

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

Child sexual abuse has been considered to be a major social problem throughout the country (Bandi, 2003; Simon-Roper, 1996). It has been noted that child sexual abuse is an old phenomenon that can be traced back in history as far as 5 000 years ago but it was not acknowledged by society until the 1970s when the Women's Liberation Movement was born, which enabled the issues concerning violence and oppression of women and children to be openly discussed (Bandi, 2003; Breckenridge & Baldry, 1997; Dodds, 1999; Herman, 1994, cited in Dodds, 1999; Lipton, 1997; Rush, 1980, cited in Delpo & Koontz, 1991). Since then, through media sources like television and radio shows, magazines, newspapers, to name a few, and also the increase in attention by the literature on this issue, there has been an increased public awareness of the reality of this problem and an increase in the reporting rate of such cases (Armstrong, 1978, Bass & Anthony, 1983, Brady, 1979, Walker, 1982, all cited in Delpo & Koontz, 1991; Dodds, 1999; Ford, Ray & Ellis, 1999).

A number of authors have also reported the high rate of child sexual abuse in South Africa that requires urgent attention, and which has also increased the public awareness of the problem (Collings, 1997; Machel, 2004, quoted by Ritcher, Dawes & Higson-Smith, 2004).

Gordon (1988, cited in Elbow & Mayfield, 1991) looks at intra-familial sexual abuse. He suggests that its existence has been denied until the 1970s when mental health professionals were faced with escalating numbers of father-daughter incest cases. This escalation, according to Swanson and Biaggio (1985), provided evidence that father-daughter incest is common but has been repressed by the social forces of family and social values. In line with that, Myer (1985) views father-daughter incest as a serious

problem in the country, which Breckenridge and Baldry (1997) categorize under criminal offenses mostly perpetrated by men.

2. INCEST CONCEPTUALIZED

Incest is a form of sexual abuse that takes place within the family context. Due to the nature of this study, the use of the term incest would focus on the child as a victim. It could be useful to first look at child sexual abuse in a broader sense.

Child sexual abuse includes any sexual behavior involving the child aimed at the gratification of the perpetrator's sexual desires. According to Robertson (1989), child sexual abuse involves the child who is below the age of consenting, and he defines the non-consenting age as 12 years and below; and an adult or an adolescent with an age gap of 6 years and above. Wallace (1999) argues that the high-risk years are between the ages of 4-9, and it normally stops at 14 years as the victim might threaten to tell.

South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare (1988) define child sexual abuse as the involvement of the child in sexual behaviours with or without her consent, with an adult person or age inappropriate adolescent, and the act is aimed at sexual gratification of the adult or older adolescent. They further suggest that this can happen within the family or outside the family, but the adult involved has charge of the child.

According to Kempe and Kempe (1984), sexual abuse refers to the "...involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not fully comprehend to, which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos or family roles "(p.60).

It has been indicated that there is no universal definition of this concept and that these definitions vary in different states (American Psychology Association, 1999; Glaser & Frosh, 1993; Louw, 2001; Newton, 2001, all cited in Bandi, 2003); but even though there are some differences in the definitions, there appears to be a consensus about the

common features including the fact that the child is developmentally immature, hence she is neither physically nor emotionally ready to engage in sexual activity; she is dependent on the adult, and unable to give informed consent. The other essential factor is that the activity is to satisfy the sexual needs of an adult involved; hence Blume (1990, cited in McClendon, 1991) states that the abusive nature comes from the fact that the needs and wishes of the child are not taken into consideration, but instead, it is the needs of the caretaker that are met at the expense of the child (Sive, 1993).

According to Russell (1997), sex is seen as exploitative when it is both unwanted and if there is a power imbalance between the people involved, for instance, the age difference, which varies according to different authors, between 3 and 6 years; and also the other person being in authority over the young child. This is supported by Doyle (1994), when she pointed out the dependent nature of the child is what makes child sexual abuse abusive as it is often perpetrated by the same person the child relies on; (e.g., parent, teacher, and so on). The other core issue is the informed consent. For the person to give informed consent, he/she should fully understand the consequences, both positive and negative, of whatever act she/he has to participate in. This cannot be said about the child's participation in sexual activity with an adult. According to Doyle (1994), children are unaware of the long-term effects, either physical or emotional, of the sexual relation with an adult. They are usually attracted by immediate gratification they get from bribery.

