Victim empathy in youth sex offenders

by

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DECLARATION

I, Laetitia Coetzee, declare that the thesis entitled *Victim empathy in youth sex offenders*, submitted for fulfilment of the degree DPhil Criminology at the University of Pretoria is my own work and has not previously been submitted for a degree at another university. In addition, I declare that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged.

_________________    ____________________
LAETITIA COETZEE    DATE
You can stand tall without standing on someone. You can be a victor without having a victim – Harriet Woods

I dedicate this thesis to my loving husband, Thinus Coetzee.
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ABSTRACT

A comprehensive literature review and consultations with experts in the field of youth sex offending indicated that there is a dearth of knowledge pertaining to victim empathy of youth sex offenders, especially within the South African context. The goal of this study was to measure, describe and compare the prevalence of victim empathy in youth sex offenders. To achieve the goal of the study, the mixed methods approach was followed. Quantitative data was collected by means of a questionnaire and qualitative data was obtained by means of semi-structured interviews. The questionnaires were completed by 96 sentenced youth sex offenders from three Youth Correctional Centres (YCCs). Subsequently interviews were conducted with each of the research participants.

The questionnaire measured the prevalence of empathy for a general sexual abuse victim as well as own victim empathy in youth sex offenders. Comparisons were made between the two types of empathy and in the quantitative section of this study it was found that the research participants displayed significantly less empathy for their own victims when compared to their levels of empathy for a general sexual abuse victim.

During the qualitative interviews, in-depth information was obtained regarding the youth sex offenders’ thoughts prior to, during and after the offence was committed. Their current feelings for the victims were also explored. The divergent responses obtained, is an indication of the heterogeneous nature of youth sex offending. Most research participants indicated that they did not think about the impact of the offence on the victim prior to, or during the committing of the offence, due to being under the influence of substances, viewing the victim as a willing participant, being impulsive, having feelings of self-entitlement or impunity, or due to the influence of peers. Most of the research participants acknowledged that directly after the victimisation occurred, they were afraid of the consequences of their actions and feared punishment, but did not necessarily consider the feelings of the victim. When explaining their current feelings, various research participants indicated that they were remorseful and would like to ask their victims for forgiveness. However, some
still failed to accept responsibility and blamed circumstances such as being under the influence of substances or being influenced by peers.

Lastly, the research participants were asked about their attendance of correctional programmes in the YCCs and whether these programmes contained an empathy component. Most of the participants indicated that the Sex Offender Programmes which they attended did not have an empathy component and did not focus on the influence that rape had on the victim. Only a small number indicated that the programmes which they attended focussed on the victim. However, it was clear from their explanations that the main focus was on general sexual abuse victim empathy and not on own victim empathy. Considering the results of this study, as well as literature pertaining to the subject, it is evident that programmes should focus on own victim empathy, as that is where the most prominent deficits are displayed.
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CHAPTER 1
ORIENTATION AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

South Africa (SA) is notorious for its high violent crime rate. Many reasons have been put forward for this social ill. The absence of moral integrity is sometimes tied to the high incidence of violent crime in SA. Support for this postulation can be traced back to June 1997, when the late and then President, Nelson Mandela, called upon religious leaders in SA to partner with the state to overcome the “spiritual malaise” underpinning the crime problem in the country. He stated that:

Our hopes and dreams, at times, seem to be overcome by cynicism, self-centeredness and fear. This spiritual malaise sows itself as a lack of good spirit, pessimism, or lack of hope and faith. And from it emerge the problems of greed and cruelty, of laziness and egotism, of personal and family failure. It helps fuel the problems of crime and corruption and hinders our efforts to deal with them (Moral Regeneration Movement, 2015).

The moral regeneration initiative gained more formal attention from the presidency of Mr Thabo Mbeki, after the 1999 election. Mr Jacob Zuma, as Deputy President, was assigned the responsibility to spear-head and formalise the notion of moral regeneration (Moral Regeneration Movement, 2015). In 2003 President Zuma announced that he envisages the advancement of a government plan to develop the moral integrity and level of empathy of the South African population. He is of the opinion that many South Africans are disengaged from what is acceptable and what is unacceptable behaviour. This detachment or lack of ability to judge what behaviour is acceptable, and the apparent lack of appropriate compassion that a person should have with fellow citizens, are especially worrisome amongst youths in SA (Zuma, 2003).

Many practitioners, youth workers and community members hold the view that the youth in SA lack morals, values and respect for authority, which can extend to a total disrespect for human life. Young people may be stuck in a conundrum of low level socio-moral reasoning which more often than not is the result of a lack of opportunity for healthy growth and development. This may lead to many young offenders considering their actions to be moral and justifiable, despite the fact that they are
breaking the law (Liese & Bezuidenhout, 2013:101). The tendency to justify and rationalise delinquent behaviour is elucidated by the neutralisation theory of David Matza and Gresham Sykes. These theorists posit that neutralisation and justification for deviant behaviour usually precede the criminal activities which “provide a moral release” (Lanier & Henry, 2010:179) to commit a crime without any special or specific motivation to act deviant. Furthermore, offenders sometimes lack empathy for their victims due to a lack of emotional competence that is imperative for the development of pro-social behaviour (Liese & Bezuidenhout, 2013:101).

It is therefore vital to establish whether offenders have the necessary insight into their harmful behaviour. It is also important to determine whether offenders have a willingness to repair their wrongful behaviour and whether they understand the concept of empathy and pity for their victim. Only after offenders realise the impact of their wrongful behaviour, they can adhere to the expected moral position of society and start a process of change to become a better person (Carich, Metzger, Baig & Harper, 2003:257). Therefore research needs to be conducted to ascertain whether offenders who commit crimes have the necessary moral values and are at a moral stage where they can understand what the impact of their offences was, or still is on the victims. A prerequisite for positive change in offenders is that their attitude and behaviour must be modified. For this change to take effect, offenders should realise and understand that their behaviour and actions were wrong and they need to feel remorse. Once this happens, the beginning of a process of positive change within the individual may occur (Bezuidenhout, 2007:50). Even though no official statistics pertaining to the recidivism rate after release from a correctional facility in SA is available, some estimate it to be as high as 95 percent (Quan-Baffour & Zawada, 2012:73). Thus, rehabilitation, positive change and empathy building are issues that are of elevated importance.

Offenders must understand the impact of offences on victims, have empathy towards victims and accept responsibility for the offences that they committed. Furthermore, they must be willing to alter their behaviour to such an extent that re-offending will not occur (Koss, Bachar & Hopkins, 2006:351). According to Beech and Fisher (2002:209) a reduced likelihood of repeat offending is associated with an increase of
empathy for the offender’s own specific victim. Braithwaite (2003:320) states that when offenders internalise the shame and realisation of the consequential harm of their deeds it will prevent them from re-offending, which implies that offenders are rehabilitated.

A tendency to prefer the repairing and restoring of relationships, instead of focussing on punishment is gaining ground in the Criminal Justice System (CJS). In other words restoration is preferred instead of retribution (Bezuidenhout, 2007:55). However, in order to repair and restore relationships, people who participate in the process have to be on a certain level of moral development. The basic principles of morality are enshrined in the South African Constitution of 1996. Even though this Constitution is regarded as one of the most liberal and advanced pieces of legislation in the world, it is not a given that every member of the South African populace have the necessary moral values that are required to abide to and understand this liberal legislation in practice. Furthermore, it should be noted that the positive notions pertaining to galvanising a culture of human rights in the Constitution will be lost without an equivalent focus on each individual’s responsibility towards others (Van Niekerk, 2003:13).

Braithwaite (2003:320) believes that the prospects of shaming by the offender’s significant other, the victim and society will prevent further crime and is more effective than the formal threats of the CJS. However, the following question arises from this hypothesis: “If offenders fear shaming and possess a conscience, why didn’t it prevent them from committing the crime in the first place?” A possible answer to this question is that offenders have a damaged conscience or a diminutive moral awareness. According to Blagg (1997:484), Braithwaite sees shaming as an innate characteristic of all societies and communities. In addition, he fails to mention that:

society’s social fabric and collective conscience have been changed by modernity. It is therefore impossible to compare indigenous close-knit families and their ability to teach and to use shame with the fractured open-textured modern family. In homogenous societies where families lived intimately and shaming worked as punishment, rehabilitation was possible (Bezuidenhout, 2007:50).
From the above it is evident that certain complex concepts like morality, shaming and empathy comes to the fore. While attending an international conference on sex offending, the researcher became aware that a dearth of knowledge regarding victim empathy in youth sex offenders within the South African context exists and discussions with national and international scholars in this field underscored the need for research focussing on this phenomenon. In this study, the researcher will measure the levels of victim empathy in youth sex offenders by means of a questionnaire. In addition, the researcher will conduct semi-structured interviews to gain in-depth knowledge of the levels of victim empathy experienced by these offenders.

Before discussing the problem statement and the rationale for the study as well as the relevance of the study for the South African context, the concepts that are central to the study will be defined.

### 1.1 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Key concepts will be defined below to prevent misunderstanding and to clarify the meanings they will carry in this study.

#### 1.1.1 VICTIM

Viano (1976:9) defines a victim as

> any individual, or groups or bodies such as an organisation or social grouping of people, who is harmed or damaged by someone else and whose harm is acknowledged, and who shares the experience and looks for, and receives help and redress from an agency.

The researcher is of the opinion that the above-mentioned definition of a victim is not applicable in this study, as organisational bodies cannot be a victim of a specific sexual offence such as rape, due to the individual nature of this offence. Furthermore, the requirement that the harm is acknowledged is problematic in cases of sexual victimisation, as certain myths and cultural beliefs can give rise to the fact
that the crime is not acknowledged by all family members, friends and the community, or in some instances the CJS. This does not mean that the person subjected to the sexual violation cannot be regarded as a victim. Furthermore, the criterion that the victim must share the experience is also problematic, as many victims are either too traumatised, or do not trust the CJS, and thus do not report the sexual offence, or for various reasons delay reporting the offence. Despite the non-reporting of sexual offences, the researcher holds the view that the person who was sexually violated must still be regarded as a victim. Lastly, it is stated in the definition that a victim is a person who looks for and receives help from an agency. In various instances the violated individual is not referred to helping agencies by members of the CJS. Surely that cannot be sufficient reason not to regard the wronged individual as a victim. Consequently a more appropriate conceptualisation of the concept ‘victim’ is required within the context of this study.

A victim of crime can be defined as “a person who has suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss, or substantial impairment of his or her fundamental rights, through acts or omissions that are in violation of our criminal law” (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, n.d.). This is a comprehensive definition that includes all the important aspects regarding the classification of a victim. However, a sexual offence entails an act and not an omission, thus that part of the definition is unsuitable for this particular study.

For the purpose of this study a victim will be defined as any individual who is harmed or violated and suffers physically and/or emotionally due to illegal and/or non-consented sexual conduct, including acts of sexual assault and/or rape committed by an offender or offenders.

1.1.2 SEXUAL CONDUCT

The Films and Publications Act (Act 65 of 1996) defines sexual conduct as stimulation or arousal of genitals, the display of genitals, masturbation, sexual intercourse, which includes anal sexual intercourse, the fondling, or touching with any object or fondling of genitals, the penetration of a vagina or anus with any object,
oral genital contact, or oral anal contact. Sexual conduct can include sexual assault and/or rape. The concepts ‘sexual assault’ and ‘rape’ will be defined next.

It is stated in The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 that sexual assault occurs when an individual (A) intentionally and unlawfully commits a sexual violation against another individual (B) without the consent of B. Furthermore, the Act defines sexual violations as any act which causes:

(a) direct or indirect contact between the-
   (i) genital organs or anus of one person or, in the case of a female, her breasts, and any part of the body of another person or an animal, or any object, including any object resembling or representing the genital organs or anus of a person or an animal;
   (ii) mouth of one person and-
      (aa) the genital organs or anus of another person or, in the case of a female, her breasts;
      (bb) the mouth of another person;
      (cc) any other part of the body of another person, other than the genital organs or anus of that person or, in the case of a female, her breasts, which could-
         (aaa) be used in an act of sexual penetration;
         (bbb) cause sexual arousal or stimulation; or
         (ccc) be sexually aroused or stimulated thereby; or
      (dd) any object resembling the genital organs or anus of a person, and in the case of a female, her breasts, or an animal; or
   (iii) mouth of the complainant and the genital organs or anus of an animal;
(b) the masturbation of one person by another person; or
(c) the insertion of any object resembling or representing the genital organs of a person or animal, into or beyond the mouth of another person, but does not include an act of sexual penetration.

Regarding the definition of rape, the following is stated in The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007: An individual (A) is guilty of rape when intentionally and unlawfully committing an act of sexual penetration with another individual (B) without the consent of B. Furthermore, the Act defines sexual penetration as

any act which causes penetration to any extent whatsoever by-
(a) the genital organs of one person into or beyond the genital organs, anus, or mouth of another person;
(b) any other part of the body of one person or, any object, including any part of the body of an animal, into or beyond the genital organs or anus of another person; or
(c) the genital organs of an animal, into or beyond the mouth of another person.

As the concept ‘consent’ is mentioned in the definitions of both sexual assault and rape, an explanation of what consent entails is essential. According to the above-mentioned Act, consent can be described as “voluntary or uncoerced agreement”. This means that the person agrees to something (e.g. sexual intercourse) without any pressure or force to do so. Consent is absent in the following instances (Artz & Smythe, 2013:61):

- Consent is obtained by force or intimidation, or the threat of harm.
- An abuse of power or abuse of an authoritative position occurs.
- The sexual act is committed under false pretences, for instance the victim believes that he/she is having sex with one person when in fact it is another, or the sexual violation takes place during another act such as a gynaecological examination.
- Instances where the victim was unable to consent due to being asleep, unconscious or under the influence of substances which led to an altered state of consciousness.
- Where a child is younger than 12 years and does not have the legal capacity to consent.
- Where the victim is mentally disabled.

For the purpose of this study, all the definitions provided in The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 will be utilised without any changes or additions, as the Act prescribes inter alia, the types of offences that are committed by youth sex offenders as well as the circumstances under which they can be held accountable for their actions.
1.1.3 EMPATHY

An extensive discussion of the historical development of defining the concept ‘empathy’ will be provided in Chapter 2. In this chapter, two definitions from different authors and an operational definition will be furnished. It should be noted that these definitions, although dated, are the definitions used in contemporary research focussing on victim empathy.

Davis (1983:113) developed the first multi-component definition of empathy. This definition includes the following components:

- Perspective-taking, which refers to the ability of an individual to adopt the viewpoint of another individual (cognitive component).
- Fantasy, which refers to the ability of an individual to transpose himself into the feelings of a fictitious character/s (one aspect of the affective component).
- Empathic concern which refers to feelings of concern for another individual (having sympathy with another person).
- Personal distress which refers to the perceiver’s self-oriented feelings of distress (another aspect of the affective component).

According to Marshall, Hudson, Jones and Fernandez (1995:101) the last aspect of the above-mentioned definition, namely the personal distress component, refers to the first affective step in an empathic reaction, but as such cannot be viewed as an emotional response as it may be somewhat self-focused. In an attempt to address the shortcomings in the above-mentioned definition, Marshall et al. (1995:101) reconceptualised the concept ‘empathy’ by creating a stage model of the empathic process. They define empathy as involving the following consecutive stages:

- Emotional recognition which refers to the capacity to distinguish the emotional state of another person.
- Perspective-taking which refers to the ability to see situations from another person’s perspective.
- Emotion replication which refers to vicarious reproduction of the observed emotion.
- Response decision which refers to the outcome being based on the feelings that were experienced by the individual.

For the purpose of this study, the definition of Marshall et al. (1995:101) will be used to construct the operational definition, as the definition encompasses both cognitive and emotional aspects and includes all the necessary elements to define empathy. Thus, empathy will be defined as the capacity to distinguish the emotional state of another individual, to see situations from another individual’s perspective, to vicariously replicate observed emotions of another individual and to respond appropriately within the given context.

1.1.4 YOUTH SEX OFFENDER

Booyens, Beukman and Bezuidenhout (2013:37) define a youth sex offender as a person under the age of 18 years who carries out a sexual offence “with a person of any age, against the victim’s will, without consent or in an aggressive, exploitative or threatening manner”. On the other hand, the White Paper on Corrections (Republic of South Africa (RSA), Department of Correctional Services, 2005) indicates that a youth or young offender is classified as an offender between the age of 18 years and 25 years. In addition, the Child Justice Act 75 of 2008 stipulates that a child is an individual younger than 18 years and in certain instances individuals who are 18 years or older but younger than 21 years and whose offence is dealt with in terms of section 4(2) of this Act. This section as interpreted by Gallinetti (2009:13) refers to youth offenders between the ages of 18 years and 21 years who committed the offence when they were younger than 18 years.

The researcher formulated the operational definition for this study by combining aspects of the definitions provided by Booyens et al. (2013:37) and the White Paper on Corrections (RSA, Department of Correctional Services, 2005). Gender is specified in the operational definition, as only male youth sex offenders will form part of the sample. This decision was based on the fact that female youth sex offenders
represent the minority of sex offenders. Furthermore, most research on a national and international level focusses on male sex offenders (Shlesinger, 2010:147). Thus, for the purpose of this study, a youth sex offender implies a male youth younger than 25 years who sexually violates another individual (this includes acts of sexual assault and/or rape).

An exposition of the problem statement as well as the rationale for the study will be given in the next section.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Good governance of misbehaviour and effective crime control should ideally enable individuals to comprehend the consequences of their actions on fellow human beings (Naudé & Prinsloo, 2003:1). Although several studies regarding reparation of relationships between victims and offenders (Batley, 2005; Braithwaite, 2003; Consedine, 2003; Hargovan, 2007; Hargovan, 2011; Skelton & Batley, 2008; Walgrave, 2003; Weitekamp, 2003; Zehr, 1990) have been conducted, there is a dearth of knowledge concerning victim empathy of youth sex offenders (Varker & Devilly, 2007:139), especially within the South African context. Lakey (1994:756) postulates that youth sex offenders can be characterised as humans with empathy deficits. However, few studies have investigated these deficits (Varker & Devilly, 2007:139). Intervention programmes frequently include victim empathy components without sufficient empirical support to necessitate such inclusion (Burke, 2001:224). Varker and Devilly (2007:139) state that a nationwide survey in the United States of America (USA) showed that 94% of the intervention programmes for male sex offenders had an empathy training component.

The few studies that have investigated empathy deficits in youth sex offenders only focussed on general victim empathy, while excluding victim specific empathy and own victim empathy (Varker & Devilly, 2007:139). Although Curwen (2003) and Varker and Devilly (2007) addressed this shortcoming in their research by adding victim specific empathy and own victim empathy in adolescent sex offenders, the researcher is of the opinion that similar research needs to be replicated in the South
African context. The reason for this is that international research does not accommodate the many cultural and social intricacies of the South African populace. Due to our diverse multi-cultural society, research has to be conducted within the South African society in order to determine whether the research results differ from research findings in the international arena. It serves to be noted that victim empathy is a universal concept that can be applied and investigated wholesale. However, the prevalence of victim empathy in youth sex offenders within the South African context needs to be explored in order to make specific recommendations that are applicable to the South African context. The different social intricacies and multi-cultural beliefs and ethnicities, as well as the socio-economic circumstances in SA make the South African context unique, and not necessarily comparable to other countries. The political history and the culture of violence in SA could also have an impact on the lives of many youths and consequently their level of empathy and respect for others.

Pertaining to research of this ilk in the South African context, a quantitative study focussing on 48 convicted male sexual offenders who committed sex offences against children was conducted in 2004. One of the aspects that were explored during this study was the attitude of offenders towards their victims. Recommendations posed during this study was that a comprehensive study focussing on the attitudes of sexual offenders towards their victims should be conducted as it is imperative to develop intervention programmes which can assist sex offenders to take responsibility for their actions and to understand the impact of their offending behaviour (Delport & Vermeulen, 2004:46).

Two types of victim empathy (general sexual abuse victim empathy and own victim empathy) will be measured in the current study in order to establish if youth sex offenders within the South African context display these types of empathy. These findings could possibly guide the development of intervention programmes for youth sex offenders within the South African context in future.
The two types of empathy that will be measured are:

- General sexual abuse victim empathy, which refers to empathy for victims of sexual abuse in general, for example a rape victim.
- Own victim empathy, which refers to specific empathy towards the victim against whom the offender committed the crime.

Prior to embarking on this study, the researcher approached experts in the field of youth sex offending in an effort to obtain their opinions with regards to the necessity of research pertaining to the prevalence of victim empathy in youth sex offenders. One of the experts, Booyens (2009/07/14), who holds a doctoral degree in Criminology and coordinates correctional programmes for youth offenders in Correctional Centres, stated the following:

In my opinion this study is very much needed in SA, especially when dealing with youth sexual offenders. As examples I would like to refer to a conversation with a sixteen year old serial rapist, who after a group discussion regarding the impact of rape on the victim, acknowledged that he never realised the consequences of his actions on the victim, let alone developing empathy for the victim. Another example is that of a group of youth awaiting-trial detainees, while viewing a rape scene performed by a group of drama students, got so excited and encouraged the rape, whereas one would expect them to rather show shock and definitely empathy towards the victim. Therefore a study like yours would be very interesting and valuable to test whether they lack empathy or are simply acting out because of peer pressure.

The other expert whom the researcher approached, Hesselink (2009/07/06), is a professor in Criminology and is actively involved in offender assessments at various Correctional Centres where she conducts needs and risk assessments for offender management and rehabilitation purposes. She added that research with regards to youth sexual offenders is an absolute necessity, as there is a dearth of research with regards to youth sexual offenders, especially in the South African context.
Hence, the compelling need for research of this ilk in a South African context was confirmed by a survey of the literature, which attested to the dearth of existing knowledge pertaining to victim empathy in youth sex offenders. This was endorsed by experts who work in the field of youth offending. During follow-up discussions with Booyens (2015/03/01), she validated her earlier position by reiterating that the envisaged study could potentially make a valuable contribution to gain insight into the phenomenon of youth sexual offending in SA.

In this study the researcher will measure the two types of empathy as discussed on the previous page. The presence or lack thereof will indicate the necessity of inclusion or exclusion of an empathy component in intervention programmes that are developed for youth sex offenders.

After defining the concepts that are central to this study and explicating the problem statement and rationale for the study, it is important to provide the goal and objectives of this study.

1.3 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general purpose of this research is descriptive in nature. According to Brynard and Hanekom (2006:8) descriptive research can be defined as the researcher’s observations and descriptions that are expressed in words. The researcher aims to provide an in-depth description of the prevalence of victim empathy in youth sex offenders. Furthermore, the research is correlational, as the strength between two variables are measured, namely the difference between empathy for a non-specific sexual abuse victim and own victim empathy.

1.3.1 GOAL OF THE STUDY

For the purpose of this study, the goal is to measure, describe and compare the prevalence of victim empathy in youth sex offenders.
1.3.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

According to Fouché and De Vos (2011:94) objectives refer to the steps that the researcher must take to realise the goal of the research. The objectives of this study will be as follows:

- To gain in-depth theoretical knowledge of what victim empathy entails.
- To measure and gain in-depth knowledge regarding the prevalence of empathy for a general (non-specific) sexual abuse victim in youth sex offenders.
- To measure and gain in-depth knowledge regarding the prevalence of own victim empathy in youth sex offenders.
- To compare the prevalence of empathy for a general (non-specific) sexual abuse victim and own victim empathy in youth sex offenders.
- To provide recommendations with regard to the need for the inclusion or exclusion of victim empathy advancement components in intervention programmes aimed at rehabilitating youth sex offenders.

A brief overview of the methodological procedures that will be applied in this study follows.

1.4 OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY

To achieve the goal of the study, the quantitative research method and the qualitative research method will be combined. The combined qualitative and quantitative approach is also referred to as the mixed methods approach (Fouché & Delport, 2011:63). In this study quantitative data will be collected by means of a questionnaire and qualitative data will be obtained by means of semi-structured interviews.

The researcher’s goal is to measure, describe and compare victim empathy in youth sex offenders. Thus, this study will be basic in nature as basic research is conducted to improve the general understanding of the topic under investigation. In addition, it
is employed to discover new phenomena or to generate new ideas of general interest. This can act as a basis for the development of certain interventions (Hansen, 2009:5). As one of the objectives in this study is to provide recommendations with regards to the inclusion or exclusion of empathy advancement components in intervention programmes aimed at rehabilitating young sex offenders, the researcher hopes that the forthcoming recommendations will act as a basis for improved interventions pertaining to youth sex offenders.

The mixed methods approach, opted for in this study, necessitates an appropriate mixed methods design. The design most suited for this study is the triangulation mixed methods design, which implies that the researcher will apply quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. Furthermore, the data collection will take place within the same time frame and both methods will be considered equally important (Delport & Fouché, 2011:442; Ivankova et al., 2007:266).

The two distinct, but in the case of this study complementary methodologies, each require its own research design. For the purpose of the quantitative section of the study (Section A), the researcher will be using a questionnaire containing a scale that has been used successfully in similar research abroad. The researcher is of the opinion that the research design most suitable for this section of the study is the cross-sectional survey design. Conversely, the collective case study research design will be used in the qualitative section of the study (Section B).

1.5 DEMARCATION OF CHAPTERS

The following demarcation will be used in the chapters that follow: Chapter 2 will consist of a literature survey focussing on the nature and extent of youth sex offending as well as an exposition of the different types of empathy and the significance and prevalence of victim empathy in youth sex offending. In Chapter 3 an exposition of theories pertaining to general high risk behaviour, youth sex offending, as well as moral development and empathy will be given. Consequently the researcher will combine all the theories discussed into a comprehensive framework that will serve the purpose of providing a theoretical framework for this
study. Chapter 4 will focus on research methodology. An analysis and interpretation of the data that was collected will be provided in Chapter 5. Subsequently the extent to which the objectives were achieved, as well as recommendations regarding the need for the inclusion or exclusion of victim empathy advancement components in intervention programmes aimed at rehabilitating youth sex offenders, recommendations for future research and an exposition of the value of the study will be forthcoming in Chapter 6.

1.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the key concepts were defined operationally. In addition, the statement of the problem and rationale for the study were discussed to provide insight into the topic under investigation. Furthermore, an exposition of the goal and objectives were given as well as a brief overview of the methods that will be applied in this study. Chapter 2 will include an exposition of scientific literature pertaining to the nature and extent of youth sex offending, as well as the different types of empathy and the significance and prevalence of victim empathy in youth sex offending.
2.1 YOUTH SEX OFFENDING

Youth sex offending is an offence with many complexities that needs to be taken into consideration when it is chosen as a research topic. Some of these complexities include the fact that the age of victims and offenders are steadily decreasing, the number of youth sex offending cases that are reported are increasing and the forcefulness that accompanies these offences are escalating as well (Van Niekerk, 2003:11). As stated in Da Costa (2014:2), sexual offences have detrimental long-term effects for both the victims and the offenders. Additionally, the sexual victimisation of youth can give rise to an intergenerational cycle of violence and abuse (Naidoo & Sewpaul, 2014:93). Furthermore, a worrisome statistic with regard to adult sex offenders is the revelation that 50% to 65% of them admit that their sexual offending commenced during adolescence (Andrade, Vincent & Saleh, 2006:163; Burke, 2001:223; Reitzel & Carbonell, 2006:402; Smith, Wampler, Jones & Reifman, 2005:83; Veneziano & Veneziano, 2002:248). The above-mentioned complexities indicate the necessity of interventions that can curb the occurrence of youth sex offending. Du Plessis (2006) echoes this notion, by stating that youth misbehaviour is increasing and emphasising the fact that practitioners are ill equipped to deal with these offenders appropriately. In order to address youth sex offending, one need to look at the nature and dynamics of these offences (Naidoo & Sewpaul, 2014:84), but also have to take note of the extent of this problem. An exposition of these intricacies will be given in this chapter.

2.1.1 EXTENT OF YOUTH SEX OFFENDING

During 2012/2013 approximately 2,1 million serious crime cases were reported to the police in SA. A third of these crimes (33.7%) were contact crimes. This amounts to 617 239 contact crimes. Of these contact crimes approximately 10,75% were sexual crimes. Thus, 66 387 sexual crimes were committed during this period (An analysis
of the national crime statistics, 2013). This figure decreased to 62 649 during the 2013/2014 financial year. In 2011/2012 127.5 sexual offences were committed per 100 000 of the population, in 2012/2013 there was a slight decrease to 127 sexual offences and in 2013/2014 it decreased to 118.2 sexual offences per 100 000 of the population (An analysis of the national crime statistics, 2014). Even though the number of reported sexual offences increased from 64 514 cases in 2011/2012 to 66 387 cases in 2012/2013, it must be noted that the population size increased from 50 586 757 people in 2011/2012 to 52 274 945 in 2012/2013, thus even though more cases were reported, it should be seen in context of the increased population size. In addition, one should consider that when comparing the 2004/2005 statistics with the 2012/2013 statistics more contact crimes were reported in the 2004/2005 financial year than in the 2012/2013 financial year. It is noteworthy to take into account that the population size was 46.5 million in 2004/2005 and that it increased to more than 52 million in 2012/2013. Furthermore, reported cases of sexual violence have reduced by 9.4% over the last ten years (2004/2005-2013/2014), 8.3% over the last five years (2009/2010-2013/2014) and 5.6% during the past financial year (An analysis of the national crime statistics, 2013; An analysis of the national crime statistics, 2014).

In the aforementioned documents it is also indicated that increased convictions of perpetrators are believed to have a positive influence on public confidence and that this leads to an increase in the reporting of offences. In addition, it is stated that the reinstating and establishment of specialised courts dealing with sexual offences will result in more efficient and quicker finalisation of cases that are currently in the system. The reinstatement of the Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences (FCS) units has had a positive effect on the prevalence of sexual offences. Since its reinstatement, 659 life sentences have been imposed and 3718 persons have been convicted and sentenced to a total of 51 631 years of imprisonment. The successful prosecution, as well as the assistance provided to victims could possibly increase the confidence that community members have in the police. Furthermore, victim friendly services in police stations and community-police partnerships are critical to ensure that victims have the confidence to report cases (An analysis of the national crime statistics, 2013; An analysis of the national crime statistics, 2014).
It is difficult to determine how many of the reported sexual offences were committed by youth offenders, as the South African Police Service (SAPS) does not distinguish between adult and youth sex offenders in their annual statistics and only provides an aggregate figure of sexual offences committed in SA. Maughan (2006:1) sheds some light on the number of youth sexual offences committed in SA. He states that the State processed 130 059 cases of sexual offences committed by young offenders between 1999 and March 2006. Of these offenders only 146 were sentenced to a Correctional Centre and 161 were awaiting trial at the time that his article was published (October 2006). He also states that on a daily basis approximately 82 children were charged for sexual offending against other children in 2006. More recent statistics provided by Naidoo (2011) shows that 40% of the 530 children that are raped on a daily basis are raped by other children whom they are normally acquainted with. An international study conducted by Finkelhor, Ormrod and Chaffin (2009:1) echoes the frequency of children being sexually abused by other children. They found that more than a third of children who are victims of sexual abuse are victimised by other children.

According to the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (2012), 4 772 children were charged for sexual offences by the SAPS during the period of April 2011 and March 2012. Furthermore, it serves to be noted that 4 147 youths and 120 children were incarcerated for sexual offences during the 2011/2012 financial year (Department of Correctional Services RSA, 2015a). When taking this, as well as the fact that according to Mashaba (2009:2) 12 000 children were raped during 2008 in the Gauteng province alone into account, the sexual abuse of children is a grave matter that needs to be addressed in earnest. Furthermore, he states that this figure is not a true reflection of the prevalence of child sexual abuse, as it is estimated that approximately 88 percent of child rapes are never reported. Brown, Esbensen and Geis (2007:108) emphasise that the number of unreported crimes better known as the dark figure is considered to be high. Underreporting is common in crimes of a sexual nature due to the sensitive nature of these offences. Reasons why victims are dissuaded to report sexual offences include humiliation, embarrassment and disillusionment, fear of being blamed or fear of repeat victimisation as well as family pressure not to report the incident. In addition, victims sometimes do not have
access to police stations or they fail to report the crime due to a general distrust in the CJS (Van Niekerk, 2003:12). Furthermore, some of the reported offences committed by youths are not recorded because it is often viewed as sexual experimentation (Booyens et al., 2013:38) or the victim is incorrectly informed by police officers that no charges can be laid if the offender was a child (Van Niekerk, 2003:12).

Even though youth sex offenders form the minority group of the overall sex offending population in SA, it is a serious problem that needs to be addressed, especially when reflecting on the fact that sexual offences can escalate in frequency and severity (Hoghughi, 1997:118; Symboluk, 1999:10; Veneziano & Veneziano, 2002). Without intervention the average youth sex offender can commit approximately 380 sexual crimes during his lifetime (Nash, 2001). In addition, their actions often progress from compulsive masturbation, to exhibitionism or voyeurism, escalating to sexual assault and rape (Print & Morrison, 2000:293).

2.1.2. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH SEX OFFENDERS

Even though youth sex offenders do not necessarily form a homogenous group, certain common characteristics displayed by them have been identified. An exposition of some of these characteristics that are applicable to this study will be provided.

2.1.2.1 Low self-esteem

According to various authors, low self-esteem is a contributing factor to sexual offending (Beech & Fisher, 2002:210; Fisher, Beech & Browne, 1999:474; Naidoo & Sewpaul, 2014:89; Seto & Lalumière, 2010:563; White, Kadlec & Sechrist, 2006:135). Sexual offenders generally have a low self-esteem that may be a precursor to sexual offending and that may hamper their progress in intervention programmes. Furthermore, Fernandez and Marshall (2003:13) state that a low self-esteem in sex offenders can be a reaction to being caught and/or punished or
stigmatised. On the other hand, it can also be a chronic problem that already presented in childhood and is displayed throughout the individual’s adult life.

Individuals with a low self-esteem are usually preoccupied with their own limitations to such an extent that they do not have sufficient emotional energy left to be concerned with other people’s feelings (Fernandez & Marshall, 2003:13). Furthermore, individuals with a low self-esteem and limited self-confidence will be so involved with fulfilling their own needs that they might ignore the feelings of other individuals in order to succeed at their own goals and aspirations. In addition, it is postulated that the empathy deficits displayed by youth sex offenders may occur due to the strategies that they utilise to prevent further judgements or attacks on their already fragile self-esteem. These strategies can include denial of their offending, minimising the harm that their victims experienced, and claiming that the victims deserved, or invited the attack. Furthermore, it must be noted that changes in the self-esteem of youth offenders as a result of intervention programmes are highly correlated with changes in empathy (Marshall & Marshall, 2011:752).

On the other hand, Fernandez and Marshall (2003:21) report that they found that rapists in their study did not portray lower levels of self-esteem when compared to other non-sexual offenders. Both the rapists and the non-sexual offenders scored very close to the normative mean when completing a measuring instrument assessing levels of self-esteem. Conversely, Fisher et al. (1999:474) and Cossins (2000:193) state that a poor self-esteem can be seen as a possible consequence of being the victim of sexual abuse and a significant number of sex offenders were sexually abused as children.

2.1.2.2 Inadequate social skills

Inadequate social skills can also be seen as a contributing factor to sex offending, as it can lead to the committing of a sexual offence due to the offender’s inability to form appropriate relationships (Fisher et al., 1999:474; Naidoo & Sewpaul, 2014:89). When compared to non-sex offending youth offenders, youth sex offenders are more often victims of bullying and do not have many friends. In conjunction with this, only
50% of the youth sex offenders in a sample indicated that they had girlfriends, compared to 81% of the non-sex offending youth offenders. A minority of the youth sex offenders had consensual sex compared to approximately 60% of the non-sex offending youth offenders (Hoghughi, 1997:13).

Fernandez and Marshall (2003:13) postulate that sex offenders display social anxiety, aggression and under-assertiveness. In conjunction with this, the above-mentioned factors can lead to a lack of self-confidence experienced by sex offenders that can result in them becoming self-absorbed. A consequence of the self-involvement can be that these individuals have a diminished ability to show empathy towards others. Contradicting the research discussed above, Seto and Lalumière (2010:565) found that there is no significant difference between the social skills of adolescent sex offenders and other adolescents. However, a noticeable difference between these two groups is that adolescent sex offenders experienced higher levels of social isolation than the comparison group. Thus, the presence of problems pertaining to socialisation is a given, but it does not necessarily mean that youth sex offenders display signs of social incompetence.

2.1.2.3 Lack of assertion skills

Assertiveness can be seen as a multidimensional concept encompassing aspects such as the ability of an individual to express feelings, take a stand for his rights, instigate and maintain interaction with other individuals, manage criticism and pressure as well as making requests and demands when necessary. In this regard it is postulated that assertiveness training should be an essential part of intervention programmes for sex offenders, as unassertive behaviour can be linked to sexual offending (Booyens et al., 2013:42) due to the presence of elements such as resentment, depression, vulnerability, frustration and feelings of injustice (Fisher et al., 1999:475; Naidoo & Sewpaul, 2014:91; Nash, 2001).

2.1.2.4 Victim empathy deficits

Debates surrounding the question whether sex offenders lack empathy in general, or
simply lack empathy towards their own victim, are on-going (Fisher et al., 1999:475). Although conflicting findings have been published, early indications are that youth sex offenders show victim empathy deficits and display callous personality traits when compared with violent non-sex offenders and non-violent offenders (Andrade et al., 2006:165). A detailed exposition of victim empathy will follow later in this chapter. In the succeeding section the researcher will discuss different categories that young sex offenders can be divided into, to highlight the multifarious underlying reasons for the occurrence of youth sex offending.

2.1.3 CATEGORIES OF YOUTH SEX OFFENDERS

Even though no typical profile exists for a youth sex offender, these offenders do share certain common characteristics and can be divided into categories providing possible explanations for the occurrence of their offences. According to Rich (2006:195) youth sex offenders can be divided into three categories based on who their victims are, namely youth sex offenders that offend against peers and/or adults, youth sex offenders that victimise children who are much younger than them and youths who partake in both forms of sexual offending, thus targeting peers or adults and children. It must be noted that most youth sex offenders are grouped in the second category, which refers to the sexual victimisation of children.

Youth sex offenders who target adults or peers often victimise female strangers and the offences often occur concurrently with other criminal activities. In addition, this category of youth sex offenders often display high aggression levels, they tend to use weapons during the act and their actions are likely to result in physical injuries sustained by their victims. Furthermore, a noteworthy number of youth sex offenders in this category were under the influence of a substance when committing the offence (Stevens, Hutchin, French & Craissati, 2013:147), most of these offences take place in isolated public areas (Hunter, 1999) and these offenders normally have a criminal history including various types of offending behaviour, not limited to sexual offending (Andrade et al., 2006:163).
On the other hand youth sex offenders that victimise children are often relatives of the victim or know the victim well. To a certain extent this is corroborated by the findings of Delport and Vermeulen (2004:45) who found that 16.7% of the victims in their study conducted with sex offenders who victimised children, were relatives of the offenders. In addition, 39.6% described their victims as acquaintances and 22.9% described their victims as a girlfriend, while only 20.8% described their victims as strangers. A study conducted by Naidoo and Sewpaul (2014:87) echoes the above notions in their study which focussed on the life experiences of 25 adolescent sex offenders who were receiving services from Childline. The ages of the victims of these offenders ranged between three and 40 years, with all except one being children. In addition it was found that 24 of their victims were younger than eight years. Furthermore, it was found that 92% of the victims knew their offenders and 44% of the victims were victimised by their brothers.

It serves to be noted that youth sex offenders with child victims were usually younger at the time of the offence, when compared to those who victimised peers or adults and they display more deficiencies in social functioning. These offenders mostly resort to manipulation to gain compliance and will not necessarily use violence. In addition, they often suffer from depression, have a low self-esteem and are likely to have been victims of sexual abuse themselves. Their offences mostly occur in private settings (Chu, Koh, Zeng & Teoh, 2015:156; Hunter, 1999; Stevens et al., 2013:147). This was also corroborated by Delport and Vermeulen’s research (2004:45) which found that 43.8% of the offences were committed at the offender’s home and 22.9% of the offences occurred at the victim’s home.

O’Brien and Bera (1986:2) provide a more comprehensive categorisation of youth sex offenders compared to Rich (2006:195). This classification system is also cited in several more contemporary studies, namely Harris (2008:29), Hoghugh (1997:18), Omar (2010:147), Serrao (2004:1) and Veneziano and Veneziano (2002:252). An exposition of these categories follows:

- Group influenced: Typically these young offenders experience peer pressure, partake in gang activities and come from a low socio-economic background.
These offenders commit sexual offences to gain a feeling of belonging. Offenders in this category are typically young adolescents who have not committed prior sexual offences. In most instances the offender and victim know one another. The offender quintessentially denies responsibility and shifts the blame to the peer group, or to the victim.

- **Naïve experimenter:** Youth sex offenders belonging to this category often commit offences while acting on their sexual curiosity. The ages of offenders in this category usually varies between 11 years and 14 years, and in most instances they do not have a history of misbehaviour. These offenders refrain from using techniques such as bribery, trickery and/or coercion. Often these offenders were exposed to pornography. Youths in this category usually commit their offences when the opportunity arises, for instance at a family gathering or while babysitting.

- **Pseudo-socialised:** Offenders resorting in this category are usually older adolescents who have good social skills. Normally these youths do not display misconduct in other areas of their life and have a good self-esteem. In addition, the youth sex offenders in this category are generally intelligent and in most instances they are top achievers. However, pseudo-socialised youth sex offenders might have been victims of sexual abuse or neglect. As a rule the misconduct of these offenders last for an extended period of time and they tend to rationalise their behaviour, do not display remorse and claim that the sexual act was consensual.

- **Under-socialised:** Youth offenders in this category have insufficient interpersonal skills and will commit offences in order to feel in control and gain power. In general these youths can be regarded as loners, as they do not have friends in their own age group and spend most of their time watching television or playing video games. When socialising with children much younger than them, they feel accepted and admired. Generally they do not display any other misconduct and will not use force to gain compliance from their victims. They typically victimise younger children who are accessible. The offences often occur while babysitting or attending family gatherings.

- **Sexually aggressive:** It is customary for the youth sex offenders resorting in this category to experience the need to dominate and gain power by acting
aggressively and exploiting their victims sexually. Their offending behaviour usually includes violence and threatening behaviour and they want to humiliate the victim. The violence, more than the sexual act is the catalyst for sexual arousal. Some offenders are aroused by the violence per se and if violence is combined with sexual acts, the displaying of violence enhances the sexual arousal. These offenders victimise children, peers or adults. Often these offenders are impulsive and have a history of a dysfunctional family life characterised by abuse and domestic violence. Normally these youths also have a history of offending behaviour, ranging from status offences such as truancy, to criminal conduct such as vandalism and arson. Generally speaking these offenders maintain good relationships with their peers and are often charming individuals. However, they are likely to act aggressively on occasions and tend to abuse substances.

- Sexually compulsive: These youth sex offenders originate from a strict, enmeshed family where the family members experience difficulty in expressing their emotions, and they experience problems with intimacy. Youth sex offenders in this category commit sex offences in a repetitive manner and the offending behaviour becomes addictive. The offence is often committed to relieve anxiety. The sexual offending behaviour normally entails “hands off” offences such as exhibitionism or voyeurism. These acts are usually followed by masturbation and subsequently an orgasm.

- Disturbed impulsive: The youth sex offenders in this category often display psychological disorders, have learning problems and will display conduct disorders and other aggressive tendencies. These offenders usually originate from an abusive family and they often use substances. Their offences occur impulsively and is characterised by a once of occurrence, or a series of unpredictable acts which are bizarre or ritualistic. The act may be a result of substance abuse or the malfunctioning of the individual’s normal inhibitory mechanisms.

In 2010, Omar conducted research focussing on children younger than 12 years who committed sexual offences against other children. In this study 50 diverted children, who were taking part in a rehabilitation programme at the Teddy Bear clinic in SA,
completed a questionnaire. After statistical analysis of the questionnaires, the researcher divided the respondents into the above-mentioned categories. She found that respondents did not always fit into only one particular category, but instead the sample portrayed characteristics that led to an overlap in different categories. She asserts that 68% of the respondents in her study could be classified as naïve experimenters, while 10% could be categorised as under-socialised child exploiters and 6% fits into the pseudo-socialised child exploiter category. This means that 84% of the respondents were participating in experimental behaviour or were experiencing problems with socialisation. The remainder of the respondents (16%) fell into the other categories, including the sexually aggressive, sexually compulsive and disturbed impulsive categories (Omar, 2010:146). These findings are not consistent with international findings, as it was found that the majority of youth sex offenders had sexual interaction prior to the occurrence of the sexual offence, negating the notion of youth sex offenders being young people who are merely experimenting (Print & Morrison, 2000:295). One can deduce that the difference in results obtained in the studies mentioned above might be attributed to the age differences between the two groups of research participants. The youth sex offenders in Omar’s study were younger than 12 years, thus in the middle childhood phase, whereas the youth sex offenders in the international studies were mainly adolescents between the ages of 13 and 17 years. The younger offenders might be more inclined to experiment sexually, compared to adolescents who might commit sexual offences due to other motivational or risk factors.

Following the review of the different categories that youth sex offenders can be divided into, it is also important to note the difference between age appropriate sexual play and sexual abuse. Omar’s (2010) findings indicate that most of the respondents in her study were classified as naïve experimenters. The significance of this is that a narrow distinction exists between young sex offenders (experimenters) who are engaging in sexual play and those who are committing a sexual offence by abusing other individuals.

The table provided on the following page indicates the differences between normal, age appropriate sexual play and deviant sexual acts:
Table 1: Difference between normal sexual play and problematic sexual play

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normal sexual play</th>
<th>Problematic sexual play</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spontaneous and exploratory.</td>
<td>Compulsive and occurs frequently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occurs occasionally and both parties are engaging voluntarily.</td>
<td>Occurs between children who are not familiar with each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occurs between children of a similar age, size and developmental level.</td>
<td>Occurs between children of different ages, sizes and developmental levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is not associated with fear, anxiousness or violence.</td>
<td>Is associated with fear and aggression and are normally accompanied by force and/or coercion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children will refrain from continuing with their play if their actions were addressed by an adult.</td>
<td>Continues after the child has been reprimanded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The children’s sexual play can be reduced with increased adult supervision.</td>
<td>Causes harm to the child.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Arnts, 2004)

After considering the differences between normal sexual play and deviant sexual acts, it is important to look at high risk factors that can give rise to, or can be indicative of youth sex offending.

2.1.4 HIGH RISK FACTORS PERTAINING TO YOUTH SEX OFFENDERS

Various authors conducted research on high risk factors that can give rise to youth sex offending (Harris, 2008; Hunter, 1999; Naidoo & Sewpaul, 2014; Smith et al., 2005). In this regard, Maree (2013:70) indicates that the risk of socially unacceptable behaviour increases exponentially with the amount of risk factors present, especially in the absence of protective factors such as positive role models and a nurturing family life. In addition, the various risk factors do not exist in isolation, but are linked and have vicarious effects on each other.

As indicated above, various risk factors can increase the chances of a youth committing a sexual offence. However, it must be noted that the main focus of this study is not the youth sex offender per se, but rather victim empathy displayed by
youth sex offenders. Thus, an overview of a few risk factors especially those pertaining to the development or inhibition of pro-social attitudes and empathy in youth sex offenders, will be explicated.

2.1.4.1 Overcrowding and social disorganisation

Youths living in disadvantaged and overcrowded areas where there is a lack of community cohesion are at risk of displaying aggressive tendencies (McClinton, 2004:27). These youths usually grow up in an environment where violence and poverty are rife and where there is a lack of constructive recreational programmes and opportunities to develop acceptable, pro-social behaviour (De Wet, 2003:3). In addition, these youths lack the presence of positive role models to counteract and buffer the negative effects of their milieu. The lack of positive role models, combined with overcrowding and community disorganisation can lead to a lack of norms and values, which can give rise to higher levels of violence and crime (McClinton, 2004:28). Furthermore, values and respect for another person’s life, property and dignity diminishes and as Harris (2008:38) states the belief that “if one needs or wants something one can simply take it filters down into all aspects of life, including sexual relationships”.

2.1.4.2 Substance abuse

Leggett (2002:3) states that a South African study focussing on the relationship between substance abuse and crime indicated that 66% of a group of offenders that were younger than 20 years, and that were arrested for non-drug related offences, tested positively for substances. Mulvey, Schubert and Chassin (2010:6) report that in a sample of 1354 American youth offenders, 48% of the youth reported that they used more than one substance during the six months prior to the commencing of the study in which they were partaking. In addition, 37% of the same sample of male youth offenders that were interviewed met the DSM-IV diagnostic criteria for drug or alcohol dependency. It must be noted that the rate of substance abuse reported above is three to four times higher compared to the community sample of non-delinquent youth also interviewed in the study conducted by Mulvey et al. (2010:6).
Although the effect of substance abuse and the link to subsequent misbehaviour committed by adolescents has been established in various studies (De Wet, 2003:96; Lakey, 1994:755; Mulvey et al., 2010:3) there is controversy pertaining to the frequency of intoxication of adolescent sex offenders during the committing of their offences (Pratt, Patel, Greydanus, Dannison, Walcott & Slaone, 2001:3). In response to the controversy, Seto and Lalumière (2010:541) found that the use of substances occurred more frequently among youth offenders who committed non-sexual offences than among youth sex offenders. Conversely Jewkes, Nduna, Shai and Dunkle (2012:5) found that approximately a quarter (24%) of all the rapes committed by the research participants in their study could have potentially been eliminated if the drug use variable was removed.

Harris (2008:119) conducted a South African study and interviewed 19 youth sex offenders. She found the following regarding the relationship between substance abuse and subsequent offending behaviour: One of the research participants indicated that he smoked nyaope (a combination of marijuana and heroin) prior to breaking into a house and that the sexual offence that he committed during the break-in was a direct result of the substance abuse. Another research participant remarked that it was easier to commit an offence when he was under the influence of alcohol, but that he could not attribute the reason for offending to the use of alcohol. Another respondent stated that he would not have committed the sexual offence if he was not under the influence of alcohol.

