy, Dube, Mahlangu and Sibindi (1995) in Matabeleland, Zimbabwe, a group consisting of health, legal and AIDS prevention workers was struck by the high rate of sexually abused children infected with HIV and sexually transmitted diseases. Child sexual abuse constituted a significant proportion of cases which were reported to the seven major police stations in Bulawayo and was reported to be increasing in number. In 1990, Mpilo Central Hospital in Bulawayo, recorded ninety-two (92) cases of child sexual abuse and in 1992, forty-four (44) children under the age of sixteen (16) were examined for alleged sexual abuse. Four district hospitals in Matabeleland reported that they are regularly confronted with police requests for examination of sexually abused children (Meursing *et al.*, 1995).

The hospitals in Bulawayo in 1992 reported thirty-six (36) cases of child sexual abuse, fourteen (14) of which concerned girls under the age of twelve (12). A rural mission hospital examined 324 cases between 1983 and 1990, of which 43% was under the age of sixteen (16) and 9% under the age of twelve (12). The Bulawayo Regional Court dealt with sixty-seven (67) cases of child sexual abuse in 1981, eighty-seven (87) in 1986 and 122 in 1991. These data indicate that child sexual abuse is common and reported in increasing numbers in Bulawayo City as well as the rural areas of Matabeleland but it is not clear whether this increase is due to a change in reporting behaviour or a true increase in prevalence (Meuring *et al.* 1995).

Where sexual abuse by natural parents or a sibling is concerned (incestuous abuse), girls (78%) are significantly more at risk than boys (22%). Boys (44%) seem more likely than girls (30%) to have been abused by someone outside the family but known to them (family friend, neighbour, etc.). According to Fergusson and Mullen (1999) girls seem to have been slightly more at risk of abuse by strangers than boys (56% of girls compared with 43% of boys).

The sexual abuse of children involves mainly three aspects, that is, the perpetrator, victim and factors that create sexual feelings toward children. In the section that follows, factors that characterize typical abusive situations will be explored.

5. Factors Influencing Sexual Abuse of Children

5.1. Initiation of the Abuse

There are various techniques that child sexual abuse offenders use to identify and recruit child victims. According to Miller-Perrin and Perrin (1999), perpetrators do not sexually abuse every child to whom they have access, but select children who are vulnerable in some way. Vulnerable children include those who are passive, quiet, trusting, young, unhappy in appearance or needy. Once the perpetrator has identified the child, s/he may desensitize the child to sexual activity through a grooming process that involves a progression from nonsexual to sexual touch in the context of gradually developing a relationship. The typical scenario begins with seemingly accidental or affectionate touches and then proceeds to sexual touches.

2.5.2. Maintenance of the Abuse

Perpetrators also employ various strategies to maintain children in sexual activities for prolonged periods. Central to maintaining sexual activities with children is the ability to convince the child that the activities should be kept secret for other adults not to intervene and stop it. Studies of child victims of sexual abuse indicate that the majority of victims do not disclose their abuse immediately and a significant number of victims do not tell about their abuse for years (Miller-Perrin & Perrin, 1999). The child may maintain silence about the abuse because the offender has offered the child attention and gifts in exchange for his or her silence. To further maintain the child's silence, perpetrators often use threats such as harming or killing the child or a significant other.

2.6. The Profile of the Perpetrator

There is a possibility that some sexual abusers are born with a sexual orientation towards children. Doyle (1994) also suggests that in others, preference may originate in their own childhood experiences. Some researchers believe that an experience of sexual abuse in childhood can cause an adult to be sexually interested in children. Perpetrators may have had so emotionally a disrupted development that sex with children feels more natural and gratifying than sexual relationships with adults. Yet others have never learnt to impose sexual boundaries and cannot distinguish between sex with adults and children.

Some forms of psychopathology exhibited by sexual abusers are less severe and may include disregard for the concerns of others or inadequate control of impulses. Perpetrators seek out sexual

encounters with children primarily because they are sexually attracted to children (Wurtele & Miller-Perrin, 1992). Potential offenders can feel powerless and out of control in other areas of their lives. Some may achieve power and control through erotic activities with children. These men are seen as acting out in part "to compensate for their perceived loss of power". This sense of powerlessness may serve to overcome some men's internal inhibitions against acting out sexual desires toward children. By controlling a child, they can reassure themselves that they are still powerful. On occasion, perpetrators have a child readily available, for instance, a father who has a compliant daughter in his preferred age group.

According to Wurtele and Miller-Perrin (1992) child sexual abusers have in common low self-esteem, difficulty in forming relationships and a sense of emotional isolation. As a result of their shortcomings, abusers do not try to handle their problems, but instead they target vulnerable children they see in the streets and playgrounds. Such perpetrators are often not handsome or attractive to many children, but may befriend a youngster who is as lonely and unloved as they are.

Child sexual abusers do not always conform to the stereotypical image of people who are social misfits. A proportion of perpetrators would appear to have excellent personality functioning. Doyle (1994) notes that in order to understand the behaviour of child sex offenders, there is a need to appreciate the fact that they are not in some way inhuman. Their behaviour may seem monstrous but they are human beings and have behaviour patterns that they share with the rest of humanity. What is different is the way in which they think about children and their attitude to children's sexuality.

2.6.1. Gender

Research studies and official statistics show that nearly all perpetrators of child sexual abuse are male and men are seen to be responsible for between 85, 4% and 100% of the abuse of girls. Nevertheless, there is a minority of cases in which a female perpetrator is involved. Female perpetration may be more common than it is reported and lack of recognition of females as potential offenders may occur because of culturally prescribed definitions of child sexual abuse that do not include women. In a recent review of child sexual abuse in Texas, thirty-five (35) female offenders have been found among 1,000 cases (3, 2%) (Woodhouse & West, 1990).

Miller-Perrin and Perrin (1999) note that female offenders may go unnoticed because inappropriate

sexual contact may occur in the context of culturally approved routine child care. Women are culturally permitted a much freer range of sexual contact with their children than men. Society readily accepts mothers taking their sons to bed but men are not given the same responsibility of fathers taking their daughters to bed. Thus, Finkelhor (1979) and Russell (1984) have concluded that since women constitute only a very small minority of all perpetrators, child sexual abuse must be seen as a gender-related issue.

2.6.2. Age

Child sexual perpetrators vary by age, but they consistently develop a trusting relationship with their victims and commonly include fathers, friends, other parental figures and family members. According to Doyle (1994), people of all ages can be perpetrators. Samples in some studies of child sexual abuse included adolescent perpetrators (Finkelhor 1979; Ryan & Lane, 1991; Colings, 1997). Nonetheless, it is clear that the young and middle adult groups constitute the majority of the perpetrators of adult-child sexual abuse. One interesting feature in Mohr's study of 1982 (in Woodhouse & West, 1990) is that he interpreted the age distribution in terms of the different types of tendencies involved. That is, the adolescent type as a result of heterosexual courtship difficulties, the middle-age types as a result of marital problems and the old-age.

2.6.3. Socio-Economic Status.

In the past, child sexual abuse was taken to be a specifically lower class phenomenon. Perpetrators involved in child sexual abuse were seen as coming from the lower strata of society. They were thought to be the working class with relatively less formal education and more often came from "problem" families (Woodhouse & West, 1990). What is clear from statistics is that every income group and social class is represented to a greater or lesser extent.

2.6.4. Occupation

According to Wurtele and Miller-Perrin (1992) situational factors, such as unemployment, have been proposed to account for the sexual abuse of children. Unemployment can also leave a father at home alone with his children and provide the ideal opportunity for sexual exploitation. Situations, in which offenders are alone with children, especially if they are in positions of authority, increase the likelihood of abuse that someone who is sexually interested in children might act on these feelings.

2.7. The Profile of the Victim

Researchers have also proposed that certain characteristics of children might make them vulnerable to sexual abuse. Child victims who have been described as isolated and having strong needs of attention, affection and approval are seen as increasing their vulnerability to the attention and affection of a potential abuser (Wurtele & Miller-Perrin, 1992).

2.7.1. Age of the Victim

According to Woodhouse and West (1990), older men might not dare to approach adolescents who are more difficult to handle and as a result, turn to younger children. The data on age distribution of both offenders and victims show that there is a tendency for older offenders to abuse younger children (under the age of ten). Gebhard and Gagnon in Woodhouse and West (1990) identified a group of sixty (60) offenders who had persistently abused children aged five (5) or younger. Adams-Tucker (1981) also found 25% of her clinic sample to be below the age of six (6). More recently, Mian in Woodhouse and West (1990) found that one-third of their hospital sample of nearly 400 child sexual abuse cases were below the age of seven (7). The abuse of younger victims (under the age of ten) is particularly common if the victim is female.

2.7.2. Gender Differences

One of the most consistent findings from research evaluating risk factors associated with child sexual abuse is gender differences. Research findings indicate that females are more likely to be victims of child sexual abuse. The argument is, that since most men are heterosexual, they would be more likely to seek girls rather than boys if they want sexual intimacy with children. According to Collings (1991) most cases of sexual abuse give the impression that victims of abuse are mostly girls, implying that boys are not likely to be abused. Findings of sexual abuse of boys report lower incident rates as compared to abuse of girls (Collings, 1991). Finkelhor (1979) argued that research on male victims of sexual abuse has not been as extensive as research on female victims.

Although compared with girls, there are fewer boy victims represented in statistics, the prevalence of sexual abuse of boys is said to be still high. The high prevalence rate of sexual abuse in boys has been confirmed in a study conducted by Madu and Peltzer (2000). The prevalence rate for contact forms of child sexual abuse in males was 60%, which has been considered to be very high compared to females (53.2%). Most sexual abuse of boys is likely to be perpetrated by males and it is known that

boys are more likely to under report abuse than girls to avoid the appearance of homosexuality. As a result, there is a general belief that boys are much less vulnerable to abuse than girls. Perhaps one of the most obvious explanations for this would be that societies are more sensitized to girls being victims of sexual abuse.

The following societal norms according to Miller-Perrin and Perrin (1999) may contribute to the under reporting of male sexual abuse:

- the fear of being considered homosexual because most boys are abused by men, and
- the pressure on males not to express helplessness or vulnerability.

There is perception that boys are stronger than girls and that victim status is reserved for females. The implication is that if boys are abused the abuse will not affect them as much. Finkelhor (1984) has estimated that sexual abuse of boys ranges from 2, 5% to 8, 7% of the general population. Finkelhor (1986) has concluded that many more boys are being sexually abused than is commonly thought.

Despite the lower incidence rate reported in child sexual abuse of boys as victims, increased reporting of male victimization and new interview-based studies with males suggest that sexual abuse of boys may be much more widespread than previously thought (Gillman & Whitlock, (1989). Consequently, such evidence would require a shift from viewing child sexual exploitation as affecting girls only (Gillham, 1991). In fact, as it is noted by Finkelhor (1983) that both boys and girls display symptoms that reflect psychological and physical trauma when they experience sexual abuse.

2.8. Preconditions to Sexual Abuse of Children

Finkelhor presents his concept as a four-factor paradigm. According to Finkelhor (1986) there are certain preconditions to be met before one can say sexual abuse has been committed. Finkelhor (1986) has developed a model for his analysis of the sexual abuse of children which makes a valuable contribution to the understanding of sexual abuse by adults. The model suggests that four preconditions have to be met for sexual abuse of children by an adult to occur:

- the adult must have sexual feelings for a child;
- the adult must overcome his/her internal inhibitions against acting out the sexual feelings;
- the adult must overcome the external obstacles to acting out the sexual feelings, and

the adult needs to overcome the child's resistance which can be achieved through a careful choice of a lonely child longing for attention. It may be through gradual and gentle seduction, slowly and patiently winning the child's trust and confidence.

Finkelhor's model suggests that the presence of one, two or three conditions is not sufficient to explain sexual abuse. To explain abuse requires an explanation of the presence of all four conditions. Finkelhor (1986) also suggests that there is a logical sequence to these preconditions. His findings reveal that only some individuals have sexual feelings for children and of those who do, only some overcome their internal inhibitions to act on these feelings. Some perpetrators overcome any internal inhibitors relatively easily and readily convince themselves that there is nothing wrong in having sex with children.

Many offenders manage to convince themselves that under certain circumstances sex with children is permissible. Of those who overcome their internal inhibitions, only a few overcome external inhibitions, for example, being watched carefully by other family members, and acting on the feelings. According to Finkelhor (1984) perpetrators need to be able to indulge in sex with children undisturbed and most do not want to get caught. They have to ensure that people who are able to protect their chosen victims are not in a position to defend them.

When the first three preconditions are met, the child at risk may for example, resist directly by running away. On the other hand, the child may not resist and hence become the victim of abuse, or the child may resist but be overcome by force.

2.9. Models of Child Sexual Abuse

Various theories have attempted to explain why child sexual abuse occurs. The problem has always been that single-factor theories have been found unsatisfactory, probably because of the complex nature of this phenomenon (Finkelhor, 1986; Levett, 1988; Russell, 1984). It is evident that no single factor can completely explain sexual abuse. There is a need to integrate various factors in order to have a clearer understanding of the causes of child sexual abuse (Finkelhor, 1979). Explanations of why adults become sexually attracted and involved with children came primarily from psychoanalytic theories and recently from other sources such as social learning theories (Finkelhor, 1979; Rush, 1981). Various explanations of why adults abuse children will now be discussed.

2.9.1. Biological Explanation

2.9.1. (i) The Medical Model

The focus of the medical model is on the treatment of the “medical” problem. Intervention is conducted within the medical context and medical personnel is seen as the most suitable to handle sexual abuse cases. Children involved in abuse cases are sometimes also seen as “patients” in need of medical attention such as hospitalization. According to the medical model, a man who sexually abuses a child is psychologically disordered and his acts are best understood as equivalent to symptoms. According to Woodhouse and West (1990) sexual contact with children is taken as an objective disease entity, a medical problem, something that could be contracted like a common cold. As a disease, “it” resides within the “disordered” person whose behaviour is understood as “symptoms”. Since sexual contact is seen as a disease that can “spread”, it can be studied within the context of epidemiology.

2.9.1. (ii) The Genetic/ Evolutionary Model

Goodman (1983) in Woodhouse and West (1990) in his discussion of the biology of sexuality has underlined the importance of the sex linked factor, the HY-antigen which is the genetic factor associated with one of the sex chromosomes, the Y-chromosome. The HY-antigen in turn controls the development of sexuality and its deviations.

Pinkava (1971) in Woodhouse and West (1990) attempts to explain sexual deviations in sex offenders by employing the concept of “innate releasing mechanism” (IRM), which he borrowed from ethology as a basic paradigm to conceptualize human instinctual behaviour. According to the genetic model, impairment of genetically determined IRM systems at the neural level, leads to faulty “imprinting” of inappropriate sexual behaviour. The impairment of the IRM system will thus result in the features of a baby or child, which under normal circumstances would elicit parental or nurturing behaviour from the adult thus becoming the trigger for sexual attraction and behaviour.

According to the physiological approach, human sexual behaviour is partially endocrinologically organized, and therefore the explanation of an adult’s interest in children is usually sought in possible disturbances of the hormonal systems.

2.9.2. Psychodynamic Explanations

The key features of "normal" sexuality in psychodynamic theories are attraction to an adult partner of the opposite sex. Deviant sexuality is defined by Woodhouse and West (1990) as a sexual preference which departs from this accepted norm. Adult sexual perversions (sexualization of aggressive instincts) resemble childhood pregenital activities and are often understood in terms of either a regression or fixation at a pregenital stage of development (Woodhouse & West, 1990).

Theories within the psychodynamic perspective originate from the work of Freud, who believed that psychosexual development is the key to personality development. Sexual deviations according to the psychodynamic theories are always traced back to some developmental difficulty in childhood. In an attempt to understand the psycho-dynamics of sexually abusive fathers, researchers have focused on their earlier development and experiences. These have been characterized by frustration, emotional deprivation and sexually abusive parents. Because of lack of nurturing, these male adults are still searching for nurturance, are attempting to resolve oral conflicts, and suffer from unmet dependency needs (Borrow, 1986; Justice & Justice, 1976).