It has been previously mentioned that child sexual abuse can either be extra-familial or intra-familial. Intra-familial child sexual abuse is also known as incest. This is seen as the most extreme form of child sexual abuse (Herman, 1981), because of the nature of the relationship between the child and the perpetrator. Robertson (1989) argues that this form of sexual abuse involves emotional pressure on the child to participate and to keep a secret even if there is no violence involved. This is a complex and difficult subject to discuss at any given situation in a society and this is exacerbated by privacy, confidentiality and the sensitivity of the matter. In view of that, Browne and Finkelhor (1986) mention that shame and non-disclosure is associated with the criminal nature of this event, the age and dependency of the victim.

Authors such as Finkelhor (1979) and McKendrick and Hoffman (1990) state that incest is defined according to marriage laws and culture as involving people who are related in that they are forbidden to marry by custom. Although some definitions exclude families like step-families, co-habiting families and the like, this study would assume that the step-father or the mother's partner occupies the father role in the life of the child. This is supported by McKendrick and Hoffman (1990) when they talk about the fact that any male that occupies the father figure in the family is the father. In terms of South African law, sexual activity with both step and the adoptive father is incest. The intercourse with the mother's live-in boyfriend cannot be defined as incest in legal terms, but in psychosocial terms, because he is the father figure to the child, it would closely resemble incest and the mother's response is most likely to be the same as when the perpetrator was the biological father of the child (South African Council for Child and Family Welfare, 1988) as these males are in parental roles in the life of the child. Faller (1988) supported this when she stated that the step-father and live-in partner are members of the family who are psychological parents to the child, hence sexual abuse by them is termed incest.

According to the South African law, incest is defined as “unlawful and intentional sexual intercourse between male and female persons who are prohibited to marry each other because they are related within prohibited degrees of consanguinity, affinity or adoptive relationship” (Snyman, 1989, cited in Russell, 1995 p.4). This definition received criticism from most researchers and clinicians due to it limiting acts to sexual intercourse. They came up with other definitions that were termed as both sociological and psychological, which took into account the lack of informed consent from the child, the powerful position of the perpetrator, range of sexual acts and the inclusion of relatives no matter how distant the relationship is (Russell, 1986, 1995).

Another definition that was rejected by researchers and clinicians is the definitions by English and Welsh laws. They refer to incest as confined to blood relationships, hence excluding step-parents, foster and adoptive parents (Doyle, 1994). According to Herman (1981), from the psychological viewpoint, blood relationship does not matter, what needs

to be considered is the relationship that exists by virtue of the adult's parental role and the child's dependency in terms of father-daughter incest. In view of the above, for the purpose of this study step-families and co-habiting families would be included because traditionally the step-father plays the father role in the life of the step-child (McKendrick & Hoffman, 1990).

There is a range of sexual acts that are defined as sexually abusive, which can include both touching and non-touching (Doyle, 1994; Green, 1993). Some authors argue that non-contact sexual activities are not abusive but only irritating. Other professionals believe that all forms, whether contact or non-contact are abusive and cannot be ranked hierarchically. They further argue that the circumstances in which these occur are the ones that make these acts more or less significant for the victim. This view is supported by Reinvoize (1982) when he pointed out that the essential feature of the sexual act is whether the child perceives it as being of sexual nature at that time, or at a later stage. Also, Johnson (1992) indicated that with father-daughter incest the definition goes beyond the genital penetration, as long as the sexual behavior has to be kept secret between the father and the daughter, then it is abusive.

