

**AN EXPLORATION OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF NON-ADMITTING  
SEX OFFENDERS OF THEIR FAMILY ENVIRONMENT**

Olivia Davene Davids

Student Number: 2029070



A mini-thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Magister Artium in Child and Family Studies in the  
Department of Social Work, Faculty of Community and Health Sciences,  
University of the Western Cape.

**Submission Date: 30 April 2014**

**Supervisor: Dr M. Londt**

## ABSTRACT

Statistics in South Africa show sex offences as being among the crimes that invoke the most public concern. The number of sentenced sex offenders is increasing at an alarming rate and the denial of the sex offence continues to be regarded as a risk factor for re-offending. The non-admitting sex offender therefore poses a greater risk to society as he does not show insight into his offending behaviour.

This study aims to explore the family environment of non-admitting sex offenders in order to gain insight into the family characteristics that could be contributing factors towards the behaviour of denial. *However, the focus will not be on the families of the sex offenders, but rather on the non-admitting sex offenders' views of their family environment.* The theoretical framework used is the Social Learning Theory, because it supports the fact that most behaviour is learned through modelling the behaviour of others.

The researcher used a qualitative approach and the aim of the study was to generate information that would describe the family environment of non-admitting sex offenders. The population of this study was incarcerated, sentenced sex offenders with specific focus on the non-admitting sex offender as the unit of analysis. Ten (10) participants were purposively selected for the study and semi-structured interviews were conducted with each one in order to generate the needed information for the study.

The findings yielded that most of the participants were raised in single-parent households and the majority of them had never known their biological fathers. Some had the opportunity of meeting their fathers later in life, but were unable to restore the father-son relationship. Most of the participants grew up in a household where either one or both parents abused alcohol. The study also confirmed how the Social Learning Theory explains that behaviour is mimicked and repeated later in life, especially in cases of domestic violence. Many of the participants grew up without a positive male role model in their lives, which meant that they struggled to identify with a positive masculine identity and therefore failed to understand what the role of a man in the household should be.

## KEYWORDS

Sex offenders

Non-admitting sex offenders

Family environment

Dynamic risk factors

Denial (refutation, minimization, depersonalization)

Authoritarian parenting style

Authoritative parenting style

Permissive parenting style



## DECLARATION

I declare that ‘An exploration of the perceptions of non-admitting sex offenders of their family environment’ is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Full name: Olivia Davene Davids

Date: September 2014

Signed.....



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to give all Honour and Praise to God for carrying me through this journey, which at times seemed endless. He uplifted me and gave me the strength to see this 'project' through.

I would also like to say thank you to my parents, David and Leonora Abrahams, who have always been my biggest supporters. They both raised me to believe that education is the key to success in life. I love you both very much and it warms my heart to know that you are proud of me.

To my sister, Durandt September, thank you for your support and for motivating me to keep on going when you knew I did not have the strength to carry on.

My husband, Chazery, you have been on this crazy journey with me for the past two years. Thank you for your sacrifices - late nights and very little sleep. Your endless support and encouragement has always been my greatest motivators.

I would also like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Marcel Londt, for her guidance, support and encouragement over the past few years. I know, at times, it was very difficult and you had to constantly motivate me to continue and see this project through, but your motivation and belief in my abilities has been instrumental in the completion of this journey.

To my friend and fellow student, Hedren, WE MADE IT! I am so glad that I decided four years ago to start this journey with you. In spite of all the tears and lamentations, I know that our friendship has grown stronger. Having gone through a 'journey' like this with someone, binds you for life. THANK YOU!

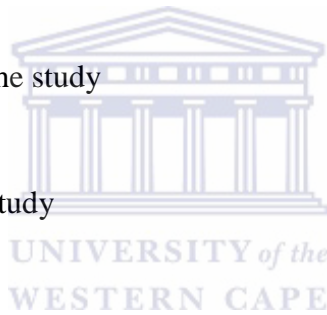
Last, but not least, a big thank you to each individual who contributed towards the success of this 'project', particularly, the brave men who were willing to be interviewed, so that we could find ways to improve the process of rehabilitation.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER 1

### BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction	1
1.2. Problem Statement	3
1.2.1. Rationale of the study	3
1.2.2. Aim of the Study	4
1.2.3. Research Question	4
1.2.4. Research Objective	4
1.2.5. Brief Overview of the study	4
1.2.6. Research Tool	5
1.2.7. Limitations of the Study	5
1.3. Definitions of Key Concepts	5
1.4. Chapter Outline	6



## CHAPTER 2

### **THEORETICAL CONTEXT: SEX OFFENDERS, CAUSALITY, FAMILIES AND SOCIO-LEGAL MANAGEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA**

2.1. Introduction	7
2.2. Social Learning Theory	8
2.3. Theoretical Context: Defining the Sex Offender; Causality and the Family of Sex offenders	11
2.4. Non-admitting sex offenders: Understanding denial in sexual offenders	12
2.5. Family characteristics of sexual offenders	16
2.5.1. Absent Fathers	17
2.5.2. Traumatic /Adverse experiences in early childhood	18
2.5.3. Violence within the family home	18
2.5.4. Parenting styles	20
2.6. Socio-legal Management of Sex Offenders in South Africa	22
2.6.1. Definition of rape	22
2.6.2. Consent as described in the new legislation on sexual offences	23
2.6.3. Definition of sexual assault	25
2.7. Summary	26

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction	28
3.2. Methodological Approach	28
3.3. Research Setting	29
3.4. Participants Population and Sampling	29
3.5. Data Collection Tool	30
3.6. Data Collection Process	30
3.7. Data Analysis	30
3.8. Trustworthiness	31
3.9. Self-reflexivity	32
3.10. Ethical Considerations	32
3.11. Significance of the study	33
3.12. Summary	34





## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1	Introduction	35
4.2	Data Analysis and Findings	35
4.2.1.	Participants' experience of his family background	35
4.2.1.1.	Domestic Violence / Aggression in the home	35
4.2.1.2.	Substance Abuse	36
4.2.2.	Participant's relationship with family members	36
4.2.2.1	Discipline imposed in home	37
4.2.2.2.	Lack of adequate parental supervision	37
4.2.3.	Lack of Masculine Identity	37
4.2.3.1.	Absent Father	37
4.2.4.	Lack of parental guidance	39
4.2.4.1.	Non-involvement of parents	39
4.2.4.2.	Sex education by peers	40
4.2.5.	Relationships in adulthood	40
4.2.5.1.	Unstable relationships with partners	40
4.2.5.2.	Non-existent relationship with own children	41
4.2.5.3.	Violence / Aggression in relationships	41
4.2.5.4.	Substance Abuse	41
4.2.6.	Description of Offence Committed	41
4.2.6.1.	Denial of the offence	41
4.2.6.2.	Minimization of involvement in the offence	42
4.2.6.3.	Justification of offence committed	42
4.2.6.4.	Denial related to harm	42
4.3.	Discussion of findings	43

4.3.1. Theme 1: Participants' experience of his family background	44
4.3.2. Theme 2: Participant's relationship with family members	44
4.3.3. Theme 3: Lack of Masculine Identity	45
4.3.4. Theme 4: Lack of parental guidance	46
4.3.5. Theme 5: Relationships in adulthood	47
4.3.6. Theme 6: Description of offence committed	47
4.4. Summary	48



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction	49
5.2. Recommendations for Assessment and Intervention: Practice Aspects	51
5.3. Recommendations for future research	51
5.4. Limitations of the study	52
5.5. Conclusion	52



## REFERENCES

A-Z

53-60



## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - LETTER OF CONSENT	61
APPENDIX B - INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	63



## CHAPTER 1

### BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1. Introduction

In South Africa, at least one in three women will be raped in her lifetime (Moffett, 2006). Crime statistics released in 2010 for the period April 2009 to March 2010 show that there were 64 514 sexual crime cases reported to the SAPS. A more recent study conducted by the Medical Research Foundation, an independently managed charity under the Medical Research Council, in 2011 shows that in the Gauteng Province, more than 37% of men state that they had raped a woman and nearly 7% of the 487 men who were included in the survey, said that they had participated in a gang rape (Crime Report, 2010/2011, South African Police Services). The latest statistics on sex offenders within the Department of Correctional Services show that an increase in totals has occurred - the total amount of un-sentenced sexual offenders has risen to 6 949 and the number of sentenced offenders to 18 058 (Department of Correctional Services, 2012, February 10). This statistical evidence shows that efforts to change the dangerous behaviour of sex offenders remain futile and inadequate, which means that either new offenders are coming into the system on a regular basis or they continue to re-offend and return to prisons.

Sex offender treatment programmes are provided in certain prisons and the overall goal is to reduce the likelihood that an offender will engage in future acts of sexually abusive behaviour (Schneider & Wright, 2004:04). Effective treatment is therefore compromised if sex offenders strongly believe that they are the victims of wrongful prosecution, conviction and incarceration. According to Schneider & Wright (2004:04), denial is almost always characterized as an obstacle to treatment progress, whereas acceptance of responsibility is typically considered a treatment goal. Schneider & Wright (2004:05) state that offenders who deny responsibility and accountability of a committed offence are likely to be non-compliant with treatment tasks, resistant to accepting ownership of treatment goals and are more likely to fail completion of the treatment programme.

According to Haas, Farrington, Killias & Sattar (2004:520) many family factors such as child rearing practices, broken homes, parental conflict and family criminality have been shown to

predict offending behaviour. Many imprisoned sexual offenders appear to have a family profile that includes family violence, instability, alcoholism, housing problems and poverty.

In this study the researcher aims to explore the family environment of the sex offender, specifically focusing on the non-admitting sex offender as its unit of analysis. According to Barbaree & Marshall (2008:03), sex offenders are persons who have been convicted of a sexual offence in a criminal court. Non-admitting sex offenders, however, in spite of them being convicted, still deny committing the offence. According to Schneider & Wright (2004:05), denial in sexual offenders continues to be regarded as a risk factor for re-offending. Many treatment professionals, like social workers and psychologists, do not consider sexual offenders as responsive to treatment unless they acknowledge the offence, recognize their sexual offending as a problem they want to change and are willing to enter into, and fully participate in, treatment programmes (Barrett, Wilson & Long, 2003:270).

Denial is recognized as a multi-faceted construct and Yates (2009:185) posits that denial is defined as: denial of the offence, denial of responsibility and thinking errors/attribution of responsibility for deviant behaviours. According to Schneider & Wright (2004:07), the different constructs of denial include refutation, which is the complete denial that an offence occurred, coupled with claims that nothing harmful happened to the victim. The second construct is minimization of the offence – the offender admits that something about the offence-related behaviour was problematic and harmful towards the victim, but then discounts their responsibility through minimization. Depersonalization, the third construct, refers to the denial of planning the offence and denying the presence of the following factors: grooming, deviant arousal, fantasizing, sexual gratification, need of help and future risk or relapse potential. Balanced against the literature, studies have, however, showed that complete or partial denial of offending is evident in a significant number of offenders (between 50% and 87%) and that denial is unrelated to recidivism. Underwager & Wakefield (1999) concur that there are no scientific data supporting the therapeutic efficacy of requiring an admission of guilt. Yates (2009:186), however, does believe that denial is a treatment-interfering factor.

## 1.2. Problem Statement

Denial in sex offenders continues to be regarded as a risk factor for re-offending (Yates, 2009:186). The non-admitting sexual offender poses a greater risk to society because he does not show insight into his offending behaviour. He is also deemed more likely to re-offend, because his denial is considered a central obstacle that stands in the way of him accepting responsibility for his offence.

Sexual offences are among the crimes that invoke the most public concern (Hanson & Mouton-Bourgon, 2005:1154). Statistics from the Department of Correctional Services have shown that there is an increase in the number of sentenced and un-sentenced sex offenders. According to Barbaree & Langton (2008:58), the families of sex offenders are often characterized by frequent violence, family instability and disorganization. They are also of the opinion that abusive sexual behaviour is strongly influenced by the family environment as well as early sexual experiences. They concur with the statement of Hanson & Morton-Bourgon (2005:1155) who posit that adverse family environments provide the breeding grounds for sexual offending. This is in keeping with tenets of the Social Learning Theory which implies that we model the behaviour we were exposed to as children, with our parents as the primary agents involved in our socialization process (Mihalic & Elliot, 1997).

### 1.2.1. Rationale of the study

According to Haas, Farrington, Killias & Sattar (2004), many family factors such as child-rearing practices, broken homes, parental conflict and family criminality have been shown to predict offending behaviour. A study conducted by Starzyk & Marshall (2003) yielded similar findings, stating that childhood family characteristics such as poor parent-child bonding, parental neglect and deviance, discontinued parental care, physical and sexual abuse are all considered risk factors for sexual offending by men. Haapasalo & Pokela (1997) also posit that those individuals exposed to negative child-rearing practices, varying from punitive and lax parenting to severe punishment and abuse in childhood, tend to be antisocial, aggressive and commit violent crimes later in life.



Sexual offending has become one of the main problems in South African society. However, many sex offenders deny committing the offence, which in turn provides the opportunity for re-offending.

### 1.2.2. Aim of the Study

This study aims to explore the family environment of non-admitting sex offenders to see what family characteristics might be contributing factors to their inability to take responsibility for their offending.