Child rearing styles and relationships, particularly with the mother in early years, are very important determinants of later development (Ash, Hevey & Roegen, 1989; Borrow, 1986). Sexual conflicts during the pre-genital stages, especially the Oedipus and Electra complexes are to be resolved by the child abandoning the parent object and becoming sexually attracted to others. A boy focuses his sexual desires on his mother and a girl on her father. In both sexes, however, the fantasies centre on the male sexual organ (penis). The boy develops an Oedipus complex which is turmoil of aggressive fantasies and guilt feelings. He desires his mother sexually and wants to take his father's place. The jealousy he feels towards his father later turns into hatred and wishes his father was dead. The boy may even fantasise about killing his father (Louw, 1991).

According to Louw (1991) the boy copes with this Oedipus complex using two defence mechanisms, repression and identification. He represses his sexual and aggressive wishes towards his parents which mean that he banishes from consciousness both the experience and the memory of his wishes but they do not disappear. On the contrary, they retain their energy and continually try to enter consciousness. The boy also copes with the Oedipus complex by identifying with his father. He wishes to be like his father, through imitating him and by incorporating his father's moral rules into his own superego (Louw, 1991). A girl notices that she does not have a penis and begins to desire her father sexually. At the same time she hates her mother because she suspects that her mother castrated her

(castration complex), and she is jealous of her father who possess the desired organ (penis envy). She copes with the complex by identifying with the mother.

The Oedipus and Electra complex are seen as a result of intense incestuous desire of the child and perversions are interpreted as the pathological expression of the effort to contain these unacceptable desires. According to the psychodynamic theories, the man who suffers from sexual interest in children has been unable to find sexual satisfaction in an adult relationship. When sexual impulses are denied their normal fulfilment in an adult love relationship, they continue to seek expression in ways which are generally abandoned by those who have been able to reach a more mature stage of development.

In keeping with psychodynamic understandings of the phenomenon, De Young (1982) observes that the single most detrimental factor in child sexual abuse is the lack of sufficient positive involvement of fathers. Deprivation and inappropriate fathering are major variables contributing strongly to the incidents of sexual abuse. Other theorists also see the absence of a competent fathering role leading to children developing maladaptive mechanisms for coping with stress and frustration, which in turn contribute to child sexual abuse (De Young, 1982).

2.9.3. Social Systems Model

Recently, research has been undertaken to explore relationships among socio-economic factors, social isolation and sexual abuse. There is therefore a shift from a narrow psychiatric focus to a broader perspective that includes social and cultural influences. There are related frameworks within the social systems model: the socio-cultural, the socio-situational and family systems models.

The socio-cultural model explores the cultural values that are prevalent in a society concerning expected and accepted ways of adult-child interaction. The family systems model explores the family dynamics that are responsible for sexual relationships between the adult and child, while the socio-situational model explores social isolation which removes the family from social scrutiny and potential networks such as community support. The common interest in both the socio-cultural and socio-situational models is that the social environment is regarded as an important variable in influencing behaviour.

2.9.3. (i) The Socio-Cultural Model

The individual family and the community are immersed within a larger social structure which is very important in the understanding of child sexual abuse. The socio-cultural model identifies the cultural and social forces that may play a role in socializing individuals into sexually abusive behaviour. In Western cultures children are taught to be compliant and obedient in the face of adult authority and because they are different from adult partners in that they do not have adult sexual needs, they are seen as being sexually available (Cossins, 2000). Societal attitudes and beliefs regarding children, male-female relationships and adult-child sexual relationships are implicated in the socio-cultural model.

The basic premise of the socio-cultural model of child sexual abuse is that the levels of violence accepted within a culture are reflected in the levels of violence expressed towards children (Brofenbrenner, 1974). Sexuality arises out of social practices, therefore child sexual abuse can be said to establish relations of power between an offender and a child if it is accepted that the adult/child relationship is inherently a relationship of differential power. According to Cossins (2000), there is a link between low-self esteem, sexual expression and choice of a sexual partner so that the choice of a passive, non-threatening, inferior sexual partner means that a man may more easily confirm experiences of manhood and accomplish masculinity. That is, a man's decision to engage in sexual behaviour with a child can be equated with a man's confirmation of his manhood.

Child sex offending is a specific sexual practice for the accomplishment of masculinity by some men in a cultural environment where men's lives are characterized by a combination of power and powerlessness. Cossins (2000) suggests that for some men sexual practices such as sexual behaviour with a child may be a key experience to overcome experiences of powerlessness when their power is in jeopardy. It is proposed that offenders sexually abuse children in circumstances where there are real or perceived challenges to their masculine power, such as a direct experience of lack of sexual potency or an experience which constitutes a lack of power as a man in other areas of life.

2.9.3. i (a) Social Attitudes

According to Wurtele and Miller-Perrin (1992), child sexual abuse is seen as a problem that comes from the inequality between men and women that has been continued throughout history by the patriarchal social system. Traditionally both women and children have shared the same minority status and have been viewed as helpless, dependent and powerless, and consequently both have been

sexually used and abused by men. Females are mainly viewed as property of males and children as property of their parents. Some men feel that they have the right of sexual access to their children as well as to any female as seen in cases of rape and extra-familial child sexual abuse (Herman, 1981; Russel, 1986).

2.9.3. i (b) Male Socialization

One of the most common findings about child sexual abuse is that it is committed mostly by men. This is the case despite the fact that men spend far less time with children and are less often the primary care-givers for children. According to Wurtele and Miller-Perrin (1992), men are socialized to be attracted to sexual partners who are younger, smaller and more vulnerable than themselves. In as much as male socialization puts value on dominance, power and initiation of sexual relationships, a preference for younger, weaker partners fit in with the cultural expectations. Men are viewed as having greater power than females and children and child sexual abuse results from an abuse of this power. Herman (1981) suggests that the sexual division of labour with its intense and extreme differences in male and female socialization determines the mother's capacity for self-restraint and the father's tendencies toward sexually exploitative behaviour. Russell (1984) points out that while equal parenting may attempt to equalize the power balance between husband and wife and therefore have possible significant implications for the prevention of child sexual abuse, this seems unlikely.

2.9.3. i(c) Mass Media and Pornography

Socio-cultural theories of child sexual abuse implicate portrayals of children as a factor in child sexual abuse. According to Wurtele and Miller-Perrin (1992), child pornography is a cultural factor that may stimulate sexual interest in children. It ranges from photographs to films or video-tapes to magazines and books that show children in sexually explicit acts. Exposure to child pornography may teach potential offenders to become aroused by children and such material removes the inhibitions about having sex with children, creates a market for children to be victimized and is used by offenders to educate and stimulate victims (Wurtele & Miller-Perrin, 1992; Miller-Perrin & Perrin, 1999).

2.9.4. Socio-Situational Model

Proponents of the socio-situational model believe that social isolation contributes towards intra-familial sexual abuse as the family is removed from social scrutiny (Finkelhor, 1979; Hill, 1990).

Neighbourhood characteristics and social support systems are seen as some of the most influential factors. A family that suffers financially and socially may experience an extreme sense of isolation from potential networks. There are few opportunities open to such families and no extended families and community support to help them resolve the unavoidable conflicts and difficulties that arise in child rearing. Such parents are left to rely on themselves to solve serious personal and family problems. The intense and continuous stress that results from community isolation is considered part of the chain of events leading to child sexual abuse (Garborini, 1986).

Fear of abandonment in these families seems to draw members of an extended family into forbidden sexual relationships. A supportive community network has also been seen as very helpful in supervising children in the absence of their mothers and as a means of exposing both intra and extra-familial abuse (Finkelhor, 1979). Many children suffer from both intra- and extra familial sexual abuse as a result of learning to respond inappropriately to sexual advances from an adult which is the only way for them to receive attention within the family system. Paternally deprived children seem particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse by non-related adults even if they may never have been previously abused directly by family members.

Overcrowded living conditions that cause a breakdown in privacy have been associated with intra-familial sexual abuse (Finkelhor, 1979). However, in his survey of 796 college students, Finkelhor (1979) concluded that crowding was not associated with child sexual abuse. He did discover that family size was positively related to sexual abuse both inside and outside the family. He therefore attributed sexual abuse to poor supervision of children by parents.

Finkelhor (1980) suggests that under stress and extreme feelings of deprivation one may lose inhibitions against child sexual abuse. Other studies have failed to confirm this and suggest that sexual abuse can be found across social strata. MacFarlane (1982) emphasizes that, in general, sexual abuse is more likely to occur in stressed families and unemployment is but one factor causing stress. Unemployment of fathers has been seen as a factor that precipitates child sexual abuse due to the father's stress, sense of powerlessness and low self-esteem. Unemployment also provides the father with easy access to the child for extended periods of time.

2.9.5. Family Systems Model

The fundamental tenet of family systems theory is that within any homeostatic system all elements are interrelated in such a way that any movement or change in one element will affect the others. Woodhouse and West (1990) note that, within this perspective, the “family dynamics” that are responsible for sexual relationships between an authority figure and a child inside a family revolve around the concept of “dysfunctional patterns of relationships”. The theory holds that the family in general and the mother in particular, play central roles in creating the environment that permits and possibly encourages the sexual victimization of children.

Family systems therapists have attempted to incorporate issues which involve the individual extending their concern to the family and the social context into a single conceptual context. Observations of the family have been based on the premise that a system/family can be defined as an organized arrangement of elements consisting of a network of interdependent co-ordinated parts that function as a unit. The presenting symptom, that is, child sexual abuse, is considered in terms of its importance and power in stabilizing family life and degree to which in turn it is maintained by family dysfunction (Craissati, 1998).

In an attempt to explain why child sexual abuse occurs, the systems approach assumes that every member in the family contributes towards abuse. It looks at individuals in context thus focusing on the influence family members have on one another. The intense need for all members involved to maintain the family intact, which very often is their only source of emotional comfort, makes it impossible for an incestuous secret to be disclosed.

Most researchers working from this tradition have revealed an association between child sexual abuse and the absence of the mother, her powerlessness or being isolated from her children (Finkelhor, 1979; Herman, 1981). Glaser and Frosh (1993) explain that when mothers are absent fathers do not take over female parental roles but expect their daughters to run the household and to take care of the young children. A daughter who functions as a “substitute mother” runs a more serious risk of being involved in an incestuous relationship with the father than a daughter who is not a “substitute mother” (Glaser & Frosh, 1993).

Herman (1981) also emphasises the role of the mother in the occurrence of incestuous abuse. She argues that when abuse occurs it is usually a measure of maternal powerlessness. Finkelhor’s survey

of 796 college students (1979) reveals that girls who ever lived without their natural mothers were more vulnerable to sexual abuse than those who lived with their natural mothers. Part of the problem here may be a lack of adequate supervision and another part of absent and unavailable mothers may be a lack of communication. According to Finkelhor (1979), it may be that girls with absent or unavailable mothers have unmet emotional needs which makes them vulnerable. Their neediness may also make them conspicuous to sexual abusers as potential victims. As noted by Gillham (1991), significance is attached to the child's relationship with the mother, implying that a good relationship affords protection and reduction of the child's emotional vulnerability.

Herman (1981) concluded that a girl who is strongly attached to a healthy mother can have some amount of protection from child sexual abuse. Finkelhor (1979) discovered that girls whose mothers have been chronically ill have been found to be at a high risk for sexual abuse. Perhaps what is really important is that daughters, whose mothers are available to them and are powerful, learn to assert themselves and are in a way less vulnerable to sexual abuse.

Given the circumstances under which most children are brought up in society, the mother's role becomes important when abuse occurs repeatedly. It is assumed that the child has confided in the mother and the mother has not been able to do anything about the abuse. The child's report of being abused is always taken with a negative reaction to protect the abuser. Conscious denial is often related to the parent's fear of family disintegration, legal consequences or the reaction of the other spouse (Besharov, 1990). Mothers frequently refer to their dependence on the offender and with relatives accusing the victim of lying and bringing disgrace to the family.

The incestuous relationship fulfils the function of easing the tension in the parental relationship and some form of stability returns to the family. Glaser and Frosh (1993) maintain that the equilibrium thus achieved is not exactly the same as before, that is, the relationship network among members of the family has changed. This intimate contact creates confusion in the daughter, who on the one hand wants to be emotionally close to the father and to take care of him, while on the other hand, experiences a devouring quality in her relationship with her father (Woodhouse & West, 1990). The family systems model focuses on family life in abusive families and it presents a reminder that child sexual abuse may also be indicative of other problems in the family and individual functioning. Incest is maintained by disturbances in the family relationships and child sexual abuse can be fully understood when it is located in the context of these disturbances.

On the other hand, living without a natural parent has been identified as a major risk factor in a number of studies. Girls with stepfathers and father substitutes for example, mothers' boyfriend, appear to be more vulnerable to sexual victimization both by the father substitute and outside friends and family members. For stepfathers and foster fathers the problem does not seem to be only the absence of the biological bond. Stepfathers are often introduced into the family at, or shortly before, evidence of emerging sexuality in older children. These fathers may not have experienced the maturing effect of bringing up their own children which strengthens the incest taboo, and they may already have experienced problems in their personal relationships (Wurtele & Miller-Perrin, 1992).

Ensink (1992) states that family members predict that if the victim persists with allegations the family will become homeless, penniless and be rejected by the community. Most of the unsupported victims bow to such threats and withdraw their statements. Child sexual abuse usually exists and continues in homes only where it is kept a secret between the victim and the abuser or where others deny its occurrence. The secrecy exists in various layers of the victim's social relationships, namely the secret between the father and the daughter, which is withheld from other family members, the mother's secrecy towards other family members or outsiders if she knows about the abuse and the secrecy within the family with regard to outsiders.

Aside from being ignorant, compliant to adult authority and susceptible to bribes and promises of rewards, victims are often threatened with consequences to themselves, the abuser or the rest of the family should they disclose the abuse. Even in families where the mother is not financially dependent on the father, there is a need to keep the abuse a secret because of fear of what other members in the community will say about the family. Mothers in these families feel that there is a need to keep their families intact as a result of being culturally bound to do so.

So there is within the family system a tendency towards yet another crisis. For instance, when the daughter begins to have boyfriends, her relation with her father may become strained, thus creating a serious instability in the whole system again. If there are younger daughters in the family, they may be pushed into a "replacement role" to maintain the vicious circle of incestuous relationships (Woodhouse & West, 1990).

2.9.5. (i) Structural Family Systems Model

The family structure consists of an invisible set of functional demands that organize the way in which family members interact. The family must be able to adapt and transform itself in ways that meet new circumstances without losing the continuity that provides a frame of reference for its members. Structural theory defines three subsystems, namely: the spouse, parental and sibling subsystems. The subsystems of the family help the family system to carry out its function relative to its structure. The rule among these subsystems for the functional family is that of hierarchy which insists on appropriate boundaries (Becvar & Becvar, 1996).

The family system is regulated by boundaries which separate the family from its environment, thus allowing the privacy of the family. Boundaries of a subsystem are the rules in the family defining who participates and how the function of these boundaries is to protect the differentiation of the subsystems (spouse, parental and siblings). For proper family functioning the boundaries of subsystems must be clear, allowing contact between members of the family and others in the family's environment and should be well-defined enough to allow subsystem members to carry out their functions without interference. The spouse subsystem must achieve a boundary that protects it from interference by the demands and needs of other systems.

In a properly functioning family, the parent, especially the mother, is expected to provide for the needs (physical, emotional etc.) of children and if the spouse subsystem maintains loose boundaries other subgroups including children may interfere with their subsystem functioning. In some instances parents fail to fulfil their roles with the result that the child is drawn into problems encountered by parents. Sexual abuse has also been found to occur mainly in families where daughters have poor relationships with their mothers. Girls who have poor relationships with their mothers turn to other people for affection. In sexually abusive families the father may seem authoritarian, his needs for affection as well as his sexual needs may not be met.

In sexually abusive families the mother's rejection of sexual relations with the father may lead to reversal of roles between the mother and daughter; the latter may be pushed into a spouse or caretaker role. The father, whose source for dealing with emotional difficulties is limited, turns to the daughter for emotional as well as sexual gratification.

It is important to realize that no family has the same degree of organization. Some families are well integrated and function smoothly whilst others are characterized by a high degree of disorganization. Disorganized and over-organized patterns of family functioning can be observed in cases of father-daughter incest. According to Carr (2000), child sexual abuse occurs in disorganized families because the chaotic way in which the family functions entails few external inhibitors for the father's abuse of children. The father abuses a number of children and this is acknowledged within the family, but kept secret from the public. The father bullies the family into accepting his right to abuse the children, so the abuse serves to regulate conflict within the family (Carr, 2000).