The forms of non-contact abuse include voyeurism, which refers to watching the naked child with the child being unaware, or asking the child to undress in front of the man; exhibitionism, which refers to exposure of genitals to the child for the man's satisfaction which can be accompanied by masturbation, or forcing the child to watch sexual activity of adults, or to watch pornographic materials; and pornography, whereby the child is forced to pose in sexual positions or to dress sexually (Russell, 1986). The other form is verbal abuse, which involves talking to the child in sexual manner (Doyle, 1994).

The focus of this study would be on the contact form of abuse. These include fondling, which involves touching genitals of the child like vaginal area, penis in case of a male child, breast and thighs; rubbing the penis against the child's vaginal area for masturbation purposes or forcing the child to touch the penis; digital penetration which involves insertion of the finger into the child's vagina or anus; penile-vaginal or penile-

anal penetration, either attempted or achieved; and oral sex which involves sucking the child's vagina or forcing her to suck the penis (Doyle, 1994; Faller, 1988; Kempe & Kempe, 1984; South African Council for Child and Family Welfare, 1988). The authors further postulate that other forms of sexual abuse can at times be easily dismissed due to lack of evidence, as the child might be accused of misinterpreting the innocent father's touch, but the emphasis on secrecy and the threats by the father reflects that whatever is happening is wrong. In addition to that, Dodds (1999) cites studies that reported this form as the most common form of child sexual abuse perpetrated by family members.

Although the focus of this study is on father-daughter incest, it should be noted that there are other types of incestuous abuse, depending on who is involved. As Russell (1995) and Vogelmann (1990) point out, there are wide ranges of perpetrators in intra-familial abuse but the research revealed that the majority are fathers. The important factors in the definition of incest are the familial tie, and the nature of the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator (Sive, 1993). These include the following:

2.1. Sibling Incest

This normally involves an older brother and a younger sister. It is mostly viewed as less traumatic and almost 'normal' as it is considered as an exploration from both parties but researchers like Gelinis (1983, cited in Friedrich, 1990), Laredo (1982, cited in Meiselman, 1990) and Russell (1986) disagree, stating cases when there were threats by an older brother. This was supported by Friday (1983) when he suggested that the amount of trauma depends on the victim's individual experience of the sexual abuse. Although this is said to be the common form of incest (Finkelhor, 1979; Schlesinger, 1982, cited in Solomon, 1992), it goes unreported most of the time even if discovered (Smith & Israel, 1987, cited in Solomon, 1992), and it is believed that there is no betrayal of trust involved (Forward & Bucks 1978). According to Meiselman (1990), this type of incest happens in large families and in families where parents are physically or emotionally distant from the children and there is poor parental supervision. Studies by Smith and Israel (1987, cited in Meiselman, 1990) revealed that most of these parents have extramarital affairs well known by the children.

2.2. Mother-Son Incest

According to Hoorwitz (1983), this form of incest is the most pathological form but rarely reported, hence less is known about its patterns and dynamics. It is believed that it usually happens in families where the father is absent and the mother is lonely (Forward & Bucks, 1978).

2.3. Mother-Daughter Incest

This is also said to be rare and involves manual stimulation of genital areas. This might be due to the socialization of females that they should not be initiators of sexual advances but recipients (Meiselman, 1990).

2.4. Father-Son Incest

This is a homosexual activity. It is also believed that it is rarely disclosed (Meiselman, 1990). Also the dynamics involved, and the pattern about it is unknown except that the perpetrator uses it to cope with his feelings of inadequacy, especially if his wife is powerful (Forward & Bucks, 1978; Hoorwitz, 1983). The literature reviewed by Williams (1988, cited in Solomon, 1992) on father-son incest, links the underreporting of this type to the taboo related to incest itself and homosexuality.

2.5. Incest by Uncle and Grandfather

These are said to be similar to father-daughter incest as these perpetrators are older family members with parental status over the child. It also puts the mother in a difficult position as the perpetrator is her own father or brother, but it might be easier for her to support her daughter and take action, as she is seldom economically dependent on these people. This is also a form of power abuse due to age difference and power imbalance between the child and the perpetrator (South African Council for Child and Family Welfare, 1988). The one study conducted by Goodwin, Comier and Owen (1983, cited in Solomon, 1992) reported that about 10% of the incestuous abuse involved grandfathers and granddaughters, thus, the researcher would posit that, although this is a substantial number, but it is not as much prevalent as the father-daughter type.

