

# **SEXUAL ABUSE OF YOUNG GIRLS BY STEPFATHERS IN THE CASE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA:**

**A CHALLENGE TO PRAXIS OF PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING**

By

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## DECLARATION

I, **Mwansa Claude Kimpinde** (Rev.) hereby declare that this research, which I submit for the degree of master's in Trauma and counselling (Practical Theology) at the University of Pretoria, is my original work, and has not previously been submitted by me to any other University. All sources I used have been indicated and duly acknowledged by means of complete reference.

The title of this thesis is: **SEXUAL ABUSE OF YOUNG GIRLS BY STEPFATHERS IN  
THE CASE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA:  
A CHALLENGE TO PRAXIS OF PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING**

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is entirely dedicated to my late father ISAAC KISIMBA MWABA, my mother ELISABETH KAKUNGU NONDE, my spouse WASINGA MIREILLE KIMPINDE and my Children For their regular contributions, sacrifices and participation in my life. Will be and always a candle that will never be extinguished for generations.

Their constant motivations toward my education, was a bell ringing in my ears every single day to date. I have reached so far because of their love, support, attention and patience to me.

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- I would like to thank my family for their love, support and encouragement. I could have given up many times. But my wife Mireille Kimpinde trusted and believed in me. I confess sometimes I ignored her insistence when I was pressured by deadlines for this work. Yet she love and care for me regardless of all. To my children this for you a measurement and an inspiration.

## ABSTRACT

This research will focus on emotional trauma as a result of sexual abuse of a young girl within a family by a stepfather. This is a great challenge to pastoral caregivers within the context of South Africa in particular in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa; where sexual abuse within the family surroundings has become the norm.

The impact of sexual abuse in young girls is vast and varied. The most commonly experienced impact of sexual abuse is posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The most frequent observation among victims of sexual abuse is that the victimised young girl tend to engage in extreme sexualized behaviour compared to other young girls who are not sexually abused

Since the abuse took place on and in the body; the body becomes the enemy. They carry a great deal of pain and memories. This is evident in Ann's life; where she desperately tries to cope with the pain; which can lead to eating disorders, self-inflicting injuries, inability to have sex, or engaging in sex often, poor body image.

This pastoral care study is an investigation of traumatic effects of sexual abuse of young girls by stepfathers. It seeks to give answers to questions like:

- How does sexual abuse on young girls within a family impact on their lives?
- Does sexual abuse that occurs in the life of a young girl affect the relationship within the family and community?
- How do young girls fall into the sexual abuse trap?
- How traumatically affected are young girls who grew up in a sexually abusive environment?
- Can a male be a therapist for this abused girl?

This study aims to deal with the pain of the survivors of sexual abuse and understand the background of these young girls. And to help survivors of sexual abuse to heal of all the wounds and year of trauma that they went through during their childhood and regain dignity and confidence, again, in life for their future sexual and family life.

The first level of empowerment that this research seeks to achieve is to bring the survivor to accept and forgive the perpetrator in their future lives.

Secondly, to assist the care giver to develop counselling models that would counsel sexual abuse survivors and their families.

And lastly, to help survivors learn to cope and deal with this situation and understand that it is possible to live a positive life after the emotional and traumatic incidences that they had gone through.

This research seeks to create awareness on the traumatic impact that sexual abuse has on the lives of young girls. The findings of this research will help pastoral caregivers, to deal effectively with this issue. This research will further empower young girls who have undergone sexual abuse to restore their dignity and, finally, help them to move from a place of paralysis to a place of being healers.

The author undertakes this research with the assumption that Young girls that are raised within a sexual abusive environment are affected negatively by such experiences. From Ann's experience, the author asserts that young girls are traumatized and may not function properly in the community as a result of this trauma.

The findings of this study will allow the author to establish a pastoral care method which addresses the impact of traumatic and emotional sexual abuse towards young girls who grow up experiencing sexual abuse by stepfathers. And will be empowering pastoral caregivers, who experience such traumatic situations, to be able to help survivors heal from their own trauma and pain and then to become healing and transforming agents to other young girls.

## **KEY TERMS**

**Sexual abuse;**

**Pastoral care;**

**Therapy;**

**Young girls;**

**Stepfathers;**

**Praxis;**

**Counselling;**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	i
Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Abstract .....	iv
Key terms.....	v
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2The impact of sexual abuse on young girls.....	3
1.3Problem statement .....	5
1.4Aims and objectives of the study.....	6
1.5Significance of the study.....	7
1.6Assumptions of the study.....	8
1.7Research gap.....	8
1.8Methodology.....	9
CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH METHOD AND METHODOLOGY.....	12
2.1 Introduction.....	12
2.1.1 Literature study.....	13
2.1.2 Key concept of the research.....	13
2.1.3. Ethical aspects concerning the research.....	13
2.1.4 Voluntary participation.....	14

<b>2.1.5 Detriment to the participants.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2.1.6 Anonymity and confidentiality.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>2.1.7 Contribution to the discipline of practical theology.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.1.7.1 Nature of practical theology.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.1.7.2 Relationship between theory and praxis.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>2.1.7.3. Transformational character.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2.1.7.4 Conclusion.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2.2. Gherkin’s and nick pollard’s approach.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2.3. Design of research .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2.4. Epistemological foundations.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2.5. Qualitative research .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>2.6. Data collection and data analysis.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>2.7. Participants.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>2.8. Ethical considerations.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>2.9. Gherkin’s hermeneutical methodology.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>2.10 conclusion .....</b>	<b>36</b>

<b>CHAP THREE: THE LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>3.1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>3.2. Sexual abuse: definition and experience.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>3.2.1 Definitions of sexual abuse.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>3.2.2 Nature of sexual abusive behaviour.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>3.2.3 Contact sexual abuse.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>3.2.4 Non-contact sexual abuse.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>3.2.5 Sexual exploitation .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>3.2.6 Rape and sexual abuse.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>3.3. Understanding the abuser.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>3.3.1 Biophysical factors.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>3.3.2 Social factors.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>3.3.3 Young girl's victim and experience of sexual abuse .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>3.3.3.1 Effects of sexual abuse.....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>3.3.3.1.1 Sexuality.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>3.3.3.1.2 Identity formation and poor self-esteem.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>34. Western perspective on child sexual abuse.....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>3.4.1. Understanding of child sexual abuse.....</b>	<b>50</b>

3.4.1.1. Myth and reality: the dimensions of child sexual abuse .....	51
3.4.1.2. Definitions.....	52
3.4.1.3. The clinical utility of definitions.....	55
3.4.1.4. Survivors and abusers.....	58
3.4.1.5. Family factors around sexual abuse.....	60
3.4.1.6. The effects of child sexual abuse.....	62
3.4.1.7. Theories concerning child sexual abuse.....	65
3.4.1.8. The sexuality of men .....	67
3.4.1.9. Psychoanalysis and the sexuality of children.....	69
3.4.1.10. Children’s sexual behaviour.....	71
3.5. African approach on child sexual abuse.....	74
3.6. Preliminary conclusion.....	76
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL ABUSE.....</b>	<b>77</b>
4.1. Introduction.....	77
4.2. Definition of trauma.....	77
4.3. Theoretical aspects of trauma in sexual abuse.....	78
4.4. Psychological impairment of child sexual abuse’ survivors.....	81

4.5. Sharing three case studies of sexual abuse experience.....	86
4.6. Impact of sexual abuse on young girls.....	96

**CHAPTER FIVE: SEXUAL ABUSE' NATURE, EFFECTS AND PASTORAL CARE  
THERAPEUTIC METHODS.....102**

5.1. Understanding of nature and effects of sexual abuse.....	102
5.1.1 Definitions.....	102
5.1.2 Ages of the participating parties.....	105
5.1.3 Relationship between participants.....	106
5.1.4 Prevalence of sexual abuse.....	107
5.1.5 Characteristics of sexual abuse.....	109
5.1.6 Father/daughter incestuous sexual abuse.....	110
5.1.7 Uncle/niece incestuous sexual abuse.....	118
5.1.8 Systemic factors.....	120
5.1.9 Parent/ Child.....	121
5.2 Pastoral care Therapeutic methods.....	122
5.2.1 Pastoral care methodology.....	125

<b>5.2.1.1 Creating an environment of security and trust within the Methodist church of southern Africa for young girls survivors of sexual abuse.....</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>5.2.1.2 Offering education and awareness regarding sexual abuse of young Girls by stepfathers.....</b>	<b>128</b>
<b>5.2.1.3 Destigmatisation of sexual abuse of young girls.....</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>5.2.1.4 Establishment of centres of healing on both survivors and their perpetrators of sexual abuse.....</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>5.2.1.5 Welfare, advocacy and support .....</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>5.2.1.6 Forgings as freedom power and identity.....</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>5.3 Preliminary conclusion.....</b>	<b>138</b>
<b>CHAPTER SIX: FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>6.1 Evaluations of the study .....</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>6.2 Method of data collection.....</b>	<b>140</b>

<b>6.3 Brief overview of the study.....</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>6.4 Summary of findings .....</b>	<b>142</b>
<b>6.4.1 Shame and trauma.....</b>	<b>142</b>
<b>6.4.2 Secrecy and shame.....</b>	<b>142</b>
<b>6.5 Limitations of the study.....</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>6.6 Recommendation for further research.....</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>6.7 Conclusion .....</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>Appendix A.....</b>	<b>146</b>
<b>Appendix B.....</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>148</b>

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

One Thursday afternoon, while I was still ministering at the Pimville Methodist Church, a young girl by the name of Ann (not her real name) was brought to my office from school. She narrated the following story:

*“My stepfather George (not the real name) was the one who did it. He started when I was about six, I guess. He would come in and touch me at night and sometimes just run his hand over my body. It felt good and I didn’t think that there was anything wrong.*

*Later on, ‘Daddy’ started doing other things with his hands that didn’t seem right but I was supposed to obey him. Then he started kissing me and kissing me under the covers. I must have been ten by then.*

*I was traumatised. I knew my mother Marry (not a real name) would punish me if she found out and I knew ‘Daddy’ would be mad at me, too if I told her. I felt like it was my fault, but I didn’t understand how. I didn’t want anyone to find out how bad I was. I remember lying awake in the dark hoping he wouldn’t come. I told myself I would jump up and run if he came, but I never did. I just lay there and hoped he would go away soon. Then I would cry and finally go to sleep. But then, when I was asleep, I would have nightmares about monsters.*

*One night my mother came in and saw him doing this to me. She got really mad. George cried and promised never to do it again. She never said anything to me, but I*

*always felt like she was mad at me too. We started to go to church then. He attended night when there was a service.*

*Nothing happened again until I was 12. Then he started being really kind to me again. By then I was doing a lot of work around the house. My mother was always tired. She just never seemed very happy. My stepfather and I always had a good time together though. We would go to the grocery store to pick up whatever we needed for dinner. It would be just me and him. My brothers and sisters would stay at home. Sometimes he would buy me something special on those trips. He always took my side when I quarrelled with my younger brothers and sisters. They knew they could not mess with me when he was around. The special treatment he gave me was admired by my siblings.*

*Then he started coming into my room again at night. I don't think my mother ever knew about it. He would cry sometimes and say he loved me. He said that it would split the family if anybody knew what was happening. He said my mom would probably get really sick if she ever found out. He did not come in very often; maybe just a couple of times a month. I started lying awake again waiting for him, hating it. I was so ashamed. What if other people found out? My brothers and sisters said I was the favourite. What if they knew what I had done?*

*I felt so rotten, like I was all alone and always would be. How could I ever tell anybody about something awful I thought about running away or killing myself, but I was afraid to do either one I wished someone would stop him, but I knew I had to keep doing what he wanted or terrible things would happen?"*

Being a man, after listening to the story and what happened, I was so despondent. I wanted not only to intervene and initiate the therapy but furthermore, wanted to conduct more research on the topic. Finkelhor (1979) refers to "trauma" as an experience that is emotionally painful, distressful, or shocking, which often results in lasting mental and physical effects.

## **1.2 THE IMPACT OF SEXUAL ABUSE ON YOUNG GIRLS**

It is difficult to recognize the signs of sexual abuse in young girls since they tend not to share what is happening to them. Therefore, it is up to concerned adults or friends to recognize the signs. The impact of sexual abuse in young girls is vast and varied. The most commonly experienced impact of sexual abuse is posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This type of stress falls into three categories: restoration of the event; avoidance or withdrawal and physiological hyper-activity. Each child is different though and may experience any or all of these in various degrees of behaviour (Rowatt 1989:12).

The most frequent observation among victims of sexual abuse is that the victimised young girl tends to engage in extreme sexualized behaviour compared to other young girls who are not sexually abused. Since the abuse took place on and in the body; the body becomes the enemy. They carry a great deal of pain and memories. This is evident in Ann's life; where she desperately try to cope with the pain; which can lead to eating disorders, self-inflicting injuries, inability to have sex, or engaging

in sex often, poor body image, generalized separation from and disregard for one's body (Irvine 1994:79).

Survivors who live through the impact of childhood sexual abuse may also experience difficulty in knowing their personal boundaries, how to maintain them, and how to protect themselves from those who do not respect or try to violate their boundaries. They are then vulnerable to further abuse.

Trust becomes a very big issue. Trust is harder to develop when the person who abused the child is the caregiver. In most instances, the abuser is often someone who has a close relationship with the child and this makes it even harder because it should have been someone the child can trust. George was the caregiver to Ann. He provided fatherly support and all that the girl needed. Later, all trust that Ann had built over the years, was destroyed.

Problematic coping behaviours include: addictions, prostitution, overworking, inability to work, high-functioning, low-functioning, argumentative, avoiding conflict, perfectionism, and wanting to please others (Garson, 1993:35).

There are also many emotional effects such as helplessness, feeling dirty, confusion, powerlessness, and pain. The survivor may not be emotions. The negative effects of the abuse, the most common form of sexual abuse, can be compounded by the reactions of parents, siblings, and other important people in the young girl's life. Sometimes siblings of the survivor blame the abused child, either because they believe the perpetrator's denials, or simply because of what the reporting the abuser has done to the family.

And when a child wonders if her mother knew about the abuse but did nothing to stop it; she can lose trust in both parents, not just one.

Not only does sexual child abuse cause debilitating circumstances for the child, God also makes it very clear in His Word that those who carry out the act against a child should succumb to drowning in the sea. "And if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around his neck" (Mark 9:42).

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Sexual abuse is real and can lead to a psychological trauma to both the survivor and the perpetrator; alike. However, the impact on the lives of the young girls who live in such an environment cannot be ignored (Rossman, Hughes & Rosenberg 2000: 91). This outlines that the negative impact on the lives of young girls who have been exposed to sexual abuse. Research in this regard has shown that the impact on young girls is apparent in the following areas: behavioural and trauma-related, emotional, cognitive/school functioning; social skills and attachment function.

As a pastoral caregiver, the author is challenged to care for both the survivor and the perpetrator in a way that challenges the perpetrator and restores the dignity of the survivor. As the author seeks to help others, he becomes aware of the negative impact of growing up in a family which is characterized by sexual abuse. The

problem statement of this study will be expressed in the form of questions outlined below.

- How does sexual abuse on young girls within a family impact on their lives?
- Does sexual abuse that occurs in the life of a young girl affect the relationship within the family and community?
- How do young girls fall into the sexual abuse trap?
- How traumatically affected are young girls who grew up in a sexually abusive environment?
- Can a male be a therapist for these abused girls?

The answer to the questions above will help the author to better understand the emotional and traumatic situations of young girls that are sexually abused within a family context. This will empower him to be an effective pastoral caregiver to those who are experiencing sexual abuse.

#### **1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The author will be able to deal with the pain of the survivors of sexual abuse and understand the background of these young girls. The most important findings of this research will empower the author on three levels discussed below;

- 1) The first aim for the author is to help survivors of sexual abuse to heal of all the wounds and years of trauma that they went through during their childhood. The greatest achievement would be to see the survivors regain dignity and confidence again, in life for their future sexual and family life. The first level of

empowerment that this research seeks to achieve is to bring the survivor to accept and forgive the perpetrator in their future lives.

2) Secondly, to assist the care giver to develop counselling models that would counsel sexual abuse survivors and their families.

And lastly, to help survivors learn to cope and deal with this situation and understand that it is possible to live a positive life after the emotional and traumatic incidences that they had gone through.

## **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This research will focus on emotional trauma as a result of sexual abuse of a young girl within a family by a stepfather. This is a great challenge to pastoral caregivers within the context of South Africa; where sexual abuse within the family surroundings has become the norm. The impact of this sexual abuse, as experienced by the young girls, can have a negative impact on motherhood and traumatize them for life. This research seeks to create awareness on the traumatic impact that sexual abuse has on the lives of young girls. The findings of this research will help pastoral caregivers, to deal effectively with this issue. This research will further empower young girls who have undergone sexual abuse to restore their dignity and, finally, help them to move from a place of paralysis to a place of being healers.

## **1.6 ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY**

The author undertakes this research with the following assumption:

Young girls that are raised within a sexually abusive environment are affected negatively by such experiences. From Ann's experience, the author asserts that young girls are traumatized and may not function properly in the community as a result of this trauma. Arising out of Ann's experience, the author further asserts that young girls, who experience sexual abuse by their stepfathers, become ineffective when they have to face life on their own.

## **1.7 RESEARCH GAP**

This research is necessary because many people are affected negatively by sexual abuse that happens within families. The author's observation is that children who grew up within such families are traumatized and, as a result, they become ineffective in life. Issues regarding conflict, violence, abuse and its effects on children have been dealt with extensively in the fields of psychology and social work. (Herman 1992:53) The author has observed that such studies have been mainly conducted to analyse the situation, diagnose the problems and come up with methodologies of addressing the issue socially and psychologically. Such researches have been clinical in nature. There is little or no theological input which leads to effective ministry towards survivors. This research is conducted by a person presently ministering within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

The gap that the author seeks to fill with this study, therefore, is to come up with a theological perspective on the issue. He will seek to establish a pastoral care method which addresses the impact of traumatic and emotional sexual abuse towards young girls who grow up experiencing sexual abuse by stepfathers. That will be his

contribution to the field of Practical Theology: Pastoral Care. By so doing, he will be empowering pastoral caregivers, who experience such traumatic situations, to be able to help survivors heal from their own trauma and pain and then to become healing and transforming agents to other young girls.

## **1.8 METHODOLOGY**

The author will use a combination of approaches and techniques in order to address the problem and come up with a method that will effectively help to deal with the problems that are encountered by young girls who grow up in sexually abusive environments. Methodology is defined as: “a system of methods used in a particular field” (Oxford Dictionary 2001: 529). This research will be based on a participant observation approach which seeks to investigate a phenomenon that is already there and attempts to correct that phenomenon (Qina 2003: 6). This approach will be utilized within the framework of qualitative strategy of information gathering and interpretation.

According to DeFrancis (1998: 240), qualitative approach is “A multi-perspective approach to social interaction, aimed at describing, making sense of, interpreting or reconstructing this interaction in terms of the meanings that the subjects attach to it”. This approach, which stems from an ant positivistic and interpretative framework; is idiographic, thus holistic in nature and the main aim is to understand social life and the meaning that people attach to everyday life (Gerkin1979:98). Accordingly, this research will be contextual in order to understand phenomena as experienced by the co-researchers. Data will be presented in the form of words, quotes from people,

documents and transcripts. The whole research process will be flexible, unique and will evolve throughout.

Edward Wimberley deals with issues of brokenness and pain among human beings. In wrestling with these issues, he comes up with a helpful methodology of dealing with them. He has discovered that as people deal with these issues; they ask certain questions like: “What does it mean to be persons of worth and value in our contemporary culture? And how can a relationship with God give us a renewed sense of our worth and value” (Wimberley 2003: 8). These are questions that I continue to grapple with as I try to make sense of Ann’s experiences and others like her. The degrading circumstances she experienced while growing up diminished her sense of self-worth. Her self-esteem was broken to such an extent that she thought she was inferior, dirty, unloved and unappreciated as a human being.

Wimberley (2003:8) further states that: *“we become persons by internalizing the conversations in which we take part, but we become holy persons by giving conversation with God a privileged status over all other conversations. Conversations with God, then, are personal interchanges with God. They transcend human conversations and bring insight into our human condition in profound ways. As a result of these conversations with God, we gain a fuller understanding of our worth and value”*. In view of the above statement, the conversation that Ann was involved with her stepfather was very destructive to her.

In conclusion, the author sought to introduce the reader to the background of the research. The climax point of this research is on emotional and traumatic experience of a young girl as a result of sexual abuse by stepfather and the impacts on children and families. The author seeks to find answers to questions like: Does sexual abuse

that occurs in the family affect the young girls? Does sexual abuse that occurs in the life of a young girl affect the relationship in the family and community? Can the Church be a place of healing and restoration for those who are traumatized by sexual abuse within their families? How can the Church assist survivors in dealing with the emotion and trauma that they have experienced while growing up so that it does not paralyse them anymore?

In practical theology, there is a gap which pertains to this topic. As discussed in the section on the research gap, there is a necessity to conduct this research. The aim of this study is to come up with a pastoral care method which will empower young girls and all care givers to effectively deal with issues of traumatic experience as a result the sexual abuse of young girls within families.

## CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH METHOD AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the methodology that the author is going to use when addressing the issue of the sexual abuse of young girls by their stepfathers; in a pastoral perspective. The research work I am embarking on is done in a South African context, and specifically in Southern Rand Circuits within the Methodist church of southern Africa. I am going to take a journey with three ladies, in their traumatic situations. Two of them are from Soweto and one is from Kibler- Park, both areas in the south of Johannesburg. All participants are members in the communities that I have served as a minister.

With this traumatic story in mind, I find it relevant to look at both the shepherding model of Gherkin and the positive deconstruction model of Nick Pollard theories in the following lines. The trauma and loss of dignity which is experienced by Ann and other victims of sexual abuse become sound concern to the community. It is key to the researcher as a ground for sound investigation by reflecting on the above models in order for the survivors to be reintegrated in the same community with dignity and for them to be able to permanently forgive their perpetrators. This chapter explores the nature of qualitative research and its epistemological foundations. The sampling, data collection and data analysis methods employed by this research are detailed below.

### 2.1.1 LITERATURE STUDY

Henning et al. (2004:27) states that a literature study is aimed to place the research in specific context. The literature study in this research focuses on young girls as victims of sexual abuse by their stepfathers.

### 2.1.2 KEY CONCEPT OF THE RESEARCH

**SEXUAL ABUSE:** the exploitation or sexual activities that threatens and harms a person's health and welfare (Wallace, 1996:58). A detailed discussion of this concept follows in the second chapter.

**YOUNG GIRLS:** adolescence commences at the ages of 6 to 13 and ends between the ages of 17 and 22, and refers to people who usually form part of the secondary school system.

**SURVIVORS:** in the context of this research, a victim is an adolescent woman of the Paarl community who has been physically, mentally and or emotionally hurt as a result of sexual abuse.

**STEPFATHERS (ABUSER):** in this research the concept of abuser refers to the male individual who carried out the act of sexual abuse of an adolescent female.

**FAMILY:** for the purpose of this research, the term "support" includes physical, financial, psychological, spiritual and emotional support to victims.

### 2.1.3. ETHICAL ASPECTS CONCERNING THE RESEARCH

A researcher has the right to collect data, but not at the expense of any individual (Babbie and Mouton 2006:520). Therefore, certain ethical guidelines have been formulated to protect both the researcher and the respondent. The other important

element is to ensure the researcher's ethical conduct towards the respondents. The following ethical issues, as identified by Babbie and Mouton (2006:526) are to be discussed: voluntary participation, detriment to respondents and anonymity/confidentiality.

#### **2.1.4 VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION**

Social research is often seen as an invasion of people's privacy. Firstly, the respondent has not requested to take part in the research. Secondly, it is going to require some of the respondent's time to partake in the research; and thirdly, the respondent may possibly have to reveal some personal information during the research (Babbie and Mouton 2006:521). It is therefore paramount that the respondent voluntarily agrees to partake in the research (See Appendix A).

In this research, specific congregations were identified and invited to participate. The invitations were done by letters, which were e-mailed or hand-delivered; a copy of this letter can be found in the Appendix. This letter informed the respondents of the purpose of the research and the method of data collection. Participation was completely voluntary.

#### **2.1.5 DETRIMENT TO THE PARTICIPANTS**

Research should never be detrimental to the respondents. Participants can be harmed in several ways. The most common way is to reveal sensitive information that can either embarrass them or endanger their lives (Babbie and Mouton 2006:522).