Carr (2000) maintains that over-organized families function in an ideal fashion, with idealized marriage and adequate child care. The father typically abuses a single child and this is kept a secret and remains unacknowledged within the family. In some families the child may be drawn into problems of the spouse subsystem. Sexual dissatisfaction within the marital relationship, conflict avoidance within the marriage and a non-supportive relationship between the abused child and mother characterize these families. Physical illness or psychological problems such as depression may also contribute to the mother's involvement in an unsatisfying relationship with her partner and an unsupportive relationship with her daughter.

Some men misunderstand the child's needs for affection and become sexually aroused by it. When these men have no inhibitions, sexual feelings are translated into sexual acts. Sexual abuse is characterized by unclear boundaries with the father and daughter enmeshed in a sexually abusive relationship which is hidden from the mother who is disengaged from her daughter. In cases of sexually abusive families the mother tends not to respond to the reported abuse when a response is necessary. As a result, sexual abuse continues in the family and nothing is done to protect the child.

2.9.5. (ii) The Communicative Approach

The communicative approach focuses on the redundant patterns of communication and interaction between subsystems. Behaviour according to this approach must be examined in context because without contextual awareness, complete understanding is impossible. In sexually abusive families behaviour that is of a sexual nature between the father and daughter has to be examined within the context in which sexual abuse occurs. The implication of this is that, in order to have a complete understanding of sexual abuse within the family, there is a need to examine how family members relate and communicate with each other.

According to Becvar and Becvar (1996) a dysfunctional family is said to be stuck in symptomatic behaviour (child sexual abuse) which maintains the current equilibrium and avoids change when change is needed. A problem (child sexual abuse) is a symptom of a dysfunctional system and is thus a communication about what is and what is not happening in the family. Communication is dysfunctional between the mother and father, mother and daughter, and father and daughter. The possibility, in a sexually abusive family, might be that the mother and the father have a sexual relation problem and there is no communication at a verbal level and as a result the father turns to his daughter to meet his sexual needs when the daughter approaches him with affect ional needs. It is evident that sexually abusive families have never learnt to communicate effectively.

The classic example of communication in a dysfunctional family is the double-bind where two messages (verbal or non-verbal) are simultaneously sent and each of these messages negates the other. The context within which sexual abuse occurs is associated with non-verbal communication and a change in the context will bring about a change in the rules of the relationship between the father and daughter involved in the incestuous relationship. The problem of sexual abuse is never communicated in the family and as a result, the survivor is faced with two contradicting messages within the family, the mother knows about the abuse but does nothing about it to support the daughter and at a non-verbal level the abusive parent (father) treats the child differently in the company of individuals who are not members of the family.

2.10. Barriers to Sexual Abuse Disclosure

People's psychological barriers to recognizing child sexual abuse can be explained in terms of how human beings react to severe shock and loss. According to Milner and Blyth (1989) reactions to shocking news have been found to follow a predictable pattern of denial, anger, depression and acceptance. An examination of this pattern of reactions explains why child sexual abuse is still a puzzling phenomenon to teachers as well as other adults and one about which they feel unsure.

Child sexual abuse is a secret activity that those involved in usually do not reveal, be it the victim or perpetrator, the reason being that most people find it difficult to consider that such a problem exists. The intense need for all members involved to maintain the family intact, which very often is their only source of emotional comfort, makes it impossible for this incestuous secret to be disclosed. Sometimes

sexually abused children will go to great lengths to protect their offenders and when children manage to disclose, they will often withdraw what they have said during the investigation (Doyle, 1994; Woodhouse & West, 1990).

Another factor that might hinder the disclosure of sexual abuse is that victims may have fear for themselves, including being punished and cast out because they believe they have done something wrong. They may worry that no one will believe them and will be labelled a liar. Disclosure also depends on verbal skills, which makes it difficult for children with communication problems to report these. Most children cannot precisely describe what happened because they lack the vocabulary skills needed to explain what happened. According to Orbach and Lamb (1999), children have already been taught that it is naughty and rude to refer to genitals. Very few have been given the vocabulary to communicate about genital differences.

Parents' expectations of their children are unrealistic. Parents who teach their children that genitals are rude and unmentionable and do nothing to equip their children with safety skills, expect the child to recognize misbehaviour when it occurs, escape and report it to them immediately. Sexual abuse involves parts of the body that are associated with a degree of shame and embarrassment, all of which are part of the child's subculture only rarely to be shared with adults. Therefore, the grooming process by the abuser is designed in such a way that the victim feels guilty and responsible, with the end result that they will not disclose the abuse (Gillham, 1991).

2.11. Behavioural Indicators of Sexual Abuse in Children

Behavioural indicators of sexual abuse are signs and symptoms that may result from abusive experiences. Briggs (1989) note that all children are vulnerable to sexual abuse irrespective of age, sex, social class or religion. Children usually present clues that they have been abused. The adult often senses that there is something wrong but does not know what it is. Victims are unlikely to reveal what is happening unless there are definite signs that the selected adults feel comfortable with such information and can help.

2.11.1. Sexual Behaviour

There are certain behavioural indicators where an abused child behaves sexually with older children in play and with dolls. Sexually abused children also exhibit sexual behaviour with adults of the same

sex as the abuser, especially male teachers and relatives. That is, having learned to please adults by behaving sexually; victims sometimes attract attention by behaving in “promiscuous” ways either with older children or adults of the same gender as the offender (Briggs, 1989).

2.11.2. Sexual Language

According to Briggs (1989) sexually abused children indicate knowledge that is beyond the expected level in conversations and also unusual writing with sexual implications. Goldstein (1987) notes that children pick up meanings of words in broad concepts as they develop language capabilities and at times their use of language may be misleading. Children may use words that imply they understand more than they actually do. In other words, their verbal skills and vocabulary may be greater than their intellectual ability. When a child uses a word to explain what happened to him/her especially in describing genitals there is a need to understand correctly by having him/her point out on the doll the things s/he is describing. For example, most parents are unlikely to understand the significance of comments such as “Uncle X hurt me with his pee-pee”. Hence to explore the matter a probe such as the following may be necessary:

Q: Did uncle X put his pee-pee (penis) inside you?

A: Yes

Q: What do you mean by a pee- pee? Can you show me where his pee-pee is on this doll?

2.11.3. Sexual Drawings

Briggs (1989) note that the drawings of victims of sexual abuse often present onlookers with an uncomfortable feeling which should not be ignored. When sexually abused children cannot talk about their sexually abusive experiences, they may express their trouble in artwork. For example, the following features according to Briggs (1989) have been found after one or more incidents of child sexual abuse:

- the abuser depicted as a monster;
- the picture content may revealing an inappropriate sexual knowledge or an obsession with “rude” and sexual matters (Briggs, 1989), and
- the artists choosing angry colours repetitively when a free colour choice is available.

2.12. Management of Child Sexual Abuse

Professional intervention never involves one source or person. The complexity of many child sexual abuse cases may require the involvement of a whole range of agencies. Once the sexually abusive relationship is revealed publicly, a number of professional agencies intervene. This results in changes in the family system and in the network of professional agencies. The abuse becomes a multi-professional as well as a family problem, and the reactions in the professional system directly influence family relationships, social and emotional interactions between different individuals within the family (Porter, 1984).

Maher (1987) notes that a number of individuals from different disciplines and agencies and from voluntary organizations and self-help groups typically become involved. Different agencies may involve a doctor, social worker and policemen each with a defined area of individual decision which interrelates with the others. If these individuals are to work together effectively, they need to understand the different terms of reference under which they operate. They need to understand how their roles interrelate and, most importantly, they need to get to know each other as professionals (Maher, 1987).

Failure to give enough attention to issues of communication and the relationship between different groups of agencies can cause problems in child abuse cases including the possibility of misunderstandings. There may be other professionals in contact with the family such as educators, who may not face the same immediate decisions about legal proceedings. Educators have little power or immediate responsibility for decisions once they have referred the case of suspected abuse for investigation.

2.13. Management of Child Sexual Abuse at School

A relationship does exist between educators and various families where children at school are concerned. The inter-relationship between teaching and caring is particularly evident in the area of child sexual abuse which shows that caring and teaching cannot be separated. By merely sending their children to spend so many hours at school, entrusting their safety and care in educators, parents provide a clear indication that they rely on educators for the education and development of their children socially, emotionally and morally. The importance of school in the life of pupils has generally been recognized, an acknowledgement of the implication of children between the ages of five (5) and sixteen (16) spending approximately fifteen thousand hours of their lives in school. When educators intervene in an incestuous family, the family ceases to be autonomous and a professional-family system is thus created. Porter (1984) notes that the influence of the educator on family processes is a crucial element in working with families in which sexual abuse of a child has occurred.

The educator-pupil relationship is unique in the sense that no other adult in authority (with the exception of the child's parents or caretakers who are the most likely perpetrators of serious sexual abuse) enjoys such an intense, continuous, consistent and private relationship with a child (Porter, 1984). Educators are confronted with abuse cases of daughters who are sexually abused by their fathers where other family members are unwilling to break the silence with the aim of keeping the whole family intact (homeostasis). Such victims are most likely to be found in a school situation and the teacher who sees the child daily in class is often the first to notice that something is wrong with her/him (Milner & Blyth, 1989).

Educators have the task to identify sexually abused children and an opportunity to teach them to avoid abuse. Educators understand children's behaviour more than any other person because of the time they spend with children and they have also been trained in child development. As a result of their knowledge of children, they can always tell when something is wrong in the child's life through careful observation of any behavioural change, especially school performance. Change in school performance is one indication that the educator can use to identify the possibility of sexual abuse in the child's life. It is through communication with the child that survivors of sexual abuse can be encouraged to report abuse. Educators have the opportunity to teach children about who the potential perpetrator is, the techniques that perpetrators use to get them involved in the sexual act and to equip children with vocabulary that will enable them to explain clearly with appropriate words when they are abused.

2.13.1. Education of Children, Parents and Educators

Child sexual abuse is a major public health problem that needs a preventative approach. There is a need for the school (educators), parents and children to receive appropriate education on sexual abuse of children to enable victims of abuse to protect themselves from potential perpetrators. This involves alerting children, parents and educators to the problem and providing children with information and the basic skills necessary for their safety and well being. In past years television, radio, newspapers and magazines have mostly tackled the problem thoughtfully and sensitively. This has had an impact on the adult population leading to an increasing number of reported cases, but most of these media efforts have not been devised for, nor have they reached children (Porter, 1984).

2.13.2. The Importance of Correct Information

Some educators inaccurately believe that male victims are infrequently abused or less affected by the experience compared with female victims. Others believe that victims are in some way responsible for their abuse. Adhering to such beliefs can have devastating effects if educators communicate disbelief, denial or blame victims. Children, parents and educators must all be given accurate pictures of potential perpetrators and be informed about the type of activities that might be involved and the tactics offenders use to entice child targets (Wurtele & Miller-Perrin, 1992).

It is important that children, parents and educators be made aware that sexual abusers are rarely strangers but more typically relatives or acquaintances. Providing educators with correct information about reporting suspected cases of child sexual abuse is another important objective of prevention efforts since prevention goals (both primary and secondary) can be accomplished through reporting.

2.13.3. Appropriate and Inappropriate Responses

Educators' reactions and attitudes towards victims are important not only because they might prevent further trauma, but because appropriate reactions can be therapeutic for victims. Wurtele and Miller-Perrin (1992) note that if educators are familiar with both appropriate and inappropriate responses before encountering victims of sexual abuse, they are more likely to respond in a therapeutic manner.

Educators may also respond inappropriately to victims because of misconceptions about the nature of sexual abuse and its victims. Therefore, appropriate responses include reacting positively towards victims to prevent further trauma, reporting to proper authorities to terminate the abuse and initiate the recovery process for the victim and working collaboratively with other professionals to enhance service provision to victims and their families.

Educator-focused prevention approaches should include guidelines for responding to abuse victims including avoiding negative reactions such as shock, horror, disapproval or anger, but rather conveying a belief in the victim's statement. The child needs to be reassured that s/he is not to blame and that every effort will be made to protect him/her, acknowledging and praising the victim's courage in disclosing the abuse

2.13.4. Educating Children

Children should not have to take on the responsibility of protecting themselves. The aim of educating children should be to give them enough information to be able to respond to a sexual abuse situation

before it becomes serious. By educating children, communication lines can be opened and reporting of sexual abuse encouraged. Informed children themselves, who are confident about situations and people, and have some idea about where to get help if they need it, are less likely to become victims of abuse.

Most children do not have sufficient knowledge to resist sexual abuse and any information they receive is often too inaccurate, misleading and even frightening. Vague warnings about dangerous strangers who are out to “get them” under various pretexts are not useful. O.Hyde (1987) explains that children can be taught to protect themselves from sexual abuse by being enlightened without being frightened. He further maintains that parents who teach their children how to avoid traffic accidents, poisons and fires can also use the very same approach to teach their children to protect themselves from sexual abuse (O.Hyde, 1987).

Children need to achieve a sense of autonomy over their own bodies and develop appropriate standards of privacy and intimacy. All children need to be taught how to protect themselves and this is especially important for victims of sexual abuse, for whom the risk of further abuse by other family members or friends is greatly increased. Children need to know their rights over their own body, particularly their sexual or “private” parts.

Children need to be taught a repertoire of self-protective responses and should therefore, be encouraged to report abusive experiences in order to reduce the secrecy surrounding child sexual abuse. Knowledge regarding child sexual abuse, the need to tell an adult if they are threatened or abused, and the need to avoid risky situations are all-important messages to convey to young children.

Since most abuse begins before children are twelve (12) years old, educating children about sexual abuse must also begin early. Experiments have shown that children can learn to deal with the problem of sexual abuse much as they learn how to avoid traffic on a busy road, learn to respect fire and accept safety precautions (O.Hyde, 1987). Mayes, Currie, Macleod, Gillies and Warden (1992) found that there is some resistance to the idea of teaching children prevention concepts and skills, particularly in relation to sexual abuse on the grounds that such information takes away children’s innocence and to that extent part of their childhood. According to Mayes *et al.* (1992) younger children may fare better with being taught concrete rules and behaviours.

2.13.5. Educating Parents

Ideally, sex education should be a continuing process within the family, but in reality the family remains a powerful source of inhibition and misinformation and educators must accept a substantial educational role for children and adults. Research findings also suggest that parents can be willing and effective instructors of a personal safety program which may help reduce the secrecy surrounding child sexual abuse and may stimulate discussions about sexuality in general (Wurtele & Miller-Perrin, 1992).

There are several areas in which the need for the education of parents and public is indicated. Parents and others in the child's home life play an important role in reinforcing the message of a prevention program. Research studies suggest that people are unsure of what steps to take when they suspect sexual abuse. It appears that if they knew more about the support agencies and resources available specifically for dealing with child sexual abuse, then they would be inclined to utilize them more often and more readily (Mayes *et al.*, 1992).

According to Mayes *et al.* (1992), it is not sufficient just to educate children and as a result, parents/adults have to be involved. Parents are in an important position for a number of reasons in preventing child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse can begin very early in life and parents may be the only ones who are in a position to help very young children avoid potentially abusive situations. There is no guarantee that anyone else will talk to children about sexual abuse if parents themselves do not.

Much abuse occurs within the family and it may be that children may be more inclined to heed warnings concerning their families if these come from a family member. In telling their children about sexual abuse, parents are opening up channels of communication and consequently making children less vulnerable. Adults who have an understanding of sexual abuse will be more adept at detecting abuse and less likely to disbelieve or contradict a child who discloses experience of abuse.

Parents particularly need to be informed about sexual abuse of children and about how best to equip children to act safely or deal with such contingencies when they arise. Parents are not always sure either which agency to contact when they suspect a child is being abused. Most parents, as noted by Mayes *et al.* (1992), do not talk to their children about sexual abuse, considering their children too young for such knowledge or deciding they are in little danger. Finkelhor (1983), in his Family Violence

Research Program at the University of New Hampshire, describes what parents tell or do not tell their children about who the potential perpetrator may be. Mayes *et al.* (1992) underline how often lack of knowledge or uncertainty about normal behaviour is a factor in child victimization.