Taking the above into account, the use of substances can be a contributing factor, as it influences a person’s inhibitions and might render them more prone to behaviour that would not otherwise be exhibited (Naidoo & Sewpaul, 2014:90). Booyens et al. (2013:35) reiterate this opinion, stating that being under the influence of a substance could potentially result in distorted perceptions as well as a heightened sense of bravado. It thus follows that if offenders are sober at the time of their offences, they might recognise the harmfulness of their actions, but while under the influence of substances, they are able to detach themselves from the victim’s suffering (Hanson & Scott, 1995:264).
2.1.4.3 Culture of violence

Societies where a culture of violence exists are characterised by the notion that violence is a legitimate avenue that can be used to resolve problems (Burton, 2008:19; Naidoo & Sewpaul, 2014:90). This legitimisation of violence as a recourse to problem resolution, is intensified by the fact that the youth in SA encounters violence on a daily basis during their normal routine activities such as going to school or in their domestic environment (De Wet, 2003:93). In addition, an adolescent male who witnesses violent interaction, especially directed towards females (e.g. his father beating his mother), might learn that women are seen as inferior to men. Furthermore, the youth can start associating aspects such as anger, fear and violence as being part and parcel of intimate relationships and this may lead to them being desensitised and not realising the detrimental consequences of their actions (Naidoo & Sewpaul, 2014:95; Ward, Polaschek & Beech, 2006:35). Moreover, Petersen, Bhana and McKay (2005:1237) found that from an early age boys are socialised into traditional patriarchal notions of what masculinity entails. These notions usually endorse and legitimise unequal male and female power relations coupled with violence and intimidation. As a result, the belief that violence and intimidation during sexual intercourse are normal may have become entrenched.

2.1.4.4 Family environment

The family can be seen as the primary socialising agent and thus their role in teaching the child pro-social behaviour is of the utmost importance (Maree, 2013:75). According to Harris (2008:140) 13 of the 19 youth sex offenders (68%) in her study indicated that their families were incomplete. This means that these children may lack positive role models as well as someone to teach them socially acceptable behaviour.

Adolescents who sexually victimise others are often raised in families where violent interaction often occurs. They experience and/or witness the violence, which in turn can lead to a lack of empathy as well as insufficient sexual boundaries (Naidoo & Sewpaul, 2014:90; Print & Morrison, 2000:296). The absence of a parent, especially
a father figure in the boy’s developmental years, is problematic as the boy needs a father to model the correct behaviour towards females. In addition, a law-abiding male role model should teach the boy how to interact with, and how to respect females (Harris, 2008:141). One must also take into account that attachment to a primary caregiver during early childhood is of paramount importance. If children did not experience empathy from others during their early childhood, they may not have the capacity to express empathy towards others (Owen & Fox, 2011:553; Regehr & Glancy, 2001:147).

2.1.4.5 Prior victimisation

A link between prior sexual victimisation and sex offending has been established in various studies (Barbaree & Langton, 2006:58; Finkelhor et al., 2009:3; Veneziano & Veneziano, 2002:248). Sexually reactive children who commit sexual offences in response to their own abuse may not be aware of the harmful effects of their behaviour and may not recognise their actions as deviant. Furthermore, it serves to be mentioned that sexual stimulation is often experienced by the victim and that subsequent masturbating to images of their own abuse can for instance condition young boys to be sexually aroused by other young boys (Miner et al., 2006:4). In addition, boys who were sexually victimised by other males might have been aroused by certain acts and could question their own sexual orientation. This might lead to a scenario where the victim becomes the offender in order to regain a sense of control and make sense out of the whole experience (Barbaree & Langton, 2006:70). Moreover, male children who were victimised by other males can develop intense homophobic attitudes (Hoghughi, 1997:118; Scavo & Buchanan, 1989:63). Often these attitudes develop as a result of a resistance they experience towards homosexual feelings that they may have, or guilt regarding pleasure that they derived from sexual stimulation that occurred during the abuse.

Cooper, Murphy and Haynes (1996:107) indicate that youth sex offenders who were prior victims of sexual abuse were more inclined to commit “hands on” offences, victimised more individuals, victimised both males and females, offended against family members or acquaintances and their offending commenced at a younger age.
Conversely, youth sex offenders who were not prior victims of sexual abuse were more inclined to commit “hands off” (e.g. exhibitionism or voyeurism) offences and typically target strangers. In addition, Seto and Lalumière (2010:564) state that youth sex offenders who have been victims of sexual abuse have more distorted views pertaining to sex and often experience sexual arousal towards children or coercive sex. Additionally, they state that certain aspects such as the relationship between the victim and the offender, as well as the nature and the duration of the sexual abuse are important aspects that can be indicative of the possibility of a victimised youth becoming a sexual offender. Factors such as violence used during the sexual abuse, sexual acts involving penetration as well as abuse continuing over a long period of time increase the likelihood that the youth will engage in sexual offending behaviour.

However, it should be emphasised that not all youth sex offenders are victims of prior sexual abuse per se, but that most of them are in fact victims of some kind of abuse, including physical and/or emotional abuse, neglect, or witnessing domestic violence (Lamont, 2010:1; Naidoo & Sewpaul, 2014:89; Pratt et al., 2001:3; Righthand & Welch, 2005:19). In an international study Pithers and Gray (1998:208) found that 84% of the adolescent sex offenders that were interviewed were victims of sexual abuse, 48% were victims of physical abuse, 33% were victims of emotional abuse, 18% were neglected and 56% were victims of a combination of these forms of abuse. At the same time the researcher acknowledges the notion that some offenders allege that they were victims of sexual abuse themselves, in order to mitigate the responsibility for their own deviant behaviour. This notion has gained support through research results indicating that sexual offenders who self-reported their own victimisation and who were subsequently subjected to a polygraph test to verify their claims of personal victimisation were found to have made false accusations. Thus, in some instances offenders are not truthful about being victims of sexual abuse (Burke, 2001:223; Hindman & Peters, 2001:14).

2.1.4.6 Rape myths

Approximately 50% of the males that were interviewed were under the impression that a girl saying “no” to sexual intercourse actually meant “yes”. In addition, eight out of ten males (80%) believed that females were to blame for the occurrence of sexual violence. Three in ten interviewees (30%) also claimed that if a girl was raped, she must have been asking for it. Two in ten interviewees (20%) felt that females enjoyed being raped. An additional alarming finding was that approximately a third of the young males and females in this sample viewed forced sex with an acquaintance as acceptable and they did not view it as sexual violence.

The research findings of Harris (2008:160) indicate that 16% of the youth sex offenders in her sample acknowledged that they believe in some of the rape myths mentioned above. Two of the respondents stated that a girl’s attire can contribute to her sexual victimisation. Another respondent postulated that having sexual intercourse with your girlfriend without her consent should not be viewed as rape, as it is the girl’s duty to prove her devotion to her boyfriend by having sex with him. Harris (2008:50) states that some males believe in certain myths which give rise to distorted views of what acceptable sexual interaction entails. Furthermore, these myths can endorse and propagate sexual violence. In addition, the belief in these myths can be used as a way to justify sex offences and can lead to offenders not taking responsibility for their offences (Harris, 2008:161). Seto and Lalumière (2010:560) disagree with the above-mentioned statements, as they found that when compared to non-sex offenders, there is no significant difference in the way that they view women or in the rape myths that they endorse. Thus, according to these authors, youth sex offenders do not display more distorted views of women or have stronger beliefs in rape myths than non-sex offenders.

2.1.4.7 Pornography

Young people are inquisitive and seek ways to gain sexual stimulation. Some of them may turn to pornography to satisfy their sexual curiosity and needs (Peter & Valkenburg, 2008:208). Most authors, such as Ven-hwei and Wei (2005:229) and Hodgetts (2012:140) hold the opinion that adolescents’ exposure to pornography can lead to sexual promiscuity. A study conducted by Peter and Valkenburg (2008:226)
likewise confirms that the more frequently young people viewed sexually explicit material, the more they thought about sex, the more intense their interest in sex became and the more frequently their thoughts were preoccupied with sex, distracting them from their normal daily activities. The possibility of sexually deviant behaviour, resulting from exposure to sexually explicit images viewed at a young age, is therefore something that has to be considered (Hunter, Figueredo & Malamuth, 2010:142). Furthermore, Hodgetts (2012:146) notes that the consumer of pornographic material might be influenced by the images that they view to such an extent that they might develop negative attitudes toward women. In this study conducted by Hodgetts (2012), it was found that some of the pornographic material viewed by research participants depicted sexually aggressive acts against women as enjoyable for both the male and female participants in the pornographic scenes. In addition, some of the research participants indicated that they derived pleasure from viewing pornographic material depicting the rape or violent treatment of women. Thus, the conclusion that was reached by the researcher in this study is that the viewing of pornography may promote sexual aggression, especially when taking into account that the viewing of violent pornography leads to sexual arousal in the consumer, as was confirmed by the research participants in her study (Hodgetts, 2012:146-148).

Research conducted by Goodenough (2003) indicates that there is a distinct link between adolescent sex offending and the viewing of pornographic material. This study included 101 research participants. Of these participants 90% indicated that they have viewed pornography and 25% of them admitted to accessing the Internet to search for pornography. A study by Harris (2008) in SA spawned similar findings to Goodenough (2003). She found that 84% of the youth that were interviewed in her study indicated that they have viewed pornography. The pornographic material included videos viewed by 53%, explicit sexual photos in magazines viewed by 53% as well, pornographic images on the Internet viewed by 37% and explicit sexual material on television viewed by 26%. It must be noted that 21% of the respondents in this study indicated that they found pornography arousing and that they had a need to replicate the behaviour that they viewed. Moreover, Ford and Linney (1995:66) indicated that their research results showed that young sex offenders were
introduced to pornographic material at a younger age than their comparison group that consisted of status offenders and violent non-sex offending youth. The young sex offenders also viewed more “hard-core” pornography than their comparison group.

Debates regarding the link between the viewing of pornography and the committing of sexual offences are on-going. Contributing to this debate, Rich (2003:68) states that pornographic images reinforce certain sexual ideas pertaining to acceptable sexual interaction and these messages are internalised by the youth. However, Rice Hughes (2001) argues that deviant sexual behaviour does not necessarily occur as a result of the viewing of pornography by adolescents. Nevertheless, the author admits that pornography may have some detrimental effect on youth. Greenfield (2004:741) states in this regard that the viewing of pornography can have an influence on the display of sexual violence; it can determine sexual attitudes, influence moral values and increase the sexual activities of young people. Diamond (1999:14) disagrees as he postulates that increased exposure to pornographic images can reduce youth sex offending, as pornography gives young people the opportunity to explore their budding sexuality and gratify their sexual needs. In addition, it serves as a vent or release for their sexual curiosity. Additionally, Groth (1979:9) emphasises a very important fact by stating that sexual offences such as rape is normally a reaction to the offender’s anger or fear, and that even though sexual offenders might be aroused by pornographic material, their sexual offences cannot be attributed to the viewing of pornography as such.

Accordingly, based on the above discussion, a direct link between the viewing of sexually explicit material and sexual offending is difficult to substantiate. This statement is supported by the findings of Harris (2008:158) that indicated that 44% of the respondents in her study were of the opinion that there was no link between their sexual offences and their viewing of pornography, whereas 56% indicated that their viewing of pornography had a significant impact on their offending behaviour. Harris (2008:159) concluded that taking the research results of her study into consideration, it can be deduced that pornography is detrimental to young people who have a predisposition to commit sexual offences. On the other hand, Perrin et al. (2008:12)
state that in some instances pornography is used to enhance or maintain sexual relationships as the viewing of pornography can provide sex education, can aid arousal prior or during sexual interaction and can provide partners the opportunity to learn and explore new sexual positions. It must, however, be noted that a study conducted by Paul and Shim (2008:196) indicated that most people are not inclined to seek sexual information for educational purposes by viewing pornography. In addition, four main reasons why people choose to view pornography was identified in their study, namely: Maintaining relationships, mood management (to alleviate depression or boredom), habitual use (some view it as a hobby) and as a means to satisfy sexual fantasies. Conversely, Hodgetts (2012:151) is of the opinion that a relationship exists between the viewing of pornography and weakening bonds and/or cohesion between partners who are in a permanent relationship.

2.1.4.8 Television

Omar (2010:125) found that a considerable number of respondents (72%) in her study reported that they watch television every day. Only 24% of the respondents indicated that they only watched television on weekends and 4% indicated that they do not watch television at all. Furthermore, 70% of the respondents indicated that they normally watch television without supervision. A further matter of concern is that 92% of the respondents indicated that they received the majority of their sex education by watching television. This is in line with international research indicating that television is regarded as one of the most important sources of sex education for adolescents (Ven-hwei & Wei, 2005:222). This is especially worrisome if one takes into account that an association between watching violence on television and then acting it out in a real life situation has been verified by research (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:374). If children are not properly informed about human sexuality, watching explicit scenes without any supervision may give rise to confusion and can lead to fear, or trauma and feelings of powerlessness. Children might try to regain their feelings of power by committing deviant sexual acts against peers (Newberger, 2001:18).
2.1.4.9 Music

Martino, Collins, Elliot, Strachman, Kanouse and Berry (2006:430) postulate that music lyrics inspire adolescents and that they gain knowledge about gender and social roles, as well as pro-social behaviour from these lyrics. Furthermore, they state that the genre of the music is not the most important factor when considering the impact that music has on the youth, but that the content of the song is the deciding factor. Considering the fact that young people are reported to listen to music for one and a half to two and a half hours per day, this is a matter that needs to be taken into consideration (Martino et al., 2006:430). In a study conducted by Weitzer and Kubrin (2009:12), it was found that some lyrics in the 430 Rap songs that were analysed, praised men who mistreat women either in a financial, sexual or emotional manner. Some of these rappers reported that they are encouraged to verbally abuse women in their lyrics, as it is rewarded by the music industry, as well as by consumers who buy such material. Even though not all the songs were derogatory towards women, they generally did not portray women in a favourable light. These notions portrayed in the music are, however, a reflection of the views and perceptions of the societies from which it originate and it echoes the larger culturally embedded objectification of women (Weitzer & Kubrin, 2009:26).

2.1.4.10 Peer relationships

Even though a peer group can provide a sense of belonging to young people, a peer group can also initiate or reinforce existing criminal or disruptive behaviour (Harris, 2008:54). According to Piaget (1932:18) the adolescent phase of a person’s life is a period where one realises that rules are flexible and that one can negotiate the terms of the rules in different contexts. The relevance of this notion within the context of youth sex offending is that an adolescent might adjust his perceptions and moral views to be compliant with the values of the peer group, to ensure acceptance within the peer group (Harris, 2008:55). Thus, if the peer group adheres to certain violent or intimidating ways of gaining sexual compliance, the adolescent within this peer group might follow suit. Kipke (1999:32) adds that adolescents gain a substantial amount of information regarding sex from their peers. This is problematic, as the information
might be inaccurate and might give rise to distorted views pertaining to pro-social sexual behaviour. Contrary to the above-mentioned, Omar (2010:127) found that 84% of the respondents in her study said that they did not gain their knowledge about sex from their friends. Thus, the influence of their peers on their sexual views and ideas were much less than expected.

In other instances adolescents might engage in sex, even if they have to use intimidation to gain compliance, just for the sake of being able to increase their status within the group and to be able to partake in discussions pertaining to sexual relationships and sexual activities (Ward et al., 2006:82). In Harris’ (2008:165) research 47% of the research participants indicated that their peer group had an impact on their sexual offence, whereas 53% indicated that their peers had no influence on their offending behaviour. A possible explanation for the majority of research participants who indicated that their peer group had no influence on their offending behaviour can be found in the research of Kipke (1999:16). She found that peer group influence can be buffered by aspects such as positive family variables, including for instance a nurturing and caring relationship between the child and the parent. This positive child-parent interaction or ‘attachment’ has also been highlighted by Travis Hirschi as an important buffer or defence against societal lure factors (Siegel, 2005:167).

2.1.4.11 Sex education

The majority of the respondents (92%) in the Omar (2010) study indicated that they received most of their sex education by watching television. It must, however, be noted that 94% of the respondents indicated that despite watching television programmes with sexual content, they did not consider acting out the scenes that were portrayed on television (Omar, 2010:125). However, one must consider the fact that children often become desensitised to inappropriate or violent behaviour portrayed on television (Baron, Byrne & Branscombe, 2006:131). This can influence them in a subtle way and lead to them incorporating the viewed behaviour into their frame of reference. It can also have a direct influence on their actions and the type of behaviour that they engage in (Baron et al., 2006:423).
A pertinent finding in Omar’s study was that 94% of the respondents indicated that they had limited exposure to the Internet and that they did not gain their knowledge regarding sex from the Internet. Omar (2010:127) is of the opinion that these children’s low socio-economic background might give rise to the fact that they do not have access to the Internet. In conjunction with this, 86% of the respondents indicated that they also did not gain knowledge regarding sex from sexual images on cellular phones. Only 10% indicated that they learned about sex as a result of viewing sexual images that were downloaded to their cellular phones.

A matter of concern is that 94% of the respondents in Omar’s study (2010:127) indicated that they did not receive sex education from their parents. This is problematic, as these children might receive warped ideas of healthy sexual development and healthy intimate relationships from other sources of information. In the absence of proper sex education provided by parents, children often have to rely on the information received via the mass media and what they hear from friends. This may perpetuate acceptance of sex myths and the belief that certain inappropriate and/or harmful sexual acts are acceptable and even condoned by society.

Subsequent to the discussion of the above risk factors, the researcher concludes that it is evident that these factors do not exist in isolation. As a matter of fact, they are quite complex, intricate and may impact on each other. In this regard Rich (2003:43) states that youth sex offenders differ in terms of their race, their socio-economic status, the type of victims they target, methods they use to gain compliance, the amount of violence they are willing to use, the type of offences they commit, as well as their motivation for committing the offences. This assertion serves to highlight the complexity of the phenomenon of youth sex offending.

The first part of this chapter focussed on the nature and the extent of youth sex offending. General characteristics of youth sex offenders as well as different categories that youth sex offenders can be divided into were discussed. This was followed by a discussion of high risk factors that can predispose youth to become sex offenders. As the focus of this study is empathy in youth sex offenders, the
remainder of this chapter will focus on the definitions and different types of empathy, as well as the prevalence of empathy in youth sex offenders. Furthermore, the significance and prevalence of empathy for general sexual abuse victims, as well as for youth sex offenders’ own specific victims will be explored. A short overview of empathy components in intervention programmes, definitions of morality as well as the development of morality will also be presented.

2.2 EMPATHY

A considerable scientific body of evidence exists that supports the notion that sexual offenders display different types of problematic behaviour which can be grouped into four main categories, namely social difficulties, emotional regulation problems, cognitive distortions and deviant sexual arousal. These four categories of problematic behaviour are normally the main focus of interventions programmes aimed at rehabilitating sexual offenders. Empathy deficits in sexual offenders are considered to resort under the cognitive distortions, or emotional dysfunctional category (Ward & Beech, 2006:54).

2.2.1 DEFINING EMPATHY

In the eighteenth century empathy was described as consisting of an ability to comprehend another person’s perspective, as well as having an emotional reaction in response to that relevant understanding (Marshall et al., 1995:100). In the twentieth century empathy was described as comprising of a perspective-taking (cognitive) and an affective (emotional) component (Marshall et al., 1995:100). Moore (1990:76) elaborated on this definition by saying that empathy involves cognitive abilities (for example perspective-taking) as well as the vicarious matching of another individual’s emotional state. Marshall et al. (1995:100) also indicate that these two latter definitions were used by most researchers conducting research on empathy. Furthermore, most researchers were of the opinion that empathy is a fixed disposition that stays the same over time and will be displayed in the same manner across all situations and towards all people. This means that according to these views, individuals who are empathetic will display empathy towards all people, or at
least the majority of people and a similar response will be displayed in all circumstances.

Eisenberg (2000:671-672) distinguishes between the concepts ‘sympathy’ and ‘empathy’ by referring to the emotional response that an individual displays towards another individual who is in distress. She explains these concepts in the following manner: Sympathy is an emotional response originating from the comprehension of another person’s emotional state or condition and does not resemble the actual or expected feelings of the other person. Instead, it consists of feelings of concern or sorrow for the other person. On the other hand, empathy refers to an affective response that originates from the comprehension of another person’s emotional state or condition and resembles the actual or expected feelings of the other person. Thus, an empathic response to viewing a sad person would be to feel or experience the same sadness, whereas a sympathetic response would be to feel concern for the individual. Marshall et al. (1995:100) emphasise that these concepts cannot be used interchangeably and that they must be distinguished from each other. ‘Empathy’ is the same or similar emotional response portrayed by the observer as the response displayed by the person being observed, while ‘sympathy’ rather indicates feelings of concern. The two responses ‘empathy’ and ‘sympathy’ often occur simultaneously. Thus, empathy consists of both cognitive and affective elements. This gives rise to the fact that numerous authors agree that ‘empathy’ can only be defined and described by a multi-component definition or model that includes both cognitive and emotional factors (Davis, 1980:87; Marshall et al., 1995:101; Marshall & Marshall, 2011:743; Ward et al., 2006:136). More recently Marshall and Marshall (2011:743) elaborated on the above-mentioned and coined a concept ‘empathic process’ that is used to describe the synergy of empathy and sympathy components which commences at the display of distress experienced by another person and culminates in an attempt to ease the distress of the other person.

Williams (1990:156) concurs with the above-mentioned authors’ opinions that ‘empathy’ is a multi-dimensional concept and elaborates by saying that it not only comprises cognitive and emotional elements, but also includes communicative as well as relational elements. To deal with the complex nature of the concept
‘empathy’, Davis (1983:113) developed the first multi-component definition of empathy. This definition includes the following components:

- Perspective-taking, which refers to the ability of an individual to adopt the viewpoint of another individual (cognitive component).
- Fantasy, which refers to the ability of an individual to transpose himself into the feelings of a fictitious character/s (one aspect of the affective component).
- Empathic concern which refers to feelings of concern for another individual (having sympathy with another person).
- Personal distress which refers to the perceiver’s self-oriented feelings of distress (another aspect of the affective component).

According to Marshall et al. (1995:101) the last aspect of the above-mentioned definition, namely the personal distress component, refers to the first affective step in an empathic reaction, but as such cannot be viewed as an emotional response as it may be somewhat self-focussed. In an attempt to address the shortcomings in the above-mentioned definitions, Marshall et al. (1995:101) reconceptualised the concept ‘empathy’ by creating a stage model of the empathic process. Marshall and his co-workers view empathy as a process that includes the following stages:

- Emotion recognition
  During this stage the observer must display the ability to accurately distinguish the emotional state of another individual. If the observer is unable to identify emotional distress displayed by another individual, the following stages pertaining to an emphatic response will not unfold.
- Perspective-taking
  This refers to observers’ ability to put themselves into the place of observed individuals and to view these individuals’ world in the same way as they do, for instance observing distress in another person.
- Emotion replication
  This stage refers to the observer’s reciprocal emotional response that replicates the emotional distress of the observed individual. Thus, following the emotional recognition and perspective-taking phase, the observer should be able to provide an emotional response which is appropriate to the situation.
• **Response decision**

The final stage involves the observers’ decision to either act or omit to act in response to their feelings.

Close scrutiny of the above-mentioned definition, reveals that emotional recognition involves the identification of the emotional state of another person. In the context of sexual offending, the offender therefore needs to have the ability to recognise distress by for instance looking at the facial expressions of a victim (Ward et al., 2006:138). According to Blake and Gannon (2008:47), sex offenders experience difficulties in identifying emotional states such as fear, disgust and anger in photographs shown to them. This is problematic, as these are the emotions that would most likely be displayed by victims during a sexual attack.

The second stage which involves perspective-taking refers to the ability of individuals to put themselves into the place of observed persons and to view the observed person’s world in the same way as they do. The greater the difference between the victim and the offender, in other words seeing the victim as belonging to a group of individuals with characteristics that are foreign to the offender, the higher the possibility of offending. In this scenario, offenders might view the facial expressions of victims, but might interpret it incorrectly and might not be aware that they are harming the other individual (Ward et al., 2006:138). In a study using videotaped vignettes portraying dating scenarios, it was found that convicted rapists when compared to non-sexual offenders, experienced significant difficulty interpreting women’s levels of interest and were unable to read negative signals indicating women’s lack of interest in pursuing a relationship (Hanson & Scott, 1995:264). It is argued that some men perceive kind gestures (verbal and non-verbal) as seductive, while they view assertiveness as aggressive and confronting behaviour. Thus, an innocent gesture such as touching a man’s arm may be interpreted as provocative behaviour, or as the display of sexual interest (Bartol & Bartol, 2014:362). Perspective-taking might be challenging in situations such as date rape, as the man may interpret the woman’s physical and verbal resistance as a disguise for her sexual interest in him. This is prevalent in situations where certain cues such as friendliness and the attire of the woman are interpreted by the man as signs of
sexual availability (Hanson, 2003:16). Furthermore, it must be noted that some sex
offenders hold the implicit theory of entitlement or viewing women as sexual objects
(Jewkes et al., 2012:1). This would entail that if he initiated sexual contact with a
woman he would perceive the woman as accepting his advances and would not pick
up on her negative reactions, if displayed. Thus, his perspective-taking skills will be
significantly impaired. Because he believes that the woman is welcoming his
advances, he filters out any contradicting information or cues received from her. This
is linked to a deficit in the development of a theory of mind. This theory of mind
refers to being able to comprehend that people have minds of their own and that
others’ desires and beliefs may differ from one’s own perceptions, desires and
beliefs. Thus, a sex offender might not realise that there is a difference between his
needs and desires and that of the victim (Blake & Gannon, 2008:49,51). Being under
the influence of a substance can compound the situation as it has an influence on
the individual’s judgement and cognitive processing of the situation (Bartol & Bartol,

The third stage which involves emotional replication refers to the observer’s ability to
replicate the emotional distress of the observed individual. Emotional replication can
only take place if stages one and two have been completed successfully and if the
observer is capable of experiencing the appropriate emotion (Ward et al., 2006:138).
Thus, offenders must be able to access their own life experiences and use this
knowledge to fully comprehend the emotions and experiences of the victim (Regehr
& Glancy, 2001:144). When applying this to a scenario where a sexual offence takes
place, offenders may interpret the facial expressions of victims correctly, and may be
aware that they are experiencing distress (stage one proficiency). Furthermore, they
may be aware of the fact that they are harming the victim (stage two proficiency), but
they might feel indifferent, or feel content about this state of affairs as they might
view the victim as someone deserving to be harmed or punished, or they might enjoy
the fact that they are harming the victim and feel empowered by their actions (stage
three deficit) (Hanson & Scott, 1995:260; Ward et al., 2006:140). In instances where
the offender was for instance teased about his sexual performance, or the lack
thereof, he can become furious and perceive the woman as a legitimate target of
sexual violence. Thus, while committing the assault, the victim’s distress would not

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inhibit him, as he wants her to suffer (Hanson, 2003:16). Most of the empathy deficits displayed by violent offenders can be described as stage two or stage three deficits (Marshall & Marshall, 2011:745).

The final stage, namely response decision or emphatic responding involves the observers’ decision to either act or omit to act in response to their feelings. It must be noted that Marshall et al. (1995:101) state that even if observers, in this case sexual offenders, successfully completed stages one to three, they may still decide to ignore their feelings and commit the offence despite knowing that it will cause distress to the victim. However, controversy exists with regard to evidence supporting that stage four can operate independently from the other three stages, as it contradicts literature pertaining to the inhibiting effects of empathy on aggression (Curwen, 2003:359; Ward et al., 2006:139).

Later on, Marshall and Marshall (2011:747) modified their model of empathy discussed above. In their modified model of empathy, emotional recognition is still the first stage of the empathic process, as some offenders lack the basic skills to recognise distress in others. This lack of emotional recognition can however, be attributed to a decision to deliberately distort perceived information. This occurs in scenarios where offenders deny causing harm, even in instances where there is clear evidence of distress being experienced by victims. Offenders who realised that they caused distress might feel shame or guilt. Two ways of responding to these feelings are that they will either block their recognition of the harm they caused, or they will experience elevated levels of emotional distress as a result of their actions. If the latter occurs, the offenders’ focus will be on reducing their own distress, by for example denying responsibility for the harm that they caused. This can entail the downplaying of the consequences of their actions, or denying their involvement in the case. In other instances offenders might find pleasure in another’s suffering and this will prevent them from responding empathically. Thus, in the absence of a positive disposition towards the person in distress, a compassionate response will not occur.
Ward et al. (2006:40) indicate that they are not convinced that the empathic process commences when the offender has begun committing the offence, in other words when the offender is in the presence of the victim. According to them, various theories indicate that empathy-like inhibitors should be present before the offender approaches the victim. Thus, empathy should have prevented them from committing the offence in the first place. Hence, if the offender approaches the victim, empathy deficits are already present. Some individuals might fantasise about certain sexual offences, but the presence of empathy will restrain them from committing such an offence. In addition, Ward et al. (2006:40) also indicate that in the presence of situational reinforcers such as alcohol usage, it will be more difficult to experience empathy and realise the impact of the offence. This coupled with sexual arousal make it less likely that the offender will refrain from offending when they are in the presence of the victim. Thus, empathy must take effect when self-control is still feasible and a victim is not present yet. Furthermore, the authors are undecided if post-offence empathy will inhibit recidivism.

Adding to the definitions provided above, Carich, Kassel and Stone (2001) in Carich et al. (2003:262) identified six elements of empathy, namely:

- Emotional recognition, which refers to the ability to recognise one’s own emotions as well as the emotions of others.
- Victim harm recognition, which involves the ability to recognise and acknowledge the harm inflicted upon the victim.
- Assuming responsibility, which refers to offenders’ ability to accept responsibility for their offending behaviour, without displaying cognitive distortions.
- Perspective-taking, which involves the ability of offenders to identify with their victims and to understand the impact of their offences on their victims.
- Guilt responses, which entail that the offender should feel remorseful. Thus, he should identify and share the victim’s emotional state.
- Emotional expression, which refers to offenders’ ability to experience the emotional expression of the victim’s pain and the impact that the offence had on the victim.
To conclude this discussion on the conceptualisation of empathy, a contemporary definition of empathy as given in a South African article authored by Olckers, Buys and Grobler (2010:2) will be provided. Empathy is described as the ability to be attentive to, to comprehend and to appreciate the thoughts and feelings of other people and to be sensitive regarding people’s thoughts, feelings and actions. Thus, empathetic individuals care about other people and show an interest and concern for others. In addition, it is noted in this article that there is a link between empathy and emotional intelligence, as empathy encompasses more than rational thinking. The essence of empathy entails the ability to sense what others feel, as words seldom convey people’s feelings. The ability to detect other people’s feelings by means of non-verbal cues and subtle communication depends on one’s self-awareness and self-control. Therefore the inability to recognise one’s own emotional state has an inhibitory effect on the discernment of other people’s perceptions and feelings. Furthermore, it can be said that empathy is an essential component of social functioning, and an absence of empathy is linked to social ineptitude.

Bartol and Bartol (2014:46) add that a lack of empathy is one of the main characteristics of psychopathy. Psychopathy is a “combination of psychological and behavioural factors related to an increased tendency to engage in antisocial and violent behaviour”. It should be noted that psychopaths have the ability to comprehend the emotions experienced by another person (cognitive empathy), but they have an inability to experience empathy (affective empathy). According to Jolliffe and Farrington (2004:28) “it appears that it is the inability to experience the emotions of others which is related to violence for both males and females rather than the ability to understand other people’s emotions”. Thus, offenders of violent crimes seem to have a significant inability to feel the pain of their victims (Bartol & Bartol, 2014:46). This concurs with Mann and Barnett’s (2013:284) definition of victim empathy within the context of sexual offending. They define victim empathy as “a cognitive and emotional understanding by a sexual offender of the experience of the victim of his or her sexual offense, resulting in a compassionate and respectful emotional recognition to that person.”
2.2.2 THE PREVALENCE OF EMPATHY IN SEX OFFENDERS

In recent years, researchers and clinicians have focussed on the presence of empathy, or the lack thereof in sex offenders. It has been postulated that sex offenders commit their offences despite the distress experienced and portrayed by their victims, due to the fact that they lack empathy for them (Fernandez & Marshall, 2003:12). Furthermore, researchers claim that a lack of empathy can be a result of childhood attachment insecurity. The attachment deficit can also be a contributing factor to adolescents' failure to have intimacy with their peers and this might be conducive to deviant sexual behaviour (Barbaree & Langton, 2006:61). In addition, it has been found that sex offenders do not recognise and have compassion with the victim’s distress to such an extent that they are able to become sexually aroused while committing the offence (Marshall et al., 1995:99). Moreover, it is stated that individuals that do not commit rape are inhibited by empathy for the potential victim (Ward et al., 2006:137).

Curwen (2003:349) adds to the debate by saying that sex offenders frequently deny their offences and minimise the harm that the victim suffered. In addition, they rationalise their behaviour and argue that their actions were not criminal. It can be argued that if denial and minimisation are present, it will give rise to a lack of empathy on the offender’s behalf. However, Hanson (2003:18) makes an interesting observation regarding justifications provided by sex offenders, by stating that offenders deny and/or minimise their sexual transgressions due to an attempt to distance themselves from their misbehaviour. Furthermore, he stresses that in these instances offenders are, however, aware of the wrongfulness of their sexual offending on some level and they are trying to make up excuses for their actions, whereas others who do not try to justify their misbehaviour genuinely believe that their actions were acceptable. Hanson (2003:18) also states that no statistical relationship between denial or minimisation and sexual recidivism has been found in research.

A study conducted with 114 convicted rapists focussing on their perceptions, motivations and afterthoughts pertaining to the crime indicated that these offenders
could be divided into two categories, namely admitters and deniers (Bartol & Bartol, 2011:361). Admitters corroborated the details of the event as described by the victim and as stated in police dockets. In addition, these offenders accepted responsibility for their behaviour. On the other hand, the versions provided by the deniers differed significantly from the details provided by the police and the victims. In this study, 47 admitters and 32 deniers were identified. The remaining participants could not be placed into either of the categories. Deniers usually blamed their victims and provided the following justifications for their behaviour:

- The victim seduced them.
- Women who say no, actually mean yes.
- Most women eventually enjoy the sexual interaction and relax after a while.
- Good girls do not become victims of rape.
- The victim was not harmed physically, so the act was a minor transgression.

Of the deniers, 31% said that the victim initiated the sexual act and 22% said that the victim did not resist and actually wanted to have sexual intercourse. In addition, most of the deniers claimed that the victim was willing and that she enjoyed the sexual encounter and 69% claimed that good girls do not become victims of rape. Furthermore, they said that their victims dressed provocatively, were hitchhiking or were generally known to be promiscuous. The notion or belief that bad things happen to bad people and good things happen to good people is known as the just-world hypothesis. Thus, they are of the opinion that people get what they deserve and deserve what they get. Deniers would suggest that victims should not go to a bar alone, should not hitchhike or should dress more conservatively (Bartol & Bartol, 2011:361).

In a South African study conducted with 50 diverted male youth sex offenders, it was found that 94% of the research participants indicated that it was not their intention to hurt their victim. In addition, all the participants indicated that they felt sad about what they did. Most of the boys indicated that they were aware of the fact that they hurt their victims and knew that their behaviour was unacceptable (Omar, 2010:116). It must be noted that the offenders in this study were younger than 12 years and
committed less serious offences. In addition, most of these offenders were naïve experimenters (see Par. 2.1.3) who did not plan to hurt their victims. In addition, their participation in an intervention programme offered by the Teddy Bear clinic might have had an influence on their recognition of their behaviour as harmful towards the victims. It is thus uncertain whether offenders who have not partaken in an intervention programme, will have the same insight into their wrongful behaviour, and if they will have the ability to show empathy towards their own victims. Conversely, another South African study focussing on 48 male sex offenders who committed their offences against child victims found that 72.9% of the offenders in their study did not have any remorse pertaining to the offence they committed. A third of the respondents (33.3%) indicated that they experienced some degree of sorrow pertaining to their actions, while 45.8% denied having any specific feelings towards their victim. It must be noted that two-thirds of the research participants in this study were younger than 25 years old at the time that they committed their crime (Delport & Vermeulen, 2004:45).

2.2.3 DIFFERENT TYPES OF EMPATHY

A difference exists between general and victim specific empathy. Therefore a difference between offenders’ general empathy levels and the level of empathy for their own victims becomes apparent (Webster, 2002:282). According to Fernandez and Marshall (2003:13) various researchers made assumptions that the empathy deficits displayed by sexual offenders included a lack of empathy towards people and situations in general. Fernandez and Marshall (2003:13) disagree with this statement as they are of the opinion that the lack of empathy portrayed by sexual offenders may be more specific than a generalised lack of empathy pertaining to all people and situations. Other researchers also focussed on the notion that empathy deficits in sexual offenders might be attributed to, and might be another component of their cognitive distortions (Webster, 2002:282). On the other hand, empathy deficits displayed by sexual offenders may be narrowed down to their feelings towards the group of people that the victim belongs to, for example women or children, it may be directed towards people who have been victims of other sexual offenders or it may only be displayed towards their own victims (Marshall et al.,
Hunter, Becker and Lexier (2006:157) elaborate that the capacity for empathy might be intact in some offenders. However, circumstances may have an influence on their capacity to display empathy for their own victims. Displaying empathy in an adversarial relationship is a challenge. One tends to think that only deviant individuals derive pleasure from others’ suffering. However, most people react positively when witnessing the suffering of an enemy or adversary (Hanson, 2003:16).

In a study conducted by Fisher et al. (1999:475), child molesters were compared to non-offenders. In this study it was found that the child molesters had deficits in victim empathy. However, it must be noted that the child molesters in the study did not lack general empathy, but portrayed deficits with regards to their own victims. According to Fernandez and Marshall (2003:11) they found that when comparing rapists and nonsexual offenders in their study, the rapists displayed more general empathy towards women and the same degree of empathy towards a woman who was a victim of a sexual assault. However, of particular importance is the finding that the rapists had significant empathy deficits with regards to their own victim/s. In this study the researchers concluded that rapists may suppress empathy directed towards their own victim, rather than suffering from a deficit in general empathy (Marshall & Marshall, 2011:746). Furthermore, they suggest that it might be more accurate to refer to the empathy deficits in rapists as cognitive distortions pertaining to their own victims.

Fernandez, Marshall, Lightbody and O’Sullivan (1999:17) obtained similar findings in research conducted with child molesters. They evaluated the levels of empathy in child molesters in the following three contexts:

- Empathy displayed towards children who had been victims of accidents (general empathy).
- Empathy displayed towards children who have been victimised sexually by another offender (general sexual abuse victim).
- Empathy displayed towards the offender’s own victim or victims.
Their research findings showed that the child molesters displayed the same level of empathy towards children in general, when compared to a non-offender sample. When looking at the scenario of the general sexual abuse victims the child molesters displayed lower empathy levels than the group of non-offenders. Of utmost importance was the findings related to the child molesters’ own victim or victims, as it was found that the child molesters displayed their greatest empathy deficits towards their own victim or victims. Curwen (2003:357) adds that empathy deficits pertaining to their own victims were present in adolescent male sex offenders who were assessed in a study that she conducted.

2.2.4 ADDRESSING EMPATHY IN INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES

A study by Reitzel and Carbonell (2006:413) showed that a statistically significant difference exists between the sexual recidivism rates of youth sex offenders who participated in intervention programmes compared to those who did not participate. They found that the recidivism rate for youth sex offenders who participated in intervention programmes was 7.37% compared to 18.93% for youth sex offenders who did not participate. Thus, the above-mentioned research indicates the importance of intervention programmes for youth sex offenders. Furthermore, it was found that instilling empathy in offenders who participated in intervention programmes usually reduces the expression of aggression and substitute antagonistic responses with socially acceptable behaviour (Marshall et al., 1995:100).

The majority of intervention programmes for sexual offenders have an empathy component (Beech & Fisher, 2002:209; Brown, Harkins & Beech, 2012:411; Burke, 2001:224; Hanson, 2003:13; Hanson & Scott, 1995:260; Mann & Barnett, 2013:282; Regehr & Glancy, 2001:150; Webster, 2002:281), as various researchers have concluded that sexual offenders lack empathy for their victims (Maletzky, 1991; Marshall et al., 1995; Pithers, 1994; Regehr & Glancy, 2001; Webster, 2002:281; Varker & Devilly, 2007; Williams & Finkelhor, 1990). Furthermore, Marshall et al. (1995:99) postulate that sexual offenders’ ability to experience empathy plays an important role in the development and maintenance of their misbehaviour. Pithers (1999:258) agrees that the developing of empathy for victims is imperative, as the
increasing of empathy could reduce recidivism, as well as enhance and maintain the offender’s motivation to change. Brown et al. (2012:421) concur with this statement. In contrast to the above-mentioned arguments, Hanson and Bussière (1998:358) found no link between low levels of empathy for victims and sexual offending recidivism. This was corroborated by later research conducted by Hanson and Morton-Bourgon (2005). These findings gave rise to speculation that victim empathy components within sex offenders intervention programmes may not be warranted. However, according to Mann and Barnett (2013:289), there are limitations to the study conducted by Hanson and Morton-Bourgon (2005), especially pertaining to the definitions and measurements of empathy employed in their research. Furthermore, Mann and Barnett (2013:295) postulate that the theoretical basis for a victim empathy component in sex offending intervention programmes is inconsistently articulated, poorly understood and lacks empirical testing. According to them “it is unclear whether or how current victim empathy treatment interventions which usually focus on developing empathy for a past victim generalise to future situations.” In addition, they claim that there is no evidence that poor victim empathy is a prediction of recidivism, or that programmes addressing victim empathy actually reduce recidivism. They conclude by saying that even though empirical evidence in favour of the rehabilitative quality of victim empathy intervention programmes are weak, it would be premature to conclude that victim empathy interventions are irrelevant or harmful. Thus, they are of the opinion that some components of victim empathy should be retained in intervention programmes but that it should be approached with caution. In addition, they emphasise that victim empathy training should be presented in a manner that respects the dignity and human rights of offenders.

Empathy components within intervention programmes for sexual offenders normally entail strategies to improve offenders’ understanding of their victims’ experience. This can be achieved by using a strategy such as role play, during which the sexual offenders will play the role of their victims in order to attain some idea of what their victims experienced when the sexual violation took place. Furthermore, the re-enactment of the sexual offence may have a similar effect than aversion therapy, as the role play can be traumatic for the offender who is the actor in the role play, especially if he experiences the scenario as realistic. The negative emotions and
trauma experienced during the role play can have an inhibitory effect on the violent sexual fantasies that the offender had prior to the intervention. It must, however, be noted that the re-enactment approach should be used with caution as it is an intrusive intervention and the effectiveness of this approach in victim empathy enhancement is uncertain (Webster, Bowers, Mann & Marshall, 2005:65).

Another method that is sometimes included in victim empathy intervention programmes is the so called ‘victim letter task’, where offenders write letters to their victims. In most instances the writing of the letter is a hypothetical exercise, as the letters are not sent to the victims, but are used to ascertain whether offenders are showing empathy towards the victims, and to assess the level of empathy as well as offenders’ understanding of the issues experienced by their victims (Webster, 2002:282). However, if offenders are forced to face the harm that they caused their victims too early in the intervention programme, it might lead to increased victim blaming instead of increasing own victim empathy. This can be explained by the hypothesis that offenders have a negative self-image and during the early phases of the intervention programme, they are not yet ready to accommodate further unconstructive messages pertaining to themselves. Thus, they can only be confronted with the impact that their offence had on the victim, when they have accumulated personal resources and emotional resilience to enable them to deal with the understanding of the harm that they have caused (Beech & Fisher, 2002:210; Marshall & Marshall, 2011:749).

In cases where offenders suffer from psychopathy or have a callous attitude towards their victims, this can be addressed by intervention programmes where the victim is personalised in a manner that offenders can relate to, such as asking them to imagine that the victim is someone they care for (Marshall & Marshall, 2011:749). According to Hanson (2003:21), intervention programmes for youth sex offenders should focus on three primary components. The first component is perspective-taking skills, which implies that the offender should be educated on aspects such as the correct identification and appropriate labelling of emotions displayed by others as well as the appropriate way to respond to the observations. The second component entails that offenders should be taught how to cope with the perceived distress of
others. This could be achieved by teaching offenders to react to their own offending behaviour with guilt feelings instead of using techniques such as denial or victim blaming to disguise their feelings of shame. The last component refers to the development of caring relationships. A good place to start harnessing caring relationships is by focusing on offenders’ feelings towards those that they already care about, for example family members or friends. Once the value of these relationships is established, attention could be given to adversarial relationships with their victims, or the police, for instance. The establishment of caring relationships and other affective components are of elevated importance when planning and facilitating intervention programmes for youth sex offenders. When treating youth sex offenders one has to take into account that those who have sadistic tendencies, might be able to successfully engage in perspective-taking and might recognise the distress of the victim. This could, however, enhance their desire to offend, especially if the affective aspects of their empathic ability are not on par. Therefore intervention programmes should place specific emphasis on the enhancement of affective components, such as the reaction of offenders to the victim’s perceived distress (Farr, Brown & Beckett, 2004:164).

Based on the research that were discussed in this chapter, it becomes evident that intervention programmes aimed at improving the general empathy of sexual offenders might not be of any value, if own victim empathy is not addressed as well. According to Fernandez and Marshall (2003:22) intervention programmes that focus on addressing sexual offenders’ general empathy levels (empathy directed towards all people and situations), or even on sexual abuse victims in general, may be wasting valuable time. The focus must be on sexual offenders’ own victim empathy deficits, as that is the area in which the most prominent empathy deficits occur (Brown et al., 2012:425). This statement concurs with evidence from various studies (Fernandez & Marshall, 2003; Fernandez et al.,1999; Fisher et al., 1999; Varker & Devilly, 2007). In addition, Brown et al. (2012:421) postulate that intervention programmes with a victim-specific empathy component influences offenders’ appreciation of the impact of their transgression on their victim.
It is also important to note that specific intervention models should be developed to address deviant sexual behaviour in adolescents. In many instances adult intervention models are used with minimal to no adaptations aimed at meeting the developmental phase of the adolescent. Considering the fact that research has shown distinct differences between adult sex offenders and youth sex offenders, this is of paramount importance. As adolescence can be seen as a time of transition, early and effective intervention strategies are essential to prevent subsequent criminal behaviour. Thus, it is assumed that if youth sex offending is recognised early and if intervention occurs swiftly, the likelihood of these youths becoming adult offenders can be reduced (Thakker, Ward & Tidmarsch, 2006:313). The researcher acknowledges that some international researchers claim that youth sex offenders are less likely to reoffend than adult sex offenders. Some of the reasons provided for this notion are that youths cease their criminal activities as they become older and more mature, while others postulate that it may be as a result of effective intervention programmes in YCCs. If the latter is true this once again emphasises the importance of effective intervention programmes (Bartol & Bartol, 2011:395).

Another important aspect that needs to be noted is that the most central feature of adolescence is the development of the self (Keenan, 2002:5). In this regard, Thakker et al. (2006:315) state that burdening young people with the idea that their offending persona is so fully developed, that they will have to exercise control over it for the rest of their adult lives, seems to defeat the purpose of intervention and treatment. Instead, the focus in intervention programmes should be on change and self-development. Using terminology such as ‘youth sex offender’ leads to the formation of an offender identity, instead of aiming to help the young person to form an identity that is detached from sexual offending. These researchers point out that referring to an adolescent as a sex offender amounts to labelling, which is counterproductive and harmful during the developmental phase of adolescence. They suggest referring to “adolescents who sexually offend” instead of referring to an adolescent as a sex offender. A label can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy and can put a vicious circle in motion that causes more harm for the young person instead of contributing to their ability to distinguish between right and wrong. If they have an empathy deficit and
they do not have the ability to choose between right and wrong, they will most probably derail again.

With regards to the South African context it is important to note that an article written by Hesselink-Louw and Schoeman in 2003 indicated that sex offender correctional programmes are mostly compiled and presented by social workers or psychologists working in the different Correctional Centres. These programmes usually focus on life skills and relationships. Furthermore, Hesselink-Louw and Schoeman (2003:162) found that no standardised Sex Offender Programmes (SOP’s) were available in the Department of Correctional Services (DCS). Additionally, the structure and presentation of the programmes depended entirely on the social worker or psychologist’s skills. Since the publication of this article, the DCS has however, compiled standardised programmes that are presented by social workers or psychologists in the different Correctional Centres. It serves to be noted that correctional programmes are compulsory for all sentenced offenders serving a sentence of 24 months and longer. The correctional programme that is offered to sexual offenders detained in Correctional Centres is called the Preparatory programme on Sexual Offences. The structure of the programme includes nine sessions focussing on the following (Department of Correctional Services, 2015b):

- Session 1 - Introduction and orientation.
- Session 2 - Possible causes of sexual offending.
- Session 3 - Development of human beings (phases and the sexual response cycle).
- Session 4 - Relevant definitions and legal implications.
- Session 5 - Roles and identity (male vs. female).
- Session 6 – Immediate precursors to sexual offending and possible coping strategies.
- Session 7 – Consequences of crime.
- Session 8 – Introduction to restorative justice.
- Session 9 – Relapse prevention.

One of the recommendations put forth in Hesselink-Louw and Schoeman’s (2003:171) article was that a multi-dimensional approach including psychologists, social workers, criminologists, educationalists and religious workers is imperative to effectively reform sex offenders. In addition, emphasis was placed on the importance
of individualised assessment, counselling and correctional programmes for sex offenders. As stipulated in the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998, individual assessment of offenders is essential to develop individualised correctional programmes forming part of an individualised assessment plan. However, as stated by Herbig and Hesselink (2012:30), the individualised treatment of offenders is not a given in practice, and a one size fits all approach is often the norm in South African corrections. This can possibly be attributed to aspects such as staff shortages in the DCS. This is highlighted by the 51% vacancy rate which was reported for psychologists and social workers in the 2010/2011 financial year, leading to caseloads of up to 3000 inmates per staff member.

2.2.5 DEFINING MORALITY

Although various debates regarding the meaning of the concept morality exist, Sigelman and Rider (2006:359) state that there is agreement regarding the fact that morality entails the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, to act according to the distinction and to feel proud when doing the right thing, while experiencing guilt or shame when doing something wrong. Furthermore, it is postulated that morality consists of three basic components. An exposition of these components follows:

- The affective or emotional component encompasses the feelings (such as guilt and concern for other people’s feelings for instance) that inspire moral thoughts and behaviour.
- The cognitive component entails the conceptualisation of right and wrong as well as decisions that are made in accordance with social cognitive skills, for instance perspective-taking or decisions made pertaining to appropriate behaviour.
- The behavioural component refers to the manner in which an individual behaves when for instance confronted with temptation, or how a person responds when they have to aid someone who is in need of assistance.