The researcher realizes that sexual abuse is a very sensitive matter to everyone affected. Therefore, this research was approached with greatest sensitivity as much

as possible. During the basic individual interviews, none of the participants were to answer any questions that made them feel uncomfortable. The data gathered from the interviews is regarded as highly private and confidential.

### **2.1.6 ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

Anonymity and confidentiality are two ways to help the author ensure that no harm comes to the participants in the research (Babbie & Mouton 2006:523). Unfortunately, these two concepts are often confused. Anonymity refers to when the researcher does not know which response belongs to which participant. This way the researcher cannot embarrass or harm any participant. Confidentiality refers to when the researcher knows which response belongs to which participant, but promises not to reveal their identities when making the results public.

This research's method of data collection does not secure anonymity because the researcher is also the interviewer. However, the researcher undertook every possible measure to ensure the confidentiality of the participants. The researcher undertook to handle all information as confidential and respected the respondents' right to privacy. The data gathered during this research was stored on a computer, which could only be accessed with a password. Before the data was saved onto the computer, all identifying details (respondents' names address and contact details) were removed and replaced with codes. Back-up files were made onto a compact disk, which was stored in a locked cabinet. On completion of the research, all information has been destroyed.

## **2.1.7 CONTRIBUTION TO THE DISCIPLINE OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY**

This research is conducted within the discipline of practical theology. To fully understand the contribution, this research strives to make a clear exposition of the researcher's understanding of practical theology.

### **2.1.7.1 NATURE OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY**

There are numerous definitions to describe the nature of practical theology. Dingmans (in Dreyer 1997:14) defines practical theology as follows: "a collective critical rationality of Christians" "From this definition, it is evident that practical theology constantly strives to improve or transform the context in which it operates. With Dingemans' definition in mind, Heitink, Pieterse and Vos's (2000:54) describes theology as a "crisis wetenschap" and this becomes relevant to this study. It is seen as a "crisiswetenschap" because of its close involvement with the praxis where crises constantly arise. Sexual abuse is a severe crisis within the Soweto community and the congregations, since impunity s in this community, are not untouched by it.

In addition to Dingemans' and Heitink et al.'s definitions of practical theology, Ploeger's (1999:87-88) definition, written below, enhances and affirms practical theology's responsibility not to focus on itself, but to be actively involved in the crises that constantly arise in the praxis: "Practical theology describes and investigates Christian praxis, with the help of hermeneutics of the Bible and the Christian tradition, within our social and cultural context, and therefore traces the being and acting of a community of believers, in order to transform the religious beliefs and practices to spiritual communication of faith, furthering integrity of human life and of the whole creation, in the light of the messianic vision of the coming Kingdom of God."

From the above definitions, it is evident that practical theology is primarily concerned with communicating the gospel to all people; which results in transformation.

The communicational character of practical theology is emphasized by both Dreyer (1999:48) and Nel (2003:26), by referring to Habermas's theory of communicative actions as a met theory of practical theology. This theory implicates that communication occurs through people's actions. The gospel is also communicated through actions; specifically faith actions. In this regard, Dreyer (1999:50) names the source of communicative faith actions as follows: Preaching, pastoral care, worship, diaconate, and mission". It can be concluded that God communicates through faith actions, positioning a human communicator as a mediator and facilitator in the encounter between God and the people whom are communicated too. These communicative actions are identified by Nel (2003:35) as Kerugma (preaching): paraklesis (pastoral care): leitourgia (worship): koinonia (fellowship): diakonia (diaconate): kybernesis (administration) and marturia (mission).

However, these communicative faith actions are not reserved only for ministers, pastors and theologians. It is the actions of all people confessing the Christian faith. In this regard, Pieterse (1999:418) clearly states: "...the object of practical theology is the religious communicative actions by individuals, groups, in personal encounters, in organized religion (the church) and in society by all the agents mentioned above." These actions are intentionally aimed at intervening in a situation with the view of transforming it (Pieterse 2001:9). It is important for the congregations in the Methodist Church of southern Africa community to perform these actions in order to be a communication agent between God and adolescent female victims of sexual abuse.

Another metatheoretical aspect of practical theology, which complements the communicational metatheory, is that of a systems theory. Dreyer (1999:47-48) explains that a systems theory is concerned with a holistic approach to people and society, and also the dynamic interactions of the different systems in society. It is evident that when addressing the issue of sexual abuse of adolescent females, a communicational action theory engaging with a systems theory is paramount. This engagement will result in the construction of a basic theory that is aimed at transforming the Christian praxis – the facilitation of an encounter between God and adolescent female victims to sexual abuse.

Nel's (2003:28) thoughts on a basic theory for practical theology as being concerned with communicative faith action in the service of the Gospel and Kingdom of God that has come and is still coming in modern society. This is an agreement with Ploeger's (1999:87-88) already-mentioned definition of practical theology. With the addition of Dreyer's thoughts on a systems theory, it can be said that practical theology is basic theoretically concerned with the communicative faith actions in the service of the Gospel and the Kingdom of God that is coming in the systems of modern society.

Furthermore, Nel (2003:27) is of opinion that a basic theory of practical theology is directive of how the Christian praxis is approached. Here, the relation between theory and praxis in the field of practical theology is aired.

### 2.1.7.2 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEORY AND PRAXIS

The relationship between theory and praxis is very complex and is often considered to be the main problem in practical theology (Pieterse & Dreyer 1995:32-33). It can be illustrated as bipolar; with continuous dialogical, critical interaction between both parties. Pieterse and Dreyer (1995:33) explain this interaction as follows: “Practical theology theories should be saturated with the collective critical rationality of a Christian theological tradition to question the contemporary religious praxis critically. But praxis means to be a practice in which the practicing constantly reflects critically on the underlying theories and ideologies which direct the praxis.” It is clear that in the bipolar relation between theory and praxis, both are considered equal and are irreplaceable within the relationship.

The dialogical, bipolar relation between theory and praxis indicates that practical theology needs to be approached hermeneutically (Pieterse 2001:9). Heitink et al. (2000:59) explains the nature of a hermeneutic approach by stating: “...hermeneutiek is een poging die kloof tussen traditie en ervaring te overbruggen.” Pieterse’s (2001:5). The understanding of a hermeneutic approach elaborates on Heitink et al.’s definition. He (Pieterse) sees hermeneutics as a science of understanding of how people interpret their environment and situation, as well as documents, books and messages from the past, within their human reality in a particular era. It is thus a matter of comprehension and explanation.

For congregations, such as FBO’s in the Paarl community, to be facilitators of communication between God and the adolescent female victims of sexual abuse, a hermeneutic approach is inevitable. The understanding of the victims’ histories, their experiences and interpretations thereof, are vital to the process of healing.

### **2.1.7.3 TRANSFORMATIONAL CHARACTER**

In the above literature, the transformational character of practical theology has been mentioned several times. Louw (1999:125) accentuates the transformational character of practical theology as a vital objective of practical theology by saying: “Praktiese teologie ontwerp nou praxis-teoriee en handelingstrategiee ten einde deel te wees van die sosiale en persoonlike transformasieproses. Die aksent wat gele word in hierdie verskuiwingsproses is weg van se (word), in die rigting van doen (handeling)... Die konsekwensie van hierdie aksent op transformasie van die praktyk bring mee dat die praktiese teologie ‘n teologie van ‘performance’ en ‘public discourse’ moet wees.”

The focus on the transformation and public discourse of practical theology is of great importance to the congregations such as FBO’s in the Paarl community. It calls upon congregations not to reserve their communicational faith actions to their organizational or institutional structures, but to act beyond these boundaries and reach out to the broken lives of the community’s sexually abused adolescent females. Only then can the congregations become true facilitators of encounters between God and the victims, can healing begin.

### **2.1.7.4. CONCLUSION**

This chapter had the purpose of providing orientation to the intended research. It focused on the prevalence of sexual abuse of adolescent females in the Methodist Church of S.A. community, as well as the motivation for the research. Subsequently, the problem statement, the research question, and the goals and objectives of the

research, were explained. The underlying methodology was highlighted and some ethical aspects were investigated. Finally, this chapter clarified concepts that are vital to the research and explained how this research aims to contribute to the discipline of practical theology.

## **2.2. GERKIN'S AND NICK POLLARD'S APPROACH.**

This research found pastoral guidance from the narrative hermeneutical model that was developed by Gherkin. In his book, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care*, (Gherkin 1997: 42) Gherkin refers to the pastor as a caring leader and a shepherd. In this model, care is viewed as the central metaphor of life in the Christian community. The Pastor is regarded as the shepherd and the Christians are the flocks that need to be cared for. This methodology needs to be located within the hearts and souls of young girls. In terms of the present research, this meant that the shepherds (and the researcher) need to utilize this method effectively in order to help people cope with any emotions that are experienced as a result of the research; including feelings of shame, hopelessness and despair. The researcher is convinced that this shepherding method, although it is written from a Western perspective, plays a pivotal role in approaching issues that are faced by African people. The researcher agrees with Gherkin's stand on the matter of healing from trauma.

## **2.3 DESIGN OF RESEARCH**

A research design can be defined as the plan or blueprint of how research is conducted (Babbie and Mouton, 2006:74). It is the strategy that the researcher follows in order to answer the research question.

The qualitative research approach holds several types of research designs (Babbie and Mouton 2006:278; Henning, Van Ransburg and Smith 2004:38). For the purpose of this research, a case study design is chosen.

According to Henning et al. (2004:41), a case study is characterized by the roundedness of its unit of analysis, also known as a “boundary system”. This bounded system is a single entity, “a unit around which there are boundaries” (Merriam 2002:178). In this research, the clear boundaries of the bounded system are geographical of nature. This research investigates the sexual abuse of a young girl female by her stepfather.

It is crucial to commence a research project by detailing the research design. This design explains the area of focus, the procedures of data collection, as well as the method of data analysis used. It also discusses the research sample and ethical issues pertaining to the research. (Trochim, 2001: 75). Trochim articulates exactly what I want to say concerning this aspect and as the researcher; I will be using the above method for data collection and different interviews; especially a questionnaire as means to help me relate to the lives of those young girls. This will be a way to establish grounds of trust for their future sexual encounters, and healing the lives of their family.

#### **2.4. EPISTEMOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS**

Qualitative research has a distinctive way of understanding the world, and it is, therefore, helpful to begin by looking at the epistemology that underlies this approach to research. Epistemology, from the Greek words ‘*episteme*’, means knowledge and ‘*logos*’ (words or speech) “*theory of knowledge*”, is the branch of

philosophy which is concerned with the nature and scope (including the limitations) of knowledge (Mason, 2006; 16).

It, therefore, addresses questions such as:

- What is our knowledge of the other?
- How is knowledge acquired?
- How do we know what we know?" (McLeod et al. 1988: 16)

The above questions bear some relevancy to the field of practical theology, as they deal directly with the pain of human experience on the ground. Doyle said that, "*Knowledge can be divided into a priori knowledge or knowledge that is automatically known apart from experience and knowledge gained from human experience*" (Doyle, 1994:215). In the light of this, sexual abuse is a well-known behaviour experienced by both Western and African societies.

The experience of sexual abuse of young girls by their stepfathers is traumatic and evil( Jeffrey,2000;61). This study focuses, specifically, on the traumatic experience through the sexual abuse of young girls by their stepfathers , with the aim of empowering those survivors and journeying with them for healing, and regaining their confidence and dignity (Wimberley, 1999; 77).

According to Mowat and Swinton , "*knowledge of the other occurs when the research focuses on a particular individual or group and explores in-depth the ways in which they view and interact with the world*" (Mowat and Swinton, 2007: 33). This quotation reflects on the researcher's aim to attain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of sexual abuse which is experienced by these young girls. The essence of epistemology is fundamental to how we think and acquire knowledge.

Without some means of understanding how we acquire knowledge, how we rely upon our senses, and how we develop concepts in our minds, we have no coherent path for our thinking.

A sound epistemology is necessary for the existence of sound thinking and reasoning. “*The centrepiece of grounded theory is the development or generation of a theory closely related to the context of the phenomenon being studied*” (Creswell, 1998; 56). In concurrent with Creswell, the researcher generated a theory or model of care from data on the ground. This will help when he collects data from the young ladies

According to Swinton and Mowat, “*the epistemology of qualitative research relates to the particular theory of knowledge that underpins this approach*” (Swinton and Mowat, 2007; 32). Epistemology, as a scope of generating knowledge, is also parallel to qualitative research in that it contributes, a lot, when collecting data based on human experiences on the ground, this will help when collecting data from the ladies. It is essential in this regard to look at this mode of inquiry as a larger mechanism of collecting data for the research project.

## **2.5. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

This research is conducted from a qualitative research approach. Marshall and Rossman (1999:2) define qualitative research as: “grounding the lived experiences of people”. In addition, Babbie and Mouton (2006:270) highlight the fact that qualitative research studies human action from the perspective of the social actors themselves. It is aimed at describing and understanding, rather than explaining.

Marshall and Rossman (1999:2), as well as Babbie and Mouton (2006:270), are clear on the characteristics of the qualitative research approach. They both agree that qualitative research highlights the nature settings of the social factors. Multiple interactive data collection methods, which respect the humanity of participants, are also used in this research.

Other characteristics of the qualitative research approach are that the research proses are emergent rather than tightly prefigured (Marshall and Rossman (1999:3). Babbie and Mouton (2006:270) agree that qualitative research process is inductive; resulting in the generation of new theories. Therefore, qualitative research does not test a hypothesis in a laboratory, but studies social action in its natural context. This is done in order to generate a new theory.

This is the main reason why the researcher chose the qualitative research approach in order to describe and understand why stepfathers are sexually abusing young girls. The research is conducted in the natural context of congregations, by means of interactive data collection methods. The methods will be explained later on. This research will not test a certain prefigured hypothesis, but aims to generate new proposals/suggestions on how young girls can heal from the shame and trauma as a result of sexual abuse by their stepfathers.

Qualitative research recognizes the world as being the locus of complex interpretive processes within which human beings work towards making sense of their experiences. This mode of data analysis was selected due to the research's focus on understanding the trauma that is experienced by young girls who are survivors of sexual abuse by their step fathers. This study consisted of two components, namely:

- A review of relevant literature in terms of: sexual abuse, healing of the sexual abused survivors; how they can regain their self-confidence and dignity; and pastoral care as a challenge to the male caregiver, who, in this case, is viewed as a figure of perpetrators of sexual abuse.
- Empirical research, which is qualitative in nature. The author used a grounded theory approach, which refers to theory derived from data that has been systematically gathered and analysed.

Qualitative research methods utilize an inductive mode of analysis. This mode of analysis is in contrast with quantitative research methods, which rely on deductive thinking or a process of moving from a general theory to specific observations. This research will delve into the lives of young girls and will pose open-ended questions with the aim of eliciting in-depth and detailed responses regarding their experiences, perceptions, feelings and knowledge on the phenomenon of sexual abuse. As the research will enter their spaces, it will endeavour to understand perspective regarding their sexuality as young girls. Swinton and Mowat define qualitative research as: *“a process of careful, rigorous inquiry into aspect of social world”* (Swinton and Mowat, 2007; 31). They continue to say that, *“this definition suggests that qualitative research relates to the careful exploration of the ways in which human beings encounter their world, an exposition that offers new ways of understanding and interpreting the world”* (Swinton and Mowat, 2007; 31).

Denzin and Lincoln define qualitative research as being: *“multi-method in focus, involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter”* (Denzin and Lincoln 1998; 3). The above quotation is helpful in this research because it aimed to describe and explore the nature and reality of sexual abuse as experienced by

young girls, and ultimately aimed to enable researchers to understand the phenomenon differently in order to add new knowledge to the field.

Qualitative research involves the utilization of a variety of methods and approaches, which enable the researcher to explore the social world in an attempt to access and understand the uniqueness that individuals and communities inhabit it.

Qualitative research always begins with the theory on the ground. Buffel describes this as: “*what is actually happening on the ground and in praxis*” (Buffel, 2007; 76)

Qualitative research uses a constructivist approach based on phenomenological and interpretive paradigms; whereas the quantitative approach uses a positivist approach which assumes existing, objective truth which can be revealed through a scientific method (Lincol 1998:4) In understanding this, the role of the researcher will be active and participatory. The researcher attempts to develop a close relationship with the participants, since the existence of such a relationship was the key to successful data collection.

## **2.6. DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS**

These interviews will be based on previous theoretical and research constructs combined with a professional and experienced psychologist and sociologist in the field of social issues, if it will be necessary.

The primary methods of data collection in qualitative research are:

- Observations (including document/literature review)
- Interviews and counselling - see Appendix A
- Questionnaires – see Appendix B

The in-depth interview method is the most appropriate data collection technique for grounded theory research. This method is considered appropriate for the study due to the focus on the phenomenon of sexual abuse of young girls within their families. Patton differentiates between the terms data collection method and data collection technique. On the one hand, data collection method refers to the systematic approach to data collection. And on the other hand, data collection technique refers to the art of asking, listening, and interpreting (see Patton, 2002; 124). This study will therefore make use of a data collection technique. This technique is helpful in a number of ways including:

- Helping the project in producing quality data from the ground; and
- Helping and building the author's listening aptitude, in order to interpret data in accordance with the phenomenon.

The researcher believes that the chosen technique will allow the generation of valid and reliable information regarding the various strategies of elasticity that was employed by the family after this evil been discovered. During the process of data collection a few key principles will be observed:

- The fact that this method of data collection deals specifically with in-depth information, rather than numerical or statistical information.
- The data will be collected from a limited number of people or individuals, rather than from a large sample. In the case of this research, I am concentrating on three ladies.

The data will then be analysed using a grounded theory. Henning defined grounded data analysis as, "*a tool for constructing substantive theories*" (Henning, 2004; 114). The researcher agrees with this definition, as it reflects one

of the primary goals of this study, which is based in trying to discover data on the ground. The research also adopts Elder-Avedon's definition of data analysis. He conceptualised data analysis as:

*“a dialogical, descriptive and explanatory, complex process aiming at creating an internal order, and searching for as many alternative explanations as the data allow, by extricating central themes, conceptualizing them into core themes and identify typology”* (Elder-Avidan's,2009: 33).

In other words, the process of analysing data will follow a funnel-like (see Harry, Sturges & Klingner, 2005:3-13), in order to attain a clear description of the young girl's ability to adapt after she has been sexually abused.

*“This analysis is a process of breaking down the data and thermalizing it in ways which draw out the meaning hidden within the text”* (Swinton & Mowat, 2006: 57).

The first step of analysing data in this regard will involve collecting the data from the ground. The sample will be selected in order to allow for an understanding of their experiences and perspectives on adjustment to sexual life or recovery, as well as their need for pastoral care.

*“The criterion for judging when to stop sampling the different groups pertinent to a category is the category's theoretical saturation”* (Glazer & Strauss, 2001, 61).

This means that saturation is reached when no new data is discovered. This saturation point is reached through the joint collection and immediate analysis of data. Thus, the processes of data collection and data analysis occur simultaneously.

## 2.7. PARTICIPANTS

In the context of this study, the participants are essential as they contribute their knowledge acquired from practical experience of and exposure to the phenomenon of the sexual abuse of young girls by their stepfathers.

In terms of selection, letters of invitation were written to selected participants. The letters detailed the purpose of the study and requested their voluntary participation. The letter also addressed the ethical issues of confidentiality and anonymity; - see (appendix C) assuring potential research participants that both would be upheld in the final data report.

The letter of invitation contained the following information:

- The topic of the research.
- The aims and objectives of the study.
- The guarantee that the researcher would maintain confidentiality and anonymity.

The research took place in Johannesburg south; the author also consulted people from different disciplines such as psychology and sociology, when necessary. The duration of each one-on-one in-depth interview was a journey of some days each due to the complexity and sensitivity of the cases. It was critically emotional for the participants to recall, again, their harmful experience which was perpetuated by the people that they had trusted the most. This is where the positive deconstruction therapy by Nick Pollard is useful. This will be dealt with in the next chapters.

## 2.8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical issues are always of great importance in research. Certain ethical issues were of particular importance were applied given the sensitive nature of this research topic. It is essential that the research participants' anonymity be protected throughout the research. This was done through the use of fictitious names. The author used the principle of respect for persons when conducting the interviews and ensured that all collected information remained confidential. Murphy emphasized the importance of "*assuring the participant's confidentiality*" (Murphy, 1992:88). These ethical precautions are designed to protect the legitimate rights of the participants.

All the data or information will be recorded in writing after obtaining the participants' written consent. The participants will be provided with a thorough explanation of the reasons for the study and the aims and objectives of the study. The author also "*pledges to be sensitive*" (Babbie, 1989: 472) and in regard to adhering to ethical standards and interpreting data collected from the participants. This sensitivity relates to the participants' welfare, the community in which they belong and their voluntary participation and confidentiality. Lastly, the research endeavoured to adhere to the above mentioned ethical considerations; while at the same time, providing a true reflection of the data.

## 2.9 GERKIN'S HERMENEUTICAL METHODOLOGY

In addition to relying heavily on the data collection technique described above, this research found pastoral guidance from the narrative hermeneutical model which was developed by Gherkin (1997).

In his book, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care*, Gherkin (1997) refers to the pastor as a caring leader and a shepherd. In this model, care is viewed as the central metaphor of life in the Christian community. The pastor is regarded as the shepherd and the Christians are the flocks that need to be cared for. This methodology needs to be located within the hearts and souls of women victims of sexual abuse; who were abused in their young age. In terms of the present study, this meant that the shepherd (and researcher) need to utilize this method effectively in order to help people cope with any emotions that are experienced as a result of the research. This include feelings of shame, hopelessness and despair. The researcher was convinced that this shepherding method, although it was written from a Western perspective, plays a pivotal role in approaching issues that are facing African people. The researcher agrees with Gherkin's (1997:42) statement that:

*Our lord and saviour Jesus Christ hath left us a commandment, which concerns all Christians alike - that we should render duties of humanity, or (as the scripture calls them) works of mercy, to those which are afflicted and under calamity, that we should visit the sick, endeavour to set free the prisoners, and perform other like acts of kindness to our neighbour, whereby the evils of this present time may in some measure be lightened."*

This quotation suggests that the clergy or the shepherd should be concerned for those in special need. “*Shepherds, were responsible for the physical survival and welfare of their own or their master’s flocks*” (Brownmiller, 1975: 463).

The shepherding motif is captured in the imagery of Psalms 23, where the lord God is depicted as the good shepherd who leads the people in paths of righteousness, restoring their souls and walking with them among their enemies, even into the valley of the shadow of death. This motif illustrates that shepherding is a biblical model of pastoral care that aims at leading, nurturing, healing and protecting. According to Jacobsen (2009), “*the shepherding perspective is founded on the basis of the gospel and so is unique to Christianity*”. He goes on to emphasize that “*the healing dimension of the pastoral task, rooted in Christ’s command to heal, is the central function of the shepherding perspective on ministry*” (Jacobsen, 2009: 30).

Gherkin’s (1997) approach focuses on both individual and family needs. This shepherding method is helpful in addressing African situations in a way that:

- It equips the pastor as the shepherd of the flock when addressing challenges that are faced by young girl victims of sexual abuse.

According to Gherkin (1997:92), the pastor needs to function as the caretaker of the individuals.

*Although emphases have fluctuated from time to time, the ordained pastor’s care for individuals has usually been given a dominant emphasis. Furthermore, in the recent history of pastoral care, in large part because of the influence of individualism and psychotherapeutic psychology, the*

*organizing conceptualization of pastoral care has focused on the individual care of the pastor for individual persons.*

The researcher agrees with Gherkin's (1997) approach to pastoral care, as it appears to be all encompassing. It addresses individual and family problems in relation to various life situations. This approach is ideal as it is able to help heal people in need of pastoral care therapy; including sexual abuse of young girls who are perhaps traumatized by virtue of being sexually defined by the people that they had trusted the most, as is the case of Ann.

The shepherd metaphor of pastoral care represents the way in which God cares for and supports people in distress. This is depicted in what Jesus Christ says in the gospel of John:

*I am the good shepherd the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it.*

*The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, I know my sheep and my sheep know me. Just as the father knows me and I know the father - and lay down my life for the sheep (John 11-15).*

This model provides a great challenge to pastors who serve African people with different problems in their congregations. In African societies, men's dignity is linked to their ability to control their families. Wimberley (1999:55) shares that "*pastoral theologians and pastoral psychologists tell us how devastating it can be to deny and*

*keep from our awareness our feelings of humiliation and shame*". Many of the problems that are experienced by members of congregations involve family issues. It is, therefore, important that pastoral care remain aware of these issues. Gherkin's model of shepherding connects with the ministry of Jesus Christ; which is characterized by compassion. Jesus Christ repeatedly displayed compassion in the face of ignorance, hunger, sickness and even death. He was gripped by compassion when he saw the aimlessness of the common people as "sheep without a shepherd" (Mathew 9:36; Mark 6:34), the sick and the blind among the multitudes (Mathew 14:14; 20:34) and the sorrow of those who had lost loved ones (Luke 7:13; John 11:35).