Cooper (2005:88) describes denial as a defense or self-protective mechanism. Jenkins-Hall & Morlett (1989, in Cooper, 2005:88) state that denial blocks the realization of the severity of the behaviour, its impact on the victim and conceals the potential consequences for offenders. Happel, Joseph & Auffrey (1995, in Cooper, 2005:88) state that sex offenders use denial as a way to avoid feelings of shame, confusion, embarrassment, inadequacy, responsibility and guilt.

To achieve the stated aim of this study the following question and objective are identified.

### 1.2.3. Research Question

The following is the main research question in this study:

What are the perceptions of non-admitting sex offenders of their family environment?

### 1.2.4. Research Objective

The research objective is to explore and describe the family environment and characteristics of non-admitting sex offenders and to see how the non-admitting sex offenders view their own family environment.

### 1.2.5. Brief Overview of the study

The researcher used a qualitative approach to gain information that would describe the family environment of non-admitting sex offenders. The study population was incarcerated, sentenced sex offenders who were accessed from the Correctional Services Data-base, using a lens that focused on the non-admitting sex offenders as the unit of analysis. Ten (10) participants were purposively selected for the study.

### 1.2.6. Research Tool

Semi structured interviews were used for the data collection and a thematic data analysis was used to analyze the findings of the study.

### 1.2.7. Limitations of the Study

The study will be of benefit to the participants and could provide opportunities to better understand offending behaviour of sex offenders, per sé. However, the information gleaned will probably be more beneficial to the professionals (social workers) who are directly tasked with the rehabilitation of the sexual offenders.

Although the sample size is limited, one should caution against inferring that the findings of how non-admitting sex offenders perceive their family environment apply to every sex offender who denies responsibility for their convicted offence. It should be noted that the participants in this study were incarcerated non-admitters, however, a myriad of other factors may also influence their reluctance to admit responsibility for a sexual crime against children and/or women.

## 1.3. Definitions of Key concepts

**Sex offender:** People who have been convicted of a sexual offence in a criminal court. (Barbaree & Marshall, 2008)

**Non-admitting sex offender:** Defined as a convicted sex offender who maintains a stance of innocence (Freeman, Palk & Davey, 2010).

**Parenting style:** It is considered a characteristic of the parent and constitutes the environmental and emotional context for child rearing and socialization (Rhee, Lumeng, Appugliese, Kaciroti & Bradley, 2006).

**Dynamic risk factors:** Defined as risk factors that represent treatment goals such as denial, cognitive distortions and hostility towards women (Yates, 2009).

**Static risk factors:** Factors such as age, previous offence history and characteristics are considered static factors (Yates, 2009).

## 1.4. Chapter Outline

**Chapter One** – provides an introductory, succinct description of the study with the main focus on the research methodology, the rationale and the limitations of the study. A more detailed version is found in Chapter 4.

**Chapter Two** – explores Social Learning Theory and how it is applicable to the study. The chapter contains information on the characteristics of sex offenders and, in particular, that of non-admitting sex offenders. The focus is also on providing background on the family environment of non-admitting sex offenders and possible factors that could have a negative contributing effect on their behaviour. The chapter finally provides an overview of the South African Legislation on Sexual Offences and describes the aspects that are relevant to this study.

**Chapter Three** – describes the research design and methodology. Qualitative research was used as the methodological framework for this study, aiming at understanding the family environment, from the participants themselves.

**Chapter Four** – The data collected through the in-depth interviews are presented in this chapter. Each participant was allowed to share his views and feelings about his family environment.

**Chapter Five** – provides a summary of the findings as well as recommendations for future possible studies.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL CONTEXT: SEX OFFENDERS, CAUSALITY, FAMILIES AND SOCIO-LEGAL MANAGEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

#### 2.1. Introduction

Sexual victimization has become one of the most publicized issues of our time. South Africa has one of the highest incidences of rape in the world, including the most violent types of rape (gang-rapes), causing severe physical injury to its victims (Lammers, Martin, Andrews & Seedat, 2010:362). Rape remains a harsh, daily reality for many South Africans. The small community of Bredasdorp, in the Western Cape, South Africa, was shocked and outraged by the cruelty of a rape case, but it was not the first time that perpetrators showed that level of brutality. A 17-year-old girl was allegedly gang-raped by a former boyfriend and family friend, then disemboweled and left to die (Swart, Mail & Guardian, 2013, February 15).

There were 64 514 sexual offences reported to the South African Police in 2012 (Crime Report, 2010/2011, South African Police Services). It is estimated that in South Africa a person is sexually assaulted or raped every 8 minutes. Sexual assault of children and adults is now recognized as a common and harmful social problem that has a negative impact on victims, their families and communities alike (Fortney, Levenson, Brannon & Baker, 2007:02). Since December, 2007 to June, 2011 the South African Police recorded 65 083 rape complaints. A total of 16 908 cases did not reach court and 34 741 were withdrawn from court. In 5 966 cases, the accused was found not guilty. Guilty verdicts were awarded in only 7 468 cases, slightly more than 11% of the total reported cases (Swart, Mail & Guardian, 2013, February 15). Many incidences, however, still go unreported as victims are fearful of victimization and retaliation by the perpetrator.

For many years, progress has been made in the treatment of sexual offenders, but gaining a greater understanding of what childhood adversities influence sexual deviant behaviour is still necessary for better treatment and prevention of sexual offending in society (Lee, Jackson, Pattison & Ward, 2002:74). Furthermore, many theories about the etiology of sexual offending postulate that negative developmental events are precursors for the occurrence of sexual offending behaviour (Lee et al. 2002:74). In the Integrated Theory of sexual offending

it is proposed that poor socialization experiences, such as violent parenting, are responsible for the development of strong feelings of resentment and hostility, elements which are essential in sexual offending (Lee et al, 2002:74). Another model developed by Malamuth, Sockloskie, Koss & Tanaka (1991), the causal model of aggression against women, suggests that hostile childhood experiences, in terms of parental violence and child abuse, are associated with delinquency, which in turn leads to coerciveness against women (Lee et al., 2002:74).

However, for the purpose of this study the Social Learning Theory will be used as a theoretical framework, which postulates that social behaviour is shaped through direct operant conditioning, as well as through imitation of others' behaviour (Bandura, 1977). This chapter will describe the theoretical framework and show how the Social Learning Theory offers an explanation on those sex offenders who deny their sexual offenses.

The literature and studies are used to show how the family environment and the perceptions of the sex offenders may influence their denial of their offenses. This may hopefully help professionals to develop an understanding of denial amongst sex offenders. Furthermore, the main characteristics of sex offenders are illuminated with a particular focus on those offenders who are viewed as non-admitters.

In order to understand the legislation that apply, the socio legal aspects are discussed to create the context of how sex offenders are managed in South Africa. This chapter will also focus and address the main aspects of the South African Legislation on sexual offences, the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, Act 32 of 2007, in order to develop an understanding of the new definitions of concepts such as rape, sexual assault and consent, especially on how it relates to this particular study.

## **2.2. Social Learning Theory**

Social Learning Theory will be used as a theoretical framework for this study, because it supports the fact that most behaviour is learned from modeling others'. According to Grusec & Davidov (2007), the socialization process involves the acceptance of values, standards and customs of society, as well as the ability to function in an adaptive way in the larger social context. Parents are considered the primary agents in the process of socialization. According

to Harrison (2009), Bandura was a leading figure in Social Learning Theory that was seen as an extension of behaviourism. The foundation of the Social Learning Theory was based on the notion of observational learning through observing or witnessing behaviour, which is imprinted in the memory and later, modeled by the youth (Bandura, 1986 cited in Burton & Meezan, 2004:43).

Bandura (1977:03) believed that in the social learning system, new patterns of behaviour can be acquired through direct experience or by observing the behaviour of others. He also hypothesized that four processes are needed for successful observational learning to take place. The first process is known as the *attentional processes* and refers to how much attention is paid to a modeled event and to the person modeling the particular behaviour. If an event is very prominent/striking to a youth, then he may be more likely to learn the behaviour (e.g. an event that is more severe in its occurrence, such as domestic violence). If a youth is exposed to such an event on a regular basis, and if the event is modeled by someone who is important to him/her (such as a parent), there is a greater likelihood that the youth would learn this behaviour. Burton & Meezan (2004:43) also posit that if a child is in a chaotic environment he/she may have the opportunity to witness inappropriate behaviours more often, but if they are in a structured and well-controlled environment, it decreases the likelihood of them observing such behaviours and therefore modeling same.

The second process is called the *retention process*. During this process the learned information is stored, so that the youth might, at a later stage, compare his/her own behaviour to the observed behaviour and try to replicate it. The process occurs through visual or oral memories. According to Bandura (1986), youths will, after multiple exposures to similar events (e.g. violence within the family), be more likely to remember a sample of the behaviour, rather than the separate events witnessed.

After an event is witnessed and retained, it may then be re-enacted through the *production process*, which is the third process. After storing and re-enacting the information, the youth must now compare his behaviour with the initial observed information, to see whether he has produced the behaviour properly.

The final process is called the *motivational process*, which is linked to the rewards a person receives for enacting the observed behaviour.

The significance of using Social Learning Theory as a lens for describing sex offender behaviour, treatment responses and recidivism is well documented in studies over the last decade (Burton, Miller & Shill, 2002). The study compared the sexual victimization of adolescent sexual offenders and non-sexual offending male delinquents. The adolescent sexual offenders had a history of sexual victimization whereas the non-sexual offending delinquents did not. Another study conducted by Burton (2000:40) compared the age of onset for sexually offending behaviour with three groups of incarcerated adolescent sexual offenders. More than 46% of the sexually aggressive adolescents began their deviant behaviour before the age of 12. The study confirmed a social learning hypothesis of sexual offending development in early adolescence. Scully & Marolla (1984 as cited in Horley, 2003:65) also argue that ‘rapists have learned the attitudes and actions consistent with sexual aggression towards women’.

When Social Learning Theory is applied to the family, it suggests that children model the behaviour that they are exposed to (Mihalic & Elliot, 1997:21). It is also believed that during childhood and adolescence, observing how parents and significant others behave in intimate relationships provide an initial learning of behavioural alternatives which are appropriate for those relationships. Sefarbi (1990) concurs with them that early childhood experiences, especially those that occur within the context of the family, take a primary role over all other influences and are the most important determinant of future behaviour. According to Wittenborn (2002:04), parents have a world of influence over their children and basically mould and shape their children into adults. The discipline style they use also greatly impacts on the socialization process.

The assumption is held that the behaviour of non-admitting sexual offenders is influenced by the behaviours modelled by parents in the family environment, particularly the type of parenting style exhibited. This also suggests that these behaviours modelled within their home environments hamper their ability to take responsibility for their offending behaviour.

According to Robertiello & Terry (2007:509), many sex offenders live in our communities and, in order to reduce the prevalence of sexual abuse and its devastating effects, it is important that they are effectively treated, managed and supervised. In order to accomplish this, their characteristics and motivations for offending need to be identified and assessed (Londt, 2008).



### **2.3. Theoretical Context: Defining the Sex Offender; Causality and the Family of Sex offenders**

Sex offenders are persons who have been convicted of a sexual offence in a criminal court (Barbaree & Marshall, 2008:03). According to Robertiello & Terry (2007:509), sex offenders have unique personal and criminal histories, as well as attitudes and beliefs that support their sexual offending behaviour. Sex offenders (rapists, child molesters) differ in terms of their motives for offending, but, in comparison, they share similar behavioural character traits such as having a sense of worthlessness, low self-esteem, feelings of inadequacy and poor social skills. Furthermore, Robertiello et al. (2007:509) are also of the opinion that many rapists come from broken homes, where punishment was likely inflicted frequently, but inconsistently. Londt (2008:97) concurs that the South African perpetrator often comes from communities with inadequate resources.

Different theories posit that there are a wide variety of factors associated with the development of sexual offending behaviour. These models suggest that adverse family environments provide the breeding grounds for sexual offending behaviour. According to Hanson & Morton-Bourgon (2005:1154), without nurturance and guidance, the potential sex offender develops problems in social functioning, such as mistrust, hostility and insecure attachments, which in turn, are associated with social rejection, loneliness, negative peer associations and delinquent behaviour. According to Starzyk & Marshall (2003:99) sexual offenders have more problematic relationships and poorer understanding of interpersonal dynamics. Their difficulties in forming and maintaining friendships begin as early as childhood and these problems continue into adulthood.

Maniglio (2011:749) posits that early traumatic experiences, such as childhood victimization, exposure to domestic violence, removal from the home, family disruption and parental loss due to death, incarceration and divorce, are just some of the risk factors that contribute to the development of sexual offending behaviour. According to Seedat, Van Niekerk, Jewkes, Suffla & Ratele (2009:1015), the experience of trauma and violence in childhood affects brain development and reduces the ability of children to subsequently form strong emotional relationships and to be empathic towards others. Furthermore, exposure to violence can also enhance the likelihood of the development of psychopathological disorders. Maniglio (2011:750) is also of the opinion that sex offenders are highly likely to experience severe



disruption in family structure and disrupted parental care, such as being placed in foster care and community programmes.

According to Robertiello & Terry (2007:509), many rapists have negative views of women; they endorse rape myths; they condone violence and display an over identification with the masculine role. Caputo, Frick & Brodsky (1999:342) are of the opinion that exposure to violence in the home may desensitize the child to the effects of violence on victims, thus making them more likely to victimize others. Sex offenders are also at risk of developing hostile and sexist attitudes towards women and often hold a number of false beliefs regarding female sexuality (Caputo et al. 1999:342).