Lifton (1985:308) explains that there are three different ways of conceptualising morality. The first notion entails that morality should be seen as synonymous with the
norms, values and traditions of a particular society. Thus, according to this view, morality will fluctuate from one culture to another. This corresponds with Freud’s view (which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3) pertaining to a child’s superego that develops in accordance to their parents’ views and moral standards. The second notion refers to morality as synonymous with universal principles common to mankind. Thus, these principles surpass the specific moral and ethical codes of a specific culture, as they are fundamental to the natural order of human existence. Piaget and Kohlberg refer to morality in this context (their views will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3). The third notion pertains to the development of morality on an individual level, where individuals’ unique personalities shape their actions and guide their interaction with other people. This resembles Bandura’s view (which will be elaborated upon in Chapter 3) pertaining to individuals’ self-regulatory mechanisms influencing their morality.

Empathy can be seen as an important moral affect, as empathising with others who are in need can lead to pro-social behaviour, including acts such as helping or caring about the welfare of other individuals (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:360). It must be noted that morality encompasses cognitive, affective and behavioural elements. Different theorists focus on different elements of morality, or on different stages of the development of morality. Freud specifically focussed on moral affect (feelings of empathy, guilt and shame), and referred to an individual’s superego that is formed as a result of parental involvement in preschool years. On the other hand, Piaget focussed on moral reasoning (cognitive component) and moral development, whereas Kohlberg’s main focal point was the different levels of moral development. Conversely, Bandura views moral conduct as learned behaviour that is influenced by self-regulatory mechanisms as well as the social environment (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:365). An in depth discussion of these theories will be advanced in Chapter 3.

2.2.6 DEVELOPMENT OF MORALITY

The acquisition of empathic skills is a process that occurs in four stages, from infancy to late childhood. As infants in stage one cannot differentiate themselves from others, they respond to distress experienced by others, with personal distress
(Marshall & Marshall, 2011:749). New-born children sometimes demonstrate primitive forms of empathy, for instance by being upset if other children cry. This might suggest that empathy is part of humans’ evolutionary heritage. It is postulated that in stage two, children between the ages of 18 months and 24 months, start internalising rules and foresee dissatisfaction when failing to comply with the prescribed rules. Moral development occurs at best when there is a secure attachment between the child and the parent. Children in secure relationships aim to please their caregivers, comply with their rules and adopt their normative values. Securely attached children learn how to display empathy, experience feelings of guilt when transgressing, and are able to resist temptation without being controlled externally (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:365). During this stage, children have the ability to differentiate themselves from others and will respond to the distress of others with behaviour that they previously used to soothe themselves (Marshall & Marshall, 2011:750).

From the age of two years (stage three) children can start engaging in perspective-taking, even though they might not yet distinguish right from wrong (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:367). Furthermore, children aged two to three years have the ability to display empathy for people who are not physically present, providing that they received enough information pertaining to the distress being experienced by the individual. During the fourth and last stage of empathy development which occurs in the late childhood phase, children can display empathy for a person’s on-going distressful situation and they realise that emotional suffering is not necessarily a temporary state (Marshall & Marshall, 2011:750). Additionally, Sigelman and Rider (2006:367) state that between the ages of 2 and 12 years a child’s moral development depends on their social experiences and interactions with family members, peers and society in general. A detailed exposition of the different stages of moral development will be provided in Chapter 3 when the theories of Piaget and Kohlberg will be explicated.
2.3 CONCLUSION

In this chapter an exposition of the nature and extent of youth sex offending were given. Furthermore, general characteristics of youth offenders as well as different categories that youth sex offenders can be divided into were discussed. This was followed by a discussion of high risk factors that can predispose youth to become sex offenders. Subsequently the definitions and different types of empathy as well as the prevalence of empathy in youth sex offenders were discussed. Moreover, the significance and prevalence of empathy for general sexual abuse victims as well as for youth sex offenders’ own specific victims were explored. In Chapter 3 the focus will be placed on theories pertaining to youth sex offending, moral development and empathy. An exposition and evaluation of these theories will be provided, and these theories will be applied to the topic under investigation to furnish a theoretical framework for this study.
CHAPTER 3
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOCUSSING ON YOUTH SEX OFFENDING AND EMPATHY

A brief overview of selected Criminology theories providing possible explanations for high risk behaviour in youth offenders will be provided. Subsequently an integrated theory focussing on youth sex offending as well as different Psychology theories focussing on moral development and/or empathy will be discussed. It should be noted that this study is situated in the subfield of Psychocriminology, in which research enquiry centres around the behaviour and mental processes of the offender (Bartol & Bartol, 2014:8). As a result, a number of theories within the field of Psychology are applicable to the phenomenon being studied. An evaluation of purposefully selected theories will be given and they will be applied to the context of this study. Based on the theoretical overview, the researcher developed a model coined the ‘Sex offending and empathy deficit correlational model’ which combines aspects originating from the different Criminology and Psychology theories that will be discussed below. An overview of the different theories will follow in the next section.

3.1 CRIMINOLOGY THEORIES

A brief overview of relevant Criminology theories that can provide possible explanations for high risk behaviour amongst youths follows in this section.

3.1.1 THE CLASSICAL AND NEO-CLASSICAL SCHOOL OF CRIMINOLOGY

The Classical school of Criminology assumes that people are rational beings with a free will. Proponents of the school view people as hedonistic, which means that they strive to experience as much pleasure as possible, while aiming to reduce pain. It follows that the commission of crime is seen as a rational choice and that individuals make these choices in a logical manner by calculating the costs and benefits of their choices and actions (Joubert & Bezuidenhout, 2013:106; Siegel, 2005:4; Williams & McShane, 2010:18). The Classical school has evolved into the Neo-Classical school encompassing contemporary theories such as the rational choice theory which views
offenders as rational decision makers weighing the pleasure derived from the offence against the possibility of punishment (Henry & Lanier, 2006:18; Lanier & Henry, 2004:89; Siegel, 2005:74; Williams & McShane 2010:24). In addition to this, the rational choice perspective strives to understand and explain when and where offenders make the choice to commit certain offences and how they plan the execution of their offences. Furthermore, different crimes require varying degrees of planning and depending on factors such as the skills, experience and age of offenders; they also display varying degrees of comprehension and concern pertaining to the impact and the consequences of their actions (Henry & Lanier, 2006:25). The rational choice theory is often paired with routine activities theory as both approaches claim that crimes can be seen as a product of criminal opportunity. Additionally, the routine activities approach focusses on the increase of crime rates due to factors such as increased opportunities to commit crime, reduced guardianship, as well as the availability of suitable targets (Lanier & Henry, 2004:93; Siegel, 2005:75).

3.1.1.1 Application to youth sex offending

According to proponents of the Classical and Neo-Classical school, offenders make a rational choice to commit an offence after considering both personal needs and situational factors (Siegel, 2005:74). This implies that youths may choose to commit a sexual offence to satisfy their personal needs, such as a need for revenge (Harris, 2008:46). On the other hand, their choice to commit a sexual offence might be subjected to situational factors such as the availability of a vulnerable victim or the absence of a capable guardian (Schwartz, DeKeseredy, Tait & Alvi, 2001:672). Their perceptions pertaining to the effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System might also influence their decision to commit the crime. When taking into account that the rape conviction rate is an estimated 4% in the Gauteng province and 8% in the Western Cape Province in South Africa, this is of elevated importance (Rape in South Africa, 2015).
3.1.1.2 Evaluation of the theories

In reaction to the arbitrary and barbarous imposition of justice prior to the Enlightenment era, Classical thinkers, such as Beccaria and Bentham, aimed to establish the notion that people should have equal rights and that the punishment should fit the crime (Lanier & Henry, 2004:68; Siegel, 2005:92). The original ideas presented by Classical theorists still apply to our modern context, as certain principles such as being innocent until proven guilty, being equal before the law and individual deterrence still play a part in our judicial system (Lanier & Henry, 2004:69). Even though the Classical school’s ideas are influential, there are certain limitations. Questions are raised regarding the assumption that all people are equal, are equally endowed with reason and equal punishments for equal crimes should be imposed (Lanier & Henry, 2004:78; Siegel, 2005:92). The questions specifically pertain to the applicability of equality in situations where, for instance people have different intellectual abilities or where they come from different socio-economic backgrounds (Lanier & Henry, 2004:78). Furthermore, some of the Classicist ideas are viewed as idealistic. This view is encapsulated by the following quote:

It proved almost as unjust to treat people the same who were clearly different as to treat people differently arbitrarily and capriciously, as had pre-Enlightenment justice. A society that celebrates individual achievement produces disparities of wealth, status, and social standing. Any attempt to provide equal punishments that ignores this reality simply provides those who can afford punitive fines or an adequate legal defense with a license to commit crime. The result of such a system is that it proves to be ‘more just’ for some than it is for others (Lanier & Henry, 2004:98).

In addition, Classicists opine that if punishment is certain, swift and sufficiently severe, it is likely that it will deter potential criminals (Williams & McShane, 2010:18). This notion is embedded in policies and legislation, for instance the imposing of mandatory minimum sentences. The critique against aspects such as mandatory minimum sentencing is that it limits the discretionary powers of the presiding officer and it limits the possibility of taking the personal circumstances, individual characteristics and/or motivations of offenders into consideration. Proponents of the rational choice theory also does not take cognisance of aspects such as irrational or
impulsive behaviour, or the role of peer groups in the committing of offences (Lanier & Henry, 2004:98).

Criticism voiced against the routine activities theory include that the focus is removed from the offender to the suitable victim and the absence of a capable guardian. Furthermore, the theory proposes that the presence of capable guardians reduces the risk of victimisation and that people who spend more time at home with family members are less vulnerable to become victims of crime. However, many victims are victimised by people that could be regarded as capable guardians, such as spouses, intimate partners, friends or acquaintances (Schwartz et al., 2001:672). Next an exposition of Positivist Criminology will be provided.

3.1.2 POSITIVIST CRIMINOLOGY

Positivism is a theoretical approach which views human behaviour as the result of external forces (biological, psychological and social) that are beyond an individual’s control. The main principles of Positivist Criminology include a deterministic outlook on the world, an emphasis on criminal behaviour instead of focussing on legal matters such as rights, as well as a focus on the treatment and rehabilitation of offenders in order to prevent crime (Williams & McShane, 2010:27). Positivism can be divided into Individual Positivism and Sociological Positivism. According to proponents of this school of thought, Individual Positivism includes personal factors such as the biological make-up or the mental ability of an individual (Joubert & Bezuidenhout, 2013:108; Siegel, 2005:5). Conversely, Sociological Positivism focusses on external causative factors within the social context of individuals. For the purpose of this study, the researcher will focus on certain theories resorting under Individual Positivism as well as under Sociological Positivism. Within the Individual Positivism paradigm, only psychological explanations for criminal behaviour will be included. Psychology theories related to moral development and the displaying of empathy will be discussed later in this chapter in Paragraph 3.3. A brief overview of a number of relevant theories demarcated under Sociological Positivism follows:
3.1.2.1 Sociological Positivism

Sociological Positivism can be divided into social structure theories and social process theories.

3.1.2.1.1 Social structure theories

A short overview of the theoretical paradigm known as The Chicago school will be provided next.

3.1.2.1.1.1 The Chicago school

In the early twentieth century, Robert Ezra Park (1864-1944), Ernest Watson Burgess (1886-1966), Louis Wirth (1897-1952) and their colleagues in the Sociology Department at the University of Chicago developed a theoretical paradigm which is known as The Chicago school. They focussed on the influence of neighbourhood conditions in the committing of crime and specifically emphasised aspects such as poverty and a lack of social fabric and control in social institutions such as the school and the family. According to the proponents of the Chicago school, a lack of control gives rise to the committing of crime (Williams & McShane, 2010:50). As they viewed crime as a social phenomenon, they were of the opinion that crime could be prevented by improving social and economic circumstances within a community.

The original Chicago school has been updated in contemporary social structure theories. Social structure theorists believe that criminal behaviour is a result of the social environment (Siegel, 2005:8). Various theories resort under the social structure theories. One of these theories is the social disorganisation theory that focusses on institutions of social control such as the family, as well as neighbourhood and community variables (Williams & McShane, 2010:50). In addition, poverty, deteriorating infrastructures and how these factors give rise to antisocial behaviour as a result of feelings of conflict and despair, are aspects emphasised in this theory (Siegel, 2005:130). Another theory is the cultural deviance theory which focusses on the development of a unique lower-class subculture in
disorganised neighbourhoods. These subcultures maintain a unique set of values and beliefs that are in direct contrast with conventional social norms (Joubert & Bezuidenhout, 2013:115; Siegel, 2005:131). Whereas middle class values centre around aspects such as hard work, education and delayed gratification, the lower class subculture revere aspects such as toughness, risk-taking behaviour, fearlessness, excitement and being street smart (Joubert & Bezuidenhout, 2013:115; Siegel, 2005:146). Thus, this theory posits that deviant behaviour is a manifestation of conformity to lower-class traditions and values and is not merely a rebellion against conventional society. In addition, it is important to note that these subcultural values and beliefs are passed on from one generation to another in a process called cultural transmission (Siegel, 2005:131).

3.1.2.1.1.1 Application to youth sex offending

As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.1.4.1, youths growing up in a disadvantaged and overcrowded environment where violence and poverty are rife, struggle to develop acceptable pro-social behaviour (De Wet, 2003:3; McClinton, 2004:27). In the absence of positive role models to counteract and buffer the negative effects of their milieu, these youths might get involved in criminal behaviour (McClinton, 2004:28). These views echo the notions of the social disorganisation theory discussed in the previous paragraph.

When looking at the cultural deviance theory discussed previously, one will see that according to this theory, crime is a result of an adherence to the unique values and beliefs of the subculture in which individuals find themselves (Siegel, 2005:131). This perspective can be linked to the prevalence of youth sex offending, as a youth might adjust his perceptions and moral views to be compliant with the values of his peer group in order to ensure acceptance within the peer group. Thus, if the peer group adheres to certain violent or intimidating ways of gaining sexual compliance, the youth within this peer group might follow suit (Harris, 2008:55). Furthermore, the belief in rape myths is prevalent in some subcultures and a link between these beliefs and sex offending has been found (Andersson et al., 2000:59).
3.1.2.1.1.2 Evaluation of the theories

The ideas of the social disorganisation theory remain valuable in the field of Criminology and various prevention and intervention programmes aim to address social disorganisation, as crime tends to flourish in areas where poverty and disarray occurs (Siegel, 2005:134; Williams & McShane, 2010:59). The Chicago school and social disorganisation theory is however, criticised for its deterministic view that a person’s environment causes his misbehaviour (Tierney, 1996:95). Furthermore, The Chicago school and social disorganisation theory ignored organised crime and crimes committed by powerful and respectable citizens (Lanier & Henry, 2004:214). Additionally, these theories were seen as tautological, as crime was viewed as a product of social disorganisation, whereas crime is actually an example of social disorganisation (Tierney, 1996:95; Vold, 1979:198). It was also said that the work of The Chicago school perpetuates stereotypes, as it only concentrated on crime rates in poverty stricken areas, thus overemphasising crimes committed by the poor (Tierney, 1996:95).

The primary point of critique against cultural deviance theories is that deviant acts are represented as conformity or adherence to the norms of the group one belongs to. This implies that deviant individuals do not exist, but instead the focus is on deviant groups and how individuals who belong to these groups internalise these norms (Henry & Lanier, 2006:94). Thus, proponents of cultural deviance theories erroneously claim that an individual either belongs to a deviant group, or to a law-abiding group. This contradicts notions of social learning theory which specifies that individuals are exposed to positive, negative and neutralising norms. This implies that although deviant behaviour may occur as a result of exposure to deviant norms, it may also occur due to exposure to norms that are accepting or pardoning of deviant behaviour or even to norms that prohibit deviance (Henry & Lanier, 2006:94).

3.1.2.1.2 Social process theories

An exposition of a number of relevant theories resorting under the social process theories follows.
3.1.2.1.2.1 Edwin Sutherland’s differential association theory

Edwin Sutherland postulated that criminal behaviour occurs as a result of a learning or socialisation process. Thus, criminal behaviour occurs due to the fact that the behaviour is learned while interacting with others (Bartol & Bartol, 2014:6; Siegel, 2005:160; Williams & McShane, 2010:63). The contemporary version of this theory is the social learning theory, which in its essence is a reformulation of the differential association theory. The social learning theory complements the differential association theory by providing a more in-depth explanation regarding the ways in which social interaction can give rise to deviant behaviour (Henry & Lanier, 2006:89).

3.1.2.1.2.2 David Matza and Gresham Sykes’ neutralisation theory

David Matza and Gresham Sykes likewise view crime as an action that occurs as a result of a learning process (Siegel, 2005:162). According to them people drift or meander between law-abiding behaviour and offending (Williams & McShane, 2010:153). Learning neutralisation techniques provide people with the option of temporarily drifting away from law-abiding behaviour and becoming involved in misbehaviour. They maintain that people develop justifications for their offending behaviour (Siegel, 2005:162). Furthermore, they view youth offenders as individuals who embrace the same conventional values as non-offending youths. However, what distinguishes them from law abiding youths is that when a potentially deviant situation arises, they have the ability to excuse and justify their behaviour to achieve a so-called moral release, which would also eliminate feelings of guilt or remorse as a result of the violation of the moral code (Henry & Lanier, 2006:89). The theoretical framework is based on four observations, namely:

- Offenders sometimes indicate that they feel guilty because of their illegal acts. The proponents of the theory hold the view that offenders only regret being apprehended and does not display true remorse for their acts.
- Offenders frequently admire and respect honest, law-abiding individuals. It is emphasised that they admire certain individuals such as sports stars, entertainers, religious leaders, teachers and the like.
Offenders define whom they can victimise. Certain individuals are seen as “off-limits” and should therefore not be victimised, such as people from the same ethnic groups, clergy representing the church or respected individuals (e.g. elders) in their neighbourhood. The fact that they consider such matters could be seen as an indication that they are aware of the wrongfulness of their acts and contemplate the possible outcome.

Offenders are not immune to the demands of conformity as most of them participate in the same social activities and functions as law-abiding individuals, for example attending school or church (Siegel, 2005:163).

According to Sykes and Matza, offenders have to learn a set of techniques that allow them to negate the moral dilemmas posed by illegal behaviour. These techniques allow them to “neutralise” any moral responsibility attached to non-conforming behaviour. Hence, Matza and Sykes identified the following methods or techniques of neutralisation:

- Denial of responsibility: Offenders sometimes claim that their illegal behaviour is not their fault and that it is a result of forces beyond their control or that it occurs accidentally.
- Denial of injury: Offenders would for instance view stealing as borrowing, or they will assert that their behaviour was only a prank and that no harm was intended.
- Denial of the victim: Offenders sometimes neutralise their offending behaviour by for instance claiming that the victim deserved it.
- Condemnation of the condemners: Offenders utilising this technique shift the blame to others and would for example claim that the government is corrupt, so why should they be law-abiding citizens.
- Appeal to higher loyalties: First time offenders would for instance assert that they were being loyal to their peer group and as a result they participated in misbehaviour (Siegel, 2005:163; Williams & McShane, 2010:154).
3.1.2.1.2.3  Travis Hirschi’s social control theory

Travis Hirschi views all individuals as potential offenders and postulates that one of the reasons why everyone is not committing crime is because they are controlled and subjected to the rules of society (Bartol & Bartol, 2014:6; Williams & McShane, 2010:155). Furthermore, they fear that offending behaviour will damage their relationships with family members, friends, teachers, employers or other community members. He divides these social bonds that people maintain in society into four main elements, namely:

- **Attachment** which refers to relationships that an individual maintain with parents, peers or social institutions such as the school.
- **Involvement** which deals with participation in conventional activities. If an individual is involved in constructive recreational activities, idleness is reduced and it leaves little time for offending behaviour.
- **Commitment** which refers to the time, energy as well as the effort spent on conventional activities. This will reduce the likelihood of involvement in offending behaviour.
- **Belief** which alludes to people’s belief in the reasonableness of boundaries placed on them. In addition, people in the same social settings often share the same moral beliefs. If these beliefs are weakened or do not exist, individuals are more prone to involvement in illegal behaviour (Joubert & Bezuidenhout, 2013:118; Siegel, 2005:167; Williams & McShane, 2010:155).

3.1.2.1.2.1.1  Application to youth sex offending

According to proponents of the differential association theory, crime occurs as a result of a learning process during social interactions (Siegel, 2005:159). Thus, as discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.1.4.3, when a young male witnesses violent interaction, especially directed towards females (e.g. his father beating his mother), he might learn that women are seen as inferior to men. Furthermore, the youth can start associating aspects such as anger, fear and violence as being part and parcel of intimate relationships and this may lead to them being desensitised and not
realising the detrimental consequences of their sexual offending behaviour (Ward et al., 2006:3).

David Matza and Gresham Sykes identified certain neutralisation techniques used by offenders. One of these techniques refers to the denial of the victim (Siegel, 2005:163). This is endorsed by some of the rape myths which some youth sex offenders believe in. They would for instance believe that rape victims deserve to be raped or that they enjoyed being raped (Andersson et al., 2000:59).

In Travis Hirschi’s social control theory, he emphasises the importance of attachment with parents, peers or social institutions such as the school (Siegel, 2005:167; Williams & McShane, 2010:155). As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.1.4.4, this is of importance to the current study, as research has found that the absence of a parent, especially a father figure in the boy’s developmental years, is problematic as the boy needs a father to model the correct behaviour towards females (Harris, 2008:141). Furthermore, children who have not experienced empathy from a primary caregiver during their early childhood may not have the capacity to express empathy towards others (Owen & Fox, 2011:553; Regehr & Glancy, 2001:147).

3.1.2.1.2 Evaluation of the theories

Proponents of the social process theories emphasise that everyone, regardless of their gender, race or socio-economic status, have the potential to commit crime. Even though they do acknowledge that members of lower socio-economic statuses may have added burdens such as poverty and disrupted family lives, they opine that these risk factors can be counteracted by positive mentors, peers or a supportive family, for instance. Conversely, they explain that life experiences can influence affluent members of society in such adverse ways, that they may turn to deviant behaviour (Siegel, 2005:156).

Even though it is difficult to test theories such as the differential association theory empirically, Siegel (2005:162) is of the opinion that several notable studies have supported the fundamental principles of the theory. Links have been established
between family relations and criminality, as it has been found that children whose parents are involved in criminal behaviour are more likely to become involved in deviant behaviour as well. Furthermore, it has been found that children who engage with deviant peers tend to act defiantly as well (Siegel, 2005:162). Some points of critique listed against the theory are that it fails to explain the origin of criminal behaviour, as it is uncertain how the first person who committed crime learned the behaviour, as there was no one that could have taught criminal behaviour to this individual. This entails that some criminal behaviour must be invented and not all behaviour is necessarily learned behaviour (Lanier & Henry, 2004:164; Siegel, 2005:162). In addition, the theory regards all offences as being committed by rational beings in a systematic manner and disregards impulsive or spontaneous deviant acts (Siegel, 2005:162). Another noteworthy point of critique is that Sutherland only focussed on learning within the context of small groups and interactions, without taking Bandura’s findings pertaining to modelling of images portrayed in the media, into account (Lanier & Henry, 2004:164).

Even though attempts have been made to empirically verify the neutralisation theory, the results have been inconclusive. Some studies indicated that offenders approve criminal behaviour, whereas other studies found that even though they were offenders themselves, they voice disapproval for illegal behaviour. Additionally, some studies found that offenders approved of social values, such as honesty, whereas other studies found the opposite. Even though the research results are inconclusive and ambiguous, most of the studies found that offenders generally disapprove deviant behaviour (Siegel, 2005:164) and that they employ neutralisation techniques to give them a so-called moral release so that they can engage in deviant behaviour (Lanier & Henry, 2010:179; Siegel, 2005:164). Furthermore, evidence was found that people drift in and out of deviant behaviour and are not committed solely to a life of crime (Siegel, 2005:164).

Travis Hirschi’s version of the social control theory is seen as the dominant version of control theories and his theory has been corroborated by numerous studies indicating that deviant youths often lack attachment and commitment to their family, peer group and/or school. However, opposing views pertaining to this theory do
exist. Examples include contentions regarding the view that youth offenders lack attachment to their peers, as various studies found that youth offenders have similar friendship patterns as non-offending youth. Hirschi counters this argument by saying that even though offending youths do have friends, their friendships are relationships of convenience, instead of true friendship. Furthermore, Hirschi is of the opinion that youths who are committed to conventional activities and strive for success are law-abiding youths. Some studies, however, indicate that people who strive for success, and who fail to achieve the aspired success, often get involved in crime. Some also argue that individuals who are more involved in extramural activities spend less time at home, have less parental supervision and are more prone to commit crime. In addition, contention exists regarding the notion that all attachments will be beneficial for the child, as deviant attachments can give rise to offending behaviour. Lastly, some studies have found that crime was not a result of a lack of attachment, instead the criminal behaviour led to attachment deficits (Siegel, 2005:168).

After looking at selected Criminology theories explaining deviant behaviour, the remainder of this chapter will focus on specific Psychology theories that are related to youth sex offending as well as moral development and the displaying of empathy. It must be noted that various theories aim to provide possible explanations for the occurrence of youth sex offences. One integrated theory that is applicable to the current study will be discussed below. Thereafter, all the theories discussed in this chapter will be combined into the sex offending and empathy deficit correlational model which will serve as the theoretical framework of the study.

### 3.2 INTEGRATED THEORY PERTAINING TO YOUTH SEX OFFENDING

An overview of the integrated theory of William Marshall and Howard Barbaree will be put forward in this section. This theory is seen as applicable to the current study because it explains how biological influences, childhood experiences, the socio-cultural context and transitory situational factors such as the use of alcohol, or the influence of deviant peers influence the occurrence of youth sex offending.
3.2.1 WILLIAM MARSHALL AND HOWARD BARBAREE’S INTEGRATED THEORY (1990)

Marshall and Barbaree’s integrated theory highlights various factors that are present in the lives of youth sex offenders and that can provide possible explanations for their deviant behaviour. These factors are as follows:

- **Biological influences or factors**
  Marshall and Barbaree (1990:259) postulate that the same parts of the brain regulate aggression and sex and that the same endocrines (sex steroids) activate aggression and sex. What is even more important for the purpose of this study is the fact that the triggering effects of these sex steroids mainly begins during puberty and once puberty is reached the individual's hormonal levels increase fourfold within the first 10 months. In addition, the adolescent’s hormonal levels normally reach adult levels within 2 years after the onset of puberty. As puberty also marks dramatic changes in the adolescent’s aggression levels and sexual behaviour, this is the most important period to learn how to control and express sexuality, how to inhibit aggression and how to separate aggression and sexual intimacy. According to this theory males have a biological predisposition towards sexual aggression, but learn how to control their aggressive inclinations and fluctuating emotions (Keown, 2008:12). This means that males must learn how to pursue their sexual interest without utilising violence, they must learn not to engage in sexual interaction that illicit fear or humiliates their partner and they must learn to adapt the age of their ideal sexual partner as they grow older. These adaptations are, however, influenced by three factors, namely: childhood experiences, the socio-cultural context and transitory situational factors (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990:260).

- **Childhood experiences**
  Even though biological predispositions may enhance sexual aggression in males, this type of behaviour should be regulated by means of socialisation taking place during adolescence. Some males are, however, unable to control their biological predispositions due to adverse experiences during their childhood. Negative childhood experiences can include matters such as weak
attachment with parents and/or experiencing or witnessing physical and/or sexual abuse. In turn this can give rise to the presence of egocentricity, apathy, poor self-esteem as well as the notion that aggression can be used to solve problems or to address problematic situations (Keown, 2008:11). In addition, cruel and inconsistent disciplining measures can cause oppositional behaviour in children. This can result in the child becoming self-centred, which can lead to future criminal behaviour. Furthermore, negative childhood experiences can lead to the adolescent being unable to feel empathy or develop intimacy resulting in a lack of self-confidence, an inability to interact with female peers, hostility, social inadequateness and a negative disposition towards women in general. This might result in an adolescent using violence to gain compliance from a partner, or to prove his masculinity. On the other hand, he might pursue sex with younger children in order to compensate for underlying feelings of incompetence. Thus, a loving and nurturing family environment where pro-social behaviour is instilled is essential in order to prepare the adolescent child for the hormonal changes and accompanying challenges that he faces. This is essential in order to help the youth with the transition between childhood and adulthood (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990:262).

- Socio-cultural context
  While the family is the most important socialising agent of the child, socio-cultural factors outside the family become more important as the child reaches puberty and enters the adolescent stage (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990:264). It must be noted that individuals who are susceptible to offending behaviour feel attracted to negative socio-cultural attitudes, which may be displayed in the media and in pornography, for instance. They are also inclined to believe in the negative stereotyping of women and children that are prevailing in society. These stereotypes can include beliefs that males must dominate females and that the use of violence to establish and maintain this dominance is acceptable (Keown, 2008:12).

- Transitory situational factors
  Marshall and Barbaree (1990:268) claim that youth sex offenders can control their actions, as they refrain from acting on their desires until a suitable opportunity arises and the chances of being detected are limited. However, a
disinhibition of this control occurs due to certain circumstantial or situational factors. Some of these situations are created by the offender and some are induced externally. The vulnerability of the offender to succumb to the circumstantial factors largely depends on the background and personal characteristics of the offender. This means that some offenders are more vulnerable to transitory situational factors than others. Examples of transitory situational factors are the use of substances, or the influence of deviant peers.

3.2.1.1 Application to youth sex offending

Marshall and Barbaree’s theory is aimed at the adolescent developmental phase and focusses on the interplay between biological factors or predispositions (for example hormonal imbalances), socio-cultural factors displayed in the media and in the community as well as situational transitory aspects (for example deviant peers and alcohol abuse) and how these aspects could give rise to inappropriate sexual behaviour. The following example can be used to indicate how the interplay between the factors explained above can lead to a sexual offence being committed:

- A young male child has a biological predisposition (for example hormonal imbalances) to sexual offending.
- This young male is exposed to adverse circumstances during his childhood, and he is raised in an environment characterised by violence, abuse and a lack of parental attachment.
- When this young male reaches adolescence he is confronted with negative socio-cultural attitudes prevailing in the community that he is residing in. The views include negative stereotyping of women and the idea that the use of violence to dominate women is acceptable. These views are portrayed in the media, or in pornography, for instance.
- This adolescent male becomes intoxicated, resulting in a breakdown of his already damaged internal buffers and as a result his inhibitions deplete completely. On the other hand, certain situational factors can cause extreme measures of stress or anger that can have a direct influence on the young male’s behaviour. In the absence of a loving, nurturing childhood, or a
community where pro-social behaviour is instilled in the members of that
community, the young male derives his idea of what masculinity entails from
his negative circumstances. If this adolescent finds himself in circumstances
conducive to offending, in other words a situation where he knows that
chances of being apprehended is slim and that the possibility of getting away
with the sexual crime is good, he is likely to offend, if a suitable victim is

Next an evaluation of this theory will be provided.

3.2.1.2 Evaluation of the theory

According to Keown (2008:12), Marshall and Barbaree’s integrated theory is
especially valuable due to its broad scope, as it sees the offender as a biological
human being who is influenced by a variety of fluctuating environmental influences.
Ward et al. (2006:39) state that this theory is especially valuable as it does not
provide a single factor explanatory basis for sexual offending, but instead it
combines notions from learning, developmental and personality theories.
Furthermore, Ward et al. (2006:39) state that the theoretical hypotheses contained in
this theory have been validated by other research and thus are reliable and
empirically sound.

On the other hand, it is noteworthy that certain limitations of this theory have been
identified. Seto and Lalumière (2010:526) are of the opinion that the theory does not
explain why youths who are unable to form peer relationships, engage in coercive
sex, instead of choosing options such as masturbation or having sex with prostitutes.
Another limitation that has been brought forward by Ward et al. (2006:40) is the fact
that the theory has a broad scope and does not distinguish between different types
of offences. As there are fundamental differences between different types of sexual
offences, this limitation is seen as significant. Furthermore, Ward et al. (2006:40)
state that no explanation is given as to why the different factors (including biological,
developmental, social and situational) lead to sexual offences and not to general
aggression. The third limitation noted by the authors (Ward et al., 2006:42) is that
Marshall and Barbaree provide a simplistic description of the interplay between sexual and aggressive impulses and do not take notice of the complex midbrain structures and the fact that no scientific evidence exists to support the idea of merged aggressive and sexual impulses. The last limitation indicated by Ward et al. (2006:41) is that the theory fails to indicate how certain environmental factors buffer males against sexual aggression and why certain males that do not embrace negative socio-cultural views, commit deviant sexual acts.

In the next section, selected theories focusing on empathy and moral development will be discussed.

3.3 THEORIES RELATED TO MORAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE DISPLAYING OF EMPATHY

A brief overview of certain aspects of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, Erik Erikson’s Neo-Freudian psychoanalytic theory, Jean Piaget’s cognitive developmental theory and Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development, as well as Albert Bandura’s social cognition theory will follow, as some of the aspects of these theories are applicable to this study. Consequently all the theories will be integrated into the sex offending and empathy deficit correlational model which will serve as the theoretical framework for this study.

3.3.1 SIGMUND FREUD’S PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY

Sigmund Freud held the view that people’s actions are determined by emotions of which they are mostly unaware and that they are shaped by their early childhood years. Furthermore, he stated that human beings have basic biological needs, urges or drives that need to be satisfied (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:31). According to him an individual’s personality consists of three components better known as the id, the ego and the superego (Beystehner, 1998:2). The id refers to an individual’s irrational and impulsive side of their personality that strives for immediate gratification regardless of the appropriateness or realistic possibility of attainment (Freud, 1949:14). The personality of an infant mainly consists of the id (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:31). The second component of the personality of an individual is the ego. This component
refers to the rational side of a person that strives to find realistic ways of satisfying their instincts. The third component of an individual’s personality is called the superego. This refers to a person’s inherent moral views and standards (Freud, 1949:14). The superego develops from the ego and normally emerges in children between the ages of three and six years. Children in this age group develop their superego in accordance to their parents’ views and moral standards. The superego prevents children from engaging in anti-social behaviour and if they do misbehave it leads to feelings of guilt and shame. The superego will encourage individuals to find suitable, pro-social ways of gratifying the id and fulfilling their needs. According to Freud, conflict between the id, ego and superego is unavoidable. The interplay between these three components normally consists of the following processes: the id requires immediate gratification of basic needs, the ego contains the impulsive id while finding appropriate ways to satisfy the needs and the superego determines if the ego’s problem-solving procedures are morally acceptable. The ego balances the divergent demands of the id and the superego, while accommodating the realities of the environment. Even though Freud placed a lot of emphasis on the role of nature (biological predispositions) he also emphasised the importance of nurture. He insisted that caring and nurturing caregivers have an important role to play when considering the development of the child’s superego (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:31).

According to Freud (1949:23), psychosexual development occurs in different stages. As each of the stages has various challenges which lead to uncertainty and anxiety, this can be exacerbated by harsh parenting styles. This can result in fixation (being stuck in one stage) or regression (resorting back to a previous or earlier stage). An exposition of the stages of psychosexual development as seen by Freud follows:

From birth to one year a baby’s libido is centralised around the mouth and gaining oral gratification from the mother is essential. This stage is called the oral stage. Children between the ages of 1 and 3 years are categorised in the anal stage which means that their libido is focussed on the anus and they experience conflict between biological needs and societal demands and rules. Furthermore, children between the ages of 3 and 6 years are in the phallic stage. The theory postulates that children in this age group develop an incestuous attraction to the parent of the opposite sex. However, if all goes well, the child will eventually start to identify with the parent of
the same sex and in the process they will internalise the value system of that parent into their own superego. Moreover, Freud categorised children between the ages of 6 to 12 years into the latent phase. During this phase sexual urges are not yet prominent and children actively engage in school work and play. The last stage, from the age of 12 years is referred to as the genital stage. During this stage the child experiences biological maturation giving rise to specific biological needs and an active libido. Freud’s theory views this stage as the last stage experienced during psychosexual development (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:32).

3.3.1.1 Application to youth sex offending

Adolescents are confronted with extreme emotional conflicts during the genital stage of psychosexual development, which occurs from the age of 12 years. The emergence of new sexual urges can cause severe anxiety and may trigger sexual conflicts experienced during earlier psychosexual stages. Young males who engage in risky sexual behaviour may have deficient ego’s (rationality) and superego’s (morality) which in turn might not keep their egocentric and irrational ids in check. These youngsters might seek immediate gratification of their sexual urges without considering the consequences of their behaviour and without experiencing any guilt or remorse (Bartollas, 1997:110; Sigelman & Rider, 2006:33). In addition, adolescent sex offending can be a result of the boy’s over-identification with his mother. This in turn can give rise to deviant masculine behaviour as a compensatory mechanism. Freud noted a resemblance between childhood sexual fantasies and certain sexual perversions that were assimilated into the adolescent’s development and were expressed in deviant sexual acts (Hoffman, 2005:18). Furthermore, abnormal development results in unconscious conflicts within an individual, specifically with regards to sexual and aggressive impulses. This can be a possible explanation for deviant sexual and/or aggressive behaviour (Bartollas, 1997:110). During the genital stage, the genital region of the adolescent becomes an area of pleasure and if childhood conflicts have not been resolved, lingering aggression could resurface and could be displayed during sexual encounters (Harris, 2008:63).


3.3.1.2 Evaluation of the theory

According to Sternberg (2001:490) Freud is seen as the “most influential thinker of all time” specifically in the field of personality psychology. Gill (2002) elaborates by saying that Freud’s research served as a starting point for most research focusing on child psychology and the unconscious mind. Thomas (2005:78) furthermore indicates that Freud’s research can be seen as innovative and revolutionary and clearly indicates the impact of childhood experiences on subsequent behaviour. Freud is also commended for indicating the link between morality and emotion. Furthermore, his focus on early childhood relationships with caregivers and the important role that it plays in the development of morality is also noteworthy. In addition, Freud emphasised the importance of children’s internalisation of moral principles in order for them to act appropriately, even in the absence of authority figures (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:360).

On the other hand, various developmental theorists claim that Freud’s theory is vague, internally inconsistent, difficult to test empirically and therefore not easily verifiable. Empirically testing intangible aspects such as the id, the ego and the superego remain a challenge (Barkan, 1997:141; Sigelman & Rider, 2006:33). In addition, Barkan (1997:141) states that Freud’s theory is critiqued, due to its deterministic nature which entails that no provision is made for the possibility of change that can occur in individuals during later stages of their life. Furthermore, it is important to note that Freud refers to childhood psychosexual development without observing any children while conducting his studies or developing his theory (Sternberg, 2001:484).

Despite the matters of critique listed above, many of Freud’s principles and the content of his theory profoundly influenced contemporary developmental theories (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:33). For instance, Freud proposed unconscious processes that underlie human behaviour and these propositions are supported by contemporary neuropsychological research (Guterl, 2002).
3.3.2 ERIK ERIKSON’S NEO-FREUDIAN PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY

Erik Erikson is regarded as the most influential life-span developmental theorist. He focussed on the dynamics of the personality and postulated that an individual’s personality evolves through systematic stages. When compared to Freud, Erikson placed less emphasis on sexual urges as the driving force behind development and placed more emphasis on social influences of peers, teachers and the broader community and culture. In addition, he also placed less emphasis on the egocentric and irrational id and more focus on the rational ego and how it can adapt to different circumstances. He was of the opinion that people were mainly rational beings who played an active role in their development. Erikson added that human development continues throughout adulthood and postulated that humans experienced eight overarching psychosocial stages or conflicts during their life span. The individual is pushed to the next stage by biological maturation and/or social demands, irrespective of whether the previous stage was resolved or not. The unsuccessful mastering of the previous stage can, however, impact on the successes and failures in the following stages (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:34; Sternberg, 2001:605). These stages or conflicts are as follows:

- **Trust vs. mistrust – birth to one year:** Trust is developed when infants realise that the caregiver is responsive to their needs. They must be able to rely on their caregivers and know that they will attend to their basic needs and nurture and comfort them. If caregivers neglect infants, are unresponsive to their needs or reject them, it can have detrimental effects on the future of the children, as they will mistrust others. It must, however, be noted that overindulged infants might trust others too much, which can also be to their detriment.
- **Autonomy vs. shame and doubt – 1 to 3 years:** During this stage children must learn to do things on their own and master it. Thus, the child must be autonomous and must learn how to assert themselves. If they do not learn autonomy they will doubt their abilities when they become older.
- **Initiative vs. guilt – 3 to 6 years:** During this stage children must learn to execute their own plans, without infringing on the rights of other persons.
• Industry vs. inferiority – 6 to 12 years: This stage entails that children must be able to master their schoolwork and keep up with their peers. If they do not succeed at this, they will feel inferior.

• Identity vs. role confusion – 12 years to 20 years: Individuals in this stage must establish their social and occupational identities. If they are unsuccessful in this, they will be unsure about their identities as adults (Erikson, 1959:166; Hesselink-Louw, 2001:71; Sigelman & Rider, 2006:32).

Even though subsequent stages were identified by Erikson, the researcher will refrain from discussing these stages, as it is not applicable to the context of this study.

3.3.2.1 Application to youth sex offending

Erikson agrees with Freud that unresolved conflicts during early childhood can affect behaviour during later stages (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:35). When looking at the different stages it is clear that if a child does not master the second stage, namely the autonomy vs. shame and doubt stage, the child will lack assertion skills. As explained in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2.3, a link between unassertive behaviour and sexual offending has been established (Fisher et al., 1999:475).

With reference to the third stage, namely initiative vs. guilt, children who do not master this stage will struggle to take the rights and feelings of other people into consideration. Thus, young males must be able to pursue their sexual interest without utilising violence and they must learn not to engage in sexual interaction that illicit fear or humiliates their partner (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990:260).

The fourth stage refers to industry vs. inferiority and implies that if a child in this age bracket (6-12 years) does not succeed at school and does not have stable peer relationships, it could lead to a feeling of inferiority. As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2.1, various authors are of the opinion that low self-esteem is a contributing factor to sexual offending (Beech & Fisher, 2002:210; Fisher et al., 1999:474; Seto & Lalumièere, 2010:563; White et al., 2006:135).
The fifth stage, namely the identity vs. role confusion stage, is a phase which is crucial when looking at an individual's capability to adapt to societal norms (Harris, 2008:67). During this stage adolescents have to establish their identity, amidst many physical, emotional and cognitive changes that they have to cope with (Hesselink-Louw, 2001:75). In addition, adolescents need to establish their social identity, as well as their moral standing. The conflicting emotions that they experience during this developmental stage can result in rebellion against societal norms (Sternberg, 2001:364). Thus, if they do not establish an identity, they struggle to have a sense of purpose (Thomas, 2005:93). Identity diffusion or role confusion means that individuals struggle to know who they are, or how others view them (Erikson, 1959:92). This could result in an over-identification with peers or role models, which implies a loss of individuality and has a negative impact on identity formation. This is of elevated importance when applying this theory to youth sex offending as youth sex offenders frequently engage with peers who commit sexual offences (Harris, 2008:67).

3.3.2.2 Evaluation of the theory

More people agree with Erikson’s notion of rationality and the interactions between biological and social influences compared to Freud’s propositions focussing on unconscious and irrational behaviour resulting from biological needs (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:35). In addition, Erikson’s theory has been acclaimed for its detailed expositions of the different psychosocial stages and its focus on the normal development of individuals in their personal and social capacity (Thomas, 2005:102).

Even though Erikson’s theory is seen as influential, it is criticised for being vague and difficult to test empirically (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:35). Certain questions that are asked regarding his theory are why certain crises occur during certain developmental stages and not in others and why provision is not made for the possibility that crises can occur in different stages (Thomas, 2005:83).

However, despite the above-mentioned critique, Erikson’s theory continues to play a prominent role in child development literature (Thomas, 2005:101).
3.3.3 JEAN PIAGET’S COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY

In Piaget’s cognitive developmental theory, morality is studied by looking at the development of moral reasoning as well as the thought processes involved in distinguishing between right and wrong. Piaget postulates that moral development is dependent on social cognitive development, especially role-taking or perspective-taking skills that gives us the opportunity to imagine how someone might react to a wrongdoing, or how someone in distress might feel. These skills also help us to understand the give and take principle when interacting with others (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:306). Piaget insists that children are not born with instinctive ideas about the world, nor are they simply crammed with information provided by adults. Instead, children actively construct new ideas and formulate an understanding of the world based on their own experiences. Gradually they gain more accurate understandings by means of viewing the world around them, and experimenting with objects in their environment. In addition, they need to construct new understandings or expand on existing knowledge to explain new found stimuli for which their current understanding is insufficient. Furthermore, interplay exists between biological maturation or the developing of the brain and the child’s experiences. This interaction results in the child’s progression from one stage of mental development to the next stage (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:42). Moral development is said to develop in four stages, namely:

- **Sensorimotor stage** – birth to two years: During this stage children learn by exploring their environments through their sensory and motor experiences.
- **Preoperational stage** – two to seven years: During this stage children can engage in symbolic thought but cannot solve problems logically. Children in this phase must rely on their perceptions and are thus easily deceived by appearances. In addition, children in this stage experience difficulty in perspective-taking, in other words they find it difficult to accept other individuals’ perceptions that are different to their own. During this stage, children will speak their minds without consideration of others’ feelings or thoughts.
• Concrete operational stage – 7 to 11 years: Children in this stage think more logically than children in the previous stage. They can solve problems pertaining to concrete objects. Furthermore, they utilise a trial and error approach when solving problems. In addition, they are capable of drawing sound conclusions that are based on their observations. On the other hand, they find it difficult to solve abstract or hypothetical problems.

• Formal operational stage – 11 or 12 years and older: During this stage children start to think hypothetically and can solve abstract problems. In addition, children in this stage have the ability to understand things without directly experiencing it themselves. Thus, they can engage in perspective-taking and can understand others’ perspectives (Atherton, 2013; McLeod, 2009; Piaget, 1973:36; Sigelman & Rider, 2006:42; Sternberg, 2001:425).

Piaget construed a theory of moral development encompassing a pre-moral period and two moral stages. According to him the pre-moral period exists during the child’s pre-school years where children demonstrate little awareness or comprehension of rules. Thus, children in the pre-moral period cannot be regarded as moral beings. Children from the age of 6 years to 10 years can be placed in the heteronymous morality category where they start to take rules seriously, as these rules are laid down by authority figures and are therefore sacred and cannot be changed or challenged. If rules are broken they calculate the damage by looking at the extent of damage without considering the intentions of the offending person. By the age of 10 or 11 years children move into the autonomous morality stage where they comprehend that rules were created by individuals and that these rules can be challenged and changed if the group of individuals reach consensus about the change. In addition, children in this category place more emphasis on the intention of the individual and less focus is placed on the consequences or damages that occurred (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:361).

3.3.3.1 Application to youth sex offending

Piaget opines that children accomplish formal operational thinking at different rates. Thus, not all adolescents may be able to consider the long term consequences of
their actions (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:43). Furthermore, children who have not reached formal operational thinking might not be able to engage in perspective-taking. Piaget asserts that children progress to different stages based on their cognitive maturation and social encounters, especially with peers who are their equals. When socialising with peers, a child can learn how to see something from someone else’s perspective and when disagreements occur they learn how to take a stand for what they believe in and they establish principles of fairness. Thus, Piaget is of the opinion that moral development occurs through interaction with peers, where an ability to identify and synchronise various perspectives on moral issues occurs. Furthermore, the child needs to outgrow the egocentrism that characterises young children and they must develop role-taking skills. Thus, they must learn how to see something from another individual’s viewpoint (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:361; Gibbs, 2005). The absence of these skills (perspective-taking) will involve an absence of empathy (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:357). It must be noted that egocentrism is seen as a cognitive characteristic and not a personality trait (Sternberg, 2001:425). When taking into account that adolescent sex offenders often are victims of bullying and do not have many friends (Hoghughi, 1997:13) due to inadequate social skills (Fisher et al., 1999:474) progressing to the formal operational stage of moral development might be problematic. Moreover, adolescents who have not outgrown their egocentrism and have not developed role-taking skills will have difficulty understanding the needs of others and might engage in sex offending without taking the consequences of their actions into consideration.

### 3.3.3.2 Evaluation of the theory

Similar to Freud, Piaget’s theory was ground breaking and has had a profound impact on how human development is understood (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:368). Piaget changed the way that people view the child’s world and had an immense influence on the way in which people study and communicate with children (McLeod, 2009). In addition, Piaget’s theory is seen as the most comprehensive theory pertaining to cognitive development and remains to have a profound impact (Sternberg, 2001:423).
On the other hand, a few of the most prominent points of critique against Piaget’s theory are that theorists query the correctness of the age brackets provided in the different stages (McLeod, 2009). In addition, other theorists such as Vygotsky and Bruner (in McLeod, 2009) are of the opinion that the compartmentalisation employed in Piaget’s theory, specifically pertaining to his emphasis on the different stages of moral development, is problematic, as development is a continuous process. According to Sternberg (2001:423) these theorists are of the opinion that children can accomplish the tasks described in the different stages at an earlier age than suggested by Piaget. In addition, they opine that some adolescents and adults do not always engage in formal operational thinking during all circumstances and that only one third of adults reach the formal operational stage (McLeod, 2009). Furthermore, the cross-cultural application of Piaget’s theory can be questioned as his theory was developed from his work with children in Western cultures. It is also important to note that he did not have a representative sample when conducting his research as he used a very small sample and mainly used his own children in his studies (McLeod, 2009). Moreover, Sternberg (2001:423) indicates that some cross-cultural studies have shown that the sequence of stages is the same across cultures, but that the age brackets in these stages differ. This difference occurs due to environmental differences rather than hereditary differences. It was also stated that in some non-Western cultures neither the adolescents, nor the adults were able to master the concrete or formal operational stage of moral development. This led to Piaget modifying his theory in 1972 to recognise that the formal operational stage might be reached as a result of an “individual’s domain-specific expertise based on experience, rather than on the maturational processes of cognitive development” (Sternberg, 2001:428).