Jesus Christ's compassion also expressed itself in practical ministry. Out of compassion, he raised the dead (John 11; Luke 7:14), taught the multitudes (Mark 6:34) and healed the sick (Mathew 14:14; 4:23; 9:35; 19:2). When ministering to the needy, Jesus Christ was not afraid to make physical contact. He took the hands of the sick (Mark 1:31; Mathew 9:29) and the demon possessed (Mark 9:27). His fingers touched blind eyes (Mathew 20:34), deaf ears (Mark 7:33) and silent tongues (Mathew 7:33). Most astonishing of all, Jesus touched the lepers - the outcasts of his day (Mathew 8:3; Luke 5:12-13).

Gherkin (1997:42) reminds us that:

*"Our lord and saviour hath left us a commandment which concerns all Christians alike, - that we should render the duties of humanity, or (as the scripter calls them) the works of mercy, to those which are afflicted and under calamity, that we should visit the sick, endeavour to set free the prisoners,*

*and perform other like acts of kindness to our neighbour, whereby the evils of this present time may in some be lightened”.*

In agreeing with this hermeneutical method of approach, this research encompassed all issues within the sphere of Africans and their experiences. An important feature of Gherkin’s (1997) hermeneutical model is the recognition of the importance of providing care for the whole family. This concept could also be extended to the care of the larger family and even the broader community. In this respect, the inclusive narrative hermeneutical model of Gherkin has a lot in common with the African worldview.

## **2.10 CONCLUSION**

Once the research method and technique were identified, the next step in the research process involved collecting the data. Data collection took the form of one-on-one in-depth interviews with participants. These interviews, which constitute the empirical research component of this research study, were conducted with three survivors who were previously sexually abused by their stepfathers when they were young.

## CHAP THREE: THE LITERATURE REVIEW

### 3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the literatures surrounding the concept of child sexual abuse. Several themes shall be discussed, namely the historical overview and understanding of child sexual abuse. This incident emanates from the both the western and African views. Furthermore, the research will explore the perspective of children victims of sexual abuse; with specific reference to what young girls experience with their stepfathers; as it is the case in this research.

### 3.2 SEXUAL ABUSE: definition and experience

The researcher will explore Western writers and then the Africans ones.

Sexual abuse is defined in various ways throughout literature. By investigating some of these definitions, the author aims to formulate a definition that is applicable to context of this study.

#### 3.2.1 Definitions of sexual abuse

Psychologist Madu (2001:121) refer to sexual abuse as an adult, significantly older person, or someone in an authoritative position, who interacts with a child in a sexual way for the gratification of the older person. From a social work perspective, Wallace (1996:58) defines sexual abuse as sexual exploitation or sexual activities under circumstances that threatens or harms the health and welfare of the victim. Parkinson (1993:9), who studied child sexual abuse in Australia, defines sexual abuse as “... *involvement of dependant, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activity with any person older or bigger, which they do not fully comprehend and to which they are unable to give an informed consent.*”

These definitions highlight three elements involved with sexual abuse: a victim, abusive behaviour and an abuser. Parkinson's (1997:9) definition is very clear on naming the victim, proposing that victim is either younger and/or smaller than the abuser, as is the case in this research. According to the author, this is a sound definition of the victim because it acknowledges that it is not only children who are sexual abused, but young girls as well.

All three of the described definitions agree that sexual abuse entails some sort of sexual activity. However, the definition that is provided by Wallace (1996:58) is most clear about the context in which this sexual activity takes place. He names it as circumstance that may threaten or hurt the health of the victim. The full extent of the nature of sexually abusive behaviour is discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Parkinson (1993:9), as well as Madu (2001:121) brings new dimensions to the common idea that an abuser is an adult. Both these definitions recognise that an abuser may be an adult, but also acknowledge that the abuser could be someone in an authoritative position, or someone who is physically bigger or stronger than the victim, regardless of age.

From the above mentioned, the definition of sexual abuse of young girls can be formulated as follows: a person who is older, physically bigger or stronger and /or in an authoritative position, taking advantage of the victim's trust and respect, by coercing her into sexual activity which can be harmful to her health and wellbeing.

### **3.2.2 Nature of sexual abusive behaviour**

Sexual abuse can take place either interfamilial (incest) or extra familial, as in the case of this research where the stepfather is concerned. The abuser in interfamilial abuse is a blood-relative of the victim. In the case of extra familial abuser is either known or unknown to the victim. Regardless, the trauma of the abuse is equally devastating.

Sexual abusive behaviour takes on a number of different forms. These categories are: contact sexual abuse, non- contact sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. Apart from these categories, the issue of rape, as another category of sexual abuse, is discussed.

### **3.2.3 Contact sexual abuse**

Contact sexual abuse implies any physical contact of sexual nature between the abuser and the victim, with the aim of the abuser's sexual gratification. This includes oral- genital contact, intercourse and attempted intercourse, sexual kissing, hugging, fondling of breasts, thighs and buttocks, anal intercourse and masturbation (Madu, 2001:12; Wallace, 1996:58)

### **3.2.4 Non-contact sexual abuse**

Non- contact sexual abuse occurs when the victim is exposed to pornographic material. It also refers to verbal sexual abuse, also known as sexual harassment (Fineran, Bennet & Sacco, and 2001:211). Non-contact sexual abuse also includes voyeurism, exhibitionism and masturbation of the abuser while the victim is watching (Parkinson, 1993:10-11; Wallace, 1996:58)

### 3.2.5 Sexual exploitation

The victim is not physically involved with the abuser, but is rather used for the abuser's financial gain (DRC, 2005:4). This includes prostitution, human trafficking and the using of the victim for the production of pornographic material.

All of the above qualify as sexually abusive behaviour. Yet, it is important to understand that each abusive situation differs. Parkimson (1993:10) rightly states: *"for some sexual abuse occurs just once, and the perpetrator is an acquaintance or a stranger. For others, the abuse continues regularly for years and the perpetrator is a parent or other trusted adult."* When considering Parkinson's argument that for some victims the abuse is a once-off incident with a stranger. It raises the question of rape. Does rape qualify as sexual abuse?

### 3.2.6 Rape and sexual abuse

There are several different opinions regarding the validity of rape as sexual abuse. The documents on sexual abuse suggest that rape differs from sexual abuse. The motivation for this suggestion is that rape is deliberate, violent and unlawful sexual intercourse with a person who does not, or cannot give consent to such intercourse. The document clearly states that rape happens in dangerous and dark places where the rapist is unknown to the victim.

This is a naïve statement, which may even cause further abuse and victimisation. Kaplan (2000:493) is of meaning that these types of statements and perceptions result in women keeping silent about rape. He confirms the author's opinion that rape is, more often than not, committed by someone known to the victim: *"the great majority of rapes are committed by someone the victim knows even well. In fact,*

*about half the rapes are by first dates, casual dates or romantic acquaintances.”*

Kaplan refers here to the statistics on rape in the USA and it cannot be generalized and applied to the South African situation, where the statistics are just as frightening. Taylor and Lutshaba's (2002: 13) research on sexual abuse in South African schools, found that 21% of girls who were raped, indicated that their rapists were relatives and 10 % indicated their boyfriends as their rapists.

What became clear from Taylor and Lutshaba's (2002:13) research on sexual abuse in South African schools is that one third of the rapes that take place in South African schools were perpetrated by teachers. Rapists are, therefore, often well known by their victims. Young girls are also not only raped in dark dangerous places, but in our schools, in our homes and even on our church grounds. It is evidently clear that these are some of the different techniques that are used by rapists and abusers. A rapist induces the sexual act on the basis of force and fear. An abuser may also use force and fear, but also use other influences such as manipulation and coercion to accomplish his goal.

The author agrees with Wallace's distinction between rape and sexual abuse, but considers rape as one type of sexual abuse. Its effect on the victim is also considered just as severe as those of other sexual abusive behaviours.

### **3.3 Understanding the abuser**

Sexual abuser cannot be stereotyped. They appear to be ordinary people: neighbours, youth leaders or family friends. Referring to “them” is also inaccurate, for “they” are so entwined in our society that “they” become “us” (Parkinson, 1997:30).

Yet, there are some warning signs, as indicated by reality on ground through Ann experience. These signs indicate that abusers may also abuse drugs and alcohol, are often with young girls, are in need of sense of power and want to assert authority over others. And as the Christian reformed church in North America's report by the Synodic committee on Physical, Emotional, Sexual Abuse (SCONAB) indicates, "many abusers have also been victims of abuse themselves" (SONAB, 2004:26). Every abuser has a reason and motivation for his behaviour. The popular belief is that having power and control over the victim is the motive for abuse (Hamby & Sugar man, 1999:961). However, James Makepeace (1997:42) considers the cause of the abuser's behaviour not to be aggravated by one factor in his life, but to be influenced by several factors. These factors are interrelated and complicated and can be labelled as biophysical and social factors.

### **3.3.1 Biophysical factors**

Many sexual abusers are young boys? When looking at the male development during adolescence; it is found that this phase is the time of peak physical condition (Louw, 1998: 486). It is the peak of physical strength, stamina, elasticity and sensory observation. As it has already been discussed in the previous chapter, adolescence is characterised by sexual awakening. During this phase, the male reaches sexual maturity. When this sexual maturity is not properly dealt with and assimilated, it may become a weapon of abuse.

### **3.3.2 Social factors**

When attempting to understand what contributes to, or aggravates the abuser's sexually abusive behaviour, it is necessary to take into account the state of families and the gender relations in South African societies. It is the author's opinion that the

state of families is closely linked to gender relations. Within the social context of South Africa, both the structure of families and gender relations are marked by patriarchies

In his article "*Theological Anthropology and Gender Relations*", Koopman (2004:193) describes the underlying essence of patriarchalism as independence and power. Koopman consults theologian Moltmann in defining patriarchalism, who describes it as: "... *the term for an institutionalized system of sexual hierarchy and psychological mechanism for its justification, according to which the man is born and made to rule, while the woman is born and made to serve.*" (Koopman, 2004:193). This patriarchal system is alive and well in South Africa

However, the patriarchal system has seriously been challenged since the government adopted the Beijing platform for action for the advancement of women in South Africa in 1995 (Mogoseti & Ryke: 17). This adoption initiated drastic measures in empowering women. It has given them decision-making roles and ensured economic participation and power.

This sudden change, and challenge to the patriarchal system, has left many men bewildered. These men may experience this empowerment of women as a threat and then retaliate by using physical power (Mogoseti & Ryke, sa, 21), resulting in abuse. In this regard, rape is being considered as one of the most "dehumanising consequences of patriarchy" (Du Toit, 2003:36). It is an assertion of power through an act of humiliation. It is establishing and affirming manhood and masculinity, at the cost of the pain and suffering of the female.

The family whether marked by patriarchies or not, is the primary space where a child learns to interact with people and about the norms and values of his culture

(Louw, 1998:314). When this space is filled with violence and abuse, it is a popular belief that the child will also grow up to be abusive. This belief is strengthened by the social learning theory of psychologist Bandura, which indicates that behaviour is learnt by means of observation and modelling (Makepaeace, 1997:40). It is true that most abusers have been abused themselves (Sconab, 2004:20) but the author does not agree that all victims choose not ever to cause pain and suffering to others.

### **3.3.3 Young girl's victim and experience of sexual abuse**

Victims experience the trauma and effects of sexual abuse, differently due to the influence of several factors. For example, the closeness of the relationship between the victim and the abuser and the duration of the abuse, determine the distress and trauma a victim experiences. Parkinson (1997: 113) gives a clear illustration: "A teenage girl's experience of being groped by a stranger on a train or in a cinema may be very distressing, but is unlikely to affect her as seriously as long-term abuse by her stepfather." Even though the intensity of the trauma is variable, the effects of sexual abuse on adolescent females are a reality and cannot be ignored.

#### **3.3.3.1 Effects of sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse has numerous effects on the victims, and these are far too many to be described within the length of this study. The focus will, therefore, be on the negative effects on the wellbeing of the development of the adolescent female. These include negative effects on sexuality, self-esteem; emotions, intimacy, trust and faith issues.

As we come to consider the effects of sexual abuse, we are faced with the physical effects of sexual abuse, which may have long term consequences through STDs, pregnancy, HIV/AIDS or physical damage that happen during the abuse. By focusing

on the metaphysical effects, I am in no way mean to discount the actual physical trauma that is experienced by victims of sexual abuse.

As seen already mentioned above, sexual abuse is not just about physical acts. Before the physical engagement even begins, sexual abuse is about power relationships, and about a 'would be' perpetrator conditioning his victim for the abuse. The abuser spends time and deliberately prepares the victim to internalize certain perceptions about themselves; the perpetrator and the world around them, in anticipation for the initiation of physical contact. This psychological, emotional, perceptual preparation then is reinforced by the physical act and statements or threats made during the denouement of the perpetrator's quest. These two looks of perceptual change are then reinforced or deconstructed in the ensuing experiences of the victim. Sam Warner is eloquent in stating that, "sexual abuse is productive of feminine identity, not something that simply sits on top of that which already exists" (Warner 2001:120).

- Abusers set up particular versions of identity and experience that construct themselves as blameless, position children as guilty and also dissuade others from asking questions and recognizing harm. It is through the restorability of these 'mind-fucks' that the 'body-fuck' is maintained and that (gendered) identity is stabilized (Warner 2001:122).

Sexual abuse is not an event in the life of a victim. Sexual abuse becomes the defining metanarrative through which other events are interpreted and ascribed meaning, and impacts not only on how the victim lives, but who they consider themselves to actually be.

Russell's research showed that victims of incestuous sexual abuse liked to have children at a younger age than their non-abused counterparts (Russell 1986:118). While comparison between these groups show little variance between those who are married or who never married, there is a dramatic increase from 16% to 28% of the number of women who are divorced or separated from their husbands. Spies (2006:69) explain that sexual abuse links affection, intimacy and so when a victim is married, the intimacy and affection brings the abuse to the fore as well. For victims, marriage may mimic the abuse scenario, as they feel compelled to offer themselves sexually at the whim of the other party, and they also feel silenced from discussing their sexual struggles with others. This silence feels like the imposed silence of abuse, and so some victims break free of marriage to escape the feeling of on-going victimization. Sadly, from Russell's statistic, we see how this places their children at greater risk.

Abusers set up particular versions of identity and experience that construct themselves as blameless, position children as guilty and also dissuade others from asking questions and recognizing harm. It is through the Reiter ability of these 'mind-fucks' that the 'body-fuck' is maintained and that (gendered) identity is stabilized. Hence, the focus in visible therapy is on the tactics of abuse, rather than the physical act itself. **This is because it is the 'mind-fuck', rather than the 'body-fuck', which endures and continues to constitute women.** The details that are important, then, are those that connect current feelings about self and others with the psychological tactics of abuse. Problems are not located within individuals, but rather within the narratives which situate both past and current relationships but which, through reiteration, obscure their own social production. Thus, I am concerned not with who women 'really are' but with how they come to know and be known through

practices of both abuse and therapy. This, then, is about making the tactics of abuse and therapy visible (Warner JSOT article pg. 122).

Moreover, the assumption of innocence brings guilt into being. Not only is a differentiation instigated between so-called **innocent and guilty victims** but, through popular accounts of romantic love, (feminine) innocence and passivity is installed as always already corrupting. Drawing on the metaphor of 'sleeping Beauty', all girls, like Sleeping Beauty, de facto, cannot consent because they are somnolent in their innocence. They, like her, can only be wakened by the violation of imposed sexualisation. Their innocence is destroyed and their maturation complete. But the innocence lost was always guilty. It was the beauty, not yet awakened, that enslaved the prince (abusers) and forced the kiss (abuse). Innocence is, therefore, always already corrupted by incipient (but unknowing) sexuality which precedes and dictates the subsequent violation. Such stories verify the notion of female passivity and culpability, while at the same time denying (Warner JSOT article pg. 123).

Male responsibility: men simply act on invitation and instinct (Warner, 2 2000b). It is only when individual trajectories of guilt are socially situating that normative understandings of responsibility may be disrupted. The limits of innocence: socially individual trajectories.

### **Silencing and Speaking Out**

I argue, therefore, that the assumption that it is always beneficial to talk about abuse should be resisted. Women will have different levels of engagement with their abuse; at different times; in different situations and relationships. Indeed, issues concerning present life experiences may be far more pressing than past concerns. Nevertheless, it may be important to privilege sexual abuse by asking after it, as has been

suggested by a number of authors (e.g. Brown and Anderson, 1991; Lobel 1992; Palmer et al., 1993). This situates women's distress in relation to the productive constraints of previous (and current) relationships, rather than simply un-situated mental (Warner JSOT article pg. 121).

Armstrong says when we consider the prevalence of sexual abuse; it is obvious that the taboo is on speaking about sexual abuse, and not on the act itself (InCourtois 1988:11). Absalom uses the hegemonic power of society to silence Tamar, compared to Amnon's personal power.

### **3.3.3.1.1 Sexuality**

Possibly the most severe and profound consequence of sexual abuse is the effect on the sexuality of the young girls. As the young girls' development phase is primarily marked by sexual maturation, the damage done by sexual abuse during this phase could be irreversible (DRC, 2005:13). An overview on sexual development taking place during puberty has already been given at the beginning of this chapter.

Sexual abuse jeopardizes the young girls' emerging sense of womanhood. She may experience her physical blossoming as a perverse object of provocation to others. In addition to this, SCONAB (2004:27) adds that the victim could associate her developing femininity with the loss of control and a vulnerability to society.

Sexual abuse can also cause a fear of sex (Spies, O'Neil & Collins, 1993:373). In reaction to this fear, sexual arousal awakes feelings of guilt, shame, disgust, pain and humiliation. These reactions may strain the victim's future relationship with her husband. It is also noteworthy that the effects of sexual abuse could also change the sexual orientation of the victim (Parkinson, 1997:130). She may enter into a lesbian

relationship in order to escape the feelings of guilt, shame, disgust, pain and humiliation that were the result of her male abuser. The idea of entering into a sexual relationship with a male is just too painful and difficult.

This is typically an unhealthy and destructive skill developed by the victim, in order to cope with the painful emotions.

Many victims apply unhealthy and destructive skills in order to cope with, or escape, the trauma and distress of sexual abuse. One of these skills, which specifically relates to young girls, is that of eating disorders. In a world where being thin is perceived as being beautiful, many young girls develop eating disorders to meet this criteria. However, the young girl-victims of sexual abuse do not want to be beautiful. They would rather hide their bodies from any sexual attention. This is due to the fact that many victims blame their bodies for abuse; they will harm their bodies in order to avoid further abuse (Spies et al., 1998:373). The victims will therefore try to make themselves unattractive to men by either starving their bodies, or cover it with excessive fat.

### **3.3.3.1.2 Identity formation and poor self-esteem**

An adolescent has to adapt to a physically changing body that is strange and different to the one they had during childhood. With all these changes happening, the young girls' security of knowing who she is endangered (Louw, 1998: 429).

Literature refers to the work of psychoanalyst Erik Eriksson when discussing the young girls' formation of identity (Louw, 1998: 52-55. 429-432; Kaplan, 2000:513-518; Beckett, 2002: 118-121). Eriksson's stage of identity vs. role confusion is

prevalent in adolescence (Louw, 1998:55). During this stage, questions like: “Who am I? Where do I belong? And, where am I going? Have to be asked by the adolescent in order to successfully orientate herself towards an established identity (Kaplan, 2000:513).

However, a victim of abuse does not have a positive outlook on her identity. She learns to see herself through the abuser’s distorted perceptions. She receives the message from the abuser that she is worthless, unimportant, and only good for the gratification of others. Her own needs do not matter. When these messages are internalised, they become her inner beliefs about herself (Parkinson, 1993:116). With such a negative perception, their confidence and dignity become compromised by the condition which makes them to feel dirty and guilty.

### **34. WESTERN PERSPECTIVE ON CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

The consequences of sexual abuse suffered in childhood have been thoroughly studied in adult female populations. However in this case In addition to the study a western perspective in the following lines will give more understanding and clarity on child sexual abuse as per western context and approach.

#### **3.4.1. UNDERSTANDING OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

Glazers (1997), in their second edition of Understanding Child sexual abuse, have tried to elaborate on the understanding of child sexual abuse. The author finds their understanding to be adequately informative to this research. They have divided their theory in two parts as follows:

### **3.4.1.1. Myth and Reality: The Dimensions of Child Sexual Abuse**

The researcher researching on the ground of child sexual abuse, would like to bring to the readers' attention that in recent years, there has been a welcome improvement in the awareness and understanding of child sexual abuse and its associated phenomena state (Glazer 1993:3). A number of carefully conducted surveys have clarified the incidence of child sexual abuse in the western and African context, revealing that it is not, as previously assumed, a rare occurrence, nor one that is confined to obviously 'disturbed' segments of the population (Glazer, 1993:3).

The same process occurred to the sexual abuse of young girls by their stepfathers; as is the case of this research. It has also become clear that many instances of sexual abuse occur within families and that abusers are known to the child victims, often being relatives or adult friends. Concerning this research, the author is connecting the theory as reality because of the experience he had during his interaction the survivors during this research. It is evident that the perpetrators were the people that they trusted the most.

The "warning signs" of sexual abuse are becoming more familiar, and professionals are now less likely to dismiss as fantasy the stories that are told to them by children- although the claims and counter-claims concerning 'ritualistic' abuse have clouded the issue once more (Glazer, 1993:5). The aims and principles of statutory and therapeutic work with the victims of sexual abuse and their families have been matters for serious and vigorous debate, producing clearer guidelines in both areas (Glazer, 1993:6).

Coming back to this research, the author will focus only, on one side which is the young girls' who are in a position of a survivor at this point on time.

“Despite these real advances,” said Stephen, “there are still many uncertainties and confusion surrounding child sexual abuse.” (Stephen, 1998:27). To some extent, this may be due to this particular circumstance that young girls are finding themselves to the people that they trust the most.

The following definitions of sexual abuse will allow us to have an understanding of the type of realities that young girls are experiencing in this regard.

#### **3.4.1.2. Definitions:**

Any attempt to define “sexual abuse of children” is fraught with difficulties, for all definitions are culture- and –bound. They are not based on rigorous scientific inquiry but on values and beliefs (Rudi D. And McLaughlin, 1993: 11). The previous become an eye-opener to the author not to be focusing on the one-sided definition on the abuse of children. This definition articulates precisely what the researcher is researching.

The term “child sexual abuse “is not universally is not accepted, and is frequently interchanged with “sexual behaviour.” Rather than referring to any specific type of sexual behaviour, there appears to be no universally accepted definitions of what constitutes child sexual abuse, although there are many ad hoc formulations and operational guidelines (Spies, 2006:54). These derive mainly from research studies in which investigators have attempted to formulate specific, operational definitions which are nevertheless broad enough to include a wider range of abusive and pontifically abusive experience.

Variations of this kind of abuse are particularly significant because they may explain some of differences in reported statistics on child abuse; as it may sound in the case

of this research where the disclosure of the situation become another frustration to the survivors and subject of shame in her inner sense as an individual. The researcher concur with Wimberley as he states in his book *Moving from shame to self-Worth* (1999); that the difference between shame and guilt is that shame involves global attributions of fault to the entire self while guilt is attributed to a specific act (Wimberly,1999:75).

The most useful definitions combine a clear specification of what is meant by “sexual” with some guidance on the age or developmental level of the participants, sometimes with a clause concerning the experienced evasiveness of the activity and the elements which make it abusive (Glazer, 1993:10).

Thus, Finkelhor (1984) defines ‘sexual victimisation’ as ‘sexual encounters of children under the age thirteen with persons at least five years older than themselves and encounters of children thirteen to sixteen with persons at least ten years older’(Finkellhor,1984:22).

Sexual encounter could be intercourse, anal-genital contact, fondling, or an encounter with an exhibitionist (Finkellhor, 1984: 23). The researcher concurs with the above definitions which confirm the statement by Roberge (1976) that a child is sexually abused when another person, who is sexually mature, involves the child in any activity which the other person expects to lead to their sexual arousal (Roberge, 1976:458). On the same perspective, sexual abuse is defined as the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent, or that violated the social taboos of family roles as is the case in this research. The researcher agrees partially with Finkellhor and Roberge because the experience that

Ann with her stepfather started when she was 6 years old. That experience doesn't necessarily mean that this abuse can only happen when you are a teenager. Reflecting at Finkellhor and Roberge statement which makes to differ with them by connecting it to the reality of Ann, young she was when all this stated. Please rewrite the sentence. The situation goes for a number of years in Ann's family from her earlier age (6 years old) up to the time she could not emotionally take it anymore.

