


**An overview of child sexual abuse prevention and risk in South Africa:
A child's point of view**

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OPTENTIA RESEARCH PROGRAMME



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OVERVIEW

- 1. Background and rationale
- 2. Purpose of the study
- 3. Design map
- 4. Findings
- 5. Conclusion and implications for practice
- 6. Limitations and future directions

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

- Protection from any form of abuse – Constitutional Right of SA children
- CSA is difficult to combat
 - Prevalence – 8-31% girls and 3-17% boys (Barth, Heim, Trelle, & Tonia, 2013)
- The long term impact – mental health problems, sexuality issues and intra-and interpersonal problems (Maniglio, 2013)
- Subsequently - Prevention is better than cure
- Universally accepted -Primary responsibility to protect children lies with parents
- Preamble of a relatively New Children's Act (38 of 2005)
 - Responsibility of communities and families to protect

...BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

- Children from high risk families might be more at risk (Cox, Webber, & Joachim, 2007)
- Anecdotal reports from social work practice – parents from high risk settings not equipped to protect
- Current CSA prevention efforts in SA: once off community awareness campaigns & school-based = child primary changing agent (Collings, 2007)
- What do these primary changing agents know about CSA risk and prevention?
- Little is documented in literature
- Identifying strengths & weaknesses in the knowledgebase of children – could aid development of strategies for CSA prevention initiatives
- Social workers – prevention – Community's views should be sought on matters concerning them

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

To explore the views of children who live in high risk settings on CSA prevention and risk, the researchers employed a qualitative research study, which was administered through structured interviews by 21 field workers (4th year student social workers)

DESIGN MAP

Training of 21 x 4th year student social workers (SSWs) in:
research methodology; interviewing; qualitative data analysis; ethical aspects –
13 WEEKS

Access to population – SSWs field placements; Ethical clearance; SSWs under supervision of registered social workers; parental consent; adolescent consent

Pilot study; case study design; structured interview schedule; purposive sampling (13-18 years old); clients of social workers, welfare organizations in Vaal Triangle
June –September 2014)

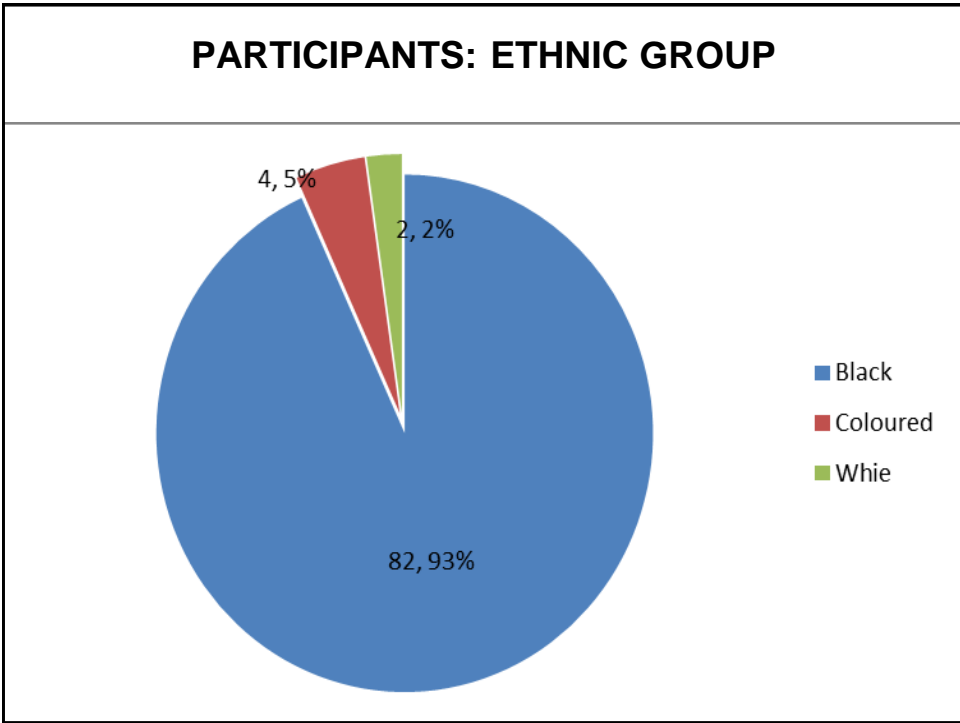
21 students x 5 child participants = 105 interviews audio-taped and transcribed; screened for accuracy; 88 transcriptions selected; thematic content analysis ; independent coding ; consensus discussion; themes and sub-themes