3.3.4 LAWRENCE KOHLBERG’S THEORY OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Elaborating on Piaget’s theory, Lawrence Kohlberg cultivated his own theory of moral development. This he did by posing questions pertaining to certain moral dilemmas to 72 boys ages 10-16 years, in order to assess how they viewed these scenarios. Of the 72 boys, 58 were involved in follow-up studies every three years for a period of 20 years (Kohlberg, 1963:19, McLeod, 2011). After analysing their
responses he reached the conclusion that moral growth develops on three broad levels each encompassing two distinct stages. Each stage resorts from the previous stage and an individual cannot skip stages or alternatively regress to a previous stage. In addition, it is important to note that not all individuals reach all the stages of moral development (McLeod, 2011; Sigelman & Rider, 2006:361).

The levels identified by Kohlberg are as follows:

**Level 1: Pre-conventional morality**
During this stage, rules are seen as external aspects and are not internalised. The child will adhere to rules that are imposed by authoritative individuals to avoid punishment or to gain rewards. Thus, behaviour is acceptable if it serves the best interest of the individual or if punishment is avoided.

Stage 1: Punishment and obedience orientation
Whether an act is deemed as inappropriate depends on the consequences of the act. Thus, a child will continue acting defiantly if the behaviour is not punished. The harsher the punishment, the more the child will view it as wrongful or bad.

Stage 2: Instrumental hedonism
An individual in the second stage of moral development will act in accordance to personal needs or rewards that can be gained. Some concern for others is displayed, but the emphasis is on what one can gain in return for good behaviour (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:375; Sternberg, 2001:473).

**Level 2: Conventional morality**
Once an individual has reached this level they have internalised moral values. They adhere to rules to satisfy others and to maintain the social order in society. Serious consideration is given to the feelings and needs of other people and the individual can engage in perspective-taking. This refers to their ability to see something from another person’s perspective (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:375).
Stage 3: Good girl or good boy morality
The appropriateness of behaviour is determined by what is pleasing and acceptable for others (Kohlberg, 1963:20). The feelings of other people are taken into consideration.

Stage 4: Authority and social order maintaining
Acceptable behaviour is determined by what is deemed correct by authorities. Fear of punishment is no longer the motivational factor, but rather the need to preserve social order. Thus, each individual feels that they should fulfil their citizen’s duty and have respect for law and order (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:375; Sternberg, 2001:473).

Level 3: Post-conventional morality
Right is distinguished from wrong by determining what is morally right and legal. Thus, individuals reach the stage where they can distinguish if laws are morally right and need to be obeyed. They realise that their opinions might differ from authority figures, but focus on what is morally right and justifiable. Thus, the individual has the ability to realise that certain laws are in conflict with basic moral principles. During this stage the individual transcends to a level of taking all individuals’ perspectives into consideration.

Stage 5: Morality of contract, individual rights and democratically accepted law
During this stage the individual understands the meaning of a social contract and understands the rationale of laws. Furthermore, individuals in this stage know that laws must be agreed upon in a democratic society and must articulate the will of the majority in an effort to maintain social cohesion (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:375; Sternberg, 2001:473).

Stage 6: Morality of universal principles of conscience
This is deemed as the final and most advanced stage of moral reasoning. The individual in this stage distinguishes right from wrong on the basis of self-generated values that are broad and universal. This individual does not construe values without reflecting and discovering abstract principles of respect for all people and their rights. The person in this stage has the ability to take the perspective of any person that are faced with a moral dilemma into consideration and can reach a solution that will be beneficial to all parties and that will be deemed morally justifiable by all. This stage of
moral development is viewed as the ideal, but in reality, it rarely occurs (McLeod, 2011; Sigelman & Rider, 2006:375; Sternberg, 2001:473).

Kohlberg alleged that the most important aspects related to the development of morality are cognitive growth and social interactions especially with one’s peers. As a prerequisite for the conventional level of moral reasoning an individual should have the capacity to appreciate the perspectives of other people. This level of formal operational thinking is normally only established once an individual reaches adulthood. Thus, certain cognitive skills should be present for moral development to occur. Social interactions are imperative so that people can understand that they form part of a larger social order and that moral order is essential in an organised society. Furthermore, it is important to engage with a variety of people, as different views from one’s own creates cognitive disequilibrium, which entails a conflict between existing cognitive structures and new ideas, which stimulates novel ways of thinking (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:375).

### 3.3.4.1 Application to youth sex offending

Level 1, stage 1 morality entails that an individual decides whether an act is inappropriate by reviewing the consequences of the act. Thus, a child will continue acting defiantly if the behaviour is not punished (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:375). A conjecture that can be deduced from the above is that many youth offenders might not be deterred from offending as they are under the impression that chances of them being apprehended and punished for their offences are slim. As youthfulness is used as a mitigating factor during prosecution and sentencing, this knowledge may increase their feeling of impunity. Furthermore, Sigelman and Rider (2006:372) are of the opinion that youth offenders are stuck in the pre-conventional moral level, are egocentric and do not consider the impact of their behaviour on others. In addition, these offenders lack the ability to distinguish between right and wrong and do not display remorse for their criminal acts.

Like Piaget, Kohlberg held the view that the most important aspects related to the development of morality are cognitive growth and social interactions, especially with
one’s peers (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:375). When taking into account that youth sex offenders often do not have many friends (Hoghugh, 1997:13) due to inadequate social skills (Fisher et al., 1999:474), it might hamper their cognitive growth, which in turn will have an impact on their moral development.

3.3.4.2 Evaluation of the theory

Kohlberg did not study children younger than 10 years and thus did not have more to say, than that they are pre-conventional moral reasoners. According to Sigelman and Rider (2006:367) some researchers are of the opinion that both Piaget and Kohlberg were unsuccessful in explaining moral growth during childhood as pre-school children have the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, they know the difference between good and bad intentions, do not view all rules as sacred, can challenge adult authority when they disagree and have the ability to appreciate the emotional consequences of their acts (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:367).

Similar to the criticism posed against the cross-cultural application of Piaget’s theory, Kohlberg’s theory was also developed from his work with children in Western cultures. According to research conducted by Ferns and Thom (2001:38) in South Africa, white adolescents’ moral development pattern was in line with Kohlberg’s theory, whereas the black adolescents showed a different pattern. This might be attributed to a difference in traditional norms and values, parenting styles and the unique political history of the South African society. Differences between the educational background of white and black individuals can have an effect on their moral reasoning abilities, as the ability to think logically and critically has an influence on the level of moral reasoning. Therefore more consideration should be given to the impact that the cultural, social and historical contexts of societies can have on the moral development of individuals. In addition, he only conducted his research with male participants (McLeod, 2011).

Another point of critique is the fact that the questions were based on a hypothetical situation. There is uncertainty if individuals would have acted similarly to the answers that they provided for the hypothetical situation if they were placed in a real scenario.
with real consequences. In addition, it is postulated that the level or stage of reasoning might be dependent on the situation and might entail that individuals regress to certain stages or levels depending on the situation (McLeod, 2011). Furthermore, it is uncertain if moral reasoning will lead to moral behaviour as there is a difference between knowing what would be the morally correct way to act and the actual moral behaviour in a real life situation. Moreover, it is stated that Kohlberg’s theory overemphasises the concept of justice when making moral decisions, without taking the importance of aspects such as compassion and other interpersonal feelings into consideration (Cherry, 2014).

3.3.5 ALBERT BANDURA’S SOCIAL COGNITION THEORY

Albert Bandura’s main interest is in the behavioural component of morality (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:363). Bandura holds the view that people are not necessarily born with the ability to commit violence or act aggressively, but instead they learn this behaviour by personally observing others. The observation can include watching another person acting violently to attain a goal, or seeing how someone is being rewarded for violent behaviour on television or in a movie. Social learning theorists agree that a person may be biologically predisposed towards violence, but insist that the predisposition is activated by factors in their environments (Siegel, 2005:114). Furthermore, Bandura’s social cognition theory asserts that people gain knowledge by observing others, having an awareness of their behaviour and comprehending the consequences of such behaviour (Symboluk, 1999:16). In his theory Bandura claims that children learn how to conduct themselves by imitating models such as their parents or peers (Thomas, 2005:150). Thus, this theory asserts that behaviour is learned by means of interacting with others and by directly or indirectly observing and imitating other live or symbolic models (Symboluk, 1999:17). Moreover social skills, sex roles, aggression and fear can be attained by means of observational learning, even without any experience of these aspects. He further opines that children learn how to foresee the outcome of their behaviour by observing the consequences of other’s behaviour (Symboluk, 1999:16). Thus, the child’s replication of certain behaviour will be regulated by the rewards or punishments of other’s behaviour (Thomas, 2005:155).
Bandura (2008:93) also posits that even though people’s actions are not entirely autonomous, their behaviour is also not entirely determined by situational influences. He believes that a reciprocal interaction pertaining to environmental, behavioural and interpersonal determinants influences human functioning. Consequently factors such as an individual’s genetic make-up, their personal goals, their values and their personal views influence their actions.

Bandura’s social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2008:93) differentiates three types of environments that people are confronted with. These environments include the imposed-, selected- and created environment. The imposed environment invades on people without them having any say in the matter. Even though they have minimal control over its existence, they decide how they want to interpret and react to this environment. Thus, the imposed environment is merely a possibility which does not become a reality unless it is selected and activated by the actions of individuals. This then constitutes the selected environment. In other words, the potential environment (imposed environment) becomes the concrete experienced environment (selected environment) based on the individual’s interpretations and reactions to the imposed environment (Bandura, 2005b:18). This explains why some people achieve success even though they were raised in a disorganised and debilitating environment. Thus, some individuals seize opportunities to improve themselves and to rise above their circumstances, while others are trapped in the negative and demoralising situations in which they find themselves. Consequently the created environment refers to the environment that is produced by each individual, as a result of their decision pertaining to the way that they will be influenced by their surroundings and affecting the way that they will lead their lives and reach their personal goals (Bandura, 2008:93).

3.3.5.1 Application to youth sex offending

According to Rich (2003:58) children absorb, mimic and replicate what they see, hear and/or experience. Thus, children gain knowledge and develop by means of interaction with their social environment. Considering SA’s culture of violence into account, the researcher contend that this is an important fact that needs to be taken
into consideration as children might absorb, mimic and replicate the violence that they are confronted with on a daily basis. When considering the impunity with which some of the violence is committed in SA, it is a matter of grave concern, especially when taking into account that an adolescent’s replication of behaviour is regulated by the rewards or punishment of other’s behaviour. Thus, if a youth is of the opinion that the rewards gained from forced sexual interaction outweighs the possibility of punishment, chances are that the youth may choose to offend, especially if that is the behaviour modelled by family members and peers. Furthermore, Symboluk (1999:17) states that if a young offender who was the victim of sexual abuse is of the opinion that his offender derived pleasure and/or experienced a feeling of being in control, without fearing or receiving any punishment, the victim might be inclined to replicate this behaviour. This in turn might lead to the victim becoming the abuser. As not all youth sex offenders were subjected to sexual abuse themselves (Pithers & Gray, 1998:212; Pratt et al., 2001:3) a possible explanation for their offending behaviour might be found in the notion that they might have learned the unacceptable sexual behaviour in their social milieu which includes aspects such as the media (e.g. television, magazines and the Internet), their peers or by viewing inappropriate sexual behaviour taking place in their homes and within their communities (Symboluk, 1999:17). Additional factors that can be considered include poor living conditions and overcrowding as this might lead to scenarios where parents and children have to share the same room and children might be exposed to their parents'/guardians’ sexual interactions. This can give rise to children imitating or replicating what they have observed. In the absence of a willing participant, abuse of a victim might occur as a result of the child’s need to experiment with his new found knowledge.

When taking the above into account, one must however, bear in mind that although an individual’s behaviour is not entirely autonomous, it is also not entirely determined by situational factors such as role models or the environment (Bandura, 2008:93). Thus, even if the imposed environment is a debilitating, disorganised environment characterised by violence, negative role models and limited opportunities, the individual still has a decision regarding the selection and activation of the imposed environment. Thus, individuals have a choice regarding the way in which they will
react to their environment, as well as the amount of influence that the environment will have on them.

Even though adolescence is regarded as a challenging period where the youth has to deal with aspects such as pubertal changes and the emergence of their sexuality, the social cognitive theory accentuates that this period should be regarded as a period of personal growth instead of a time of turmoil and confusion (Bandura, 2005a:6). Adolescents should learn how to regulate their behaviour and how to avoid deviant sexual behaviour (Bandura, 2005a:22). The probability of adolescents’ involvement in deviant behaviour largely depends on individuals’ competencies, self-regulatory abilities and the social influences in their lives. Disorganised communities with high levels of poverty and a lack of positive role models and social support structures provide an environment that is conducive to deviant behaviour (Bandura, 2005a:27). However, certain enabling factors can equip young people with the resilience to overcome their adversity. Bandura prefers to refer to the concept “enablement factors” instead of “protective factors”. According to him “protectiveness shields individuals from harsh realities or may weaken their impact”, whereas “enablement equips them with the personal resources to select and structure their environment in ways that set a successful course for their lives”. Thus, enablement factors empower individuals to play a proactive role instead of becoming a victim of their circumstances (Bandura, 2005a:28). An example of an enablement factor is a nurturing relationship between children and their parents. As the feeling of self-worth and self-efficacy plays an important role in the empowering of children, parents can play a pivotal role in affirming youths’ positive attributes and emphasising their mastery over important milestones. Parental involvement and support can buffer negative environmental factors and can empower youths to rise above their circumstances and overcome hindrances that they may encounter.

3.3.5.2 Evaluation of the theory

Albert Bandura’s social cognition theory is an integrative theory that indicates how children learn certain behaviour and how their actions are influenced by the knowledge that they acquire from their social environment. In addition, the theory is
reliable, have gained reasonable support from the scientific community and its practical value is undeniable (Thomas, 2005:162-164). Furthermore, the social cognition theory emphasises the importance of nurturing families, positive role models and non-delinquent peers. It also provides an explanation for the occurrence of criminal behaviour across different economical class structures, as everyone is vulnerable to being exposed to pro-criminal behaviour (Siegel, 2005:165).

However, one of the points of critique against the above-mentioned theory is the fact that emphasis is placed on the fact that an individual learns behaviour and is to a certain degree a product of their environment (Sternberg, 2001:494). This in turn reduces the individual’s accountability and contradicts the notion of rationality and own free will. In response to this, Bandura (2008:93) states that people’s behaviour is a result of interaction between environmental, behavioural and interpersonal determinants. Thus, an individual’s actions are not entirely autonomous, neither entirely determined by situational factors. In addition, Bandura also refers to the fact that individuals decide how to react to their environment and that enabling factors empower them to make a conscious decision to engage in pro-social behaviour (Bandura, 2005a:28). Against the background of the aforementioned, it is clear that Bandura’s social cognition theory does not contradict the notion of rationality and free will, as the theory emphasises the importance of self-efficacy and self-determination.

Other limitations include questions regarding the reason why some people imitate negative role models, whereas others do not (Lanier & Henry, 2004:145). This limitation can be addressed by referring to Bandura’s reference to the presence of enabling factors that empower certain individuals to refrain from becoming involved in deviant behaviour (Bandura, 2005a:28). Furthermore, questions are also raised regarding the inability of the theory to explain racial, age or gender differences (Lanier & Henry, 2004:145).

After providing an overview and evaluation of the above-mentioned theories and applying it to youth sex offending, the researcher will provide a theoretical framework for this study.
3.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THIS STUDY

The researcher compiled a model to integrate the theories discussed thus far and to provide a theoretical framework for this study. Upon reflecting on the above-mentioned theories, the researcher concluded that the following nine factors may influence the development and display of empathy in youth sex offending:

- Biological influences (Marshall and Barbaree’s theory which states that males have a biological predisposition towards sexual aggression).
- Socio-moral thinking (development of superego as described in Freud’s theory).
- Psychosocial development (assertion skills, perspective-taking and egocentrism as described in Erikson, Piaget and Kohlberg’s theories).
- Childhood experiences (e.g. childhood attachment, experiencing or witnessing physical, sexual or emotional abuse as described in Marshall and Barbaree’s theory, Hirschi’s theory as well as Bandura’s theory).
- Socio-cultural factors (for example the influence of the media, community perceptions, school experiences, community disorganisation and social interactions as described in Marshall and Barbaree’s theory, social disorganisation theory, Hirschi’s theory, Sutherland’s theory and cultural deviance theory).
- Social learning (Bandura’s theory and Sutherland’s theory).
- Situational transitory aspects which refer to the influence of deviant peers and/or substance abuse on youth sex offending (Marshall and Barbaree’s theory, Sutherland’s theory and the cultural deviance theory).
- Opportunity to commit crime, availability of a suitable victim and absence of a capable guardian (routine activities theory).
- Impunity, which refers to the notion that anti-social behaviour, lacks consequences (Kohlberg’s theory and rational choice theory).

Following an examination of the above-mentioned theoretical explanations, the researcher developed the ‘sex offending and empathy deficit correlational model’ which will serve as the theoretical framework that will guide this study. This model
illustrates the interplay between the above-mentioned factors and male youth sex offending in the following manner:

- A young male child has a biological predisposition to sexual offending (Keown, 2008:12).
- Adolescents who engage in risky sexual behaviour may have deficient ego’s (rationality) and superego’s (morality) which in turn might not keep their egocentric and irrational ids in check. These adolescents might seek immediate gratification of their sexual urges without considering the consequences of their behaviour and without experiencing any guilt or remorse (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:31-32).
- The different stages of childhood development as described by Erikson reveals that if a child does not master the second stage, namely the autonomy vs. shame and doubt stage, the child will lack assertion skills. A link between unassertive behaviour and sexual offending has been established. Considering the third stage, namely initiative vs. guilt, children who do not master this stage will struggle to take the rights and feelings of other people into consideration. Young males have to pursue their sexual interest without utilising violence and they must learn not to engage in sexual interaction that illicit fear or humiliate their partner. Thus, if they lack empathy and do not consider others’ feelings (lack of perspective-taking skills) they might pursue their own sexual interest at all costs (egocentrism) resulting in deviant sexual behaviour. The fourth stage refers to industry vs. inferiority and implies that if a child in this age bracket (6-12 years) does not succeed at school and does not have stable peer relationships, it could lead to a feeling of inferiority. Low self-esteem is also considered a contributing factor to sexual offending (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:32).
- This young male is exposed to adverse circumstances during his childhood, and he is raised in an environment characterised by violence, abuse and a lack of parental attachment. At school this child is a loner with no meaningful friendships. Additionally, he performs poorly at school. When this young male reaches adolescence he is confronted with negative socio-cultural attitudes prevailing in the community that he is residing in. The views include negative
stereotyping of women and the idea that the use of violence to dominate women is acceptable. These views are portrayed in the media, music or in pornography, for instance (Keown, 2008:12). These views become part of the cognitive script of this young man by means of social learning and the adolescent learns criminal behaviour by observing significant others. Furthermore, these youths justify their behaviour to eliminate feelings of guilt or remorse.

- This young male becomes intoxicated, resulting in a breakdown of his already damaged internal buffers and as a result his inhibitions deplete completely (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990:271). He can also be frustrated when his sexual advances, for instance, are rejected. This frustration can give rise to aggression (Bartol & Bartol, 2014:114).

- In the absence of a loving, nurturing childhood, or a community where pro-social behaviour is instilled in the members of that community, the young male derives his idea of what masculinity entails from his negative circumstances. If this young male finds himself in circumstances conducive to offending, in other words a situation where he knows that chances of being apprehended are slim and that there is a reasonable possibility of getting away with the sexual crime (impunity), he is likely to offend, if a suitable victim is present (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990:271).

A diagram of the model follows on the next page:
SEX OFFENDING AND EMPATHY DEFICIT CORRELATIONAL MODEL

**Inappropriate sexual behaviour**

**Biological influences**
(e.g. genetical predispositions and sexual drive)

**Socio-moral thinking**
(e.g. superego deficiency = empathy deficit)

**Psychosocial development**
(e.g. lack of assertiveness, low self-esteem, lack of perspective-taking skills, lack of social skills and egocentrism)

**Childhood experiences**
(attachment with parents, witnessing or experiencing physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse)

**Socio-cultural influences**
(e.g. school, media, community, social interactions)

**Social learning**
(e.g. observing deviant behaviour emanating from family members, peers the community and/or the media)

**Situational transitory aspects**
(e.g. substances, peers)

**Impunity**
(lack of consequences)

**Opportunity, suitable victim and absence of capable guardian**
3.5 CONCLUSION

The chapter commenced with an overview of Criminological theories providing possible explanations for high risk or deviant behaviour such as youth sex offending. Subsequently an exposition of Marshall and Barbaree’s integrated theory focussing on youth sex offending was given. Thereafter, theories relating to moral development and the displaying of empathy were discussed. These theories include Freud’s psychoanalytic theory, Erikson’s neo-Freudian psychoanalytic theory, Piaget’s cognitive developmental theory, Kohlberg’s theory of moral development and Bandura’s social cognition theory. Consequently all of the above-mentioned theories were briefly summarised and the researcher developed the sex offending and empathy deficit correlational model which will serve as a theoretical framework for this study. In the following chapter, the methodology and ethical aspects pertaining to this study will be discussed.
CHAPTER 4
METHODOLOGY AND PLAUSIBLE ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This chapter focusses on the methodological procedures of this study. Furthermore, a discussion of conceivable ethical implications of the study and the manner in which it was addressed during the research process are included. In the next section, specific emphasis will be placed on the research approach, type of research, research design, research question and hypothesis as well as sampling procedures, data collection methods, data analysis and the pilot study.

4.1 RESEARCH APPROACH

During this study, the quantitative research approach and the qualitative research approach were combined. The combined qualitative and quantitative approach is also referred to as the mixed methods approach (Fouché & Delport, 2011:63; Ivankova, Creswell & Clark, 2007:260). An advantage of mixed methods research is that a more holistic view of the research problem can be gained and this can lead to a more thorough understanding of the topic under investigation. The use of more than one data collection method reduces the occurrence of errors and biases that might be present when only using one method of data collection. In this study quantitative data were collected by means of a questionnaire and qualitative data were obtained by means of semi-structured interviews. Subsequently the data that was collected was analysed and integrated in order to give a detailed description of the phenomenon being studied. The researcher’s rationale for selecting the mixed methods approach includes the need for triangulation and complementarity. Triangulation entails the corroboration of results obtained by using different data collection methods to study the same phenomenon. On the other hand, complementarity entails the enrichment, amplification, elucidation and clarification of the results obtained by the one data collection method, with the results obtained from the other data collection method (Delport & Fouché, 2011:434,445,446).

It is evident that the quantitative research method is applicable to this study as the researcher wanted to aggregate, compare and summarise the data, where after the
data that was derived from the questionnaires were analysed statistically (Maxfield & Babbie, 2005:23). In addition, the quantitative research approach is suitable as the quantitative aspects of this study will be a replication of other international quantitative studies of similar ilk (Fouché & Delport, 2011:66).

The qualitative research approach likewise is justifiable because the researcher aims to attain a first-hand, holistic understanding of the phenomenon that is being researched. The researcher has a particular interest in the feelings and thoughts of the youth sex offender regarding the prevalence of victim empathy for general sexual abuse victims as well as victim empathy for the offender’s own specific victim. Thus, the researcher aims to understand the meaning that these youths attach to their actions (Fouché & Delport, 2011:65). In depth information pertaining to the aspects as explained above was derived by conducting semi-structured interviews with the offenders.

4.2 TYPE OF RESEARCH

The researcher’s goal is to measure, describe and compare victim empathy in youth sex offenders. Thus, this study will be basic in nature as basic research is conducted to improve the general understanding of the topic under investigation. In addition, it is employed to discover new phenomena or to generate new ideas of general interest. This can act as a basis for the development of certain interventions (Hansen, 2009:5). As one of the objectives in this study is to provide recommendations with regards to the inclusion or exclusion of empathy advancement components in intervention programmes aimed at rehabilitating young sex offenders, the researcher hopes that the forthcoming recommendations will act as a basis for improved interventions pertaining to youth sex offenders.

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Delport and Roestenburg (2011:171) a research design refers to “the plan or blueprint of the study”, while Fouché, Delport and De Vos (2011:143) state
that a research design focusses on the final product and the steps that should be followed during the process of achieving the desired outcome.

The mixed methods approach opted for in this study require the selection of an appropriate mixed methods design that will be applied. The design most suited for this study is the triangulation mixed methods design, where the researcher applies both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection (Delport & Fouché, 2011:442; Ivankova et al., 2007:266). Furthermore, the data collection took place within the same time frame and both methods were considered equally important. Thus, the data was collected concurrently, but separately. First the questionnaire was completed, followed by the semi-structured interview. After completion of the data collection, both the qualitative and the quantitative data were analysed and compared. This enables the researcher to provide a more comprehensive account of the research problem and to explain the phenomenon in more detail. Thus, both the qualitative and the quantitative method carry equal weight in this approach. During this study the researcher conducted the survey (questionnaire) and the semi-structured interview simultaneously with the same respondents in order to measure and describe the prevalence of offenders’ empathy for general sexual abuse victims and for the victims of their own offences.

Even though the triangulation mixed methods design is advantageous, due to the fact that a more holistic view of the research problem can be attained, a few challenges posed by this approach must be considered. The first challenge entails that a great deal of effort and expertise are needed to collect and analyse the two separate sets of data simultaneously. Furthermore, one must take the scenario into account where results obtained in the quantitative section of the study might differ from results obtained in the qualitative section. These differences might be difficult to explain and this may require the gathering of supplementary data (Delport & Fouché, 2011:442; Ivankova et al., 2007:267).

For the purpose of the quantitative section of this study (Section A), the researcher utilised a questionnaire containing a scale that has been used in similar research abroad. The researcher is of the opinion that the research design most suitable for
this section of the study is the cross-sectional survey design. The survey will be cross-sectional, as all the data will be collected in a single interval. Survey research involves the gathering of information from a sample of individuals through their answers to questions. The cross-sectional survey design is versatile due to the fact that it can improve understanding of a social issue. The social issue that was explored is the prevalence of empathy for a general victim of sexual abuse, as well as empathy for the youth sex offender’s own victim within the South African context. Furthermore, the chosen research design can be seen as efficient, as data on the prevalence of empathy were collected from a variety of respondents, in this case youth sex offenders, at relatively low cost and relatively quickly (Bachman & Schutt, 2003:172; Creswell, 2014:157).

In the qualitative section of this research (Section B) the collective case study research design was used. The purpose of the collective case study design is to increase the researcher’s understanding regarding a social issue, or the population that is being researched. The researcher’s primary interest is the group of cases with the individual case being the secondary interest. Furthermore, collective case studies enable the researcher to make comparisons between cases. When taking into account that correlational research is one of the purposes of this study, it is clear that the collective case study design is the most appropriate strategy for this section of the study (Fouché & Schurink, 2011:322).

**4.4 HYPOTHESIS: QUANTITATIVE SECTION OF THE STUDY (SECTION A)**

A hypothesis can be defined as a specific implication which is deduced from an existing theory or theories (Bachman & Schutt, 2003:37). The difference between a hypothesis and a statement is that the person making a statement knows that it is either true or false. In the case of a hypothesis, the person suspects that his or her prediction will be correct and will test this empirically (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:35). The following hypothesis is applicable to this study:

A significant number of youth sex offenders have less empathy towards their own victims, compared to empathy towards a general sexual abuse victim.
The rationale for this hypothesis can be found in the work of Varker and Devilly (2007:145). In their research on victim empathy in youth sex offenders, these authors found that youth sex offenders had significantly less victim empathy for their own victim compared to a general sexual abuse victim. This finding is consistent with research results obtained by Fernandez and Marshall (2003:11) as well as Hanson and Scott (1995:262).

4.5 RESEARCH QUESTION: QUALITATIVE SECTION OF THE STUDY (SECTION B)

According to Fouché and Schurink (2011:323) a research question has to be formulated if a qualitative study is going to be conducted, as it forms the ‘backbone’ of qualitative research. In order to formulate such a question the unit of analysis, the research goal, the research approach and the research design must be taken into account. After considering these factors the researcher formulated the following research question:

How do youth sex offenders express victim empathy for general sexual abuse victims and for their own specific victims?

4.6 RESEARCH POPULATION, SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHOD

According to Bachman and Schutt (2003:87) a research population can be defined as an entire set of elements in which the researcher is interested. As most researchers do not have the time and resources to study the entire population, a sample is compiled. This sample entails a subset of elements from the larger population. Thus, a sample refers to a small segment of the entire set of items, events or people from which a representative selection is made (Strydom, 2011b:224). Maxfield and Babbie (2005:173) concur with the aforesaid by mentioning that sampling can be referred to as a method of selecting a group of people who represent the entire population.
4.6.1 RESEARCH POPULATION

The research population in this study consisted of all the male youth sex offenders detained in Leeuwkop, Emthonjeni and Boksburg YCCs in the Gauteng province of SA.

4.6.2 SAMPLE

For the purpose of this research a sample of approximately 100 male youth sex offenders detained in the YCCs of Leeuwkop, Emthonjeni and Boksburg in Gauteng were envisaged. In the end, the actual sample consisted of 96 male youth sex offenders.

4.6.3 SAMPLING METHOD

According to Strydom (2011b:226) sampling procedures can be divided into two groups, namely probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is based on randomisation, thus each person in the population has the same chance of being selected. On the other hand, non-probability sampling refers to sampling done without randomisation (Strydom & Delport, 2011:391).

In this study the researcher made use of non-probability sampling. The researcher applied the purposive sampling method by trying to find approximately 100 participants that fit the sampling criteria and were representative of the population being studied (Strydom & Delport, 2011:392). Purposive sampling is also known as judgemental sampling, as the sampling method is based on the judgement of the researcher (Strydom, 2011b:232). This entails that each research participant is selected based on the unique position and traits of that individual. This means that purposive sampling may involve the inclusion of the entire population of a limited group or subset of a population (Bachman & Schutt, 2003:108). In this case all the respondents that were included in the sample were male sex offenders younger than 25 years who could understand and speak English. The researcher is of the opinion
that the language preference was not a limitation as most offenders detained in the identified YCCs in Gauteng could understand and speak English.

Due to the small number of youth sex offenders in the age bracket (younger than 25 years) in which the researcher was interested, all the research participants in Leeuwkop, Emthonjeni and Boksburg Correctional Centres who were willing to participate in the study and fulfilled the sampling criteria were included. It must be noted that there are three Correctional facilities in Gauteng which house sentenced youth offenders, namely Boksburg Correctional Centre B for maximum offenders, Leeuwkop Medium B Correctional Centre and Emthonjeni Correctional Centre for medium offenders (Department of Correctional Services, 2011). Thus, Leeuwkop and Emthonjeni are medium YCCs which imply that offenders in these Centres serve prison sentences of less than 10 years. On the other hand the Youth Centre at Boksburg Correctional Centre was closed in 2007 and converted to a maximum security centre for youth offenders (Roper, 2007). Thus, youth offenders in Boksburg YCC are serving sentences that exceed 10 years. Moreover, it must be noted that Boksburg YCC is the only maximum YCC in Gauteng and also detains youth offenders with maximum sentences which were imposed in Kwa-Zulu Natal, Free State, Northern Cape and Western Cape. Thus, the sample can be seen as representative of male youth sex offenders in the broader South African context, because offenders from all the above-mentioned provinces originating from both minimum and maximum centres were included in the study.

4.7 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

For the quantitative section of this study a questionnaire (Appendix A) was used to gather information from a sample of 96 male youth sex offenders. The questionnaire contains both statements and questions, as the researcher is interested in determining the attitude or perspective of individuals who are knowledgeable about the topic under investigation (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:233).

The researcher made use of a structured interview schedule, in the format of a questionnaire. This entails that the researcher read the questions in the
questionnaire to the research participants and then recorded their answers on the questionnaire. One of the advantages of the structured interview schedule is that the researcher was able to monitor the conditions while the questionnaire is being completed and in the process had more control over the response rate of the respondents. The researcher is of the opinion that the utilisation of the structured interview schedule was the best option, as it decreased the occurrence of answers that were omitted due to an inability to interpret or understand the questions correctly (Delport & Roestenburg, 2011:186). In addition, having face-to-face interaction enabled the interviewer to establish rapport with the research participants which allowed them to feel at ease. This strategy aided in developing a relationship of trust with the research participants during which they felt confident to divulge the truth (Babbie, 2008:309). However, disadvantages of this method include that conducting interviews with one respondent at a time is time consuming and the presence of the interviewer might inhibit the respondent’s ability to answer the questions truthfully (Delport & Roestenburg, 2011:186). The presence of an interviewer can lead to bias and can influence the reliability of research participants’ responses. Bias might emerge due to the personal characteristics of the interviewer, the way in which the interviewer formulates questions, or the tone of voice used when asking questions. Moreover, the research participants might provide socially desirable responses instead of providing truthful answers (Babbie, 2008:308). The researcher tried to minimise this by focussing on using the same tone of voice when asking the questions and as a questionnaire was used, the formulation of questions was identical in all the interviews that were conducted.

For the quantitative section, the researcher used an existing questionnaire containing a four point Likert scale. Bachman and Schutt (2003:176) insist that an existing questionnaire can be used when it has been developed by another researcher and contains a set of questions that measures the key concepts in another envisaged study. This is especially pertinent when evidence from previous studies indicates that the measuring instrument provides a valid and reliable measure of the phenomenon under investigation. Since the scale that was used in the current research has been successfully employed by several researchers, the researcher is of the opinion that this questionnaire is suitable and valid for the
current study. The following researchers have empirically validated the scale in their studies: Beech used the Beckett and Fisher Victim Empathy Distortions Scale (VEDS) in 1998, while Varker and Devilly utilised it in 2007. The validity and reliability of the measuring instruments will be discussed in paragraph 4.8.2.

Beckett and Fisher’s VEDS was obtained from Devilly who utilised it in research conducted by him and Varker in 2007. The researcher sent an e-mail to Devilly (the corresponding author in the Varker and Devilly article written in 2007) as she was unable to get hold of the VEDS. He forwarded the scale to the researcher via electronic mail. Varker and Devilly (2007) made minor adjustments to the scale in order to accommodate the youthful age and literacy levels of some of the research participants. It must be noted that the only changes that have been made to the questionnaire are linguistic changes to accommodate the language skills of research participants. Great care was taken not to change the context and meaning of the questions in the questionnaire. The scale is designed to assess empathy for a non-specific victim depicted in a case study, as well as empathy for an offender’s own victim. The scale consists of 30 questions focussing on empathy for a general sex abuse victim and 30 questions concentrating on the offender’s own victim, each with five possible responses (Varker & Devilly, 2007:143). It must be noted that the VEDS is a four point Likert scale, but a fifth response category (do not know) is included in each question in the scale. If this response is chosen it is not calculated, and it is handled as a non-response. According to Fisher et al. (1999:478) the scale measures an individual’s understanding of the impact and effects that sexual abuse has on a victim as well as his or her beliefs regarding the feelings of the victim during the sexual contact. Items in the questionnaire cover aspects such as the extent to which offenders believe that victims enjoy sexual contact, whether victims are in a position to stop the contact or whether they encourage it, whether victims experience fear and/or guilt and if the victims would prefer to have similar sexual encounters in the future.

The questionnaire consists of the following three sections:

- Section A: Biographical information
- Section B: Beckett and Fisher’s Victim Empathy Distortion scale (VEDS) focusing on a general sexual abuse victim.
- Section C: Beckett and Fisher’s Victim Empathy Distortion scale (VEDS) concentrating on the offender’s own victim.

Regarding the qualitative section of the research (Section B), the researcher made use of the semi-structured one-to-one interviewing data collection method. Semi-structured interviews are used to obtain a comprehensive idea of the research participant’s beliefs, perceptions or ideas pertaining to a specific topic. The flexibility of the semi-structured interview enables the researcher to follow up fascinating, relevant aspects that surface during the interview and enables research participants to provide a fuller, more detailed image of thoughts and feelings (Greeff, 2011:351). The semi-structured interview schedule gives the researcher freedom to probe and ask follow-up questions that are appropriate to issues and concerns that are raised by the research participants. It also provides an opportunity for the research participant to introduce an issue that the researcher did not include in the interview schedule (David & Sutton, 2004:65). Furthermore, it gives the interviewer an opportunity to alleviate misunderstandings and to clarify any uncertainties or confusion that the research participant may have pertaining to the interpretation of questions (Hagan, 2010:149). Thus, the researcher used an interview schedule (Appendix B) with predetermined themes that guided the interview without dictating and which allowed the research participants the opportunity to make the maximum contribution in terms of providing descriptions and rich detail regarding their contextual experiences.

Even though the interviewing process as a data collection method has various strengths, certain weaknesses are also identified. Participants may be reluctant to share intimate or personal details, or they can provide untruthful answers due to shame, or because they do not want the interviewer to get a bad impression of them (Greeff, 2011:361; Hagan, 2010:150). The researcher attempted to address this by ensuring the research participants of her non-judgemental approach and trying to set their minds at ease by emphasising that all the information obtained will be treated confidentially.
4.7.1 THE INTERVIEWING PROCESS

Interviewing can be seen as the primary mode of data collection in qualitative research, as it provides an opportunity for the researcher to exchange information with the research participant and to gain insight into the participant's point of view (Greeff, 2011:342). In the following section, the interview setting, the procedures followed and the duration of the interviews will be discussed.

4.7.1.1 Interview setting

Ideally the interview setting should be private and the occurrence of interruptions should be minimised, as it might be difficult to regain “the level of intimacy established prior to the interruption” (Greeff, 2011:294). The interviews were conducted in an office at the respective YCCs. The researcher tried to make the setting as comfortable and non-evasive as possible and requested that staff members and other individuals do not enter the venue while the interview is in progress.

4.7.1.2 Interviewing procedures

The researcher conducted all the interviews personally. Before the interview commenced the researcher informed the research participants that all information shared during the interview would remain confidential and that their identities would not be revealed. The research participants who were younger than 18 years signed informed assent forms and informed consent forms were signed by the head of the relevant YCC who acts in loco parentis of these youths. The research participants who were 18 years and older signed an informed consent letter. These forms were signed after all the interviewing procedures and the content of the forms were discussed.
4.7.1.3 Duration of the interview

The questionnaire and the semi-structured interview took approximately one hour to complete. The research participants were briefed regarding the duration of the interview.

4.8 PILOT STUDY

According to Strydom (2011c:236) the pilot study is a prerequisite for the successful implementation and completion of a research project, as it forms an integral part of the research process. The ways in which the data collection instruments were pilot-tested will be discussed next.

4.8.1 PILOT TESTING OF THE DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

The researcher should expose a few research participants, with a similar profile as the research participants that will be used in the main research, to a pilot study where the same procedures that are planned for the main research, will be followed. This is necessary in order to test, and if necessary modify the measuring instrument. In addition, the pilot test is essential to enhance the face and content validity of the data collection instrument and to establish the time it takes to complete the questionnaire (Delport & Roestenburg, 2011:195).

In this study, the questionnaire (used in Section A) and interview schedule (used in Section B) were pilot-tested beforehand. A group of four youth sex offenders who are incarcerated at Leeuwkop YCC were selected to complete the questionnaire by means of the in-person interview technique to ascertain if all the questions are clear and unambiguous and to assure that there are no leading questions. Furthermore, the same group of youth sex offenders were asked to participate in the one-to-one semi-structured interview to ascertain if the questions in the interview schedule are clear and unambiguous. Due to the richness of data obtained from these research participants, the findings of the respondents who were utilised for pilot testing will be
included in the main research. The data obtained during the pilot test was analysed, to ensure that the desired and expected outcomes were achieved.

During the pilot test, the researcher became aware of the fact that the research participants are uncomfortable with the idea of a digital voice recorder being used. The researcher then decided to refrain from recording the interviews and subsequently made no mention of possible recording to avoid further discomfort to the research participants. Instead, the researcher asked the research participants if they would be comfortable if very detailed notes were taken and they agreed. Thus, the researcher took great care to write detailed notes, which is a verbatim account of the interviews that were conducted. Following the interviews, the written notes were typed and saved electronically. In addition, the researcher realised that certain linguistic changes needed to be made to the questionnaire, as the research participants experienced difficulties distinguishing between concepts such as ‘likely’ and ‘unlikely’. These concepts were replaced with ‘possible’ and ‘not possible’. Furthermore, the researcher ascertained that the completion of the questionnaire and the interview took approximately 1 hour. This aided the researcher in planning the amount of interviews that could be conducted per day. When taking the schedule of the YCCs into consideration it was ascertained that a maximum of four interviews could be conducted per day.

4.8.2 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE QUANTITATIVE MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Validity is present if the measuring instrument measures what it is intended to measure and if the research results are truthful. Validity can be ensured by applying two methods, namely face validity and content validity. Face validity refers to how effective the measuring instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. In this study the researcher wants to measure victim empathy in youth sex offenders. Thus, if the questions asked in the questionnaire measure victim empathy in youth sex offenders, validity at face value is ensured (Bachman & Schutt, 2012:93). Content validity refers to the content of the measuring instrument. One way in which the researcher can improve content validity is by looking at previous studies and the way in which questions were asked in these studies (Maxfield & Babbie, 2005:119). As
the questionnaire used in this study has been used in various other studies focussing on victim empathy in sex offenders, content validity is present.

Reliability is attained when there is a consistent and stable replication of the research findings when a measurement is repeated (Hagan, 2010:239; Maxfield & Babbie, 2005:116). The questionnaire used in this study scored an internal reliability of .89 and a test-retest reliability of .95 when used in a previous study (Varker & Devilly, 2007:143). In addition, Fisher et al. (1999:478) state that the scale has high internal reliability (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .90$). The researcher performed the Cronbach’s alpha test by means of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software package and found that in the current study the internal reliability test revealed high reliability as well (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .89$). Furthermore, the researcher standardised the conditions under which data were collected by ensuring that the interviews took place in a private setting where the research participants were as comfortable as possible. Moreover, the researcher gave the same instructions to all research participants and was consistent in the way that the interviews were conducted. As the researcher personally conducted all the interviews, reliability of the data that was collected is elevated (Delport & Roestenburg, 2011:177).

4.8.3 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE QUALITATIVE SECTION

When conducting qualitative research, one is interested in the truthfulness and authenticity of the participants. Within the research context, authenticity refers to an impartial, honest and balanced report of the views of the research participants (Neuman, 2006:196). Moreover, a study can be regarded as trustworthy if specific strategies are employed during the research process to ensure authenticity. This implies that the perspectives of the research participants should be gathered authentically and the gathered data should be represented accurately in the research findings. Thus, trustworthiness entails that a study must be credible. Within the research context credibility refers to the accuracy in which the research findings portray the information conveyed by the participants (Lietz & Zayas, 2010:191). A strategy that can be employed to enhance credibility is triangulation. In the current study, data triangulation was used as data was gathered by means of two collection
strategies, namely a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Another strategy that was employed is member checking, which refers to the corroboration of research findings by obtaining feedback from research participants (Lietz & Zayas, 2010:193). As comprehensive notes had to be taken during the interviews due to the fact that an audio recorder could not be utilised, the researcher informed the participants regarding the importance of capturing their verbatim accounts. In addition, the researcher obtained their permission to ask them to pause if she fell behind, or to reflect on what she wrote down, to ensure that it was their direct words. This strategy also made the participants aware of the value of their input and the importance of their thoughts and feelings which they shared during the interviews. Moreover, this strategy ensured that the researcher refrained from imposing her opinion in the research results.

Auditability and confirmability are two concepts which can also be utilised to measure the trustworthiness of a study. Auditability refers to how effectively research procedures are documented and if it allows someone who is not involved in the study to follow and critique the processes followed during the research (Lietz & Zayas, 2010:195). Conversely, confirmability refers to the degree to which other researchers can confirm or corroborate the research findings (Lietz & Zayas, 2010:197). A strategy which can be utilised to enhance auditability and confirmability is peer debriefing. This strategy can enhance the research process by identifying potential pitfalls pertaining to the methodological procedures which will be followed and it can lead to the generating of new ideas pertaining to the research process (Lietz & Zayas, 2010:196). The researcher utilised peer debriefing with fellow colleagues and experts who possess specialised knowledge pertaining to the youth sex offending field, working with youth sex offenders and/or the mixed methods approach which is utilised in the current study (Lietz, Langer & Furman, 2006:11).

4.9 DATA ANALYSIS

Fouché and Bartley (2011:248) state that data analysis refers to the ordering, categorising and summarising of data to gain answers to research questions or to test hypotheses. Babbie (2007:405) elaborates on this by stating that quantitative
data analysis refers to the conversion of data or observations to a numerical form and subsequently analysing it statistically in order to describe and explain the phenomenon that is being researched. The analyses of the quantitative data in the current study will be discussed next.

After the questionnaires were completed, the researcher compiled spreadsheets on Microsoft Excel containing the raw data and used formulas to analyse the data statistically. These spreadsheets were uploaded to SPSS for further statistical analyses. It serves to be noted that only 94 of the 96 research participants’ data were included in the SPSS tests, as one participant did not complete the own victim empathy questionnaire due to the fact that he petitioned his innocence and said that he had no sexual interaction with the victim. The other participant whose data was excluded only completed half of the questions in the own victim empathy section. Due to the fact that he murdering his victim, he could not comment on questions pertaining to the aftermath of the event and the victim’s experience thereof. Their responses were, however, included in the biographical analyses of the quantitative section as well as in the qualitative section.

The researcher tested the distribution of the data to determine whether the distribution deviates from normality. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test on SPSS was used, as this test compares the scores obtained “in the sample to a normally distributed set of scores with the same mean and standard deviation” (Field, 2009:540). If the test result is significant (p<0.05) it means that the distribution of the scores obtained in the study is significantly different from a normal distribution (Field, 2009:144). In the current study a normal distribution was not attained, as determined by the Kolmogorov Smirnov test. The test result on the SPSS general sexual abuse empathy scores, $D(94) = 0.14$, p<.05 and the own victim empathy scores, $D(94) = 0.11$, p<.05 were both significantly non-normal. The abnormal distribution can be attributed to the fact that due to the heterogeneous nature of the research participants in this study, there were both very high and very low empathy scores, and thus a normal distribution in the data was not attainable. This, as well as the fact that a non-probability sampling technique was used in this study, necessitated the use of a non-parametric test. Non-parametric tests are sometimes referred to as
assumption-free tests due to the fact that they work on the principle of ranking data, in other words, giving a rank to the lowest score and a rank to the highest score. Thus, high scores will be represented by large ranks, whereas low scores will be represented by small ranks. This implies that the analysis will be done on the ranks and not the actual data (Field, 2009:540). For the purpose of this study, frequency tables were compiled and the Wilcoxon signed rank test was performed by means of SPSS. This type of test is conducted in situations where there are two sets of scores to compare, and these scores come from the same research participants (Field, 2009:552). The Wilcoxon signed rank test was used to indicate if a significant difference existed between the research participants’ empathy for general sexual abuse victims compared to the empathy displayed towards their own victims. The findings were interpreted to support or disprove the hypothesis. A discussion of the findings will be forthcoming in Chapter 5. These findings will also be presented in graphs, pie charts and tables.

Pertaining to the qualitative section of this study, data analysis started while the interviews were being conducted. It must be noted that qualitative data analysis incorporates a twofold approach which involves the data analysis that takes place during the data collection and the data analysis that takes place after the data collection. Firstly, the researcher should plan the recording of data during data collection. As the research participants indicated that they were not comfortable to participate in interviews which are being audio-recorded, the researcher had to make extensive notes while conducting the interviews. Recording the data derived from the interviews can be seen as the beginning of qualitative analysis. The second part of the data analysis will be discussed next (Schurink, Fouché & De Vos, 2011:404).

The first step in the second part of the data analysis process refers to the managing and organising of the data (Schurink et al., 2011:409). The researcher typed the written notes obtained from each interview. Next the researcher organised the files in a dedicated folder on a laptop and made at least three back-up files on different electronic storage devices to ensure the safeguarding of the information.
The next step involves the reading and writing of the typed data (Schurink et al., 2011:409). The researcher read the documents pertaining to each interview over and over again in order to familiarise herself with the information that was gathered.

Subsequently the researcher has to generate categories and code the data (Schurink et al., 2011:410). The data derived from the interviews were used to identify categories with various sub-categories. From these categories, comparative as well as divergent responses will be listed.

The last step involves that the researcher must present the data by writing a research report (Schurink et al., 2011:418). Consequently the quantitative data will be integrated with the qualitative data to obtain a holistic understanding of the prevalence of victim empathy in youth sex offenders. Furthermore, the researcher will compare the data derived from the interviews, with the data derived from the questionnaires and will compare it to the literature pertaining to victim empathy in youth sex offenders. This will be followed by inferences and conclusions derived from the research findings as well as an outline of the limitations of the study (Delport & Fouché, 2011:447).

4.10 ETHICAL ASPECTS

The concept ethics “implies preferences that influence behaviour in human relations, conforming to a code of principles, the rules of conduct, the responsibility of the researcher and the standards of conduct of a given profession” (Strydom, 2011a:57). Babbie (2007:63) elaborates on this by stating that even though it is a necessity to conduct research it should not be done at the expense of other individuals in society.

In the section that follows, ethical issues that are relevant to the study will be discussed.
4.10.1 AVOIDANCE OF HARM

Every research participant has the right to refuse to partake in a research project, to refuse to answer any question/s that they are not comfortable with, and they have the right not to be asked to partake in research when it is inconvenient for them (Mouton, 2001:243). During this study, all the research participants were informed of the nature of the research and were sensitised to the possibility that the questions asked in the questionnaire can evoke certain feelings and emotions. The relevant social workers at the identified YCCs were notified of the research project and were requested to be available during the research if any emotional problems arise during the completion of the questionnaire and the conducting of the interview. Where necessary, the research participants were referred for counselling. In addition, research participants were informed that they are free to withdraw from the research at any time. It was also stated that in case of a withdrawal, all the data that was collected would be destroyed immediately. Furthermore, it was pointed out to the research participants that participation is voluntary and that no negative consequences will arise from withdrawal (Strydom, 2011a:117). In this study, none of the research participants indicated that they want to withdraw. According to Bailey (1994:457) negative effects, that are more negative than any anticipated harm that may occur due to the research project, exist in the everyday lives of research participants. In these cases it is justified that research participants experience a certain degree of discomfort to eventually improve their circumstances (Strydom, 2011a:115). The aforementioned is applicable in this study, as the offenders might experience discomfort or emotional problems as a result of the questions asked in the questionnaire. This is, however, justified as it is essential that the offender is confronted with the harsh reality of the consequences of his actions and how it impacted on the life of his victim. This can, however, have a positive outcome because if an offender does not realise the impact of his wrongdoing, he will not be able to accept responsibility and endeavour on the road to rehabilitation. In addition, the offender was afforded the opportunity to divulge his feelings and thought processes in a safe and non-judgemental environment.
4.10.2 DECEPTION OF RESPONDENTS

Deception of research participants refers to the deliberate misrepresentation of facts. Deception can occur when the researcher intentionally misrepresents facts or misleads the research participants by means of written or verbal instructions, misleading them by not revealing the real goal of the study and/or minimising or hiding the feelings that research participants might experience while participating in the research (Strydom, 2011a:117-119). Bachman and Schutt (2003:164) believe that research participants must not be exposed to substantial risk of personal harm and that debriefing of each research participant can lessen the possibility of harm inflicted by the research.