This implies that children can be abused without being aware of it. For instance, some forms of voyeurism, but it usefully draws attention of the central element in sexual abuse: that it is something carried out by the adult for his own sexual purposes, taking the child as an object in the action. This also highlights the way different forms of abuse, which vary markedly in degree of severity and impact, might nevertheless have common underlying purposes and psychodynamic structures (Glazer, 1993:11).

Thus; a young child who does not resist advances by an adult, would still be regarded as having been abused because of the child's lack of knowledge of the social meanings and psychological effects of the sexual encounter. Also, her or his trust in and dependency upon adults mean that she or he would not be in a position to give informed consent (Van Niekerk, 2006:15).

Finally, the child sexual abuse definition which is provided by the Standing Committee on Sexual Abused Children (SCOSAC:1984) usefully ties together most of the various stands present in the other and above definitions, and deserves to be quoted in full. It states:

*“Any child below the age of consent may be deemed to have been sexually abused when a sexually mature person has, by design or by neglect of their*

*usual societal or specific responsibilities in relation to the child, engaged or permitted the engagement of that child in any activity of sexual nature which is intended to lead to the sexual gratification of the sexually mature person. This definition pertains whether or not this activity involves genital or physical contact, whether or not initiated by the child, and whether or not there is dissemble harmful outcome in the short term.”*

### **3.4.1.3. The clinical utility of definitions**

While it may be clear, in principle that an adult that is engaging in sexual activities with a child should be designated as abusing that child, in practice it is sometimes difficult to decide whether the contact is actually abusive or not (Scwartz BG, 1990:8). In my case of research, the consent is qualified and violated.

For example, the boundaries between appropriate affectionate and inappropriate sexual physical contact between adults and children may be difficult to draw; it may not be clear whether an adult is deriving sexual gratification from an action with a child; it may be even less clear whether a child is that anything untoward has taken place at all (German, Habenicht and Futcher 1990: 8-9).

This is a reality which connects to the background of this research where the survivor, Ann, at the age of 6 year could not even know that what her stepfather was doing to her was an offence or abuse. It took time, courage and maturity to start realising that the action was a violation of her dignity.

There are a number of points that arise from these considerations that are eluded by German, Habenicht and Futcher (1990). Firstly, there are many instances in which the adult-child encounter falls within the definitions that are given earlier. In these

situations, such definitions provide useful heuristics for naming the encounter as abusive, and also clarify issues such as whether the severity of the incident or the child's active participation in it should influence the name given to it (German, Habenicht and Futch, 1990:10).

The above statement, to the mind of the author, is soundly controversial by saying 'Child's active participation'. In most of the cases involvement of the child results in a traumatic situation which is driven by fear or the child may be not being aware of the gravity of the action as a vulnerable person under the authority of a trusted person as a father figure. The author opts to differ from the point mentioned above by Jonathan and Albert. Nevertheless, the view adopted here is that the degree of coercion, genital contact, child activity or immediate outcome is all irrelevant to the naming of an adult-child sexual encounter as abusive (Glazer, 1993:8). These encounters are legitimately called 'sexual abuse' because children cannot give informed consent to them; they fear the caregiver and their lives always represent an exploitation of power and betrayal of trust. Secondly, there is a real difficulty with some borderline cases where it is unclear whether something is to be labelled "affectionate physical contact" or "sexual interference". Sometimes these can be differentiated by reference to the child's feelings. If a child is made to feel uncomfortable or worried by the physical attentions she or he is receiving, then this signals something inappropriate. Whether it is always sexual abuse that is going on in this situation is a controversial point, perhaps only to be decided by unravelling the motives of the adult, but at the very least it is inappropriate contact. Otherwise, the general rule that equates 'sexual contact' with some form of genital involvement is a useful one where the appropriateness of physical encounters are raised.

Thirdly, there is the question of when intervention is necessary. But the general answer here can only be “always”. The rationale for this derives from the currently available data on the effects of child sexual abuse. Child sexual abuse is usually experienced adversely by the survivor; it often has serious consequences for the child; these consequences may be long term; they can be ameliorated by sensitive responses on the part of family members or professionals. Perhaps most importantly, for questions of intervention, it is very difficult to predict whether an experience of abuse will have long-term damaging consequences for a particular child. Therefore, therapeutic assessments as well as protective interventions are justified in all cases. Defining something as clearly sexual abuse does not necessarily alter its effects on a child (although it might, because of impact of social responses, but it does alert professionals to the possible severity of the situation, and the care with which it must be treated).

A fourth point that was pointed out by Haugaard and Reppuci (1998) advocates very specific descriptions of the kind of abuse which has been suffered. The final point of interest here is the relationship between child sexual abuse and another form of child abuse (Haugaard and Reppuci, 1998:78). There are some systematic links: for example, sexual abuse sometimes involves physical coercion and injury; adults who were sexually abused as children have a heightened probability of neglecting or physically abusing their children (Goodwin, 1982:45). But there are also differences: many cases of sexual abuse do not involve physical hurt, and some have an affectionate context which is unusual in non –accidental injury or rape by strangers, child sexual abuse is best classed alongside severe emotional abuse in term of its structure and effects. The experience of Ann in this research doesn't show any physical violence from the perpetrator but we consider the emotional abuse and

traumatic implication that Ann experienced while she was sharing the story with the researcher. In the narration, she reached a stage that when she was ten years old, she could not sleep; waiting until the stepfather will do his things and go. The reader can now understand the scars, type and level of trauma that Ann experiences. It will be more relevant to this research to see the relation between the survivor and the abused in the following lines.

#### **3.4.1.4. Survivors and abusers**

In most studies, it is men who appear as the adults in sexual contact with children. Child sexual abuse is, in this sense, a phenomenon primarily connected with the sexuality of men (Schekty and Green, 1988: 47). The same situation that happened during Ann's early age. As a survivor in this study, her stepfather victimized her to satisfy his sexual need regardless of the family bond with her biological mother.

Glaser states that, there are a number of other descriptors of victims and abusers which are of some importance both for theory and practice, but which do not require an extended discussion here (Schekty and Green, 1988:48). The most common time that abusers start the sexual abuse of children is when the victims are between the ages of 8 and 14 years. Although, the range extends right down to infancy, as it is the case of this study, Ann was 6 years old when the abuse has started. Most of the studies place the victim's average age to be below puberty (Haugaard and Reppucci, 1988). There are variations in the age data reported in different studies, but the clear conclusion that arises from them all (Glazer and Strauss, 2001), is that child sexual abuse is not something that occurs primarily to post-pubescent adolescents. Glaser continues by saying that as is now becoming well-recognised, advice to children that

warms them only to keep clear of strangers and unfamiliar places will not protect them very effectively against sexual abuse( Glazer and Strauss, 2001:214).

However, the stereotypical notion that most abuse is incestuous abuse by fathers or stepfathers as the key in this study is also not completely accurate, as much is by other relatives, family friends ( who may concurrently abuse their own children), or other adults in positions of power over the children concerned ( Haugaard and Reppuvi, 1988:87).

In Glazer and Strauss's research (2001), the abuse took place within the family. Girls were more likely to have been abused by parents, grandparents or siblings, while boys were not at risk from people outside the family but those who are known to the (Glazer and Strauss, 2001:210).

A more controversial area of apparently organised multiple sexual abuse is that of claimed instances of 'ritualistic' or 'satanic' abuse. Here, it is alleged that children are sexually assaulted in the context of various quasi-religious rituals, sometimes involving drug abuse or even ritual sacrifice of babies (Spies, 2006:45). This was a way of reflecting on the different type of sexual abuse on children. The same thing is happening here in some of the rural areas and township in South Africa. Some cultural beliefs push people to abuse children sexually; especially new born babies by saying that, they will be healed from Aids. Jonker and Finkelhors say that finding "signs of ritual abuse in day-care centres in the United States", portray the characteristics of this kind of abuse (Glazer, 1993:25). For not to divert the objectives of this study, which is around sexual abuse of young girls by their stepfathers, let us examine the families' implications in the following section.

### 3.4.1.5. Family factors around sexual abuse

In the years between 1993 and 1996, there was very little awareness of children being sexually abused within their families. Instead, the problem was understood in terms of 'perverted strangers' and sexually delinquent' girls (Rudi. and McLaughlin E., 1993:51). This lack of awareness of sexual abuse was strengthened by the influence of psychoanalysis on all casework and therapeutic practice. Freud had denied the existence of the actual abuse by arguing that children fantasize about sexual experiences with their parents (Glazer, 1993:25). The 'rediscovery' of child sexual abuse has generated a fierce controversy about psychoanalytic theory and practice on sexual abuse, in particular, among feminists and psychoanalysts (Rudi and McLaughlin 1993:51). The researcher agrees with the above statement, this becomes a burning debate in our field where the pastoral caregiver becomes challenged on the building of trust by the survivor.

Russell supports feminist campaigns and literature that focuses on violence from men, and highlights the secrecy, denial and disbelief that surrounded sexual abuse. During the 1980s, incest survivors set up self-help groups, and feminists produced theoretical accounts which made links between the abuse of women and children within and outside the family, and which described sexual abuse as an 'abuse of male power (Russell, 1986:46).

Furthermore, professionals also began to recognize the existence of child sexual abuse but their focus was abuse within the family; particularly father-daughter incest. They did not acknowledge gender as central to understanding why abuse occurs. Instead, most professionals fitted sexual abuse into their existing analysis of 'dangerous families'. The researcher saw in relation to physical abuse that the

terminology, itself, can convey important meanings, and this is also true in the terms: incest' and child sexual abuse. Which are often used synonymously? Feminists suggest that the professional focus on incest, which is not the aim of the study, while calling it 'child sexual abuse', and this perpetuates the idea that sexual abuse occurs only or mainly within the immediate family (Rudi and McLaughlin, 1993:51). This statement justifies what occurred in Ann family where her stepfather was somewhat closer to her and was trusted by her. Another trauma that the survivor was going through is what the rest of the siblings and the mother would say if they discovered what going on between her and her stepfather. Eventually, that came out at the later stage of her life when seek emotional freedom. This was a beginning of her healing process by breaking the silence. Rudi and McLaughlin ( 1993) state that the role that survivors played in putting child sexual abuse on to the public agenda, has had an enormous impact on the discourses surrounding it , in particular, the need to listen to children is emphasized by professionals from all theoretical perspectives. The disbelief and denial which is associated with psychoanalysis were replaced by an emphasis on helping children to 'disclose 'the abuse, and on believing what they say (Rudi and McLaughlin, 1993:51-52). The researcher connects with the above statement reflecting on Ann's the experience in this study was not really easy for her to start talking about it, up to the time where she could not taking it any more in her twenties. The researcher was challenged, pastorally, by the following conditional question by researcher on this field of child sexual abuse; "If abuse is seen as a symptom of something wrong in the family, then decisions about "protection" of the child focus on whether or not the family is or can be helped to become a safe place, or whether the child should be removed from home. In practice, much of the discussion focuses on the mother's role in the family, in particular, by asking whether

she “knew” about the abuse, whether she “colluded”, and whether she “failed to protect” her child (Sholevar, 2003:12). By conveying a meaning that should have been known, the intervention may serve to strengthen her denial. This sometimes becomes a very challenging reality. In the case of this study, the survivor has been told by the perpetrator that it is a kind of secret and that if her mother knew about this, she will be mad with her, “let’s keep it to ourselves” said the perpetrator. In this scenario, the mother seems to be innocent in relation to what has been said above. In contrast, a practice that is influenced by the feminists’ perspective emphasizes the responsibility of the individual abuser, and therefore aims to remove him from the home, rather than the child so that the child can remain within the non-abusing part of the family. It also recognizes that the mother also suffered loss and betrayal, that she may need help, in her own right, to accept what has happened in order to be able to make decisions, and to support her child (Laurence; 2006:79). A lot is understood by the author but the mother side is not a focus of this research; which can be recommended for further study in future.

#### **3.4.1.6. The effects of Child sexual abuse.**

The first thing to be said concerning the long-term effects of sexual abuse, according to Rosco (1993), is that we do not really know enough about them. The literature contains a few retrospective evaluations of persons who have been sexually abused in childhood and even a few reports of the longitudinal observation of sexually abused children followed during the ensuing years of childhood (Rosco, 1993:223).

A subtle and prevalent reason for our lack of knowledge is the reluctance of sexual abuse victims to discuss their problems; even with professionals, for many years after the abuse occurred. Such reluctance is further abetted by professionals who,

for whatever reasons of their own, are very hesitant to deal with the problem of sexual abuse, even during long-term counselling or intensive therapy. The reality is that many young adults who have had significant therapeutic contact during which the subject of sexual abuse was either never brought up or, if once mentioned, was assiduously avoided thereafter. This phenomenon is not unrelated to the very strong admonition to the child victim to never tell about his/her experience, often accompanied by the threat of severe punishment if this prohibition is broken. Also involved is the great personal insecurity of sexual abuse victim and the fear that the revelation of the past activities will stir up unbearable shame, guilt, and social disapproval.

This justifies itself through Ann's experience. In this study, even after 19 years, she could not be able to share her experience with even her mother because of what has been said above. The later effects of sexual abuse cannot be simplistically related to the sexual nature of the abuse. The impact of such events upon the child will be marked differently; according to the child's age, stage of psychosexual development, the nature of the abusive act, the frequency of repetition, the amount of aggression involved, and the relationship of the abused to the abuser. There are also the profound effects of the kind of relationships that exist with non-abusing caretakers and with other significant figures in the child's life, both before, during, and after the sexually abusive episodes. In addition to these factors, the response of the environment, when abuse has been revealed, has a significant impact on the ways in which the child understands his/her experience (Rosco, 1993:223-224).

There is now considerable evidence that sexual abuse often has harmful effects on children, although there is considerable variation in the extent of this harm. Reports from clinical populations show that, in childhood, sexual abuse is associated with

depression, feelings of guilt, lowered self-esteem, phobias, nightmares, restlessness, bedwetting, school refusal, adolescent pregnancies and suicide attempts- the whole gamut of mild, moderate and severe childhood psychological difficulties( Conte and Schuerman, 1988:20).

There is also much evidence that the long-term effects of child sexual abuse can be harmful. In the long term, women who have been sexually abused as children have an impaired self-esteem: including sexual self-esteem. They are also more likely to become drug or alcohol addicts, more prone to negative mood and cognitive state, to inter personal problems (Finkelhor, 1984:12).

Finding an explanation is also a crucial part of the process of personal survivor for those who have been abused. “Why did he do it?” and Why me? Are part of the agony experienced by child and adult survivors, who often find part of the agony experienced by child and adult survivors, who often find it hard to move away from blaming themselves (Crosson, 2005:65).

Different theoretical perspectives, again, have different implications for understanding survival, and therefore also for helping. Traditionally, children are seen as showing “symptoms of abuse ‘leading to long term effects’ or consequences”, requiring medical or psychiatric treatment. For example, child sexual abuse is said to be likely to lead to prostitution, to becoming an abuser (for men), or to becoming a victim of abuse, or a colluding mother (for women) (Russel, 1986:112).

In contrast, feminists see abuse not as a ‘Symptom of a disease’, but as an experience which can be survived (Sholevar, 2003:39). Discussions on child abuse can leave us feeling helpless and powerless, and there is a danger that we may

respond to it with disbelief and denial. It can be helpful to remember that human beings do often survive the most horrific experiences, including child abuse (Warner, 2006:26). To stress this, is not to deny the nature of many of their experiences, nor to deny that some children may be completely crushed by them. But it is important to learn about the process of survivors that they are not viewed, and do not see themselves, purely in terms of their experiences, have demonstrated that struggling to find a meaning is a key part of the process of recovery, a meaning that the survivor can live with an which removes self-blame .(Warner,2001:43)

#### **3.4.1.7. Theories concerning child sexual abuse**

A comprehensive theory of child sexual abuse will be a complex matter, including elements that are related to broad social processes as well as to intimate personal relationships and personality factors. To some extent, child sexual abuse can be viewed as a social phenomenon, linked to general attitudes and practices towards children and also to the ways sexual relationships are organised and regulated in any particular society. However, whilst it is important to include this element in any full model of how abuse occurs, for clinical and social-work purposes it is probably more useful to consider 'micro social's features, particularly the psychology of individual protagonists (especially the abuser) and the interpersonal networks in which in abuse occurs. In this and the following chapter we explore the forces that produce child sexual abuse at this micro social level, focusing on the sexuality of men and children, and on the family processes that make abuse more likely to occur. Explanatory models of this kind are extremely contentious and bring numerous general and political issues in their wake, a situation which often gives rise to polarised views, particularly between adherents of feminist and family systems viewpoints (Dalglish et al, 1989:13). We therefore wish to spell out our model in

advance, before the detailed discussion. The argument we offer is that it is important to distinguish between the immediate causes of sexual abuse, which lies in the psychology of the abuser, and the constellation or relationships, social arrangements and values that make particular children more or less likely to victimise. There are significant theoretical, practical, psychological and ethical differences between abusing a child and failing to protect a child against abuse. In general, we follow the suggestions of Finkelhor (1984), who describes a 'four precondition's' model of sexual abuse that distinguishes between the 'motivation to sexually abuse' and three inhibiting factors which have to be heading of 'motivation' are all related to the abuser's person feels towards children) or at the level of sociocultural values (e.g. The 'male tendency to sexualise all emotional needs (Fikelhor, 1984, 56). The 'inhibiting factors' are divided into three classes; internal (e.g. Moral values), external (e.g. Supervision of the child by others) and the child's own resistance. Finkelhor lists numerous factors that can lead to the overcome by alcohol or illness of the child's mother may remove a significant external inhibition; a particular child's mother may remove a significant external inhibition; a particular child's vulnerability may arise from emotional insecurity, isolation or age although there are some gaps in, and debate points about, this model. Overall, it offers a helpful framework for thinking about the sources of child sexual abuse. It focuses attention on links between masculine sexuality and abusiveness, and it makes it clear that it is the abuser who is responsible for a specific act of abuse when it occurs. It also takes account of the evidence that exists for contributory influences to abuse stemming from the emotional needs of others in a family. But it also places these in an appropriate perspective, as factors which are exploited or which make a child more vulnerable as

was the situation of Ann and the other two participants, rather than as abusive acts in themselves.

In the next section, I will provide a more detailed account of those elements in sexuality; which is relevant to understand child sexual abuse. In this, a distinction must be maintained between general factors which make abuse a possibility for anyone, and the influence on individuals who might make a specific person abuse a particular child. As noted in the chapter above, it is becoming clearer that there are more female abusers than it once was thought. Weldon (2008) for instance, he discusses the possible intra-psychic mechanisms that might lead women to abuse children sexually; which are not our focus point in this study hence we are investigating the side of the abuse that emanate from their stepfathers, as well as pointing out society's difficulties in recognising women as possible sexual abusers. Nevertheless, the actual proportion of female to male abuser is very small, so that in searching for systematic features of sexual socialisation which might be connected of men. In the following section, we pay more attention to the discussions on the role of women in child sexual abuse; particularly in the context of the family dynamics that are claimed to be connected with incest.

#### **3.4.1.8. The sexuality of men**

The most common image of men who sexually abuse children is that of the 'dirty old man', the stranger who deceives youngsters and interferes with them as an expression of his own degeneracy. The statistics presented in the previous section make it apparent that, this stereotype cannot be an accurate one, as most victims are abused by someone they know, frequently from within the family as in the case of Ann and the rest of the participants . In addition, as was pointed out earlier,

abusers are often quiet young; in many cases, they are below the age of 20. It is not even clear if all abusers are sexually frustrated in the sense of having no alternative outlets for the expression of their desires: at least some of those who have sexually relations with children are very promiscuous. Variations such as these should promote caution when drawing up any simple classification system for describing abusive men.

There have been some attempts to categorise men who abuse children according to behavioural or personality attributes. A popular example is Weinberg's (1955) scheme, which distinguishes between:

1. 'Endogamy' abusers, who are oriented inwards, towards their families over whom they keep a tightly possessive hold;
2. 'Psychopathic' abusers, who treat all people within their power as sexual possessions; and
3. 'Paedophilic' abusers, whose psychological immaturity make them fixate upon children as their sexual objects.

Although this schema holds some interest, its drawback t suggests that children are abused only by particular groups of abnormal men, who may themselves have had pathogenic backgrounds, and who are distinct from other men. In fact, abusive men form an extremely heterogeneous group. For instance, some seem to be motivated, primarily, by sexual desires, while others are motivated by needs for closeness or by aggression (Finkehor, 1979), or by sentimental images of children (Westcott, 1991). Some may be fearful of sexual contact with adults (Scher, 2001) some may be violent, while others are unassertive (Osofsky, 1995); some are paedophilic in the sense of having an explicit preference for children as sexual partners, while others

have only an attraction towards the specific child with whom they become involved, or have simply taken advantage of a particular situation.

#### **3.4.1.9. Psychoanalysis and the sexuality of children**

The experience of sexual abuse in the life of the three young girls happened during their early age. Where they were not having any idea around what they were doing or was to be done upon their lives. In many recent critiques, Sigmund Freud is identified as prime culprit and originator of the professional tendency to discount sexual abuse or blame it on the victim. His fall from grace is held to have resided in the famous transition from a seduction theory of neurosis, which explained hysteria as the result of real childhood sexual victimisation, to the theory of fantasy, in which patients' memories were interpreted as wishes (Masson, 1986:67). This was in many respects a crucial reinterpretation of material, making the real beginning of psychoanalysis as a discipline devoted to the mapping and explanation of subject experience. But, at the critique runs, it also merged with cultural prescriptions to support the tendency among therapists (perhaps in the part because of their own anxieties), to write off the accounts of sexual abuse that is given by victims as is the case of Ann and other young survivors of sexual abuse as the core of this research.

Instead of being recognised as referring to real events, in many cases resulting in trauma and long-term negative consequences, reports on sexual abuse were often read by psychoanalysts as wishes, incestuous desires mistaken for reality. Even if the genuineness of the abuse was impossible to ignore, it was commonly seen as being provoked by the child - a spilling-over of unconscious desires into a real life. In one sweep, psychoanalysis thus combined a tendency to cover up the existence of child

sexual abuse with a reworking of child-seductress image, once again making the child the source of her own distress.

On the other hand, however, psychoanalysis has made a significant contribution to work in the area of sexual abuse by developing a sophisticated account of the nature and origins of sexuality. For instance, the notion of infantile sexuality, however much, it tends to confuse issues of what might be meant by “sexual”, importantly combats a romanticised image of childhood innocence which actually makes children more vulnerable by denying them access to sexual knowledge. In his outline, Freudian psychoanalysis holds that children are sexual beings from the start of life, with desires which are articulated sensually. Observable behaviours such as sucking are interpreted as expression of these internal sexual feelings in a way that makes them structurally similar to equivalent adult behaviours, but more deeply as an expression of desires for pleasure that centre on the anal region. The famous Freudian progression operates in this way: children have sexual drives which are expressed through the bodily modes characteristic of early periods in development, beginning with the oral region (sucking, biting), moving to the anal area (defecating, soiling) and then to the genital or ‘phallic’ region (masturbatory activity). Following this, there is supposed to be a latency period in which sexual desires withdraw while the child develops her or his social and cognitive skills; this phase comes to an end with puberty. In all this, the drives themselves remain essentially the same, simply developing more coherence and being expressed in progressively more adult ways.

For psychoanalysts, children are not asexual, nor is their sexuality fully formed, and it may well be that it is the transition from infantile behaviour and experience to a rich and free adult sexuality that is most marred by sexual abuse. In particular, given their ideas on the centrality and difficulty of incestuous desires in childhood, analytically

inclined therapists have often been very clear in articulating the deleteriousness of adult-child sexual encounters, particularly for girls involved in liaisons with their fathers. In the psychoanalytic view, father-daughter incest is particularly harmful because it makes the oedipal fantasies of the girl concrete and interferes with the progression of her development towards autonomy, a controlled selfhood, and relationships outside the family.

Some of these come from within the psychoanalytic movement itself. Especially; from object relations theorists

#### **3.4.1.10. Children's sexual behaviour**

Freud's account has also been challenged descriptively, on the grounds that its version of children's sexual interests is factually incorrect. Studies revealing the lack of universality of the Oedipus complex fall into this class, although there appears to be a dearth of literature on what normal childhood sexual behaviour are actually like. Rutter's (1984) review is still the most reliable source for material of this kind, even though it is based on work largely carried out in the 1950s and 1960s. In brief, the important points made in this paper are as follows.