#### **2.4. Non-admitting sex offenders: Understanding denial in sexual offenders**

Non-admitting sex offenders, in spite of them being convicted, still deny committing the offence. The Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA) has defined denial as the failure of sexual abusers to accept responsibility for their offences (Levenson & Macgowan, 2004:52).

An overall goal of sex offender treatment programmes is to reduce the likelihood that an offender will engage in future acts of sexually abusive behaviour (Schneider & Wright, 2004:03). Most sex offender treatment programmes encourage their participants to 'take responsibility' for their sexual offending behaviour. It is therefore believed that effective treatment is compromised if sex offenders strongly believe that they are the victims of wrongful prosecution, conviction and incarceration. Schneider & Wright (2004:04) state that offenders, who deny responsibility and accountability of a committed offence, are likely to be non-compliant with treatment tasks, resistant to accepting ownership of treatment goals and are more likely to fail completion of the treatment programme.

According to Tierney & McCabe (2002:113), non-admitting sex offenders frequently deny, minimize, rationalize or justify their actions. It has also been argued that these sex offenders change at different rates because of differences in motivation, problem severity and personal resources. In Ware & Mann (2012), a sex offender is most usually described as not taking responsibility, when he is either denying or minimizing his sexual abusive behaviour.

Ware & Mann (2012:280) defines taking responsibility in its most basic form as the offender acknowledging that he had committed the sexual offence. But this is often not sufficient for the treatment professionals, as it does not say that there is an absence of denial, minimization and excuses. Therapists usually want the offender to take full responsibility of the sex offence, where he or she is no longer denying the offence, minimizing or justifying certain aspects of the offence. According to Ware & Mann (2012), therapists would usually want a full disclosure of the behaviours that occurred immediately before and during the actual offence. The offender needs to provide full details of the event even if it involves the use of explicit language in order to demonstrate that he is taking responsibility. This is often seen as a demonstration of acknowledgement by those involved in sex offender treatment or management.

Denial is a common characteristic of sex offenders and writings by many scholars suggest that denial is a normal human defense mechanism and a coping strategy people usually use to avoid facing problems, uncomfortable feelings or anticipated consequences (Ware & Mann (2012:280; Tierney & McCabe, 2002:113). By denying the danger, the person actually alleviates the anxiety and remains calm. On the contrary, it is also seen as a key aspect in the precipitation and maintenance of sexually aggressive behaviour.

According to Gibbons, De Volder & Casey (2003:336), denial may be viewed as a more complex phenomenon that encompasses up to 12 different dimensions, such as denial of ever having committed the offence, denial of inappropriate fantasizing and planning related to the offence and denial of harm to the victim. Levenson & Macgowan (2004:52) also state that denial often exists on a continuum that includes minimization of the impact of sexual assault on victims, blaming others for the offence and refusing to acknowledge the severity or chronicity of the sexual behavioural problem.

It is argued that denial and minimizations cause the continuation of offending once the first offence has been committed. Ware & Mann (2012:281) further argue that when an offender denies and minimizes his actions after the offence has taken place, it might be that it is grounded in distorted cognitions, and that his denial and minimization is evidence of pre-existing beliefs and attitudes.

Cooper (2005: 89) cites research findings suggesting that denial of the offence may be linked to family dynamics. Through their denial, perpetrators might be protecting their families from stress and subsequent physical injury, or it can be that they want to protect themselves from emotional rejection by family members. They might fear losing family members and friends if they admit to committing the sexual offence.

Sefarbi (1990 in Cooper, 2005:89) found that deniers are often supported by their families in their denial. This can be ascribed to the following reasons:

- Denial is seen as a coping mechanism used by both the offenders and their families to maintain a level of equilibrium;
- They could believe that denial protects them from any physical or emotional harm within the family and the community they live in;
- By being in denial, it protects the social and collective self-image of the family

Offender denial is sometimes also sustained and maintained by external support systems such as socio-cultural myths and values. Often offenders might admit to some behaviours and deny others, even when there is no apparent explanation for this. According to Salter (1988 in Cooper, 2005:88) there are three stages of denial. The first stage is denial about the events that preceded the offence (e.g. the denial of planning and inappropriate fantasy or the denial of a motive for the offence). It is important to realize that sex offending is part of a deviant cycle of behaviour and thinking, thus sex offenders think about offending before they engage in the behaviour. Salter (1988 in Cooper, 2005:88) also states that an offender who admits to committing an offence, but denies that he fantasized, or planned such behaviour, is denying reality.

The second stage of denial is denial or minimization of the deviant behaviour itself (e.g. the offender outrightly denies any abusive behaviour or minimizes, i.e. admits to some aspects of the offence, but denies others). Offenders engaging in this pattern of denial may also try to rationalize their behaviour by blaming someone else or suggesting that their behaviour was not deviant (e.g. they might say that it was not rape, but consensual sexual intercourse).

The third stage is denial of the consequences or significance of the behaviour (e.g. they might try to imply that their behaviour was caused by alcohol, drug use or stress and that they do not need treatment for sexual deviancy).

According to Salter (ibid,14), some offenders think that they will be able to resolve their offending patterns easily or quickly and deny that change is a lengthy process that they need to go through. Research suggests that some offenders, who claim to have changed once they found God, are only looking for an easy way out. The individual fails to acknowledge the difficulty of changing patterns of thinking and behaviour and is also likely to deny the possibility of relapse to re-offend. Non-admitting sex offenders also fail to recognize the serious harm caused by their behaviour and this is sometimes enforced through societal myths and beliefs.

According to Van der Bijl & Rumney (2010:420), myths and stereotyping have also long been blamed for the denial of non-consensual sex as rape and as a reason for underreporting in women. Mention is made of two characteristics of sexual offending in South Africa that suggests the existence of societal attitudes of tolerating and encouraging sexual offending. Parents, families and society exert very little pressure on men and boys to discourage them from perpetrating. Instead, the onus is placed on women to prevent rape and they are also often blamed for provoking the incident. Incidents of rape are downplayed when they happen in existing relationships, where sex is seen as mandatory. Society, and particularly men, are still perceived as being judgmental towards women when their behaviour is perceived to differ from the ideal or proper feminine behaviour, such as drunkenness, provocative dressing, having many sexual partners, etc. These are the attitudes that seem to make non-consensual sex acceptable in the eyes of some perpetrators. Some men firmly believe that when they entertain a woman and spend money on her, they are entitled to sex. The woman has no say, as in the eyes of these perpetrators sex is regarded as payback from the woman.

Offenders often hold attitudes/beliefs or engage in defense mechanisms that support the maintenance of their own denial and often their denial is supported by external support systems, such as family/communities and socio-cultural myths and values. The following are some examples:

- Male dominance/Female submissiveness are the appropriate gender roles;

- No means yes (i.e. females are simply reluctant, afraid or shy to admit that they want sex);
- Sex is a male's right and a female's duty.

(Van der Bijl & Rumney, 2010:422)

According to Farkas & Miller (2007:88), convicted sex offenders and their families are confronted by unique challenges when re-entry into the community takes place. They are often subjected to stigmatization due to the nature of the sex offence, as well as publicity concerning the sex offenders' release back into society. Family support and encouragement is essential as it can decrease the possibility of re-offending.

According to Farkas & Miller (2007:89), each family member needs to deal with the prolonged absence of the family member, the feelings of loneliness and isolation, as well as the shame and stigma attached to having a family member who was convicted of a sexual offence. Families often need to be reconstructed in order to accommodate the new roles and responsibilities that the remaining family members need to adopt.

## **2.5. Family characteristics of sexual offenders**

During a child's early years, the family is considered primarily responsible for the care and development of the child. According to Repetti, Taylor & Seeman (2002:330), in a healthy family, children learn that they can count on their environment to provide for their emotional security, as well as their physical safety and well-being. A healthy environment is a safe environment that provides a sense of emotional security.

Research shows that families, who are characterized by certain negative qualities, can have damaging outcomes for the physical and mental health of a child. These characteristics include overt family conflict, recurrent episodes of anger and aggression/family violence, deficient nurturing, family relationships that are cold, unsupportive and neglectful (Repetti et al, 2002:330).

South African research, conducted by Mandisa (2007:64), also states that children tend to turn to criminal behaviour more easily when families fail to provide for their emotional needs. Mandisa (2007:67) posits that research on youth and adult offenders have shown that

most offenders suffer adverse childhood experiences in comparison to non-offenders. Children who have experienced emotional deprivation, family violence, the lack of much needed support from their parents and negative child-rearing patterns, feel an emotional emptiness that directly influences their actions and their behaviour (Liese, 2003 as cited in Mandisa, 2007).

### 2.5.1. Absent Fathers

Studies on family structure and children's outcomes, as that of Carlson & Corcoran (2001), consistently find that children raised in two-parent families do better than children raised in single-parent families on measures of educational achievement and adjustment (Jaffee, Moffitt, Cospi & Taylor, 2003:109). According to Harper & McLanahan (2004:370), children in disadvantaged populations are more likely to grow up in father-absent households, as marriage rates are lower and fertility is higher. In society, men usually hold a higher social status than women because, in most cases, they are better paid and have better access to certain resources. According to Richter (2006:55), children are not necessarily disadvantaged by the absence of a father, but they are disadvantaged when they are part of a household that does not have access to financial resources, often provided by men. In contrast, children living with their fathers or with their mothers' male partner are better protected than children staying in single women-headed households. This may confer greater social value on the child especially in a society where so many children are being raised in single mother-headed households.

A positive father-child engagement can have a positive impact on a child's development (Cabrera, Shannon & Tamis-LeMonde, 2007:208). Fathers contribute towards children's cognitive, social and emotional development. Richter (2006) posits that a father's presence contributes to greater cognitive development, intellectual functioning, school achievement and emotional well-being. In contrast, Holborn & Eddy (2011:04) state that children growing up without fathers are more likely to experience emotional disturbances and depression. Richter (2006) continues that male children seem to be affected more by the absence of a father – it affects their social competence, behaviour control and school success. Holborn & Eddy (2011:04) concurs with Richter (2006) that boys growing up in absent-father households are more likely to display hyper-masculine behaviour, including aggression.

### 2.5.2. Traumatic /Adverse experiences in early childhood

According to Maniglio (2011:749), studies, such as the meta-analysis study of Seto & Lalumière (2010), have shown that early traumatic experiences, such as childhood victimization, exposure to domestic violence, removal from the home, family disruption and parental loss due to break-ups, death, divorce or incarceration, play a role in the development of sexual offending behaviour. These are some of the common risk factors for sexual offending. Numerous studies as per Croissati, McClurg & Browne (2002), have shown that sexual offenders are also more likely to report a history of childhood victimization, including neglect, physical maltreatment, emotional abuse and sex abuse. Other studies have shown that adolescents who display a strong attachment to their parents are less likely to participate in delinquent behaviour as opposed to those less intimately attached (Smetana, Campione-Barr & Metzger, 2006). According to Lee, Jackson, Pattison & Ward (2002:76), a history of childhood physical abuse is commonly found among sex offenders. Family dysfunction also often accompanies childhood adversities among sex offenders. According to Lee et al. (2002:77), there is evidence suggesting that sexually abused sex offenders have poorer family supports, more disturbed family backgrounds and more negative relationships with their fathers.

Lee et al (2002:74) state that negative developmental events are significant precursors to the development of sexual offending behaviour. Furthermore, poor socialization experiences, such as violent parenting, are responsible for the development of strong feelings of resentment and hostility, which are essential elements in sexual offending.

### 2.5.3. Violence within the family home

In Simons, Wurtele & Durham (2008:550), research has shown that sexual offenders often report a childhood history of physical abuse, suggesting that they learn violence in their family of origin and later translate that violence into their interpersonal relationships as children and later as adults.

According to Goldstein & Heaven (2000:1170), families of violent offenders and sexual offenders have consistently shown high levels of negative affect and low levels of positive affect, which suggests that these families have low levels of bonding. An Australian study showed that higher delinquency scores were associated with low



parental care and bonding, however, those from affectionless control families also showed higher levels of delinquency (Goldstein et al, 2000:1170). According to Burton & Meezan (2004:55), research on the families of adolescent sexual abusers have shown difficulties within the family constellation, including family relations that are characterized by rigidity and low cohesion, domestic violence between parents, difficult relationships among family members, broken homes, absence of parents in the lives of the youth and a lack of both nurturance and supervision. In addition, research also posits that many adolescent sexual abusers have witnessed criminality, substance abuse and domestic violence in their homes (Mandisa, 2007).

According to Lotfi, Vaziri & Lotfi (2012:1277), Bandura (1977) indicated that aggression is a product of learning the values and aggressive behaviours linked with criminality. Hostile childhood experiences, such as parental violence and child abuse are associated with delinquency, which in turn leads to coerciveness and aggression towards women. He suggests that individuals learn criminal behaviour from family members while still in their adolescence, as well as aggressive acts through operant conditioning and the modeling of other's behaviours and actions. He also states that positive rewards and the avoidance of punishment reinforced aggression. The relationship between parents, physical punishment and violence towards children can have a great impact on the expression of aggression.