2.6. Father-Daughter Incest

Research revealed that this is the most prevalent form (Russell, 1997). The author posited that it is exploitative since there is power imbalance between relatives involved due to age difference, unlike when it involves relatives of the same age; hence he uses the term incestuous abuse. This is the focus of the study, so, whatever is discussed in the subsequent sections would be referring to this type of incestuous abuse.

3. RATIONALE

3.1. Incidence and Prevalence

Several researchers have reported an increasing number in the reported cases of child sexual abuse both locally and internationally (Green, 1993; Rudd, 2004; Vogelmann, 1990). Vogelmann (1990) further suggests that this problem affects every population, irrespective of their socio-economic status. Some reports indicate that the problem is increasing. Finkelhor (1994, cited in Davies, Seymour and Read, 2000); Martin (1994, also cited in Davies et al., 2000) and Townsend and Dawes (2004), argue that this might not be a true reflection of an increasing incidence rate; instead it could be that the reporting rate is improving because of an increased awareness of the problem. It has been noted that the incidence of child sexual abuse cannot be confirmed because of the number of cases that goes unreported for different reasons, or if reported, some are not followed up (Dodds, 1999; Pienaar, 2000, cited in Bandi, 2003; Prusent, 1992). This is consistent with Russell's (1983, cited in Carter, 1993) suggestion that only 2 % of intrafamilial and 6% of extra familial gets reported to the legal and child protection services. Furthermore, it has been documented that the prevalent rates as reported by different researchers depend on the definition used and the methodological issues (Collings, 1991, cited in Collings, 1997; Dodds, 1999; Finkelhor, 1986, 1988, cited in Collings, 1997; Mzarek & Kempe, 1981).

According to Kempe and Kempe (1984), there has been a 200 % increase in the reported cases of child sexual abuse in the country since 1978. In line with that, Carter (1993) documented an increase in the disclosure of child sexual abuse in North America in the

past decade. This is consistent with the findings of the National Incidence Study conducted by the National Centre of Child Abuse and Neglect (1988, cited in Green, 1993), which reported an increase in the number of sexually abused children in 1986, which was almost three times the incidence in 1980.

Both Collings (1997) and the South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare (1988) stated that in South Africa, child sexual abuse is amongst the broader spectrum of child abuse needing urgent attention. In relation to that, Bandi (2003) points out that out of 52 957 of rape cases that were reported in 2000, 21 630 were of children below 18 years; and Kindra and Gabrielse (2002, cited in Bandi, 2003), reported that 40% of all reported rape cases in South Africa are those of children. Bandi (2003) adds that this one of the reasons the Child Protection Unit was formed, that is, to deal with such cases. Dodds (1999) also cited literature indicating the high prevalence rate in South Africa as compared to other countries.

Van Niekerk (2004) provides an overview of national statistics of child sexual abuse cases reported to Childline over a 10-year period from 1991-2002. She noted a significant increase of up to 400% in the last 8-9 years. She further states that in Gauteng, about 3000 cases of crime against children are reported to the Child Protection Unit per month. In addition to that, Rudd (2004) documented that in Zimbabwe, 5470 children were treated in 3 different clinics for the same problem between 1997-2001. Furthermore, Schurink (1996, cited in Mokgadi, 2002) documented a 60% increase in these cases in South Africa between 1991 and 1994, and a 28 % increase per year between 1993 and 1995. Also, RAPCAN and South African Police Services (2001, cited in Dawes, 2002) recorded sexual crimes against children ranging between 23 430 to 25 578 in the years 1996-2000. Other South African studies that were consistent with these statistics are those of Levett (1989, cited in Dodds, 1999), which reported a prevalence rate of 43,6% and Key (cited by Pitman, 1993, in Keen and Keen, 1995), revealing that out of 15 333 child abuse cases reported to South African Police in 1992, 7706 were sexual abuse.