- a. In the male infant, erections of the penis occur from birth, at a frequency of three to eleven times per day in the first few months. These may be unpleasant at first, and are certainly reflect in quality, but infants of both sexes soon begin to rub and touch their genital, along with other bodily parts. Gradually, genital manipulation gains an 'erotic' quality as it is found to be pleasurable. The rate of genitals manipulation is quite high: New, son and Newson (1993) found that 36 percent of mothers of one year-olds reported genital play in their

children, with pulling the penis by boys much commoner than genital stimulation by girls. Orgasm-like responses have been observed as early as five months, but usually this occurs later.

- b. Genital interest increase between the ages of 2 and 5 years. The study of middle-class American children by Westcott et al. (1991) found that about half the boys were reported to indulge in sex play or genital handling; the rates are probably lower in girls (about 16 per cent).
- c. Games involving undressing or sexual exploration are common by the age of 4, with wide range activities with both other children and an increase of activities being shown by pre-schoolers. Johnson notes that, ' Exhibitionistic and voyeuristic activities with both other children and adults are characteristic, masturbation occurs, children attempt to fondle their mother's breasts, and it appears from the nature of their play that urination is associated in children's minds with sex activity' (Johnson, 1993:325).
- d. There is no 'latency' period in the sense of a time in middle childhood behaviour may be more concealed. Sexual activity actually increases during this period: in boys, rates of masturbation rise from around 10 per cent at 7 years to 80 per cent at 13; heterosexual play is shown by about a third of boys at the age of 8. The rates are lower for girls, but the rising pattern is the same. These findings are also supported by Goodman (1993) study of children's sexual thinking: although children show more inhibitions in talking about sexuality at this time, they also show increasing interest in, and knowledge of sex.

- e. Homosexual play in boys (which mostly consists mutual handling of genitals) and girls shows a gradual rise during childhood, reaching 25 to 30 per cent at the age of 13.

Although this does not bear specifically on Freudian Theory, it is worth noting that sexual experience among adolescents is fairly extensive, although perhaps not as extensive as is sometimes represented. Schofield (1995), whose survey was based upon a national random sample of English 15-19 year-olds, found that most teenagers had had their first serious contacts with the opposite sex between the ages of 12 and 14, the girls earlier than the boys. Sixteen per cent of Schofield's samples were regarded as 'sexually experienced'. A later British study by Faller (1987) suggests that rates increased in the 1970s as 51 per cent of girls and 31 per cent of boys were 'fully experienced'; 12 per cent of Girl and 31 per cent of boys were 'fully sexually experienced' by the age of 16. Other studies confirm the general trend of these findings (Goodman, 1993).

With the exception of findings on the latency period and, to a lesser extent, the Oedipus complex, the results of the studies that are summarised above, generally support psychoanalytic views of the existence of infantile sexuality. It is less clear that sexual development occurs through the psychological stage progression which is postulated by Freud, and even less likely that his description of femininity is accurate. But it does seem that children learn the pleasurable possibilities of masturbation early on, and that the extent and sophistication of their sexual interests and knowledge accumulates

throughout their childhood. Children discover bodily pleasure and gradually learn the full extent of sexual meanings; they have fantasies about sexual acts, child-bearing and birth; they are active participants in their sexuality rather than innocents to be ignored or kept ignorant. None of this, however, changes one central fact about child sexual abuse. Over and over again, it has to be restated that child sexual abuse is a common phenomenon in reality, that the victims of child sexual abuse are victims, that children who are looking for sex, those children who do attempt to sexualise affectionate relationships do so as a learnt sequel to particular experiences; usually through being sexually abused. Whatever fantasies or wishes children, they can define and manipulate their desires as they wish.

### **3.5. AFRICAN APPROACH ON CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

Alfred statement is by saying, is that investigating sexuality in Africa beyond the load of Christian, and colonial, patriarchal connotations is no easy matter. Particularly so, because the keen obsession with 'sexuality', which accompanied the colonial intervention, did not seem to be matched by a similar ideas on sexuality from the African context The important African systems of kinship and marriage was fertility, not sexuality as such. Compounding the issue is a certain uncertainty regarding what actually counts/ counted as 'sexual'. Kendall (1999) reports from her work in Lesotho that the women she interviewed, who engaged in what is seen with Western eyes would be same sex practices, did not see this behaviour as sexual at all. To them sexuality had to do with penetration. From their point view, "you cannot have sex unless somebody has a Koai (penis)." Thus: No koai, no sex." This means that

women's ways of expressing love, lust, passion, or joy in each other are neither immoral nor suspect, (Kendall 1999:167).

The answer was that such practices did not exist. This has to be understood that same –sex practices or other practices did not exist. This has to be understood that same-sex practices or other practices considered 'unnatural' in the contemporary European context were not forbidden in this group, or even considered unnatural, whereas Autenreith concluded that they did not exist at all (Weinberg 2001:11). Same sex practices in Africa contexts seems to have been quite effectively silenced, even to the extent that the heads of states, nowadays, claim these to be Western imports. A rapidly increasing bodies of research shows that this not to be the case (Kendall 1999:88).

A notion regarding a 'Culture of silence' seems to have currency in certain African contexts, indicating a "socially accepted behavioural constraint" dictating "women's reserve, modesty and discretion in sexual relations" (Osofsky, 1995:193). On closer look, however, the usefulness of this notion is doubtful; it tends to merge all sorts of different silences together into one. What seems to be important, in an initial phase, is rather to identify different types of silences. In this vein, one type of silence has to do with the fact that some important ways of structuring sexuality takes place through proceedings that are often per formative rather than discursive. Commenting on Audrey Richard's puzzled confusion when attending the Bemba chisungu ritual of female initiation in 1930s, Henrietta Moore points out that, this is an uphill struggle. Of course the missionaries have not worked in vain; in South Africa, too, the Madonna/whore discourse is active. Local studies have found that " women are viewed and view themselves as 'slags', 'sluts' or ' loose' if they are sexually active and with multiple partners; while men are congratulated for such behaviour. Such

language also reproduces female sexuality as receptive, as a vessel to receive male sexuality (seeing women) as either pure (or asexual) or impure (and sexual)” (Scher 2001:8). Generally, according to Tamara shefer, “sexuality gets framed as a male domain, in which men control and set the terms, and to which women must be inducted and guided” (Scher 2001:10). This is the well-known theme of the male actor and waiting virgin. But as Scher also insistently points out, :”there is a need for the development of discourses which challenge the negative construction of girl’s/women’s sexuality and sexual desires, and put forwards a positive acknowledgement of women as sexual agents” (Scher 2001:14). The aim of this chapter has been to help in making the development of such discourses possible, through the auxiliary tasks of de-stabilizing existing notions, venturing feminist readings and mapping silences, thus trying to clear a space, as it were, for alternative discourses.

### **Preliminary conclusion**

Sexually abused children face many imposing obstacle to disclosure; In addition to the dependency and vulnerability in horrent to childhood from the western contest or African one. Therefore, many children victims fear they will not be believed or helped, research indicates that these fears are borne in reality for too many children, resulting in lack of legal and /or therapeutic intervention (Abel, 1998).

Despite a wealth of clinical literature on motivational factors that inhibit children from disclosing sexual abuse.

## CHAPTER FOUR: TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL ABUSE

### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter will be focusing on the traumatic experiences of sexual abuse, which will be relevant to the author to reflect on the theoretical aspects of Trauma in sexual abuse, the impact of sexual abuse on young girls, the psychological impairment of child sexual abuse survivors and sharing of three case studies of sexual abuse experiences.

### 4.2. Definition of trauma

The above drive the author to connect to what Prof Dreyer indicates in her trauma lecture held on the 21 February 2011 at university of Pretoria, by rephrasing the definition of Trauma from Hampton who says that: "Trauma is a paralysed, overwhelmed state, with immobilization, withdrawal, possible depersonalization, evidence of disorganization." She continues further by saying that victim will feel to be objectify, not feeling like an human being anymore not able to concentrate and not able to perform regular activities (Hampton, 1978:90).

This is certainly the experience that Ann went through before she decided to break the silence of her traumatic situation; as a result of being sexually abused by her stepfather. On the same note, Besharov defines "Trauma as an emotional state of discomfort and stress resulting from memories of an extraordinary, catastrophic experience which shattered the survivor's sense of invulnerability to harm" (Besharov, 1985:18).

To reflect on what Besharov stands for, Ann's experience was a serious discomfort emotional situation while she was dealing with the dignity of the all member of her family.

To reconnect to those traumatic memories as say above which justify what Ann was experiencing up to the time she regained sense of her life and dignity, it is imperative for the author to bring to this research the following theories.

### **4.3. Theoretical Aspects of Trauma in sexual abuse**

Finkelhor and Browerne (1986) proposed a model to explain the traumatic effects of sexual abuse. Which sound to the author to be topical and informative to the current world? Both authors identified four trauma-causing or “trauma genic” factors, namely: traumatic sexualisation, powerlessness, stigmatization, and betrayal. Let’s I elaborate the above in details as follows:

- *Traumatic sexualisation* occurs through the sexual stimulation and reinforcement of the child’s sexual response so that the child learns to sexual behaviour to gratify a variety of nonsexual needs, this leads to inappropriate and premature sexual activity, the misperception of sexual self-concept, and deviant patterns of sexual arousal. This was exactly what Ann went through in her earlier age when her stepfather was coming to her day and night to gratify his sexual arousal. On the other hand, it was a premature sexual activity to the young girl and at the same time, a nonsexual need to her.
- *Powerlessness* refers to helplessness occurring during the sexual assault and the child’s inability to stop it, leading to fear and anxiety.

During the interview Ann’s response reveals that she found herself in a position where she could not stop any more and the fear and anxiety took place in her life. Every night she could not sleep waiting for her stepfather to come in her bedroom to perform his evil.

- *Stigmatization* describes the victim's sense of being "damaged" and blamed for the molestation, which is reinforced by peers and family members. This leads to shame, guilt, and low self-esteem, analogous to the concept of "scapegoating" in the literature on child physical abuse.

This is a fact, all the three survivors of child sexual abuse; in my interaction with them, they have shared the same experiences which lead them to shame, guilt, and low self-esteem. Wimberly, in his book *moving from Shame to Self-worth*, defined Shame as feeling unlovable (Wimberly, 1999:11). This gives a way to Stigmatisation and bridges the survivors to feel unlovable; even though they were in that circle of secrecy and personal disappointment.

- *Betrayal* occurs when the victim experiences cruelty and disregard at the hands of a trusted caretaker from who love and protection are expected. It is exactly what the situation was between Ann and her stepfather. It was a sense of betrayal because Ann had trust and a lot of respect for the father figure in that house. However, materialised itself in that manner. Betrayal by a physically assaultive parent may lead to disillusionment, distrust of others, hostility, and anger.

This "trauma genic" model appears, to be a useful tool in organizing our understanding of the impact of sexual abuse. This model might also be applied toward intervention and research in the field; which is not the tool used in this research. Finkelhor and Browne did not differentiate acute and chronic stressors among the four factors. They emphasized the over determined relationships between the traumatic components of sexual abuse and the resulting symptoms, i.e., depression might be derived from a combination of stigmatization, betrayal, and helplessness.

This become obvious, Ann was able to break the silence, on time before it could reach such a stage.

It would be important to add a temporal perspective to the trauma genic model in order to explain the development of immediate and long-term Squeal. Child sexual abuse might be regarded as a periodic infliction of intense, overwhelming sexual and aggressive stimulation which is superimposed upon a chronic background of pathological family interaction, including stigmatisation, betrayal, role reversal, chronic sexualisation and seductiveness, and invasion of psychological and physical boundaries. The acute sexual assault, including traumatic sexualisation and powerlessness, would produce fearfulness and anxiety-related symptoms such as nightmares, sleep disorders, hyper-vigilance, post-traumatic stress syndrome, and psychosomatic symptoms and dissociative responses. The underlying long-term family dysfunction, producing stigmatization and betrayal, would give rise to guilt, shame, low self- esteem, mistrust, paranoid symptoms, and pathological defences. Disturbances in sexual behaviour and gender identify might stem from the traumatic sexualisation occurring in both the acute molestation and the chronic sexual overstimulation by the family. The tendency to actively or passively re-enact or re-create the sexual encounter might be similarly derived from acute (post-traumatic stress syndrome) and long-term (identification with the aggressor) traumatic elements. The interaction between these acute and long term variables is likely to potentiate their pathological impact. Differentiating the acute and chronic traumatic elements is consistent with psychoanalytic theories of shock and cumulative trauma.

Severity of both acute and long-term symptoms would vary as a function of following:

- i. Age and developmental level of child;
- ii. Onset, duration, and frequency of abuse;
- iii. Degree of coercion and physical trauma;
- iv. Relationship between the child the perpetrator;
- v. Child's pre-existing personality ;
- vi. Familial response to disclosure;
- vii. Institutional response; and
- viii. Therapeutic intervention.

#### **4.4. Psychological Impairment of Child Sexual Abuse' Survivors**

The existing literature on the impact of child sexual abuse and, more specifically, incest has been limited almost entirely to the anecdotal clinical material and uncontrolled studies. Some observers (Bender & Blau, 1937; Burton, 1968; Landis 1956; Yorukoglu 7 Kempf, 1966) have proposed that sexual abuse of a child by an adult may note psychologically damaging; while many others have noted the prevalence of psychological symptoms. While the latter group is constituted by most recent studies of child sexual abuse, methodological deficiencies render the findings confusing and inconclusive.

Despite a lack of methodological rigor reminiscent of the early child physical abuse literature, some consensus exists concerning immediate effects and two dimensions of long-term psychological impairment; including general psychopathology and sexual behaviour.

*i. Short-term Effects*

A rather consistent pattern of fearfulness and anxiety-related symptoms has been described in sexual abused children. Sleep disturbances, insomnia, and nightmares have been cited by Lewis (1981). Somatic complaints and psychosomatic disorders were frequently observed (Adams, 1992); described fear reactions among sexual abuse victims extending to phobic avoidance of all males. These children also were afraid of physical injury as a consequence of sexual contact and feared retaliation by the perpetrators.

The degree of traumatization will be influenced by the age of the child, the extent of threats, coercion or force, and concomitant physical injury. Severe traumatization can produce a full-blown post-traumatic stress disorder (to be described in the next section on long-term Sequelae).

*ii. Long-term Sequelae*

*General psychopathology*

- *Mistrust:* Herman (1981), Shengold (1999) have described the inability of sexually abused children to establish trusting relationships with adults. Their achievement of basic trust is compromised by the father's breach of his parental role and may be compounded by the mother's denial or failure to protect the child from the incestuous activity. The child can no longer look to her parents for support and self-validation. Through the process of generalization, other adults and potential love objects might be considered untrustworthy and unpredictable.
- *Poor self-image:* Shengold (1999) refers to the "damage goods" syndrome in which the sexually abused child feels physically damaged or altered by

the sexual encounter. This is reinforced by critical and hostile responses from individuals in the environment. Shengold also described reactions of shame and guilt among sexually abused children. Shame and guilt are likely to be intensified when the child experiences sexual pleasure, which is heightened by gratification of phase-specific sexual fantasies. The child's fragile self-esteem is further eroded.

- *Depression:* Depressive symptoms have been observed in sexually abused children. Vizard (1995:740) indicated that adolescent sexual abuse victims were more vulnerable to depression than those of latency age. Simon and Whitbeck (1991) described suicidal behaviour in sexually abused adolescents, while Anderson (1981) reported case histories of four adolescent girls who attempted suicide following the disclosure of sexual abuse.
- *Hysterical symptoms and Character traits:* these have been noted by Goodwin (1982), who found a prevalence of hysterical seizures in adolescent girls as a sequel to sexual abuse. Hysterical symptoms might represent the child's attempt to "wall off" traumatic impressions of the incest through primitive defences such as denial, isolation of affect, and splitting. The most extreme dissociative reactions may result in multiple personality disorder. In fact, sexual and physical abuses are the most frequent antecedents to multiple personality disorder. In fact, sexual and physical abuses are the most frequent antecedents to multiple personality (Saunders, 1991:66).
- *Social withdrawal and impaired peer relations:* Adams (1982) reported inadequate social skills, difficulties in interpersonal relationships, and

social withdrawal in young sexual abuse victims. Shengold (1999) described how sexually abused families discourage separation-individuation of the target child and the attainment of peer relationships.

- *Impairment of body image:* Shengold (1999) also described the fear of physical damage present in sexually abused children, particularly in those cases where actual injury occurred. These children were preoccupied with concerns about permanent damage to their bodies and fears that they would be unable to experience normal sex lives and have babies in the future. Complications such as pregnancy or venereal disease as a result of incest further aggravate distorted bodily perceptions.
- *Poor school performance:* sudden drops in school performance have been observed by Goodwin (1982). The sexually abused child might experience difficulty concentrating in the classroom due to preoccupation with the incest and family tensions. Social withdrawal extended to the school setting can progress to school refusal; while anxiety and guilt can lead to impulsive, acting-out behaviour in the classroom.
- *Post-traumatic stress disorder (post-traumatic stress syndrome):* Goodwin (1985) maintains that most sexual abused survivors, who request treatment, meet the criteria for post-traumatic stress syndrome, i.e., fear, startle reactions, anxiety, repetition, re-enactment of or flashback to the trauma, sleep disturbance and depressive symptoms, ego constriction or regression, and explosive and maladaptive expressions of anger.

Chronic or delayed post-traumatic stress syndrome may occur in adults who have been sexually molested during childhood. These women often

seek psychiatric treatment for depression, sleep disturbance, and sexual or relationship problems. In the course of their therapy, they often appreciate for the first time the link between their current symptoms and prior victimization. Lindberg and Distad studied 17 adult women who entered individual therapy and average of 17 years after experiencing sexual abuse during childhood. They manifested such symptoms as intrusive imagery of the sexual violence, feelings of detachment or constricted affect, sleep disturbance, guilt, and intensification of symptoms when exposed to events resembling the sexual abuse trauma. As a result, Ann experienced varying degrees of sexual dysfunction as an adult; hence, she has decided to break the silence.

- *Borderline personality disorder:* Stone (1984:76) reported that a history of sexual abuse was common in adult patients with borderline personality disorder; particularly in females hospitalized for this condition. Herman and Van der Kolk (1987) attributed the higher incidence of borderline personality disorder in females to the more widespread sexual victimization of girls. They postulate that early experiences of violence occurring within the developing child's system of primary attachments may produce psychological and psychological- sociological disorders. These authors also cite the frequent history of physical abuse during the childhood of adult borderlines.
- *Disturbances in sexual behaviour and gender role:* on purely logical grounds, one would anticipate child sexual abuse experiences to have an adverse impact on subsequent sexual; therefore, it is not surprising that this finding is reported in many studies. Frigidity and promiscuity are

frequently noted; while Kempe regarded sexual abuse as a training ground for prostitution (Kempe, 1984:44). Kempe states that these young children were readily orgasmic and or maintained a high level of sexual arousal. Their highly catheter focus on sexual learning detracted from sexual relationships and become arousal by routine physical or psychological closeness.

Brant and Tisza speculate that sexually abused children could be at risk for repeated sexual misuse. They also maintained that these children provoked further sexual contact, as a vehicle for obtaining pleasure and need satisfaction and as a means of mastering the original trauma (Baldwin, 1990:45). Psychoanalytic treatment of six women who had been raped during childhood cited their tendency to repeat the traumatic events with adult partners or through their own children (Miller, 1978:78).

#### **4.5. Sharing three case studies of sexual abuse experience**

Being sexually abused is a risk for becoming an abuser, but most survivors have enough protective factors that they do not. These persons can be thought of as the wounded well. Some survivors have a few risks and many protective factors, but abuse children once or twice as teenagers and then stop. These persons can be thought of as naïve experimenters. The following are three case studies of adult survivors. They had several risks for poor outcomes, but both had the essential protective factors: emotionally expressiveness and lack of interest in sexually abusing children.

### **Case study 1:**

Carine was the elder of two children of semi-alcoholic mother and a stepfather living in marginal economic circumstances in Soweto. Her mother and the stepfather frequently argued and fought. Carine felt her mother was not interested in her and seemed far away when she tried to talk to her. The young brother was mother's favourite to whom she gave all her love.

Carine was attached to her stepfather. She felt close to him and believed he returned her warmth. The stepfather, however, often beat her with his hands or a belt until she was black and blue, and his favourite saying was "I will knock you through the wall" sometimes he would make her hold two electric wires in her hands while he turned on the current to give her shock in order to remind her that he was the boss, and she must obey him. By the age of seven, the stepfather was having regular sex-play with Carine; some fondling having occurred earlier, possibly at age of four. He would ask, "Do you want me to make it feel good down there?" and Carine would answer "yes". This soon progressed to intercourse which continued for several years. Carine enjoyed the closeness of the sexual activity but also felt it was wrong because her stepfather admonished her not to tell. Mother was very rejecting of the father sexually and repeatedly told him to leave her alone. Mother was aware of the abusive sexual relationship between the two, because after an argument with the stepfather she would encourage Carine to go to him, sleep with him, and bring back some cash so that she could buy a bottle of liquor.

When Carine was 13, her stepfather committed suicide by blowing off part of his face and the top of his head with a shotgun in the bedroom while Carine and her mother were cooking dinner. After the funeral, on a cold, grey day, Carine came back home

and went into the bedroom. She recalls, “There I saw bits of flesh and hair on the wall and ceiling- all that was left of my stepfather. He was the only man I ever loved, and the only person who ever loved me”.

Carine had her first boyfriend, at 14, and he was someone who made her feel beautiful and fine. She began having intercourse with him frequently and enjoyed it. However, in public he fought with her and treated her as “something to wipe his feet on “. Years later, she still dreamed and fantasized about him even though she realised life would not have been good with him. At 15, she began dating cadets at a banker and loved being treated “like a lady”. Between the ages 18 and 21, she describes having affairs with 32 different men and, at times, “carrying on “with as many as three men in one day. She married at 22, a man who was patient, kind and considerate towards her. Nevertheless, she continued to have some affairs and, at times, found her husband physically repulsive. She felt she had “ruined” her husband by avoiding sex with him, thus making him become cross, angry and critical toward Papy, the older of her two sons. Carine has been extremely ambivalent, at times feeling love for him, but more often feeling disgust and hatred. She often wished that she could get rid of him or that he would die. For various misbehaviours, she would beat him with her fists or whip him with a belt or a board .she said, “He has all my faults, I have tried to beat him all his phobias out of him. I know it’s not sensible, but I cannot control myself. I think he must be me and I’ is a combination of my mother and my stepfather. My mother wouldn’t pay attention to me, and my stepfather would beat me. I would say to Papy, “I will knock you through the wall’, just like my stepfather said to me “. Carine felt she had brainwashed her husband into also yelling and screaming at this boy to whom he had previously been very good. She felt she ruined them both and felt very guilty about it. “I want to get rid of them both;

I want them both to die. But I have thought of suicide myself because I have been ruining them.”

Toward a younger son, Nkululeko she felt quite differently. She loved him dearly and felt a warmth and affection for him that she had not known before that she was capable of feeling. She surmised that he was like her younger brother to whom her mother had given all her love and attention. This relationship encouraged Carine to believe that inside her somewhere there was something good and decent.

Carine was puzzled about her own identity. She said, “I think Papy must be me, and I am a combination of mother and stepfather. When I would talk to mother, she would be far away and not answerer. I do the same thing with Nkululeko. It was the stepfather who used to beat me; now Papy is me, and little Nkululeko is my brother, Ndumisane. My mother gave her love and protection to Ndumisane”, another time, she said, “I don’t know yet who I really am. I am beginning to think I am somebody and know a little bit about who I am, but I am having trouble becoming it and being something. I don’t know whether I am my mother or my stepfather or Ndumisane or a combination of all of them, or whether I am my children”

In this tragic story, we see all the themes of economic difficulty, alcoholism, parental conflict, maternal deprivation, sibling rivalry, physical abuse, father-loss by suicide, and social isolation. Sexual abuse was just one more event in a complex drama of disturbed, unhappy family life. To the casual observer, Carine was an attractive, popular, young married woman with two children, not too different from other young matrons who lived on a military base with their armed-service career husbands. Yet, beneath the surface of her life, she is seriously troubled- psychologically and behaviourally.