During this study, the researcher refrained from intentionally misrepresenting any fact, withholding important information or providing incorrect information to the research participants. Clear instructions were given to each research participant and the goal and objectives of the study were clearly outlined. In addition, debriefing sessions were held with each research participant after completion of the questionnaire and the interview. Debriefing of the research participants will be discussed in detail in paragraph 4.10.7

4.10.3 INFORMED CONSENT

Prior to the interviews, an informed consent form (Appendix C) was signed by the head of the YCC who acts in loco parentis of children younger than 18 years. Being in loco parentis of the children, means that they have the mandate to sign the consent form on behalf of, or in the absence of a parent or guardian. An informed assent form (Appendix D) was also signed by research participants that were younger than 18 years. Research participants that are older than 18 years signed their own informed consent forms (Appendix E).

According to David and Sutton (2004:363) informed consent can only be attained following the researcher’s full disclosure of all relevant aspects pertaining to the research. The information provided to the research participants must be
unambiguous and in an understandable language that all the research participants can relate to. The aims, methods and intended uses of the research must be clearly outlined. The purpose of the research, as well as the procedures that will be followed during the research, the possible advantages and disadvantages, as well as the risks to which respondents may be exposed, should be highlighted (Strydom, 2011a:117). Respondents with less power and lower status than the researcher, for instance offenders in a correctional setting, may feel obliged to participate in the research. On the other hand, they may participate to alleviate boredom, or in the hope of receiving certain privileges due to their participation (Strydom, 2011a:118). Thus, the researcher emphasised that no obligation rests on the offenders to partake in the research and that no privileges will be gained due to their participation in the research. In addition, it was emphasised that there are no preconceived physical risks or dangers associated with participation in the study.

4.10.4 NON-VIOLATION OF PRIVACY, ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Strydom (2011a:119) states that violation of privacy and confidentiality are synonymous. He adds that the right to privacy involves that the individual has a right to decide when, where, to whom and to what extent his or her beliefs, attitudes and/or behaviour will be revealed. On the other hand, confidentiality refers to the management of information in a confidential manner. Thus, confidentiality can be seen as an extension of privacy which refers to an agreement between the researcher and the research participant that limits other individuals’ access to private information obtained during data collection. Babbie (2007:65) elaborates by adding that confidentiality is ensured when the researcher can identify a person’s responses but does not make it public.

In this study the privacy of the research participants will be respected. All the information obtained from each research participant will be treated confidentially and will only be utilised for research purposes. The researcher explained to each research participant what confidentiality, privacy and anonymity entails and how it will be addressed during the research. Even though the researcher had face-to-face contact with the research participants, thus making anonymity impossible,
confidentiality will still be guaranteed and no personal information or their identities will be revealed when disseminating the research results. In addition, due care will be taken to protect and safeguard the rights and autonomy of all parties, which include the research participants, the University of Pretoria and the Department of Correctional Services.

4.10.5 ACTIONS AND COMPETENCE OF THE RESEARCHER

According to Babbie (2007:69) a researcher has an ethical obligation to ensure that they are adequately skilled and capable to conduct research. The researcher has an obligation towards the research community to accurately reflect the analysed data and results obtained in the study. Hagan (2010:150) elaborates on this by saying that the researcher must remain objective and prevent the occurrence of interviewer bias when conducting the research.

The researcher in the current study is of the opinion that she is competent and adequately skilled to conduct the research. She has already successfully completed a research Master’s degree in Criminology and has interacted with youth offenders in Pretoria Local Remand Detention Centre during community engagement projects. In addition, the research was conducted under the guidance of a supervisor from the Department of Social Work and Criminology at UP. Moreover, ethical clearance to conduct the research was obtained from UP’s Faculty of Humanities Postgraduate and Ethics Committee as well as the DCS’ Research Ethics Committee. Furthermore, the research was done in an ethically sound manner and the researcher remained objective at all times and refrained from being judgemental.

4.10.6 DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

According to Strydom (2011a:126) the findings of the study must be recorded in written format as accurately and objectively as possible and the results must be disseminated to the public sphere in order to have scientific value. Bachman and Schutt (2003:402) provide some guidelines on how to ethically report research results. The researcher has to specify how the research was conducted and whether
the initial research design was changed or adapted. They add that a full record of the research data must be kept in order to answer any possible questions with regard to the research. They state that statistics and graphs must be a true reflection of the research results.

In this study, the findings of the study were recorded in written format and plagiarism was avoided by giving due recognition to all the sources that are consulted and paraphrasing the words of the authors. In addition, the thesis was uploaded on Turnitin to ensure that no plagiarism is present. Furthermore, an outline of the shortcomings of the study will be included when disseminating the results of the research. The researcher will refrain from providing incorrect or biased results in the final research report (Strydom, 2011a:126). Scientific articles based on the research findings will be compiled and sent to accredited journals for publication. Adhering to the policy of the University of Pretoria, raw data will be stored at the Department of Social Work and Criminology for a period of 15 years.

4.10.7 DEBRIEFING OF PARTICIPANTS

Research debriefing can be seen as a process where the researcher evaluates the research participant’s personal reactions to the research after it has been conducted (Bachman & Schutt, 2003:56). These debriefing sessions occur after the study and entail a process where research participants get the opportunity to discuss their experience of the research process and where the researcher can minimise possible harm which may have occurred during the research process. Debriefing also provides an opportunity to correct misperceptions that may have occurred while the research was conducted (Strydom, 2011a:122).

Individual debriefing sessions were held after completing the questionnaires and interviews with the research participants. During the debriefing sessions the research participants discussed their experiences and the way that the answering of the questionnaire and their participation in the interview impacted on them. By having the debriefing session the researcher aimed to minimise possible harm that may have occurred despite all the precautions taken to minimise harm. If the research
participants were negatively affected in any way, a social worker was at hand to provide trauma debriefing and/or counselling to the research participant concerned.

Referral was only required in three cases. In all three instances it was not due to emotional problems arising during the completion of the questionnaire or their participation in the interview. One of the three participants became very emotional during the discussion of the informed consent letter and the researcher decided not to subject him to the interview and rather referred him to the social worker for counselling. Another participant asked questions after the completion of the interview which did not form part of the scope of the research, so he was referred to the social worker as well. The third research participant who was referred became very emotional during the research debriefing after completion of the interview. He shared that he was a first time offender and that he was struggling to adjust in the YCC. It was his second week in the YCC and he seemed very traumatised. He emphasised that his emotional distress was not caused by the interview, but rather his circumstances and that the researcher was the first person in which he confided about this. He was referred to the social worker. In all three cases the researcher personally approached the social worker immediately after conclusion of the respective interviews to request expeditious assistance. Thus, the affected research participants received swift professional support. All the other research participants who participated in the interviews indicated that they felt a sense of relief and comfort because they had the opportunity to share their side of the story and their feelings in a safe, non-judgemental environment.

### 4.11 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher provided a detailed discussion of methodological procedures that were executed in this study. This was followed by a thorough discussion of the ethical considerations that were paramount when conducting the research. In the following chapter the researcher will discuss the research findings of the empirical section of this study. Quantitative results as derived from the questionnaires and qualitative results stemming from the interviews will be discussed in detail.
CHAPTER 5
EXPOSITION OF THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

In this study quantitative data was collected by means of a questionnaire and qualitative data was obtained by means of a semi-structured interview schedule. Thus, the mixed methods approach was followed. Lanier and Briggs (2014) insist that the mixed methods approach has the potential to strengthen a study and it is applicable to any type of research. The quantitative data (Section A of the current study) provided numerical value to the study and the qualitative data (Section B) provided rich information regarding youth sex offenders’ perceptions of their victims, as well as their thoughts and the level of empathy displayed prior and during the offence. Furthermore, information was gathered on the youth sex offenders’ thoughts after the transgression, as well as their current thoughts and feelings towards their victims. The data that was collected was analysed and integrated in order to give a detailed description of the phenomenon being studied. An exposition of the analysed data will be given in this chapter. The quantitative findings will be discussed in section A of this chapter and the qualitative findings will be discussed in section B. It must be noted that the theoretical interpretation of the themes as outlined in this chapter will be forthcoming in Chapter 6.

5.1 SECTION A: QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

A discussion of the biographical characteristics of the youth sex offenders who participated in this study will be provided in the following section.

5.1.1 YOUTH SEX OFFENDERS’ CURRENT AGE

The majority of the youth sex offenders who participated in the interviews were between the ages of 20 and 25 years (66 out of the 96 participants = 68.75%) at the time of the interviews. Only seven (7.29%) of the participants were 17 years old, eight (8.33%) of the participants were 18 years old and fifteen (15.63%) of the participants were 19 years old. The pie chart on the following page provides a
graphical depiction of the current ages of the youth sex offenders who participated in the study.

Figure 1: Youth sex offenders’ current age

![Pie chart showing age distribution]

N=96

5.1.2 YOUTH SEX OFFENDERS’ RACIAL PROFILE

Figure 2 below indicates that the majority of youth sex offenders (90=93.75%) who were interviewed in this study identified their race as Black. With regards to the remainder of the sample, five (5.21%) of the research participants identified themselves as Coloured and one (1.04%) research participant was White.

Figure 2: Racial profile

![Pie chart showing racial distribution]

N=96
5.1.3 YOUTH SEX OFFENDERS’ EDUCATIONAL PROFILE

In South Africa Grades 1-7 are completed as part of the primary school curriculum and Grades 8-12 form part of the secondary school curriculum. Fifty percent (48=50%) of the research participants indicated that their highest qualification is grade 8 or 9. Twenty one (21.87%) of the participants indicated that their highest qualification is Grade 10. With regards to the remaining participants, twelve (12.5%) only completed primary school (Grade 1-7), 9 (9.38%) completed Grade 11 and was currently busy with Grade 12 inside the YCC and six (6.25%) indicated that they already passed Grade 12. The bar chart provided below gives a graphical depiction of the youth sex offenders’ educational profile.

Figure 3: Educational profile

![Bar chart showing educational profile with N=96](image)

5.1.4 GENDER OF THE VICTIMS

As illustrated in the table provided below, ninety (93.75%) of the youth sex offenders who participated in the study indicated that their victims were female, four (4.17%) of the offenders indicated that their victims were male and two (2.08%) of the offenders indicated that they offended against both a male and a female victim.
Table 2: Gender of the victims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male &amp; Female</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=96

5.1.5 VICTIM-OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

As illustrated on the pie chart provided on the next page, in a noteworthy number of instances, the research participants indicated that no prior relationship existed between them and the victim. Thus, thirty-four (35.41%) youth sex offenders stipulated that their victims were strangers whom they have never met or had any interaction with prior to the offence. Twenty (20.83%) of the youth sex offenders indicated that their victims were acquaintances. This implied that they met their victims before or knew them prior to the offence. However, there was no personal relationship or specific affinity between them. Typical victims in these instances were individuals whom they have only spoken to once, or seen once before. In other instances the victims were friends with someone whom both the offender and the victim knew. Furthermore, nineteen (19.79%) of the youth sex offenders indicated that their victims resided in the same neighbourhood as themselves, ten (10.42%) youth sex offenders indicated that they were friends with their victims and five (5.21%) youth sex offenders indicated that they went to school with their victims. Five (5.21%) participants indicated that the victims were their girlfriends with whom they were in a relationship and three (3.13%) indicated that the victim was a family member.
5.1.6 AGE OF THE OFFENDER WHEN THE CRIME WAS COMMITTED

The pie chart provided on the following page depicts the age when the offender committed the sex offence. Notably, twenty-seven (28.12%) of the research participants indicated that they were 17 years old when they committed the offence. Furthermore, seventeen (17.71%) of the research participants stipulated that they were 16 years old, seventeen (17.71%) indicated that they were 18 years old and seventeen (17.71%) indicated that they were 19 years old. With regards to the remainder of the participants, twelve (12.5%) of them said that they were 15 years old, five (5.21%) were 20 years old and one (1.04%) was 13 years old at the time of the offence. It is worth mentioning that fifty-seven of the ninety-six research participants (59.38%) were younger than 18 years old when they committed the sexual offence.
5.1.7 VICTIM’S AGE

In Figure 6, provided on the next page, the age distribution of the victims is illustrated. The victim population of the current study are as follows: Twenty-seven (27=28.13%) of the victims were between 18 and 20 years. Furthermore, a notable number of victims (25=26.04%) were between the ages of 14-17 years and 21-25 years (21=21.88%) respectively. Ten victims were older than 25 years, thus comprising 10.42% of the sample. The remainder of the victims were between the ages of 11-13 years (8=8.33%) and a small minority, namely two (2.08%) of the victims were between the ages of 7-10 years while only one (1=1.04%) of the victims was younger than 7 years. Two (2.08%) of the research participants refused to reveal the age of their victims.
5.1.8 EMPATHY LEVELS OF YOUTH SEX OFFENDERS

The questionnaire measured the empathy levels of youth sex offenders on two levels. The first level focused on their empathy for a general sexual abuse victim. The research participants answered questions pertaining to a case study about a seven year old girl named Sarah, who was sexually abused by her 15 year old brother. The second level of empathy related to the youth sex offender’s own victim. The questions that were asked in the first section of the questionnaire focusing on the case study were repeated, but this time the research participants had to apply it to their own victims and convey their feelings and thoughts regarding the specific person whom they victimised.

A Wilcoxon signed-rank test was conducted on SPSS to examine whether a significant difference exists between the research participant’s level of empathy for a general sexual abuse victim compared to the level of empathy for the offender’s own victim. It was found that the youth sex offenders in this study had significantly less victim empathy for their own victim (M=89.17/120; s.d. = 20.01) than for a general sexual abuse victim (M=100.84/120; s.d. = 12.26). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected as a significant difference exists between own victim empathy levels and...
general sexual abuse victim empathy levels in youth sex offenders who participated in this study ($z=-4.99$, $p<.05$) with a large effect size as interpreted with Cohen’s criteria ($r=-0.51$).

The following bar chart depicts the difference between the youth sex offender’s level of empathy for a general sexual abuse victim (Sarah in the case study) and the empathy for his own specific victim.

**Figure 7: Empathy levels**

![Empathy Levels](image)
It must be noted that 70 of the 96 research participants (72.92%) measured lower levels of empathy for their own victims when compared to the empathy that they displayed towards the general sexual abuse victim in the case study. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that only 31 of the 96 research participants’ (32.29%) empathy levels measured below 80% for the general sexual abuse victim empathy section. In addition, the research participants’ average empathy score for the general sexual abuse victim was 84% (100.8/120) with a minimum score of 48% (58/120) and a maximum score of 99% (119/120). On the other hand, 55 of the 96 research participants’ (57.29%) empathy levels for their own specific victim measured below 80% and the average empathy score for the research participants’ own victims was 74% (89.17/120) with a minimum score of 25.83% (31/120) and a maximum score of 96.67% (116/120).

An analysis of the different responses to the different questions revealed that some of the responses amounted to an average score of less than 84%. As the average score obtained for the general sexual abuse victim empathy section was 84%, it was used as a benchmark to identify the specific questions that elicited a below average score (i.e.<84%). This strategy highlighted specific areas where youth sex offenders expressed what might be interpreted as a lack of empathy for a general sexual abuse victim. A description of these questions follows:
• In question 3 the research participants were asked if they thought that the victim (Sarah who was 7 years old) thought that it was a game when her brother (the sexual offender who was 15 years old) had sex with her. They had to provide their response on a four point Likert scale. The average response for this question was 2.91 out of 4 (72.75%) indicating that on average they were of the opinion that Sarah mostly thought it was a game. This might indicate that the research participants failed to comprehend the seriousness of the sexual offence which was committed against Sarah. However, some of the research participants indicated that due to the fact that Sarah was so young and innocent, she might have lacked comprehension and thought that her brother was playing a game with her. Thus, the average response to this question is not necessarily an indication of a lack of empathy.

• In question 5 the research participants were asked if they thought that Sarah could have stopped her brother if she wanted to. The average response for this question was 2.71 out of 4 (67.75%) showing that on average they opined that it would have been easy for Sarah to stop her brother from wanting to have sex with her. This might be an indication that the research participants are justifying the behaviour of the brother in the case study, while simultaneously blaming the victim for her part in the victimisation.

• In question 13 the research participants were asked if they thought that Sarah felt guilty about how she behaved. The average response for this question was 2.86 out of 4 (71.5%), which is an indication that on average they thought that Sarah felt a little bit guilty about how she behaved. Once again, this might amount to victim blaming.

• In question 18 the research participants were asked if they thought that Sarah felt sorry for her brother over what had happened. The average response for this question was 3.13 out of 4 (78.25%) showing that the average research participant thought that she felt a little bit sorry for her brother over what had happened. This might be an indication that the research participants do not feel that the brother is the only one at fault in this case study, and that might be the reason why Sarah would feel sorry for him. On the other hand, they might project their own feelings onto this case study due to the fact that they
might want their own victims to sympathise with them. Some of the research participants explained that Sarah loved her brother and she might feel sorry for him if he got into trouble. Thus, the average response to this question is not necessarily an indication of a lack of empathy.

- In question 21 the research participants were asked if they thought that Sarah had experienced something similar in the past. The average response for this question was 2.8 out of 4 (70%) which shows that on average they were of the opinion that it was possible that Sarah experienced something similar in the past. This might imply that Sarah was promiscuous, or that on some level, Sarah wanted to have sex with her brother. However, some of the research participants indicated that they chose this option because lots of little girls are victimised in the area where they reside. Thus, this response is not necessarily an indication of a lack of empathy.

- In question 26 the research participants were asked if they thought that Sarah had been led on by her brother. The average response for this question was 3.11 out of 4 (77.75%) indicating that most of the research participants thought that she was mostly led on by the brother. This means that they did ascribe a little bit of blame to Sarah, as they did not choose the option that she was totally led on by her brother.

When looking at the second set of thirty questions focusing on the empathy level for the youth sex offender’s own victim, the following questions obtained an average score below 84%, possibly indicating a lack of empathy:

- In question 4 each research participant was asked if he thought that the victim in his own case indicated beforehand that she might not mind if he had sex with her. The average response for this question was 3.01 out of 4 (75.25%) which meant that they chose the option of not really, instead of definitely not. This might indicate that they denounce the victim in a way, or that they are reluctant to accept total responsibility for their actions.

- In question 5 each research participant was asked if he thought that the victim in his own case could have stopped him if she wanted to. The average response for this question was 2.52 out of 4 (63%) which shows that most of
the research participants were of the opinion that the victim could have stopped him easily.

- In question 7 each research participant was asked if he thought that the victim in his own case wanted to have sex with him. The average response for this question was 3.11 out of 4 (77.75%). This indicates that on average the research participants felt that the victim had at least some desire to have sex with them.

- In question 8 the research participants were asked if they thought that the victim in their own case was in control of the situation. The average response for this question was 3.19 out of 4 (79.75%) which shows that they were of the opinion that the victim had a little bit of control during the sexual encounter.

- In question 9 the research participants were asked if they thought that the victim in their own case felt good about what happened. The average response for this question was 3.17 out of 4 (79.25%) which meant they chose the option stating that the victim felt mostly bad about what happened. Once again, the decision not to choose the option stating that the victim felt very bad, might be an indication of not accepting full responsibility, or not realising the impact of their offending behaviour.

- In question 10 the research participants were asked if they thought that the victim in their own case felt safe in the situation. The average response for this question was 3.18 out of 4 (79.5%) meaning that they were of the opinion that the victim felt mostly unsafe. As stated above, not choosing the option stating that the victim felt very unsafe, might indicate that the offender is minimising the impact of the offence.

- In question 12 the research participants were asked if they thought that the victim in their own case had pleasant sexual fantasies afterwards over what had happened. The average response for this question was 3.14 out of 4 (78.5%) which meant that they said that the victim rarely had pleasant sexual fantasies afterwards over what had happened. Rarely, however, indicates that pleasant fantasies were present, even though it did not occur frequently. This might be seen as an empathy deficit.
• In question 13 the research participants were asked if they thought that the victim in their own case felt guilty about how she had behaved. The average response for this question was 2.62 out of 4 (65.5%). Thus, they chose the option stating that the victim felt a little bit guilty about how she behaved.

• In question 14 the research participants were asked if they thought that the victim in their own case was afraid. The average response for this question was 2.95 out of 4 (73.75%) meaning that they opined that the victim felt a little bit scared.

• In question 15 each research participant was asked if he was of the opinion that the victim in his own case thought about the situation afterwards. The average response for this question was 2.94 out of 4 (73.5%) indicating that they were of the opinion that the victim thought about the situation sometimes. Not choosing the often or many times option might be an indication of a lack of empathy for their victim.

• In question 18 the research participants were asked if they thought that the victim in their own case felt sorry for them. The average response for this question was 2.85 out of 4 (71.25%) showing that they thought that the victim felt sorry for them.

• In question 19 the research participants were asked if they thought that the victim in their own case suggested the sexual interaction to them and led them on. The average response for this question was 2.98 out of 4 (74.5%) indicating that on average they were of the opinion that it was possible that the victim suggested the sexual interaction and led them on. This might be a way of denying responsibility for the offence.

• In question 20 the research participants were asked if they thought that the victim in their own case felt angry about what had happened. The average response for this question was 2.97 out of 4 (74.25%) thus entailing that they were of the opinion that the victim was a little bit angry about what had happened. The motivation not to choose the angry or extremely angry option probably indicates a justification strategy with the aim to minimise the victim’s experience.

• In question 21 the research participants were asked if they thought that the victim in their own case had experienced something similar in the past. The
average response for this question was 2.56 out of 4 (64%). This meant that the average opinion was that it is possible that the victim experienced something similar before. This might be an indication of the presence of victim blaming.

- In question 22 every research participant was asked if he thought that the victim in his own case felt victimised by him. The average response for this question was 2.77 out of 4 (69.25%). This means that on average they were of the opinion that the victim felt a little bit victimised by the offender’s actions, once again indicating the minimising of the impact of the offence on the victim.

- In question 23 the research participants were asked if they thought that the victim in their own case worried that someone would find out what happened. The average response for this question was 2.85 out of 4 (71.25%) which meant that the average participant were of the opinion that the victim worried a little bit about other people finding out about the victimisation. Not realising that the victim will be very worried about being publicly exposed as a victim, might be an indication that the participants are not aware of the emotional impact of sexual victimisation.

- In question 25 the research participants were asked if they thought that the victim in their own case knew more about sex than they rendered. The average response for this question was 2.31 out of 4 (57.75%). The majority of the participants said that it was possible that the victim were more sexually experienced than people thought. This might also be an indication of the presence of victim blaming.

- In question 26 every research participant was asked if he led the victim on and if it was his idea to have sex. The average response for this question was 2.60 out of 4 (65%). This meant that the average answer was that the victim had been led on by him a little bit, thus ascribing blame to the victim as well.

- In question 28 the research participants were asked if they thought that the victim in their own case felt dirty inside herself afterwards. The average response for this question was 2.70 out of 4 (67.5%) indicating that they chose the option stating that the victim may have felt dirty inside herself.
afterwards. Once again this might be an indication of a lack of insight pertaining to the impact that sexual offences generally has on victims.

- In question 30 the research participants were asked if they thought that the victim in their own case was harmed in the long term because of the incident. The average response for this question was 2.73 out of 4 (68.25%) indicating that on average they opined that the victim was not really harmed in the long term. This is a clear indication of the presence of empathy deficits.

During the qualitative interviews, some of the responses by the research participants in the quantitative section of the research were echoed. These responses and more in-depth explanations of the replies will be elaborated upon in the following section, which focusses on the qualitative findings of the current study.

5.2 SECTION B: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

Certain verbatim extracts from the interviews will be presented in the next section of this chapter. To ensure confidentiality, the researcher will refer to the research participants as Research Participant (RP) 1 to 96. In addition, the researcher will omit and adapt where necessary all identifying information when repeating verbatim responses from the participants. In this way the researcher aims to avoid specific participants from being linked to individual responses.

After the transcription of the interviews, the researcher organised the data derived from the interviews and sorted it into themes and sub-themes. In this chapter, the researcher will first provide a table with a summary of the themes and sub-themes which originated from the interviews. Subsequently the researcher will elaborate on the themes and sub-themes and verbatim quotes from the participants will be included. It should be noted that the majority of the participants speak English as a second language and did not always show a proper command of the English language. As a consequence, the verbatim responses that are provided are loaded with grammatical and syntax errors.
The following is a list of the different themes and sub-themes that emerged from the interviews:

**Table 3: List of themes and sub-themes**

<table>
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<th>Theme 1: General sexual abuse victim empathy.</th>
<th>Sub-theme 1: Feelings for Sarah (victim in case study).</th>
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<td>Theme 2: Own victim empathy.</td>
<td>Sub-theme 2.1: Offenders’ consideration of the impact of the offence on the victim prior to victimisation. Sub-theme 2.2: Offenders’ consideration of the impact of the offence on the victim during victimisation. Sub-theme 2.3: Offenders’ consideration of the impact of the offence on the victim directly after victimisation occurred. Sub-theme 2.4: Offenders’ current feelings pertaining to the victim.</td>
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<td>Theme 3: Correctional programmes in Youth Correctional Centres</td>
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In the next section the different themes will be discussed. Due to the heterogeneous nature of youth sex offending and the myriad of ways in which the research participants expressed themselves during the interviews, various quotes will be provided to give insight into the way in which they think about victims and how they perceive the impact of their offences.

**5.2.1 THEME 1: GENERAL SEXUAL ABUSE VICTIM EMPATHY**

RP 17 made the following general comment about empathy: “I didn’t have a heart for someone, I didn’t feel sorry for anyone cause I didn’t have someone who could buy me shoes/trousers.”
In the following section, quotes indicating participants’ feelings and thoughts regarding the victim in the case study will be provided.

5.2.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Feelings for Sarah (victim in case study)

The responses of participants regarding their feelings for Sarah indicated that some of them felt very sorry for her. Some of the verbatim replies elucidating this sentiment will be shared next.

RP 3’s response was: “Sarah was unfortunate; she was very young and lacked experience.”

RP 21 said: “Sad story because she was a young girl. It could hurt her for the rest of her life. She didn’t know what was happening. He took it with force, no agreement. If he forces the girl the guy expresses his feelings and not the girl’s feelings. It is rape. Boys express their feelings, taking it with force and it is rape. They have to talk to each other and understand each other.”

RP 42 declared: “I feel sorry for Sarah, because she was a child, she didn’t know nothing. She maybe didn’t have the power to stop her brother. This might be her memory when she grows up. She will not cope well in school and will see everyone as her brother. The emotions will stay with her no matter how old she is.”

RP 60 conveyed that: “Sarah had no control. If they had parents she had to go to them, but sometimes parents won’t take the story.”

RP 63 explained his feelings for Sarah by saying: “I’m very sad, emotional. She couldn’t fight for herself. There was nothing she could do to stop the brother or to feel safe.”

On the other hand, some of the research participants had empathy for both Sarah and the brother. The following is an exposition of such feelings:

RP 7 opined: “I feel sad for the brother. He makes sex with his sister. I feel sad for the sister. The brother does not have another miss (juffrou) outside the family.”

RP 11 disclosed his feelings in the following manner: “I feel ashamed. I know how hurt it is for the girl and the boy.”
Various research participants held robust views pertaining to the fact that the sexual offence was committed by Sarah’s brother. A few of these opinions will be provided.

RP 2 said: “I feel sorry that it happened. Don’t expect it to happen between brother and sister.”

RP 5 proclaimed that: “I feel sorry for Sarah because she was young and confused and didn’t know what was going on... it was her brother, they shared the same blood.”

RP 10 commented: “I thought how does her brother feel when he is finished. How does he feel afterwards? She is still young and he can’t have sex with his sister. I feel sorry for her. People that age get scared easily and might not say anything.”

RP 13 conveyed: “How could her brother force his little sister into sleeping with him. Maybe the little sister trusted the brother and the mother said to the brother he should look after his little sister. Brother shouldn’t have feelings for sister from same mother. At least if he did it to someone else...”

RP 22 replied: “I feel very bad for Sarah. She is not safe with her brother doing such things to her. Her brother was supposed to protect her.” At face value it may seem as though RP 22 has empathy with Sarah. However, in order to gain a holistic understanding of RP 22’s thought processes it is imperative to consider this response in conjunction with some of the answers provided by RP 22 in the questionnaire as well as some of the explanations given for his answers in the questionnaire. Some of these responses and the explanations for the responses provided in brackets, will be provided next: Sarah secretly hoped very much that something similar could happen again (“maybe she wanted it”), she felt very sorry for the brother (“the brother didn’t know the consequences”), very possible that it happened before (“maybe she was scared to tell someone, maybe if it was from outside she could tell, maybe that is why it happened again”), very likely that she knows more about sex than her age (“when you are young and something like that happen, you will know more than people are the same age than you”), she was slightly led on by her brother (“the brother is not supposed to do it to his younger sister, he is supposed to protect her. Maybe both of them wanted it”).

RP 27 said: “I feel bad. It is bad to sleep with your sister. How are you going to look at him, you stay in the same house? It is unforgivable how do you forgive someone that sleeps with his sister?”
RP 29 stated that: “What happened to her was not good. Her brother had no right to have sex with her without her consent.”

RP 38 explained that: “It is hard. Many young girls are raped by people in the same family. As a child she can’t tell her family members because her brother might beat her.”

RP 43 communicated: “Yoh, it is very sad. How come your brother? I don’t think I would ever be able to forgive my brother for such a thing.”

RP 77 replied: “Her brother is not right about doing it to this sister. Maybe he doesn’t have a girlfriend but it doesn’t give him the right to touch her private parts.”

RP 87 voiced his thoughts about Sarah as follows: “I think Sarah eish, didn’t like it happening to her because she think her brother was playing and then he end up sleeping with her. She was afraid to tell her mother. If her friends found out Sarah was sleeping with her brother, she was scared for that.”

RP 91 expressed: “I don’t have feelings (sexual) for a little girl. It wasn’t good. Her brother got into her bedroom and forced her. She is innocent to what happens to her. What happened to her, she won’t forget it easily. She don’t know what sex is. The brother still slept with her and it was his biological sister. Even if it wasn’t his sister it would be wrong. The brother was ignorant. He was not thinking. We as boys are ignorant. We just think what we want, not what women wants.”

Various research participants conveyed strong feelings with regards to the fact that Sarah was so young, and her brother was much older. Some of their responses will follow.

RP 33 explicated that: “How could 15 year old boy have sex with 7 year old? To my side it is not okay.”

RP 61 expressed his feelings for Sarah in the following manner: “Very painful for me, because when I look at age of boy he was 15, the girl was 7 years old. What did that boy think when he raped that little girl? It is disgusting. She is very young and she knows nothing about sex. She was crying, that is the picture in my mind, how could he do it to his sister. For me, it is very, very, very painful.”

RP 88 said: “Even if I’m a person who do crime I won’t think of raping a 7 year old girl.”
Some of the research participants internalised the case study and applied it to their own lives. Examples of their responses are as follows:

RP 28 said: “I felt very bad. In stories like this I think what if it was my sister or relative, makes me feel very angry inside.”

RP 75 conveyed: “I feel very shocked. I will kill for my little sister. I will never do that.”

RP 78 proclaimed: “That story is sad. Sarah is young and what happened to her with her brother, her brother left a trauma to her. Even me, also, we are used to playing such a game, a mother, father and son but we didn’t put it inside. We didn’t know what was going on.”

RP 82 commented: “You see such things, eish. I’m not feeling okay, because some of things we do our victims don’t like. We might think we enjoyed it, but to her it is not alright.”

RP 93 declared that: “To be honest with you, I think that what happened to her was not right for her, because I know how it is to be forced to have sex with someone you don’t want to have sex with.”

On the other hand, some of the research participants engaged in victim blaming by for example referring to Sarah’s obligation to report the sexual encounter. Some of their thoughts will be shared next.

RP 6 noted: “Sarah could have stopped her brother very easily. Sarah and the brother was at home, she must scream. She felt very guilty, she didn’t try to scream or prevent it.”

RP 12 stated the following: “This girl is very, very young. Maybe this girl’s future is not going to be fine. She think too much she might commit suicide.” However, in contradiction to this statement, when asked during the completion of the questionnaire if Sarah felt sorry for herself, RP 12 replied “not at all.” When asked to explain his reasons for saying that, he stated: “She never screamed, seemed like she was enjoying it.”
RP 64 said: “I was feeling so; I don’t know how to define it. Sarah had a choice. If she didn’t like she was supposed to go to the police station and arrest the brother. She wants.”

When taking the above-mentioned verbatim responses into consideration, it is clear that some of the research participants indicated that they had empathy with Sarah and in some instances they even conveyed empathy for the brother who committed the offence. Various research participants indicated their disapproval of the fact that the sexual offence was committed by Sarah’s brother and several of them conveyed strong feelings regarding the fact that Sarah was so young and her brother was much older. Some of the participants internalised the case study and applied it to their own lives by for instance referring to how they would feel if someone sexually violated someone they cared for. On the other hand, some of the participants engaged in victim blaming by for example referring to Sarah’s obligation to report the sexual encounter.

In the following section, the research participants’ thoughts and feelings for their own victims will be explored.

5.2.2 THEME 2: OWN VICTIM EMPATHY

RP 6’s general feelings regarding his own victim were explained as follows: “She felt very guilty because she came to the house without invitation and drank, very unlikely that she was harmed in the long term – just short term, already forgot about it.”

RP 7 made the following general remark about his victim: “A girl can’t drink and not pay.” It must be noted that despite this comment, RP 7 scored very high on own victim empathy, namely 93%. During the interview, he however, said that even though he was present during the rape, it was his friend who committed the rape and that he did not know how to stop him.

RP 8 had the following to say about his victim: “I don’t feel sorry for the victim, I am angry.” During his interview he said that they had consensual sex. However, after they had sex she requested money and when he did not want to give her money she told her parents that he raped her. It must be noted that RP 8 had a score of 38% for
the own victim empathy questionnaire and he scored 89% for the general sexual abuse victim empathy questionnaire.

RP 9 communicated the following about his victim: “She felt very guilty, she didn’t scream, she just let me do it to her. She was not harmed in the long term, maybe she will forget.”

5.2.2.1 Sub-theme 2.1: Offenders’ consideration of the impact of the offence on the victim prior to victimisation

A number of offenders conveyed that they were under the influence of a substance when they committed the offence. Some of them explained their thoughts prior to the offence as follows:

RP 14 explicated that: “I wasn’t thinking I would be arrested, nothing’s going to happen. I didn’t think it was going to end like this, it just happened. I was drunk and smoke dagga. I still smoke dagga, it makes you forget. It would happen in anyway even if I didn’t drink or smoke dagga. I didn’t know that rape is serious, that I will end up in prison. Before the rape I thought that what I was doing is bad, but fuck that I’m going on.”

RP 29 conveyed that: “Me and my friends were drunk; we were at a party, drinking and smoking heroin. I smoked it often. After that we decided to go for a walk. We saw the victim standing with another boy. My friend said that if she is standing around with other boys what is going to stop us from having sex with her. I was thinking that the other boy was proposing to her to sleep with him because it was late and what was a girl doing with a boy this late in the dark. I was dragging her and thinking of just sleeping with her and doing all sorts of stuff.”

RP 38 said: “I think with my girlfriend. What is happening if my girlfriend finds out I slept with girl. I’m drunk, so I don’t change my mind.”

RP 48 responded: “Nyaope’ make you feel tired or sleepy and dagga also. When I think properly what was inside there was Silver bullet. It makes you want to have

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1 Nyaope is a mix of dagga and heroin (Booyens et al., 2013:53).
2 Silver bullet is slang for Ritalin (Drug slang translator, 2015). During a personal communication, some of the other inmates, however, indicated that silver bullet is not a drug, but can be bought from a pharmacy or supermarket and can be found next to the lubricants and condoms. They explained that is a sexual enhancement drug, which is sometimes used as a date rape drug, as large quantities can relax the muscles.
sex. It is a pill. I never thought about this, never thought it could happen. I just wanted to have sex with any of the girls, anyone. Before I smoked and never thought about sex. I didn’t think about outcomes, I was drunk.”

RP 53 revealed that: “The time we got to them and started robbing them. One of my friends is a coloured boy and he start touching girls’ private parts. I wasn’t thinking. We were drinking and smoking drugs. I was only thinking to rob them. We needed money for tomorrow to smoke again.”

RP 60’s version is as follows: “I went to the tavern before the incident. It is in the same street I stayed in. If you don’t have enough money there is a drug that you put in your beer Umgwinyo. It makes you very drunk, it is a pill. Some say it is steroids, others say it is something you inject horses with when they race. If you sit still you are cold, you have to dance and move. It makes you very energetic and drunk. In the morning you forget everything that happened.”

RP 77 reported: “Nothing wrong, nothing to make her scared. We were drunk, all of us. In court she didn’t agree that she was drunk.”

RP 78 replied: “Just thought I must get. I was totally out of myself, it wasn’t me. I only took brandy, cigarettes and dagga.”

RP 83 responded as follows: “I didn’t know her father was a cop. I didn’t think about trouble, I was drunk.”

RP 84 explained his thoughts prior to committing the offence as follows: “You see dagga, if you use it, it gives you bravery. After doing it, you feel sorry. Didn’t plan to rape woman. I saw something, I saw her breasts, she was wearing low top. That made me think I want to rape her. I think it is her fault that she was wearing that top. If she didn’t wear the top I don’t think it would happen.”

RP 93 answered: “I only took alcohol before, this was the first time I used drugs. First time I committed a crime. I don’t remember. I was drinking with my friend. My girlfriend asked for punch and that it is the only thing that I remembered. The magistrate asked me if it is possible that I committed this crime and I said I’m not such a person, but my friend saw me do it.”

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3 Umgwinyo is slang for Ecstasy (Raising a generation of substance abusers, 2007).
Some of the research participants targeted victims who in their minds seemed like suitable targets and who were easily accessible. Some of their responses regarding their thoughts prior to committing the offence follow:

RP 1’s victim was his neighbour. Upon exploring his thoughts about his victim, prior to the victimisation, he gave the following response: “Coming back from school we met at street, spoke, she trusted me like a brother. I asked her to go with me. She didn’t know what was going to happen. When asking I knew I didn’t love her or like her in that way. She was an easy target – she trusted me. It was not the first time that I had sex. There wasn’t another girl in the school that I could approach. I thought the victim wouldn’t like it, but I didn’t think she would report and I didn’t think I will end up in jail.”

RP 6 explicated: “When entering the room I started thinking of sex. I didn’t worry about anything because I have slept with her before. I was taking advantage because the girl doesn’t sleep at home; she was almost like a prostitute. Sometimes she asked some of the men for money, but she didn’t ask me for money before.”

RP 15 stated the following: “I was only thinking about myself. I know the park very well. I knew I could take her to a place where nobody will be able to see or help her. I didn’t think about the girl.”

RP 31 said: “The girl was naked and I felt something in my blood. I didn’t think I could get in trouble. It is not the first time I slept with this girl.”

Some of the research participants targeted their victims due to a sense of entitlement or a feeling of invincibility. The following are a few examples of responses highlighting such feelings and thoughts experienced prior to the offence:

RP 12 noted that: “In my thought I thought that she was going to sleep with me because she drank my beer and used my money. She was my neighbour and she just wanted to drink with me. After drinking she wanted to run away. I lose focus and self-control and had no perseverance. I beat her – I didn’t want her to return to friends. I didn’t want her friends to know what I’m going to do to her.”

RP 13 argued: “I was thinking this girl is already in my house and she tells me to stop. I wasn’t angry. The thing that made me do it is that this girl went with other boys. She used to go with other boys and it made me feel that I’m nothing to her and
we were in a relationship.” Probing this participant about the duration of their relationship, he said: “From Dec 2010 until Jan 2011.”

RP 17 stated: “I wanted K for many months. I was smoking weed and drinking. I wanted everything to be mine. I had lots of girls but she didn’t want me. I was angry because she was going with this stupid boy and he was hitting me. I told her I loved her. I was really mad.”

When exploring the thoughts of RP 27 prior to committing the rape, he explained that: “When I see white people, I see money. When I see traffic coming I just grab what I want. I just take chances. My friends ran away, I was alone, I take money and stuff. I was never scared about being caught. What doesn’t kill me, make me strong. I didn’t drink or anything. If I don’t have a knife I can even use a brick. I didn’t grow up with a father, only mother on my side, trying to guide me. I didn’t have the chance to speak to my father. I had friends who I saw as my family. They told me they have guns... I was using dagga, beer and girls selling their bodies. I will rob the girls while she is busy with the others. I do crime alone; don’t need anybody, like housebreaking.” It must be noted that RP 27 first robbed the victim and while searching her, he related feeling overwhelmed: “The girl was so beautiful. When I touched her breasts I knew I had to sleep with her, I will never get the chance again. My friends tried to stop me.”

RP 58 expressed his thoughts as follows: “I didn’t think of raping someone before. Maybe the second time, I thought I wasn’t caught the first time; I had the power over them. I thought I will take the scissor, maybe I will find someone, it was 40% of the reason. Sixty percent (60%) of it was for protection, because I was robbed twice on that road.”

RP 62 said: “No alcohol or drug. I do it because I want to ‘plak-plak’. I don’t think of trouble, if I think about it, it is going to happen. I’m not thinking anything. I’m just thinking of sex.”

Additional reported circumstances preceding the offending behaviour were factors such as anger, committing the sexual offence in the course of committing other offences, poor social skills, the influence of peers and the watching of pornography. Some of the thoughts of research participants who resort in this category will follow.
RP 4 raped a stranger whom he met in a tavern on the day of the incident. He explained his thoughts prior to the offence in the next manner: “I felt angry. I was drinking, didn’t think about tomorrow. I did not want to teach her a lesson; I loved her and was angry because she didn’t love me back.”

RP 5 stated: “It wouldn’t have happened if we didn’t drink. We only thought about money, not about hurting the victim. While searching and touching them we became tempted. If we’re just walking past the girls without touching them we wouldn’t have raped them.”

RP 23 responded by indicating: “I was thinking the girl liked me and that is why she told me she was cold. Now I think that she was scared and wanted to know where I live to tell the cops.” It should be noted that RP 23 was armed with a panga and robbed the victim and her friends prior to the rape incident.

RP 43 related: “I thought the girl is in love with me. I thought the girl is boring and now I must threaten her so that she can kiss me. I always have a knife. I don’t know if I would kill her. Maybe. Maybe just beat and beat and leave her.”

RP 75 verbalised his thoughts prior to the incident by saying: “I knew my friends want to sleep with her as well, because it happened regularly. I didn’t think we will get in trouble. I think if we didn’t do it at night and she didn’t spend the night she wouldn’t make a case. Other times it was in the day with other girls and they didn’t make a case.”

RP 76 noted: “If I look back she wasn’t that happy, maybe she was drunk. Most of the people in the community knew I was involved in gang, we fight, stab. Maybe she knew and was scared. I didn’t think about it then.”

RP 81 explained: “I just think that maybe they will catch me, but I just did it. When I was picturing what I seen on the phone my feelings got high.” It must be noted that RP 81 was watching pornography on his cellular phone prior to the committing of the offence. He relayed that: “I started watching porn. From there my penis erect, I see I got my girlfriend. I can’t go to my girlfriend now. Most porn is white people. I was tired of black people.”

Five of the research participants indicated that they were convicted of raping their girlfriends. RP 79 explained his thoughts prior to the sexual encounter in the
following manner: “Nothing was wrong before or during, like it was always between us. She was my girlfriend for 5 months.”

The above-mentioned verbatim quotes illustrate that the youth sex offenders in this study did not think about the impact of the offence on the victim prior to committing the offence. This can possibly be attributed to various factors such as being under the influence of substances, feeling a sense of entitlement or invincibility, anger, impulsivity, a lack of social skills or peer pressure. In some instances they admitted that in hindsight there were certain signs indicating that the victim was not a willing participant, but this was only acknowledged at a much later stage. The research participants’ thoughts during the offence will be considered in the following section.

5.2.2.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Offenders' consideration of the impact of the offence on the victim during victimisation

Whilst exploring the research participants’ thoughts and feelings at the time of the offence, one of the most common responses was that they did not think about the impact of the offence on the victim at all. Some of these responses will be provided below.

RP 11 stated that: “She didn’t cry, didn’t ask to stop, didn’t push away. I didn’t think.”
RP 17 elaborated on his feelings by saying: “K just watched me, like what are you doing? After I finished she said I don’t have to love her like that. I didn’t think. From the beginning I followed K because I wanted to have sex with her, get her.”
RP 19 stated: “She pushed me off. I didn’t think anything.”
RP 28 declared: “I can’t remember what I was thinking. I just did it without thinking. She cried and she asked me to stop. She wasn’t screaming. I had no feelings whatsoever. I thought she was attractive... Had nothing to do with clothes, she was wearing a school uniform.”
RP 67 replied: “The girl cried and screamed. I didn’t think anything.”
RP 78 said: “Girl was crying, but she ended up keeping quiet. The other girl said my friend has a small penis she can’t feel him inside her. I don’t know what happened after that. She did scream but we told her she must keep quiet. My friend had a gun. I wasn’t thinking about it.”
RP 84 explained his feelings during the offence as follows: “She screamed, she cried and she tried to push me. I didn’t think at that stage. I think about it after. We didn’t kill her; it is hard to kill a female, a woman. A man you can kill. She said I must do anything, but not kill her. You can feel for women. If a woman ask for R10 and that is the only R10 you have you will give it but not for man because he must do it for himself.”

RP 85 conveyed: “She was not crying, not screaming, not fighting, she looked upset. Eish, I don’t remember if I thought anything.”

As illustrated by the above-mentioned quotes, despite the research participants stating that they did not think about anything at the time of the offence, they identified the display of emotions expressed by the victims, but chose not to act on it. In some instances the research participants revealed that their lack of consideration of the impact of the offence on the victim might have been due to them being under the influence of a substance. Some of these responses follow:

RP 23 related: “The girl was good to me, she looked fine. In my friend’s house they use candles, so I can’t see her face. She didn’t say anything. She was just quiet. I was too drunk, not thinking.”

RP 51 stated that: “She didn’t scream because she was scared. After raping her we take her key and go to her house and take the system of the house and got money, cell phone, jewellery. The girl cried. I wasn’t thinking properly. I smoked Tik⁴. I was paranoid, I was high.”

RP 89 commented: “She didn’t scream or fight but there was tears. I think about it after. Think about it when I’m sober. What I did was totally wrong. I feel shame for her.”

In some instances evidence was provided that the research participants might have interpreted the victims’ actions as well as their display of emotions incorrectly. Thus, even though they were able to identify negative emotions, they did not interpret it correctly and consequently claimed that they did not realise that their victims were not willing participants. This might be due to a lack of social awareness and deficient

⁴ Methamphetamine, otherwise known as Tik, resorts under the amphetamine group of drugs and is a stimulant that overexcites the central nervous system (Booyens, et al., 2013:53).
emotional intelligence. The reason for this is that many of them did not even have the ability to monitor their own emotions, much less their victims’ emotions. Moreover, they displayed a very poor ability to discriminate between different emotions and label them appropriately. In essence, individuals who possess sufficient emotional intelligence are able to utilise emotional information to guide their thinking and behaviour. In other instances, they understood that the victim was unwilling, but due to their self-centredness they nevertheless continued with the sexual act. Some of the verbatim responses highlighting participants’ egocentrism follow:

RP 9 explained himself by stating: “The first time she agreed and then she said no, I thought she was playing with me. While busy I saw she was angry, but she didn’t cry. She didn’t like it. She pushed me, but I used my power. I saw she was angry but I didn’t think. I just wanted to have sex.”

RP 12 conveyed: “I was thinking for the moment, only wanted to sleep with the girl. The girl looked uncomfortable but I was thinking about what I was busy with.”

RP 13 said the following: “Not thinking about anything. She didn’t cry or fight back, not angry or upset. I didn’t look at her. I think she was fine.”

RP 15 explained his thoughts in the following manner: “She was crying and angry. I was not thinking about her. I was only thinking about myself. She was fighting etc. The fighting from her side made me more angry. It made me more aggressive because she was fighting. I was busy with her from 6pm until 22:12pm.”

RP 22 said: “He didn’t fight. He was upset. I didn’t think anything about it.” RP 22’s version of what happened during the event in question is as follows: “We were 3. They went to the boy and talked to him. They promised him something. He said it was okay. He said it is fine, we can pay him afterwards. The boy was scared that other people in the cell will hear what he has done. They gave him what he wanted the next morning. He told the police that we raped him. There was no force.”

RP 33 responded by noting: “To my side it didn’t look like she was screaming or scared. She didn’t show herself to us. She admitted. We asked. She didn’t panic, didn’t talk too much. She said we mustn’t hurt her. We had condoms and so. She asked do we have condoms? I said yes. She said that we should not hurt her.”
RP 36 said: “She tried to cry, but kept quiet most of the time. If maybe she cried hard the neighbours could hear her, perhaps I’ll stop because I’m scared they will catch me.”

RP 38 replied: “That girl when I look at her she was so confused. She liked me but felt guilty. I do the things, not her idea.”

RP 41 answered: “I was not thinking about consequences. She was upset but she didn’t cry or scream. She said take what you want but don’t kill me. I didn’t think about anything. I was thinking about what I want.”

RP 43 responded as follows: “When we finished kissing I asked nicely why we don’t have sex. I took knife again. I said I don’t want to hurt or kill you. I just wanted to have sex. I want this thing now, end of the story. She won’t have the power, I have a knife.”