Children often say they were confused and misled by the abuser's insistence that the sexual activity was proper and normal, or they did not know they had a right to refuse or that adults would defend them if they complained. One effective preventive measure would be to see that the children themselves know more about sexual abuse. Most parents reported that they had talked to their children in an "indirect way" about sexual abuse. The sexual parts of the discussion of sexual abuse that is, what really helps identifying sexual abuse were found to be most lacking. Another important omission concerned the nature of possible abusers. Overwhelmingly, people remembered their discussion of sexual abuse revolving around strangers.

2.13.6. Educating Teachers

Educators have to be equipped with a comprehensive understanding of child sexual abuse problems so that they can become familiar with the true nature of the problem and disregard the myths surrounding the topic. Educators should also be educated about the various definitions of sexual abuse which will assist them in identifying victims of abuse. Information about the incidence and prevalence rate of child sexual abuse can help to convey an accurate perception of the magnitude of the problem. The knowledge of the characteristics of victims is also important so that educators working with children are alert to the fact that victims can be males as well as females of different ages.

Teachers have been most readily identified as potential educators of children. Educators are familiar with their children and they may be able to structure training to meet children's special needs, incorporating it into the regular curriculum and reviewing material periodically to ensure that children retain the information. Educators are in a unique position to educate children about sexual abuse and its prevention given their specific skills in educating and communicating with children and their consistent and longitudinal contact with children which allows for both repeated exposures to prevention materials and reinforcement of protective behaviours (Wurtele & Miller-Perrin, 1992).

Studies investigating teachers' attitudes on teaching about sexual abuse have shown that teachers feel a real need for training in this area. Fortheringham (1988) in Mayes *et al.* (1992), attempted to

investigate teachers' attitudes concerning five main aspects of intervention that is, detection, disclosure, after disclosure, prevention and communication with others.

2.13.6. (i) Detection

Fotheringham (1988) in Mayes *et al.* (1992) note that, 90% of educators felt that they had a part to play in the detection of sexual abuse. An estimated number of 95% of educators in the sample was unsure of possible symptoms of abuse and 82% of them requested training.

2.13.6. (ii) Disclosure

Educators (71%) in Fotheringham's sample wanted to be part of the procedure to assist a child disclose sexual abuse while 21% felt that this should be handled by outside agencies. Many teachers in the sample stressed that they do not see it as part of their duty to be involved in disclosure, but as something they would be happy to do if the child wanted it. The majority of teachers in the study were aware of the importance of believing a child who discloses, with 85% acknowledging that children very rarely lie about being abused.

2.13.6. (iii) After Disclosure

It has been widely recognized that an educator can play an important role in helping an abused child adjust to life after disclosure. The educator cannot change what happened, but s/he may be able to help the child to feel different about the abuse. Fotheringham's sample of educators (81%) was willing to assume this role although many felt that they would first require training.

2.13.6. (iv) Prevention

Educators in Fotheringham's sample appeared uncertain of their role in the prevention of abuse with just over half seeing this as part of their function as teachers.

2.13.6. (v) Communication with Others

An important issue indicated by teachers' comments was the lack of communication about sexual abuse issues among educators. Educators reported feeling ill-equipped to cope with sexual abuse victims and expressed concerns about how to respond to a child who they suspect is being abused,

what official channels to go through. Many teachers received minimal training in child sexual abuse and therefore may hesitate to become involved because of lack of knowledge or emotional discomfort. Hazzard (1984) found that teachers often feel uncomfortable to talk with children or parents about abuse-related issues

Teachers may indeed lack information on the nature and extent of the problem on child sexual abuse.

As a result of knowledge deficiencies and negative attitudes, one would expect that teachers would tend not to intervene as effectively as possible in child sexual abuse cases. Mayes *et al.* (1992) found that teachers not only have deficits in their knowledge about important aspects of child sexual abuse but they also do not perceive themselves as qualified to undertake this task. Educators have also expressed concerns that educational curricula should not include topics related to sexual matters because such issues are best dealt with within the privacy of the home setting.

2.13.7. Possible Barriers to the Implementation of Educational Programs

2.13.7. (i) Time

Nelson and Clark (1986) note that availability of time is the most critical issue for educators. Educators feel that the time available for their daily teaching cannot accommodate extra lessons such as teaching children about sexual abuse. The reason being that the inclusion of prevention programs in the school curriculum would require the development of new materials, attending workshops and doing some research through available resource material. Programs based on teaching sexual aspects would demand extensive preparation and increase in the time spent on teaching which to them, would be unrealistic.

2.13.7. (ii) Fears

The subject of sexual exploitation is not one that most educators have been prepared to discuss. Educators are often concerned about the reaction of parents to a sexual abuse program in the classroom. Educators fear the possible negative effects such discussions might have on children.

2.13.7. (ii) Materials

Educators want materials that are intended for educational purposes. They need spontaneous access to curriculum materials if they hope to capitalize upon “teachable moments”. Prevention materials should be appropriate to the developmental level or age of the child (Nelson & Clark, 1986).

2.13.7. (iv) Support

Educators are seldom able to maintain enthusiasm for a program if it does not have the support of other teachers. Principals are seldom willing to support a program that is criticized by parents or receives no endorsement from the district.

2.14. Educating Teachers about Child Abuse

There is a need to equip educators with the necessary skills to understand child sexual abuse since most of them are still under the impression that sexual abuse has to do with the socio-economic status of both the victim and the offender. This has been evident in Briggs' sample, where respondents believed that sexual abuse is most likely to occur in poor families (Briggs, 1993). It is also imperative that educators be equipped with the knowledge on how to report any suspicion of a sexually abused child since reporting of such cases to relevant authorities would reduce the possibility of further abuse for the victims.

2.14.1. Information

The basic information that must be offered to educators includes examples of what child sexual abuse means and does not mean, a brief review and relevance of prevalence rate. Educators need to know specific signs and symptoms of child sexual abuse in order to effectively identify victims of abuse. In addition to victim behaviour, educators need to be aware of other indicators of sexual abuse. For example, the functioning of the individuals within the victim's family and environment. By increasing the breadth of sexual abuse indicators to include characteristics of abusive families, the likelihood of successful victim identification is increased (Nelson & Clark, 1986).

2.14.2. Attitude

A more important area in training involves the fostering of positive attitudes regarding the prevention and the role an educator can play. People sometimes need an opportunity to talk in small groups about

their confusion and fears about child sexual abuse and its prevention. Interaction in a group also provides an opportunity for people to hear differing opinions and can help them clarify their own thoughts and feelings.

2.15. Appropriate Responses to Disclosures

Professionals have to be educated about their roles and responsibilities in responding to victims who disclose abuse. If educators are familiar with both appropriate and inappropriate responses before encountering victims of sexual abuse, they are more likely to respond in a therapeutic way. Appropriate responses include reacting positively toward victims to prevent further trauma, reporting to the proper authorities to terminate the abuse, initiating the recovery process for the victim working with other professionals to provide service to the victim and their families.

2.16. Conclusion

In conclusion, since it is evident that child sexual abuse is a very complex phenomenon it is imperative that it be taken seriously in order to protect victims from further abuse. It is much important that educators receive correct information about the issue of child sexual abuse to enable them to make appropriate responses to the victim's disclosures, which will enhance more reporting of such cases.

Since elementary school children constitute the majority of victims of sexual abuse, this is a vital place to start in. Based on the fact that educators have an ongoing relationship with children, it is important that they take the initiative in child sexual abuse prevention programs to increase their knowledge and skills in dealing with sexual abuse cases. Educators need to be knowledgeable about the issue of child sexual abuse because they are the first to encounter such victims in class. Therefore, appropriate training is vital if teachers are to become effective sexual abuse prevention educators.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the methodology adopted for the purpose of this study. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was chosen. Each of these approaches is discussed in detail, and the steps and principles applied to obtain the results outlined. Concepts of reliability and validity are discussed against the qualitative and quantitative methods used.

3.2. Sampling Procedure

3.2.1. Nature of the Population

The aim of this study is to explore the knowledge and opinions of educators regarding the issue of child sexual abuse. Because educators are amongst the first to notice if something is wrong with the child and because of their continued contact with children at school, it is important to know if they are able to identify and deal with sexually abused children and also to prevent children from being sexually abused. The researcher believes that education about the sexual abuse of children should begin at an earlier age. Therefore, the population from which the sample was drawn is of educators in rural, disadvantaged primary schools in some parts of the North West Province. The sample included educators who were both never exposed and those who were exposed, to some degree, to child sexual abuse cases. Research participants consisted of educators from different geographical areas and they were obtained from eleven local primary schools situated in parts of the North West Province.

3.2.2. Sample Selection

Schools were selected in certain parts of the Northwest area, especially poor, disadvantaged, rural schools for the purpose of this research. The reason for conducting research in such schools is that they are situated in poorly developed areas, with limited access to social work services, making it even more important to rely on teachers to educate and protect victims from further abuse.

The incidence of child sexual abuse was observed within a particular context and the manner in which abuse cases were dealt with in some schools gave the researcher a clue that little has been done to assist survivors of sexual abuse. As observation of such cases was within rural school areas, schools which were then selected for the purpose of the study were first identified and chosen. This selection

was based mainly on transport accessibility which would allow the researcher to travel to such schools many of which were in very remote areas.

The point of departure in selecting research participants was to approach the district managers, the circuit education officers and school principals of the eleven identified local primary schools and ask for permission to use educators as research participants. The purpose of the study, the number of educators required from each school and the reason for choosing educators as relevant people to address the issue of child sexual abuse were all clearly explained.

After permission was obtained from district managers and circuit education officers, school principals were approached with the letter of permission (see appendix B) to ask for their approval to use educators as research participants. After permission was given by the principal and educators agreed to participate in the study, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the research participants and that their knowledge and opinions on child sexual abuse would be measured through their responses on questionnaires. Educators were encouraged to give their honest opinions to enable the researcher to report correctly on what they know and think about child sexual abuse.

Research participants were randomly selected (simple random sampling) giving each educator an equal chance of being selected in the sample. A record of names of educators (sampling frame) in schools that had enough educators (more than ten educators) was requested from the school principals to select participants randomly. From the record of names of educators, the researcher wrote the names on small pieces of paper and put them in a container where they were picked randomly. Names, which were picked from the container, were the ones used for participants of the research study. As there were an unequal number of male and female educators in each of the eleven identified schools, the same proportion of male and female educators was used as in the educator population.

However, most of what the researcher planned in selecting the sample did not turn out to be feasible in some schools. Random selection in some schools was not possible as a result of the number of educators available. Since the research process had to be conducted during school hours, the researcher had no intention to disrupt the smooth running of the whole school by using the entire staff; therefore a maximum of ten participants was required from each school to allow the remaining staff to keep the school running. There was a need to assemble the participating educators in the same place,

that is, at their respective schools as it was not possible to see them individually due to time constraints.

In some schools educators were either ten or less and this implied that the researcher would have to use all the educators within those schools and this made random selection meaningless. On the day of the research process, some educators were attending workshops, some were absent while others were present within the school premises but had some commitments to fulfil for the school. Although there were therefore some elements of random selection in the sampling procedure, the final sample obtained should be viewed as a convenience sample drawn from poorer schools in the North West Province.

3.3. Ethical Considerations

Once educators had agreed to participate in the study, the researcher indicated to them that whatever transpired during the research process, that is, their responses to the questionnaire and research results will be kept in confidence. Even though participants were informed about the purpose of the study and gave their consent, the researcher explained to the participants that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. As a result of the emotional nature of the research topic, debriefing was done at the end of the process where the researcher explained clearly what her aim was in involving educators to participate in this type of research.

3. 4. Number of Subjects

The number of educators in each of the eleven primary schools varied. Some schools had ten educators and others had more than ten. The total sample size comprised eighty-four participants, while female educators in each of the eleven primary schools outnumbered the male. As a result, approximately the same proportion of male and female educators was used as in the educator population to ensure that the female-male ratio in the sample was more or less the same as in the educator population. The sample size was satisfactory as enough information could be gathered for both qualitative and quantitative methods.

3.5. Research Instrument Used

A questionnaire which consisted of open-ended and closed questions was used in the study for the

purpose of collecting data. The context within which the researcher observed sexual abuse of children and the manner in which victims of abuse received less attention from educators with regard to assistance in getting the necessary help, made the researcher to consider the construction of her own questionnaire relevant to be able to cover the research needs. Questionnaires used in studies by Reyome and Gaeddert (1998) and Daro, Abrahams and Casey (1992) were considered for use in the current study, but were found to be somewhat inappropriate as these questionnaires were designed for use in secondary school teachers and for teachers from very different cultural and economic circumstances from those in the current study. A new questionnaire, incorporating some questions from Reyome and Gaeddert (1998) and Daro *et al.* (1992), but more appropriate for local circumstances, was therefore constructed (see Appendix A).

The draft questionnaire was given to an expert to particularly examine the construction of items. The questionnaire was revised three times before the expert considered it appropriate. This helped to improve both the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. The following issues were looked into: responses were checked to see if they followed clearly from the questions. That is, there has to be a relationship between the way the question is asked and the responses.

each response was checked to see if it was an appropriate response for answering the question and responses that were regarded as unsuitable were deleted.

editing of the question and responses was done to ensure that both the question and responses do not contain vague or unnecessary words that might complicate the items, and

it was also ensured that the questions only bear one response that is correct as the items were closed questions.

The questionnaire included items which assessed background information on child sexual abuse, exposure to information on sexual abuse, awareness of behavioural signs of abuse and personal opinion. Aspects on knowledge and opinion domains covered in the questionnaire are discussed in more detail under section four. The questionnaire consists of two sections, that is, open questions and closed questions. Open questions were used to explore the insight that educators possess on child sexual abuse and required educators to give their opinions on the issues being discussed. In both open-ended and closed questions, the objective was to assess whether educators possess factual knowledge on child sexual abuse. True or false questions were characterized by statements where participants were expected to identify statements as either true or false. The educators' ability to identify statements correctly would reflect the knowledge they have about child sexual abuse issues.

The strategy was to begin the questionnaire with open-ended questions in order to orientate respondents to the subject matter of the questionnaire and then follow them with fixed alternatives in the remainder of the questionnaire. The reason for including open questions is that, the design of closed format runs a serious risk of failing to include important alternatives. The ideal situation, obviously, is to combine features of each approach (Abrahamson, 1983).

The principal advantage of an open questionnaire is that it does not suggest terms in which respondents should answer the question. Therefore, subjects will be free to invent their own responses even though this may result in the non comparability of their responses and also in limiting analysis of their responses (Abrahamson, 1983). With open-ended questions, participants were provided with paragraph type questions and provision was made for responses by providing spaces with a few lines where subjects could write their responses.

Responses to knowledge items (i.e. items characterized by both right or wrong answers and true/false items) were grouped together to obtain an overall knowledge score for each respondent. Frequencies were calculated to determine the number of cases obtaining the individual items right or wrong. Items were analysed to determine their correlation with the whole scale and items that correlated very weakly with the scale were removed from the scale. A more detailed discussion of item analysis and the reliability of the questionnaire will be given in the results chapter.

3.6. Analysis of Data

3.6.1. Qualitative Analysis

Common themes were extracted from participants' responses. Although certain themes were expected to emerge from the literature, the researcher was flexible and open to unexpected themes such as the ideas about the causes of sexual abuse, and how child sexual abuse can be prevented. Extracted themes were categorized around family issues, dealing with and handling of child sexual abuse cases and educators' opinion on what should be done at school level.

For this stage of analysis, recommendations by qualitative researchers such as Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) and Stiles (1993) were utilized. In the following paragraphs an overview of the steps that were taken to complete the analysis of qualitative data will be set out to enable the reader to understand the steps that were used in the analysis of qualitative data.

3.6.1. (i) Familiarization and Immersion

In order to develop ideas and theories about the phenomenon under study (child sexual abuse) the open-ended questionnaire responses were collected and were examined very closely. The transcripts were read through several times and all ideas discovered during the process were noted. The aim was to gain familiarity with the text, and thus identify interpretations likely to be supported by the data. Although it is impossible not to see texts through one's own frame of reference, it is important to be as aware of one's own ideas as possible. With this in mind, the researcher read the transcripts primarily with the idea of picking up ideas that were "unexpected".

3.6.1. (ii) Inducing Themes

After the process of familiarization with the data, the researcher was in the position to infer themes from transcripts, that is, to note recurring patterns which pulled together many separate pieces of data. Material in the data was examined and principles that underlie the material were organized according to their similarities and differences. To label the categories underlying the research material, the researcher applied the language used by the research participants.