If a child witnesses violence, they too may learn to be violent. When combined with their sexual development and/or other factors (e.g. exposure to pornography, personality traits and social skills deficits) it may lead to coercive sexual behaviour or sexual aggression. Additionally, youth who have experienced physical victimization or who have witnessed physical aggression have probably also exposed themselves to rationalizations and justifications as to why such aggressive behaviour is acceptable. In such instances, the youth not only see and experience the behaviours, but they hear the social cognitions of their role models and identify with it.

According to Lotfi et al (2012:1278), being rejected by parents, physical harassment, physical abuse, parents' conflict and deviation, parents' addiction, parent-child incompetent relationships, misbehaviour by parents' violence, authoritarian parenting and intellectual defects are all associated with aggressive behaviour of children.



#### 2.5.4. Parenting styles

When discussing the parent-child relationship, many research studies introduce the Attachment Theory. The premise of this theory is that internal working models for interpersonal relationships develop through parent-child interaction (Starzyk & Marshall, 2003:95). According to the underlying principles of the Attachment Theory, when parents are supportive, reliable and respond empathically to their children, the child acquires a sense of self-worth, learns that he/she is loveable, develops effective interpersonal skills, becomes confident enough to display affection for and empathy towards others, and feel emotionally secure (Starzyk & Marshall, 2003:95).

Maccoby (2000:03) states that parents are the ones assigned primary responsibility for bending and shaping children in desirable directions through supervising, teaching and disciplining them as they grow up. Early childhood, in particular, is a stage in which children are especially open to social influences on characteristics that they will carry with them for the rest of their lives – long after they have left their family of origin.

According to Hovee, Dubas, Gerris, Van der Laan & Smeenk (2011), family characteristics, and more particularly, parenting and parenting styles have been among the strongest predictors of criminal behaviour. Parental attachment, harsh parental discipline, poor relationships with parents, poor supervision and inconsistent discipline are among the family factors that have been linked to delinquency. Family dysfunction, including violent adult relationships is also considered a risk factor for sexual abuse and sexual offending behaviour (Kellogg & Menard, 2003:1368).

According to Darling (1999:02), parenting is a complex activity which includes many specific behaviours that work individually and together to influence the outcome of the child's behaviour. Darling (1999:02) continues that parenting style captures two important elements of parenting, namely parental responsiveness (support) and parental demandingness (control). According to Hovee et al (2011), the support dimension refers to parental behaviour towards the child that makes him/her feel comfortable, accepted and approved, whereas the control dimension is defined as placing demands on the child and wanting to control the child.

Baumrind (1991:56) is one of the key researchers in parenting and through her research she believes that there are different styles of parenting that advance different outcomes within the rearing of the child and directly relates to how children perceive and react to the world and the challenges therein (Roman, 2011). The particular parenting style will also influence the outcome of the parent-child relationship.

Baumrind (1991:56) identified three general parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian and permissive. Authoritative parenting, according to Rossman & Rea (2005:262), involves parent attempts to direct a child's activities in a rational, issue-oriented manner where both thoughtful autonomy and disciplined conformity are valued. According to Darling (1999:03), authoritative parents are both demanding and responsive. They are described as warm, supportive, encouraging, accepting and responsive (Roman, 2011). Authoritative parents are assertive, but not intrusive and restrictive. Children from authoritative homes are socially more competent and become well-adjusted adults. They are also more likely to establish strong relationships with secure attachments due to the positive support from parents (Roman, 2011).

Authoritarian parenting describes parents as overly strict, who believe in absolute obedience. According to Rossman & Rea (2005:262), authoritarian parenting values obedience and restriction of a child's autonomy. The child is expected to always accept the parents view of what is right without having an opportunity for discussion. Although the authoritarian parent loves his/her child, they are considered to be less nurturing and they seem detached from the child. Their children also perceive them as unapproachable. According to Wittenborn (2002), the authoritarian parent is high in demandingness and low in restrictiveness. They are often strict and unfair in punishing their children. One could also describe them as cold and unemotional. Rosmann & Rea (2005:262) also posit that authoritarian parents are less responsive to their children's needs, they expect much of their children, but do not explain the reasoning for the rules or boundaries. Some of the behavioural outcomes for the child of the authoritarian parent include less social competence, seeing that the parent generally tells the child what to do instead of allowing the child to choose for him or herself. Other behaviour outcomes also include, antisocial behaviour, including aggression; delay or stagnation of the child's development. There is no existence of a reciprocal relationship between the parent and the child.

Permissive parenting on the other hand, involves acting in an accepting and benign manner towards children's impulses and actions as long as the child's physical safety is not in jeopardy. According to Darling (1999:02), permissive parents are more responsive than they are demanding. They are non-traditional and very lenient and do not require mature behaviour. They also allow considerable self-regulation and avoid confrontation. The behavioural outcomes for children associated with the permissive parenting style includes, problem behaviour and average academic achievement. Roman (2011) posits that children who were raised in a permissive parenting style environment are more likely to be aggressive and impulsive. However, in order to fully address the issue of sexual offences and the treatment of sexual offenders one needs to have a clear understanding of the South African Legislation on sexual offences.

## **2.6. Socio-legal Management of Sex Offenders in South Africa**

According to Naidoo (2013:210), South Africa has one of the highest incidences of rape in the world. A lack of faith in the criminal justice system and the secondary trauma sometimes experienced by the survivors at the hands of the SAPS and medical practitioners are distinct barriers to reporting the crime of sexual assault.

The increase in the number of reported incidences of sexual offences can be ascribed to the implementation of the new Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007. The legislation on sexual offences deals extensively with the commercial sexual exploitation of children, describes what services ought to be available for the victims of sexual assault and deals with the compulsory testing (HIV/Aids) of the alleged perpetrators. The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007, now also includes a broadened definition of rape to include the non-consensual vaginal, oral or anal penetration of any person, regardless of gender, with any object.

### **2.6.1. Definition of rape**

Prior to the new sexual offences act coming into effect in December 2007, rape was formally defined, in terms of the common law, as consisting of a male having sexual intercourse with a female without her consent. The lack of consent was required as the essential element (Van der Bijl & Rumney, 2010:417).

According to the old Sexual Offences Act 23 of 1957, only a woman could be raped and that only by a man, and the only object that could legally be used in a rape was a penis. Forced oral sex did not constitute rape and neither did the insertion of any objects into the victims' anus or vagina.

According to the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007, the sexual violations of men, women and children by a man or a woman are recognized as equally a devastating injury, physically and psychologically, to the victim (Artz & Roehrs, 2009:465). Rape is, therefore, now defined as an act of sexual penetration by another person without the persons' consent. Sexual penetration replaces the term vaginal penetration and now refers to the penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth by a penis or the penetration of the vagina or anus by a penis or any other foreign object (Artz & Roehrs, 2009:465).

#### 2.6.2. Consent as described in the new legislation on sexual offences

The issue of consent still remains an essential element of the crime of rape, but it too has been broadened. Consent means voluntary and unforced agreement. A court of law has to decide whether a victim freely, willingly and deliberately agreed to the sexual act and whether the victim was able to understand what he or she was consenting to. A significant event or case affecting the issue of consent is the very controversial rape trial of Mr. X, a well-known political figure, in 2005. Mr. X was charged with raping an acquaintance at his house in Johannesburg in November, 2005 and in May, 2006, he was found not guilty by the Gauteng High Court. The trial centered mainly on the issue of consent (or lack thereof) on the part of the complainant. Mr. X built his defense on the fact that he believed, at the time of the incident, that he had the consent of the complainant.

According to Illsey (2008:64-65), particularly in a case of non-stranger or acquaintance rape, such as the case of Mr. X, the complainant is less likely to offer significant resistance, thus there is more scope for the accused to argue that he honestly, albeit mistakenly, believed that the complainant consented to sexual intercourse. During the trial a lot of emphasis was also placed on discrediting the complainant by cross-examining her about her previous sexual history which was done by calling past sexual partners to testify against her. The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related

Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007, however, states clearly that sexual intercourse is not voluntary or without coercion when the sexual act is committed:

- Using force or intimidation;
- By threats of harm to the individual or to his/her property;
- Through abuse of power and authority and prohibiting the person from indicating his/her unwillingness;
- When a person is deceived into agreeing to the sexual act;
- When a person is not able to think properly or understand the nature of the sexual act because he/she is:
  - Asleep;
  - Unconscious;
  - In an altered state of mind and unable to think properly due to being under the influence of any medication, drugs, alcohol or any other substances;
  - A child below the age of 12 years; or
  - A person who is mentally disabled.

This explicit list makes it clear that a perpetrator cannot claim the victim consented to the sexual act, if the above-mentioned circumstances are present (Artz & Roehrs, 2009:465).

When considering the case of Mr. X, two aspects that are significant are the concepts of 'coercive circumstances' and the provisions made to the admissibility of the sexual history evidence of the complainant. The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 recognizes the fact that under certain circumstances a victim may not be able to offer active resistance. The recognition that a sexual offence was committed under coercive circumstances reiterates/substantiates the notion that sexual offending has less to do with sex and more to do with force, coercion and exerting control over the victim (Illsey, 2008:76). In many instances, sex offenders deny committing the offence by claiming that they had consensual sex with the victim. With the new definition, the focus is automatically shifted away from the complainant

having to prove whether he/she consented to the act, towards determining whether the accused coerced the complainant into having sex.

### 2.6.3. Definition of sexual assault

Another offence that has changed is 'indecent assault'. It is replaced with the much broader offence of Sexual Assault. According to Section 5 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007, Sexual Assault is defined as sexually violating another person without such persons' consent, to which Artz & Roehrs (2009) concurs. Section 5 of the Act also states that sexual violation includes any act that causes:

- Direct or indirect contact between the genital organs, anus or female breasts of one person, and any part of the body of another person, animal or object;
- Contact between the mouth of one person and the genital organs/ anus/ female breasts/ mouth of another person.
- Masturbation of one person by another.

The main difference between rape and sexual assault is that sexual assault does not include penetrative forms of sex, except the insertion of an object resembling or representing the genital organs of a person or animal into the mouth of another person. (Criminal Law [Sexual Offences and Related Matters] Amendment Act 32 of 2007: Section 5)

The new sexual offences act (Criminal Law [Sexual Offences and Related Matters] Amendment Act 32 of 2007), however, listed 29 sexual offences that had no specific penalty. These offences included compelled rape, sexual assault, the sexual grooming of children, exposing one's genitalia to children and sexual exploitation of children. In May 2012, the Western Cape High Court ruled that when specific penalties are absent, these offences do not constitute crimes and cannot be prosecuted. It consequently meant that the court could not send someone to prison when they had committed any of these serious offences.

An amendment bill was passed by Parliament on 07 June 2012 that enabled the courts to use their discretion when applying a sentence where no penalty is specified in the

Sexual Offences Act. Sex offenders can now be convicted and sentenced for these crimes (Jamieson, Proudlock & Nhenga-Chakarisa, 2012:16).

According to Robertiello & Terry (2007:509), many sex offenders live within our communities and, in order to reduce the prevalence of sexual abuse and its devastating effects, it is important that they are effectively treated, managed and supervised. In order to accomplish this, their characteristics and motivations for offending need to be identified and assessed (Londt, 2008).

## **2.7. Summary**

The main focus of this chapter was to describe and demonstrate the theoretical framework used in this study. Social Learning Theory posits that most behaviour is learned through modeling the behaviour of others. Further focus provided an understanding of the processes involved in the Social Learning Theory and provided examples of previous studies in which this theory was also used as theoretical framework. Parents are the first agents of modeling for their children. Children witness behaviour, which is imprinted in their memories, and eventually model that same behaviour.

A sex offender was defined as a person who has been convicted of a sex offence in a criminal court. In general, sex offenders differ in terms of their motives for offending, but in comparison, they share similar behavioural characteristics.

The characteristics of non-admitting sex offenders were also described in order to understand the nuances of denial, especially after a successful conviction for a sexual crime. Different theories posit that there are many reasons as to why people start offending. Literature used in this chapter has shown that a vast array of factors could contribute towards the development of offending behaviour. Throughout the literature though, adverse family environments provide the breeding grounds for the development of sexual offending behaviour. The absence of nurturance, guidance, low attachment bonds with caretakers, disruption in family structures, witnessing domestic violence and traumatic experiences during childhood are just some of the risk factors that were associated with the development of sexual offending behaviour.



Non-admitting sex offenders, although convicted, still deny committing the offence and consequently do not take responsibility for their actions. Denial is common in many offenders and is seen as a human defense mechanism. Non-admitting sex offenders deny committing the offence either to avoid facing judgment and shame or as an excuse to continue the inappropriate sexual offending behaviour. Denial is described as encompassing different dimensions such as: total denial of ever having committed the offence; partial denial or minimizing some aspects of the offence; denial of inappropriate fantasizing and planning of the offence; and denial of the victim harm.

This chapter also focused on providing an overview of the background of the family environment of non-admitting sex offenders. The researcher has shown that their family environment is mostly marked by domestic violence, substance abuse, lack of parental supervision, disorganized family lives, etc.

Finally, the aim of this chapter was also to give a clear understanding of the socio-legal management of sex offenders in South Africa. An understanding of the new definitions of rape, sexual assault and consent, as set out in the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, Act 32 of 2007, was presented. Important to this particular study was the definition of 'consent' as the justice system now recognizes the fact that, in some instances, the victims are unable to offer active resistance, which means that the sexual offence was committed under coercive circumstances. The onus, therefore, no longer rests on the complainant to prove that s/he consented to the act but the focus is rather on the perpetrator, who now has to show that s/he did not coerce the complainant into having sex.