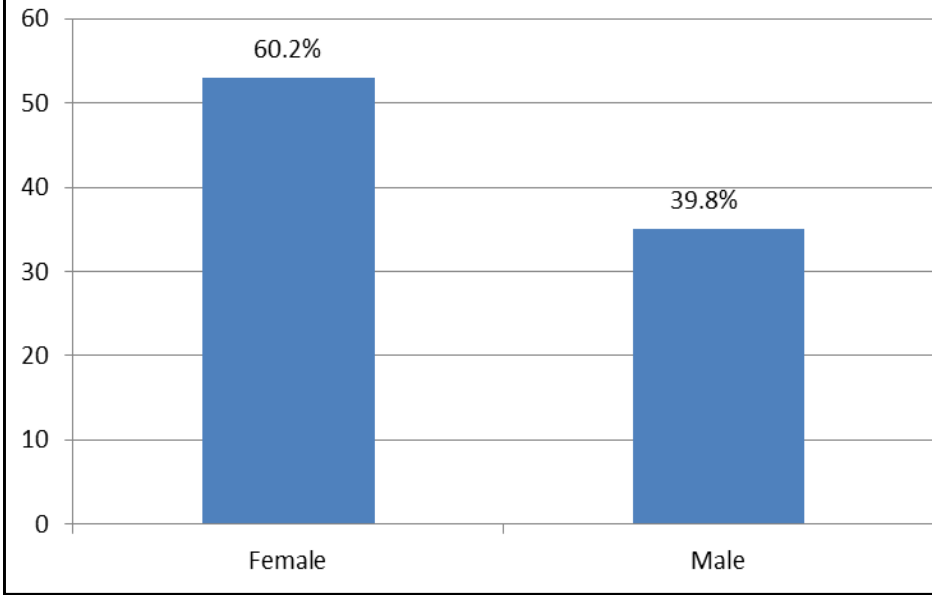
FINDINGS

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RESEARCH FOCUS AREA

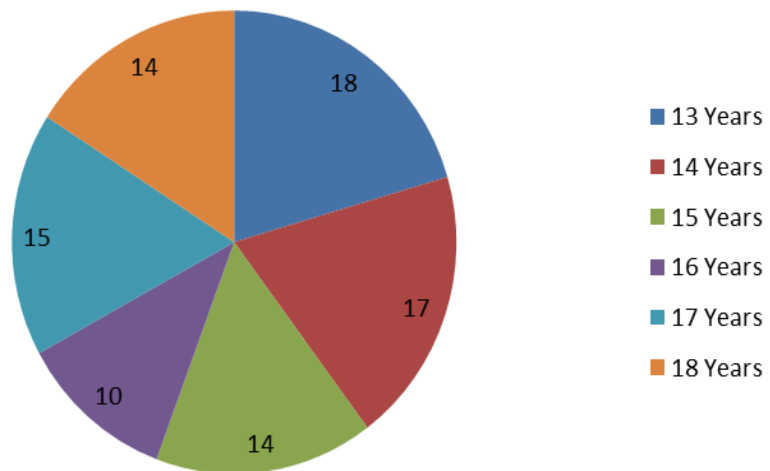
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PARTICIPANTS: GENDER