3.6.1. (iii) Coding

In developing themes, the researcher coded the data where different sections of the data were marked as relevant to one or more of the themes. A phrase, a line, sentence or a paragraph was identified or coded as containing material that pertains to the themes under consideration.

3.6.1. iii (a) Open Coding

Raw data was organized into conceptual categories and themes or concepts were created for analyzing data. Themes were located and initial codes assigned to condense the data into categories. Preliminary concepts were then written at the edge of the transcripts and highlighted with colour ink. The researcher made a list of themes after open coding.

3.6.1. iii (b) Axial Coding

Axial coding refers to the process of reviewing and examining codes. The process began with an organized set of initial codes with particular focus on the initial coded themes than on the data.

Additional codes that emerged were noted and existing concepts were divided into sub- categories, and several closely related concepts were combined and organized into a sequence.

3.6.1 (iv) Elaboration

In this stage of analysis identified themes were further explored to see if differences exist in extracts, which had been grouped together under a single theme (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999). At this stage, further coding and elaboration was done until no further new insights on the data emerged.

Generated themes were explored more closely to enable the researcher to gain a fresh view and deeper meaning from the original coding system. Dialoguing occurred between what the researcher read and the context in which the participants found themselves, between the researcher, and the supervisor, between the researcher and the account itself, the researcher's own values, assumptions, interpretations and understandings.

3.6.1. (v) Interpretation and Checking

Interpretations were put together as a written account of the phenomenon under study (child sexual abuse) using themes from the analysis as sub-headings.

3.6.2. Quantitative Analysis

Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, correlations and t-tests were used to analyze closed questions. Frequencies were calculated for knowledge items in the questionnaire (items 3-11, 14-21) and opinion items (items 12 and 13). Pearson's Correlation was computed to see if there was any significant relationship between variables. A t-test was used to test for significant differences of knowledge scores between male and female educators.

3.6.3. Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are conceptualized differently in qualitative and quantitative research designs. In quantitative research, reliability refers to the consistency of the measuring instrument while validity refers to the instrument measuring what it intends to measure. In qualitative research, reliability refers to the trustworthiness of observations or data whereas validity refers to the trustworthiness of interpretations or conclusions (Stiles, 1993). Reliability in quantitative research has been explained

in terms of the design of the questionnaire where the researcher ensured that both closed questions (multiple and true/false) and open-ended questions measured the same thing, that is, knowledge and opinions of educators on child sexual abuse.

3.6.3. (i) Reliability in Quantitative Research

3.6.3. i (a) Ensuring Reliability of Collected Data

In the construction of items for the questionnaire, trying out preliminary versions of the questionnaire to identify potential problems for example, unclear questions and responses and content domain of questions could help in improving the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was pilot-tested on a sample of ten people to see whether the instructions and items were clear. Difficulties that the pilot sample experienced with regard to some questions for example, wording of questions, responses and instructions which were not clear to the respondents were taken into consideration to revise the final version of the questionnaire.

3.6.3. i (b) Item Analysis

Item responses were analyzed to see how items functioned in order to identify the best items in the questionnaire. To determine if an individual item "hangs together" with the remaining items in the scale, an item total correlation was computed for each item and items with low correlations with the scale total were removed from the scale. Fourteen items were removed from the scale, and as the items were removed, the Chronbach alpha reliability coefficient for the total scale improved.

3.6.4. Validity

The following types of validity (quantitative) were evaluated to ensure that the questionnaire measures what it is supposed to measure.

3.6.4. (i) Face Validity

The questionnaire was given to ten people who were not in the actual sample. People who were given the questionnaire were in the Audience Research Department (South African Broadcasting Corporation) and MA (Research Psychology) intern students. The people were asked to check if the

individual items, responses and the meaning of words used in the items and responses were clear to them. They also had to check whether the questions covered enough of the research topic and whether appropriate questions were used to address relevant issues. Adjustments to the individual items were made consequent to how people viewed the questionnaire at face value.

3.6.4. (ii) Content Validity

Questions were designed in such a way that the responses were to reflect whether the respondents possessed knowledge of child sexual abuse. Opinion items were designed to enable respondents to give views which would reflect respondents' knowledge and awareness of sexual abuse of children.

In constructing the items, the researcher identified the content domain of the questionnaire. That is, the topic to be investigated and what the researcher would like to find more information about. In the case of this study, the topic to be investigated was child sexual abuse and the researcher wanted to find out how much the educators knew and what their opinion was about the issue of child sexual abuse.

The knowledge domain included, inter alia, being aware of potential abusers and victims, the types of families that experience sexual abuse, causes of sexual abuse of children and the credulity of the child reporting the abuse. The opinion domain included educators' experience of sexually abused children, the problems they encountered in dealing with sexually abused children, the secrecy behind child sexual abuse in families and what can be done to protect children from further abuse.

For further validation, the questionnaire was given to an expert who is a co-ordinator in Auxiliary Services for sexually abused children. The expert co-ordinates with the district manager, circuit education officers and educators in primary schools to address issues of child sexual abuse. She also organises mini-workshops to discuss child sexual abuse with guidance teachers.

The expert evaluated the questionnaire's content and recommended the addition of more items that would address issues of sexual abuse at school level. She also recommended that the wording of some items and responses be checked, as they were not clear. The expert recommended that items should also be edited to ensure that they convey a clear and consistent meaning to all respondents.

3.6.5. Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research

The following steps were taken to ensure that observations and interpretations of the study were reliable and valid.

3.6.5. (i) Reliability (Qualitative Research)

3.6.5. i (a) Disclosure of Orientation

According to Stiles (1993), good practice recommends disclosure by the researcher of his/her expectations for the study and preconceptions. The researcher approached the study with the opinion that educators have little knowledge about identifying and dealing with sexually abused children in a school situation. In this study, the researcher expected educators to express the need for immediate attention on the issue of child sexual abuse and workshops to empower themselves. At the beginning of the study, the researcher approached the study with the following preconceptions some of which were confirmed by the responses of the participants from the qualitative results.

- child sexual abuse cases should be handled by welfare organizations such as clinics, hospitals and not the school;
- centres should be established with highly qualified people to give training to educators on sexual abuse of children;
- educators would indicate the need to receive training on how to identify, deal and report child sexual abuse cases, and
- educators were never trained on how to deal with child sexual abuse cases which makes it impossible for them to deal successfully with such cases.

3.6.5. i (b) Engagement with the Research Material

Reliability and validity in qualitative research is facilitated by immersion in the research material, an exercise which may involve intimate familiarity with the text. In this study, the responses to the open-ended questions were read repeatedly to effect immersion and gain familiarization with the material. As she read the transcripts, promising ideas were underlined and their links with related ideas considered.

3.6.5. i (c) Iteration: Cycling Between Interpretation and Observations/Data

Iteration included reading, conceptualizing, rereading and reconceptualizing. During this process, the researcher kept a journal for taking notes as she read and reconceptualized promising ideas.

3.6.5. i (d). Grounding of Interpretations

Grounding of interpretations has to do with linking the researcher's more abstract interpretations with more concrete observations. As the researcher read through the transcripts, own interpretations were made. These had to be confirmed by using original material, that is, participants' responses from the questionnaire. To link the researcher's more abstract interpretations with concrete observations, the researcher took lines, sentences and in some instance paragraphs from the responses to confirm her interpretations. To further validate the interpretations, themes were organised around commonly used theories of child sexual abuse such as the family systems model.

3.6.5. i (e) Description of Internal Processes of Investigation

The process involves explaining how the investigation affected the researcher, difficulties experienced when analyzing the data and whether the data caused a change of mind in the researcher. Some of the respondents misinterpreted questions and this made it difficult for the researcher to figure out the answer for the questions. The data that the researcher was faced with caused a change of mind regarding the preconceptions previously held about educators' knowledge on child sexual abuse issues. That is, from the responses given it was clear that educators had more knowledge on child sexual abuse than what the researcher initially thought.

3.6.6. Validity (Qualitative Research)

3.6.6. (i). Triangulation

Triangulation in research is the use of multiple methods in the study of a phenomenon. There are four types of triangulation, namely, data, investigator, theoretical and methodological triangulation. In this study triangulation across investigators was used in the sense that several expert collaborators were involved as described below. This helped in improving the reliability of interpretations made. According to Stiles (1993), for an interpretation to be valid it must present itself as an argument in which alternatives are entertained. In this study, other investigators included educators who were not in the actual sample. These educators were undergraduate and postgraduate students at the University of

South Africa and they were given responses to open-questions to read and infer themes. The researcher then took the themes which were inferred by other investigators and compared them with own themes. Similarities and differences that existed in the themes were identified and differences in themes inferred were incorporated into the analysis of data.

3.6.6. (ii). Reflexive Validity

Reflexive validity according to Stiles (1993) refers to how the theory or the researcher's way of thinking is changed by data. Validity requires ceaseless confrontation with the experiences of people in their daily lives. Although the researcher in this study had a list of expected themes, unexpected themes arising from respondents' answers were also incorporated in the analysis.

3.7. Conclusion

An overview of how the sample in the study was selected has been discussed to enable the reader to understand who the subjects were and how many participants were included in the sample. The researcher's use of own constructed questionnaire as the most appropriate instrument for collecting data has been discussed to enable the reader to understand the appropriateness of this measuring instrument with regard to the research topic. Various steps which were taken to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data were set out clearly to ensure that the reader understands how the results were obtained. Concepts of reliability and validity were also explained for both quantitative and qualitative data to ensure the reliability and validity of the results obtained.

CHAPTER 4

Results and Discussion

4.1. Quantitative Results

The following section deals, inter alia, with the analysis of the quantitative results. Biographical information was obtained from the first section of the questionnaire. This biographical information is presented to enable the reader to obtain a clear idea of the profile of the sample taking part in the study. Frequencies were calculated to analyze the number of cases in each category, for example, gender, age, marital status, parental status, qualifications, home language and the number of years in teaching.

4.1.1. Biographical Profile of Respondents

Table 1: Gender Profile of Sample

Gender	N	%
Male	19	22.6
Female	65	77.4
Total	84	100.0

Table 2: Qualification Profile of Sample

Qualifications	N	%
Std8	4	4.8
Std 10	12	14.2
Diploma	53	63.1
Degree	5	6.0
Senior Degree	2	2.4
Not Known	8	9.5
Total	84	100.0

Table 3: Marital Status of Sample

Marital Status	N	%
Single	15	18.0
Married	58	69.0
Divorced	9	10.7
Widowed	2	2.3
Total	84	100.0

Table 4: Parental Status of Sample

Parental Status	N	%
Have children	79	94.0
Have no children	5	6.0
Total	84	100.0

Table 5: Language Profile of Sample

Home Language	N	%
SeTswana	74	88.1
Isizulu	1	1.2
Xitsonga	1	1.2
Sesotho sa Lebowa	8	9.5
Total	84	100.0

Table 6: Age Profile of Sample

Age	N	%
25-29	2	2.4
30-34	6	7.1
35-39	17	20.3
40-44	29	34.5
45-49	24	28.6
50-60	6	7.1
Total	84	100.0

Table 7: Teaching Experience of Sample

Number of Years	N	%
5-10	15	18.0
11-16	19	22.0
17-22	35	42.0
23-29	15	18.0
Total	84	100.0

Table 8: Mean and Standard Deviation (Teaching Experience)

Mean	Standard Deviation
17.0952	5.8281

4.1.1. (i) Gender

Table 1 indicates that there are a larger number of female educators (77.4%) in the sample compared to male educators (22.6%). The sample which was used in the study appeared to reflect the proportion of female educators to male educators found in primary schools. That is, most of the primary schools in the part of the North West Province where the sample was selected had a larger number of female educators than male educators. It emerged that male educators prefer to work with older children in secondary schools.

4.1.1. (ii) Qualifications

Most of the respondents in the sample had a Diploma (63.1%), a Std 10 (14.2%) and other qualifications (9.5%). Very few had a Degree (6.0%), a Std 8 (4.8%) or a Senior Degree (2.4%) as reflected in table 2. It is evident from the above figures that there are still respondents who have Standard 8 and 10 as their qualifications and the presence of such educators reflects what transpired in the past in the Education Department. People were allowed to enter the teaching field with these qualifications (Std 8 and 10) and the continued existence of such educators shows that the educators have not done much to improve their qualifications.

There is a high number of respondents in the sample who had a diploma (63.1%) as their qualification and this high percentage gives reflection of what is transpiring in the Education Department. A Diploma certificate is currently the minimum requirement for entry in the teaching field. Therefore, this high percentage of educators with a diploma probably reflects that some of the respondents in the sample entered the teaching field recently and some of the educators who entered the teaching field

with very low qualifications might have improved their qualifications through full time or part time studies.

The low percentage of ordinary degree and a senior degree holders shows that educators in the sample who entered the teaching field with the acceptable qualifications did not improve their qualifications further.

4.1.1. (iii) Marital Status

The sample in the study had a representation of respondents across the marital status band but a high representation is in the married status group. That is, 69% of married respondents with few of them single (18.0%), divorced (10.7%) and very few widowed (2.3%).

4.1.1. (iv) Parental Status

The sample is characterized by a majority of respondents who can be expected to have reasonable understanding of children's needs as most of the respondents in the sample have children (94.0%) with a few of the respondents having no children (6.0%).

4.1.1. (v) Home Language

The North West Province is characterized by people of different language groups but mostly dominated by SeTswana speaking people. It is evident from the sample that most of the respondents were SeTswana-speaking (88.1%), with few SeSesotho sa Lebowa (9.5%), IsiZulu (1.2%) and XiTsonga (1.2%) speaking people.

4.1.1. (vi) Age

Different age groups have been represented in the sample, which implies that respondents of all ages do enter the teaching field and continue teaching until retirement age. Both young and old respondents were found in the sample with the minimum age of 25-29 years representing young educators and a maximum age of 50-60 years representing older educators. A majority of respondents in the sample were in the age range of 35-39 (20.3%), 40-44 (34.5%) and 45-49 (28.6%). The average age for most of the respondents in the sample was in the age range of 40-44.

4.1.1. (vii) Number of Years in Teaching

Most respondents in the study had extensive experience in teaching as is reflected in the number of years that educators had taught. Most educators had taught for an average of 17-22 years and the least experienced had five to ten (5-10) years and the most experienced, 23-29 years' experience. The average number of years that most of the respondents in the sample had taught was seventeen (17) years.

4.1.2. Ratings of Respondents' Knowledge on Child Sexual Abuse

Table 9: Respondents' Rating on Child Sexual Abuse

Rating Scale	N	%
Poor	7	8.3
Fairly Good	38	45.2
Good	23	27.4
Very Good	11	13.1
Excellent	3	3.6
Total	82	97.6

Frequencies were calculated to analyze how respondents rated their knowledge of child sexual abuse on a 5-point scale which ranged from poor to excellent. Educators considered themselves as having a fair knowledge on child sexual abuse as the majority of respondents rated their knowledge fairly good and good. Few of the respondents rated their knowledge as poor, implying that most educators did not regard themselves as having little knowledge on sexual abuse of children. Respondents' ratings of their own knowledge on child sexual abuse were expected to correlate with their knowledge score to enable the researcher to measure the extent to which they (educators) knew about child sexual abuse issues.

For those respondents who rated their knowledge as fairly good and good, this was also expected to be reflected in their knowledge scores.

4.1.3. Respondents' Information Sources

Frequencies were calculated to determine the sources from which respondents obtained information on child sexual abuse and the number of cases in each category of the sources of information. That is, the number of respondents who obtained information from newspapers, workshops, television, radio, magazines, internet and friends or colleagues.

Table 10: Sources of Information about Child Sexual Abuse

Sources of information	N	%
Newspapers	64	76.2
Workshops	34	40.5
Television	69	82.1
Radio	57	67.9
Magazine	51	60.7
Friends/Colleagues	33	39.3
Other(internet)	7	8.3

It is evident from Table 10 that information about sexual abuse of children was mostly gathered through news media such as newspapers, magazines, the television and the radio. Few of the respondents in the sample got information from friends/colleagues (39.3%), which may imply that the educators are not communicating a lot with their colleagues/ friends about child sexual abuse issues. A total of 40.5% of the respondents in the sample obtained information about sexual abuse through workshops, which shows that workshops are conducted. However, this percentage might still be reflective of a

possibility of some contributing factors such as the lack of expertise in the field of child sexual abuse on the part of people who conduct workshops. As the study was conducted in rural areas the low percentage of using the internet (8.3%) as a source of information might indicate that educators do not have access to the internet.