The Research Design and Methodology used for this study will be discussed in the next chapter to show how the main research question was addressed.



## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter describes the Methodology used for this particular study. The interpretive approach was chosen because it helped to understand the participants' subjective experiences of their family environment. The research setting, sampling methods, data collection tools and data collection process will also be discussed in detail. The researcher will seek to maintain the trustworthiness of the study by ensuring that the results are a true reflection of the information and experiences shared by the participants. The significance of the study will also be highlighted as well as the researchers' experiences during the completion of this process.

#### 3.2. Methodological Approach

A qualitative approach was used to describe the family environment of non-admitting sex offenders. According to Mouton & Babbie (2001:270), qualitative research attempts to study human action from the perspective of the social beings themselves. The strength of this approach is in its ability to provide in-depth information and descriptions about how people experience the given research issue. According to Wellman, Kruger & Mitchell (2005:188), qualitative research is concerned with understanding social and psychoanalytical phenomena from the perspectives of the people involved and are concerned with the participants' experiences, beliefs and attitudes.

In this study non-admitting sex offenders provide insight into their family environment by sharing their childhood experiences and the type of family structure they were reared in. The aim of this exploratory study is to get descriptions and an understanding of the family environment of non-admitting sex offenders. Exploratory studies allow the participants the opportunity to respond in their own words and give detailed information that is rich and explanatory in nature (Mack, Woodson, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005:04).

### 3.3. Research Setting

The research study was conducted through the Department of Correctional Services, which is a National Department of South Africa. The researcher had to gain approval from the National Commissioner of Correctional Services before being able to gain access to a male correctional facility where the actual study could be conducted. The core business of this organization is to rehabilitate offending behaviour and instill a sense of social responsibility in the incarcerated offender. The Department also focuses on human development through vocational and educational programmes.

### 3.4. Participants Population and Sampling

The population that was studied consisted of incarcerated, sentenced sex offenders. Participants were purposively selected to participate in this study that specifically aims to explore the family environment of non-admitting sex offenders. According to Teddlie & Yu (2007:80), with purposive sampling, the researcher actively selects the most productive sample to answer the research questions and the participants are chosen based on a specific purpose rather than randomly. Likewise, Devers & Frankel (2000:264) state that researchers seek information-rich cases that can provide the greatest insight into the research question. Ten participants made up the sample for this study.

The following inclusion criteria informed the purposive sample:

- Participants had to be a current inmate in the prison.
- A conviction for a sexual offense
- All participants should have been fully assessed by a social worker in Correctional Services, whose sole job description is the assessment of all sex offenders at admission.
- Participants should have been assessed and identified as a non-admitting offender

Age, race and gender were not considered and excluded as selection criterion, since ethnicity of the participants did not appear significant to this study

### 3.5. Data Collection Tool

The data for this study was collected through in-depth interviews. A semi-structured interview guide was compiled and face-to-face interviews were conducted with all ten participants. According to Mack, Woodson, MacQueen, Guest & Namey (2005:29), in-depth interviews are optimal for collecting data on the individuals' personal histories, perspectives and experiences.

This method seemed the most appropriate to use as the researcher wanted to provide the participants with an opportunity to share their experiences of their family environment and to elaborate as much as possible on the questions asked. The semi-structured interview guide aided in answering the research question and ensured that we had structure during the interviewing process. The interviews were tape recorded in order to assist in obtaining accurate information provided by the participants. The interviews were transcribed by the researcher. The researcher also ensured that she provided her undivided attention to participants and listened attentively to the information shared. The interview guide is attached as Appendix B.

### 3.6. Data Collection Process

The study was conducted at a Male Correctional Facility in the Breede Valley Area. A convenient date and time was scheduled for the researcher to meet with all the participants. The aims and objectives of the study were explained before any interviews took place. Only participants that met the selection criteria, as stipulated in paragraph 3.4., were used for the study. Participants were also informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time. All participants had to sign a consent form (Appendix A) before the commencement of any interviews could take place. On these consent forms they give permission to voluntarily participate in the study and for their interviews to be tape recorded. Specific times and dates were scheduled with each participant and the interviews took place in a comfortable and private setting. One interview was done with each participant and two hours were allocated for each.

### 3.7. Data Analysis

According to Wellman et al. (2005:211), qualitative data analysis involves several steps that need to be followed in the process of trying to understand and make sense of the information

gathered. Firstly, the field notes have to be prepared and transcribed in order to be better familiarized with the data. The second step is theme identification from the data collected as it relates to the research question. During step three the data is coded. The fourth step involves more elaboration on the themes i.e. examining them more closely. The final step requires reflecting on the understanding and interpretation of the data collected.

During the interviewing process the researcher made copious field notes. After the interviews, the researcher listened to the tape recordings several times over in order to get a clearer understanding and description of the data, while still making additional field notes. These notes were later used to clarify any dubious data with the participants and assist with the identification of themes and sub-themes within the data. The research data was also discussed with the supervisor for clarification where required and then coded for further elaboration and reflection.

### **3.8. Trustworthiness**

According to Shenton (2004:63), trustworthiness refers to the validity and reliability of a qualitative research project. In order to maintain trustworthiness the researcher had to ensure that the study was credible, transferable, dependable and conformable. Credibility refers to whether a true picture of the study had been reflected.

In order to display credibility the researcher ensured that all data was provided by the participants themselves. The researcher used the same questionnaire with each participant and the order of questioning remained the same. During the interviewing process a tape recorder was used, with the consent of the participants, to capture the entire interview. The researcher did not deviate from the information that was provided by the participants. For transferability the researcher had to ensure that if the research was conducted in another management area, with other participants, the study would yield similar results.

Dependability refers to the consistency of the research, therefore the researcher had to ensure that if this study was repeated, in the same context, with the same participants and using the same methods, similar results would be obtained. Lastly, for conformability, the researcher needed to ensure that the results were a true reflection of the information that was shared by the participants so that when shared with the participants, they would be able to understand it

and be satisfied that it was a true reflection of their experiences and information shared with the researcher.

### **3.9. Self-reflexivity**

Working with sex offenders is very challenging. The topic of sex offenders and sex offences, in general, is such a sensitive issue in society that I expected the participants to find it difficult to share their private family information.

It was important for me to, first of all, convince the participants of my credibility as a researcher and assure them that their privacy would be protected and respected at all times. I had to continuously explain to them that their participation in the study would not affect the length of their sentence or eligibility for parole.

The interviewing process was very difficult because questions had to be re-phrased and explained due to some participants' low level of literacy. At times, the information shared by the participants was very sensitive and I had to ensure that I remained objective and professional throughout the interviews.

This study has changed my perception of non-admitting sex offenders, as I have now gained insight into their family environment which somehow sheds light on the reasons for their offending behaviour. At times, it was challenging for me not to interrogate and confront the participants with the information they provided. It was important for me to constantly remind myself that the purpose of the interview was not to determine whether the participant was truthful, but merely to get information on his family environment.

The information gathered made me aware of the number of the participants who grew up in dysfunctional families that lacked the needed positive role modeling from their parents. For many of them their current circumstances were just a continuation of the life cycle they were caught up in – a life cycle that was being repeated in the lives of their own children.

### **3.10. Ethical Considerations**

According to Bless, Higgins-Smith & Kagee (2006:139), research ethics helps to prevent research abuses and assists researchers in understanding their responsibilities as ethical

scholars. It is the responsibility of a researcher to ensure that his/her research study is conducted ethically. Research ethics assists in placing emphasis on the humane and sensitive treatment of research participants.

The researcher worked with participants who were from a vulnerable population, i.e. prisoners, who sometimes feel that they have no rights and are not deserving of equal treatment as others. The researcher therefore ensured that they were afforded the same rights and privileges, as any other person participating in a research study, by doing the following:

- ***Voluntary Participation:*** The researcher first of all made sure that they understood that their participation in the study is voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time.
- ***Informed Consent:*** Each participant signed a consent form before the commencement of any interviews. Participants were very concerned about the confidentiality factor.
- ***Anonymity and Confidentiality:*** The researcher re-iterated the fact that all the information would be kept confidential and anonymous and that no information divulged would be placed in their social work files or case files. Their privacy would be protected at all times as tape recordings and any field notes would be kept confidential and destroyed after the research study was complete. They were also assured of the fact that if any of them were to be negatively affected through participation in the research study, counseling services would be made available to them. It was also important for the researcher not to create certain expectations with the participants and it was therefore essential for them to know that their participation in the study would have no effect on their sentence or their eligibility for parole. The participants will be informed about the results of the study after completion of the project.

### **3.11. Significance of the study**

This study will benefit the participants as it provides them an opportunity to better understand their offending behaviour and could help them with behavioural change. The study, however, will be more beneficial to the professionals (social workers) who are directly tasked with the rehabilitation of the sexual offenders. By understanding the behaviour of non-admitting sex offenders and the possible impact of their family environment on their offending behaviour, could greatly assist in the successful rehabilitation of the offender. By gaining a better

understanding of the family environment of non-admitting sex offenders, greater emphasis could be placed on rectifying cognitive distortions that might have been manifested in the individual through his early socialization process within his family environment.

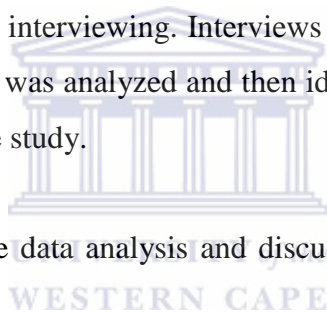
The findings of this study can also assist in the adaptation of current treatment programmes that are being provided for non-admitting sexual offenders.

### **3.12. Summary**

The chapter focused on the research design and the methodology used in this study. A qualitative approach was used as its aim was to understand the family environment of the non-admitting sex offenders through their own experiences.

The data collection process, as well as the data collection tool was discussed. Data was collected with the use of in-depth interviewing. Interviews were tape recorded in order to get all the relevant information. Data was analyzed and then identified in order to better describe and understand the findings of the study.

The next chapter will address the data analysis and discussion of the main findings of this study.



## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter will provide an analysis of the data that has been collected and the findings of the research study will also be discussed. The researcher has divided the information into themes and sub-themes that would assist in making it easier to understand the findings.

#### 4.2. Data Analysis and Findings

##### 4.2.1. Participants' experience of his family background

During a child's early years, the family is considered primarily responsible for the care and development of the child. The majority of the participants grew up in a family environment characterized by poverty, lack of basic resources, dysfunctional family life and emotional deprivation.

##### 4.2.1.1. Domestic Violence / Aggression in the home

Many of the participants were exposed to domestic violence within the family home. In most instances they were subjected to violence by the male figure within the household. The following quotations relate:

Participant 6: *"Yes. My stepfather beat my mother. I saw how he threw the flower pots at her."*

Participant 2: *"Only when he was under the influence he would fight with me. He said he wanted to make a man out of me."*

Participant 4: *"My father was never rude to our children, only with my mother, because when he came home he wanted money for alcohol."  
"The relationship was fine, it was only Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays that things were not alright, because he goes and buy wine. And when he comes back he wants food and after that he fights with my mother."*



Participant 3: *“Yes, they fought a lot, he fought a lot with my mother. We could do nothing, we were too scared.” “He abused her physically as well as verbally.”*

#### 4.2.1.2. Substance Abuse

Many of the participants made mention of the fact that one or both of their parents made use of substances (either alcohol or drugs or both). Substance abuse in a family often leads to many social problems within the household, such as child neglect and maltreatment, poverty, domestic violence, financial problems, marital or relationship problems. For many of the participants the fact that their parent(s) made use of substances meant that at some stage their parents failed to provide for their needs, be it emotional needs or material needs. The following quotations relate:

Participant 1: *“The only problem she had was alcohol. I still have that problem with her today. It affected me badly because I felt that I did not have a mother.”*

Participant 4: *“My father drank. And a person that drinks a lot, fights a lot in the family home. He fought a lot with my mother and that is why she decided to leave him for someone else.”*

Participant 2: *“My father made use of alcohol. We were scared of him, because sometimes he broke stuff in the house. He fought with me a lot, and did not worry about the other children.” “Only when he was under the influence of alcohol, then he would fight with me.”*

Participant 7: *“My mother drank a lot and that is why we children were removed from her care and placed in a Children’s Home.”*

#### 4.2.2. Participant’s relationship with family members

Many of the participants grew up in disorganized households. Aspects such as the manner in which discipline was imposed within the household and the lack of adequate parental supervision hugely affect the type and nature of relationships parents and children build with one another.