PARTICIPANTS: AGE



SUMMARY OF THEMES (1)		
What is CSA?	Who taught them about CSA?	Who are possible child sexual offenders?
Accurate understanding of CSA	School	Family & acquaintances
Vague understanding of CSA	Self-informed	General category & People with observable dysfunctional behaviour
Family & no one		

SUMMARY OF THEMES (2)		
Who will never sexually abuse a child?	Safe & unsafe places	Advice to president; parents; social workers
Female care givers	Home is safe	Advance security and resources
Family	Places where there are supervision are safe	Heavy penalties
Biological fathers	No direct supervision & Far from home make it unsafe	Educate and emphasise responsibility of community and parents
Trustworthy person		

SUMMARY OF THEMES (3)

Advice to children from children - how to protect themselves	Advice to children from children -what to do if they are abused
Avoid and act in potential unsafe situations	Report in general
Report any boundary violations	Report to specific people (social workers; police)
Encouragement	

WHAT IS CSA?

		QUOTE
Majority had an accurate understanding of CSA	-Refer to a forced act of a sexual nature with a child	"...a child raped or touched in private parts in the wrong way" (P 46) "When a child is being abused and touched in places where she doesn't want to be touched...forced" (P86)
	-Emphasized gender ;age; or relationship	"When a parent forces you to have sex with him" (P66) "Children who are raped by uncles, dads, neighbors and everyone who is male"(P34) "When a man forces himself on a girl without her permission" (P19) When a child is forced to have sex with an older person (P11)
Few had a vague understanding	-physical abuse -emotional abuse	"Beating you at home when you refuse to do the chores" (P56) "When someone abuse you physically or emotionally" (P56)

WHO TAUGHT THEM ABOUT CSA?

		QUOTE
School (most)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers - Life orientation teachers - Life sciences teacher - Guest speakers 	<p>"Learnt about it in primary school - also see it in most cases on the news"(P22)</p> <p>"...social workers who came to our school and told us who possible perpetrators might be" (P86)</p>
Self-informed (many)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Media - Support groups - Exposure & experience 	<p>"I know this because my friend was raped...by her step father, she escaped through the window, her mother did not believe her." (P32)</p> <p>"Newspapers, I see it on news and I see other cases around me" (P13)</p>
Family or no-one(few)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mother - Father - Brother 	<p>"...my mother..." (P88)</p>

POTENTIAL SEXUAL OFFENDERS

		QUOTE
Most identified family & acquaintances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Males (uncles; fathers; stepfather; brothers; grandfathers) -Friends; neighbours 	<p>"...stepfathers, cousins, uncles, mostly males." (P10)</p> <p>"...grandfather, uncle, teacher & friend" (P53)</p>
Many - general referral & people with observable dysfunctional behaviour	<p>"males"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strangers Men and women Everyone -Criminals -Substance abusers 	<p>"People who smoke drugs and drink alcohol" (P27)</p> <p>"...uncles, strangers and some parents" (P38)</p>

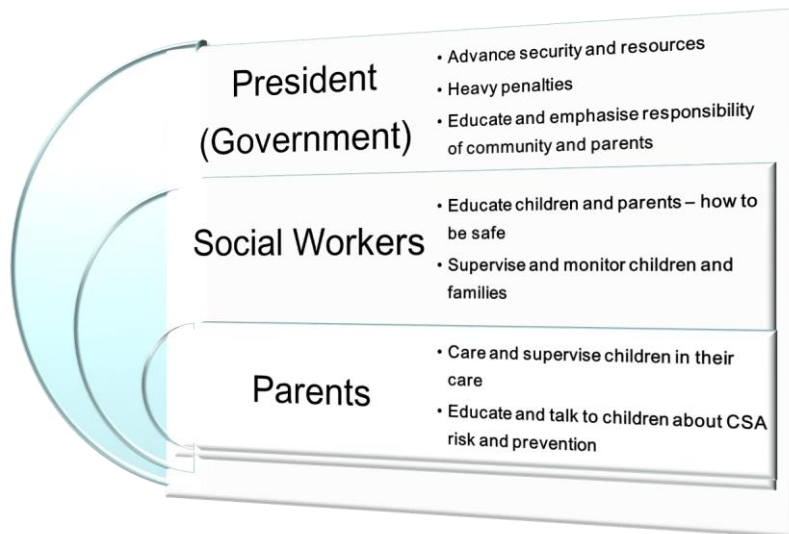
WHO WILL NEVER SEXUALLY ABUSE A CHILD?