It is further indicated that the problem of child sexual abuse affects all genders but the rate is higher in girls (Bass & Davis, 1994, cited in Ford et al., 1999; Bolen & Scannapieco, 1999, cited in Corcoran, 2004; Carter, 1993; Solomon, 1992). Finkelhor (1994, cited in Madu, 2001) conducted a study in 20 countries that revealed that the rate of child sexual abuse in females is 1.5-3% more than in males. Dodds (1999) also cited several studies supporting this notion. This seems to be true for South Africa as well as confirmed by Childline when they indicated that 1 in 3 girls will have been sexually abused by the age of 18 years as opposed to 1 in 5 boys, and also, the statistics from Transwerk Memorial Institute's (TMI) Teddy Bear Clinic for sexually abused children revealed that, of the 49 children treated in the clinic between December 2003 and January 2004, there were 6 boys and 43 girls, which is consistent with Higson-Smith and Lamprecht's (2004) statement that 85% of child victims seen at the Teddy Bear Clinic are females. Furthermore, studies conducted by Collings (1991, cited in Collings, 1997); Dodds (1999); Vogelman (1990) and World Health Organisation (1999, cited in Guma and Henda, 2004), supported this view. In addition to that, Rudd (2004) documented that in Zimbabwe, there was a higher number of female victims reported in the three clinics between 1997 and 2001, of which the number was consistent over those 4.5 years.

Studies indicate that the majority of perpetrators are men. Faller's (1988) and Herman's (1981) studies reported 94% and 97 % of male perpetrators respectively. According to Tamara's House (2003), 95% of all perpetrators are male. In line with that, Solomon (1992) cited several studies that reported men as the most perpetrators of child sexual abuse. This was also evident in Rudd's (2004) report of child sexual abuse in Zimbabwe that revealed 99% of male perpetrators and Dodds' (1999) study reporting males as the most perpetrators.

It is believed that in most cases the perpetrator is someone who is well known to the family. South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare (1988, p.2) mentioned that studies done in South Africa and America indicated that between 87% and 95% of perpetrators are male, of which only 6% are strangers and about 66% being "...members of the child's psychosocial family". In line with that, Finkelhor (1984, cited

in Ford et al., 1999) and Rudd (2004), also reported a small percentage of stranger perpetrators. Russell's (1984) study revealed 16% of incestuous abuse before the age of 18 years of age among female subjects in San Francisco, of which 12% were abused before they reached the age of 14 years. He further estimated that in South Africa, incestuous abuse may be at least 50% higher as compared to North America, which suggests that one quarter of sexual abuse cases amongst females in South Africa are incestuous (Russell, 1993, cited in Dodds, 1999). This is in line with Tamara's House's (2003) argument that 75%-80% of children are sexually abused by someone they know and trust, and someone that has an easy access to them. Also, The Unspeakable Family Secret (1984, cited in Trotter, 1985) gives an estimation of 250 000 children being sexually abused in their homes in United States, with 75 % being their fathers' victims. In relation to that, Childline indicated that among the cases of child sexual abuse dealt with every month, 85% occur within the family and mostly by someone who is trusted and loved by the victim as he uses trust; love and affection to get the victim do what he wants her to do. Also, Higson-Smith and Lamprecht (2004) reported that in the Teddy Bear Clinic cases, 25% of perpetrators are mothers' partners.

Other authors that reported intrafamilial sexual abuse as the commonest type are Gomes-Schwartz, Horowitz and Cardarelli (1990); Vogelman (1990) and Wolfe, Gentile & Wolfe (1989). Dodds (1999) also cited literature supporting this idea. This is consistent with Pienaar's (1996, cited in Mokgadi, 2002) report that between 1993 and 1995, the Child Protection Unit documented an increase from 12-17 incest cases per month in the country, and 20.8 cases per month in the first 6 months of 1996.