RP 50 disclosed: “It wasn’t the first time sleeping with me. She wasn’t crying but I could see that she wasn’t having fun like I was. She asked me why am I doing that to her and I couldn’t tell her. The only thing I remember was that what I was doing wasn’t a good thing. She said she never thought I could do something like that to her even if we were not a couple anymore. During our relationship I started cheating on her and she left me.”

RP 53 explained: “I wasn’t thinking nothing, because I was enjoying the party. The girls didn’t scream or cry. They were scared. They said just rape us and leave us, don’t kill us. It didn’t make me feel bad.”

RP 58’s version of his thoughts while committing the offence was voiced as follows: “She wasn’t crying, but she was scared, I could see on her face. I felt that after I tried to penetrate that was the first time I thought it was wrong. During it I was another person. The second time I didn’t take condoms, I was in a hurry to get to my brother. I was finished at my brother when it happened; I was on my way back. The girls were on their way to school. She wasn’t crying but she was busy telling me I must not kill her, she will do anything I ask her to do. I felt sorry. She even told me her mother just passed away a few weeks ago. I don’t know what made me carry on. Maybe I wanted to do it. I had a feeling of anger. I don’t know where I got it.”

RP 60 said: “She didn’t push me away. I don’t know if she was angry or hurt, but she was holding me tight. I think she was maybe drugged or drunk. Maybe it was the first time she had alcohol.”
RP 76 responded: “She didn’t say anything or cried but she looked a little bit uncomfortable. I only realised it now.”

RP 81 conveyed: “She tried to fight me. I didn’t think anything. I just wanted to be on top of her.”

RP 86 explained: “She told me to stop and I didn’t. She was feeling pains. I thought she was enjoying it.”

Some of the research participants explained that they committed the offence due to peer pressure. They explained their thoughts at the time of committing the offence as follows:

RP 1 reacted by saying: “I didn’t ask her, just continued. She didn’t say anything. It would make a difference if she asked me to stop. I did not use force. I did not think about the victim and I didn’t think about the consequences. Everyone in the community and my friends do it, so I did not know that it was wrong. I also didn’t think if she is enjoying it.”

RP 5 responded: “We were confused; we were still young and drunk. I thought my friend is doing it, so I must too. If I was alone I wouldn’t have done it. I didn’t pay attention to what the girl was saying or if she was crying.”

RP 32 stated that: “I knew it wasn’t right, I told my friend, even while being under the influence. I was just acting, doing it for my friend; otherwise he might think I’m stupid.”

RP 49 explained: “I tell my friend how could you do this, when he was raping the girl. I said the thing you were doing is wrong. That guy was the leader. He had a child and girlfriend at home. I was scared of him and he said I must rape. She was upset. I wasn’t thinking.”

RP 87 explained his thoughts during the committing of the offence as follows: “She was crying. I feel pain because she told me she had a small child. I told my accused let’s take her back home because who is looking after the child and he listened to me. The other girl was crying also, didn’t scream, she tried to fight. The other accused knew the girl because she is his girlfriend’s friend. He said we must kill her or she will make a case. She was killed with the knife. I felt pain again because I was trying to help her to run away but my accused catch her again.”
As illustrated by some of the preceding verbatim responses, some of the research participants felt empathy for the victim during the committing of the offence, but continued with the act due to certain factors such as peer pressure, or because they gave in to their sexual urges and acted without thinking of future consequences. One of the research participants explained how he continued with the act even though he felt guilty about what he was doing to the victim. RP 18 stated: “While raping her, the chick was crying a lot. I touched the chick’s breast when it was my turn. While I was touching her I had a guilty conscience. I couldn’t get an erection. My other friend took his chance. I thought what if I got caught and go to prison for something that I didn’t do, so I raped her as well. I wasn’t thinking about the guilt while busy. I just wanted more and more.”

In other instances, some of the research participants were unable to proceed with the offence once they realised what the future consequences might be. RP 24’s account illustrates it as follows: “She called my name and I felt sorry. I was thinking the morning the people will come; maybe her brother will kill me. I was not thinking about the girl. The girl was crying and she was fighting. The crying made me feel I don’t want to do it again and others mustn’t do it because it is not good. I stopped. When she fighting, my friend wanted to hit her with a bottle and I had to stop him. Her crying didn’t make a difference to my friend. She saw me stop him, but don’t know if it made a difference to how she feels.”

RP 42 explained: “While I was busy it came in mind that I was doing wrong and I didn’t finish. I just left. She was upset and she said her child was small and she said that I should not do that to her. I felt sorry.”

On the other hand, some of the research participants indicated that they did not feel anything for the victims, or that they acted out of anger. Their responses will be provided next:

RP 27 said: “While busy she cried a lot. I didn’t feel anything; I told her she had to enjoy it. Her boyfriend gave me his pin numbers and pleaded but I said I don’t need it; I am taking what I need. I am doing this and nothing’s going to stop me. It was my
first time raping someone. Normally I just tell people to give me everything when I rob.”

RP 29 indicated: “We pushed her into the shack and she fell on the bed. One by one we forced ourselves into her. I was excited. Initially I thought she was enjoying it. When we started taking turns she was just quiet, not screaming or fighting, so I thought she was beginning to enjoy it. When she tried to fight for herself we assaulted her. She was screaming, but every time she tried to scream we clapped (slapped) her and assaulted her. She couldn’t control us, because we were 4 and she was alone. I felt disturbed about her screaming because someone could hear her screaming and come to her rescue. When she tried to plead we told her you always walk around with other boys, why you don’t want to sleep with us. We saw her with other boys before. I wasn’t scared of what my friend would say about raping his girlfriend because I was older than him. After that two guys left and the other two of us stayed and we forced ourselves into her again for the second time. After that we called her funny names like bitch. Then we left her in the dark and went to sleep.”

RP 45 conveyed: “She was crying, but scared of screaming. I had a firearm, .38. It didn’t make any difference. I didn’t feel anything. I was only aggressive.”

RP 46 responded: “She said no. I thought why she wasn’t giving me, but she gave others. I was feeling angry. She said that I have a small penis. I got angry. I wanted to show her I don’t have a small penis. I got more angry. While we were busy she was crying and calling for her brother. I feel if her brother comes it will be a big problem.”

RP 65 explained: “She screamed, she was scared, she was crying. By that time I didn’t feel anything. Not thinking about trouble.”

Some of the research participants indicated that they thought that the victim was a willing participant, or that they were under the impression that they were dating the victim. Some of their quotes will be provided next.

RP 31 said: “Not thinking that I could get into trouble. I slept with her before. She was quiet. I couldn’t see that she was upset.”

RP 39 stated that: “She very much wanted to have sex, I don’t make her. If she don’t want to have sex she can’t be woman on top, she was totally in control, not first time
making sex with me. Me, I told her Friday come to my house we will have sex. She come. She must like. Our love is not secret. People know F and L love each other. My mother know as well. She was a virgin when we met. Me, I teach her sex.”

RP 47 responded: “No crying, screaming or asking me to stop. She came to me by herself and asked me to do it. Maybe she was jealous because I came with another girl to the tavern 3 days later. When she left my house she was fine. I gave her my number and said that she could phone me if she wanted to.”

RP 73’s version of what happened during the incident was: “She came to me and we go with agreement. She didn’t say stop. She stripped. She enjoyed. I was just talking the truth and thought everything is going to be fine. It was my first time in court. I had to travel from Limpopo to court – R500 a day and leave at 3 in the morning, because I’m not allowed to stay close to N. Had to go to court once a month. They don’t care and don’t give me anything. I thought it was with agreement. She told the court she wasn’t drinking. She said she was working at dumping site, but she wore Carvelas⁵.”

The preceding verbatim responses testify to the fact that many of the research participants did not think about the impact of the offence on the victim while they were committing the sexual offence. In some instances their judgement might have been impaired by substances, a lack of social awareness, self-centredness, an inability to delay gratification or peer pressure. In other instances some of the research participants claimed that it was a choice to commit the crime and that they felt no empathy for the victim before or during the offence. A number of the research participants indicated that they felt empathy for the victim while committing the offence. In some instances this led to them not proceeding with the offence and in other instances they completed the sexual act despite their feelings, due to an inability to delay the gratification of their sexual urges. A few of the research participants indicated that they were under the impression that the complainant was a willing participant and in some instances they indicated that they were in a relationship with the complainant prior to the charges being brought against them. In the following section the offenders’ consideration of the impact of the offence on the victim after victimisation occurred, will be analysed.

⁵ Carvelas are Italian designer shoes.
5.2.2.3 Sub-theme 2.3: Offenders’ consideration of the impact of the
offence on the victim after victimisation occurred

In many instances the research participants conceded that after the victimisation
occurred, they felt afraid of the consequences. This means that they thought about
the possibility of incarceration or considered that their reputation might be ruined.
However, it does not necessarily mean that they contemplated the impact of the
offence on the victim. Interestingly, in some instances they almost viewed
themselves as the victims. A snapshot of some of these responses follows:

RP 1 said: “I was scared because she ran out and she didn’t say anything. I thought I
might end in prison. I thought that the victim didn’t like it, I felt bad.”

RP 4 described his thoughts directly after the victimisation occurred by stating: “I
thought she was going home to sleep. After arrest I said I didn’t rape. I went to
BOSASA\(^6\), then to court and got house arrest. I told the social worker the truth, said I
raped the girl, went to court and was sentenced to 3 years. I was too young; I didn’t
know what was wrong. It is unfair to be in prison.” It must be noted that even though
RP 4 emphasised that he was too young and did not know that his behaviour was
inappropriate, he was 17 years old at the time of the offence.

RP 5 answered: “I walked with her to prevent her from screaming or attracting
others’ attention. I went home, drank coffee and realised that what I did was wrong. I
thought that I might go to prison.”

RP 11 explained his feelings in the following manner: “Afterwards she told me I hurt
her. I felt scared after she said that I hurt her because she will tell her parents and
they will beat me up. After the beating I felt ashamed. I was regretting myself – why
did I do this? I wasn’t interested in girls, I was too young. We watched videos on the
phone – sex with older girls. I was feeling that I could experience what they were
doing. I watched the videos long before this happened. I used to play with the girl,
she trusted me, make it easier. I didn’t realise it will hurt her. I got a 6 year sentence.
Wish I was home, there is no place like home.”

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\(^6\) BOSASA is a youth development centre that detains children in conflict with the law (BOSASA Youth
Development Centres, 2015).

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RP 12 responded: “After I started regretting, after the sex, regretting what I’ve done. She see me every day, attending the same school. Thinking I hurt her and her parents will be angry. I was scared of prison, being cripple, or death.”

RP 13 elaborated: “Afterwards she was upset. When I accompanied her she didn’t want to talk to me. When we get to her house I told her I’ll see her later. When I went back home I thought I was cool. I was shocked when her brother beat me, I didn’t expect it. After he left I was afraid, because they told me they were going to the cops. When they arrest me I regretted what I did. She told me to stop and I forced myself into her. I regretted it because I went to prison.”

RP 20 stated: “I was afraid afterwards because he was crying ... I would not have stopped if he said I should.” It must be noted that RP 20 had sexual intercourse with a fellow inmate. His version of the events was: “I was inside my cell at 9pm, sleeping, he on top. I gave him cosmetics and bread. When I come from the trial he was sleeping with someone else. I asked him to have sex with me and he did. Then he started to cry. One prison warden was patrolling and he told him that I raped him.”

RP 24 explained his thoughts as follows: “We left her and ran. I was afraid. I think that the girl will come, she knows me. She will come with the cops. She was feeling sad, I thought while running.”

RP 27 said: “The girl screamed and ran away trying to get some help. I started running, but the dog unit came and caught me. I just told myself the police was going to catch me. I was scared. I knew rape; I could get 10 or 15 years, or life. In the police cell I started thinking about what I did. I don’t deserve to be forgiven. I feel that I should be punished for raping, it’s a bad thing.”

RP 33 responded: “I was feeling bad when I got home. My father and mother are respected. Everyone knows them. I thought how they will look at my family. They know me; I’m not interested in girls.”

RP 45 conveyed: “I was thinking to buy nyaope and smoke and to buy food and rest. I was not thinking about her. When I heard the police are looking for me, I start thinking I’m going to jail and I knew I could get maybe 15 years or upwards. I thought about the girl, because she is the only one that can report me. When they cuff me, I see crime doesn’t pay. I must stop robbing and raping people. I think I make big mistake. It was heavy, even for me.”
RP 62 gave the following explanation of his thoughts after committing the offence: “I’m thinking where am I going to sell the items. Not thinking about the girl. After an hour the police came. Obvious, I’m thinking about jail. I’m thinking of way out immediately. In police cell I’m thinking of a way out. How am I going to protect myself in statement? I got 14 years imprisonment. It depends on how you present yourself. Keep to same story.”

RP 67 disclosed: “The police came; I was thinking to kill myself. I was sad, I disappointed my mom, she didn’t know what was going on. In police cell I was thinking many things. The victim is going to see me. Even when the police hit me, I said they must kill me. I wanted to kill myself.”

RP 81 shared: “When they started investigating I felt guilty and wanted to tell them, but I thought they will take me to prison. I thought maybe she was dead. In police cell I was not thinking about her, I was thinking about myself. It was the first time I was arrested. I was confused.

RP 91 said: “I laughed and thought I wanted to do it again. When I got to my bedroom I was thinking. Was this really me? I was shocked and sweating when I saw the pictures on the phone. I was thinking about woman. What I did was wrong and I’m going to get arrested. I knew the guy and the girl. I realised it when I saw the pictures. I was busy regretting it.”

In other instances, research participants indicated that they were still under the influence of a substance directly after the offence was committed. Two responses of research participants who fall in this category are provided below.

RP 6 explained: “What the girl will say when we meet at the street or the school? I wanted to give money but I didn’t have any and my friend didn’t want to give money. I got home too drunk to think.”

RP 93 conveyed: “I called a cop and asked why I was there. He said that I was found raping an 11 year old girl and I asked how is that possible? I was having a party for my girlfriend. That is all I remembered. They didn’t take blood immediately, maybe 3 or 4 weeks later.”
A number of the research participants reported feeling no empathy for the victim directly after the offence, while others felt what can be described as invincible. Some of their responses will be provided next:

RP 15 explained: “The next morning when I woke in the park I was scared and alert to run away. I didn’t think about the girl. I thought I was good, it wasn’t wrong, she deserved it. I knew it was bad but I ignored it. I didn’t want to feel guilty.”

RP 18 said: “Then we ran to the streets. I drank more and started robbing other people that came from a party. I didn’t think about the chick at all.”

RP 29 declared: “After leaving I thought I got what I wanted and I don’t care about what is going to happen after. I never thought that she will go to the cops, because we told her that we will kill her. We went to prison before and came back. Previous charges was robbery and housebreaking.”

RP 43 proclaimed: “I ran because I was scared of people beating me. I was thinking I have sex, I’m right. Only worried about beating. When police took me I know I didn’t do anything wrong. Obviously I didn’t think girl will go to the police. In police cell I knew there is something I don’t understand; now I’m arrested. They beat me. I just feel awesome. The thing that I wanted, I got. I just felt happy. I was scared of going to prison. At Protem[^7] I think about the girl. We did other programmes about our crimes. We were in group. When it comes to me I thought there is a problem. I thought why did I do it? I told myself I didn’t kill the girl, she is alive.”

RP 86 replied: “I was thinking, I’ll tell my father to give the girl money and she will drop the charges for me.”

In other instances research participants who were under the impression that the complainants in their cases were willing participants, admitted noticing that something was wrong directly after the sexual encounter. They explained their insights in the following manner:

RP 35 revealed: “I was so scared. There are some of the girls that are not safe. We agree and afterwards they say that we didn’t agree.”

[^7]: Protem is a secure care centre for children in conflict with the law.
RP 77 gave the following version: “She just woke up and ask for money for her hair. I asked how much? She said R500. I just wanted to give her the money so that she can get off my back. I thought she might get me in trouble.”

RP 83 responded: “She was also drunk. It was not the first time but the first time it was at night. She wasn’t upset she was just scared to go home.”

RP 92 said: “Everything was nice, we were going together. She wasn’t sad or angry. The girl go home 15:00 and come back 20:00. The mother beat her and say, where you’re staying? In the court the girl said I raped her, she was scared of her mother.”

Other participants reported that they only started to think about the impact on the victim after some time had elapsed or while they were in the holding cell, in court or after their incarceration. They explained their feelings and thoughts regarding their victims as follows.

RP 28 stated: “I didn’t untie her. I opened the door and left. I was very scared when I got home. I didn’t go back to the training. I didn’t think about the girl. I was just thinking about what if someone saw me when I left. After a couple of weeks I went to the police station myself and told the guy at admin what happened. After the thing I couldn’t sleep. My house was on the corner and every time someone passed I woke up and thought it was the police. I lived in fear for the few weeks. The guy who worked at admin knew me and thought I was making a joke. They arrested me after 6 months, December last year. During the 6 months I thought that maybe the girl wasn’t going to make a case. I wasn’t thinking about the girl. I was scared to be in the police cells, I was thinking of jail. I was awaiting trial in Sun City. I started thinking about the girl. My younger sister visited me on Thursdays. I realised what would I have done if it was my sister, reality set in.”

RP 32 stated that: “I was ashamed what I’ve done to the girl, that is why I took myself to the police station.”

RP 36 replied: “I just went back home. I drank again at tavern and went to sleep. I didn’t think about it; forgot until the police arrived. I didn’t tell anyone. When police arrived, I thought I’m going to jail but hoped they would give me bail. First time I

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8 The colloquial name used for Johannesburg Correctional Centre is Sun City (Safer South Africa Foundation, 2013).
thought about jail was when the police stopped outside. I didn’t think about the girl. When I was arrested I started thinking about the girl. What I did wasn’t good.”

RP 40 said: “I was afraid that she was going to tell her mother that I raped her. When the police came I thought she and her mother went to the police and told them that I raped her. When I was in holding cell I thought about her and that the thing I do was not right. She didn’t want to do it, I forced her.”

RP 41 responded: “The next morning I was thinking what I did was wrong, when I was sober. I speak with my friends and said eish the thing we did yesterday wasn’t right. They said that we were drinking and we did things but didn’t think. We didn’t talk about it again. I was thinking that the girl was angry and now we are her enemies and she will never forgive us for the things we did to her.”

RP 48 conveyed: “After I raped her I started thinking clearly with my mind, it was as if my mind was thinking positively. I started saying sorry for what I’ve done. I started to apologise. There I was starting to think that I was getting into trouble. I told her it was not my intention. I don’t know what happened. I asked her please don’t call the police, I’m so sorry. She said it is okay she could see I am drunk. I feel sorry for her because when I took her phone she told me that her mother died and she stayed with her grandmother. I thought it was not good.”

RP 64 explained: “I think about the girl. I was feeling guilty. When I finish while we are walking, I was feeling guilty because it wasn’t my style.”

RP 65 stated: “That is when I realised the things I was doing was wrong, when she went out and she was crying. I was thinking about trouble then. I was thinking that we hurt her and she was in pain. I felt sad.”

RP 72 responded as follows: “Directly afterwards I apologised, I realised what happened. I just came to my senses.”

RP 76 said: “She looked a little bit sad the next morning when I told her that my family don’t want girls sleeping over. I only realised that after the case was made. The first time I thought about this was in court when they told me I was not safe in community or for community. I start to think what I did wrong to make her lay charge.”

RP 78 described: “The police was there, we had to get away. The tough time started to begin in police cell. At the time I was thinking, I was coming to my senses. Why did I do this? I was asking myself a lot of questions. I was thinking about the girls.
Why did I do this to them? My friends said they did deserve it. Why were they wearing that? They were half naked under those shorts. I don’t agree with the friends. I was thinking about the feelings of the girls. That’s when I started to think why? I still don’t have answers. I never dream about abusing women.”

RP 84 shared: “Afterwards I was happy, I got what I want. In police cell I was blaming myself for everything I done because I’m going to jail. I was thinking about woman because I make her to live with pain.”

RP 56 explained that directly after the rape, he wanted to undo his actions. He explained his thoughts in the following manner: “After I killed her, I just went out. I told the neighbour that the child in the house, something happened to her. I couldn’t tell her what I did. She came over and saw I raped the girl. I didn’t cover it up. At that stage I was thinking maybe the women could wake the child up or do something, but she was gone.”

Close scrutiny of the responses of the research participants provided above reveals that some of them started to realise what they did and began thinking about the victim once they became sober, or when they were arrested. Some were only concerned about their own fate at that stage and feared incarceration. Others reported that once they were charged in court, they had to face what they had done and only then started to experience empathy for the victim. In other instances they indicated only starting to consider their victims after incarceration. Some of the research participants declared that they still felt no empathy for their victims and thought that they deserved it, or dismissed the victim by saying that they did not hurt or kill them. A few offenders viewed themselves as the victims and were angry that the charges were brought against them. Yet, other research participants revealed feeling intense remorse and wishing they could reverse their deeds or trying to apologise to the victim once they realised what they had done. In the next section the current feelings of the research participants towards their victims will be outlined.

5.2.2.4 Sub-theme 2.4: Offenders’ current feelings pertaining to the victim

Exploration of the research participants’ current feelings towards their victims disclosed that various participants felt sorry for their victims and some even
expressed the wish to ask their victims for forgiveness. A selection of such responses will be provided below:

RP 4 emphasised: “I feel sorry for the victim. I haven’t seen her again. I would like to see her again so that I can explain that I’m sorry.”

RP 18 said: “Now I feel like I ruined this girl’s future. She will never forget. It hurt emotionally. I want to say that I’m sorry.”

RP 23 declared: “Now my plan is to apologise to the girl. There is this thing called VOD\(^9\). I regret what I did to the girl, I feel sorry for her. I would like to make her see that what I did was wrong. I’m a changed person. I quit smoking. I have a daughter outside; she is 2 years 7 months. I was fighting with her mother because she was pregnant, before I went to the tavern the day of the rape.”

RP 24 said: “I feel sorry for the girl when I’m in the cell. When I watch tv, the news, see what others did to grandmothers and small child I feel sorry.”

RP 25 explained: “I feel sorry for L. I was too young and I was a gangster. I think it hurt her; others will say you had sex with a gangster. I still love her. I haven’t spoken to her. I would like to speak to her again.”

RP 43 responded: “Just if I can meet girl and apologise, but I know it is too late, my life is ruined. Obviously now they sentenced me. I started thinking about things I did. If I didn’t go to tavern I wouldn’t do it. If I didn’t meet the girl, but why did she greet me. I’m in prison. My friends no longer comes. I realise crime doesn’t pay. Crime, you will be disabled or die in prison. Now I realise she just greet me.”

RP 45 conveyed: “I want to finish my sentence. I am sorry for her, but I didn’t get the chance to talk to her, you see. She will never forget it; maybe I break her heart and her dignity. I didn’t ask permission for her, I just took the law into my own hands.”

RP 49 communicated that: “All that I’m feeling is that she could forgive me. Here I’m eating and have a place to sleep. That girl is maybe hurt for the rest of her life. Maybe something started going wrong in the relationship. Maybe she got a disease from my other friend. What is she going to tell her friends and family?”

RP 51 stated: “I feel sorry for her. Maybe she can forgive me. The day I got sentenced I felt sorry for the girl. The girl, when I got sentenced she was busy crying and said to “hof” (court) that she doesn’t recognise us. The girl was still scared.”

\(^9\) VOD is an abbreviation for Victim Offender Dialogue. This entails a meeting between the victim, the offender and community stakeholders (DCS launches Victim Offender Dialogue, 2013).
RP 60 declared: “I’m a bad man. What happened to her shouldn’t happen. My mind was not there. I don’t blame anyone, or drugs or alcohol. I should have used my mind. I blame myself for what happened. When I look at things now, some people blame the devil; it is them who take actions. Alcohol didn’t control my actions. Sometimes I used to be angry at my friends. Now I’m angry at myself. I’ve forgiven myself. I want to ask for forgiveness from my victim, so that I can move on with my life. My family is still visiting. They know I’m a good guy. I was the first one at home to reach matric. My mother was crying. There is only one thing that is always on my mind. My mother has high blood pressure, my brother has HI virus, my sister passed away when her child was 7 months. Who is going to take care of her?”

RP 67 emphasised: “Some other time I think about her. Now I change, I want, I need to apologise to her but I don’t think she will ever forgive me or trust that I changed. I think about her feelings. I know it is bad this thing I did. I’m shocked. I was that man.”

RP 72 gave the following exposition of his current thoughts and feelings: “I think about her. I just want to apologise to her. Afterwards I felt bad for her. I haven’t seen her since. From my side I do feel bad for the sentence I got. On the other hand I deserved it, because maybe I ruined her life. I want to explain to her what I was thinking at the time, why I did it and that I’m sorry. Maybe she will never get over the trauma and I messed everything up for her.”

RP 89 commented: “The thing I’m thinking about is writing a letter to her so that she can forgive me. Tell her I’m a different person, I don’t listen to my friends anymore. I want to give the letter to my parents so that they can give it to her, go to her house and give it to her parents.”

In other cases research participants indicated that they feel sorry for their victims and some of them said that they wanted to apologise for their actions. However, they qualified that their actions were a result of factors such as inexperience, peer pressure, substance abuse and ignorance pertaining to the wrongfulness and impact of sexual offences. Others appealed to higher loyalties (such as saying they were involved in crime to provide for their families) or they blamed the victim. Responses of this ilk echo the tendency to avoid responsibility. Examples of such responses are provided next.
RP 1 stated: “I think she will never forget. It was her first time to have sex. I have not seen her since, but I would like to say sorry but her parents don’t want to give me the chance. Women must say what they want or tell men when they don’t want something and not be angry afterwards. She should have said something.”

RP 5 emphasised: “I think I traumatised the girl a lot. If I could change anything I would change everything. I would like to see her again. I will try to explain that I was still young, didn’t think straight and didn’t mean to hurt her. Some people don’t plan it, it just happens. It would have made a difference in my life if I knew what the consequences are for a victim. When I was arrested I realised that I could go to prison for a long time. I have a sister and mother and thought what if it was them, but I only thought about that later. I knew it but in the moment I didn’t think about it.”

It must be noted that RP 5 had a score of 94% for the own victim empathy questionnaire, indicating a high level of empathy towards his own victim.

RP 6 explained: “I feel sorry for the girl I raped, I damaged her life. I am not angry with her, I am angry with myself. I wouldn’t have done it if I was sober. Those who sleep with her pay and she agreed to sleep with them. I didn’t pay and she didn’t agree.”

RP 9 declared: “I feel bad, because I was stupid, what I did was bad. She didn’t agree and I forced her. What made me feel bad is if something like that happened to my sister I will feel bad. While I was in prison I was thinking about it. I haven’t seen her again. I would like to see her again to apologise. Even if I didn’t drink it would have happened, because I also smoke dagga. If I wasn’t drunk or smoked it wouldn’t have happened. When I am normal I’m a good person, not angry, always I’m happy. I would have listened to what she was saying. I wouldn’t think she was playing when she said no.”

RP 13 elaborated: “When I think of her sometimes, I have this pain in my heart. I’m going to ask for her forgiveness. Her and my family, we are close. Her grandma and my grandma go to the same church. My grandma and parents visit me. I didn’t know that it was wrong, nobody told me. I never spoke to my dad about relationships or girls. I speak to my friends. No classes in school where they spoke about sex or relationships. Some of my friends like to have gang-girlfriends. I have six girlfriends. Township boys have peer pressure; have as many girlfriends as possible.”
RP 17 commented: “Sometimes I feel I learned myself, if someone says no you must accept. If I accepted no I wouldn’t be here. K put me in so much trouble. Not her, me. Because of her beauty. I would tell her I’m sorry if I could see her again. I have to forgive myself. I am being punished. I hurt her, holding her roughly. It wouldn’t have happened if I didn’t use alcohol or drugs. If I approached her when I was sober she would laugh and chat with me. She was a good girl.”

RP 29 said: “In Sun City I thought about K, there was this other church lady that spoke to me. It came to my mind that what I did was not right. Maybe if I can get the opportunity to ask K for forgiveness. I’m feeling as if I destroyed her future. Maybe she is not feeling well about the situation. Maybe she is blaming herself and it will take a long time for her. Maybe if I could control my feelings at that time all of this wouldn’t have happened. I don’t know if same thing would happen if I didn’t drink and smoke. I saw her with other boys before and it never came to my mind when I was sober. Before I went to party my mother said I must stay at home because she had a bad dream about me going to prison. If I listened all the bad things wouldn’t have happened. My father went out early in the morning and came back late in the evening. We didn’t have time to have father son talk. I think it would be different if he told me to stay. Sometimes my father used force, so if I don’t listen he will give me a hiding. It was also different because I was with friends. If I was alone I wouldn’t have strength to control her, because I was drunk and she was sober. If I told my friends stop it they would tell me I’m scared, that type of thing. When we were dragging her there was a van passing by and I said we should stop and they said we can’t, we already started.”

RP 31 stated: “I was thinking about the girl, maybe I will tell him sorry. Maybe she didn’t like it, but she didn’t tell me. Maybe she will tell me sorry. If girl told me to stop I would have stopped. After that I will move maybe to another location.”

RP 33 conveyed: “My heart it shows me, I’m not that person. At night I can’t sleep. It is not okay for me. The devil comes and say you will do this. I was planning to do good things. If I was on my own, not with friend, it wouldn’t happen. Me, I will never blame dagga/alcohol. What I blame is my actions; I wanted to prove someone that I’m not scared. I wanted to show him. You know how guys are. I never thought of raping or beating women. I respected women.” It should be noted that RP 33 had a
score of 92% for the general sexual abuse victim empathy questionnaire and a score of 83% for the own victim empathy questionnaire.

RP 48 revealed: “I even wrote her a letter that I apologise to her. It wasn’t my intention, I was on drugs. I’m sorry for putting down her image in the community. I think that she needs me to come to her and ask that I’m sorry. She want that to pass. Last week I called her grandmother and she said forget what happened you were still young, I understand. My grandmother and her grandmother are like friends now.”

RP 84 replied: “I think about how the female live. I took what happened to her and make it inside me and think how I would feel. After everything I don’t feel right. If she is alone in the house she will feel scared. You see all the things I did, I did to help my family. If my family had money I wouldn’t be here.” For clarity purposes it should be noted that RP 84’s main purpose was to rob and kill the husband of the victim who was raped. While searching for money he decided to rape her as well. His final remark during the interview was: “Now I see the way I have done was not right. You must get money with right decision, not like I have done.”

Other participants seemed to take responsibility for their actions whilst expressing feelings of remorse. They explained their feelings as follows:

RP 27 elaborated: “Now I feel I would like to see her and thank her for opening the case, I saw light. I’m no longer causing pain to my family. I was in prison before, but I was in gangs. No gangs anymore, I don’t want to hurt them anymore. I have a girlfriend and a child, I have to grow up. I look at what I’m going to do if someone tries to rape my girl. I feel shame; bring shame to my girlfriend and family. I’m grown up, I realise my mistakes. I want to go outside and go to schools and tell others what I did and who I am today. I made peace with my mom before she passed away. My girlfriend visits me. I pray to God for peace for the victim. While in Rustenburg prison my girlfriend came and said you aren’t K who I fell in love with. The one I know was involved in the community. My girlfriend asked me: Do you love me and your child? She said I have to choose. I realised I can’t lose this girl, she is always on my side and I found God. I encourage people, many change and realise their mistakes.”

RP 28 remarked: “Now I’m feeling okay, that I’m serving time for what I did. I feel that this is the right thing that should have happened. I want to go outside and carry on
with my life. Right now I’m just feeling sorry for her.” It should be noted that RP 28 scored 93% for both the own victim empathy questionnaire and the general sexual abuse victim empathy questionnaire.

RP 41 explained: “Sometimes I can tell me that I’m not a good man, I can call me a rapist. I can see that I’m not a man enough. I don’t think that if she see me she will feel fine. She will feel so badly.”


RP 56 revealed: “When I’m talking about this I feel better, because I talk to someone. I talked to the social worker. I don’t speak about it inside. I feel sorry for her. She was a child who needed to grow up and be something. I just took that from her. There is this gap between me and my family. I can’t blame them. My sister came once while I’m here. She says she knows why I did what I did. She is someone that believe in traditional things, muti, but I don’t. I don’t blame anyone for what I did.”

RP 58’s version of his current thoughts regarding his victims is as follows: “I think of them almost every day. I feel sorry for them. Even though there is no penetration, there is trauma. The other thing is the reason I confessed, I gave all the information because I felt guilty. If I lied, I would have won the case. I did the point-outs and confessed everything. Maybe I was going to do more if I was still outside.”

RP 85 said: “Yes, sometimes I think about the girl. I think that I put her life in danger. I’m asking myself why? I make her life to be difficult, because when I start to attend court the magistrate told me the girl always fight with her parents because they ask her where do you go so late? I don’t blame her for being out so late. I think that she is maybe sad.”

RP 93 responded: “I think about this girl every day. I can’t even look at myself in the mirror. The DNA showed I did it. I never thought that I will do such a thing. I have a child, she is a girl. I only saw her, but couldn’t touch her. I’m not sure what is going to happen to her. What I did might happen to her as well and I can’t even protect her. She visits my parents every weekend. I must stay here for 3 years before I can go back to KZN. If you can go back to my community, they will tell you I’m not this type of person. The community boycotted.” He started crying and said he was scared and

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10 KZN is the abbreviation for Kwa-Zulu Natal, a province in South Africa.
that he would rather commit suicide than be raped or killed inside prison. Furthermore, he explained that he was under the influence of alcohol and that he used drugs for the first time prior to committing the offence. He was unable to remember anything after using the drug until he started sobering up in the police cell.

Notwithstanding the common notion that many incarcerated offenders proclaim that they are not guilty, RP 63 petitioned his innocence. He denied that he had sexual intercourse with the complainant and emphasised that no DNA evidence was found to link him to the crime. He gave the following explanation of his current feelings towards the victim: “I feel sorry for the girl, because the person committing the crime is still on the outside. The perpetrator is from the family and still on the outside with her. I don’t know why she did it to me. I do feel angry, but I try to be positive, that is how I’m trying to survive. I sometimes ask myself how does she feel knowing that I didn’t commit the crime. It will be very difficult to look at her or to see her on the outside. 2016 will be my first appearance to parole board. How are they going to believe me? They say everyone inside says they didn’t do it. Even if I have to wait and sit here for 15 years, I can’t accept that I show remorse, I didn’t do it. I will try and prove my innocence. Even if I sit 15 years after that I will still try to prove that I’m innocent.”

The research participants who indicated that the complainants in their cases were willing participants expressed their current thoughts pertaining to their victims as follows:

RP 3 said: “I blame her mother, I am angry. For her I feel sorry. The victim approached the mother of my child (my girlfriend) and said she was dating me. She said she only opened the case because of her mother – she was scared she was going to be kicked out of the house.” To place this response into context it is important to know that RP 3 explained that he met the victim at a bar and that they had consensual sex. They spent the night together without her mother knowing where she was. According to RP 3 she told him that when her mother found out where she was, she forced her to lay a rape charge. It should be noted that RP 3
obtained a score of 90% for the general sexual abuse victim empathy section of the VEDS, while he only obtained a score of 49% for the own victim empathy section.

RP 10 stated: “Sometimes I feel bad, sometimes I blame her, sometimes I blame myself – I knew that the two of us sleeping with her is not a good thing. In court they said we didn’t have the right to have sex with her or take advantage because she was drunk and she was young.” It should be noted that RP 10 and his friend had sex with the victim, but RP 10 is of the opinion that it was consensual. RP 10 was 17 years old and the victim was 16 years old. RP 10 explained the events of that day as follows: “One of my friends decided to take one of the girls and go and change the music in the other room. They did go there, but spent too much time there. Then all of a sudden the music was turned down, so I went there to check what was going on with the music. So when I got into the room the guy was coming out, so I asked him what is happening and he said I don’t know what is going on with this music and he went to the toilet. At that time the girl was on top of the bed, so I go straight to the music and try to fix it up. After I finish with the sound I decided to go outside but the girl stopped me and said that I mustn’t go, I must stay with her. Then I asked her why do you want me to stay here and she said don’t you want to have fun with me? So I told her that you already had fun with my friend so what you want to do with me. She told me, don’t be a fool, I know you want to have fun with me. She jumped over and came to me. At that time she was naked, so we started kissing and I brought her over to the bed and we started having sex.” … “Later I found the same guy (my friend) and he and the girl was arguing. I asked them what was going on, why you making so much noise. The girl told me this friend of yours wants to sleep with me. So I asked the girl: What did you say? She said to me I told him I want money because you cannot sleep with me the 2 of you without money. I asked her but you didn’t tell me anything about money. She told me that do you think you can have fun just like that, I need money. So I told the girl, me I don’t have money and she said to me you have to make a plan because if you don’t I will go to the police station.” … “All of a sudden she told them that we have raped her. When she told them I was very angry and I lost my temper and beat her. So my friends told me I mustn’t beat her, we must talk. While my friends were busy the other one took me and said we must go, because we are drunk and we might regret it the next day.” It should be noted that RP 10 scored higher than the average on both sections of the VEDS, as
RP 21 explained his feelings for the victim as follows: “I have pain, many things in my mind. I am still angry. It was 2010 and now it is 2013. My mother passed away in 2011 and my grandmother and my uncle. The girl keeps on enjoying her life. I phoned her and asked her why she is doing this to me. She said you must serve long time. I was first year office admin student at the college. My family never blamed me. I still have some family members that come and visit, but I want to see my mother’s grave.” RP 21’s version of the events occurring on the day in question was as follows: “We had a party at the location, me and my friend. We have a lot of money from crime business, robbery. We drink alcohol from 18:00, we dance. 22:00 me, I go to sleep. They came back to other friend’s house where I was sleeping at 1am. They come back with girl, living in another street. The friend and girl was having sex. They said I must sleep. I was drunk. Girl and friend slept after having sex. The girl woke up and she woke me up. She is naked and on top of me, kissing me. Even me, I sleep with her. 4am she wanted to go to her grandmother. My friend still sleeps. Me and the girl we wake up and go. While we are walking I go to shop to buy cigarettes and the girl leaves and goes to police station. By the time she goes to the police station it was a huge set-up. She opened a case for me and my friend. It was a set-up because her boyfriend was in prison. Me and my friend testified against her boyfriend in the case of murder.” It is noteworthy that RP 21 scored 99% for the general sexual abuse victim empathy questionnaire and 52% for the own victim empathy questionnaire.

RP 26 explained: “I feel so sad because I’m here now; I’m losing my everything outside, my job, my property. Maybe her, she is happy now. Her mother told her if she doesn’t do this she must leave. She feels nothing. I will ignore her and her family when I go outside. She is not visiting, nothing. My friend couldn’t testify, he said he was working and he was too scared to talk. The doctor said there was vaginal bruising. Money talks in the police station.” It should be noted that RP 26 said that he had consensual sex with the victim on the way to her home while he was accompanying her. He explained the events of the evening as follows: “I asked her would she like something to drink. She said Savannah. Nice song was hitting, we dance, we dance. I was gossiping to her while we were dancing and I asked her if
we could be together, having fun. She said she come with her brother and can’t come to my home. I asked if they don’t come back, what do you wanna do. It is far where she was staying. She said we would see if it’s 2am at the end of the party. We were busy dancing, dancing. I went to the toilet again and left her at the table. She was still there. While sitting it became 1:55, so I went to my friend and told them that if I disappear from them I’m already gone. When I come back she was gone. I was looking for her, didn’t see her inside ... Me, my friend and his girlfriend was in car. While driving I saw her clothes and she was walking. I asked him to stop and opened the car. I asked her where she was going. I said we will give you a lift. My friend said her house was out of the way. He said he was drunk, my friend, and has to work tomorrow. I said to her let’s see where he will drop us. 2:15 my friend dropped us on corner where I live. I said we will sleep at my room. It is night; we don’t know what is going to happen. She refused and told me about her mother. She knew that the girl went to the party with her brother. I said I will sacrifice a place for her to sleep until it is light, morning. She said no, she wants to go home. I said let me accompany you, it is dangerous. But it will be difficult for me to be back in time to go to work. She said I can accompany her until I feel I have to turn back. I asked her why she didn’t want to sleep at my house. She said her mother gets cross quickly. Her mother was drinking. She has a hard heart. What will your mother say if you sleep outside from your home? She told me we will do it next time, sleep together ... Both of us were drunk and then I asked her for a one night stand. I was already in the mood. There was a passage and we hide there. I undress her trousers and panties and kiss her and touched her again. She liked it, so I put my penis to her. We walked to her home and I turned off a short distance before her house to be in time for work. She said she is fine and she could see her house. I asked can I turn off and she said no problem. I kissed her and walked off. When I go home in the morning, I washed, went to work and my sister phoned and said her mother, father, brother and sister-in-law was at my house. I asked my sister why they were looking for me. I said I know E. The family said I raped her. I begged my boss to leave and said there is a problem at my house. I lied to my boss and said my child is vomiting. He said I can go home. When I’m coming in the mother was screaming and swearing at me. I asked, E did I rape you and she said yes. I asked how did I know that you were at the pub with your brother? She said that I wanted to rob her. I said what did I take? I asked her, but
you still have your phone. She said I was raping her and then ran away and she ran away. The mother said I must be quiet. They went to the police. I said I wasn’t run away, this is where I stayed. They phoned the police and they took me to the station. E wrote a statement, it wasn’t from her, it was from her mother. The girl said I was beating her with a bottle and stamped her head on the floor. The girl had no scars. The doctor confirmed that.” It is noteworthy that R 26 scored below average on both sections of the VEDS. His score for the general sexual abuse empathy section was 70% and his score for the own victim empathy section was 62%.

RP 30 responded: “Young girls nowadays say it is right I will have sex with you and later says it is rape. I’m hurt. I’m learning lot of things. Girl didn’t want to open case. Mother said otherwise she will punish her.” It is important to note that both of his empathy scores were below average and his general sexual abuse victim empathy score was lower than his own victim empathy score. He obtained a score of 60% for the general sexual abuse victim empathy section of the VEDS, whereas his score for the own victim empathy section was 68%.

RP 68 commented: “I feel bad, I’m angry. I buy beers and we talk and she says it’s fine and then she goes to the cops.” It should be noted that both his general sexual abuse victim empathy score as well as his own victim empathy score were below average. He scored 76% and 63% respectively.

RP 75 explained: “Sometimes I do think about her. I just ask myself after she did it she is the one not telling the truth. If I feel guilty how must she feel? My vision of rape was forcing a girl, you beat her up, there will be evidence. I never thought if she was a minor and our friends sleep with her we can be in trouble. This thing has been going on like this since high school. My dad never asked, I never talk, I just went home to sleep and eat, I was with friends.” It is noteworthy that his general sexual abuse victim empathy score was 98%, whereas his own victim empathy score was 50%. Thus, it does not appear as if he displays any general sexual abuse victim empathy deficits.

RP 83 declared: “Sometimes I think about her, but then I just remove it from my mind. She was in court but she didn’t look at me. She told lies, she was scared. Sometimes I’m angry at her, but then life goes on, I can’t stay angry forever.” It should be noted that his general sexual abuse victim empathy score was 96%, whereas his own victim empathy score was 26%. As was the case with the previous
research participant discussed above, it does not appear as if RP 83 displays any general sexual abuse victim empathy deficits either.

RP 86 replied: “I think about her. I just want to tell her that she laid a charge for me when we agreed to have sex. I was angry, but not now, I accept what happened. I think she laid the charge for me because I didn’t want to give her money.” Interestingly enough his own victim empathy score was higher than his general sexual abuse victim empathy score. He obtained an own victim empathy score of 88%, whereas his general sexual abuse victim empathy score was 78%.

Some research participants were still angry about the fact that their victims brought charges against them, while others remained concerned about their reputations which had been tainted. Some of the comments provided resonate the egotism or lack of social awareness displayed by the research participants. The following verbatim responses substantiate this observation:

RP 11 said: “I felt guilty – I already get my punishment. People are going to call me rapist when I go out. I want to call a meeting with a community member and apologise, I’m not a criminal. I feel bad for victim, even neighbours they never trust me anymore. I would like to see the victim, I want to ask forgiveness. Maybe she is going to accept it. I need forgiveness.”

RP 14 stated the following: “I can bully the girl, angry with the girl. When I’m outside I can’t control my anger. The girl ruined my life.”

RP 15 explained: “I don’t know what I am thinking now. I know I did something wrong, terrible thing. Maybe she also loved it, why didn’t she point me.” For clarity purposes, the ‘point me’ refers to the fact that according to the research participant, the victim pointed to one of the other accused when asked who raped her. RP 15 explicated his thoughts about this aspect as follows: “I became happy because I was afraid of going to prison for a long time. They asked her if she was sure and she said that she will never forget the guy’s face. I thought her family want me to go out because the family wanted to kill me. The DNA pointed to me. I knew she knew it was me. They asked the girl to point again. She then pointed me. The magistrate asked why did you say it was the other one. I thought maybe the girl liked what happened.”
RP 20 commented: “I feel sorry for him, sometimes angry. Why did he do it? I feel sorry; when I told him to stop crying he cried worse. Maybe people from outside, like my parents won’t trust me anymore.”

Other research participants were self-absorbed, complacent or dismissive by indicating that currently they do not think about the victim at all. An exposition of their thoughts is provided below.

RP 46 said: “I don’t think about her at all.”
RP 62 explained: “Because of VOD I think about the victim. The complainant should come and talk to me so that I can ask forgiveness. Naa, otherwise I’m not thinking about the victim at all. I’m very sorry. I regret myself too much.”
RP 64 conveyed: “Sometimes I think about her, but years passed by. I also wanted to make that thing where you apologise. Sometimes I think about myself. She is hurt, she can forget. Me, I can’t. Each day I wake up and see this place. Freedomless.”
RP 87 responded: “Sometimes I think about them. I think about the one who was raped, it was my girlfriend’s sister. I don’t feel good because she is angry for me.”
RP 91 commented: “Too much, I think what I did to her. Sometimes it makes me confused. How am I going to confront her family when I go outside? I think she will hate me for it.”
RP 96 shared: “I think about them. I ask myself what they will wish to do to me if they see me outside after I served my sentence, because I hurt them with my accused.”

Other research participants indicated that they wished that they could forget about the ordeal and move forward with their lives. They explained their thoughts in the following manner:

RP 69 conveyed: “I’m thinking about her. I want to tell her how I feel about her. I read the newspaper and listen to the news. If I go outside I don’t want her to be scared or run away. I want her to be free. Let’s leave past in the past and move forward.”
RP 71 replied: “To be honest, I’m not really thinking of her. Anger and revenge had always been my motivation. Now I want the past to fade in the past along with its people and move on with my life.”
RP 78 explained his current feelings by sharing: “I’m not fine about it now. I blame myself every second. When I was in trial I was hating myself when I was looking into the mirror. I’m not used to this environment. People at church said they can see something is hurting me. Then after that I like to sing gospel songs. That’s when I started to heal. When I sing I forget about everything. When I stop I think. I started to believe in God and meditate. I told myself it is not over, unless God says it is over. It is only God that knows. That’s when I started to change myself. God has forgiven me, I must move on with my life.”

RP 81 said: “No, I don’t think about her too much. I was thinking about her in 2011 after they sentenced me. I even thought of committing suicide. I didn’t believe it was me. I wasn’t comfortable with it. Now I know it happened, I can’t change it.”

Exploration of the research participants’ current feelings pertaining to their victims revealed that various participants felt sorry for their victim and some even articulated that they would like to ask their victims for forgiveness. Others indicated that even though they felt sorry for their victims and would like to ask for forgiveness, they committed the offences due to factors such as inexperience, peer pressure, substance abuse and ignorance pertaining to the wrongfulness and the impact of their offending behaviour. Some of the participants appealed to higher loyalties by claiming that they were involved in crime to provide for their families, while others blamed the victim. Some of the participants accepted responsibility for their offences and expressed feelings of remorse. On the other hand, a few indicated that the complainants in their cases were willing participants. One participant petitioned his innocence by claiming that he did not have any sexual interaction with the victim and that there was no DNA evidence to link him to the offence. Some participants were angry about the fact that their victims brought charges against them, while others remained concerned about their reputations which had been tainted. Others were self-absorbed, complacent or dismissive by indicating that currently they do not think about the victim at all, while others said that they wished that they could forget about the ordeal and move on with their lives. In the next section the views of participants regarding correctional programmes in the YCCs will be provided.
5.2.3 THEME 3: CORRECTIONAL PROGRAMMES IN YOUTH CORRECTIONAL CENTRES

The research participants were probed about their involvement in and attendance of correctional programmes in the YCCs where they were incarcerated. An overview of some of the comments regarding the correctional programmes that are offered in the respective centres, as well as their views pertaining to the inclusion of empathy components in correctional programmes are provided in the next section.

5.2.3.1 Sub-theme 3.1: Attendance of programmes

A number of research participants expressed appreciation for the correctional programmes available in the YCCs. Some of their responses follow:

RP 18 replied that: “In prison everyone must do Sex Offender programme. If I had a choice I would still do it.”

RP 20 said: “People should attend programmes in prison, make it compulsory. Life Skills is a good programme.”

RP 23 opined that: “Courses such as Life Skills are valuable. Maybe make them compulsory. The others say it won’t change their lives, it is useless. It can’t change them, they must decide.”

RP 24 stated: “There is courses in prison and you can go to school. Life Skills and Anger Management programmes. They work, but not everyone goes.”

RP 29 elaborated: “There is a course for sex offenders. They teach us about sexual offences. They are showing us the importance of females. Most of the time we think they are not like us. I learned that we all have something in common; we want to feel safe and loved. If the girl says no, I mustn’t force myself into her.”

A few of the research participants indicated that they experienced the correctional programmes in a negative light, or they felt that the programmes did not focus on aspects they deemed important. Some of their responses will be provided next:

RP 13 said: “The Sexual Offender programme taught us different types of abuses and rape. We talked about how the victim feels. We didn’t talk about relationships.”
RP 16 stated that: “There should be more activities during the programmes in prison. We just sit in the class and listen to a story book. They have to preach less, it leads to resistance.”

Some of the research participants provided a general overview of their views pertaining to the different programmes and recreational activities that are available in YCCs. Some also focused on the general impact that incarceration has had on them. A few of these responses follows:

RP 33 elaborated: “We have Sex Offence, Anger and Life Skills programmes. Some of us we don’t have plans what we are going to do outside. You have to work for food outside. Outside I was a boxer. I play soccer and boxing inside. I’m good on it.”