4.1.4. Reliability Analysis of Items

A combined scale of various items measuring educators' knowledge on child sexual abuse was constructed with individual items focusing on different contents of the phenomenon of child sexual abuse. Items in the whole scale were related to each other by the rationale of the study. All items were intended to measure the knowledge that educators have regarding child sexual abuse.

To determine if an individual item "hangs together" with the remaining items in the scale, items that correlated low with the scale were removed from the scale and this improved the alpha of the total scale. The alpha for the total scale ($\alpha = .6696$) represents a reasonably good internal consistency for a research instrument (self-constructed) used for the first time. Items 3 -13, 14.1-14.4, 15.1-15.4, 16.1-16.6, 17.1-17.5, 18.1-18.4, 19.1-19.4, 20.1-20.4, 21.1-21.4 were included in the first version of the scale and items 3, 4, 8-11, 14.3, 15.1, 15.3-15.4, 16.2, 16.4, 17.1, 18.1-18.3, 19.3-19.4, 20.2, 20.4 and 21.1 were removed from the scale as a result of their low correlation with the total scale (see a copy of questionnaire attached as Appendix A). The mean score of the sample on the final scale was 22.0 with a standard deviation of 3.61. These scores were used in later parts of the analysis to establish if knowledge level is related to variables such as self-rated knowledge, information sources and gender.

4.1.5. Knowledge Level of Educators on Child Sexual Abuse

4.5.1. (i) Correct/ Incorrect Items

Here we shall refer to items 3 to 11 in the questionnaire. Frequencies were calculated for the knowledge items (items characterized by either right or wrong answers) to determine the number of respondents who obtained individual items right. Responses to individual items have been looked into since the total knowledge score does not give a detailed picture of exactly what respondents know and do not know.

Table 11: Defining Child Sexual Abuse (item 3)

	Frequencies	%
1. Estimated number of children reported to be abused by family member	11	13.1
2. When a child agrees to be involved with the abuser in sexual activity	3	3.6
3. The number of sexual abuse cases arising in a given period, usually a year	7	8.3
*4. When a child is involved in an activity that leads to sexual arousal and gratification of the abuser	52	61.9
5. Involvement of independent, mature person with the abuser in sexual activities they truly understand	6	7.1

* Correct response for item

Table 12: Which type of families experience sexual abuse of children? (item 4)

	Frequencies	%
1. Poor families	31	36.9
2. Rich families	-	-
*3. Both 1 and 2	50	59.5
4. I don't know	2	2.4

Table 13: Which one of the following is not an abuser? (Item 5)

	Frequencies	%
1.Mothers	12	14.3
2. Fathers	1	1.2
3.Uncles	-	-
4.Siblings	13	15.5
5.Aunts	1	1.2
*6.All of the above	56	66.7

Table 14: Which one of the following is never abused? (Item 8)

	Frequencies	%
1. Boys	-	-
2.Girls	1	1.2
*3.Both can be abused	83	98.8

Table 15: Most of the Reported Abusers are (item 9)

	Frequencies	%
1.Females	46	54.7
*2.Males	24	28.6
3.Both males and females	14	16.7

Table 16: Females form a (n)... Percentage of Sexual Abusers (item 10)

	Frequencies	%
*1.Small	32	38.1
2.Large	44	52.4
3.Average	6	7.1
4.They are not abusers at all	2	2.4

Table 11 indicates that most of the respondents (61.9%) managed to choose the right response (response 4) to define what sexual abuse of children is and no one in the sample had an opinion that sexual abuse can be found in rich families (table 12). Some of the respondents in the sample (36.9%) still hold the “myth” that child sexual abuse occurs only in poor families. Respondents in the sample (66.7%) were generally aware that any person, for example, people who are older than victims of abuse can be possible abusers as indicated in table 13. A large number of educators (98.8%) in the sample had knowledge that victims of abuse are not only girls but boys can also be abused. A majority of educators identified females as the most common abusers (table 15). This is contrary to public perceptions and statistical data that most abusers are male, and is therefore a most unexpected finding, which is difficult to account for. One possibility is that, respondents were confused about the meaning of “abuser”, with some understanding it to mean the abused person.

Table 17: At which Stage (developmental) is Sexual Abuse Psychologically Harmful to the Child? (Item 6)

	Frequencies	%
1.Childhood	15	17.9
2.Adolescence	3	3.6
*3. All developmental stages	66	78.6
4. I don't know	-	-

Table 18: The Victim of Sexual Abuse is most Disturbed if the Abuser is a... (Item 7)

	Frequencies	%
1. Strangers	9	1.0
2. Professionals(educators, doctors etc)	13	15.5
3. Family friend	2	2.0
*4. Family member	55	65.5

Respondents in the sample differed with regard to the developmental stages at which they believed sexual abuse is harmful, with the majority (78.6%) indicating that sexual abuse is most harmful at all stages, while some respondents were of the opinion that the abuse is harmful at childhood level (17.9%) and at adolescence (3.6%). These types of responses show that some educators are still not aware that the effect of sexual abuse cannot be considered less harmful at some developmental stages and more harmful in other stages. Educators showed some knowledge of the negative effect of intra-familial abuse since most of them (65.5%) indicated that child sexual abuse would be disturbing if the abuser is within the family. According to the literature on child sexual abuse, parents do not tell their children about who the potential abuser may be as most of them remembered their discussion of sexual abuse revolving around strangers. As a result, sexual abuse will be most shocking to the child if a family member is the perpetrator.

Table 19: The most common technique used by abusers to keep their victims quiet about what happened is... (Item 11)

	Frequencies	%
1. Forcing victims to keep the secret	33	39.3
*2. Threatening and blackmailing victims	40	47.6
3. Assuring victims that their involvement (sexual) with them is acceptable	3	3.6
4. Making victims feel guilty about what happened	5	6.0

Table 19 shows that an average number of respondents (47.6%) managed to identify correctly the tactic that is commonly used by abusers to get their victims to agree in participating in the sexual act.

Blackmail has to do with promises of good things if children conform and threats of bad things if they resist and abusers find it easy to use blackmail to get children to participate in the sexual act. Some respondents in the sample (39.3%) were of the opinion that victims of abuse are forced to participate in the sexual act. According to the literature review, child sexual abuse does not need to involve violence or coercion but seduction and enticement are the main means used by the adult to achieve control over the child.

4.1.5. (ii) True or False Items (items 14-21 in the questionnaire)

Table 20: Percentages (%) of Respondents who Identified Statement Correctly

Question Number		% correctly identified
14.1-14.3	16.1	90%
15.1	16.6	
	21.1	
14.4	17.5	80%
15.3	19.1-19.3	
16.2-16.3	20.3	
16.5	21.1	
20.1	18.2	70%
19.4	17.2	
18.4	15.2	
17.4		50%
21.4		
15.4	18.3	40%
17.3	20.4	
18.1		
21.3		30%
20.2		
17.1		20%
16.4		10%

Frequencies were also computed to determine the number of respondents who managed to identify individual statements correctly as either true or false. Respondents' ability to identify statements

correctly would reflect the extent to which they (educators) knew about child sexual abuse issues (see a copy of questionnaire attached as Appendix A).

Few statements in the true or false category were not identified correctly by respondents, but the majority of the statements were correctly identified by most of the respondents in the sample. Most of the respondents in the sample found items 14.1-14.4; 15.1-15.3; 16.1-16.3; 16.5-16.6; 17.2; 17.5; 18.2; 18.4; 19.1-19.4; 20.1; 20.3; and 21.1-21.2 easy to identify correctly. Items 15.4; 17.3 -17.4; 18.1; 18.3; 20.2; 20.4; 21.3-21.4 were on average identified correctly by respondents and a majority of the respondents in the sample found items 16.4 and 17.1 difficult to identify correctly. Educators demonstrated a lot of knowledge in the true or false items on issues that had to deal with factors that contribute towards a high rate of secrecy of sexual abuse in families and factors that impede voluntary reporting of abuse cases. The educators' ability to identify statements correctly reflects the extent to which they know about the issues that were raised in individual items.

4.1.5. (iii) Opinion Items (Items 12 and 13 in the questionnaire)

Frequencies were calculated for opinion items to determine the number of cases reporting in each category where respondents gave their opinions on the issues concerning child sexual abuse.

Table 21: Who Should Educate Children about Sexual Abuse (Item 12)?

	Frequencies	%
Educator	690	82.1
Parent	68	81.0
Friends	17	20.2
Expert	38	45.2
Any adult	40	47.6

Respondents in the sample felt that the education of children about sexual abuse should be the responsibility of both educators (82.1%) and parents (81.0%). Educators devote a great deal of time

and energy to promote links between the home and school. In many instances there has been an increasing effort to develop an educational system that forges a three-way partnership between the school, parents and pupils. Therefore, the opinion of having both parents and educators working together to prevent children from sexual abuse can be traced back to the kind of relationship that exists between educators and parents of children they teach. Educators might also have considered working with parents to combat sexual abuse of children as a result of the time that the child spends at home and at school.

However, a number of respondents in the sample were of the opinion that the education of children about sexual abuse is not their responsibility and as a result, they relegated such responsibility to friends (20.2%), experts (45.2%) and any adult (47.6%). The attribution of responsibility to experts in educating children about sexual abuse issues might be an indication that educators perceive themselves as less skilled and trained. The other possibility of attributing responsibility to friends and any other adult might be that some educators consider discussion of sexual topics as taboo.

Table 22: Who other than parents should first address education about sexual abuse of children (Item 13)?

	Frequencies	%
Clinics	14	16.7
Schools	35	41.7
Child Protection Unit	30	35.7
Child psychologist	2	2.4
Total	81	96.4

Respondents in the sample were of the opinion that the school (41.7%) and Child Protection Unit (35.7%) should be the first to address education about sexual abuse of children. The opinion of having a high percentage of respondents (educators) feeling the responsibility to educate, might be as a result of considering that most of the education of children takes place at school level and considering the fact that children spend most of their time at school. The Child Protection Unit is also considered

responsible for educating potential victims of sexual abuse considering the fact that there are a lot of experts involved within this unit who can also assure that the victim receive maximum protection from the perpetrator.

4.1.6. Relationship between Variables

4.6.1. (i) Respondents' Ratings of their Knowledge

A Pearson correlation was computed to see if any relationship exists between the respondents' ratings of their knowledge on a 5-point scale (poor, fairly good, good, very good and excellent) and the total score respondents obtained from the knowledge items. That is, is the way in which respondents rated their knowledge reflected in their knowledge score?

Table 23: Respondents' Ratings of Knowledge on Child Sexual Abuse Issues

r (x;y)	0.215
n	60
p value	0.050
significance level	0.05

The correlation between respondents' ratings of their knowledge on child sexual abuse issues and their knowledge scores was found to be statistically significant. The value of "r" is .215, which is a weak correlation as the value is not close to a correlation of +1.00 (perfect positive correlation). The "p" value is 0.050, which implies that the correlation is statistically significant but the correlation remains a weak one ($r = .215$; $p = 0.050$).

Although statistically significant, the relatively low correlation between these variables implies that educators were unable to accurately judge their level of knowledge about child sexual abuse issues. It is expected that if respondents rated their knowledge as poor for example, their knowledge scores should also be low to indicate that they know little or nothing about the issue of sexual abuse. The same applies to respondents who rated their knowledge as very good or excellent. Their knowledge scores are expected to be very high compared to those who rated their knowledge as poor, fairly good or good.

4.1.6. (ii) Age and Knowledge Correlation

Table 24: Relationship between respondents' age and their knowledge score on child sexual abuse issues

r (x:y)	-0.155
N	61
p value	0.232
significance level	0.05

A Pearson correlation was computed to determine if there is any relationship between respondents' age and their score on knowledge items. That is, whether there was a difference of scores between young and older respondents.

A negative correlation between age and knowledge scores implies that an increase in one variable (age) was associated with a decrease in the other variable (knowledge score). The value of $r = -.155$ is considered a negative and weak correlation. The p-value is .232, which means that the correlation is not statistically significant. Age and respondents' knowledge scores are not statistically significantly correlated ($r = -.155$; $p = .232$). The lack of correlation between these variables signifies that respondents' knowledge scores on items were not related to their age.

4.1.6. (iii) Qualifications and Knowledge Correlation

Table 25: Relationship between respondents' qualifications and their knowledge scores on child sexual abuse issues

r (x;y)	0.21
n	55
p value	0.615
significance level	0.05

N.B. The sample size is slightly smaller in this case as respondents who indicated their level of qualification as “other” were excluded.

A Pearson correlation was computed to determine if there was any relationship between respondents' qualifications and their knowledge scores. That is, whether educators' knowledge scores were determined by the qualification they had.

The value of $r = .210$ is considered a very weak correlation. The p-value is .615 which implies that the correlation is not statistically significant. Therefore, qualifications and knowledge scores are not statistically significantly correlated ($r = .210$ $p = .615$). This lack of correlation between variables signifies that the knowledge of respondents regarding issues on sexual abuse of children was not determined by respondents' qualifications. This implies that there was no difference of scores where respondents of higher qualifications scored higher than the respondents of low qualification.

4.1.7. Differences in Knowledge between Males and Females

A t-test was computed for the variable gender to determine if male and female respondents scored differently on knowledge items. The significance level of .05 was compared with the p-value of the relevant test. If the p-value was more than the significance level, then the means of the two groups are not statistically significantly different and the results would be statistically significantly different if $p < .05$.

Table 26: Knowledge scores of respondents (male and female) on knowledge items

	Assuming Equal Variance	Assuming Unequal Variance
t	- .118	- .111
p	0.907	.912
df	59	23.882

Gender	N	Mean
1.00 (M)	16	22.875
2.00 (F)	45	23

Testing for equality of variance: Levene's test = .200 p= .656

Levene's test for equality of variance is not significant, therefore the variances of the two groups are equal and the t-value for when the equal variances are assumed (-.118) can be used. The two groups are not statistically significantly different in their mean scores on gender ($t = -.118$; $df = 59$; $p = .907$). Educators had considerable knowledge on child sexual abuse issues which was obtained mainly from television, radio, newspapers, magazines, friends/colleagues, workshops and the internet, but their knowledge level did not differ as a result of gender (male and female). Male educators did not obtain a higher score on knowledge items than female educators or vice versa.

4.1.8. Differences in Knowledge Depending on Sources of Information

Table 27: Knowledge Differences on Sources of Information

Sources of information	t-value	p-value	df	Mean for the group that obtained information from the source	Mean for the group that did not obtain information from the source
Newspapers	-0.23	0.819	59	23	22.7
Workshops/ Lectures	-0.061	0.952	59	23	22.9
Television	-1.217	0.228	59	23.2	21.7
Friends/ Colleagues	-2.35	0.022	59	24.4	22.2

Radio	-0.032	0.975	59	22.9	22.9
Magazine	-2.23	0.03	59	23.8	21.8
Other(Internet)	0.235	0.815	59	23	23

Knowledge scores of people who got information from television, newspapers, radio, other (internet) and workshops/lecturers were not statistically significantly different from those who did not. Only knowledge scores of respondents who obtained information from friends/colleagues and magazines were different from the scores of respondents who did not obtain information from these sources of information. Therefore only two sources of information about sexual abuse of children are discussed below namely, friends/colleagues and magazines.

4.1.8. (i) Obtaining Information from Friends/Colleagues

Table 28: Friend/Colleagues as Source of Information

	Assuming Equal Variances	Assuming Unequal Variances
t	-2.35	-2.482
p	0.022	0.016
df	59	51.016

	N	Mean
0 (information not obtained from friends)	39	22.1795
1 (information obtained from friends)	22	24.3636

Test for equality of variance: Levene's test = 1.893; p= .174

Levene's test for equality of variance is not significant, therefore the variances of the two groups are equal and the t-value for when equal variances are assumed (-2.350) can be used. The two groups are statistically significantly different in terms of their mean scores on obtaining information about child sexual abuse from friends or colleagues ($t = -2.350$; $df = 59$; $p = .002$). This implies that, people who obtained information from friends/colleagues about sexual abuse of children on average got higher knowledge scores than those who did not. Higher knowledge scores of respondents who obtained information from friends/ colleagues on sexual abuse shows that there is some form of communication that is going on among educators and they do obtain correct information on sexual abuse issues.