Different authors have different views on the most common age of child sexual abuse victims. Burton (1968, cited in Katz, 1979) mentioned that it is between 7-10 years whilst Glaister (1974, also cited in Katz, 1979), extended it to 12 years. The study conducted by Goldberg and Goldberg (1974, cited in Katz, 1979) reported the age range to be 4-16 years. Studies conducted by Dodds (1999) and Wolfe (1998, cited in Corcoran, 2004) reported that children at all developmental stages are vulnerable to sexual abuse. Some researchers argue this point as they suggest that the risk is higher for preadolescent

children (Finkelhor, 1993, cited in Dodds, 1999). Other researchers state that children under 10 years are at greater risk but they further noted that in South Africa the onset is even younger, ranging between 3-6 years. This was evident in the South African studies reviewed by Dodds (1999). In relation to that, Corcoran (2004) cited studies that reported preschool age to be the most at risk for sexual abuse. In Van Niekerk's (2004) overview of the Childline statistics, she noted the national decrease in the average age of the victim since 1991. She reported that in 2002, KwaZulu-Natal offices documented 50% of children younger than 7 years and in 2003 it was 63% of the under 7 year olds in Pietermaritzburg only. These are in comparison with the average age of 10-12 years in 1991. Several media reports indicate a high rate of infant rape, especially in South Africa, from as young as a few days old. For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on ages of 5-11 years, as Lewis (1997) suggests that this is when they begin to develop an ability to fully integrate their memories. In addition to that, Goodwin (1982) suggests that between the ages of 7-11 years, children can give more meaningful account of what happened.

Different forms of child sexual abuse have been mentioned earlier. Most studies indicate that contact form is more common than non-contact form (Jaffe & Roux, 1988; Levett, 1989b; Robin et al., 1997; Westcott, 1984, all cited in Dodds, 1999). Jacobs and Loening (1991, cited in Dodds, 1999) reported that in King Edward VIII hospital, 73% of cases treated in 1988 with an increase to 83% in 1989. Early studies reported that from the contact type, genital fondling was the commonest (Gale et al., 1988, cited in Dodds, 1999; Gomes-Schwartz et al., 1990; Russell, 1983, cited in Wolfe et al., 1989). However, recent studies identified penetrative forms, vaginal or anal, as the most common forms (Ho & Lieh Mak, 1992; Robin et al., 1997, both cited in Dodds, 1999). This is consistent with Rudd's (2004) report of 92% of penetrative sex on the cases treated in three Zimbabwean clinics between 1997-2001; and also Pienaar's (2000, cited in Bandi, 2003) Pretoria statistics between 1994-1998 which documented an increase in child rape cases from 7559 to 15 732, sodomy from 491 to 739 and indecent assault decreasing from 3904 to 3774.

3.2. Motivation

The sudden increase in reported cases of rape of infants and children has alerted the South African community to the prevalence of child sexual abuse in general in the country. This was noted by Bandi (2003) when he stated that children as young as 8 months old are reported by the media to be vulnerable to sexual abuse, but of late, there have been reports of child victims even younger than that. It is believed that in most cases the perpetrator is somebody who is well known to the family, especially someone who is trusted and loved by the victim. Several authors support these allegations when they suggest that the majority of the sexual abuse cases are committed within the supposedly safe home environment and in the presence or hands of the parents (Bandi, 2003; Madu, 2001; Vogelmann, 1990).

It is posited that the relationship of the perpetrator to the family determines the reaction of the mother to the abuse and how she relates to the child (Massat & Lundy, 1998). Flynn (1994) supported this when she stated that it may be easier for the mother to cope if the perpetrator is a stranger than a spouse. Richter and Higson-Smith (2004) point out the increasing incidence of father-daughter rape reported in the media. This is consistent with the views of Gagliano (1987), Goodwin (1982) and Vogelmann (1990), that father-daughter incest is the most common form of intra-familial child sexual abuse ranging between 70%-80% of reported cases. Furthermore, Solomon (1992) cites several authors suggesting father-daughter incest as the most prevalent type. Russell's (1984) findings in his study reported that out of every 40 women that had stayed with their biological fathers, one reported to have been sexually abused by them.