#### 4.2.2.1 Discipline imposed in home

Some of the participants were exposed to very harsh disciplinary methods within their family homes. At times, according to them, this contributed towards their 'rebellious nature' and, as was the case with two of the participants, was the reason that they decided to leave their family home at a very young age. The following quotations relate:

Participant 3: *"My stepfather imposed the discipline and whatever he said needed to be obeyed. He used to beat me a lot, maybe that was his way of imposing discipline"*

Participant 5: *"I was the last born and nobody disciplined me. My brothers were not allowed to discipline me."*

Participant 8: *"My mother imposed the discipline when I did something wrong, but I can say that it was not sufficient, because I still did not listen to her."*

Participant 2: *"My mother would handle the small stuff, but when we needed to be disciplined, by father would do it, and if you did not listen and do what father told you to do, he would give us a big hiding."*

Participant 10: *"My father used to beat me a lot, he would literally fight with me. He never treated the other children like this."*

#### 4.2.2.2. Lack of adequate parental supervision

The following quotations relate:

Participant 8: *"I left my family home at a very young age to go and stay with friends."*

Participant 5: *"My brother and his wife was unable to give me the motherly love I needed, so at the age of 11 years, I ran away from home, and ended up with the brokers in the city."*

#### 4.2.3. Lack of Masculine Identity

##### 4.2.3.1. Absent Father

Most of the participants grew up without ever knowing their biological father. In most cases the parents had already broken up, by the time the participant was

born. Two of the participants said that they first made contact with their biological fathers when they were in their teenage years and adulthood, but many times they were unable to build or restore a proper father-son relationship. The following quotations relate:

Participant 1: *“I don’t know my father at all.”*

Participant 3: *“I was raised by my mother. By the time I was big my parents had already split up. My stepfather did not treat us well.” “When I was 21 years old I first made contact with my biological father and it was only then that we started to get to know one another.”*

Participant 7: *“I was raised by my mother. I was 2 years old when my father went to prison. He got a sentence of 12 years.”*

One of the participants said that the absence of his father caused him to be angry and build up a lot of resentment towards his father. He mentioned that his longing for a father figure caused him to seek other male role models with whom he could identify, but who did not always have a positive effect on him. The following quotation relates:

Participant 8: *“I grew up without a father in my life, and this caused me to go and look for a father figure outside the house and in all the wrong places.”*

The absence of an important *positive* male figure in their lives also meant that they did not have any example on which to model their behaviour or character in order to know what the role and responsibilities of a man in a household entailed. Many of the participants could give an account of what they thought the role of a man within a household entailed, but very few of them ever had the opportunity to fulfill such a role. The following quotations relate:

Participant 1: *“Role of a man is to look after his wife and children, he has to ensure that there is always food within the house, he must see to it that the children attend school and that they have shoes and clothes. He must see to it that they are neat at all times.”*

Participant 3: *“He must protect his family and children and see to it that they are in a safe place.”*

Participant 8: *“Just the word man is a strong word. He must be emotionally and physically strong for his family. He has the heaviest burden within the house. He must ensure that his wife and children are happy. Must not do anything that will harm them.”*

Participant 6: *“Firstly, he must always ensure that there is a roof over his families head, he must provide food for them and he also needs to make sure that they have clothes to cover their bodies.”*

Some of the participants found it difficult to describe the role and responsibilities of a man. Those who gave a description were only able to talk about what they thought the roles and responsibilities of a man entailed. The following quotations relate:

Participant 5: *“I have not even stayed with a woman for two years. I have not yet had a responsibility of my own, or a roof over my head. I am a man who comes to prison on a regular basis and in short periods of time. I have been in prison for the biggest part of my life.”*

Participant 10: *“I cannot tell you what the role of a man in the house is, because I have not yet had that responsibility to play that role in a house.”*

#### 4.2.4. Lack of parental guidance

Most of the participants came from an environment where there was no clear structure within the family home. Due to social problems such as domestic violence and substance abuse occurring in the home, children did not experience much parental guidance. Due to a lack of parental guidance and involvement, children often tend to turn to others such as peers or other adults for information and guidance.

##### 4.2.4.1. Non-involvement of parents

All of the participants said that their parents never spoke to them about sex. There might be many reasons as to why the parents did not do sex education with their children. Parents could have been too conservative to talk to their children about a topic as delicate as sex education. The following quotations relate:

Participant 1: *“My parents never spoke to me about sex.”*

Participant 3: *“My parents never spoke to me about sex. We were educated at school and later on as I was growing up, I figured it out for myself, what is what and what is good.”*

Participant 6: *“No, no one taught me, I learned from no one.”(laugh)*

#### 4.2.4.2. Sex education by peers

Participants said that they were taught about sex by their peers, friends and cousins. Due to the fact that the parents never educated their children, they received incorrect and sometimes inappropriate information from their peers. This could have contributed towards distorted cognitions regarding sex. The following quotations relate:

Participant 2: *“I learned about sex from my older nephews and nieces and my brothers showed me. I saw it from a very young age. When we were younger and we played with one another, we would do this naughty stuff with one another. We were still very small so that is how it began.”*

Participant 1: *“I taught myself, experimented as life went on, as I grew up. I learned from friends.”*

#### 4.2.5. Relationships in adulthood

Many of the participants were involved in relationships before their incarcerations, but since then their relationships have ended. Four of the participants are married, but they do not have regular contact with their spouses anymore, mostly due to financial shortcomings and the fact that they had severed all contact with the participants due to their imprisonment. The following quotations apply to show the themes that emerged:

##### 4.2.5.1. Unstable aggressive/ violent relationships with partners

Their relationships were sometimes also characterized by domestic violence and infidelity. The following quotations relate:

Participant 2: *“I physically abused my wife and I made use of alcohol and dagga.”*

Participant 3: *“There were incidences when I slapped my wife, but it was never too serious.”*

Participant 5: *“I have raised my hand to her, I can’t remember what had happened, but something did happen.”*

#### 4.2.5.2. Non-existent relationship with own children

Due to their incarceration, many of the participants do not have contact with their own biological children. Some of them even had no existing relationships with their children before they came to prison. The following quotations relate:

Participant 4: *“Since I came to prison in 2008 I have no contact with my two children and their mother.”*

Participant 6: *“I never had a relationship with my own children. I have two children of my own and my wife has three children of her own. Her children stayed with us.”*

Participant 5: *“I don’t have contact with my children, the two eldest children are in the Northern Cape. One is in the Western Cape and he is turning 27 and the other one is in the city.”*

#### 4.2.5.3. Substance Abuse

Many of the participants themselves also abused alcohol. They also mentioned that they were abusive and aggressive towards their family members, when they were under the influence of substances. The following quotation relates:

Participant 7: *“She was always judgmental towards me because of my alcohol and drug abuse.”*

### 4.2.6. Description of Offence Committed

#### 4.2.6.1. Denial of the offence

The following quotations relate:

Participant 2: *“They did not find any DNA evidence linking me to the crime. I did not have any witnesses so I could not proof my innocence. I did not commit the crime.”*

Participant 1: *“I was charged for attempted murder, but because I was also on the scene I was also found guilty of rape. I did not have sex with the victim.”*

Nine of the 10 participants, at some stage during the interviews, said that they did not commit the offence they were accused of. As the interviews progressed, some of them still denied, but would go through other stages of the denial process such as minimization, denial of certain aspects of the event.

Five of the 10 participants, however, remained with their initial statements that they did not commit the offence.

#### *4.2.6.2. Minimization of involvement in the offence*

The following quotations relate:

Participant 6: *“I admit that I did touch her, but I did not rape her.”*

Participant 8: *“I admit that I had sex with her, but I did not rape her. She gave me permission to have sex with her. I don’t know whether she gave the other guy also permission to have sex with her.”*

The second stage of denial is minimization. The offender would admit to some aspects of the offence and deny others. Those who engaged in this type of denial would also deny that their behaviour was deviant or they would blame someone else. Three of the participants said that they did not rape their victims, as they were involved in relationships with their victims. They said that they had the consent of the women to have sexual intercourse.

#### *4.2.6.3. Justification of offence committed*

The following quotations relate:

Participant 4: *“She said I must come with her to her house that night. She said that I must sleep with her that evening.”*

Participant 10: *“I was heavily addicted to drugs at the time that I committed the offences and really did not know what I was doing.”*

#### *4.2.6.4. Denial related to harm*

The following quotation relates:

Participant 8: *“I wanted to protect her against the other guy, but she stepped closer and the knife accidentally slit her throat.”*



### 4.3. Discussion of findings

**Table 1: Summary of the themes and sub-themes**

Themes	Sub-themes	Literature
1. Participant's experience of his family background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic violence/ Aggression in the home</li> <li>• Substance Abuse</li> </ul>	According to Simons, Wurtele & Durham (2008:550) sexual offenders often report a childhood history of physical abuse. Burton & Meezan (2004:51) posit that aggressive behaviour is learned through the witnessing of domestic and other violence.
2. Participant's relationship with family members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discipline imposed in home</li> <li>• Lack of adequate parental supervision</li> </ul>	According to Darling (1991), parenting is a complex activity that includes many specific behaviours which work individually and together to influence the outcome of the child's behaviour. Parental attachment, harsh parental discipline, poor relationships with parents, poor supervision and inconsistent discipline are among the family factors that have been linked to delinquency.
3. Lack of masculine identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absent father</li> </ul>	Holborn & Eddy (2011:04) state that children growing up without fathers are more likely to experience emotional disturbances and depression. Richter (2006:55) posits that male children seem to be affected more by the absence of a father, which affects their social competence, behaviour control and school success.
4. Lack of parental guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-involvement of parents</li> <li>• Sex education by peers</li> </ul>	Moccoby (2000:03) states that parents are the ones assigned primary responsibility for bending and shaping children in desirable directions, through supervising, teaching and disciplining them as they grow up. According to Wittenborn (2002:04) parents have a world of influence over their children and basically shape and mould their children into adults.
5. Relationships in adulthood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unstable relationships with partners</li> <li>• Non-existent relationship with own children</li> <li>• Violence/Aggression in relationships</li> <li>• Substance Abuse</li> </ul>	Social Learning Theory was used as a theoretical framework for this study because it supports the fact that most behaviour is learned through the modeling of others. According to Harrison (2009), the foundation of the theory was based on the notion of observational learning through observing or witnessing behavior that is imprinted in the memory and later on, modeled by the youth.
6. Description of offence committed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Denial of offence</li> <li>• Minimization of involvement in the offence</li> <li>• Justification of offence committed</li> <li>• Denial related to harm</li> </ul>	Denial is a common characteristic of sex offenders. According to Levenson & Macgowan (2004:52) denial often exists on a continuum that includes minimization of the impact of sexual assault on victims, blaming others for the offence and refusing to acknowledge the severity of chronicity of the sexual behaviour problem.



#### 4.3.1. Theme 1: Participants' experience of his family background

During a child's early years, the family is considered primarily responsible for the care and development of the child. 'A stimulating home environment with opportunities for learning and exploration that provides warmth and emotional support will foster healthy growth and development in children' Carlson & Corcoran (2001:780). The majority of the participants, however, grew up in an environment that was marked by poverty, family disorganization and the lack of basic resources. Mandisa (2007) posits that when families fail to provide for the emotional needs of their children, they tend to turn to criminal behaviour easily, as is evident with most of the participants in the study. Many of them turned to the streets or started associating with a negative peer group at a very young age.

In the family home, many of the participants were also exposed to domestic violence and aggressive behaviour. Research has shown that sexual offenders often report a childhood history of physical abuse, suggesting that they learn violence in their family of origin and later translate this violence into their own interpersonal relationships. Burton & Meezan (2004:51) posits that aggressive behaviour is learned through the witnessing of domestic and other violence, suggesting that when a child witnesses violence, he/she too may learn to be violent. If Social Learning Theory is applied in this context, it follows that because these participants witnessed domestic violence within their family homes of origin, they could also be violent in their own homes.

#### 4.3.2. Theme 2: Participant's relationship with family members

According to Darling (1999), parenting is a complex activity that includes many specific behaviours working individually and together to influence the outcome of the child's behaviour. Parental attachment, harsh parental discipline, poor relationships with parents, poor supervision and inconsistent discipline are among the family factors that have been linked to delinquency.

From the responses the participants gave, it is evident that the parenting style imposed by their parents, ranged between permissive and authoritarian parenting styles. The single-mother household usually followed a more permissive type of parenting style, i.e. they were much more lenient with their children. In some cases, due to alcohol

abuse, they were unable to effectively impose discipline in the household. Darling (1999:02) states that permissive parents avoid confrontation and are much more lenient. The behavioural outcomes for children associated with the permissive parenting style include, problem behaviour and being prone to more aggression and impulsivity.

The authoritarian parenting style is mainly practiced in households where there is a father or stepfather present. Authoritarian parenting describes parents as overly strict and who believe in absolute obedience. They are often described as being cold and unemotional and their children perceive them as unapproachable. As with permissive parenting, the behaviour outcomes for children associated with authoritarian parenting style also include aggressive as well as antisocial behaviour.

The findings highlight that although the two parenting styles mostly used in the homes of the participants are on opposite sides of the spectrum, the behavioral outcomes for the children are relatively similar. In both styles problem behaviour was identified as an outcome. Most of the participants mentioned that they had behavioural problems early in life. Some of them ran away from home, others got involved in gangsterism, negative peer groups and substance abuse.

The lack of adequate parental supervision was also identified as a sub-theme and played a role in most of their households. For some it was because parent(s) were intoxicated and unable to exert the necessary parental control over them. Others found their living conditions too harsh and opted rather to leave their home environment in order to escape parental supervision and be on their own.