4.1.8. (ii) Obtaining Information from Magazines

Table 29: Magazines as Source of Information

	Assuming Equal Variances	Assuming Unequal Variances
t	-2.23	-2.23
p	0.03	0.03
df	59	-2.0209

	N	Mean
0 (information not obtained from magazines)	26	21.8077
1 (information from magazines)	35	23.8286

Test for equality of variance: Levene's test = .003; $p = .960$

Levene's test for equality of variance is not significant, therefore the variances of the two groups are equal and the t-value for when equal variances are assumed (-2.230) can be used. The two groups are statistically significantly different in their mean scores on obtaining information about sexual abuse of children from magazines. This implies that people who obtained information from magazines on average got higher knowledge scores than those who did not.

4.1.9. Conclusions on Quantitative Results

There was a low correlation between educators' knowledge scores and their self-rating scale on sexual abuse issues and this low correlation implies that educators were unable to accurately judge their level of knowledge on child sexual abuse issues. It is evident from the above results that television, the radio, newspapers and magazines were the main sources of information used by educators in the sample to obtain information on sexual abuse issues. Since the study was conducted in the rural areas, the low percentage of educators who obtained information through the internet might indicate that the respondents did not have access to such a facility. The above results also show that educators' knowledge scores were not affected by their age, gender or qualifications. Implicitly, there was no difference of scores on items of the questionnaire as a result of educators' age, gender and qualifications.

4.1.10. Analysis of Qualitative Results

Qualitative research involves information in the form of words giving in-depth understanding of the nature of what people experience. Therefore, in the following discussion, analysis will be largely presented in words and no quantitative indices will be given.

Qualitative results were obtained from the second part of the questionnaire (Section B) where respondents were required to answer open questions on issues regarding sexual abuse of children. The aim of analyzing qualitative responses was to evaluate what educators know about sexual abuse of children, to assess the opinion that educators have regarding the causes of child sexual abuse, and to assess what they think could be done to prevent children from abuse. Through analysis of open questions, the researcher aimed at evaluating if educators felt responsible to protect victims of abuse.

4.1.10. (i) Central Themes

4.1.10. i (a) Inexperienced Educators about Sexual Abuse Cases

A small proportion of educators in the sample indicated that they have not been exposed to abuse cases in their schools as a result they are unable to identify cases of sexual abuse. Educators indicated that their ability to identify sexual abuse cases depended on whether or not the case had been reported by parents. Most of the educators indicated that they were not skilled in the area of child sexual abuse because they had not been trained. They therefore, felt the need for them to attend workshops in order to learn how to deal with sexually abused children.

Some educators indicated that they were unable to recognise behavioural signs in sexually abused children. In one case, the educator had a sexually abused child in her classroom who used to behave very oddly, crying every time she spoke to her, but she could not identify the child because the case had not been reported to her by parents. The educator only came to understand the child's odd behaviour when the child's parents came to school to report the abuse.

4.1.10. i (b) Experienced Educators about Sexual Abuse Cases

A proportion of educators in the sample indicated that they had direct exposure to sexually abused children in their schools and eighteen (18) abuse cases were dealt with where survivors were identified through a change in school performance and attitudes. An indication of having skills has been made by these educators because sex education is part of the curriculum in subjects such as life skills and life orientation. Skills in these subjects were received in the form of training through workshops.

In one particular case the survivor of sexual abuse was approached and through the questions that were asked, the survivor confirmed that the abuse had taken place. The perpetrator was approached and he admitted to having committed the crime. The case was then reported by the educator to the police, social workers, the Child Protection Unit and the perpetrator was jailed. The survivor was taken for medical examination and counselling. Eventually she was removed from her home. The case was further taken to court but the educator and the child lost the case because the mother of the survivor withdrew charges during investigations as a result of being threatened by the father.

Educators in this category seem to have some inappropriate knowledge of dealing with survivors of sexual abuse. A decline in school performance might not be the only indication of sexual abuse, but there are many other contributing factors affecting the child's performance such as loss of interest in school work or laziness. There is a need for educators to have a good understanding of behavioural

signs that can be noticed in survivors of sexual abuse. Even though educators indicated having skills in dealing with survivors of sexual abuse, confronting survivors to confess the abuse was a very inappropriate response to be used by a person who regarded him/herself as skilled.

4.1.10. (ii) Problems of Dealing with Sexually Abused Children

4.1.10. ii (a) Communication

Educators explained their inability to deal with survivors of abuse because survivors do not talk and respond to questions when asked about the abuse. The major problem that educators encountered was false reports that were given by survivors of abuse regarding what happened.

One educator wrote: "Children tend to hide the story of sexual abuse. If one suspects such a case, they tell lies fearing the abuser."

Another educator was of the opinion that: "Victims pretend as if nothing happened, they may choose not to tell the truth."

Parents are not willing to co-operate and they are reluctant to come forward with information because they want to protect the abuser. According to educators, some of the survivors they encountered refused to give information because they had been threatened. "In other cases the child may fear to tell because an abuser had threatened him/her". In some abuse cases, survivors of abuse withdrew their statements during investigations.

Educators were of the opinion that failure on the part of survivors to communicate about the abuse was as a result of being shy to talk freely with educators. Educators felt that they also had a share in making communication impossible as a result of spending less time with children due to overcrowding. Educators felt a real need to develop a better way of communicating with survivors by approaching them to talk about the abuse. Interesting solutions regarding communication problems experienced with survivors were given and educators acknowledged their role to ensure that survivors talk about the abuse. According to educators, similar stories on sexual abuse can be related to the survivor to open communication. The survivor can be encouraged to talk by asking him/her open-ended questions about the family and personal life to probe for the truth.

According to educators, one other way to encourage communication with survivors would be to give creative work to the survivor to write about their families. What the child wrote would enable the educator to detect if there is anything wrong in the child's life. Educators emphasized the need to assure the survivor of confidentiality, protection from the abuser and that the abuse is not her fault. A small proportion of educators felt it appropriate that an expert would be the relevant person to handle sexual abuse cases. Therefore, the survivor would be referred to an expert who may either be a nurse or social worker to talk to.

From the above perceptions, the majority of educators acknowledged the important role that they have to play to ensure that survivors are supported during disclosure of abuse cases. "I spend less time with children not talking too much about sexual abuse issues" Few of the other respondents were of the opinion that sexual abuse of children is not their responsibility, but should be referred to experts. "I would advise the child to go to the social worker, clinic and report the matter to the relevant authority for example, the police and child protection unit". Some educators indicated the need to improve their skills through training by experts to enable them to handle communication problems with survivors of sexual abuse.

4.1.10. ii (b) Secrecy in the Family

Most of the educators in the sample showed a deeper knowledge of related issues that contribute toward the secrecy behind sexual abuse of children within the family. Educators expressed their responses to issues raised in the questionnaire with appropriate words (such as avoiding family breakdown, the family being financially dependent on the abuser, women wanting to save their marriages etc.). This showed that they really understood what they were talking about. According to educators, sexual abuse of children within the family is kept a secret because the family wants to maintain the dignity of the family by avoiding bad reputation.

One educator wrote: "We black people respect our marriages rather than our children. We pretend even if we are not satisfied with something because we are afraid of what the other community members will say about the family "batho ba tla reng"("What will the people say").

As a result, the abuse is denied and the survivor is blamed for what happened. In some cases the family accuses the child by saying that s/he enjoyed it. Educators are of the opinion that the abuse is

kept a secret in the family when the abuser is known to the family and is a blood relative of the abused. They contend that the abuser may be the father who is a breadwinner. Because the family is so heavily dependent on him there is great reluctance to expose the abuser.

Educators indicate that the survivor might also fear to tell about being abused because she thinks no one will believe her and may also be feeling guilty about what happened. As a result of fearing punishment and being threatened to keep the secret, the survivor is unable to report. In some cases of abuse survivors are bribed by abusers to keep the secret. An indication was also made by educators that, in some families, abuse is kept a secret to avoid family breakdown; women protect abusers in a bid to save their marriages: "Women fear broken marriages especially when it has lost the spark and the wife is holistically dependent on the perpetrator."

Culturally, discussing sex topics with children is taboo in the family. This was also seen by educators as a contributing factor toward keeping the abuse a secret. "To talk about private parts is taboo in our tradition".

4.1.10. (iii) Legal Action against Abusers

Educators emphasized the importance of teaching children to report abuse. "A child may experience sexual abuse for a long time thinking that it is a normal thing therefore, they need to be taught to report so that they can get immediate help to stop the abuser from continuing his/her dirty work". Most educators believed that survivors of abuse can learn to break the silence and avoid being abused by reporting the abuse, but evidence is very important to have before one can consider reporting the case.

Educators indicated that they have problems reporting the case when the abuse occurred outside the school premises and the parents did not report the case. Educators indicated that the best approach would be to confront the abuser and seek evidence before reporting the case. To strengthen the case, information can also be obtained from the survivors of sexual abuse and their parents about what happened. Educators acknowledged their role in taking action against the abuser and protecting children from further abuse by exposing the abuser to the Police/Child Protection Unit and ensuring that the abuser is arrested.

According to educators, evidence can be obtained through the medical examination of the survivor and asking for a medical report either from the clinic or doctor. It is evident from the above report that educators fear the legal implications of reporting without having proof that abuse occurred. Educators are not aware that they can even report when they suspect that the child is sexually abused. Educators fear negative consequences that reporting of abuse might have on the family if such abuse did not actually happen. The survivor of abuse can also be removed or distanced from home to protect her from the abuser.

4.1.10(iv). Relationship between Perpetrator and Survivor

Educators indicated that in most of the sexual abuse cases they experienced, the survivor and the offender knew each other. The perpetrator was an uncle, a stepfather or a father who was unemployed; one educator related a case where "the child was abused by the father at night when her mother was working night shifts". According to educators, the offender often used a relationship of trust and authority to achieve his goal. Most of the survivors were girls and in one case, the survivor was a mentally retarded girl. One educator reported:

"Yes, a fourteen year old mentally retarded girl was continuously abused by her step-father."

The offender counted on threats, rewards and the young age of the victim to keep the secret. Victims were given money and in one case, the victim was given 20c by her uncle to keep the secret:

"The survivor had to pass every day through her uncle's house who would take her and give her 20c to sexually abuse her."

"In another case, grade three and a grade four pupils (sisters) were abused by their uncle who also used to give them 20c and told them not to tell anyone."

Educators were of the opinion that sometimes survivors tried to withhold information about being abused because they felt ashamed to reveal the secret. In some instance survivors were not identified and some were not believed when they report of being abused.

4.1.10. (v) "Enjoying their Virginity"

Problems in sexual life, for example, sexual dissatisfaction with partners was seen by educators as the most important contributing factor for men to sexually abuse children. Such men fear challenge from older women and are unable to form sexual relationships with adults or are sexually rejected by adults, educators hypothesized. As a result of their need for affection and failure to control their sexual desires, sexual offenders resort to children for their sexual satisfaction. Educators indicated that there are certain attributes of survivors which attract sexual offenders to abuse them sexually. Older men use younger children for their sexual satisfaction because they find children pliable due to age, innocence and defencelessness. Older men according to educators, find it easy to get what they want from children because the latter are susceptible to bribery. They also prefer children because “they enjoy their virginity” and children are seen by these offenders to be free from sexually transmitted diseases. Educators contend that, children “can be trusted with keeping secrets, they are seen as less demanding (financially) and available all the time”. Older men prefer children for their sexual satisfaction because they are “sexually attractive and active” or competent as compared to the men’s (older) partners.

4.1.10. (vi) Educating Children in Self-Protection

Educators felt that through education on sexual abuse, the high rate of abuse and unwanted pregnancies can be reduced and children can be protected from further abuse. According to educators, it is important to teach and encourage children to report any abuse to trusted adults so that they can get immediate help and medical attention, and be protected from sexually transmitted diseases. Educators were of the opinion that, through education, children can learn to speak openly to their parents encouraging them to expose the abuser. Educators indicated that, through educating, children can be made aware and warned about the possibility of being abused. Children can be taught abusive acts and the tricks used by abusers to lure them into participating in sexual acts.

One educator wrote: “Children should be taught to say ‘No’ and when ‘No’ is not taken as an answer, they should report immediately. If somebody touches you and you feel uncomfortable say ‘No’ loudly.”

Educators emphasized the importance of equipping children with protective measures that they can use against abusers to avoid victimization. According to educators, information about sex issues and protective measures against abusers is also relevant in the education of children to equip them with

enough knowledge. Children must be taught that it is their right to refuse any sexual advances and touch by an adult that make them feel uncomfortable.

Children need to be made aware of the tactics that abusers use and to avoid situations that might lead to abuse. Children need to be taught to avoid taking money, sweets or accepting lifts and open doors for strangers. They (children) should be encouraged to report immediately and not to keep secrets when they feel sexually abused. Educators were of the opinion that children should be taught to avoid strangers, unsafe places, and refuse gifts and lifts from people they do not know. Emphasis on teaching children to avoid strangers was one of the most discussed comments. It is interesting to note that there are people who still believe that perpetrators of sexual abuse are strangers. This notion is also confirmed by the literature review that parents' discussion of sexual abuse with children revolved around strangers. Educators indicated that children should be taught appropriate names for different parts of the body to equip them with the correct vocabulary when they report.

4.1.10. (vii) Educating about Child Sexual Abuse - Home/ School?

Educators in the sample differed with regard to who should educate children about sexual abuse. Some of the educators in the sample were of the opinion that children should receive education about sexual abuse both at home and school, while others felt that children should be educated by the school only.

4.1.10. vii (a) Parents' Involvement

Educators emphasized the importance of involving parents in the education of their children on sexual abuse matters because the parents spent most of the time with their children. Parents were considered to be at the receiving end when abuse happens since they have to deal with the survivor after being abused:

"Parents lay the foundation about sex education and we educators consolidate what the child already knows to make teaching and learning more meaningful".

By being involved with their children, parents will become aware of, read signs and know when the child is abused. Therefore, if parents are able to identify signs of abuse, they can be in a position to stop the abuse immediately and take the necessary steps to prevent the child from further abuse.

Educators considered involvement of parents in the education of their children as a way of increasing the parents' knowledge and encouraging communication with their children, especially survivors of abuse. Parents were seen as the primary educators of their children who can bring more awareness to children about the possibility of being abused and have to assist educators in teaching children about sexual abuse.

4.1.10. vii (b) Home Only

A small proportion of educators in the sample indicated that parents should educate children about sexual abuse at home since they (parents) have more knowledge of their children. Several advantages such as the kind of relationship and continued contact that exists between parents and their children were considered as some possibilities that could enable parents to achieve this goal. For example, "children are freer to talk to their parents than they are to educators". Educators considered parents as being capable of bringing more awareness to their children about abusive acts in order to stop the abuser from continuing the abuse. Educators indicated a need for approval to talk to children about sex issues as most parents considered it unacceptable and immoral to do so. One opinion was:

"Some parents are still culture-bound and they believe that their children are still young to be taught such nonsense. They believe teachers are encouraging their children to sleep around".

This comment is confirmed in the literature review by Nelson and Clark (1986) that educators are concerned about the reaction of parents to sexual abuse programmes in the classroom.

4.1.10. Vii(c) Both Home and School

Educators seem to have considered the kind of relationship that already exists between them and the parents of children they are teaching as well as the time that the child spends at home and at school. In their opinion therefore, the child can acquire more information and knowledge if education about sexual abuse is a joint effort of both the school and the home.

Educators were of the opinion that children should be taught about sexual abuse issues at home and school because abuse happens everywhere. "Abuse sometimes occurs at schools done by educators or some students", one educator stated. In this case, the survivor will be in a position to report either

to the parent or the educator. According to educators, parents are not open to their children about sex topics. ("Parents can't call a spade a spade, they are secretive") and do not have sufficient knowledge and detailed facts about sexual abuse issues. Therefore, if education about sexual abuse is done at both places, this will convey a clear message to the child and enhance a better understanding and seriousness of the issue. Information that the child receives from home will be reinforced at school to enhance meaningful learning.