		QUOTE
Most identified females caregivers and females in general	-Mothers, females; grandmothers; sisters	"...mothers, because women have compassion" (P8) "...sisters and grandmother" (P24)
Some identified family members or trustworthy people	Father Uncle Social Worker Educated person	"...good people, family members, people from home" (P14) "A person who is educated, who has a purpose in life and listens. A man who is educated" (P78)
Few indicated that no one is to be trusted		"Any person who has a heart and who cares about children and has love for children and wants to help them, like child welfare" (P51) "...anyone can rape a child" (P48)

SAFE & UNSAFE PLACES

		QUOTE
Safe places	- Home - School - Supervised places e.g. Churches Parks – security	"[At] school, playing in the yard at home, or [in] the street where there are a lot of people"(P7) " At church and the museum even at school because there are security guards. Even at home in the yard" (P25)
Unsafe places	-No direct supervision -Far from home -Perceived unsafe places – taverns; alley ways; abandoned houses	"...parks and home under the parent supervision and at school under teacher supervision" (P57) "...next to the tavern and where its far from home" (P4) "Parks...because nobody supervises it, even the police are lazy there" (P47)

ADVICE TO PRESIDENT, PARENTS & SOCIAL WORKERS



ADVICE TO CHILDREN FROM CHILDREN

What to do to protect themselves?

Avoid, and *act* in potentially unsafe situations

"They should not go with or talk to strangers. They should not take things from strangers such as sweets. They should tell their parents if a stranger approaches them." (P6)

"They must not play around men, when they are around men...They must not go with their friend to Matiki ...that is a place where they throw rubbish" (P41).

Report any boundary violations

"They can protect themselves by distancing themselves from dangerous situations; if the person forces them they should tell an adult, or a person whom they trust or report him to the nearest police station" (P27).

...ADVICE TO CHILDREN

What to do if abused?

Report-general

"...they[children] should actually fight back by talking about it [CSA]" (P18)

Report to specific people (Police; Social workers; parents)

"They should tell maybe the people they trust or teachers that they trust if they don't trust anyone at home" (P17)

"Firstly tell their parents immediately after they experienced so that they can get advice on what to do and later report to the police" (P27)

Encouragement

"...that its not the end of the world and that they should not lose hope - that they should find help. ... they should not allow this abuse to damage them because you might discover that this child has a bright future, as every child has a bright future, right. so this child has dreams so she should not think that those dreams have to fade" (P71)

WIDENING REFLECTIONS & IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. Participants have a good understanding of what CSA is, and who are potential offenders
2. They are mostly taught at school
3. Mostly feel safe with females and at home, under adult supervision
4. They consider far away places where there are no adult supervision as unsafe, however few CSA cases that are reported, occur in such situations
5. They report potential perpetrators as family or acquaintances but identify their homes as safe

WIDENING REFLECTIONS & IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

6. Majority of participants recommend that children should talk about CSA and report the matter
7. Advice to president - express a need to be protected and secure
8. Children seek more security outside their homes
9. Move away from holding the child responsibility for prevention of CSA
10. Shift our attention to the mothers/females/parents in children lives – empower with knowledge and skills

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Most children were interviewed in English
- Re-interviewing of small sample of participants on important aspects of the interview to provide some form of measure of quality control in data was not done
- Qualitative content analysis

Thank You

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