In view of the above, one wonders as to what implications this has for the children's mothers as they are an intrinsic part of the system within which the abuse takes place. According to Jacobs (1994), one of the most tragic effects of incest is on the relationship between the mother and the daughter, because this is the primary attachment underlying both the psychosocial development of the child and the construction of the self. Koch and Jarvis (1987) point out the importance of understanding these relational dynamics since they are significant in the intervention programme of the child and the mother.

Despite the extent of this problem, there is a paucity of studies looking at the experiences of mothers within the South African context and the relational dynamics in the mother-daughter dyad, and this study hopes to contribute to this area. The study also envisages contributing to existing literature on indirect trauma, and the findings could be useful to psychotherapists and counsellors who develop techniques and programmes to assist these women.

As stated above, there is little research that focuses on mothers of child sexual abuse survivors. Tamraz (1996) mentioned that most literature on the non-offending parents is based on authors' opinions and on the information from secondary sources like the professionals dealing with these cases rather than on research. He further stated that literature is mostly based on the studies focusing on the child victim or the offender.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

This study is aimed at investigating the impact of father-daughter incest on the mother-daughter relationship. It seeks to find out the different responses of the mothers to the disclosure of such an event. It is also aimed at examining the psychological effects of the abuse on the mother and her child. It would then examine the effects of the above on the mother-daughter relationship.

These will be achieved through a literature study on the above issues and also through exploring different theoretical explanations of the dynamics of incest. An exploratory study surrounding these issues will then be conducted on the mothers and based on that, conclusions will be drawn and recommendations will be made for intervention programmes with mothers.

5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study will explore the following questions:

- How do mothers respond to the disclosure of their children's sexual abuse allegations perpetrated by their spouses?
- What are the factors that influence these responses?
- What are the psychological effects of father-daughter incest on the mother and the child?
- What factors mediate these psychological effects?
- What impact do these variables have on the relationship between the mother and her daughter?

6. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The relationship between the mother and her daughter may be adversely affected by the sexual abuse of her daughter by her current intimate partner.

7. FEASIBILITY OF THE STUDY

The researcher assumed that the following factors might contribute to the success of this study:

- The experts or agencies dealing with the cases of child sexual abuse will refer the participants.
- The interviews will be conducted in the participants' preferred language and at a venue where each participant feels safe and comfortable.
- The researcher will cover the costs involved, including transporting the participants to places where the interviews will take place.

8. ANTICIPATED PROBLEMS

It could be difficult to gain the mothers' trust due to the sensitive nature of the topic and the pending court cases, which could result in mothers refusing to participate; withdrawing in the middle of the study; not willing to share some of the crucial information or denying some aspects of the abuse.

Because of possible relocation and change of contact details it may be difficult to locate some mothers. It should also be noted that this study is based on the perspectives of the mothers.

9. LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS

This research report consists of five chapters. The first chapter (Chapter 1) introduces the concept of child sexual abuse and incest. Chapter 2 provides different theoretical frameworks that explain the dynamics of child sexual abuse perpetrated by the father within the family. It also describes parenting with special reference to Baumrind's different parenting styles, and looks at the development of attachment and different attachment patterns according to Bowlby's theory. These are discussed in relation to the onset and the maintenance of sexual abuse of the child by her father, and their implications for disclosure for the child and the mother. The researcher also examines the existing literature on child sexual abuse with specific focus on maternal response to disclosure, the impact of such an experience on both the mother and the child, and also the effects these have on their relationship. The third chapter is the methodology section, which describes the research design followed, the sample and the method of data collection and analysis.

Research findings are presented and discussed in Chapter 4, and the last chapter (Chapter 5) provides the summary of the findings and the conclusions that the researcher came to from the study. The study limitations are also mentioned in this chapter, and the

implications for therapy with the mothers of father-daughter incest victims. A suggestion for future research directions is stated.