With unusual clarity, she describes many of futures commonly seen in those who have been sexually or physically abused. Her low self-esteem, chronic depression, inability to find satisfactory pleasure in life, and bewilderingly un-integrated sense of identity are all quite obvious. The physical abuse of her older son seems related to her identification with a father who beat her as child, and this is reinforced by identification with an unloving, emphatic, uncaring mother. Her desperate, frantic, compulsive search for a man to love and be loved by, begging at age 14 and continuing in various forms up to present, appears to be related to memories of the warm closeness she had with her father, including the sexual abuse, and the unresolved grief-reaction to his suicide when she was 13, she over-idealised the loving side of her ambivalence toward him and never been able to find an adequate replacement. Her promiscuous, sexual pattern with men is undoubtedly related to the sexualisation of the love relationship with her stepfather, but the desperateness of the search itself has more potent, deep roots in the effort to find somewhere a replacement for lack of basic, caring love from the mother in her early life, and the need to find some way to get approval and acceptance. Her inability to enjoy sexual activity is at least partly the result of residual guilt in relationship with her stepfather. Yet, this guilt is not so much the feeling of having done something wrong sexually with him, but much more that she was not able, even in her sexual relationship, to make him happy enough to prevent the suicide. Carina was aware that her sexual behaviour was not really acceptable in society, which led to some feelings of low self-esteem, but she did not exhibit a true sense of guilt about it. This is understandable if we consider the fact that her earliest, most potent superego identifications are with the mother who encouraged the sexual relationship with the stepfather who accepted, approved, and appreciated the sexual activity, Carine's

recurrent, futile attempts are a distortion of the normal, healthy hope of having sexual relation with a true activity is at least partly the result.

## **Case Study 2**

Margaret was abused in toddlerhood by her father a few times and by two other men; once by each. Both men were family acquaintances. She hardly remembers her stepfather's sexual abuse, but she recalls the smell of beer on his breath, his sense of urgency and fear, his breathing, and the pressure of his penis against her vulva. The second time she was abused, she was about six and the abuse involved a man who lived across the street from her putting her hand on his erect penis through his pants pocket and rolling her hand around his penis. She was afraid to tell anyone. The man moved soon afterward.

The third time, she was about twelve, when another man fondled her breasts. She was too ashamed and embarrassed to tell him to stop or to tell anyone what he had done. She simply avoided him, as she had avoided the man who put her hand on his penis. She did not tell about these abusive episodes because she was confused and embarrassed. She did not think she would be punished.

## **Margaret's Emotional Development**

Margaret's stepfather was not physically abusive and was proud of her accomplishments in music, sports, and schoolwork. When he was in a good mood, he was a funny, attentive stepfather. Margaret felt very close to her mother, older sister, and two friends whom she knew all her life from early childhood to adulthood. She could talk to her sister, mother, and friends about what was troubling her, and she often did. These family members and friends encouraged Margaret to pursue

her interests and were themselves good at many things and popular with their own friends.

### **Margaret Sought Professional Help**

Margaret did not have major issues with depression and anxiety and had the resources to imagine a positive future and to achieve her dreams. Sexually abusing children did not cross her mind, but as a young adult, she had a series of problems with jobs and boyfriends and sought therapy for several years and then spent three years in self-help groups for adult children of alcoholics.

As a result of her participation in therapy and self-help groups, Margaret gained even more confidence in herself, went to medical school, and is a well-known academic physician, specializing in child neurology. At the age of forty-three, she has a long-term relationship with a man who is a college professor.

### **Case study3**

Mike's life story is an example of a man who was not sexually, physically, or psychologically abused and neglected as a child or teen. In fact, he described a happy childhood that went wrong after the one remaining sibling besides himself left the family home when Mike was twelve. Despite being raised in what appears to be a "good enough" family, Mike sexually abused his stepdaughter, June, for several years, beginning when she was three. He also raped his wife many times and beat her as well.

He had the qualities identified earlier as characteristic of persons who abuse children sexually. He appeared to have capacities to detach from his emotions and the emotions of others. He never discussed personal, painful problems with others. He believed he could do whatever he wanted regardless of what others wanted. He believed he was entitled to be sexual with his stepdaughter, and he acted on these beliefs.

The youngest child of seven children and the only son of a working class, two-parent family, Mike was smart, handsome, and personable. His older sisters and his parents doted on him. His parents and his sisters, all married, had good incomes, owned their own homes, and were law-abiding, contributing members of their communities. He went to church every week with his parents, and he liked going. His friends were other children from the church and from his neighborhood. His parents did not drink alcohol, and they socialized with other families. They were married for thirty-seven years. The marriage ended when Mike's father died at age of seventy-five. Mike spent a lot of time with his father who taught him how to repair cars, how to build houses, and how to care for the house and yard, which Mike said was "immaculate." Mike appeared to respect his father, He said

I learned a lot of stuff from him. A lot of it I didn't use later on. He gave me a good example, but I chose not to follow it.

He said his father was always busy, always doing something for work or around the house and yard. "The only time he wasn't working, he was sleeping," he said. Mike did not like to talk about his father; who died when Mike was in his early twenties. He regretted that he had not gotten to know his father better. He said, "I still have a lot of

pain about talking about him.” He did not elaborate on the sources of his pain, but at least he acknowledged some.

Mike’s mother was a homemaker who occasionally worked part-time. She was an excellent cook and an organized homemaker. After her husband died, she did not remarry and bought her own home in a neighborhood to be close to Mike and his family and to two daughters and their families. Mike said that he felt like he was an only child because his siblings all were married and out of the home by the time he was in his early teens. A sister six years older than him was like his second mother. She would take care of him when his mother was working.

Things changed for Mike when he was an early teen and his sister left home to get married. He began using drugs and alcohol, no longer wanted to go to church, and began to disobey his parents. He dropped out of high school and worked at low-paying jobs. In one job, he became angry at the boss and vandalized the workplace as revenge.

He said he abused his stepdaughter, June, because he liked doing it. His description of the abuse illustrates many of the points made earlier about what perpetrators say about child sexual abuse. This is what Mike said in his own words.

I don’t think about why I did it too much. There’s lot of different reasons why I did it. Number one was because I liked it. I liked the control and what I felt was intimacy or whatever. She and I didn’t have anybody else. It was like a challenge, too, to get her alone. That part was almost more exciting than actually having sex with her, setting everything up just to get her alone. It took a lot of my time and a lot of my energy to do that, a lot of preoccupation, a lot of planning involved in it.

I had to think what time her mother gets home for sure. She worked part-time. So she got off different times. I knew if I had to pick her up or if she is getting a ride of

some. So she may come walking in. Keeping June scared, more or less. What's going to happen to her if she tells? An awareness of where the kids are. I always knew where they were at. I used a lot of verbal threats. Mom would leave or something.

At the beginning, I guess I used to think that it was good to do this. She was younger. She believed me then. When she started to resist, it turned into threats and manipulation with money. Or 'You're grounded,' or 'You're not going to get anything.' 'You can't go there. You can't go here, if you don't do this for me.' That nobody would want her, stuff like that. I used a lot of shaming.

So it went from caring, what I felt was caring, down to stronger forcing, towards the last three or four years, actually. June was convenient. She was always there.

There's no stopping once, I started. There was no turning back after that. I just figured that I enjoyed it and why stop. Why tell anybody because I'd get thrown in prison then.

The actual sex — I liked that. Then the control, being in control of her life completely was a thrill for me. I thought about it more than I thought about my wife. She occupied a lot of my time.

I don't think of people's feelings. I still have a hard time with that. I'm pretty insensitive about other people. I'm really self-centered. It's just selfish, sexual gratification and that's all. That's about all there is to it.

She was a pretty girl--no question. I mean, other people say that, too. I looked at her other than just an object--also as a pretty girl. Then it would run in my head that she's not just a girl. She's mine and always will be. It would run in my head that she will always, will be mine.

I eventually think I would have run off with her. I thought about that. I would someday. That's where a lot of pornography and stuff comes in with people like child molesting and stuff, that they control - it controls their life so much that they finally get involved with child pornography and stuff like that, where they can manipulate the kids into doing things to make money for them. I think that was the road I was traveling.

We'd talk about sex abuse all the time at work, stories on TV and all that stuff. We talked about that. Here, I was doing the same thing. Anyway, I took a real hard line on it with him, that they weren't fit to be alive, stuff like that. I was doing the same thing.

Mike's mother and siblings stayed in close touch with him while he was in prison for sexually abusing his stepdaughter. All but one sister visited him regularly, at least twice a month, with phone calls and letters in between. One sister thought his sexual abuse of his stepdaughter had crossed a line, and she did not want to see him because of it. He had no contact with June. June's mother divorced Mike, and the judge ordered no contact with the family.

#### **4.6. Impact of sexual abuse on young girls.**

We know that children are sexual beings but we must also recognize that sexuality infancy and childhood, and in adult life, will be different. Child sexual abuse violates the dependent child's expectations of parental care, leading to confusion of roles and boundaries for the child, the family, and next generation (Peters, 1985:18). It is hardly surprising that the child victims of sexual abuse show a great deal of anxiety. An adolescent girl appears proud of her power over her father and other men but underneath this façade she is in need of affection.

These girls may sexualize all their relationships because they feel this is the only way to obtain love. Such children continue to have difficulties in giving and receiving love when they placed in alternative families and may try to enact, with foster parents, previous sexual experiences (Peters, 1985:19). They have also difficult in expressing anger because of the intensity of their angry feelings towards their mother for failing to protect them, as well towards their father or stepfather as is the case of this research; they are often depressed and confused. They tend to adopt attitudes of self-sacrifice, either passively withdrawing or acting out in a self-destructive, flamboyant manner. Suicidal attempts are not un-common.

The estimation of late effects of sexual abuse is an extremely complex task because of the enormous variety of factors involved; including age, frequency, amount of associated aggression, relationship of participants, total family dynamics and object-relationship before and after the act of abuse, sub-cultural customs, and environmental responses. Possibly there are relatively few late effects of abuse if there are not many other detrimental factors involved beyond simply sexual interaction.

The experience of sexual abuse seems to gain much of its potential for later damage by being the central core around which all other noxious experiences become organized, thus becoming an obvious system which can carry the weight of all other serious family pathology. There are also significant differences of opinion among researchers as to what constitutes the long-term effects of sexual abuse. Some seem to consider a person who is married and shows no serious psychotic, neurotic, or character disorder and who is living with average success within the community to have emerged from the sexual abuse unscathed. But the cases noted above indicate how much pain and turmoil can exist beneath an outwardly normal or seemingly

well-adjusted appearance. Which the author saw on the face of Ann; the first time she was brought by her mother in his office.

Human beings have strong sexual drives in different forms and at different stages of their lives, and there is always a potential for these drives to be activated and utilized to express other conflicts and attempts to solve them.

The essence of an abusive element in the sexual activity is the misuse of the immature child by adult for the solving of problems and satisfying of adult. The adult instigator takes advantage of the child's own normal sexual responsiveness, her wishes to please, and obedience to authority. This was Ann's reality which she experienced under her mother's roof and was perpetrated by her stepfather. At the same time, other important caretakers condone the behaviour, do not protect the child, and disregard the child's complaints.

The late effects of these situations are in the tragic feelings of inferiority, non-integrated identity, poor basic trust, repressed anger, unresolved identifications and fixations, and profound difficulties in establishing and maintaining warm, successful adult human relationships. Variations in the obvious sexual dysfunctions and aberrant sexual behaviours which occur in later life are essentially desperate, maladaptive attempts to compensate for, or somehow adapt to, the distortions created in a developing psyche by the sexual exploitation and emotional disregard suffered. Shame, guilt and fear of social disapproval make it even more difficult to cope with the underlying feelings of helplessness and fear (Peters, 1985:233).

This bridge a loss of respect and identity said Glaz and Moessner in the book "women in travail and transition Identity", is that sense of individuality that has continuity over time. It is that "vital sense of who we are as individuals, embracing our worth, our adequacy, and our very dignity as human beings." This was a serious

challenge to Ann be able to recognised herself after such experiences; to her mother and siblings.

Ordinarily, identity emerges as a child's natural needs are met in mutually significant caring relationships. An inner sense of wholeness, belonging, and connection develops through a reciprocal process of identification and differentiation. Shame ensues when a devastating experience of rupture breaks that interpersonal bridge with trusted adults and brings a consequent sense of betrayal and the unexpected exposure of unmet internal need. Ann wanted and needed her stepfather's affection. However, his manipulative, abusive behaviour left her needs not only unmet but also exposed. When such experiences in relationships are not repaired or are chronic, they leave the individual's sense of self diminished, painfully small or belittled, filled with self-doubt, and over whelmed by self-consciousness.

We all have some experiences of shame that allow us to learn to cope with the occasional failures, defeat, or rejection inherent in life. In the case of severe trauma and /or chronic trauma such as incest and sexual abuse, however, the interpersonal experience of shame is internalized. Once internalized, the distorting effects of shame may function apart from the original experience with the progressively destructive consequences we saw in the lives of Ann, Carina and Bilonda. Shame became a core dimension of their identities. Each women internalized voices of contempt or blame and now can voice them herself, unprompted. Their experience of division within-self-hatred or worthless was so painful that each sought to disown those hated parts of herself and set in motion the processes of repression and denial.

When such care is replaced by the abuse of power, violation, and betrayal, then chronic fear, shame, and self-contempt replace trust and distort religious experience.

Ann's logical conclusion is that somehow what is happening to her meets with God's approval and that God's love doesn't include her. Self-contempt, guilt, and shame emerge than characterize a victim's religious experience. Carine self destructively acted out her sense of worthlessness and self-contempt. Ann said "for a long time I have known there was no grace in my personal relationship with God. I was trying to deserve a love I couldn't even feel for myself." The poignant absence of hope and gracelessness are consequences of shame many survivors describe. Theirs is a faith sharpened by obligation and alienation. Their pervasive shame begets a "sickness of the soul" an inner, chronic hell. This was defined by Ann; her dark moment of her life.

The process of recovery for women who were molested or sexual abused as children is a lifelong, but healing is possible and, although difficult, can be significant. A key element in this process is the experience of rebuilding the interpersonal bridge that was broken by the trauma and its shame which will be attended to, in the following chapter of this research. The levels of estrangement and alienation that are induced by shame gradually can be overcome as the survivor establishes a connection with a skilled therapist whose she can trust.

The issues most women encounter include breaking through denial and believing it happened, experiencing the anger and resentment that accompanies the recognition of abuse, grieving the many losses related to the trauma, remembering the abuse, itself and the emotions felt at the time but suppressed or denied, and trusting themselves- their emotions and their own judgement. The passage from an identity as victim to a new self-understanding as a survivor is not hard but it is rewarding work of labour; especially when the image of labour includes a support team. A woman like Ann, for example, will need special care and gentle encouragement as

she begins the process of daring to believe she is a loved and valued member of the congregational family. Trusting will not come easily for her, but the experience of belonging offers healing and new hope for belief in God whose love is reliable, the above studies case may connect us.

## CHAPTER FIVE: SEXUAL ABUSE'NATURE, EFFECTS AND PASTORAL CARE THERAPEUTIC HEALING METHODS.

This chap brings to an end the pastoral care studies on the effects of sexual abuse on young girls by their stepfathers. It is composed of two points: Understanding of the nature and effects of Sexual abuse and Pastoral care therapeutic healing Methods.

### 5.1 Understanding of the nature and effects of sexual abuse

#### 5.1.1 Definition

To come to definition of sexual abuse we need to consider the nature of the act, and the ages of the participating parties. As a subset of sexual abuse, we may consider incestuous abuse which is defined by the relationship between the participants. (Sholevar 2003:697)

#### Nature of the act

Diana Russell (1986:41; 61), as a researcher, established her definition of incestuous child sexual abuse in order to set the parameters of her study as follows:

*Any kind of exploitative sexual contact or attempted sexual contact that occurred between relatives, no matter how distant the relationship, before the victim was 18 years old. Experiences involving sexual contact with a relative that were wanted or with a peer were regarded as no exploitative and hence no abusive.*

Russell (1986:61) defines extra familial child sexual abuse as follows:

*Unwanted sexual experiences with the persons unrelated by blood or marriage, ranging from attempted petting (touching of breasts or genitals or attempts at such touching) to rape, before the victim turned 14 years, and completed or attempted forcible rape experiences from the ages of 14 to 17 years (inclusive).*

The parameters of Russell's definitions need to be borne in mind when considering her statistical data. Changing these parameters will affect the number of cases which are deemed abusive. Actual or attempted physical contact is a criterion for Russell's research because verbal innuendo would ultimately dilute the quality of her study to the point of meaninglessness. (Russell 1986:50-51) Russell does not deny that verbal proposals or exhibitionism are sometimes as harmful as physical contact. Spies (2006:4) argue that a working definition should include: "exposure to sexual behavior inappropriate to one's age". This would mean exposing children to the viewing of sexual acts which are inappropriate to their age, whether in the flesh or through electronic media, would constitute sexual abuse. This is a legal offense, in South Africa, and if convicted, the perpetrator may receive a two year prison sentence. (<http://www.pmg.org.za/bills/030728crim.htm>). While a child, who encounters her parents engaging in sex by chance, may find this to be traumatic such an event should not be considered as sexually abuse of the child (Russell 1986:53).

Under the South African Law, the definition of rape now includes non-consensual anal or oral sex, and penetration with an object other than a penis. The Sexual Offenses Amendment Bill defines rape as:

(1) A person who unlawfully and intentionally commits an act which causes penetration to any extent whatsoever by the genital organs of that person into or

beyond the anus or genital organs of another person, or any act which causes penetration to any extent whatsoever by the genital organs of another person into or beyond the anus or genital organs of the person committing the act, is guilty of the offense of rape (Lawrence & Janse v Rensburg 2006:131).

Furthermore, coercion, misleading a participant and engaging in sex with a person who is legally incapable of consenting, is also illegal (Lawrence & Janse v Rensburg 2006:130). Coercion will be deemed to include the use of force, threatening harm against the victim, another person or the property of the victim or another person. Misleading includes leading a person to believe they are actually having sex with someone other than the real partner, or leading them to believe the act is actually something other than what it is, and thirdly to misinform someone about a medical status (Lawrence & Janse v Rensburg 2006:131).

A person is deemed incapable under law of consenting if they, at the time the act takes place, are asleep, unconscious, in an altered state of consciousness, under the influence of a substance to extent that their consciousness or judgment is adversely affected, is mentally impaired or below the age of twelve years (Lawrence & Janse v Rensburg 2006:131).

Where penetration does not take place, but a person is non-consensually touched with sexual intent, this is legally deemed to be sexual assault. There is precedent at Regional Court level to show that sexual assault includes exposing a child to sexual acts, objects and speech, or acting with the intent of indecently assaulting a child. (Lawrence & Janse v Rensburg 2006:132)

Schechter and Roberge (in Doyle 1994:8-9) define sexual abuse as:

The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities that they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give an informed consent, or that violates the social taboos of family roles.

### **5.1.2 Ages of the Participating Parties**

Russell (1986:41) includes the term: “exploitative” because many people willingly engage in exploration with someone of similar age with no negative effects. Spies (2006:4) emphasizes that while children may engage in sex-play, what is critical is how the child experiences the event and what meaning they ascribe to it. Russell acknowledges that most researchers would discount sexual contact between children with less than a five years age gap, (peers) while most clinicians would include such cases. Russell, therefore, from her definition of sexual abuse cases, excludes cases where “peers” engage sexually if the victim reports the event as consensual. She (1986:42) draws attention to the fact that, contrary to popular belief, only two percent of respondents in her study stated that they experienced “positive incest experiences”. However, when the age gap is greater than five years, even if the younger participant deems the event/s to be non-traumatic and having no effect on their life, Russell included it as a case of abuse. This is because with increasing age differences, the power ratio also changes dramatically (Russell 1986:43-44).

Russell’s definition sets the age of the victim below eighteen years when the abuse took place, because this is specifically “child” sexual abuse. In the case of Russell’s definition of extra familial sexual abuse, she creates a further distinction by excluding petting after the age of fourteen. The reason for this is to statistically eradicate the

common occurrence of unwanted petting and intercourse which take place while dating (Russell 1986:61).

Under South African Law, a person under the age of twelve years is deemed unable to consent to sexual acts. Between the ages of twelve and sixteen, even if the child consented, the perpetrator may well be convicted of statutory rape. (Lawrence & Janse v Rensburg 2006: 129; 133)

While legal convictions depend on the nature of what happened, sentencing is affected by the social and psychological impact the event has had and will have on the victim (Lawrence & Janse v Rensburg 2006:145). This provision acknowledges that the harm was not only physical or temporary, but that the harm is also emotional and endures long after the physical acts. Brownmiller (quoted in Courtois 1988:16) asserts that *Rape* is an assault on woman's body, but more importantly an assault on her psyche. The same is true of sexual abuse.

### **5.1.3 Relationship between Participants**

The general distinction between incestuous sexual abuse and extra familial sexual abuse is that incest occurs between relatives. Russell (1986:41) expresses that as "*no matter how distant the relationship*".

Nel (2003:7) is more specific in stating that incest does not only include blood relatives, who may not marry because they are related, but also includes adopted family members. Hence; stepchildren and foster children should be included in the category of incestuous sexual abuse.

Russell's (1986:215) probability sample showed that incest is most commonly perpetrated by uncles of the victims. 25% of her (1986:216) probability samples were

abused by an uncle, while 14% were abused by a biological father and 12% by a full biological brother. Male first cousins accounted for 16% of incestuous sexual abuse, and stepfathers accounted for 8%. In Russell's sample (1986:70), 19% of the 930 samples were victims of incest; while 35% were victims of extra familial sexual abuse, realizing that a number of these were abused by both a family member and a stranger. While 71% of abusers were not related to their victim, only 11% were total strangers, with 60% being known by the victim (Russell 1986:219).

Sexual abuse is often far more than a physical occurrence which takes place between people. Spies (2006:3) say that, "incest is a manifestation of individual personality pathology and a disturbance in the total family unit". In most cases, this would be equally true for most cases of sexual abuse. Sexual abuse disturbs a family's regulation of their sexuality, aggression and independency. In essence, the abuser is the indicator of a family which is struggling with abandonment issues and sexuality, and the abuse is an attempt to create a more livable environment which relieves the tensions (Spies 2006:3). In their attempt to survive as a family unit, these families: Lose their capacity to adapt as the members grow and change, fail to afford sufficient private space, intimacy lose the capacity to express intimacy in non-sexual ways use the children to satisfy the needs of the parents (Hotaling 2005:15).

#### **5.1.4 Prevalence of Sexual Abuse**

The prevalence of sexual abuse is difficult to ascertain with even proximate accuracy because by nature of the taboo, sexual abuse is under reported and even denied by victims. Sam Warner (2009:3) correctly points out that since a definition of what constitutes sexual abuse is a social construct, that definition will constantly change depending on history, geography, culture, law and social policy. Joan van Niekerk, (quoted at <http://www.stopdemand.org/afawcs0112878/ID=154/newsdetails.html> on

1 September 2010) Director of Childline South Africa, is quoted as saying that the situation has worsened in South Africa because of the number of policemen who are either sexual abusers themselves, or related to the abuser, or who are willing to accept a bribe to protect abusers. Diana Russell's (1978) research was groundbreaking in that it no longer drew from a subset of society, but rather closely mimicked the demographics of society. Furthermore, Russell used face to face interviews, which provided better data than previous studies (Russell 1986: 19-30).

Russell (1986: 59) distinguishes between prevalence and incidence, she refers to *prevalence* as the number of girls who were abused, and *incidence* referring to the number cases of sexual abuse that took place.

By reviewing the data from the 930 participating women, Russell discovered that 16% were victims of incestuous sexual abuse before the age of eighteen. 12% were victims of incestuous sexual abuse before the age of fourteen. In addition, 31% of the participants were victims of extra familial sexual abuse by age eighteen, and 20% were victims of extra familial sexual abuse by the age of fourteen. There was an overlap as some girls were victims of both incestuous and extra familial sexual abuse. Therefore, when the two categories were combined, the prevalence of victims was 38% before the age of eighteen, and 28% by the age of fourteen (Russell 1986: 60-61). Only 5% of these cases were ever reported to the police, and the reporting of extra familial sexual abuse was eight times higher than the reports of incestuous sexual abuse (Russell 1986: 85). While the prevalence of sexual abuse reported and the statistics seems high, it must be remembered that Russell has excluded a number of cases which were even slightly uncertain, and that her definitions are very narrow, and disregard verbal abuse or exhibitionism.

Russell's study, by dividing the participants into age groups and comparing the prevalence of abuse between age groups, provides a linear statistic which shows that sexual abuse is increasing dramatically decade by decade. Therefore, unless some major change has occurred, today's statistics would probably be far worse (Russell 1986: 79). A 2000 study in the UK, which was carried out by Cawson (<http://www.intothelight.org.uk/facts.asp> accessed on 1 September 2010) states that 21% of girls and 11% of boys under the age of sixteen experience sexual abuse in the UK.