#### 4.3.3. Theme 3: Lack of Masculine Identity

One of the main themes that stood out in the study was the lack of a masculine identity, particularly a *positive masculine identity*. Many of the participants grew up without a father, or ever knowing who their biological father was. From their responses it was evident that this affected them, because they never had the opportunity experience what it was like to grow up with a father present. Some of the participants had a father or a stepfather, but the relationship was seldom positive or healthy. For those who grew up with a father or stepfather, the father-son relationship was strained and often marked by physical and emotional abuse. The absence of the important *positive* male figure in

their lives also meant that they did not have an example on which to model their behaviour or character in order to know what the role and responsibilities of a man within a household entailed.

In literature, Holborn & Eddy (2011:04) state that children growing up without their fathers are more likely to experience emotional disturbances. Richter (2006) also state that male children seem to be affected more by father-absence because it affects their social competence and they are more likely to engage in stereotypical masculine behaviour which includes aggression. Holborn et al (2011:04) reiterate that boys growing up in absent-father households are more likely to display hyper-masculine behaviour, including aggression. This statement links with the statement of Robertiello & Terry (2007:509) who posit that many rapists have negative views of women, they often endorse rape myths, they condone violence and display an over identification with the masculine role.

#### 4.3.4. Theme 4: Lack of parental guidance

Moccoby (2000:03) states that parents are the ones assigned primary responsibility for bending and shaping children in desirable directions through supervising, teaching and disciplining them as they grow up. Wittenborn (2000:04) also posits that parents have a world of influence over their children and basically shape and mould their children into adults.

From the findings of the study, it was evident that the parents neglected to provide sufficient guidance and support to their children. Within the father-absent households, single-mothers, and sometimes extended family members, had the sole responsibility of guiding the children – a task in which they were often unsuccessful due to their own problems, such as substance abuse. According to Hanson & Morton-Bourgon (2005:1154), lacking nurturance and guidance, the potential sex offender develops problems in social functioning, such as mistrust, hostility and insecure attachments, which in turn, are associated with social rejection, loneliness, negative peer associations and delinquent behaviour.

Only one (1) out of the ten (10) participants said that his mother spoke to him about sex. By not providing the correct information on sex education, they put their children

at risk of developing distorted cognitions due to negative information they learned from their peers.

#### 4.3.5. Theme 5: Relationships in adulthood

Social Learning Theory was used as the theoretical framework for this particular study because it supports the fact that most behaviour is learned through the modeling of others'. According to Harrison (2009) the foundation of the theory was based on the notion of observational learning through observing or witnessing behaviour that is imprinted on the memory and later on modeled by the youth.

One aspect highlighted in the study was that some participants had a very unstable relationship with their partners. Four of the participants were married, but had no contact with their spouses. Many of the participants also had non-existent relationships with their children. One, in particular, mentioned that he had never had any contact with his biological children at all. A third aspect is that many of the participants themselves also admitted to using/abusing alcohol/drugs and physically abusing their partners while under the influence of substances.

This theme supports the Social Learning Theory which concurs with the literature stating that most behaviour is learned through the modeling of others' behaviour. When applied to the context of the family it states that we model the behaviour that we were exposed to as children. According to Mihalic & Elliot (1997:21), during childhood and adolescence, observations of how parents and significant others behave in intimate relationships provide an initial template for learning of behavioural alternatives. Sefarbi (1990) concurs that early childhood experiences, especially those that occur within the context of the family, take a primary role over all other influences and are the most important determinant of future behaviour.

#### 4.3.6. Theme 6: Description/denial of offence committed

Denial is a common characteristic of sex offenders. It is believed to be a defense mechanism that they use in order to protect themselves from harm, guilt and shame. According to Levenson & Macgowan (2004:52), denial often exists on a continuum that includes minimization of the impact of sexual assault on victims, blaming others

for the offence and refusing to acknowledge the severity or chronicity of the sexual behaviour problem.

During the data analysis process, all of the different phases of denial could be identified amongst the participants. Nine of the 10 participants started off the interview process denying the offence. As the interviews progressed some of them tried to minimize their offence, or they blamed someone else.

Some of the participants would also try to justify their behaviour by saying that they had a relationship with the victim, or that they were intoxicated, or that they had the consent of the victim. Some would also deny that they wanted to harm the victim or that their actions caused any harm to the victim.

#### **4.4. Summary**

In summary, the findings have shown that the participants had similar experiences as portrayed by the literature regarding the family characteristics of sex offenders. Substance abuse by parents and lack of parental involvement were some of the familial adversities and problems experienced by the participants. What stands out is the fact that within their own adult lives with their partners and children, they were experiencing the same adversities. One of the experiences they had in their young lives and adult lives was domestic violence. Some of them were raised in a home where the father physically abused the mother and in their own adult lives they also abused their partners.

Social Learning Theory was used as the theoretical framework for this study and the findings positively linked to the theory. Some of the participants' experiences from their younger years were repeated in their adult lives, which was a clear indication that their behaviour was modeled on what they had witnessed.

The next chapter will provide an overall view of the findings and recommendations for future studies.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1. Introduction

This final chapter provides an overview of the conclusions, significance for further research as well as recommendations. The purpose of this study was to explore the family environment of the non-admitting sex offenders and explore a linkage between the way in which they were raised and their inability to take responsibility for their sexual offences. The main objectives that informed this study were to:

- Explore and describe the family environment and characteristics of non-admitting sex offenders.
- To explore and describe how the non-admitting sex offenders view their own family environment.

The researcher conducted interviews with the ten (10) participants who were all non-admitting sex offenders. Although all the participants were convicted of a sexual offence, they have chronically and persistently denied committing the offence.

The Social Learning Theory, used in this study, illuminated how behaviour is modeled and repeated later in somebody's life. Many of the disadvantages or life style deficits identified by the participants' in their family of origin were also present in their own adult lives.

The findings of this study, alerts one to the following aspects that will have to be considered in primary prevention initiatives if we are to break the cycle of sexual violence in South Africa

- ***Family Structure***

Most of the participants were raised in single-parent households. They were either raised by their mother or other family members. There were several risk factors (which is characteristic of a dysfunctional family environment) present in the majority of the participants' lives. However, simply being raised by a single mother does not automatically imply that the person will become a sex offender and deny

responsibility for an offence. This finding suggests that there were other compounding negative factors that aggravated being raised by a single parent, usually a mother.

- ***Absent Fathers***

The majority of the participants said that they never knew their biological fathers. Their parents were not married and their father had already left by the time they were born. Most of them therefore, grew up without ever knowing their biological fathers during their younger years. Some of the participants mentioned that they got to meet their biological fathers later in life, in their adult years. In many instances, they never really got the opportunity to restore the father-son relationship. Some of the participants were raised by a step-father, but in all cases, they described the relationship with the stepfather as very negative.

- ***Substance abuse by one or both parents***

Most of the participants mentioned that either one or both of their parents made use of alcohol or drugs. Two of the participants mentioned that their mothers excessively abused alcohol. This affected her ability to properly care for her children causing her to neglect them and their needs. Some of them also felt that their most traumatic experiences as a child occurred while their parents were intoxicated. For some it was a constant reminder to the fear of having to flee their home or the abuse they had to endure.

- ***Domestic violence within the household***

Many of the respondents said that they witnessed many incidences of domestic violence between their parents and family members while growing up. In most instances, it was the father or stepfather who physically abused the mother while they were intoxicated. This study confirmed how the Social Learning Theory explains that behaviour is mimicked and repeated, especially with domestic violence. Through their witnessing of these events, they learned the behaviour and eventually made themselves guilty of domestic violence within their own adult relationships.

- ***Lack of masculine identity***

Many of the participants grew up without a positive male role model in their lives. For those who had a father or a stepfather in the house, the experience was mostly



negative. During the interviews, it was apparent that most of the participants could not give a clear description of what role a man should play in the household. Many of them said that they had never had the experience of being in a stable relationship with a woman and children. They struggled to identify what the responsibilities of a man within a household entailed. It was evident that many of them had a distorted view of what exactly the individual roles and responsibilities of a man and woman are within a household.

## **5.2. Recommendations for Assessment and Intervention: Practice Aspects**

In light of the findings and discussions the researcher would like to make the following recommendations:

- Sex Offender Programmes that are presented at correctional facilities should focus more on the early family environment of the non-admitting sex offender. During the initial assessment phase, greater emphasis should be placed on generating as much information of the offenders' background. In doing so, it will enable the facilitator to understand what contributing factors within his early life could have impacted on the current offending behaviour.
- This process would also be beneficial to the offender as he would get an opportunity to re-assess his childhood and get to work on the cognitive distortions that was formed in his early family environment.
- More emphasis should be placed on incorporating information that will focus on masculine identities. Many of the participants did not know what the true nature of being a responsible, respectable man, husband and father in society entailed.

## **5.3. Recommendations for future research**

- Should a similar study be conducted at a later stage, the researcher suggests that those offenders, who had already undergone social work programmes, be excluded. In most instances, it was evident that the participants answered what they thought the researcher wanted to hear and they used words and phrases taught to them in their treatment programmes (Programme speak).
- When selecting participants, an effort should be made to select individuals who were fairly new in their sentence.



#### **5.4. Limitations of the study**

The researcher encountered a lot of set-backs in gaining approval for the study to be conducted in the Department of Correctional Services. Research Committee Meetings of the Department was either postponed or cancelled on more than one occasion, thus prolonging the process of gaining approval. Consequently, a smaller sample was used in this study, whilst a larger sample may have enhanced the rigor and outcomes of this research project. Knowledge about sex offenders in South Africa remains limited and studies with larger representative samples can contribute to more evidence-based knowledge about this clientele group.

#### **5.5. Conclusion**

If one compares the family environment of the participants and to their own lives, and that of their own families, it appears that, in most cases, the cycle of abuse and family dysfunctionality is just repeating itself. As they were raised with absent fathers, their children are also growing up without fathers. In most cases, the participants also did not share a relationship with their biological children.

From the findings of the study it is evident that they were raised in a family environment characterized by poverty, neglect, lack of parental supervision, lack of proper support structure, substance abuse and a lack of positive role modeling. All these facts could have contributed towards the circumstances that they currently find themselves in. They never had the opportunity to learn what it meant to be a true man and what the responsibilities of a man entailed. They had never known what a healthy relationship between a man and a woman resembled. From the participants' responses, one gathers that they still believed a woman was merely around for the pleasure of a man and to take care of the children. This could be a contributing factor to their inability to take responsibility for their sexual violation of their victims. Most of the participants denied committing the offence, some of them admitted to certain aspects of the offence, while others said that they had the consent of the victim. The different phases of denial were positively identified in the responses received from the participants.

## REFERENCES

- Artz, L. & Roehrs, S. (2009). Criminal Law (Sexual and Related Matters) Amendment Act (No. 32 of 2007): Emerging issues for the health sector. *CME*, 27(10), 464 – 467.
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. Retrieved from <http://www.asecib.ase.ro>. Accessed November 2013.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Barbaree, H.E. & Langton, C.M. (2008). The Effects of Child Sexual Abuse and Family Environment. In *The Juvenile Sex Offender*. (pp. 58 – 75). UK: Guilford Press.
- Barbaree, H.E. & Marshall, W.L. (2008). An Introduction to the Juvenile Sex Offender: Terms, Concepts and Definitions. In *The Juvenile Sex Offender*. (pp. 1 - 10). UK: Guilford Press.
- Barrett, M., Wilson, R. & Long, C. (2003). Measuring Motivation to Change in Sexual Offenders From Institutional Intake to Community Treatment. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, 15(4), 269-283.
- Baumrind, D. (1991). The influence of parenting style on adolescent competence and substance use. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 11(1), 56 – 95.
- Bless, C., Higson-Smith, C. & Kagee, A. (2006). Research Ethics. In *Fundamentals of Social Research Methods: An African Perspective* (pp. 139 – 148). South Africa: Juta and Company Ltd.
- Burton, D.L. (2000). Were Adolescent Sexual Offenders Children with Sexual Behaviour Problems? *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, 12(1), 37 – 48.
- Burton, D. & Meezan, W. (2004). Revisiting recent research on Social Learning Theory as an etiological proposition for sexually abusive male adolescents. *Journal of Evidence-Based Social Work*, 1(1), 41 - 80.

Burton, D., Miller, D. & Shill, C. (2002). A social learning comparison of the sexual victimization of adolescent sexual offenders and nonsexual offending male delinquents. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 26(9), 893 – 907.

Cabrera, N., Shannon, J. & Tamis-LeMonde. (2007). Fathers' influence on their children's cognitive and emotional development: from toddlers to pre-k. *Applied Development Science*, 11(4), 208 - 213.

Caputo, A.A., Frick, P.J., & Brodsky, S.L. (1999). Family Violence and Juvenile Sexual Offending: The Potential Mediating Role of Psychopathic Traits and Negative Attitudes Toward Women. *Criminal Justice and Behaviour*, 26(3), 338 – 356.

Carlson, M. & Corcoran, M. (2001). Family structure and children's behavioural and cognitive outcomes. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63, 779 – 792.

Cooper, S. (2005). Understanding, treating, and managing sex offenders who deny their offence. *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 11(1), 85 – 94.

Craissati, J., McClurg, G. & Browne, K. (2002). Characteristics of perpetrators of child sexual abuse who have been sexually victimized as children. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, 14(3), 221 – 235.

Crime Report 2010/2011. South African Police Service. Retrieved from <http://www.issafrica.org>. Accessed January, 2013.

Crime Report 2011/2012. South African Police Service. Retrieved from <http://www.issafrica.org>. Accessed January, 2013.

Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (No. 32 of 2007).

Darling, N. (1999). Parenting style and its correlates. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED427896.pdf>. Accessed January 2013.

Department of Correctional Services (2012, February 10). Retrieved from [www.dcs.gov.za](http://www.dcs.gov.za). Accessed November 2013.

Devers, K.J. & Frankel, R.M. (2000). Study Design in Qualitative Research – 2: Sampling and Data Collection Strategies. *Education for Health*, 13(2), 263 – 271.

Eddy, G. & Holborn, L. (2011). Fractured families: a crisis for South Africa. *South African Institute of Race Relations*, 4, 1 – 6.

Farkas, M. & Miller, G. (2007). Reentry and Reintegration: Challenges faced by the families of convicted sex offenders. *Federal Sentencing Reporter*, 20(2), 88 – 92.

Fortney, T., Levenson, J., Brannon, Y. & Baker, J. (2007). Myths and facts about sexual offenders: Implications for treatment and public policy. *Sexual Offender Treatment*, 2(1), 1 – 17.

Freeman, J.E., Palk, G.R. & Davey, J.D. (2010). Sex offenders in denial: a study into a group of forensic psychologists' attitudes regarding the corresponding impact upon risk calculations and parole eligibility. *Journal of Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology*, 21(1), 39 – 51.

Gibbons, P., de Volder, J. & Casey, P. (2003). Patterns of Denial in sex offenders: A replication study. *The Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law*, 31(3), 336 - 344.

Goldstein, M. & Heaven, P.C.L. (2000). Perceptions of the family, delinquency, and emotional adjustment among youth. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 29, 1169 – 1178.

Grusec, J.E. & Davidov, M. (2007). Socialization in the Family: The Roles of Parents. In *Handbook of Socialization: Theory and Research* (pp. 284 – 308). New York: Guilford Press.

Haapasalo, J., & Pokela, E. (1997). Child-rearing and child abuse antecedents of criminality. *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*, 4(1), 107 – 127.

Haas, H., Farrington, D.P., Killias, M. & Sattar, G. (2004). The impact of different family configurations on delinquency. *British Journal of Criminology*, 44(4), 520 – 532.

Hanson, R.K., & Morton-Bourgon, K.E. (2005). The Characteristics of Persistent Sexual Offenders: A Meta-Analysis of Recidivism Studies. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 73(6), 1154 – 1163.

Harper, C. & McLanahan, S. (2004). Father Absence and Youth Incarceration. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 14(3), 369 - 397.

- Harrison, L. (2009). The Ambiguity of Juvenile Sexual Offenders. *Internet Journal of Criminology*.
- Hoeve, M., Dubas, J.S., Gerris, J.R.M., Van der Laan, P.H., en Smeenk, W. (2011). Maternal and Paternal parenting styles: Unique and combined links to adolescent and early adult delinquency. *Journal of Adolescence*, 34, 813 – 827.
- Holborn, L. & Eddy, G. (2011). *First steps to healing the South African family*. Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations.
- Horley, J. (2003) Sexual Offenders. In Horley, J. (2003) Personal Construct Perspectives on Forensic Psychology. Psychology Press.
- Illsey, T. (2008). The defence of mistaken belief in consent. *South African Journal of Criminal Justice*, 21(1), 63 – 80.
- Jaffee, S., Moffitt, T., Caspi, A. & Taylor, A. (2003). Life with (or without) father: The benefits of living with two biological parents depend on the fathers' antisocial behaviour. *Child Development*, 74(1), 109 - 126.
- Jamieson, L., Proudlock, P. & Nhenga-Chakarisa, T. (2012). Legislative developments in 2011/2012. In *South African Child Gauge 2012*. Cape Town: Children's Institute, University of Cape Town.
- Jewkes, R. & Abrahams, N. (2002). The epidemiology of rape and sexual coercion in South Africa: an overview. *Social Science & Medicine*, 55, 1231 – 1244.
- Kellogg, N. & Menard, S. (2003). Violence among family members of children and adolescents evaluated for sexual abuse. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 27(12), 1367 – 1376.
- Lammers, K., Martin, L., Andrews, D. & Seedat, S. (2010). Reported rapes at a hospital rape centre: Demographic and clinical profiles. *South African Medical Journal*, 100(6), 362 – 363.
- Lee, J.K.P., Jackson, H.J., Pattison, P., & Ward, T. (2002). Developmental risk factors for sexual offending. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 26, 73 – 92.

- Levenson, J.S. & Macgowan, M.J. (2004). Engagement, denial, and treatment progress among sex offenders in group therapy. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, 16(1), 49 – 63.
- Londt, M. (2008). The Management of Sex Offenders in South Africa: Drawing from International Evidence to Address a National Problem. *Practice: Social Work in Action*, 20(2), 93 – 101.
- Lotfi Azimi, A., Vaziri, S.H., & Lotfi Kashani, F. (2012). Relationship between maternal parenting style and child's aggressive behaviour. *Procegra Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 69, 1276 – 1281.
- Maccoby, E. (2000). Parenting and its effects on children: On reading and misreading behavior genetics. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 51, 1 – 27.
- Mack, N., Woodson, C., MacQueen, K., Guest, G., & Namey, E. (2005). Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide. Family Health International:USA.
- Malamuth, N., Sockloskie, R., Koss, M. & Tanaka, J. (1991). Characteristics of aggressors against women: Testing a model using a national sample of college students. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 59(5), 670 – 681.
- Mandisa, T. (2007). Home and Family Circumstances of Young Offenders: An Examination of Social Workers Views. *British Journal of Community Justice*, 5(3), 63 – 80.
- Maniglio, R. (2011). The role of childhood trauma, psychological problems, and coping in the development of deviant sexual fantasies in sexual offenders. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 31, 748 – 756.
- Medical Research Council, South Africa (2010). Medical Research Foundation Report.
- Mihalic, S. W., & Elliot, D. (1997). A Social Learning Theory of Marital Violence. *Journal of Family Violence*, 12(1), 21 – 47.
- Moffett, H. (2006). These Women, They Force Us To Rape Them: Rape as Narrative of Social Control in Post-Apartheid South Africa. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 32(1).

- Mouton, J. & Babbie, E. (2001). *The practice of social research*. Cape Town: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Naidoo, K. (2013). Rape in South Africa – a call to action. *South African Medical Journal*, 103(4), 210 – 211.
- Repetti, R.L., Taylor, S.E., & Seeman, T.E. (2002). Risky Families: Family Social Environments and the Mental and Physical Health of Offspring. *Psychological Bulletin*, 128(2), 330 – 336.
- Rhee, K.E., Lumeng, J.C., Applugliese, D.P., Kaciroti, N., & Bradley, R.H. (2006). Parenting Styles and Overweight status in first grade. *Pediatrics*, 117(6), 2047 – 2054.
- Richter, L. (2006). The importance of fathering for children. In *Baba: Men and fatherhood in South Africa*. (p.53 – 72), Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Robertiello, G. & Terry, K.J. (2007). Can we profile sex offenders? A review of sex offender typologies. *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*, 12, 508 – 518.
- Roman, N. (2011). *Lecture 1: Parenting Styles* [PowerPoint slides]. Unpublished manuscript, University of the Western Cape, South Africa.
- Rossman, B.B.R., & Rea, J.G. (2005). The Relationship of Parenting Styles and Inconsistencies to Adaptive Functioning for Children in Conflictual and Violent Families. *Journal of Family Violence*, 20(5), 261 – 277.
- Schneider, S.L., & Wright, R.C. (2004). Understanding Denial in Sexual Offenders: A Preview of Cognitive and Motivational Processes to Avoid Responsibility. *Trauma, Violence and Abuse*, 5(1), 3 – 20.
- Seedat, M., Van Niekerk, A., Jewkes, R., Suffla, S. & Ratele, K. (2009). Violence and Injuries in South Africa: prioritizing an agenda for prevention. *The Lancet*, 374 (9694), 1011 – 1022.
- Sefarbi, R. (1990). Admitters and Deniers among adolescent sex offenders and their families: A Preliminary study. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 60(3), 460 – 465.



Seto, M. & Lalumière, M. (2010). What is so special about male adolescent sexual offending? A review and test of explanations through meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 136(4), 526 – 575.

Sexual Offences Act 23 of 1957. Retrieved from <http://www.justice.gov.za>. Accessed January 2013.

Simons, D.A., Wurtele, S.K., & Durham, R.L. (2008). Developmental experiences of child sexual abusers and rapists. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 32, 549 – 560.

Shenton, A.K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, 22(2004), 63 – 75.

Smetana, J., Campione-Barr, N. & Metzger, A. (2006). Adolescent Development in Interpersonal and Societal contexts. *Annual Review Psychology*, 57, 255 – 284.

Starzyk, K.B. & Marshall, W.L. (2003). Childhood, family and personological risk factors for sexual offending. *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*, 8(1), 93 – 105.

Swart, H. (2013, 15 February). Will Anene Booysen's brutal rape and murder shake the nation into action? Mail & Guardian. Retrieved from <http://mg.co.za>. Accessed January 2014.

Teddlie, C. & Yu, F. (2007). Mixed methods sampling: A typology with examples. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(1), 77 – 100.

Tierney, D.W. & McCabe, M.P. (2002). Motivation for behaviour change among sex offenders – A review of the literature. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 22, 113 – 129.

Underwager, R. & Wakefield, H. (1999). Sex Offender Treatment Requiring Admission of Guilt. Presented at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium of the American College of Forensic Psychology, April 29, 1999. Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Van der Bijl, C. & Rumney, P. (2010). Attitudes, rape and law reform in South Africa. *Journal of Criminal Law*, 73(5), 414 – 449.

Ware, J. & Mann, R. (2012). How should acceptance of responsibility be addressed in sexual offending treatment programs? *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*, 17, 279 - 288.



Wellman, C., Kruger, F., & Mitchell, B. (2005). *Research Methodology*. Oxford University Press: Southern Africa.

Wittenborn, M. (2002). *The Relations Between Parenting Styles and Juvenile Delinquency*. (Honors Theses, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, 2002). Retrieved from <http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/uhp>.

Yates, P.M. (2009). Is sexual offender denial related to sex offence risk and recidivism? A review and treatment implications. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 15(2), 183 – 199.



## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### LETTER OF CONSENT

**Title: An exploration of the perceptions of non-admitting sex offenders of their family environment.**

This letter serves to grant my consent to complete and participate in the research study with the researcher. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted. The objective of the study is to explore and describe the family environment and family dynamics of non-admitting sex offenders.

I am aware that I may withdraw from the study at any time should I not feel comfortable with the topic. I understand that the information is private and will be managed by the interviewer, confidentially and anonymously.

I understand that I give consent that the information gathered through the questionnaire, will be anonymously presented in research reports.

I ..... (The interviewee) give my consent to the researcher to voluntarily participate in the study.

This letter was signed on .....day of .....month of the year.....

**Signature of interviewee:**.....

**Signature of interviewer:** .....

**Witness:** .....

**Head of Department: (Supervisor) Dr. Marcel Londt**

Dean of the Faculty of Community and Health Sciences:

University of the Western Cape

Private Bag X17

Bellville 7535

Contact no: 021 - 959 2277 / 082 490 6469

Email: [mlondt@uwc.ac.za](mailto:mlondt@uwc.ac.za)

**Social Work Supervisor: Mrs. M. Jones**

Breede River Management Area

Private Bag X3057

Worcester

6849

Contact no: 023 -348 7700

Email: [Moiria.Jones@dcs.gov.za](mailto:Moiria.Jones@dcs.gov.za)

**Area Commissioner: Mr. C. Petersen**

Breede River Management Area  
Private Bag X3057  
Worcester  
6849  
Contact no: 023 -348 7700  
Email: Cecil.Petersen@dcs.gov.za



## APPENDIX B

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

#### Identifying details

First Name	Age	Place of Birth	Highest Qualification	Marital Status	Number of Children

#### Offence details

First/ Second offence	Offence Convicted On	Length of Sentence

3. Tell me about your relationship with your caregivers?
4. Tell me about your early childhood years and experiences and what was your circumstances like?
5. Did you ever experience any abuse as a child, in your family or the community you lived in?
6. Tell me what do you think is the role and responsibilities of a man and a woman irrespectively within a household?
7. Tell me, when you were a child who was the one who used to discipline you when you did something wrong?
8. And how was discipline imposed within your household?
9. Tell me how would you describe the relationship between your mother and father?
10. Did either one of your caregivers make use of alcohol or other substances?
11. Have you ever witnessed any parental conflict between your caregivers? If so, could you please elaborate?
12. Have any of your family members ever been convicted for a sexual offence and if so, please elaborate?
13. Tell me, what do you think about women?
14. How long have you and your partner been in a relationship, and how would you describe each one's role within the relationship?
15. Do you have any children and how is your relationship with them?

16. What are some of the rules within your household that your children need to adhere to?
17. How is discipline imposed within your household?
18. Did your parents ever talk to you about sex?
19. Tell me, were you ever exposed to any inappropriate sexual behaviour within your household? If so, please elaborate.
20. Did you have any sex education at school? If not, where else did you get sex education?
21. Tell me what is your understanding of the term rape?
22. Can you describe the offence that you were convicted on?
23. How do you feel about the offence and do you take responsibility for the offence committed?