4.1.10. vii (d) School Only

Considering the fact that most learning takes place at school, educators regarded the school as the relevant place and source of information where children can be taught sexual abuse issues. At school the survivor has a wide choice of who to speak to if s/he feels sexually abused. Educators regarded themselves as having more in depth information and better equipped than parents to talk to children about sex issues. According to educators, parents are not clear about certain issues of sexual abuse as a result of lack of information. The opinion is that, "Some parents are shy and illiterate and they will be unable to teach children the correct thing."

Educators considered the school to be the most appropriate place for children who stay alone at home to learn about abuse since education about sexual abuse at school would be the only opportunity for these children to learn. Children stand a better chance to be taught about sex education at school because topics on sex issues at home are culturally not permissible. "It is easier at school since sex issues are dealt within subjects such as life skill and life orientation", one teacher explained. Educators considered the school as the ideal place where information on sexual abuse of children can be obtained because experts such as Nurses, the Police and the Child Protection Unit visit schools to address such matters. The school, according to these educators, is the relevant place when the abuser is a family member because s/he can be exposed by the educator without fearing threats and deprivation.

4.1.10. (viii) "Myths"

Issues that indicate the common idea held by many sexual abusers throughout the world were raised by educators in this theme. For instance, there is a misconception that sleeping with children or virgins will cure from HIV/Aids: "This common "myth" is perceived to be responsible for the high rate of sexual

abuse of children in many communities. Educators felt that older men who abuse children believe that children are pure and free from sickness. According to educators, older men believe that having sex with children will revive their feelings and keep them young forever and reduce their blood pressure.

One educator wrote: "Sexual abusers believe that sleeping with children reduces their high blood pressure and makes them feel young, active and to regain their strength."

4.1.11. Conclusion

In this chapter, both the quantitative and qualitative results that were obtained in the study were presented. Quantitative results were shown in table form with a breakdown of sample composition to provide the reader with the profile of the respondents in the sample. Furthermore, variables of interest in the study were correlated to determine if there was any relationship that might have accounted for differences between the variables being studied. There was no correlation of educators' knowledge scores and their ratings on a 5-point scale. This shows that educators were unable to accurately judge their level of knowledge about child sexual abuse issues. There was no difference in the educators' knowledge scores as a result of their age, gender and qualification. It is evident from quantitative results that the majority of educators in the sample obtained information about child sexual abuse from the television, the radio, newspapers and magazines. Because the study was conducted in rural areas, only a small percentage of educators in the sample obtained information from the internet, which shows that the majority of educators do not have access to the internet.

On average, educators in the sample had a fair knowledge of child sexual abuse as this was also evident in their ability to identify statements as either true or false in the questionnaire. A further analysis of qualitative results has been presented to qualify findings on quantitative results. The researcher was able to identify areas where educators were lacking knowledge through their responses when educators failed to use appropriate words to express their opinion. Experiences reported by educators in the study were conceptually grouped into central themes and detailed account of educators' opinions regarding various issues which were raised in different questions was given for each theme. Quantitative and qualitative results have been presented in sequence to allow the reader to follow some relationships that exist between quantitative and qualitative results.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, SHORTCOMINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

Educators experience difficulties in identifying and dealing with sexually abused children in schools. Most survivors of sexual abuse are found within the school setting and educators are the first to notice when something is wrong with the child. Therefore, there is a need to investigate if educators are informed about child sexual abuse during their training at tertiary level. This study was undertaken to determine the extent to which educators know about sexual abuse and how to identify and deal with sexually abused children.

In the previous chapter, findings from the literature review as well as empirical investigations were presented. Final conclusions regarding the knowledge that educators possess in dealing with sexually abused children, contributions and limitations of this study are also presented. Furthermore, other issues that have arisen from this study as possible issues for future research are highlighted.

5.1.1. Main Findings of the Study

Educators inaccurately judged their knowledge level on child sexual abuse, but they did possess excellent knowledge, especially on issues that dealt with the causes of sexual abuse, techniques used by perpetrators, factors that contribute towards the secrecy of abuse in families and factors that impede voluntary reporting of abuse cases. There is also an indication from the results of the study that even though educators had knowledge of child sexual abuse, they experienced problems, especially with identifying and dealing with sexually abused children.

5.2. Key Findings from the Literature Review

The school system is an area in which sexually abused children spend a large proportion of their time, and therefore educators potentially represent a very useful resource in discovering and preventing the sexual abuse of children. Teachers are trained to observe changes in the appearance and progress of individual children but they are not sufficiently trained in the detection and referral of abuse, particularly sexual abuse.

Studies indicate that the involvement of educators in sexual abuse cases has been limited and little has been done to educate teachers to identify report and prevent child sexual abuse. The limited involvement of educators in cases of sexual abuse is due to their lack of training in this area.

Educators have limited power in decision making once the case of suspected abuse has been referred for investigation. There is scarcity of literature on how child sexual abuse should be identified and reported by schools and what unique role the school should play in the management of child sexual abuse. As a result of their knowledge deficiencies in child sexual abuse, educators do not perceive themselves qualified to deal with such matters. They tend to leave the responsibility for sexually abused children to child welfare professionals.

There is evidence in the literature survey that educators experience difficulties in handling cases of sexually abused children as a result of poor communication and cultural barriers that exist between themselves, parents and children on sexual abuse topics. Discussion on sexual abuse with children revolved mostly on strangers. It emerged that children are not made aware of family members and friends as possible abusers.

According to the literature review, sexual abuse cases can be managed better within the school because there is continued contact between educators and children. Educators can structure training to meet children's special needs, incorporate training into the regular curriculum and review material regularly to ensure that children retain the information. Educators can also play an important role in helping an abused child adjust to life after disclosure.

5.3. Key Findings of the Empirical Study

There were no significant correlations between age, gender, qualification and knowledge scores of respondents. Knowledge was the same for all respondents irrespective of age, gender and qualifications.

There was no correlation between the educators' knowledge scores and their self-ratings on a 5-point scale, implying that educators inaccurately judged their knowledge level on child sexual abuse. Even though some educators thought that they did not have enough knowledge on child sexual abuse, this was not the case because a majority of them managed to respond appropriately to most of the items in the questionnaire (closed and open-questions). But, having knowledge of child sexual abuse does

not imply that educators are able to identify and deal with cases of sexual abuse. This is evident from educators' responses (qualitative) where they indicated that they are unable to deal with sexually abused children as a result of insufficient skills and training they have on child sexual abuse. The educators' knowledge level of sexual abuse of children might just be an indication of their awareness of information obtained from various sources of information like the television, the radio, newspapers, magazines, friends/colleagues, workshops and the internet.

Most of the respondents in the sample obtained information on child sexual abuse through the television, the radio, newspapers and magazines. The percentage of respondents who obtained information through workshops/lecturers and friends/colleagues was lower than the percentage of other sources of information. A small percentage of respondents in the sample obtained information through the internet.

The majority of educators in the sample had knowledge about child sexual abuse, but some of the respondents indicated that they were unable to identify and deal with cases of sexual abuse because they had never dealt with survivors of abuse directly. A small proportion of educators (25%) in the sample were of the opinion that education of children about sexual abuse is not their responsibility and such responsibility was passed on to experts such as social workers, nurses and the child protection unit. Some of the respondents in the sample still hold to the idea that sexual abuse is committed by strangers with little indication of family members and friends as possible abusers.

Educators in the sample indicated that their inability to handle abuse cases is due to the lack of skills and training in this area. Due to their lack of expertise in dealing with sexual abuse, educators in the sample were of the opinion that they should attend workshops and receive training to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills which will enable them to handle abuse cases.

5.4. Integration of Literature and Empirical Findings

The results of this study reflected the high rate at which children are sexually abused and consequently, the victims of sexual abuse are young children. As a result of the limited and poorly equipped resources in these schools, most educators in the sample acknowledged the role that they have to play to prevent children from being sexually abused. Educators in the sample possessed a considerable knowledge on child sexual abuse and the opinions that they gave regarding issues which were raised in open-questions of the study also reflected this knowledge. Regardless of the knowledge that educators had, results of the study show that they experience problems in handling and dealing

with sexually abused children. It is evident from the literature and empirical findings that difficulties experienced by the consulted educators in dealing with sexually abused children was due to their limited power as they are not given immediate responsibility to handle abuse cases. Educators of all ages, gender and qualification in the sample indicated that they were not sufficiently trained in the area of sexual abuse and as a result, they lacked skills which would enable them to handle sexual abuse cases.

Educators are not given the opportunity to deal with and to handle cases of abuse on their own. They have to rely on the expertise of other people for example, child welfare professionals. They feel incompetent because they are insufficiently involved and not given immediate responsibility to deal with sexually abused children. That is why some respondents in the sample felt that educating children about sexual abuse was not their responsibility but should rather be referred to experts such as nurses, social workers and Child Protection Units. As a result of some knowledge deficiencies and the absence of proper skills in handling child sexual abuse issues, educators in the sample indicated that there is a need for them to attend workshops in order to improve their skills which will enable them to deal with sexually abused children.

As the literature reflects that child sexual abuse cases can be managed better at school and that educators potentially represent a useful resource, it is imperative for educators to be more involved in dealing with sexual abuse cases at school. Educators should be given immediate responsibility and exposure to sexual abuse cases by dealing directly with survivors of abuse.

5.5. Contribution of this Study

In an attempt to evaluate educators' knowledge on child sexual abuse issues, specifically how to identify and deal with sexually abused children, the following contributions were made:

- Arising out of the application of the questionnaire, the systematically ordered quantitative and qualitative results facilitated the identification of problems which were experienced by educators when they dealt with sexually abused children. That is for items (quantitative) where respondents were unable to respond correctly; such problems were identified through qualitative responses as this was the area where respondents communicated their opinions on

sexual abuse issues. The educators' inability to respond with appropriate words in open questions enabled the researcher to identify their lack of knowledge on the issues.

- the lack of correlation between respondents' knowledge scores and their self-ratings on a 5-point scale was not supported by information obtained from quantitative and qualitative results where educators showed a considerable amount of knowledge on child sexual abuse issues, and
- an indication of the knowledge level of educators on child sexual abuse and the rich information of educators' experiences, opinions and problems experienced in dealing with survivors of sexual abuse in a part of the North West Province.

5.6. Shortcomings of the Study

A first and very important aspect of this study was the fact that the researcher was new to the field of child sexual abuse at the beginning of the investigation. This means that in terms of theory, content and method, the researcher was moving into a totally new field. At first this created a sense of fragmentation. The integration of ideas that is essential in a project such as this only came about at a fairly advanced stage of the study. Regardless of the problems experienced in the study, the researcher managed to come up with useful results which can be utilized on a larger scale.

The construction of the questionnaire was another challenge. As the researcher decided on using a self-constructed questionnaire, this was not an easy task because she was inexperienced in the construction of items. For example, formulating distracters in a way that they agreed with the stem of the question (with no obvious wrong distracters), assessing the reliability and validity of items and ensuring that items are representative of the content domain of the study were all virgin concepts.

Shortcomings of the 5-point scale used to assess educators' ratings of their knowledge level on child sexual abuse were discovered at a very advanced stage of the study --the analysis stage-- and there was no chance to rectify such a shortcoming. The researcher discovered that exclusion of ratings such as very poor and average limited the educators' chances of rating their knowledge level appropriately as they were not given a wider choice on which to base their self-ratings.

As the study was designed with a small sample, the researcher experienced problems in obtaining enough information from the questionnaires as some respondents did not fill in all the questions. Consequently such questionnaires could not be used for the analysis of research results.

Results of the study cannot be generalized as a small sample was used. However, they gave the researcher an indication of the problem areas that need to be addressed concerning knowledge deficiencies of educators on sexual abuse of children.

5.7. Recommendations

5.7.1. Recommendations for Intervention

Based on the poor communication that exists between educators, children, parents and school principals about sexual abuse, there is a need to organize capacity building workshops mainly for educators focusing on improving their knowledge and skills so as to enable them to deal effectively with sexual abuse cases. Workshops should be conducted by experts in the field of child sexual abuse who can train educators on how to identify and deal with sexually abused children. It is important that the content of the workshops be structured in such a way that it meets educators' needs, enabling them to deal with sexually abused children. Therefore, the content of the workshops should address the following issues:

- profile of the abuser. Educators need to be informed about potential abusers (both male and female) and behavioural indicators that they can look out for to identify survivors of sexual abuse;
- appropriate response to sexual abuse disclosure;
- steps to be taken after disclosure, for example, communicating with others such as colleagues Child Protection Services etc. and making the necessary referral to professionals such as psychologists, and
- the right to report suspected cases of abuse.

5.7.2. Recommendations for Further Research

The self-constructed questionnaire used in this study can be utilized and further developed as a diagnostic tool for detecting other contributory factors related to educators' lack of knowledge regarding sexual abuse of children.

As the study was conducted with a small sample, any further in-depth study of educators' knowledge on child sexual abuse with a larger sample would yield valuable information on educators' knowledge of child sexual abuse issues to emphasize the importance of involving educators in dealing with sexual abuse cases at school level.

The results yielded by the questionnaire can be utilized as information that can be used to structure workshops for educators in order to increase their knowledge level on child sexual abuse and develop educational programs for children at school level which will help to equip children with appropriate vocabulary to enable them (children) to report when they are sexually abused.

As it is evident from the results chapter that most of the information about sexual abuse of children was obtained through the media that is radio, television and through reading magazines and newspapers, it is important that these sources be utilised effectively to communicate more information with educators on child sexual abuse issues.

5.8. Conclusion

Results in this study show that sexual abuse of children do occur in schools and some of the abuse cases are not reported to educators or false information about abuse is given by victims .

Responses given by educators in the sample indicate that sexual abuse is denied by most survivors of sexual abuse and there is a lot of secrecy within the family as a result of feeling shame about what happened. Even though educators have been trained to observe changes in the appearance and progress of individual children they are unable to detect sexually abused children as a result of insufficient knowledge and training that they have in identifying and dealing with sexual abuse cases.

Educators in the sample demonstrated knowledge on child sexual abuse issues but they do experience problems in identifying and dealing with sexually abused children. Problems experienced by educators with sexually abused children are due to less involvement and exposure to child sexual abuse cases.

There is a need to spell out clearly what educators' role is in sexual abuse of children. It is evident from both the literature and empirical findings that educators are less-informed, less-skilled and insufficiently trained on child sexual abuse issues during their training (at tertiary level).

Prevention efforts in child sexual abuse within an educational system can be shaped in a three-way system which involves the school, parents and pupils where parents have to be involved in the education of their children on sexual abuse. As educators represent a potential resource to educate children on sexual abuse, there is a need to equip and empower them with knowledge and skills and involve them to the maximum in dealing with abuse cases. Educators have on going contact and opportunity to educate children therefore they need to be well informed and involved in the prevention of sexually abused children.

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02 August 2001

Ms K J Ratlhagane
South African Broadcasting Corporation
P.O. Box 91006
Auckland Park

Madam

APPLICATION: TO USE EDUCATORS AS RESEARCH SUBJECTS

Permission is granted to you to use educators as subjects for research subject to their acceptance. May I, however, give you this information about your sample schools.

SCHOOL

Mmammudu
Mmakuba
Mosetlha
Thipe
Relebogile
Kosea-Moeka
Pholkgolo
Ramoshie

STAFF COMPLEMENT

11 educators
18.....
11.....
16
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17.....
13.....
17.....

I wish you success in your research

CIRCUIT MANAGER
Sekgobela (Mr)

APPENDIX B (PERMISSION LETTER)

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NORTH WEST PROVINCE
TEMBA DISTRICT OFFICE

PRIVATE BAG X 495 HAMMASKRAAL 0400, FAX NO. (012) 717 3316 TEL.
NO. (012) 717 5562/3/4/5

03/07/2001

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Enquiries: J.Z.O Machiu

Permission is hereby granted by the undersigned Circuit Manager (Makapanstad West Circuit) for Ms Kgomotso, J Ratlhagane to visit your schools and do research work for her Master's Degree in your school.

Ms Ratlhagane is a teacher in our circuit at Letlape School and is most well known to the principals and educators in the Lebotloane area.

Kindly give her the necessary co-operation she requires from you and your staff to make it possible for her to complete the research she is pursuing. She will thereafter be an asset to our Circuit and as the old saying goes: "All the things start from the West"

We take this opportunity to wish her well in her studies and that all we hope for is for her to smoke the academic pipe even more to make our circuit the ideal circuit we want it to be.

Thanking you in advance

CIRCUIT MANAGER
Machiu J.Z.O (Mr)