### **5.1.5 Characteristics of Sexual Abuse**

In Russell's study, the shape of the family had significant bearing on the prevalence of incestuous abuse. In families where children lived with either their biological or adoptive parents, 15% were incestuously abused. Of these, 14 girls were abused by more than one family member, which was 2% of the number of girls living with biological or adoptive parents. This number increased to 18% of the girls who only lived with their biological mother. When a stepfather was added to the home, this number jumped to 28%. Ten girls were raised by their grandparents, and while this is a small sample from which to draw any conclusions, 30% of these girls were incestuously abused, not necessarily by their grandfather (Russell 1986: 104). Grandfathers were, however, the most likely to abuse another relative (Russell 1986: 227). At the other end of the scale, 26% of the perpetrators were under eighteen years old, themselves, when they committed the abuse. (Russell 1986: 219)

Russell also found that the profession of the victim's father had no bearing on incestuous or extra-familial abuse statistics. (Russell 1986:106) Extra-familial sexual abuse was more prevalent in either poorer or wealthier families, rather than middle

earning families. This contrasts incestuous sexual abuse which is most prevalent in high income families, and decreases as income decreases (Russell 1986: 107).

If this can be universalized, then incestuous sexual abuse is by far most common in wealthy homes.

Russell found too that more incest victims graduated from college and high school than their non-abused counterparts (Russell 1986: 109). Sadly, girls who were raised in Protestant or Roman Catholic homes were 3% less and therefore insignificant difference. It is alarming as one would hope that children who are raised in religious homes would be far less at risk. Girls raised in Jewish homes were 8% less victims of incest than girls who are raised in Protestant homes. This disappointment is added to by the statistic that Protestant and Roman Catholic victims were 13% and 28% more likely to defect from their faith group; respectively (Russell 1986: 120).

### **5.1.6 Father/Daughter incestuous Sexual Abuse**

In the late 1800's, Freud deduced from his work with female patients that their trauma was caused by sexual interaction with their fathers. Due to his repulsion, and public outcry, Freud modified his opinion to the oedipal theory that little girls fall in love with their fathers. This meant that for centuries, till the 1970's, the existence of father/daughter incestuous abuse was denied and victims derided for their accusations (Courtois 1988: 7).

Russell's (1986: 223; 237) probability sample shows that stepfathers are most likely to abuse their victims at the most severe level. The severest forms include rape,

non-forcible intercourse and cunnilingus. The least severe are listed as forcible or non-forcible sexual kissing, and sexual touching (Russel, 1986:99).

While 36% of abusive fathers (biological and step) only abused their daughters once, 38% abused their daughter eleven or more times (Russell 1986: 224).

Spies (2006:5) has found in the literature that she has studied, that abusive fathers often feel powerless, and so they overcompensate by adopting rigid authoritarian models of parenting. Often these fathers fulfill a dependent-dominating pattern, or a dependent-dependent one. These fathers, who behave like children in their own families, withdraw from responsibility into dependency, allowing others to take the lead. Either the mother in these households becomes dominant, with the father relating more like a sibling, or the mother also reverts to dependency, and the family becomes a de facto child headed household.

Spies (2006: 6) asserts that father/daughter incestuous abuse is not so much about sexual fulfillment, but more about meeting the emotional needs of the father. It must be noted that often, rather than being unaware or repulsed by this; mothers find this arrangement serving their perceived needs too.

Father/daughter incestuous abuse is by far the most traumatic form of incest (Russell 1986: 231). Those victims who suffer long term effects because of father/daughter abuse, in Russell's sample, was 44% double than that of other forms of incestuous abuse. Russell lists the reasons for that as follows:

1. Fathers were more like to have imposed vaginal intercourse on their daughter than the other incest perpetrators: (18% versus 6%)

2. Fathers sexually who abused their daughters more frequently than other incestuous relatives.
3. Although the overall numbers of incest perpetrators, who used force or violence in the perpetration of the sexual abuse, were extremely low; fathers were more likely than other relatives to use physical force. (34% used force, compared to 44% of brothers and 44% of first cousins);
4. In contrast to other incest perpetrators, the vast majority of fathers were also the victim's provider. (86%);
5. Most of the fathers were also at least twenty years older than their victims. (Russell 1986: 231-232);

While the ratio of fathers among the type of perpetrators is high, this was skewed by the large number of victims who are raised by their biological fathers. Across the entire study, only 2.3% of biological fathers abused their daughters before the age of fourteen, compared to 17% of stepfathers. (Russell 1986: 234) Stepfathers also abused their victims more frequently. Biological fathers were far more likely to only abuse their daughter once (48%), while step fathers were more likely to abuse them a multiple times. (41% over 20 times) (Russell 1986: 235). 47% of stepfathers abused their victims for more than five years (Russell 1986:236).

Of all the victims that were interviewed by Russell (1986:44), not a single one said that incest with their father was a positive experience. 53% of victims of stepfathers, and 39% of victims of biological fathers experienced severe long term effects of their abuse. However, these figures are not comparable because stepfathers were more often violent or forceful, and the abuse more severe. (Russell 1986: 248) concludes that father/daughter incestuous sexual abuse is the most traumatic type of incest of all the types that she has investigated. Since only 17% of victims of father/daughter

incestuous abuse were married at the time, Russell interviewed them (Russell 1986:254), and compared to 43% of victims of other forms of abuse. Russell states that this type of abuse is “particularly destructive” to marriage relationships for the victims. Just to reiterate, however, that stepfather/daughter incestuous abuse occurred at 17%, compared to biological father/daughter incestuous abuse at 2.3%. This should be taken into account by parents who divorce and marry new spouses. It seems that the taboo which surrounds biological father incestuous abuse is still stronger than the taboo surrounding stepfather incestuous sexual abuse between biological fathers and daughters; which may also help to prevent abuse.

#### Brother/Sister Incestuous Sexual Abuse

It seems for a long time that the dominant question was: whether sibling sexual abuse even existed or whether this was just a natural part of human development as children explored their sexuality with those nearest them? This has changed, and today authors like Spies (2006: 6) speculate that brother/sister incestuous abuse could be up to five times more prevalent than father/daughter abuse. Since many children engage in sex play with siblings as a part of their natural development, a mindset has arisen that all sexual acts between siblings are of that nature, and hence; non abusive. The reality is though that even what starts out as mutually wanted sex play sometimes changes in nature. (Russell 1986: 279; 284) also states that what was mutually desirable can become the desire of one sibling alone. Rather than making it less traumatic, these initially consensual sexual encounters heap far more self-blame and guilt on the victim; and subsequently, shame and self-loathing. The victim, to a far greater degree, blames themselves for leading the perpetrator on, and often doubt whether they really did mean “no”, or whether they actually wanted what happened (Russell 1986: 279).

What makes sexual abuse even more confusing for the victim is that even in abuse, there is often an element of physical pleasure derived by the victim as nerve endings are stimulated. This pleasure is in no way proof that the event was non-abusive. The victim may struggle though to reconcile their experience of pleasure with being able to attribute blame to the perpetrator and identifying the encounter as abuse. Whereas shock and horror would indicate for the victim her own repulsion by the abuse, deriving pleasure from it creates a different kind of trauma which is possibly more pervasive of the victim's identity. This aspect of abuse is maybe almost peculiar to sibling abuse (Russell 1986: 279).

It is also true that many cases of sibling sexual abuse is abusive and undesired by the victim from the outset. The myth that all sibling sexual activity is mutual and non-abusive has severely harmed the healing of many victims, as their pain was dismissed. Even in the case of Tamar and Amnon, we saw how Pamela Reis tried to dismiss this sexual event as mutually sought after. As a power relationship, siblings are able to use their greater power over a sibling; even if this power disparity is less than the power disparity between fathers and daughters or uncles and niece (Russell 1986: 271). In Russell's probability sample, 2% of the 930 participants reported that they were sexually abused by a brother (Russell 1986: 271). This statistic is probably an understatement, as some participants did not have brothers, which would exclude them from the sample (Russell 1986: 272). Of the one hundred and ninety perpetrators that are reported in Russell's (1986: 216) probability sample, twenty three of them, or 12%, were brothers of the victims. Victims of sibling abuse were more often from large families, and may imply that larger families have more sons, and so more potential brother-abusers (Russell 1986: 290). This may also imply though that large families, where parents need to take care and provide for a

greater number of people, also need to share the parents care and oversight more broadly (Meiselman 1978: 269). This shortage of parental guidance could create greater opportunities for sons in large families, and create a greater emotional need within these sons which they try to fill sexually.

Russell (1986: 273) found that abuse by a brother was the least likely to extend beyond a year, possibly because the power ratio between siblings is much closer and so sisters are able to develop the ability to resist. It could also be that brothers are in a developmental phase when they abuse their sisters, and grow out of that phase and hence; lose interest, moving their focus to other girls. Because of the naiveté of many people regarding sibling abuse, it is often disregarded. Furthermore, sisters tend to want to protect their brothers more than they would want to protect uncles or cousins; and so under-report sibling abuse. Sisters, while not wanting the sexual relationship with their brothers, often accept the abuse rather than appealing to their parents and making their brothers vulnerable to their parent's wrath (Russell 1986: 275). Many of the victims of brother/sister abuse that I have encountered, are afraid of disclosure even as adults, because they are afraid their families will be torn apart by their disclosure, and that their brother will become a pariah to their parents. These sisters choose to carry the burden alone rather than see their parents suffer the pain. This overdeveloped sense of responsibility, where the child takes on the parenting role, is a secondary self-victimization.

As discovered by Malcolm Gladwell (FIND), even the difference of a few months makes a huge difference in terms of emotional, intellectual and physical power when children are only ten years old. Since 72% of the abusive brothers in Russell's probability sample were under eighteen years of age, they themselves were still in a highly transitory phase of their personal development. (Russell 1986: 276) Probably

to some degree, because of their youth, these boys would be less likely to have mastered their own power of verbal persuasion, or other forms of non-violent coercion, and hence were almost twice as likely to use physical force as their primary strategy of coercion (Russell 1986: 285).

As evidence that sibling sexual abuse is abusive, Russell compared some statistics of the effects of sibling sexual encounters to the effects caused by other forms which are commonly agreed to be abusive. The nature of the sexual encounter can maybe best be ascertained through observing the nature of the sexual encounter can maybe best be ascertained through observing the effects (Spies 2006: 7). In other abusive relationships, 53% of victims said they were very or extremely upset by the event. In the case of siblings, 48% of the girls found it very or extremely upsetting (Russell 1986: 281). In other cases of abuse, 52% of the victims reported long term effects on their lives. In the case of siblings, this number increased to 56% (Russell 1986: 281). In terms of severity, sibling sexual abuse was reported to Russell to be similar between siblings and the other types of incestuous abuse, but far fewer siblings reported abuse at the lower levels of severity. This shows that while victims of sibling abuse usually view the less severe sexual encounters as tolerable, probably because of the taboo and uncertainty around sibling abuse, yet when it reaches the more severe levels, they are unable to ignore the realization that they have been abused (Russell 1986: 286). Rather than concluding that sibling abuse does not occur at the lower levels, we may need to conclude that social constructs cause the mislabeling of these events and cause under-reporting.

Russell then compared certain statistics of women who had been abused by their brothers to those of women who reported no abuse whatsoever. If sibling sexual contact was benign, then these statistics should be quite similar. This is not the case

though. Russell (1986: 286) infers great significance in the fact that 47% of sibling victims never married, compared to 27% of other forms of incestuous sexual abuse. While this correlation does not prove cause, it strongly hints at the immensity of effect this abuse has had on these women. It is likely that living daily in a sexual relationship with a man in marriage resembles the setting of abuse too closely to be tenable for victims of sibling abuse.

When victims of sibling abuse were asked whether they feared sexual assault when they were children, those who answered “yes” were three times more prevalent than women who had experienced no sexual abuse (Russell 1986: 287). Clearly, abuse by their brothers had awakened within them a fear of further abuse.

Sexual abuse exposes victims to ongoing abuse by others, or victimization. Sisters who were abused by their brothers were 32% more likely to be violently assaulted by their husband or ex-husband than a woman who was not abused at all, (50% vs., and 18%) These victims were also 31% more likely to have an unwanted sexual experience with an authority figure. (58% vs. 27%) (Russell 1986: 287) While this adds to the evidence of the abusive nature of sibling incest, it also reveals some of the consequences of abuse.

As further evidence that these tete-a-tetes had significant consequence on the victims, Russell (1986: 288) found that 65% of these victims had left their religion, compared to only 35% of women who had never been abused in any way. If sibling abuse is truly ineffectual, all these disparities between sisters who were abused by their brothers and women who were never abused should not exist. We should, therefore, dispel the myth that sibling sexual activity is always mutually consensual, and that it is of no consequence to either party. Sibling incestuous abuse, to the

contrary, is deeply damaging to the victims, and in many cases, probably to the perpetrators too.

Spies (2006: 7) highlights that it is often the parents of the victim who assist the child to establish the meaning of the sexual encounter; through their response. Some victims have been more traumatized by the reaction of their parents, than by the actual abuse itself. Bass and David (1988: 105) explain how a victim is conditioned by the abuser, and then by their parents, society and religious communities, to see themselves as guilty or defiled by their abuse. Bass and Davis have noticed that this ownership ironically restores some power to the victim, and the hope that power to make them better people. Conversely, by releasing the self-blame, the victim comes to realize that they were powerless, which is far worse to cope with. Knowing that the events which have taken place contravene the social taboos places a lot of guilt victims of abuse. Many victims suffer secondary trauma when their families disintegrate, when they are blamed by family members or friends for the abuse, or they need to continue living with their sibling. (Spies 2006:8) Sadly, in the case of sibling abuse, seldom is professional help sought for the victim or the perpetrator as the family chooses to deal with the abuse within the family.

#### **5.1.7 Uncle/Niece Incestuous Sexual Abuse**

In the case of father/daughter or brother/sister abuse, family dynamics play a significant role in the causation of the abuse, but are not the only contributing factors. By comparing cases of uncle/niece abuse, the degree and ways in which nuclear family dynamics affect the occurrence of sexual abuse can be explored.

## **(1) Violence and force**

Unlike rape, sexual abuse is often recurring and escalates over time. Russell (1986: 93) reports that only in 43% of the cases in her study, did abuse occur only once. While not uncommon, violence is used far less to coerce the cooperation of children during sexual abuse (Courtois 1988: 15). Russell's research estimates that in 68% of cases, no physical force was used at all, and in another 29% only the mildest force of pushing a victim or pinning them down was used. Brothers, first cousins or other male relatives are the most likely to use force on their victims, probably because they lack the authority of older abusers and so have to resort to violence (Russell 1986: 223).

Abusive relationships where force is absent, often involve children who are drawn into affectionate relationships with adults whom they know. These adults use the guise of affection or of special education to encourage them into sexual behavior. These children may become submissive, but this submission is not equivalent to consent (Courtois 1988: 15). Russell (1986: 131) reports cases where the victims were "disarmed by their feelings for the perpetrator". These victims loved and looked up to their perpetrators and so did not want to disappoint them or refuse them. In these cases, abuse is usually preceded by a subtle process of entrapment of the victim (Spies 2006: 45).

Force or the threat of force was the primary means of coercion in 27% of the cases in Russell's survey. 17% of the time, the victim was taken by surprise. While these are insightful, Russell (1986: 229) found that in 40% of the cases of incestuous abuse, the perpetrator actually used a combination of varying tactics to coerce cooperation from their victims.

### 5.1.8 Systemic Factors

While the pathology of the abuser plays a causative role, so too does the behavior of the rest of the family. Van Niekerk (2006: 102) quotes Prentky saying that he has identified two common factors in the etiology of sexual abuse.

- Emotional neglect in early childhood relationships, resulting in profound attachment problems in later life. The most common factors associated with emotional neglect are caregiver instability, and emotional and sexual abuse.
- Attachment deficits resulting in emotional detachment, a lack of empathy and impersonal sex.

Since sexual abuse often takes place during childhood, which are the formative years, this abuse shapes the personality and worldview of everyone in the home (Courtois 1988: 9). Spies (2006: 14) compare the home to a school where children learn about themselves, their personal boundaries and how to satisfy their needs. People carry this knowledge in to their own homes as adults and parents. Parents who experienced abuse as children may commit the same abuse because they consider it normal behavior. Through adolescence and early adulthood, most people accept or reject the value systems of their family of origin. However, in times of family discord, stress or fatigue, people often resort to the family of origin's norms as they seemed to have worked for the previous generation. This is particularly so when they lack the energy to resist inherited perceptions. Sexual abuse may often be situational, as the result of a number of contributing factors which coincide to create the necessary stresses and opportunities, and may never replicate in the lifetime of that family. In these cases, the effects on the family and especially the next generation usually outlast the crisis which gave rise to the abuse.

### 5.1.9 Parent/Child

Non-abusing parents who experienced abuse as children may find themselves immobilized by the similarity between the abuse taking place in their current families, and childhood experiences. The boundaries learnt as a child remain the perceived boundaries in adulthood, and so a perpetrator may be living on the boundaries of their own childhood. Through assimilation, children internalize the meaning of lived experiences and create working models to facilitate their functioning. These experiences lay down neural tracks in the child's memories and create links which they base decisions on in adulthood (Spies: 2006: 50; 53). People who grew up in families with poor parent-child relationships are likely to have poor parent-child relationships with their children. While the abuse may cause certain behavioral modifications in the entire family where abuse occurred, those behavioral patterns which were internalized and normalized are carried over into new families, and those behavioral patterns may create the seedbed for the next generation of abuse to occur (Spies 2006: 15). A person who grew up in a family where abuse occurred, even if they were not victims themselves, most likely learnt secrecy, to live in somewhat social isolation, and avoid discussing sex. When these behaviors are carried into their families, the stage is set for another generation of abuse. Families in which abuse occurs are often isolated from their community, either physically, or emotionally. This isolation itself is often an attempt to save the family from fragmenting (Spies 2006: 18). Isolation may initially have been adapted.

## 5.2 Pastoral care' Therapeutic Methods

While busy concluding this research, two month ago it has happened again in my extended family; back home my young cousin girl of 17 years old got pregnant by her step father it just sound very familiar to my ears as I have listened to different stories from the three survivors as core searchers of this study it really a great disappointment and challenging to me. My concern is, it's really happening under our noses, to justify that this evil still affecting many of young girls in our communities, Churches and family and especially in the scope of my research it's very sensitive because of the shame and secrecy surrounded sexual abuse of young girls in particular family.

Never the less, this is the reason why traumatic therapy, healing and forgiveness are needed to those are affected by sexual abused.

It is evident that in order for the abuser to maintain control in the relationship he has to instil fear into the young girl and be good at the same time as Ann was relating her situation in our interview from the background of this research. Hence all of the interviewees in this research mentioned how fearful the situation was in their homes. Some of them were constantly on the run from their homes due to the fearful and shameful circumstances that they found themselves in by being sexually abused by the father figure in their homes.

It also evident, that sexual abuse has different understanding; throughout different cultures, races, ethnic groups and socio-economic backgrounds.

It seems that the taboo surrounding stepfather incestuous sexual abuse and this seems to prevent biological fathers (Russell 1986:261).

The Survivor in this research come from different backgrounds; culturally, racially, economically, ethnically and socially. They all grew within an environment of traumatic sexual abuse by stepfather as people that they trusted the most. As a result, they all suffered spiritually, emotionally, psychologically, economically and otherwise. To this very day, they live with the psychological and emotional scars that they received from their traumatic back grounds of sexual abuse. They seek healing and restoration for themselves so that they, in turn, may be agents of healing and restoration. Their example bears witness to the incriminatory nature of sexual abuse by stepfather. In this part, the researcher will be dealing with therapeutic healing methods based on the stories of these young girls as expressed in chapter four. This will be done as a way of addressing their problems so that they, and countless other people, can be healed and regained confidence for their future sexual lives.

This part will focus on pastoral care, which is the task of all caregivers to individual persons and communities. The aim is to prepare a ground where the care giver and the survivors to regained dignity and confidence after that traumatic tragedy of sexual that they have experienced within their families on that other hand the care giver to be able with respect and humility to journey with the survivors of sexual abuse.

“The arena of pastoral work is multifaceted and full of surprises, unexpected problems and opportunities for profound insight into the human situation. It is an arena within which the pastor is privileged to be with people where they live and breathe, succeed and fail, relate intimately and experience alienation; It is the down-to-earth world of the human living” (Gherkin, 1997:11).

This means that caregivers are called to journey alongside God’s people in their distresses and joys, moments of peace and turbulence in order to give them support,

encouragement and to 'hold their hands' through the dark valleys of life. According to Chirinda, caregivers are therefore challenged to do their work in such a way that will liberate and enable both the care giver and the help seeker to develop a healthy relationship. This we lead to healing and transformation of society (Chirinda 2008:110). This means that the care giver needs all of the empowerment, in order to become the voice of the voiceless and the prophet to the powerful.

During our training for ministry in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, there is a provision on the syllabus of the seminary, where care giver or counsellors minister to be. They are submitted to a spiritual formation where students are been attached to different organizations to minister and contextualize practically their ministries to different situation in the community, in my case I was sent to an organization where unwanted baby were received for adoption. The searcher had encounter with a young girls, sharing how they find themselves in such condition.

“Those communities include not only families living together and groups of people who work and play seek to be faithful Disciples of Christ in the world. Touring that world will cause us to encounter the interval tension involved in providing pastoral care for individuals and for congregations” ( Gherkin, 1997:11).

It goes without saying that traumatic sexual abuse within families is one of the tensions that young girls encounter in their families and communities. In order to regained dignity, confidence and healed from the shame and wounds an adequate preparation is needed for them to be able to heal from the past hurt and wounds so that they do not inflict more harm to themselves and to their families and communities.

The researcher affirms that the survivors that participate in this research were negatively affected and by the sexual abuse from the people that they have trust the most in their child hood.

For some survivor of sexual abuse the impact of growing up in a family where such evil is occurred is more evident to them that they are adults. This has affected them differently in their lives. All of them agree to a certain extent that the church (Methodist Church of Southern Africa) can be a place of healing and restoration for those who are traumatized from sexual abuse by their stepfather. It can also be a place of healing for children that are raised within such situation. However, in their experience, as young girls within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, they have discover that the Church does not necessary meet the needs of young Girls survivors of sexual abuse by their stepfather it become relevant to ministers as pastoral care to minister and organizing support group structure within the church and community to cater for survivors of sexual abuse in their families. Following is pastoral care methodology that seeks to empower the young girls to forgive the perpetrators and regain dignity and confidence in their future sexual lives.

### **5.2.1 Pastoral care Methodology**

The faith community needs to be a place that nurtures growth and development of those who are members. It needs to challenge negative areas within individual members' lives and also affirm positive areas. A pastoral care should journey alongside God's people offering support, encouragement and prophetic witness when the need arises. Such a career would need to have dealt adequately with negative areas within matters of sexual abuse. The Methodist Church of southern

Africa needs to prepare a ground where the care giver call minister can deal accordingly with matters of sexual abuse of young girls by stepfathers and where the survivors of that abuse may regain dignity and confidence and in the same note to be able to forgive effectively the perpetrators. Arising out of the shared case studies in previous chapter, the researcher came up with the following therapeutic healing methods that the Methodist Church of southern Africa can use to empower young girls that grew up in a traumatizing sexual abuse family background.

#### **5.2.1.1 Creating an Environment of security and Trust within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa for young girls survivors of sexual abuse**

Through informal and formal interaction with care giver and survivor of sexual abuse, the researcher found that it become very challenging to the survivor to be able to open up to any pastoral care giver in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa for lack of trust and security. By not knowing where it's going to lead to, especially where the Gender of the Pastoral giver is representing a traumatic memory of the perpetrator as a person that was trusted the most. If such an amount of distrust and fear is evident between the care giver and help seeker, those are called shepherd of the flock must create an environment of security and trust to allow the survivors to tell their stories for healing and transformation from that traumatic situation they went through in their early ages. It is the researcher's observation, that there is a level of distrust within local congregations. such amounts of distrust results in many people being unable to open up regarding their traumatic encounters as is the case of this research where the survivors came up with their sexual abuse experience and over 20 years of secrecy and fear of sharing with anyone their sexual abuse encounter by

lack of trust and security. This challenges the Methodist Church of Southern Africa to create an environment of trust so that God's people may share their stories of hurt and pain easily. At this point an explanation of the concept of trust is warranted.

Trust is defined as a "firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength of someone or something" (Oxford Dictionary, 2001:901). It can also be explained as "to put one's confidence in a person or thing" (Knight, 2005:338). An environment of trust within the Church therefore, would be an environment where the victims of traumatic abuse can be confident enough to share openly their stories without fear or suspicion.