RP 35 added that he attended the following programmes: “Anger Management, Crossroads, Substance Abuse, Sexual Offences, Life Skills, New Beginnings.”

RP 48 said: “Life is not easy, but once we truly accept it and work on towards it then life is no longer difficult. Life is not about money, not about what you wear not about pure pula (be a famous person in the location). Crime is not the way that you can make money. There is lot of ways to make money with our hands and minds. Tell the people outside they must not learn from their own mistakes, learn from other’s mistakes. I don’t want other youths to mess up their future. I left school grade 7 but today because of prison I have N5 certificate, N2 Electricity (Level 1 and 2), Level 1 and 2 Computer literacy, Substance Abuse programme, Anger Management, Sexual Behaviour programme, New Beginning programme. I’ve won a certificate in poetry. I motivate people, all of the inmates. I accepted God as my Christ and saviour in prison. Now I’m ready to face the world. I’ve disappointed my family. I just want to build trust up. All of the other younger ones smoke nyaope and slip out of school. I must provide for them, so that the siblings coming at the back of me will know the right things to choose at life. I thank the prison for what they’ve done to me. I’m a better person. My family is so very happy. Last week I went to parole board. I haven’t done even a year. After 8 months I am going out. I even know English. I realised that life is not about me.”

RP 61 explained his thoughts about prison life as follows: “For now I’m saying it is the purpose of God for me to be here. After attending church I found the peace of
God. Before that I was crying all the time, my pillow was always wet. Thank God I found the peace of God. I tried to forget. I can forgive, but I can't forget. It ruined my life. There was nothing I could do because I really loved her. We said that no-one will separate us. My sister knew and they found out before we had sex. They tried to break us up but they failed. Her mother was swearing at me, but I just told myself that she was mad. She beat the girl every time she heard she was with me, but she kept coming to me. Her mother found the opportunity to find me guilty. There was no hard feelings between me and the girl. It was not the first time we had sex.”

RP 75 gave the following exposition of the impact of programmes he attended in the YCC: “I found my potential in prison, motivational speaking; Mo-Africa\textsuperscript{11} and Pillar To Post\textsuperscript{12}, Footballers 4 Life\textsuperscript{13}. I’m just surrounding myself with positiveness. Outside I didn’t know about decision making. I just took everything as it comes, go with the flow, but now I know between right and wrong and I know how to stand by my decisions. No longer about pleasing others, but pleasing myself. Usually people learn from their own mistakes, but wise people learn from others’ mistakes.”

RP 91 gave the following version of the impact that the YCC had on him: “For me to be in prison, it made me come to my senses and realise I’m not the person I thought I was. I found God and he made me realise that I’m not here to do bad things, I’m here to win souls for him. I’m not saying it’s nice to be in prison, but I have time to meditate. I was involved in gangsterism, but I’ve realised it is holding me back from reaching my goal. If you give yourself to God, he forgives us. I gave him all my sins. He said come to me and cast all your burdens. He gave me the lightest weight.”

Some of the participants felt indifferent about the programmes, or indicated that they only attend programmes because they know that it is a requirement of the parole board. Their views will be provided next:

RP 71 said: “Sex programme is a must for the parole board, also Life Skills and Anger Management.”

\textsuperscript{11} According to the research participant, Mo-Africa is a correctional programme presented in some of the Correctional Centres. It focuses on HIV/AIDS and TB education.

\textsuperscript{12} Pillar to Post has an educational theatre component where inmates perform for visiting school groups.

\textsuperscript{13} Footballers 4 Life is an organisation consisting of 6 retired professional football players who give back to society. They focus on life skills and social issues that relate to HIV/AIDS and TB.
RP 86 replied: “Only did New Beginning. I want to go to other programmes because it will help in parole board and they will see you changed and you won’t make another crime.”

A number of research participants expressed appreciation for the correctional programmes that are presented in the YCCs, while only a few indicated that the programmes did not focus on aspects they deemed important. Moreover, the general views of participants regarding their attendance of correctional programmes and participation in recreational activities in the respective YCCs were positive and they acknowledged the positive influence it has had on their lives. On the other hand, a few participants felt indifferent about the programmes and indicated that they only attend them, due to their awareness of the fact that the parole board requires attendance of correctional programmes. The views of the research participants with regards to the inclusion of victim empathy components in the correctional programmes will be provided in the next section.

5.2.3.2  Sub-theme 3.2: Inclusion of victim empathy components in the programmes attended

Research participants were asked if the programmes that they attended focussed on victims and the impact that sexual offences have on them. Furthermore, the researcher enquired if they were of the opinion that it was important to have programmes with such a focus. Next, some of their comments will be provided:

RP 6 mentioned: “Programmes must teach us how the rape affects the victim’s life. If they did something to my sister how would I feel?”
RP 35 said: “We need Victim Offender Dialogue. I want to speak to the victim to get the truth out there. I want to apologise to show the victim that she should be honest.”
RP 51 replied: “I did Anger Management where they teach about victims, how to treat anger because anger made us commit these crimes.”
RP 52 responded: “I went to Life skills, Anger Management, Sexual Offence programme where we did victim empathy. We debate topic of rape. Why it happens. Talk about our own story. We are 20 in a group. There is not a lot of time, not everyone gets a chance.”
RP 53 stated: “I did programmes like Family Tree, New Beginning. Talking about rapes, doing drugs, peer pressure, victims, how you get in trouble, nothing about empathy.”

RP 56 conveyed: “The Sex Offender programme included victims but I can’t remember what.”

RP 58 explained the content of the Sex Offender programme he attended as follows: “I attended many programmes. I never talked about my case in the Sex Offender programme. Only social worker knows. In the programme we talked about how victims in general feel, how they would feel if they saw you. We use newspaper and talk about how the victims feel and how we feel. Some talked about their own victims as well.”

RP 59 commented: “In the Family Foundation programme we discussed Victim Offender dialogue (VOD).”

RP 61 shared: “I made many programmes, nothing focusing on the victim.”

RP 64 described: “Life Skills said something about victim but I can’t remember. Since I’ve applied for Dialogue, the victim has passed away. What must I do know?”

RP 65 emphasised: “Programmes are helpful. Anger Management helped me a lot, taught me how to control my anger. No programme directly spoke about the victim.”

RP 75 disclosed: “The Sex Offence programme, our social worker talks about victims and we write a letter to victim. I also attended psychologist. I also wrote letter to victim and letter back from victim to me. I registered for VOD.”

RP 76 reiterated: “Nothing about victims. More about me, how to start new life, self-image, self-awareness, respect for others.”

RP 81 elaborated: “In New Beginnings and Sex Offender programme we looked at victims. What causes us to commit crime and what can we do not to commit crime again.”

RP 82 communicated that: “In the Alternative Violence programme someone from outside tell us about Victim Dialogue.”

When discussing the inclusion of a victim empathy component in programmes that are presented in YCCs the researcher became aware of the fact that many research participants did not understand the concept ‘victim’. During the interviews it was also observed that some participants refused to use the concept ‘victim’ and referred to
the ‘complainant’ in their case. This might be an indication of a refusal to acknowledge the harm that they caused to the victims in their cases by distancing themselves from the concept ‘victim’ as that would imply that they were the victimiser. Furthermore, some of the participants acknowledged the importance of victim empathy components in correctional programmes as they explained that they were not aware of the impact that their offending behaviour would have on the victim. Additionally, they expressed the need for involvement in restorative justice initiatives such as VOD’s, where they can apologise to their victims. Some raised the fact that the correctional programmes were held in groups of approximately 20 members and that there is insufficient time for everyone to participate. Moreover, many participants conveyed that the correctional programmes which they participated in did not have an empathy component, or did not really focus on victim empathy.

5.3 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher analysed the collected data. An exposition of the biographical characteristics of the research participants were given, followed by a description of the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires. The results of the measurement of general sexual abuse victim empathy as well as own victim empathy was discussed. Subsequently an exposition of the qualitative data was given by identifying emergent themes and sub-themes. Verbatim extracts were provided to indicate the research participants’ thoughts, feelings and opinions regarding the questions that were posed to them during the interviews. In the following chapter the researcher will discuss the attainment of the goal and the objectives of the study, where after the data will be interpreted with reference to the literature review and theoretical framework as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively. In addition, a discussion of the need to include victim empathy components in intervention programmes focussing on youth sex offenders will be provided. This will be followed by an exposition of the value of the study, limitations of the study as well as recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER 6
RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

In the current study which focusses on victim empathy in youth sex offenders, the following concepts were operationally defined in Chapter 1: Victim, sexual conduct, empathy and youth sex offender. The remainder of the chapter was devoted to a discussion of the rationale, the goal and objectives as well as a synopsis of the methodological procedures that were applied in the study. Chapter 2 consisted of a literature review focussing on the nature and extent of youth sex offending. Furthermore, the conceptualisation and different types of empathy, as well as the prevalence of empathy in youth sex offenders were provided. In Chapter 3 the researcher provided an overview of selected Criminology theories which renders themselves to provide possible explanations of high risk behaviour in young offenders. This was followed by a discussion of Marshall and Barbaree’s integrated theory which focusses on youth sex offending. Subsequently relevant theories within the field of Psychology were discussed to explain moral and cognitive development. By combining aspects from the Criminology and Psychology theories, as well as Marshall and Barbaree’s integrated theory, the researcher developed a model coined the sex offending and empathy deficit correlational model. The model serves as a theoretical framework for this study. Chapter 4 comprised of a discussion of the methodological procedures executed in the study, as well as ethical considerations that were of paramount concern. In Chapter 5 an exposition of the empirical data was furnished.

In the concluding chapter the researcher aims to assess whether the goal and objectives of the study, as explicated in Chapter 1, were achieved. Furthermore, the researcher intends to integrate the literature emanating from the literature review, as well as the theoretical framework of the study, with the empirical data obtained from the VEDS and the interviews. Moreover, recommendations pertaining to the inclusion or exclusion of victim empathy components in intervention programmes for youth sex offenders will be provided. Furthermore, recommendations will be made pertaining to worthwhile future research endeavours focussing on victim empathy in
youth sex offenders. The chapter will conclude with a reflection on the value, as well as the limitations of the study.

6.1 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The goal of this study was to measure, describe and compare the prevalence of victim empathy in youth sex offenders. The researcher is of the opinion that this goal was achieved, as the prevalence of empathy for a general sexual abuse victim, as well as for their own specific victim was measured by means of the VEDS. In order to develop an in-depth understanding, the two types of victim empathy were explored further by means of semi-structured interviews to achieve the goal of describing if, when and how youth sex offenders experience, or display empathy for their victims. Lastly, comparisons were made between the prevalence of the two types of empathy which were measured by the VEDS. As explained in Chapter 5, the Wilcoxon signed rank test was performed using SPSS which led to the conclusion that youth offenders had significantly less empathy for their own victims, when compared to a general sexual abuse victim in a case study.

In order to achieve the goal, the following objectives were developed and operationalised:

- To gain in-depth theoretical knowledge of what victim empathy entails. The objective was achieved by conducting a thorough literature study. Relevant articles, books and Internet sources were consulted and consequently a literature review was provided in Chapter 2. Furthermore, theories that are applicable to the study were examined in Chapter 3, which were used to create an integrated model which served as the theoretical framework of the study.

- To measure and gain in-depth knowledge regarding the prevalence of empathy for a general (non-specific) sexual abuse victim in youth sex offenders. The objective was attained by using the VEDS to measure the prevalence of victim empathy for a general sexual abuse victim. Following the
measurement, in-depth knowledge of the prevalence of victim empathy for a sexual abuse victim as portrayed in a case study was gained by means of semi-structured interviews that were conducted with each research participant.

- To measure and gain in-depth knowledge regarding the prevalence of own victim empathy in youth sex offenders.

The objective was accomplished by using the VEDS to measure the prevalence of victim empathy for the youth sex offender's own victim. Following the measurement, in-depth knowledge regarding the prevalence of own victim empathy in youth sex offenders was gained by means of semi-structured interviews that were conducted with each research participant.

- To compare the prevalence of empathy for a general (non-specific) sexual abuse victim and own victim empathy in youth sex offenders.

Following the measurement of general sexual abuse empathy and own victim empathy as explained above, the researcher compared the two measurement results by means of different statistical techniques. Each respondent's accumulated score for both sections of the VEDS (general sexual abuse victim empathy and own victim empathy) was calculated on Excel and the average score for the 96 participants was determined as well. Bar graphs were compiled to graphically represent the different scores that each respondent obtained for the two sections of the VEDS. In addition, the Wilcoxon signed rank test was performed by using SPSS, to determine if there was a significant difference between the respondents' general sexual abuse victim empathy and the empathy that they displayed for their own victims. Thus, this objective was achieved as well.

- To provide recommendations with regard to the need for the inclusion or exclusion of victim empathy advancement in intervention programmes aimed at rehabilitating youth sex offenders.

During the interviews, research participants were asked to indicate in which correctional programmes they participated. In addition, they were probed if the programmes that they attended included a component focusing on victim empathy. This information together with insights gained during the rest of the
data collection process was presented in Chapter 5 and will be elaborated upon later in this chapter. Thus, this objective was achieved as well.

The next section will focus on the themes and sub-themes that emanated from the interviews which were conducted with the research participants. Key findings and conclusions regarding these themes will be forthcoming. Before embarking on a discussion of the key themes, the researcher wishes to reflect on specific aspects that emerged from the biographical information obtained from the research participants.

6.2 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The aspects which are deemed noteworthy and require further scrutiny are the current age of the youth sex offenders as well as their age when they committed the offence, the relationship of the offenders with their victims as well as the age of the victims.

6.2.1 CURRENT AGE AND TRANSGRESSION AGE OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

As discussed in Chapter 5, Paragraph 5.1.1, a substantial number of the youth sex offenders who participated in the interviews were between the ages of 20 and 25 years (66 out of the 96 participants = 68.75%) at the time of the interviews. Only seven of the participants (7.29%) were 17 years old, eight of the participants were 18 years old (8.33%) and fifteen of the participants were 19 years old (15.63%).

In Chapter 5, Paragraph 5.1.6 it was highlighted that a noteworthy number of the research participants indicated that they were 17 years old when they committed the offence (27=28.12%). Furthermore, seventeen (17.71%) of the research participants stipulated that they were 16 years old, twelve (12.5%) of them said that they were 15 years old and one (1.04%) was 13 years old at the time of the offence. Thus, fifty-seven of the ninety-six research participants (59.38%) were younger than 18 years old when they committed the sexual offence.
Consideration of the age categories of the offenders who participated in the current study highlighted certain aspects that had to be taken into account. The South African Constitution of 1996 defines a child as a person younger than 18 years. As discussed in Chapter 1, Paragraph 1.1.4, most authors such as Booyens et al. (2013:37) define a youth sex offender as a person under the age of 18 years who carries out a sexual offence “with a person of any age, against the victim’s will, without consent or in an aggressive, exploitative or threatening manner.” Thus, young sex offenders are usually referred to as children, adolescents or youths and include individuals who are younger than 18 years. On the other hand, the White Paper on Corrections (2005) indicates that a youth or young offender is classified as an offender between the age of 18 years and 25 years. Thus, the DCS makes a distinction between child offenders (younger than 18 years) and youth offenders (between the ages of 18 years and 25 years). This implies that offenders who are younger than 25 years and who are sentenced to imprisonment in SA are housed in YCCs. Usually the children (younger than 18 years) are separated from the youths (18-25 years) and for security reasons, the 18-21 year old youths are also separated from the 22-25 year old youths. Pertaining to the current study, the researcher included all the child and youth offenders from the three YCCs in the Gauteng province who were willing to participate in the research. Due to the fact that only a small number of children younger than 18 years are currently incarcerated in these YCCs, the researcher had to broaden her scope to include the youth sex offenders as well (18 years to 25 years). Furthermore, the researcher decided not to distinguish between the child and the youth offenders in this study, but to refer to all the research participants as youth sex offenders, as only seven of the ninety-six research participants (7.29%) resorted under the “child” category. In addition, it must be noted that as mentioned earlier, 59.38% of the research participants committed their offences when they were younger than 18 years old, thus they were child offenders, but at the time of the interview they fell under the youth offender category.

6.2.2 VICTIM-OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP AND AGE OF THE VICTIMS

Upon comparing the empirical findings of this study with literature, it becomes evident that some of the results obtained in this study differ from international
findings. As stated in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.1.3, Rich (2006:195) indicated that youth sex offenders can be divided into three categories, namely youth sex offenders who offend against adults or peers, youth sex offenders who victimise children and youths who partake in both forms of sexual offending, thus targeting adults or peers and children. Furthermore, he states that most youth sex offenders resort in the second category which refers to the sexual victimisation of children. However, most of the youth sex offenders in the current study resort in the first category (i.e. victimisation of adults or peers) and not in the second category (i.e. victimisation of children) as stated in literature. As explained in Chapter 5, Paragraph 5.1.7, a noteworthy number of victims were older than 18 years (58=60.41%) when they were victimised, thus indicating that in 60.41% of the cases the youth sex offenders targeted adults or peers in the 18-25 years age bracket. Furthermore, twenty-five (26.04%) of the victims were between the ages of 14-17 years. Considering the fact that 59.38% of the participants indicated that they were younger than 18 years when they committed the offence, victims between the ages of 14-17 years can be viewed as their peers. Thus, in approximately 86.45% of the cases the youth sex offenders in this study resort in the first category of offenders who target adults or peers. Only three (3.13%) of the youth sex offenders targeted victims who were younger than 10 years.

International research findings (Andrade et al., 2006:163; Hunter, 1999) indicate that youth sex offenders who target adults or peers often victimise female strangers. This is congruent with the empirical data obtained in this study as a noteworthy number of research participants indicated that no prior relationship existed between them and the victim. Thirty-four (35.41%) of the youth sex offenders stipulated that their victims were strangers whom they have never met, or had any interaction with prior to the offence. In addition, twenty (20.83%) of the youth sex offenders indicated that their victims were acquaintances. This implied that they met their victims before, or knew them prior to the offence. However, there was no personal relationship or specific affinity between them. Typical victims in these instances were individuals whom they have only spoken to once, or seen once before. In other instances the victims were friends with someone both the offender and the victim knew, but the relationship could not be described as close or of any consequence.
On the other hand Hunter (1999) opines that youth sex offenders who victimise children are often relatives of the victim. These offenders mostly resort to manipulation to gain compliance, they do not necessarily use violence and their offences mostly occur in private settings. These notions were echoed in research conducted by Delport and Vermeulen (2004:45) as well as Naidoo and Sewpaul (2014:87). As indicated previously, only three (3.13%) of the research participants in the current study victimised children younger than 10 years and two of them indicated that their victims were family members. Thus, this finding albeit emanating from only three participants, is in line with international research findings. In addition, all three of the youth sex offenders in this study used manipulation to gain compliance from their victims. A difference does, however, exist with regards to the use of violence during the committing of the offence. Although the above-mentioned literature indicates that youth sex offenders who target children do not necessarily use violence and prefer a private setting, two inverse responses were attained in the current study. One of the youth sex offenders, who raped a 7 year old girl, killed his victim. In addition, one of the research participants committed his offence against a child at church after choir practice, thus not in a private setting.

In the following section conclusions pertaining to the different themes and sub-themes that emerged from the interviews will be provided.

6.2.3 THEME 1: GENERAL SEXUAL ABUSE VICTIM EMPATHY

As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2.3, empathy deficits displayed by sexual offenders may be narrowed down to their feelings towards the group of people that the victim resorts in, for example women or children, it may be directed towards people who have been victims of other sexual offenders or it may only be displayed towards their own victims (Marshall et al., 1995:102). In the current study, research participants’ levels of general sexual abuse victim empathy were measured in the first section of the VEDS. It is stated in Fisher et al. (1999:478) that the scale measures an individual’s understanding of the impact and effects that sexual abuse has on a victim as well as his or her beliefs regarding the feelings of the victim during the sexual contact. The thirty quantitative questions were followed up with an
interview where the research participants had the opportunity to explain their feelings toward the victim depicted in the case study. Conclusions regarding their responses will be provided next.

6.2.3.1 Sub-theme 1: Feelings for Sarah (victim in the case study)

Upon examination of the aggregate scores obtained by the research participants for the general sexual abuse victim empathy section of the VEDS, it must be noted that only thirty-one of the ninety-six research participants’ (32.29%) empathy levels measured below 80%. In addition, the research participants’ average empathy score for the general sexual abuse victim (Sarah) was 84% (100.8/120) with a minimum score of 48% (58/120) and a maximum score of 99% (119/120).

These quantitative scores gained more meaning when the researcher discussed the answers provided by the research participants with them during the qualitative interviews. Some of the research participants indicated that they felt very sorry for Sarah and some of them had empathy for Sarah and for the brother. Various research participants were upset about the fact that the sexual offence was committed by Sarah’s brother as they were blood relatives. Some of them indicated that it would have been better if she was abused by a stranger, as she will never be able to escape from the abuse of her brother. Various research participants had strong feelings with regards to the fact that Sarah was so young, and her brother was much older. They were of the opinion that her brother should have protected her instead of abusing her. Some of the research participants internalised the case study and applied it to their own lives. They shared their own feelings towards their sisters and said that they would never be able to sexually violate them and would be furious if someone else did.

On the other hand, some of the research participants engaged in victim blaming, by for example referring to Sarah’s obligation to report the sexual encounter. In question 5 of the questionnaire the research participants were asked if they thought that Sarah could have stopped her brother if she wanted to. The average response to this question indicated that they were of the opinion that it would have been easy for
Sarah to halt her brother from wanting to have sex with her. This might be an indication of victim blaming being expressed. Some participants even went so far as saying that she must have enjoyed it and that her sexual gratification is the reason for not reporting the sexual encounter to the authorities, or her parents. When linking responses of this ilk with literature, it is imperative to refer to a study conducted by Andersson et al. (2000:59) between 1998 and 2000. As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.1.4.6 these researchers interviewed 27,364 scholars in twenty-five schools situated in Johannesburg, in the Gauteng Province of SA. In this study they found that eight out of ten males (80%) believed that females were to blame for the occurrence of sexual violence. Three in ten interviewees (30%) in the study also claimed that if a girl was raped, she must have been asking for it. In addition, two in ten interviewees (20%) felt that females liked to be raped. Linking these findings with the current study affirms that in general, the research participants in the current study assigned blame to the victim in the case study. They were of the opinion that Sarah should have reported the matter. In addition, some of the research participants were of the opinion that she liked to have sexual intercourse with her brother. A possible reason why some of the research participants did not assign blame to the victim might be due to the fact that the case study involved a young girl, Sarah (7 years old) who was raped by her biological brother who was 15 years old. Had the case study focussed on a victim who was not related to the offender and if the age gap between them was smaller, different results might have been obtained.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2.3, Fernandez and Marshall (2003:11) found that rapists had significant empathy deficits towards their own victim/s and that they suppressed empathy directed towards their own victim, rather than suffering from a deficit in general empathy. Furthermore, they suggest that it might be more accurate to refer to the empathy deficits in rapists as cognitive distortions pertaining to their own victims. The current study correlates with the finding that the youth sex offenders had significantly less empathy for their own victims, when compared to the empathy that they displayed for a general sexual abuse victim. The next section will focus on the research participants’ empathy for their own victims.
6.2.4 THEME 2: OWN VICTIM EMPATHY

In the second section of the VEDS the same questions which were asked in the first section focussing on the case study were repeated. However, this time the research participants were asked to apply it to their own victims and convey their feelings and thoughts regarding the specific person whom they victimised. As discussed in Chapter 5, Paragraph 5.1.8, a Wilcoxon signed-rank test was conducted using SPSS after completion of the VEDS, to establish whether a significant difference exists between the research participants’ level of empathy for a general sexual abuse victim, compared to the level of empathy for the offender’s own victim. It was found that the youth sex offenders in this study had significantly less victim empathy for their own victim than for the general sexual abuse victim in the case study.

It is noteworthy that seventy of the ninety-six research participants (72.92%) measured lower levels of empathy for their own victims when compared to the empathy which they displayed towards Sarah. On the other hand, fifty-five of the ninety-six research participants’ (57.29%) empathy levels for their own specific victim measured below 80% and the average empathy score for the research participants’ own victims was 74% (89.17/120) with a minimum score of 25.83% (31/120) and a maximum score of 96.67% (116/120). Some of the answers provided by the research participants for specific questions are noteworthy and will be elaborated upon hereafter.

As explicated in Chapter 5, Paragraph 5.1.8, when discussing the participants’ responses to the questions pertaining to their own victims, most of the research participants were of the opinion that the victims could have easily prevented them from committing the offence, if they wanted to and they were of the opinion that their victims had a little bit of control during the sexual encounter. On average, the research participants felt that the victim had a little bit of a desire to have sex with them and they were of the opinion that it was possible that the victim suggested the sexual interaction and enticed them. This might be a way of denying responsibility for the offence. Furthermore, most of the research participants were of the opinion that the victim felt a little bit victimised by their actions, indicating the minimising of the
impact of the offence on the victim. When asking the research participants whether they enticed the victim and if it was their idea to have sex, the average answer was that the victim had been tempted by them a little bit, thus projecting some blame on the victim as well. On average, the research participants opined that their victim was not really harmed in the long term by what had happened. This is a clear indication of the presence of empathy deficits.

The above findings can be linked with the opinion of Curwen (2003:349) and Bartol and Bartol (2011:361) as discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2.2. They opine that sex offenders frequently deny their offences and minimise the harm that the victim suffered. In addition, they rationalise their behaviour and argue that their actions were not criminal. It can be argued that if denial and minimisation are present, it will give rise to a lack of empathy on the offender’s behalf. Deniers usually blame their victims and provide justifications for their behaviour. Some of the justifications used by youth sex offenders are that their victims dress provocatively, that they go to bars on their own, that they hitchhike or that they are known for their promiscuous behaviour (Bartol & Bartol, 2011:361). In the current study all of the previously mentioned justifications were provided by some of the research participants. A number of research participants referred to the fact that they meet girls in taverns or bars where they buy alcohol for them, or that girls join house parties where alcohol is served. The research participants emphasised that the girls knew that accepting a drink from a boy implies that you are willing to return the favour by having sexual intercourse. Various research participants also referred to the fact that the victim did not fight back or scream and saw it as a sign that they were willing participants. A few of the research participants referred to the victim’s attire and claimed that it was a contributory factor to the rape. The tendency to justify and rationalise delinquent behaviour is supported by the neutralisation theory of Matza and Sykes, who state that the neutralisation and justification of deviant behaviour usually precede criminal activities and “provide a moral release” (Lanier & Henry, 2010:179) to commit a crime without any special or specific motivation to act defiantly.

The above-mentioned responses testify to the possible presence of specific empathy deficits. These deficits were explored further during the qualitative interviews.
Numerous general observations were made by the researcher. The first observation was that various research participants were reluctant to say that the victim had no attraction to him. Furthermore, some of them refused to refer to the victim as a ‘victim’, but instead they used the concept ‘complainant’. In addition, a number of research participants were of the opinion that if the victim said something, he would not have continued with the sexual act. However, it must be emphasised that some of them acknowledged that they were aware of the fact that the victims would have preferred not to have the sexual encounter, or they became aware of the victims’ unwillingness during the sexual encounter. Despite acknowledging this awareness, they still continued with the offence, which negates the notion that they would not have continued with the sexual act if the victims voiced their unwillingness. It is also thought provoking that even though some of the research participants acknowledged that the victims had no control and felt very unsafe, they were still of the opinion that the victims could have easily prevented them from committing the offence.

The researcher noted that in general most of the research participants were adamant that they were in control of the situation, which perhaps has something to do with their need to emphasise their masculinity, but yet they did not want to admit that they enticed the victim. The researcher is of the opinion that the research participants who reacted in this manner wanted to avoid taking responsibility for the offence because had they admitted to leading the victim on, it might mean that they initiated the offence. In some of the instances where research participants indicated that the victim approached them and led them on, various contradictions were found when their versions were compared with the answers they provided in the VEDS. Some of them indicated that the victim felt unsafe and some acknowledged that she was harmed in the long term. If, however, she initiated the act, it is unclear why she would feel unsafe and why she would be harmed in the long term. In other instances, however, the versions of research participants who indicated that they had consensual sex with the victims were corroborated by their responses to the VEDS. One of the research participants resorting in this category obtained a score of 90% for the general sexual abuse victim empathy section, which is higher than the 84% average scored by the rest of the research participants. This might be an indication that he does not suffer from an empathy distortion pertaining to general victims of
sexual offences. In addition, all the information obtained during the interview corroborated his responses in the questionnaire. Whilst exploring the research participant’s current thoughts and feelings pertaining to his own victim, he stated that he was aware of the fact that the girl was sexually abused by a family member and that instead of shaming the family member, they placed the blame on him. Furthermore, he stated that he is not angry with the victim, but instead he feels sorry for her, because the real perpetrator is still at large and can victimise her repeatedly and with impunity.

After discussing the general observations and findings pertaining to the research participants’ display of empathy towards their own victims, it is important to focus on their thought processes during each phase of their offending behaviour. The first phase which was explored during the qualitative interviews was the time period prior to the offence. The researcher aimed to find out what the research participants were thinking prior to the offence and if they considered the feelings of the victim during this period. Conclusions regarding their responses will be provided in the next section.

6.2.4.1 Sub-theme 2.1: Offenders’ consideration of the impact of the offence on the victim prior to the victimisation

Analyses of the responses of the research participants divulge that most of them did not think about the consequences or the impact of the offence on the victims prior to committing the offence. This can possibly be attributed to various factors such as being under the influence of substances, which impaired their judgement. It must, however, be emphasised that in some of the instances both the offender and the victim were reported to be under the influence of a substance. It is stated in the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 that inter alia, consent is absent where the victim was under the influence of substances which led to an altered state of consciousness. This creates a scenario where the victim is deemed unable to have been in a position to consent, but the offenders are expected to take full responsibility for their actions, despite being under the influence of a substance as well. One of the research participants claimed that he could not remember committing the sexual offence as he was under the influence of alcohol and
consumed a pill which altered his consciousness. He did not dispute that he committed the offence, as one of his friends witnessed the act and his DNA matched the sample obtained from the victim. He, however, stated that he was in an altered state of consciousness and was not aware of his actions. He asserted that to date he still has no recollection of the rape. He recalled attending his girlfriend’s surprise party, having a few drinks and taking the pill. His next recollection was waking up in the police cell. He verbalised intense remorse and displayed no empathy deficits for his victim. He also signified that a blood sample was not taken after his arrest and thus there was no evidence of being under the influence of a substance.

Whilst explaining their thoughts prior to the offence some of the research participants used justifications for their actions. Some referred to the fact that the victims were flirtatious with other boys and said that they viewed them as promiscuous and consequently ‘fair game’. Others engaged in victim blaming by saying that the victims were at fault for walking alone at night or that they wore revealing clothes. Others were angry because the victims were not interested in pursuing a relationship with them and preferred other boys whom the offenders viewed as inferior or inappropriate choices. A number of participants felt that they were entitled to have sex with a girl if she accepted drinks from them, willingly came to their house for a house party, or if the girl, for instance, greeted them in a friendly manner.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.1.4.6, the research findings of Harris (2008:160) indicate that 16% of the youth sex offenders in her sample acknowledged that they believed in some of the rape myths mentioned above. On the other hand, Seto and Lalumière (2010:560) found that youth sex offenders do not display more distorted views of women, or have stronger beliefs in rape myths than non-sex offenders. According to the researcher this leaves one with the question, that if both youth sex offenders and non-sex offenders endorse certain rape myths, whether the prevalence of victim empathy could perhaps have an influence on their decision to act defiantly.

Some of the offenders initially committed another crime like robbery and became sexually aroused while ‘frisking’ the victim for cash or other valuable items. Thus, they
did not plan to commit the sexual offence as such. Others were impulsive and were sexually attracted to the victim.

Some of the research participants claimed that their convictions resulted from engaging in consensual sex with their girlfriends, while others indicated that their victims consented to the sexual act even though they were not in a relationship, or only met that specific day. Others claimed that they had sex with the girl before; consequently they assumed that it was acceptable to have sex with her again. In some of these instances the girl would, according to them, consent to the act, but would later demand money and if her demands were not met, she would bring rape charges against them. Others indicated that the complainant consented to the act, but was forced by family members to bring charges against them, as it would reflect badly on the family and on her if the community knew that she willingly engaged in extramarital sex. It should, however, be emphasised that the researcher is of the opinion that some of the participants had poor social skills and did not comprehend what it means to be in a relationship or did not interpret the behaviour of the victim correctly.

With regards to consensual sex between peers, it must be noted that sections 15 and 16 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007, criminalised penetration between children who were older than 12 years and younger than 16 years. Furthermore, it criminalised sexual interactions without penetration (sexual violations) between children who were older than 12 years and younger than 16 years in instances where an age gap of more than two years existed between the two children. These sections have, however, been deemed unconstitutional in the recent Constitutional Court case Teddy Bear Clinic for abused children and Another v Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development and Another (2013) as it was seen as an infringement on children’s constitutional rights to dignity, privacy and bodily and psychological integrity, as well as their right in terms of section 28(2) of the Constitution to have their best interests treated as being of paramount importance in all matters concerning them.
Furthermore, this infringement is not justifiable in terms of section 36 of the Constitution, as less restrictive means could have been used to regulate the consensual sexual interactions of peers (Khampepe, 2013). Consequently section 15 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 is currently in the process of being amended and in the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act Amendment Bill 18 of 2014 it now reads as follows:

A person (‘A’) who commits an act of sexual penetration with a child (‘B’) who is 12 years of age or older but under the age of 16 years is, despite the consent of B to the commission of such an act, guilty of the offence of having committed an act of consensual sexual penetration with a child, unless A at the time of the alleged commission of such an act, was (a) 12 years of age or older but under the age of 16 years; or (b) either 16 or 17 years of age and the age difference between A and B was not more than two years.

Section 16 of the Act now reads as follows:

A person (‘A’) who commits an act of sexual violation with a child (‘B’) who is 12 years of age or older but under the age of 16 years is, despite the consent of B to the commission of such an act, guilty of the offence of having committed an act of consensual sexual violation with a child, unless A, at the time of the alleged commission of such an act, was (a) 12 years of age or older but under the age of 16 years; or (b) either 16 or 17 years of age and the age difference between A and B was not more than two years.

These amendments were made as it was found that the legislation that was supposed to protect children had harmful effects, such as exposing children who engaged in consensual sexual relationships to the harsh criminal justice system. This in conjunction with the reporting duty which is placed in terms of section 54(1)(a), as well as the provisions pertaining to the National Register for sex offenders contained in Chapter 6 of the Act, exacerbated the negative effects of sections 15 and 16 of the Act. It must be noted that children who were prosecuted and found guilty under the previous Act will be able to make an application for the removal of their names from the Register (Khampepe, 2013).
Some of the research participants acknowledged that they purposively targeted vulnerable victims or individuals which they viewed as suitable targets. Furthermore, they admitted that they knew that the victim was not a willing participant, but that they continued with the transgression as they were of the opinion that their victims would be too scared or ashamed to report the offence. This can be linked with the theoretical framework of this study which states that if a youth finds himself in circumstances conducive to offending, such as a situation where he knows that chances of being apprehended are slim and that there is a reasonable possibility of getting away with the crime (impunity), he is likely to offend, if a suitable victim is present (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990:271).

A number of research participants were influenced by their peers when they committed the offence and claimed that they would not have committed the rape if they were on their own. Some declared that they were scared of their peers and others acknowledged that they wanted to impress their peers. These offenders resort under the group influenced category, as explained by O'Brien and Bera (1986:2). This classification system was also referred to in more contemporary studies, such as Harris (2008:29), Omar (2010:147), Serrao (2004:1) and Veneziano and Veneziano (2002:252). Typically these young offenders experience peer pressure and commit sexual offences to gain a feeling of belonging. In these instances the offender normally denies responsibility and shifts the blame to the peer group, or to the victim. This can be linked with the neutralisation techniques described by Sykes and Matza. In their theory, they mention the fact that offenders often deny responsibility for their offending behaviour, or they sometimes neutralise their deviant behaviour by blaming their peers or the victim (Siegel, 2005:163; Williams & McShane, 2010:153).

Some of the research participants shared that they realised that there were certain signs indicating that the victims were not willing participants, but they only recognised it at a much later stage. Thus, prior to committing the offence they were unaware of the impact of their actions on the victim.
To summarise, most of the research participants assert that they did not think about the consequences or the impact of the offence on the victims prior to committing the offence, due to factors such as being under the influence of substances or due to the influence of peers. Some of the research participants used justifications for their actions by engaging in victim blaming, denying responsibility for their offences or shifting the blame to their peer groups. Others were impulsive and wanted immediate gratification. Moreover, some acknowledged that they purposively targeted vulnerable victims or individuals which they viewed as suitable targets. On the other hand, some claimed that they engaged in consensual sex. In the following section the research participants’ thoughts during the offence will be considered.

6.2.4.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Offenders’ consideration of the impact of the offence on the victim during the victimisation

Whilst exploring the research participants’ thoughts and feelings at the time of committing the offence, one of the most popular responses was that they did not think about the impact of the offence on the victim at all. In instances where the victim resisted, cried, screamed or asked the perpetrator to stop, it mostly did not deter the offenders from continuing with the act. Furthermore, they did not think about their victims’ feelings or the impact of their actions during the offence and their only purpose was to gain sexual gratification. This can be linked to the theoretical framework of this study as discussed in Chapter 3. In the sex offending and empathy deficit correlational model, one of the factors in this model refers to socio-moral thinking. This factor refers to deviant sexual behaviour displayed by youths as a result of their deficient ego’s (rationality) and superego’s (morality), which in turn might not keep their egocentric and irrational ids in check. These adolescents might seek immediate gratification of their sexual urges without considering the consequences of their behaviour and without experiencing any guilt or remorse (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:31-32).

As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2.1, empathy is seen as a process which includes a few stages. Stage 1 of empathy, namely emotional recognition involves the identification of the emotional state of another person. With reference to sexual offending, the offender needs to have the ability to recognise distress by for instance

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looking at the facial expressions of a victim (Ward et al., 2006:138). In this study it is clear that some of the research participants had the ability to recognise distress in their victims.

In some of the instances where the research participants stated that they did not think about anything, they admitted that they noticed the display of emotions on the part of the victims, but did not act on it. In some of these scenarios it seems as though the research participants might have interpreted the victims’ actions as well as their display of emotions incorrectly. Thus, even though they identified negative emotions, they did not interpret it correctly and did not realise that their victims were not willing participants. This might be due to a lack of social awareness and deficient emotional intelligence. The reason for this is that most of them did not have the ability to monitor their own, or their victims’ emotions. In addition, they showed a very poor ability to distinguish between different emotions and label them appropriately. Had they possessed sufficient emotional intelligence they would have been able to use the information gained during their interactions with the victims to guide their thinking and behaviour.

In the current study it was evident that even though some of the research participants had the ability to recognise distress in the victim, some of them misinterpreted it by for instance thinking that the victim actually enjoyed the sexual encounter, but was just ‘playing hard to get’. In other instances, the silence of the victim was interpreted as consent. In a study using videotaped vignettes portraying dating scenarios, it was found that convicted rapists when compared to non-sexual offenders, experienced significant difficulty interpreting women’s level of interest and were unable to read negative signals indicating the woman’s lack of interest in pursuing a relationship (Hanson & Scott, 1995:264). It is argued that some men perceive kind gestures (verbal and non-verbal) as seductive, while they view assertiveness as aggressive and confronting behaviour. In the current study, it seemed as though some of the research participants also misinterpreted kind gestures of their victims as seductive behaviour. Some indicated that if a woman greeted them, they were of the opinion that she was attracted to them, whereas she might just have been courteous. Being under the influence of a substance can
compound the situation as it has an influence on the individual’s judgement and cognitive processing of the situation (Bartol & Bartol, 2014:362). In the current study it was found that a number of research participants were under the influence of a substance which could have impaired their judgement even further.

The third stage which involves emotional replication refers to the observer’s ability to replicate the emotional distress of the observed individual. Emotional replication can only take place if stages one and two have been completed successfully and if the observer is capable of experiencing the appropriate emotion (Ward et al., 2006:138). Thus, the offender must be able to use his own life experience and use this knowledge to fully comprehend the emotions and experiences of the victim (Regehr & Glancy, 2001:144). Applying this to a scenario where a sexual offence takes place, the offender may interpret the facial expressions of the victim correctly and may be aware that she is experiencing distress (stage one proficiency). Furthermore, he may be aware of the fact that he is harming the victim (stage two proficiency), but he might feel indifferent, or feel content about this state of affairs as he might view the victim as a women deserving to be harmed or punished, or he might enjoy the fact that he is harming the individual and feel empowered by his actions (stage three deficit) (Hanson & Scott, 1995:260; Ward et al., 2006:140). This stage three deficit was evidently present in the scenarios described by some of the research participants in the current study, as some of them indicated that they did not care about the feelings of the victim or that they were excited or actually enjoyed raping the victim. Some of the research participants also indicated that the victim had sex with other men whom they deemed unbecoming or unworthy partners, that they were out on the streets late during the evenings, or that they accepted the gestures of the men who bought alcohol for them and thus placed themselves in vulnerable situations. In other instances, they knew that the victim was unwilling, but due to self-centredness they nevertheless continued with the sexual act.

The final stage, namely response decision or emphatic responding involves the observer’s decision to either act or omit to act in response to his feelings. It must be noted that Marshall et al. (1995:101) state that even if the observer, in this case the sexual offender, successfully completed stages one to three, he may still decide to
ignore his feelings and commit the offence despite knowing that it will cause distress to the victim. However, controversy exists pertaining to evidence supporting that stage four can operate independently from the other three stages, as it contradicts literature pertaining to the inhibiting effects of empathy on aggression (Curwen, 2003:359; Ward et al., 2006:139). In the current study, stage four deficits were present in some of the research participants’ actions. Even though some acknowledged that they were aware that the victims were in distress and that they felt guilty about committing the offence, some of them proceeded due to the fact that they feared their peers or did not want to acknowledge to their peers that they were not willing or able to commit the offence.

In some instances the research participants were of the opinion that their lack of consideration regarding the impact of the offence on the victim might be attributed to the fact that they were under the influence of a substance. This can be linked to the theoretical framework of this study. In the sex offending and empathy deficit correlational model, one of the factors in this model (situational transitory factors) refers to the young male becoming intoxicated, resulting in a breakdown of his already damaged internal buffers and as a result his inhibitions deplete completely (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990:271).

On the other hand, some of the research participants indicated that they did not feel anything for their victims, or that they acted out of anger. In other instances the victim’s resistance made the offender angry and led to more violence while perpetrating the offence. As discussed in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4, certain situational transitory factors can cause extreme measures of stress or anger that can have a direct influence on the young male’s behaviour (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990:271). This young male can also be frustrated when for instance, his sexual advances are rejected. This frustration can give rise to aggression (Bartol & Bartol, 2014:114).

In the current study, some of the research participants went as far as saying that it was exciting for them to rape the victim. Others were complacent and indicated that they went to bed after the rape and continued with their daily routine as if nothing
happened. This group of offenders resort under the sexually aggressive category, as explained by O'Brien and Bera (1986:2) in Omar (2010:147). Typically the youth sex offenders resorting in this category want to dominate and gain power by acting aggressively and exploiting their victims sexually. The offending behaviour normally includes violent and threatening behaviour and the offender wants to humiliate the victim. Some offenders are aroused by the violence per se and if the violence is combined with sexual acts, the displaying of violence enhances the sexual arousal. Generally speaking these offenders maintain good relationships with their peers and are often charming individuals. However, they are likely to act aggressively on occasions and tend to abuse substances. This can be linked to the theoretical framework of this study. One of the factors in the sex offending and empathy deficit correlational model refers to psychosocial development which includes aspects such as a lack of perspective-taking skills. Considering the third stage of development as described by Erikson, namely initiative vs. guilt, children who do not master this stage will struggle to take the rights and feelings of other people into consideration and might pursue their own sexual interest at all costs resulting in deviant sexual behaviour (Sigelman & Rider, 2006:32).

Some of the research participants explained that they committed the offence due to peer pressure and because everyone in the community acted in the same manner, they did not understand that their actions were wrong. This can also be linked to the theoretical framework of this study. One of the factors in the sex offending and empathy deficit correlational model refers to situations where young males are confronted with negative socio-cultural attitudes prevailing in the community that they are residing in. The views include negative stereotyping of women and the idea that the use of violence to dominate women is acceptable. These views are for instance portrayed in the media, or in pornography (Keown, 2008:12). Such views then become part of the cognitive scripts of these young men by means of social learning through which they learn to commit crime by observing significant others. This correlates with another factor which is included in the sex offending and empathy deficit correlational model, namely social learning. The social learning factor is derived from Bandura’s social cognition theory which states that people learn aggressive behaviour by personally observing others (Siegel, 2005:114) and with
Sutherland’s differential association theory which claims that criminal behaviour occurs due to the fact that the behaviour is learned while interacting with others (Bartol & Bartol, 2014:6).

In other instances research participants aimed to impress their friends, or did not want to be an outcast or be viewed as weak and inferior to their peers, or they were scared of their peers and obeyed their orders. In addition, some of the research participants felt empathy for the victim during the committing of the offence, but continued with the act due to certain factors such as peer pressure, or because they gave in to their sexual urges and acted without thinking of future consequences. This is congruent with the literature discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.1.4.10. Even though a peer group can provide a sense of belonging to young people, a peer group can also initiate or reinforce existing criminal or disruptive behaviour (Harris, 2008:54). According to Piaget (1932:18) the adolescent phase of a person’s life is a period during which one realises that rules are flexible and that one can negotiate the terms of the rules in different contexts. The relevance of this notion within the context of youth sex offending is that an adolescent might adjust his perceptions and moral views to be compliant with the values of the peer group to ensure acceptance within the peer group (Harris, 2008:55). Thus, if the peer group adheres to certain violent or intimidating ways of gaining sexual compliance, the adolescent within this peer group might follow suit.

One participant shared that he felt guilty about what he did and that he had empathy for the victim. However, he said that he considered the fact that he could end up in prison as a result of his actions because the mere fact that he was at the scene of the crime could make him look guilty. As a result he decided to continue raping the girl, as he did not want to be punished for something he did not do. In other instances, some of the research participants could not continue with the offence after they realised what the future consequences might be. Thus, their reason for not continuing with the offence was the fact that they did not want to be punished. In other words, they did not desist from offending due to victim empathy; they desisted because they feared the consequences of their actions. One of the research participants decided not to continue after realising that the victim had a small child.
and realising what the impact of his actions will be. Thus, it seems as though the prevalence of empathy for his victim prevented him from continuing with the act.

Some of the research participants indicated that they thought that the victim was a willing participant, or that they were dating. In these instances the research participants denoted that the victims did not resist and did not voice their dissatisfaction. As a consequence the research participants indicated that they were unaware of the fact that the victims did not want to have sexual intercourse. Most of the research participants in this category indicated that there were no signs indicating that they might get into trouble as a result of their actions. Some of them claimed that the complainant initiated the sexual act, or that they had sex before and therefore they were of the opinion that it was consensual. Others claimed that their friends and family were aware of the fact that they were dating. One research participant said that when the complainant left his house he was not aware that the victim was upset and even shared his telephone number with her.

Considering the above-mentioned, it becomes evident that many of the research participants did not think about the impact of the offence on the victim while they were committing the sexual offence. In some instances their judgement might have been impaired by substances, a lack of social awareness, self-centredness, an inability to delay gratification, peer pressure or a feeling of impunity. The notion of impunity can be linked to the theoretical framework of this study. This factor refers to the fact that if youths find themselves in circumstances conducive to offending, in other words a situation where they know that chances of being apprehended are slim and that the possibility of getting away with the sexual crime is good, they are likely to offend, especially if a suitable victim is present (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990:271). This correlates with the rational choice theory as well as the routine activities approach that was discussed in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.1.1.

To summarise, in some instances the research participants claimed that it was a choice to commit the crime and consequently they experienced no empathy for the victim before or during the offence. Other research participants indicated that they felt empathy for the victim while committing the offence. In some instances this
caused them not to persist with the offence and in other instances they completed the sexual act despite their feelings, due to an inability to delay the gratification of their sexual urges. A few of the research participants indicated that they were under the impression that the complainant was a willing participant and in some instances they indicated that they were in a relationship with the complainant prior to the charges being brought against them. In the following section, the offender’s consideration of the impact of the offence on the victim directly after victimisation occurred, will be discussed.

6.2.4.3 Sub-theme 2.3: Offenders’ consideration of the impact of the offence on the victim after the victimisation

In most instances the research participants explained that directly after the victimisation occurred, they feared the consequences of their actions. Thus, they thought about the possibility of incarceration, or they thought about their reputation which might be ruined, but not necessarily about the impact of the offence on the victim. In some instances they almost viewed themselves as the victims. Others indicated that directly after the victimisation they became aware of the fact that the victim was not a willing participant and that contrary to their earlier belief; they did not enjoy the sexual encounter. Some of them claimed that due to their young age they were not aware of the impact of their actions. One of the research participants explained that he was very young (13 years old) when he committed the offence. He victimised a little girl (6 years old) whom he knew well and who trusted him. He viewed pornography and explained that he was aroused and curious about what he had learned in the pornographic material. He described the victim as a vulnerable, easily accessible target. This corroborates with the routine activities approach discussed in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.1.1, as there was an opportunity to commit the crime and the victim was a suitable target. This offender resorts under the naïve experimenter category, as explained by O'Brien and Bera (1986:2) in Omar (2010:147). Youth sex offenders resorting in this category often commit offences while acting on their sexual curiosity and they were often exposed to pornography prior to committing the offence. Youths in this category normally commit their offences when the opportunity arises, for instance at a family gathering or while babysitting.
As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.1.3, Omar conducted a study in 2010 focussing on children younger than 12 years who committed sexual offences against other children. She asserts that 68% of the respondents in her study could be classified as naïve experimenters. This finding is not consistent with international findings, as it was found that the majority of youth sex offenders had sexual interaction prior to the occurrence of the sexual offence, negating the notion of youth sex offenders being young people who are merely experimenting (Print & Morrison, 2000:295). In Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2.2, the researcher opined that the difference in results obtained in the studies mentioned above might be attributed to the age differences between the two groups of research participants. The youth sex offenders in Omar’s study were younger than 12 years, whereas the youth sex offenders in the international studies were mainly between the ages of 13 and 17 years. The younger offenders might be more inclined to experiment sexually, compared to the older youths who commit sexual offences due to other motivational or risk factors. This observation made by the researcher in Chapter 2 was corroborated in the current study, as there was only one research participant who clearly fitted the naïve experimenter category.