Sadly enough, this deep-seated distrust is not limited only against pastoral care giver from the survivor of sexual abuse within a family. It has infected local community as well. As a result, people who are suffering with abuse and traumatic experience do not find it easy to share their stories with in the congregations. They fear that they may be discriminated against, victimized or even stigmatized severely. This does not help in dealing with the abuse, but it perpetuates it even further. One of the survivor mentioned that the secrecy and silence about sexual abuse of young Girls within a family is huge matter that needs to be deal with urgently. This can be addressed effectively when Church intentionally creates an environment of trust where God's people - can express their hurts and struggles without fear of victimization, discrimination and stigmatization by the wider community of faith. Creating an environment of trust means that those in leadership need to display a deep sense of integrity and god honouring disposition when dealing with confidential matters that come to their attention. It means that they need to take seriously the call of god the shepherd God's people in a manner that brings about transformation, healing and restoration. It also means that they need to display in their own lives a character

worth imitating by the rest of the community. Their attitude should display the Christ-like qualities.

A good-honouring, Christ-like disposition and attitude that will create an environment of trust within the church. When dealing with issues pertaining to God's people, an attitude of humanity instead of pride and 'better-than' disposition will create and maintain an environment of trust and confidence that is needed to help them to open up to their leaders. Young girls that come from environment of traumatic sexual abuse will find it easier to share their stories in such an environment. As they share their stories, they will receive the healing that they need. Not only is trust essential, but also offering education and awareness regarding sexual abuse of young Girls by their stepfather.

#### **5.2.1.2 Offering Education and awareness regarding Sexual Abuse of Young Girls by stepfathers.**

This research has revealed to us that issues of sexual abuse of young Girls by stepfather affect everybody within the families where this happens. Not only that, the worshipping communities within which victims and perpetrators of abuse worship are affected as well. This is because we members of one body." The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they" form one body.

It helpful to keep in mind that "there are many vehicles one can use to bring about awareness and education in church environment. Some of these are workshops, sermon and teaching series, Bible study sessions, liturgies and songs/hymns that are appropriate for such a purpose." (Sifo, 2009:111). He warns that such educational programs should be implemented with sensitivity and professionalism

based on accurate information, love, compassion and with a deep concern for human rights and dignity. They should seek to challenge the abuser, affirm and support the abused and persuade a lifestyle change in all people. They should re-examine the human conditions that promote abuse and violence in families and advocate for Christian values that call for behavioural change in individuals, families and congregations. I conquer with Sifo state that, "our teaching and empowerment would be incomplete if we do not give attention to gender issues, including the empowerment of women and girls. Not only that, the church would have to examine critically some of the cultural, customary and sexist practices that have been perpetuated in certain in certain circles of society" (Sifo, 2009:110). Failure to do this would continue to render women and children vulnerable to abuse and traumatic conflict within their families. When the church addresses this head on in its education and awareness drive, it would strengthen its prophetic ministry and empower victims of abuse and traumatic conflict within family in very serious light. It would communicate a clear message that people who are abused should not be rejected, stigmatized, labelled, and discriminated against in any way by the church. It would also communicate a message of love, care, acceptance, grace and compassion to those living and struggling with issues of sexual abuse of young girl by stepfather. Such education and empowerment would challenge the whole body of Christ to examine itself. Such examination would flow from a deep reflection and understanding of how are we affected by sexual abuse within our families. Part of education and awareness within a congregation involves sharing of testimonies by the survivors of sexual abuse by stepfathers. These would give hope to those who are still struggling with abuse and nurture faith in those who have lost it through their trauma. Through such testimonies some survivors would regain a sense of strength,

confidence and dignity of themselves. They will receive empowerment to go and face their abusers with courage. When opportunities for testimonies are opened, people should also be given space to express their lament regarding the trauma they are subjected to. Wimberley understood that, laments are the moans of the souls that arise from life's struggles and losses and that are brought to speech in prayer (2004:162).

Of importance as well is the creation and development of support groups within the church. People that faced with traumatic sexual abuse of young girls within their families can come together to share their stories and encourage each other meaningfully. Such groups should not only be aimed at survivors of sexual abuse by their stepfather. They should also be available for perpetrators of sexual abuse in these case stepfathers. In such group, perpetrators would be challenged to change their behaviour. They would covenant to hold each other accountable and pray for each other. In their journey they would covenant to hold each other accountable and to pray for each other. In their journey they would seek guidance, love, compassion and opportunities to make right that which they did wrong through their actions.

From this discussion it is clear that education awareness involves more than just teaching about sexual abuse of young girls by their stepfathers. It involves the whole community of faith standing in solidarity together before God and crying out to God for God's intervention and assistance. It also involves the church establishing ministries that will train and empower clergy as pastoral care giver to become counsellors and mentors to young girl's survivors of sexual abuse. It involves tailoring education and the formation process to the needs of the survivors so that their brokenness can be addressed adequately.

Not only that, every local church should be intentional in designing and conducting healing services that would be aimed at survivors of sexual abuse and perpetrators of sexual abuse within families. The benefit of this would be that those people who would find it difficult to speak to a counsellor on one-to one basis would be able to express their pain openly if the opportunity is given as part of worship. However this would call for empowerment and training of worship leaders, ministries, council members and all involved within the life of the congregation.

### **5.2.1.3 DE stigmatization of sexual abuse of young Girls**

Stigma can be described as “a mark or sign of disgrace “(Oxford Dictionary, 2001:824). It is a sign of social unacceptability associated with a deep sense of shame. I believe that our biggest mistake as a Christian community has been to attach stigma to violence, abuse and traumatic conflict that happen in the homes of believers. This has resulted in many people unable to come forward and share their stories and experiences because they will be judged, rejected and discriminated against by the Church. Until stigma is eradicated fully, it will remain difficult for people to fight sexual abuse. People will die silently and secretly as a result of trauma, abuse and violence in their families.

DE stigmatization in this regard would imply that we treat the victims with dignity, love and compassion so that they, in turn, may feel that they are still important human beings who are created in the image and likeness of God. This means that they would know themselves as people of worth and dignity and people of equal standing with others in the community. Through this we will be communicating to them a strong message that says that they are still God’s own beloved children who need not be ashamed of themselves just because they are victims of sexual abuse.

DE stigmatization would also mean that the abuser has an avenue to come and be ministered to as well. While his (usually male figure) behaviour will be challenged graciously and lovingly, his humanity will and should not be locked down at. When that happens he will be given a unique opportunity to change and embrace a new kind of life that Jesus offers him. DE stigmatization for the abuser will mean that the message of the Gospel is communicated in manner that brings about healing and transformation.

#### **5.2.1.4 Establishment of centres of healing or both survivors and their perpetrators of sexual Abuse**

Healing for the victims and perpetrators of sexual abuse of young girls within a family would aim at achieving the following purposes:

“To transform individuals into a real personal relationship with Jesus Christ through the baptism of the Spirit; to heal relationships and to build community-especially in the family and the neighbourhood community, and, to transform society by healing relationships of injustice and oppression” (MacNutt, 1974:19).

This goes without saying that every local congregation with the Methodist Church of Southern Africa should be a centre of healing if we take seriously our mission statement. We believe that the Methodist Church in the Southern Africa is called to “proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ for healing and transformation”.

However because of the special nature, depth and gravity of abuse within families, a special effort should be made in addressing these issues. People that are trained

specifically to deal with sexual abuse and trauma are needed within the church so that they can offer referral service for pastors and leaders who feel ill-equipped to deal with such issues.

At the present, the researcher is aware of only one of healing within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa; the lack of centres of healing is not unique to Methodist in Southern Africa. It is a widespread phenomenon throughout Africa, to say the least. In this paper on pastoral care for the clergy, Magesa advocates for the establishment of professional counselling centre in Tanzania. These centres, attests Magesa, could specifically be aimed at caring for the clergy.

“In the absence of professional counsellors, or counselling centres in the country, it seems to be of paramount importance that the church in Tanzania, establish them at several strategic locations. The number of clergy who are falling victim to alcoholism, for example, is rising too quickly to ignore. But there are other things for which professional care (outside the confessional) is clergy needed. Perhaps they are less obvious in their physical effects than alcohol abuse, but they are no less deadly in every other sense of the word with regard to the priest’s personality and ministry” (Magesa in Waruta and Kinoti, 2005:230).

It is envisaged that these centres would be places of healing, restoration and transformation for the people of God who have been subjected to abuse. They would be most beneficial for young survivors of sexual abuse by stepfather who feel ill-equipped

To deal with trauma that affects their congregants, especially if they have grown up in traumatic environments. As they open up their wounds in no-judgmental, caring

and embracing atmosphere, they would receive the healing that they desperately need.

#### **5.2.1.5 Welfare, advocacy and support.**

It is very important for the Church to understand that it has a mission to be a visible sign of Christ's presence in the world. According to Nasimiyu-Wasike, the vitality of the Church depends to some extent on the health and integral well-being of the society and culture within which the people of God live. Therefore, it is the church's salvific mission to promote and foster healthy and healing human relationships at public level (in Waruta and Kinoti, 205:133). This means that the Church can and should partner with all other organizations that seek to advance the cause of the victims of abuse. These partnerships need to go further to the political and social service arenas. The church can take part in secular activities that speak against violence and abuse within families. An example of that is the '16 days of activism against women and child abuse,'

Not only should the Methodist Church of Southern Africa educate and teach about the divesting effects of traumatic sexual abuse of young girls, it should also advocate for the rights of the people who are traumatized by sexual abuse. The church should be proactive in addressing issues relating to Christian values and respect. At least one respondent is of the view that families should not be divided or damaged before something is done. People who are affected by abuse should be cared for specifically and internationally and intentionally, not only by the church but also by the society. For such to happen, the Church needs to be the voice of the voiceless and the consciousness of the society. While doing this, the church should not push

its responsibility of caring for the people. It should develop ministries specifically aimed at the abused. It should establish recovery or rehabilitation centre for sexual abuser of young girls.

The purpose for such partnership would be to offer support for the organisations that actively stand against abuse in the society but also hold accountable those that do not live up to their mandate in terms of delivering acceptable service to survivor of sexual abuse. Nasimiyu-wasike further advocates that the Church should follow in the example of Jesus Christ who challenged evil conditions especially those caused by abuse, exploitation and irresponsibility. The Church's responsibility in all these evil conditions is one of therapeutic and loving liberation rather than that of judge (in Waruta and kinoti, 2005:133).

It is evident that the church should be at the forefront in addressing issue of trauma, sexual abuse within families. Otherwise it would not be living out its god-giving mandate of preaching good news to the poor, proclaiming freedom to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, releasing the oppressed and proclaiming the year of the Lord's favour ( Luke 4:18-19 NIV). Young girls from backgrounds of trauma and abuse would be useful resources within the church in this regard. In their testimonies and story-telling, they would offer hope to others, support and mentor each other and hopefully heal themselves and become instruments of healing and restoration for the people of God.

#### **5.2.1.6 Forgiveness as freedom power and identity**

Given the centrality of forgiveness to Christian doctrine and practice, it is not surprising that research participants saw forgiveness as an important part of managing sexual abuse in the case of this research (DeSmet 2007). This view is

supported in literature which recognizes how forgiveness has been utilized in Christian institutions a strategy for responding to sexual abuse of young girls( Franz 2002; Keenan 2012; Macaskill 2005). This literature often recognize discourses of forgings have been defined in such a way as to be disempowering for survivors and narrow their ability to speak about their abuse by the community, as well as to maintain the position of the individual perpetrator as an authority or father figure. Such models of forgings have justified moving around between appointments, without disclosure of their history of abusing the young girls and vulnerable (Iseley et al, 2008). In this light, forgiveness is a disclosure that makes perpetrators and survivors visible in certain ways. This model of forgings also carries with it an ethical conceptualization that may be used to perpetuate the possibility of sexual abuse through protecting the identity of offenders as 'father figure and people were most trusted in Ann case. Further to this, it silence and marginalizes survivor by placing the burdens of forgings on them and trying these directly to their visibility as an ethical subject.

James defines forgiveness by its ability to liberate survivors of harm or sexual abuse from at least some of the consequences of that harm. For James, forgiveness is an act which comes from the agency of the survivor. It is, in part, through exercising this agency that a victim is seen as constructing a new identity that move beyond powerlessness as a result of sexual abuse of young as survivor. In the perception of research participants, forgings in understood as a discourse of resistance controlled by survivor, rather than others (Foucault 1977). From this perspective, forgiveness should not be demanded as the only suitable response but also one that can be appropriated by survivor for themselves in the process of a journey rather than a single event

(Jenkins, hall and Joy 2002:35). This model of forgiveness emphasizes the choice and exercise of power that survivors have to gain when they forgive as means of liberating themselves. It is clear these research participants see forgings as an act of power enabling survivor to construct their identities and reframe perpetrators as no longer able to manipulate or control them. To forgive is to exercise autonomy and exorcise the perpetrator from their internalization of their subjectivity: they are no longer victims, but empowered survivors. This is a form of identity change where survivors appeal to new discourses to present a 'self to be recognizing by others. Butler's (2006:66) explanation of the self as non-static and constructed in narrative lends insight to the ways in which survivors can construct and present fluid identities. Such narrative of self are initiated at a particular time, enacted through articulation in language, and linked to other narratives of self. In this transformative process, forgiveness, may be constructed as part of an on-going safety plan for survivor because it begins in remembering, acknowledging the harm done by the abuse and moves to relinquish negative feelings and reinventing the self as no longer damaged (Jenkins and joy 2002:39). Forgiveness is understood to be a shift in identity rather than a survivor mentality forever waiting to be re-victimized. This identity is seen as no longer powerless to perpetrators but empowered to 'experience life for them or in a process of empowerment which emphasizes choice of being healed and renewed and their own understanding of themselves, to seek to identify by the promises of forgings to liberate and heal.

### **5.3 Preliminary Conclusion**

This chapter was an attempt by the researcher to develop a methodology of healing and restoration for the young girls encountered traumatic sexual abuse with their stepfather's environment when they were growing up.

The aim of this methodology was to assist the young girl to regained dignity, confidence and to forgive their perpetrators and the other side to assist the Methodist Church of Southern Africa to provide an environment of healing and transformation for such young girls to be transformed and to become a message of hope deliverance.

## **CHAPTER SIX: FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this final chapter is to present an overview of the study, and recommendations for further studies. This research project had explored a traumatic experience of young girls after been sexually abused by stepfathers. The methodology that was used was qualitative in orientation and involved in-depth interviews with participants.

### **6.1 EVALUATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The foremost objective of the study was to help survivors of sexual abuse to heal of all the wounds, trauma and shame that they went through during their childhood years. The three participants in this study had their own very subjective experiences of sexual abuse. It had appeared that social support, spirituality, families (relatives and parents) and new environment served as aspects of confidence which enabled them to navigate their journey of reintegration after they have lost their dignities through being sexually abused by their stepfathers.

### **PARTICIPANTS**

In the research proposal, the researcher stated that he aimed to interview three participants who had been sexually abused by their stepfathers. These participants were aged between 21 and 30, and were from different churches that I have ministered in the Southern Area of Johannesburg, specifically from Soweto. Secrecy and shame are major key factors in their lives. The research question explored the participants' different experiences of sexual abuse, and focused, specifically, on their

unique points of view, ideas, motives, beliefs and feelings on the phenomenon of sexual abuse. They were thus allowed to tell their stories in their own way, since they were viewed as experts in their own journey and experiences. In this regard, the aim was to remain congruent with each participant's context and continually refer to the text of each written story whilst making interpretations. The interpretations have dealt with individual themes and through the processes of the use of language, personal identities and exchange of dialogue, new meanings were created with the participants. These were recorded in chapters four.

Participants were selected objectively, and could not be friends or acquaintances of the researcher, in order to ensure that the researcher's objectivity could be retained (Walker, 1994: 30). The criteria for a safe and representative sample were thoughtfully determined in such a way to inclusively represent the spectrum of young women participating in the research project.

## **6.2 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

The study followed a qualitative research method: which were in-depth in orientation with participants. The study also made use of quantitative methodologies in order to obtain a broader view of healing mechanisms during their traumatic experience of been sexually abused by people that they had trusted the most. The use of questionnaire allowed the research to move beyond the in-depth studies and demonstrate how sexual abuse impacts young girls in South Africa. A one-on-one interview method was followed in collecting data from the ground. The research questions were designed to study the participants' experience from their point of view and immersed in from their ideas, motives, beliefs and feelings. During the time of interview, the researcher ensured that there were no distractions by anybody

during the process of interview. Based on the questions raised in the interview guide, the participants' answers were classified and discussed extensively in chapter four. They were also analysed and the concepts which were frequently observed from all participants were categorized and summarized in different sub-headings.

### **6.3 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

In chapter two, the theoretical bases and literature review on the concept of child sexual abuse were dealt with from both a biblical, psychological and therapeutically point of view. It also revealed the divine standpoint in terms of sexuality and the traumatic consequences for everyone involved. The aim was to arrive at a holistic understanding of sexual abuse and to see survivors regain dignity and confidence again in life for their future sexual and family life all the stages. Procedures involved a healing from the traumatic experience of child sexual abuse. Chapter three focused on the research method and design utilized for this study, and outlines the epistemological basis, sample, and data collection and analysis methods. Finally, the chapter touched on some ethical considerations that the researcher took into account when devising this study.

Chapter four explored the traumatic experiences of sexual abuse. It also investigated the transitional challenges that these young girls had faced in the aftermath of sexual abuse.

Chapter five dealt with the data analysis and hermeneutic of pastoral care, it further reflected upon the themes which were gathered from co-researchers (participants) through the process of narration.

## **6.4 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

### **6.4.1 Shame and trauma**

Due to the community believe system which were indoctrinated to young girl, there was no proper mechanism to protect survivor of sexual abuse from shame and the loss of dignity, with the following reasons:

### **6.4.2 Secrecy and shame**

Shame and secrecy as one of the most pivotal key concept in this research was proven to be a psychological one. As this research project is underdone from a theological perspective, the researcher endeavoured to seek out a theological mechanism which can be linked and used a secretive way in counselling.

The researcher has come to conclude that, a young girl's ability to regained confidence, dignity and healing depend, mostly, on their ability to forgive and accept themselves again. This creates a flourishing space and opening for the future. The researcher, however, kept in mind that forgiveness is not reconciliation, but rather a way of easing oneself.

Forgiveness is also one of the ways that creatures can deal with those events that wounds their souls as it is a religious thing. It must therefore, be incorporated in the mode of pastoral counselling in order to for the help seekers to gain positive mind, confidence and personal acceptance; regardless of their past traumatic experience . This will help to make people let go of their resentment towards their perpetrators.

## 6.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Firstly, the choice of the study is derived from qualitative and theological pastoral care theory and principles. Due to the extensive time and labour intensive nature of the study, only three participants were interviewed. This small sample only represents a small proportion of young girls that were abused sexually by their stepfathers and therefore cannot be generalized to a larger population of young girls who are sexually abused with different experience and context. Although the researcher knew that interviewing more young girls who are victims of sexual abuse would have elicited more information and assumptions about the research topic. The aim was only on the selected participants in the context of some members of the Methodist Church of southern Africa that he has ministered to in the South of Johannesburg.
- Secondly, the researcher has however, omitted important information regarding the culture due to its sensitivity and respect for it. These are some of the rituals which African people do and it concerns lots of African charms and sexual connotations. I therefore acknowledge that my interpretation of data were likely to be coloured by my own perceptions and values as I share some commonalities with this cultural understanding of sexual abuse in the townships.
- Thirdly, I acknowledge that the manner in which I elicited themes from each participant's narrations was coloured by the lens through which I was looking at the particular point in time. I, therefore, note that another researcher may highlight different themes. A more empirical or qualitative vice in the field of

psychology research could therefore criticize this study, as its outcomes cannot be generalized to a larger population.

## **6.6 RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

- As the study focused entirely on the sexual abuse of young girls by stepfather's perspective of shame and loss of dignity, the researcher proposes that a stepfathers feelings perspective be investigated in order to get more insight and their feeling as this research did not say anything about stepfathers. This would help in determining the variations in family relationships between stepfathers and their stepdaughters.
- As the research is done from the perspective of the healing of young girls abused sexually by their stepfather, it would be interesting to have other young girls dealing with such traumatic experience and the shames that unfold from tragedy of sexual abuse in their childhood lives. This would help when comparing the modes in order for others to construct therapy that would help young girls who are sexually abused. Moreover, young girls who are sexual abused from different cultures could be compared to see whether there is a prevalence of emotional vulnerability and loss of dignity in their respective cultures.
- It would be interesting and valuable to undertake a study that is similar to this one but includes the perceptions of children concerning the impact of sexual abuse on themselves and the whole family as well. This would help in acquiring a holistic understanding from all family members who are involved with respect to the impact of sexual abuse of children.

## 6.7 CONCLUSION

Sexual abuse is a fact of life in modern society. It, therefore, requires a major change in the life course of all family structures and all sources of help in order to bounce back. As a way of concluding the research project, sexual abuse of young girls is not just a psychological concept but a biblical one as well. A thorough investigation of the biblical stand on sexuality and the divine disapproval of this abuse by stepfathers were made and have been summarised. The prevalent universality of sexuality seems to confirm the biblical traditional sexuality as the divine way of recreating humanity. Furthermore, the bible in both the Old and New Testaments views sexuality as contrary to the divine intent. It was noted that Leviticus 24 does not command or encourage sexual abuse; rather, it simply regulates the context where sexuality since it was already happening. After a thorough exegesis of the passage and survey of the relevant interpretations in (Matthews), it is clear that Jesus forbade sexual abuse for any reason. Sexual abuse is unthinkable because it destroys the intended order of creation and God's creative act in intercourse between man and a woman together in accordance with his order - not stepfather to a stepdaughter. God is the author of sexuality; therefore, he inscribed the call to sexuality in our very being by creating us as male and female. Sexuality is governed by His laws, faithfully transmitted by His bride, which is the Church.

## APPENDIX A

### RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

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## UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

**“Sexual abuse of young girls by stepfathers in the case of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa:  
A challenge to Praxis of pastoral care and counselling”**

I am a Master’s student in theology at university of Pretoria. This course requires us to gain applied experience in designing and conducting research. As such, I have designed a research project to study what are the effects of sexual abuse on young girls by their stepfather.

During this study you will be asked to answer certain question in a face –to face interview concerning your personal experiences of growing up in a sexual abusive family background. You will also be asked to share your insight on how such experience have affected you in your adulthood. Your participation will require approximately 60minutes of your time.

There is no known harm associated with your participation in the study. None of the findings will be used against you in any way whatsoever. The potential benefit are that the research will come out with a helpful methodology that will help sexual abused young girls to deal with their experiences so that they can effective pastoral caregivers. All records of participation will be kept strictly confidential, such that only I and my supervisor will have access to the information. Your name will not be used directly or indirectly in any of the records and therefore your anonymity is guaranteed .all data will be destroyed by shredding at the end of the project. The result from this research will be reported in written research report and oral report during class presentation. Information about the project will not be made public in any way that individual participant.

Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. It may be discontinued at any for any reason without explanation and without penalty. Feel free to contact me or my supervisor at any time using the above contact details.

Thanking you in advance for your participation.

**CONSENT**

I have read the above letter, understand the information read, understand that I can ask questions or withdraw at any time. I consent to participate in this research study

-----  
Participant’s signature

-----  
Researcher’s signature

On the (Date).....

At (Place).....

## APPENDIX B

### Interview Questions

Gender: ..... Age.....

Marital Status: ..... Racial group: .....

Physical Address: ..... Contact Number: .....

1. Narrate your story of growing up in a family background of sexual abuse by your father figure.
2. How did this sexual abuse experience impact your parent relationship and the all family?
3. Do you think that young girls who went through such experience may be healed and regain dignity for their future sexual life?
4. In your surrounding have heard from other young girls or friend in your neighbourhood encountered also sexual abuse by their stepfathers?
5. How have you dealt with such situation?
6. By doing so did felt to be affecter emotionally?
7. In your opinion, can the church be a place of healing and restoration for those who are traumatized by stepfather's sexual abuse?
8. According to you, do you thing a male may help you as a pastoral care vis- a- vis your sexual abuse experience during your child hood?
9. How can the church assist young girls' survivor of sexual abuse by their stepfathers in dealing with the trauma they experienced while growing up so that it does not paralyzed them anymore in their future sexual lives?
10. How can the church meet the needs of the young girls' survivor of sexual abuse within a family?
11. Please offer any general comments.

**Thank you for your participation!**

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