With reference to the influence of pornography on youth sex offending, Ven-hwei and Wei (2005:221) hold the view that adolescents’ exposure to pornography can lead to sexual promiscuity. Goodenough (2003) and Harris (2008) concur that there is a distinct link between adolescent sex offending and the viewing of pornographic material. Harris (2008) found that 84% of the youth who were interviewed in her study indicated that they have viewed pornography. It must be noted that 21% of the respondents in her study indicated that they found pornography arousing and that they had a need to replicate the behaviour which was portrayed. In the current study, only two of the research participants indicated that they viewed pornography prior to the offence and that it might have influenced their behaviour.

A number of research participants indicated that they only started thinking of the impact of their actions after the victimisation took place. Many of them mentioned that the graveness of their behaviour only occurred to them once they were arrested. At this stage, however, most of them feared punishment and some of them started
considering the impact that it will have on their families and how they would react once the research participants’ offending behaviour came to light. This corroborates the views of Sykes and Matza, who postulate that offenders sometimes indicate that they felt guilty because of their illegal act. The proponents of the theory hold the view that offenders only regret being apprehended and does not display true remorse for their acts (Siegel, 2005:163). In other instances, research participants were still under the influence of a substance directly after the offence was committed. Some of the research participants reported that their lack of empathy for the victim persisted until after the offence was committed, while others indicated that they refused to feel guilty. Some felt invincible due to the fact that they threatened the victims and told them that they would kill them if they reported the incident. Some of the research participants continued with their lives as if nothing happened and did not think about their actions or the impact on the victim at all. A number of research participants believed that they would be able to escape from the police cells, bribe the officials to dispose of dockets, or that they would be able to intimidate the victims to such an extent that they would drop the charges. Some of them still had no comprehension of the graveness of their acts directly after the sexual offence, as they believed that the victims would eventually forget about the ordeal and that they would not suffer any harm in the long term. This can be linked with the ninth factor in the sex offending and empathy deficit correlational model as discussed in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4, where it is explained that a feeling of impunity might influence the development and display of empathy in youth sex offending. This notion is derived from the rational choice theory as well as Kohlberg’s theory.

In other instances research participants who were under the impression that the complainants in their cases were willing participants, noticed that something may be awry immediately after the sexual encounter. Some of them explained that the complainant consented and directly after the sexual encounter demanded money. Other victims were reported to feel anxious to return home, as their parents were not aware of the fact that they attended a party, used substances and/or were sexually active.
Other participants reported that they started thinking about the impact on the victim only after some time had passed or while they were in the holding cell, in court or after their incarceration. Some of them were able to internalise the situation and consequently became aware of context relevant feelings after they related the offence to their own family circle. They expressed how they imagined they would have felt if someone else violated their sisters in the same way in which they violated their victims. Some of them realised that their actions were not in line with their normal behaviour and when they became sober they realised the impact of their offending behaviour. This is corroborated by literature as discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2.1, where Bartol and Bartol (2014:362) explains that being under the influence of a substance can compound the situation as it has an influence on the individual's judgement and cognitive processing of the situation. Thus, when these offenders become sober and their judgement and cognitive processing are no longer inhibited, they might begin to realise the graveness of their actions.

To summarise, it is evident that some of the research participants started to realise what they did and began thinking about the victim once they became sober, or when they were arrested. Some only thought about their own fate at that stage and feared incarceration. Others reported that once they were charged in court they had to face what they had done and only then started to experience empathy for the victim. In other instances they reported that they only began to think about their victims after incarceration. Some of the research participants reported that they still had no empathy for their victims and thought that they deserved it, or dismissed the sexual offence by saying that they did not hurt or kill the victim. In some instances the offenders viewed themselves as the victims and were angry that the charges were laid. Some, on the other hand, experienced intense remorse and wanted to undo their deeds or tried to apologise to the victim once they realised what they had done. In the next section the current feelings of the research participants towards their victims will be interpreted.
6.2.4.4 Sub-theme 2.4: Offender’s current feelings for the victim

Exploration of the research participants’ current feelings towards the victims revealed that a number of them felt sorry for their victims and they felt the need to ask them for forgiveness. In addition, they acknowledged that the victims would suffer long term consequences due to the emotional harm caused by their actions. A number of offenders indicated that they would like to participate in Restorative Justice initiatives such as VOD so that they can explain to the victims that they have changed and to ask for their forgiveness. Others expressed the urgency to write a letter to their victims in order to explain why they committed the offences and to emphasise that they understand what they did was wrong. As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2.4, the so called ‘victim letter task’ is a method that is sometimes included in victim empathy intervention programmes. In most instances the writing of the letter is a hypothetical exercise, as the letters are not sent to the victims, but are used to ascertain whether offenders are showing empathy towards the victims, and to assess the level of empathy, as well as offenders’ understanding of the issues experienced by their victims (Webster, 2002:282).

In other cases research participants argued that their actions were a result of factors such as peer pressure, substances, or a lack of information regarding the wrongfulness and the impact of sexual offences. In addition, some of them appealed to higher loyalties (such as saying that they were involved in crime to provide for their families), or they blamed the victim. Some of these responses echo the tendency to avoid responsibility. Some of the research participants indicated that had they understood what the impact of their actions would be, they would not have committed the offence. Some of them said that they did not have a father who explained to them how relationships work and that it is wrong to force another person to have sexual intercourse.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.1.4.4, the family can be seen as the primary socialising agent and thus their role in teaching the child pro-social behaviour is of the utmost importance (Maree, 2013:75). The absence of a parent, especially a father figure in the boy’s developmental years, is problematic as the boy needs a
father to model the correct behaviour towards females. In addition, a healthy male role model should teach the boy how to interact with, and how to respect females (Harris, 2008:141). The importance of parental involvement as explained above was reiterated in the current study. In the absence of parental guidance, young boys gain their sexual education from other sources. Various research participants explained that they followed the examples set by their peers and that they were not aware of the fact that their actions were illegal. This correlates with factors 5-7 in the sex offending and empathy deficit model as discussed in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4. These factors include socio-cultural factors, for example the influence of social interactions as described in Marshall and Barbaree’s theory, Sutherland’s theory and the cultural deviance theory. In addition, it includes the social learning factor as described in Bandura and Sutherland’s theories as well as the situational transitory aspects explained in Marshall and Barbaree’s theory, Sutherland's theory and the cultural deviance theory. As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.1.4.10, a matter of concern is that 94% of the respondents in Omar's study (2010:127) indicated that they did not receive sex education from their parents. This is critical, as these children may develop warped ideas of healthy sexual development and healthy intimate relationships. In the absence of proper sex education provided by parents the children have to rely on information received via the mass media and what they learn from friends. This can give rise to the acceptance of sex myths and the belief that certain inappropriate and/or harmful sexual acts are acceptable and are condoned by society. The findings in the current study corroborated this notion.

A number of research participants reported that had they not been under the influence of a substance, they would not have committed the offence. Although the effect of substance abuse and the link to subsequent misbehaviour committed by adolescents have been established in various studies (De Wet, 2003:96; Lakey, 1994:755; Mulvey et al., 2010:3) controversy exists pertaining to the frequency of intoxication of adolescent sex offenders during the committing of their offences (Pratt et al., 2001:3). In response to the controversy, Seto and Lalumière (2010:541) found that the use of substances occurred more frequently among youth offenders who committed non-sexual offences than among youth sex offenders. However, in this study a number of youth sex offenders indicated that they were under the influence
of a substance when they committed the sexual offence. In Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.1.4.2, the researcher opined that the use of substances can be a contributing factor, as it influences a person’s inhibitions and might make them more prone to behaviour that would not otherwise be exhibited. Furthermore, Hanson and Scott (1995:264) are of the opinion that if the offender was sober, he might have recognised the harmfulness of his actions, but while under the influence of alcohol, the offender was able to detach himself from the victim’s suffering. These notions were corroborated by the research findings in the current study.

A number of research participants indicated that they took responsibility for their actions, that they felt remorseful and that they understood the harm that they caused. Various participants indicated that they are glad that the victim reported the case, because they deserved to be punished and they acknowledged that their incarceration at the YCCs had changed them for the better.

Some research participants indicated that the complainants in their cases were willing participants. Other research participants were self-centred, complacent or indicated that they do not think about the victim at all and that they just wanted to forget about the ordeal and move forward with their lives.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2.2, a South African study conducted with 50 diverted male youth sex offenders indicated that 94% of the research participants said that it was not their intention to hurt their victims. In addition, all the participants indicated that they felt sad about what they did. Most of the boys indicated that they were aware of the fact that they have hurt their victims and knew that their behaviour was unacceptable (Omar, 2010:116). As opined by the researcher in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2.2, it must be noted that the sex offenders in the Omar study were younger than 12 years and committed less serious offences. In addition, most of these offenders were naïve experimenters (68%) who did not plan to hurt their victims. When looking at the research results obtained in the current study, one will find that the researcher’s opinion was corroborated. Even though some of the research participants displayed empathy for their own victims, 55 of the 96 research
participants’ (57.29%) empathy levels for their own specific victim measured below 80%.

Conclusions pertaining to the last theme and sub-themes that emerged from the interviews will be provided in the next section.

6.2.5 THEME 3: CORRECTIONAL PROGRAMMES IN YOUTH CORRECTIONAL CENTRES

The research participants were probed about their involvement in, and attendance of programmes in the YCCs where they were incarcerated. As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2.4, a study conducted by Reitzel and Carbonell (2006:413) showed that a statistically significant difference exists between the sexual recidivism rates of youth sexual offenders who participated in intervention programmes compared to those who did not participate. Furthermore, it was found that instilling empathy in offenders who participated in intervention programmes usually reduces the expression of aggression and substitute antagonistic responses with socially acceptable behaviour (Marshall et al., 1995:100). An interpretation of the research participants’ thoughts pertaining to the attendance of programmes and their thoughts about the impact of the YCCs will follow.

6.2.5.1 Sub-theme 3.1: Attendance of programmes

A number of research participants attended the Sex Offender programme (SOP) wherein the focus is placed on different types of sexual offences. Some indicated that they talked about the victims’ feelings, but not about relationships. According to the research participants in the current study the SOP was compulsory to attend. Some of them indicated that even if it was voluntary, they would have agreed to attend the programme. However, it should be noted that some of the research participants in the study have not yet attended the programme. Some of the research participants who attended the SOP also had the insight that a programme cannot change behaviour and that they had to change on the inside. Thus, change is an individual choice. Other programmes that were attended by some of the research participants include: Life Skills, Anger Management, Substance Abuse, New
Beginnings and Crossroads. Some of the participants also mentioned that they partook in other educational programmes or activities. Some attended school and completed certificate courses in aspects such as Computer literacy and Electrical engineering. Others participated in recreational activities such as football, boxing, athletics, writing poems and playing fingerboard.

With regards to the influence that the programmes as well as the YCC in general had on them, some of the research participants gave insightful responses. One of these responses was that crime does not pay and that one must use one’s hands and minds to generate money. Some research participants expressed gratitude for what the YCC had done for them, as they were of the opinion that they were now improved individuals as a result of their incarceration. In addition, a few participants opined that their incarceration had a purpose and that they found solace in religion. Some of the participants were of the opinion that they had reached their full potential in the YCC upon discovering that they had hidden talents such as the ability to write poems or create artworks, be a motivational speaker or a peer educator. Others mentioned that they wanted to attend as many programmes as possible, as they believed that it would positively influence the decision of the parole board upon contemplating their release.

Research participants were asked if the programmes that they attended focussed on victims and the impact that sexual offences have on them. Furthermore, they were probed about the importance of including aspects of this nature in intervention programmes. Conclusions pertaining to this sub-theme will be provided in the following section.

6.2.5.2 Sub-theme 3.2: Inclusion of a victim empathy component in the programmes attended

As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2.4, the majority of intervention programmes for sexual offenders have an empathy component (Beech & Fisher, 2002:209; Burke, 2001:224; Hanson & Scott, 1995:260; Regehr & Glancy, 2001:150; Webster, 2002:281), as various researchers have concluded that sexual offenders lack empathy for their victims (Maletzky, 1991; Marshall et al., 1995; Pithers, 1994;
Regehr & Glancy, 2001; Varker & Devilly, 2007; Webster, 2002:281; Williams & Finkelhor, 1990). Furthermore, Marshall et al. (1995:99) postulate that sexual offenders’ ability to experience empathy plays an important role in the development and maintenance of their misbehaviour. Pithers (1994:565) agrees that the developing of empathy for victims of sexual offences is imperative, as the increasing of empathy will reduce recidivism, improve the offenders’ capacity for intimacy in interpersonal relationships and can enhance and maintain the offender’s motivation to change.

Most of the research participants indicated that the SOP that they attended did not have an empathy component and did not focus on the impact that rape had on the victim. Some of the participants said that they talked about victims in the SOP, but they could not remember what the specifics of the discussion entailed. Various participants knew about VOD and indicated that they would like to be part of a Restorative Justice process, but according to them that was the only aspect pertaining to the victim which formed part of the programmes that they attended. However, a number of these participants wanted to have a discussion with their victims in order to get them to acknowledge that they consented to the sexual act and were willing participants. Thus, these participants’ main focus was not to ask for forgiveness and take responsibility for the offence, or to make amends, but instead they wanted to ensure that the victim is partly blamed for the incident and the aftermath thereof.

A small number of the research participants said that the SOP that they attended focussed on the victim as well. One of the participants explained that a group of twenty members participated in the programme and some of them had the opportunity to tell the group about their victim. Considering the research evidence that was discussed in Chapter 2, it is clear that intervention programmes aimed at improving the general empathy of sexual offenders might not be of any value if own victim empathy is not addressed as well. According to Fernandez and Marshall (2003:22) intervention programmes that focus on addressing sexual offenders’ general empathy levels (empathy directed towards all people and situations) or even on sexual abuse victims in general may be wasting valuable time. The focus must be
on sexual offenders’ own victim empathy deficits, as that is the area in which the most prominent empathy deficits occur. This statement concurs with evidence from various studies (Fernandez & Marshall, 2003; Fernandez et al., 1999; Fisher et al., 1999; Varker & Devilly, 2007). Based on this, the deduction can be made, that if own victim empathy is not addressed during an intervention programme, the programme is flawed. Therefore if the SOP’s are presented to groups of approximately twenty offenders, the programme might be less effective due to the size of the groups. It became evident that due to time constraints not all of the members received an opportunity to participate and engage meaningfully in the programme and thus the emphasis was not placed on all the offenders’ own victims and the needs of each individual offender.

A noteworthy number of the research participants who said that they focussed on victims in the SOP said that they usually talked about victims in general and about how these victims probably experienced the sexual offence. They indicated that the facilitators in the group interventions used newspaper articles to facilitate the discussion and some of the research participants sporadically were given the opportunity to discuss their own victim’s feelings. It is commendable that some facilitators focus on victims of sexual abuse. The limitation is, however, that most of the focus is on general victim empathy and not on own victim empathy. In addition, one must take into account that some of the youth sex offenders are not willing to discuss the particulars of their offences in a group setting, as they are scared of retaliation, especially if they committed an offence against a young child. This complicates matters, as a group setting might not be the best scenario to address own victim empathy. Constrained resources, however, makes individual therapy sessions for incarcerated youth sex offenders problematic.

A few research participants said that they were instructed to write letters to their victims as well as fictitious letters from their victims to them. As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2.4, empathy components within intervention programmes for sexual offenders normally entail strategies to improve the offender’s understanding of his victim’s experience. According to Webster (2002:282) this can be achieved by the so called “victim letter task”, where the offender writes a letter to his victim.
Even though it is obvious that the SOP’s presented in the YCCs do have an empathy component, it is evident that most of the focus is on general sexual abuse victim empathy. Considering the fact that the research participants’ average empathy score for general sexual abuse victims was 84% it is reasonable to deduce that in general they do not have general sexual abuse victim empathy deficits. However, a significant difference exists between their scores for the general sexual abuse victim and their own victim. Thus, own victim empathy is where the focus of intervention programmes should be. As discussed in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2.4, it is assumed that if youth sex offending is identified at an early stage and if intervention occurs swiftly, chances of these juveniles becoming adult offenders can be minimised (Thakker et al., 2006:313). However, Ward et al.’s (2006:40) concern should be noted. They opine that in the presence of situational reinforcers or triggers such as alcohol usage, it will be more difficult to experience empathy and comprehend the impact of the offence. This coupled with sexual arousal make it less likely that the offender will refrain from offending when they are in the presence of the victim. Furthermore, Ward and co-authors are unsure if post-offence empathy will inhibit recidivism. This notion is underscored by the results in the current study, which indicate that even though some of the research participants indicated that they felt empathy for their victims once they sobered up, or once they were removed from a situation of peer pressure, the situational reinforcer such as being under the influence of a substance numbed their feelings and inhibited the display of empathy prior to, as well as during the committing of the sexual offence. However, this does not mean that focussing on own victim empathy in intervention programmes will not have a positive influence on the offenders who were not aware of the impact of their actions on the victim.

After providing concluding remarks regarding the themes and the sub-themes of this study, the remainder of this chapter will be devoted to a discussion of the value and limitations of the study, as well as recommendations for future research.
6.3 VALUE OF THE STUDY

It is the researcher’s opinion that this study has added to the knowledge base of Criminology in general and has made a valuable contribution to the Psychriminology sub-field in Criminology. It is the first South African study focusing on victim empathy in youth sex offenders and will complement the existing body of knowledge pertaining to youth sex offenders. The study concentrated on the thoughts and feelings of youth sex offenders towards general sexual abuse victims, as well as their own victims. Improved awareness of youth sex offenders’ thoughts and feelings are imperative to provide professionals such as social workers and psychologists greater insight into why they committed the sexual assault. Furthermore, it will be beneficial for scholars in Criminology who provide expert witness testimony in court, those who have to compile court reports such as presentencing reports, as well as those who are involved in criminological assessments and profiling practices of offenders within Correctional Centres. In order to curb recidivism, it is of paramount importance that the factors which contributed to the offence in the first place are comprehended. Understanding the thoughts and the feelings of youth sex offenders prior to, during, as well as after their offences, may well be a desirable point of departure. Moreover, one of the objectives in the study was to provide recommendations regarding the need for the inclusion or exclusion of victim empathy advancement components in intervention programmes aimed at rehabilitating youth sex offenders. The empirical evidence of this study indicated the importance of the inclusion of own victim empathy in intervention programmes and placed emphasis on the fact that focusing on general sexual abuse victim empathy is insufficient, as that it is not where youth sex offenders’ empathy deficits are.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the theme of this research links with one of the Faculty Research Themes (FRT’s) of the University of Pretoria’s Humanities Faculty, namely enhancing the wellbeing of vulnerable children. In this study, the focus was placed on vulnerable children and youth, as the research participants in this study, albeit on the wrong side of the law, can be viewed as a vulnerable category of young people. In addition, those that victimised small children or their peers violated the rights of other children, which placed these children in a vulnerable position as well.
Knowledge pertaining to the thoughts and feelings of youth sex offenders can better equip professionals working with them to enhance their wellbeing. In addition, curbing the reoccurrence of further crimes also decrease the risk of other children becoming victims of sexual offences.

6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

The researcher identified the following limitations in the current study:

- As this is the first study on victim empathy in youth sex offenders within the South African context, the researcher had to rely extensively on international sources.
- Various dated sources had to be included as they can be viewed as seminal research focussing on the development and display of empathy.
- The researcher only included research participants who could understand and speak either English or Afrikaans. Even though this can be seen as a limitation, it serves to be mentioned that the researcher conducted interviews with all the participants who were willing to participate in the study, with the exception of two participants who were unable to speak either of the two languages. The researcher conducted 96 one-on-one semi-structured interviews and was able to continue with interviews until data saturation was reached.
- The fact that the research was only conducted in one province, namely Gauteng, can be seen as a limitation. However, it should be noted that the Maximum YCC in Boksburg incarcerates youth sex offenders from provinces such as Kwa-Zulu Natal, Northern Cape and the Western-Cape as well, which renders this study relevant to the broader South African context.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS PERTAINING TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF VICTIM EMPATHY

Based on the research findings of this study, the following recommendations pertaining to the advancement of victim empathy are forthcoming and will be explicated on a primary, secondary and tertiary level:
• Primary level
- It is suggested that awareness campaigns should focus on healthy sexual interactions and the forming of appropriate relationships, which will sensitise and inform community members pertaining to what constitutes pro-social sexual behaviour. It is imperative that leaders and important role-players within communities will take responsibility to sensitise community members to the impact that deviant sexual behaviour can have on other individuals. The importance of leaders in the communities as well as guardians of children, leading by example, cannot be stressed enough.

• Secondary level
- Information pertaining to the prevalence of rape myths and cognitive distortions pertaining to inappropriate sexual behaviour, as well as the impact that sexual offences have on victims should be included in the life orientation curricula in schools. This is essential, as youths need to be equipped with the above-mentioned knowledge, as it might inhibit deviant sexual behaviour. When taking into account that the youth sex offenders in this study acknowledged that they were not aware of the impact of their actions and that they derived most of their sexual education from the media, this is imperative. In addition, it was mentioned by various participants that they did not have a father figure, or any other family member who discussed with them what appropriate relationships entail.
- Victim empowerment strategies such as awareness campaigns pertaining to high risk situations which can give rise to victimisation should receive attention. When taking into account that a lot of offenders referred to scenarios where both the offender and the victim attended parties or went to bars or taverns, became intoxicated, and engaged in sexual interactions, it is imperative to sensitise community members with regards to their vulnerability in such situations.

• Tertiary prevention
- Individual counselling sessions focussing on the harnessing of own victim empathy in youth sex offenders is the ideal.
- Due to the lack of resources impacting on the viability of individual counselling sessions for each youth sex offender, treatment groups focussing on own
victim empathy enhancement is the next best option. Increased usage of certain strategies such as the victim letter task should also be considered.

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the empirical findings of this study, the following needs for future research endeavours were identified:

- The development, implementation and evaluation of a victim empathy programme focussing on own victim empathy, which can be utilised in YCCs as well as intervention centres that focus on diverted youth sex offenders. The development of such a programme is imperative as professionals working with youth sex offenders need tailor-made programmes that are based on empirical research.
- An evaluation of existing SOP’s in YCCs. A study of this ilk can shed light on the positive attributes, as well as the limitations of these programmes.
- A study focussing on the cognitive distortions displayed by youth sex offenders in the South African context. It is important that one understands the thought processes of youth sex offenders in order to curb recidivism. In addition, one might be able to identify certain primary and secondary preventative measures that can be implemented to address these cognitive distortions before it leads to offending behaviour.
- Research should be conducted on the sentencing procedures of youth sex offenders. While conducting the current study, the researcher became aware of the discrepancies in sentences imposed on youth sex offenders with similar types of offences. A study focussing on this could shed light on the types and duration of sentences imposed on youth sex offenders as well as the procedural matters concerning the sentencing. A study of this nature can increase the knowledge base within the field of Criminology. It is, however, recommended that the researcher who conducts a study of this ilk should have a thorough Criminology and legal background.
- Related to the above-mentioned recommendation, a study focussing on appeal procedures for youth sex offenders in YCCs will also add to the
knowledge base and can influence policies and legislation regulating the field of youth sex offending.

- A study focussing on the perceptions of youth sex offenders pertaining to sexual interaction and relationships is also needed. During the current research it became clear that a noteworthy number of research participants had limited knowledge of what a healthy romantic relationship entails. A study exploring these perceptions will enhance knowledge on this topic, and better equip professionals working with youth sex offenders. Consequently specific programmes focussing on healthy sexual interaction and appropriate relationships could be developed.

### 6.7 CONCLUSION

As stated in a recent Supreme Court of Appeal case between the Department of Public Prosecutions as the appellant, and Prins as the respondent (*DPP v Prins*, 2012) the presiding officers made the following comment in their judgement:

> No judicial officer sitting in South Africa today is unaware of the extent of sexual violence in this country and the way in which it deprives so many women and children of their right to dignity and bodily integrity and, in the case of children, the right to be children; to grow up in innocence and, as they grow older, to awaken to maturity and joy of full humanity. The rights to dignity and bodily integrity are fundamental to our humanity and should be respected for that reason alone.

Against the backdrop of the above-mentioned quote it is clear that the occurrence of sexual violence needs to be addressed, as it has dire consequences for the victims of these offences. In order to address the occurrence of sexual violence one needs to ascertain what contributes to its occurrence. Even though three studies (Da Costa, 2014; Harris, 2008; Omar, 2010) recently contributed to this field of study by focussing on the risk factors that contribute to youth sex offending as well as developing a typology of youth sex offending in the South African context, it is imperative to ascertain what the thoughts of these offenders were prior to and during the committing of the offence. In addition, it is of paramount importance to establish
whether youth sex offenders have the necessary insight into their harmful behaviour and if they possess the willingness to repair their wrongful behaviour. As the recidivism rate after release from a correctional facility in SA is estimated to be as high as 95 percent (Quan-Baffour & Zawada, 2012:73), rehabilitation, positive change and empathy building are issues that are of elevated importance. This notion necessitated the current study as the researcher is of the opinion that it is imperative to ascertain whether offenders who commit sexually motivated crimes display the necessary moral values and are at a moral stage where they can understand what the impact of their offences was, or still is on the victims.

In the quantitative section of this study it was found that only 32.29% of the research participants scored lower than 80% for the general sexual abuse victim empathy section of the VEDS whereas 57.29% scored lower than 80% for the own victim empathy section of the VEDS. This means that a significant difference exists between the research participants’ scores for the general sexual abuse victim empathy section when compared to the own victim empathy section. In other words, the participants displayed much less empathy for their own victims when compared to the general sexual abuse victim.

In the qualitative section of this study, the divergent responses which were given by the research participants, is a clear indication of the heterogeneous nature of youth sex offending. In this regard Rich (2003:43) states that youth sex offenders differ in terms of their race, their socio-economic status, the type of victims that they target, methods that they use to gain compliance, the amount of violence that they are willing to use, the type of offences that they commit as well as their motivation for committing the offences. This highlights the complexity of the phenomenon of youth sex offending and underscores Bartol and Bartol’s (2014:348) opinion that there is no single profile that encompasses even a majority of sex offenders. Thus, it follows that if youth sex offenders differ with regards to all of the above mentioned, surely the way in which they view their victims, as well as the way in which they display empathy, if they display it, will vary as well. This notion was corroborated in the current study.
A noteworthy number of research participants displayed empathy for the general sexual abuse victim (Sarah) as portrayed in the case study. Even though they displayed empathy, on average they were of the opinion that it would have been easy for Sarah to stop her brother from raping her, which is indicative of victim blaming being present. With reference to their own victims, most were also of the opinion that the victims could have stopped them easily, if they wanted to. Furthermore, a noteworthy number of research participants denied responsibility for the offence by opining that it was the victim who suggested the sexual interaction and they minimised the impact of the offence on the victim by claiming that their victims were not really harmed in the long term by what had happened.

During the qualitative interviews, in-depth information was obtained regarding the youth sex offenders’ thoughts prior to, during and after the offence was committed. Their current feelings for the victims were also explored. Most research participants indicated that they did not think about the consequences or the impact of the offence on the victim prior to, or during the committing of the offence, due to being under the influence of substances, having feelings of self-entitlement, viewing the victim as a willing participant, being impulsive, having feelings of impunity, or due to the influence of peers. Even when victims resisted the attack, it did not deter them as their only purpose was sexual gratification. In other instances they misinterpreted the emotional displays of victims, or chose not to act on it. Most of the research participants acknowledged that directly after the victimisation occurred, they were afraid of the consequences of their actions and feared punishment. Others only became aware that the complainants in their case were not willing participants directly after the sexual encounter. Some indicated that they realised what they did was wrong and had intense remorse. When explaining their current feelings, various research participants indicated that they were remorseful and would like to ask their victims for forgiveness. A number of participants accepted responsibility for the offences that they committed and understood the harm that they caused. However, some still failed to accept responsibility and blamed circumstances such as being under the influence of substances or being influenced by peers. Others just wanted to forget about the ordeal and indicated that they wanted to move on with their lives.
It serves to be noted that it is difficult to genuinely determine the level of sincerity of those who indicated remorse and admitted to their wrongdoing. It is, however, worrisome to know that a number of youth sex offenders justify their behaviour and that others are morally and cognitively removed from the sexual crimes which they committed. Additionally, their ignorance pertaining to the impact of their offences on their victims, as well as the lack of understanding regarding the long term damage of their actions, are causes for concern. A study of this ilk highlights the need to adapt current correctional programmes in YCCs to ensure that offenders take responsibility and realise the detrimental effects of their behaviour. This is imperative, as offenders should be held accountable. Moreover, a prerequisite for positive change in offenders is that their attitude and behaviour must be modified. In this regard, Advocate Michael Masuthu, Minister of Justice and Correctional Services stated the following in the foreword of the 2013/2014 Department of Correctional Services’ annual report: “Remorse, regret, reconciliation and rehabilitation are cornerstones for the successful reintegration of offenders back into communities.”

In conclusion, the research participants were asked about their involvement and attendance of programmes in the YCCs and if these programmes contained an empathy component. Most of the participants indicated that the SOP’s that they attended did not have an empathy component and did not focus on the influence that rape had on the victim. Only a small number indicated that the SOP that they attended focussed on the victim. However, it was clear from their explanations that the main focus was on general sexual abuse victim empathy and not on own victim empathy. Considering the results of this study, as well as literature pertaining to the subject, it is clear that programmes should focus on own victim empathy, as that is where the most prominent deficits are displayed. A popular quote by Bill Drayton, an American social entrepreneur underlines this notion: “We have to teach empathy as we do literacy” (Drayton, 2011).

It is the researcher’s aspiration that this study will stimulate and encourage continued research in order to find the most effective ways of dealing with youth sex offending and curbing the occurrence of this social ill. This aspiration is best encapsulated in the words of Ayelet Waldman, an Israeli-American novelist and former lawyer:
The thing about youthful offenders is that no one seems to care about them. Most people don’t like adolescents – even the good ones can be snarky and unpleasant. Combine the antipathy we feel toward the average teenager with the fear inspired by youth violence and you have a population that no one wants to deal with. Despite the fact that in America we incarcerate more juveniles for life terms than in any other country in the world, the truth is that the vast majority of youth offenders will one day be released. The question is simple and stark. Do we want to help them change, or do we want to help them become even more violent and dangerous?
REFERENCES


Booyens, K. (karen.booyens@up.ac.za) 2009/07/14. Navorsing oor jeugseks-oortreders se empatie vir hulle slagoffers. (Research regarding youth sex offenders’ empathy for their victims). E-mail to L Campher (laetitia.campher@up.ac.za).

Booyens, K. (karen.booyens@up.ac.za) 2015/03/01. Navorsing oor jeugseks-oortreders se empatie vir hulle slagoffers. (Research regarding youth sex offenders’ empathy for their victims). E-mail to L Coetzee (laetitia.coetzee@up.ac.za).


DPP v Prins (Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development & two amici curiae intervening) (369/12) (2012) 106 ZASCA (15 June 2012).


Hesselink, A.E. (hesselaehunisa.ac.za). 2009/07/06. Navorsing oor adolesente seksuele oortreders se empatie vir hulle slagoffers. E-mail to L Campher (laetitia.campher@up.ac.za).


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APPENDIX A: Questionnaire

Young people understand other people in different ways when compared to adults. In view of this and with special emphasis on perceptions of young people, this questionnaire has been developed to accommodate the unique emotional processing abilities of young people. This questionnaire will enable the researcher to assess various feelings of young people in different situations, and how they think they might respond in these different situations. The questionnaire contains a series of statements for which there are no right or wrong answers.

The most accurate measurement is gained from people who respond to the statements honestly. Therefore it is essential that you are truthful about yourself, and that you do not respond in a way that you think sounds good or acceptable. In general, try not to spend too long thinking about responses. Most often the first answer that occurs to you is the most accurate. If you feel that a statement does not apply to you, choose a response that gives the best indication of how you would typically think, feel or act in that given situation. Some of the statements may not give all the information you would like to receive. If this is the case, please choose a response that is the closest to your feeling about the statement. Thank you for taking the time to help me to complete this questionnaire. Your involvement in this research will help me to have a better understanding of the thought patterns and levels of empathy of young people. I will ask all the questions and I will complete your response on the questionnaire on your behalf. Thus, I will write down the information in the boxes provided.
SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25 years</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Level of education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1-7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8-9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Race or ethnical background of the research participant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SECTION B: THINKING ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE

I want you to think about the following case:

Sarah is a 7 year old child. Sarah’s 15 year old brother has been going into Sarah’s bedroom at night, when Sarah is asleep, and getting into the same bed with her. Sarah’s brother touched Sarah’s private parts and he had sex with her several times over the past few months.
Please answer the following questions:

I WILL PUT A **X** IN THE BOX THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR VIEW.

THINKING ABOUT THE CASE, DO YOU THINK THAT SARAH:

1. Enjoyed what happened?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did not enjoy it at all</td>
<td>Disliked it a little bit</td>
<td>Enjoyed it a little bit</td>
<td>Enjoyed it very much</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Felt attracted to the brother?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felt very attracted</td>
<td>Mostly attracted</td>
<td>Little bit attracted</td>
<td>Felt no attraction</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Thought it was a game?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolutely</td>
<td>Mostly</td>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Had indicated beforehand that she might not mind if her brother had sex with her?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very possible</td>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>Definitely not</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Could have stopped this from happening if Sarah wanted it to?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Only with difficulty</td>
<td>Easily</td>
<td>Very easily</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Was sexually aroused (sexually excited) by the brother?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>Pretty aroused</td>
<td>Little bit</td>
<td>Not aroused at all</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Wanted the situation to go further (wanted to have sex)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>A little bit</td>
<td>Mostly</td>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Was in control of the situation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Had no control at all</td>
<td>Had a little bit of control</td>
<td>Mostly had control</td>
<td>Was totally in control</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Felt good about what happened?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Felt very good</td>
<td>Felt mostly good</td>
<td>Felt mostly bad</td>
<td>Felt very bad</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Felt safe in the situation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Felt totally safe</td>
<td>Felt mostly safe</td>
<td>Felt mostly unsafe</td>
<td>Felt very unsafe</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Was secretly excited by what happened?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very excited</td>
<td>Excited</td>
<td>A little bit excited</td>
<td>Not excited at all</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Had pleasant sexual fantasies (nice sexual dreams) afterwards over what had happened?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. Felt guilty about how he/she had behaved?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did not feel guilty at all</td>
<td>Felt a little bit guilty</td>
<td>Felt guilty</td>
<td>Felt very guilty</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14. **Was afraid or scared?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Felt very afraid</td>
<td>Felt afraid</td>
<td>Felt a little bit scared</td>
<td>Not afraid at all</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. **Thought about the situation afterwards?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Many times</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. **Secretly hoped that something similar might happen again?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hoped very much</td>
<td>Hoped quite a lot</td>
<td>Hoped a little</td>
<td>Did not hope at all</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. **Felt sorry for herself over what happened?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not sorry at all</td>
<td>A little bit sorry</td>
<td>Sorry</td>
<td>Very sorry</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. **Felt sorry for the brother over what had happened?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very sorry</td>
<td>Sorry</td>
<td>A little bit sorry</td>
<td>Not sorry at all</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. **Suggested the sexual interaction to her brother and led him on?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Almost certainly</td>
<td>Possibly</td>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>Definitely not</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20. **Felt angry about what had happened?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremely angry</td>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>A little bit angry</td>
<td>Not angry</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
21. Had experienced something similar in the past?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very possible</td>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>Definitely not</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22. Felt victimised (hurt) by the brother?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>Mostly</td>
<td>A little bit</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23. Worried that someone would find out what happened?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did not worry at all</td>
<td>Worried a little bit</td>
<td>Worried a lot</td>
<td>Was extremely worried</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24. Would like to have sex with her brother again if Sarah had the chance?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very possible</td>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>Definitely not</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25. Is more sexually experienced (knows more about sex) than her age would suggest?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not possible</td>
<td>Somewhat possible</td>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>Very possible</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26. Had been led on by the brother (it was the brother’s idea and he took the lead)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>A little bit</td>
<td>Mostly</td>
<td>Totally</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. Felt emotionally confused afterwards?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>Very possible</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
28. Felt dirty inside of herself afterwards?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>Very possible</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29. Was able to forget what had happened afterwards?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very easily</td>
<td>Easily</td>
<td>Not easily</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30. Was harmed in the long term by what happened?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Definitely not</td>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>Possibly</td>
<td>Very possible</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SECTION C: THINKING ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE

I want you to think about what you did to the person you violated and caused you to be in this Youth Correctional Centre.

Answer the following questions:

C1 Was your victim male or female?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male &amp; Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C2  What was your relationship with this person?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend same school</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live in the same neighbourhood</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girlfriend</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family member</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C3  How old were you when you committed the offence?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 years</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 years</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 years</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 years</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C4  How old was the victim?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younger than 7 years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-10 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-13 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-17 years</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20 years</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25 years</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older than 25 years</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Further instructions:**

I WILL READ A STATEMENT ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND I WILL MARK A X IN THE BOX THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR VIEW.

Thinking about the boy/girl involved in your own situation, would you think he/she:-

1. **Enjoyed what happened?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did not enjoy it at all</td>
<td>Disliked it a little bit</td>
<td>Enjoyed it a little bit</td>
<td>Enjoyed it very much</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Felt attracted to you?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Felt very attracted</td>
<td>Mostly attracted</td>
<td>Little bit attracted</td>
<td>Felt no attraction</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **Thought it was a game?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Absolutely</td>
<td>Mostly</td>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **Had indicated beforehand that he/she might not mind if you had sexual interaction with him/her?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very possible</td>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>Definitely not</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. **Could have stopped this from happening if he or she wanted to?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Only with difficulty</td>
<td>Easily</td>
<td>Very easily</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. **Was sexually aroused (sexually excited) by you?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>Pretty aroused</td>
<td>Little bit</td>
<td>Not aroused at all</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Wanted the situation to go further (wanted to have sex)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>A little bit</td>
<td>Mostly</td>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Was in control of the situation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had no control at all</td>
<td>Had a little bit of control</td>
<td>Mostly had control</td>
<td>Was totally in control</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Felt good about what happened?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felt very good</td>
<td>Felt mostly good</td>
<td>Felt mostly bad</td>
<td>Felt very bad</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Felt safe in the situation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felt totally safe</td>
<td>Felt mostly safe</td>
<td>Felt mostly unsafe</td>
<td>Felt very unsafe</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Was secretly excited by what happened?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very excited</td>
<td>Excited</td>
<td>A little bit excited</td>
<td>Not excited at all</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Had pleasant sexual fantasies (nice sexual dreams) afterwards over what had happened?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. Felt guilty about how he/she had behaved?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did not feel guilty at all</td>
<td>Felt a little bit guilty</td>
<td>Felt guilty</td>
<td>Felt very guilty</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Was afraid or scared?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt very afraid</td>
<td>Felt afraid</td>
<td>Felt a little bit scared</td>
<td>Not afraid at all</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15. Thought about the situation afterwards?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many times</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>16. Secretly hoped that something similar might happen again?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoped very much</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>17. Felt sorry for him/herself over what happened?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sorry at all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>18. Felt sorry for you over what had happened?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very sorry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>19. Suggested the sexual interaction and led you on?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost certainly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20. Felt angry about what had happened?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely angry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
21. Had experienced something similar in the past?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very possible</td>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>Definitely not</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22. Felt victimised (hurt) by you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>Mostly</td>
<td>A little bit</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23. Worried that someone would find out what happened?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did not worry at all</td>
<td>Worried a little bit</td>
<td>Worried a lot</td>
<td>Was extremely worried</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24. Would like to have sex with you again if he/she had the chance?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very possible</td>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>Definitely not</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25. Is more sexually experienced (knows more about sex) than people think?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not possible</td>
<td>Somewhat possible</td>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>Very possible</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26. Had been led on by you (it was your idea and you took the lead)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>A little bit</td>
<td>Mostly</td>
<td>Totally</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. Felt emotionally confused afterwards?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>Very possible</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
28. Afterwards felt dirty inside of him/herself?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>Very possible</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29. Was able to forget what had happened afterwards?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very easily</td>
<td>Easily</td>
<td>Not easily</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30. Was harmed in the long term by what happened?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Definitely not</td>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>Possibly</td>
<td>Very possible</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!
APPENDIX B: Semi-structured interview schedule

1. If you consider the case study that we discussed earlier in the questionnaire, please explain your feelings for Sarah.

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

2. Please think about the offence that you committed. If you want to, you can tell me what happened in your case.

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

3. Did you consider the impact of the offence on the victim?

3.1 Pre-victimisation

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

3.2 During victimisation

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

3.3 Post-victimisation

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

4. Do you think about your victim? If yes, please explain your current feelings for your victim.

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

5. Please tell me about the programmes that you attended in prison.

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
6. Was there any component in these programmes that dealt with victims and your feelings towards your victim?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

7. Is there anything that you feel is important that we have to add to this discussion?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

*Lines for aesthetic purposes only
APPENDIX C: Informed consent

Head of YCC

18/01/2016

Our Ref: Ms Laetitia Coetzee
Tel: (012) 420-3481
E-mail: laetitia.coetzee@up.ac.za

Dear Mr/Ms ....

Informed consent for a study regarding victim empathy in youth sex offenders

Thank you for considering the participation of the selected children in the current study. The University of Pretoria’s Research Proposal and Ethics Committee requires that a researcher should seek informed consent from a research participant before commencing with the research. Informed consent entails the following:

1. **Goal of the research**: The current study is being undertaken in fulfilment of a Doctoral Degree in Criminology at the Department of Social Work and Criminology, University of Pretoria. The goal of the research is to measure and describe the prevalence of victim empathy in youth sex offenders.

2. **Procedures**: In order to undertake this study, an existing questionnaire that have been developed internationally and have been used in various studies, will be used. The researcher will make use of in-person interview surveys. Thus, the researcher will ask the questions to the research participants and record their answers on the questionnaire. It will take approximately 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Subsequently a 30 minute interview
guided by a semi-structured interview schedule will be conducted with the research participants.

3. **Avoidance of harm**: If the questions asked in the questionnaire or during the interview evoke certain feelings and emotions, participants can request to see a social worker for counselling. A social worker at the Youth Correctional Centre where the research will be conducted will be notified of the research project and will be requested to be available during the research if any emotional problems arise during the in-person questionnaire completion process, as well as during the interview.

4. **Benefits**: It must be stressed that no benefits will be gained by participating in this study.

5. **Participant’s rights**: Participants are free to withdraw at any stage of the research. As participation is voluntary, no negative consequences will arise from withdrawal. Should withdrawal occur, all data pertaining to the participant concerned will be destroyed immediately.

6. **Confidentiality**: All information will be treated as confidential and the identities of the research participants will not be disclosed. In addition, information will only be utilised for research purposes and will be published in the form of a final research report, scientific journal articles and conference papers. After completion of the research the completed questionnaires and raw data will be safely stored at the Department of Social Work and Criminology for a period of 15 years for archiving and research purposes.

7. **Ethical clearance**: The Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Pretoria granted ethical clearance for this study.

8. **Questions and concerns**: Should any questions or concerns arise, the researcher could be contacted at the above-mentioned telephone numbers. Should you be interested in the research findings, the researcher can also be
contacted. In turn the researcher will e-mail a summary of the most important findings to you.

I understand my rights as a guardian or a person *in loco parentis* of the research participants and I give voluntary consent for the selected children to participate in the study. I understand what the study entails and that I may request a signed copy of this consent form.

__________________________  ________________________
Guardian *in loco parentis*  Date

__________________________  ________________________
Researcher  Date
Informed assent form for participating in research regarding victim empathy in youth sex offenders

My name is Laetitia Coetzee, and I am a doctorate student from the University of Pretoria. As you have been one of the people that have been selected to assist me with my study, I am writing this letter to you, to request your participation in the research I am undertaking. In order to give your assent, in other words your agreement that you are willing to be part of this research, you have to fully understand what the research entails and what part you will be playing in this process. In order to fulfil the above-mentioned, please read the following:

PURPOSE: A person does research in order to learn more about people and to get answers for certain questions. In this study I want to measure and describe the prevalence of victim empathy in youth sex offenders that are serving their sentence in Youth Correctional Centres. This means that I want to see if youth sex offenders feel sorry about what they did to their victims.

PARTICIPATION: If you decide you want to be part of this study, you will be asked to talk to me for about 1 hour. During this time I will ask you a few questions and I will write down your answers.
RISKS & BENEFITS: There are some things about this study you should know. You may feel a bit shy or uncomfortable about certain questions or content of the conversation but you do not have to answer a question if you do not feel like it. You can also withdraw at any time you do not want to continue with the conversation.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION: When I am finished with this study I will write a report about what I have learned. This report will not include your name or any details that will show that you participated in the study. I hope to talk to about 100 youth sex offenders. I want you to know that I will ensure that your information stay confidential.

VOLUNTARY: Voluntary means that you do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be. I have already asked the Head of your Centre if it is okay for me to ask you to take part in this study. Even though the Head of the Youth Correctional Centre said I could ask you, you still get to decide if you want to be part of this study. No one will be mad at you, or upset if you decide not to be part of this study. If you decide to stop after we begin, that’s okay too. You can also skip any of the questions you do not want to answer.

QUESTIONS: You can ask questions now, during the research (while I am asking you the questions) or after we completed the questionnaire.

Please sign your name below, if you agree to be part of this study. This is the first time a study like this is undertaken in South Africa, so you are helping me a great deal!

Signature of participant _____________________ Date _________________

Name of participant ________________________ Date _________________

Signature of researcher _____________________ Date _________________
APPENDIX E: Informed consent
Research Participant

18/01/2016

Our Ref: Ms Laetitia Coetzee
Tel: (012) 420-3481
E-mail: laetitia.coetzee@up.ac.za

Dear research participant

Informed consent for a study regarding victim empathy in youth sex offenders

Thank you for your participation in the current study. The University of Pretoria’s Research Proposal and Ethics Committee requires that a researcher should seek informed consent from a research participant before commencing with the research. Informed consent entails the following:

1. **Goal of the research:** The current study is being undertaken in fulfilment of a Doctoral Degree in Criminology at the Department of Social Work and Criminology, University of Pretoria. The goal of the research is to measure and describe the prevalence of victim empathy in youth sex offenders.

2. **Procedures:** In order to undertake this study, an existing questionnaire that have been developed internationally and have been used in various studies, will be used. The researcher will make use of in-person interview surveys. Thus the researcher will ask the questions to the research participants and record their answers on the questionnaire. It will take approximately 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Subsequently a 30 minute interview
guided by a semi-structured interview schedule will be conducted with the research participants.

3. **Avoidance of harm**: If the questions asked in the questionnaire or during the interview evoke certain feelings and emotions, participants can request to see a social worker for counselling. A social worker at the Youth Correctional Centre where the research will be conducted will be notified of the research project and will be requested to be available during the research if any emotional problems arise during the in-person questionnaire completion process as well as during the interview.

4. **Benefits**: It must be stressed that no benefits will be gained by participating in this study.

5. **Participant’s rights**: Participants are free to withdraw at any stage of the research. As participation is voluntary, no negative consequences will arise from withdrawal. Should withdrawal occur, all data pertaining to the participant concerned will be destroyed immediately.

6. **Confidentiality**: All information will be treated as confidential and the identities of the research participants will not be disclosed. In addition, information will only be utilised for research purposes and will be published in the form of a final research report, scientific journal articles and conference papers. After completion of the research the completed questionnaires and raw data will be safely stored at the Department of Social Work and Criminology for a period of 15 years for archiving and research purposes.
7. Ethical clearance: The Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Pretoria granted ethical clearance for this study.

I understand my rights as a research participant and I give voluntary consent to participate in the study.

Research participant ___________________ Date ______________

Researcher __________________________ Date ______________
APPENDIX F: Permission letter DCS

Ms. L. Campher
Department of Social Work and Criminology
University of Pretoria
Hillcrest
Pretoria
0187

Dear Ms. Campher,

Re: Feedback on the application to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services on “Victim Empathy in Diverted and Sentenced Adolescent Sexual Offenders”

This letter serves to inform you that your request to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services on the above topic has been approved.

You are required to do the following:

- The relevant Regional and Area Commissioners where the research will be conducted will be informed of your proposed research project.
- Your internal guide will be Director: Community Liaison – Mr. A. Nesengani. You are requested to contact him at telephone number (012) 305 8402/8781 before the commencement of your research.
- It is your responsibility to make arrangements for your interviewing times.
- Your identity document and this approval letter should be in your possession when visiting.
- You are required to use the terminology used in the White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (February 2005).
- You are not allowed to use photographic or video equipment during your visits, unless permission is allowed.
- Submit your final report to the Department for approval by the Directorate: Research and Information of the Department of Correctional Services before publication (including presentation at workshops, conferences, seminars, etc) of the report.
- Should you have any queries regarding this process, please contact the Directorate: Research and Information at telephone number 012-307-2770/2369.

Thank you for your interest to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services.

MS. T.M. MAGORO
DC: Policy Co-ordination & Research

DATE: 19/11/2007
APPENDIX G: Publication approval DCS

CONFIDENTIAL

correctional services
Department: Correctional Services
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X136, PRETORIA, 0001 Poyntons Building, C/O WF Nkomo and Sophie de Bruyn Street, PRETORIA
Tel (012) 307 2000, Fax (012) 328-5111

Ms. L. Coetze
Department of Social Work and Criminology
University of Pretoria
Hillcrest
Pretoria
0001

Dear Ms. Coetzee

RE: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL FOR PUBLICATION OF COMPLETED RESEARCH ON "VICTIM EMPATHY IN YOUTH SEX OFFENDERS"

It is with pleasure to inform you that your request to publish the findings of the above mentioned study has been granted by the National Commissioner of the Department of Correctional Services.

Thank you for your interest in the Department of Correctional Services.

ND SIHLAZANA
DC: POLICY CO-ORDINATION & RESEARCH
DATE: 08/12/2015