

**Beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa speaking people about  
child sexual abuse in a rural area**

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**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree *Master of Social Work in  
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North-West University***

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**Co-Supervisor:** Prof CC Wessels

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about child sexual abuse in a rural area**

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## **DEDICATION**

This study is dedicated to the children of the remote rural areas in the Eastern Cape who are still in pain due to sexual abuse, hoping that the time will come when they will be able to speak out and be heard by the elders, parents and by the community leaders. There is a hope that one day even our country will take cognisance of sexually abused children in these areas.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I thank **GOD** for giving me the opportunity to do my studies and for giving me strength throughout the years doing this study. I would also like to thank the following people who played an enormous role during the period of my studies:

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- Dr AA Roux for her guidance, support and patience.
- Professor CC Wessels for her inputs, guidance and support when the study was at initial stage.
- The Management of the South African Police Service for granting me permission to conduct interviews with Social workers at FCS Unit dealing with children that have been sexually abused in the Eastern Cape, especially those working with such children living in rural areas of the Eastern Cape.
- The Department of Social Development and the Non-Governmental organisation, UCARC (Umtata Child Abuse Resource Centre) for granting me permission to conduct my study and interview Social workers working in their Organization.
- The community leaders, that are occasionally involved in discussing cases of abused children in their communities known as Lekgotla.
- Finally I thank my colleagues that were supporting and encouraging me during the time of my study.

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## **STATEMENT**

I, Nomahomba Thelma Zantsi, hereby states that the manuscript titled:

***Beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa speaking people about child sexual abuse  
in a rural area***

is my own work.

.....  
**NT Zantsi**

.....  
**Date**

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## SUMMARY

### **Beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa speaking people about child sexual abuse in a rural area**

**Key words:** *Child, sexual abuse, beliefs, knowledge, rural area, isiXhosa speaking people*

The researcher is a member of the South African Police Service, attached to Family violence, Child protection and Sexual Offences Unit in the Eastern Cape, dealing with victims of child sexual abuse. It had come to the researcher's attention that some children are being sexually abused by family relatives and some are sexually abused by the known people for different reasons which are based on their beliefs and knowledge about child sexual abuse. Most of these cases are of children who are living in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape. The numbers of such cases are increasing in Ngqeleni, Libode, Mqanduli, Mthatha and Lusikisiki; hence the study is based on those areas of the Eastern Cape. The people living in these areas speak isiXhosa. No study known of such has been conducted in this geographic area; it appears that this problem was never brought to light, at all. This matter of child sexual abuse in these areas was never addressed.

The aim of the research is to know more about the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people regarding child sexual abuse in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape, and also to look at the strategies and programmes that can be implemented in order to make parents, children and the community at large of isiXhosa-speaking areas aware of child sexual abuse. Purposive sampling was conducted with Forensic Social workers at the South African Police Service, Social workers at Department of Social Development, and Social workers at Umtata Child Abuse Resource Centre, parents dealing with children and community members that are members of Lekgotla.

The research done in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape shows that the isiXhosa-speaking people of the rural areas of the Eastern Cape have little knowledge of child sexual abuse and those that indeed do know what to do are obstructed by their beliefs about child sexual abuse; hence they do not report it and some do not consider it as being sexual abuse. The people concerned working in these areas are

afraid to report incidents of child abuse, thinking that they will lose their job should they report the incidents to law enforcement agencies or to social workers. The study shows that neither awareness programmes were presented nor any education done in these areas about child sexual abuse.

Children in these areas are vulnerable due to ignorance, lack of knowledge, beliefs of their parents and the beliefs of the perpetrators and their lack knowledge. There is a vast need for extended programmes, awareness and education projects to be conducted by the social workers in Government and Non-Government organizations in the remote areas, at school, and in the communities of these areas. Teachers at pre-school and primary school levels and parents need to be educated on child sexual abuse. This study addressed the issue of child sexual abuse looking at the beliefs of isiXhosa-speaking people.

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## **OPSOMMING**

### **Menings en kennis van isiXhosa sprekende persone rakende seksuele misbruik van kinders in ‘n plattelandse gebied**

**Sleutelwoorde:** *Kind, seksuele misbruik, kennis, plattelandse gebiede, isiXhosa-sprekende mense.*

Die navorser is ‘n lid van die Suid-Afrikaanse Polisiediens’ verbonde aan Gesinsgeweld, Kinderbeskerming en Seksuele Oortredingseenheid in die Oos-Kaap, wat met slagoffers van kinder- seksuele misbruik werk. Dit het onder die navorser se aandag gekom dat sommige kinders seksueel deur familielede misbruik word en sommige oortreders weer seksueel misbruik om verskillende redes wat op hul geloofsoortuigings en kennis van kinder- seksuele misbruik gegrond is. Die meeste gevalle is dié van kinders wat op die platteland van die Oos-Kaap woon. Die getalle van sodanige gevalle is aan die toeneem in Ngqeleni, Libode, Mqanduli, Mthatha en Lusikisiki; gevvolglik is die studie op daardie gebiede van die Oos-Kaap gebaseer. Die mense wat in hierdie gebiede woonagtig is, is isiXhosa-sprekend. Daar is geen studie na die navorser se wete wat in hierdie geografiese gebied uitgevoer is nie; dit blyk hierdie probleem hoegenaamd nooit aan die lig gebring is nie. Hierdie aangeleentheid van kinder- seksuele misbruik is nooit in hierdie gebiede onder die loep geneem nie.

Die doel van hierdie navorsing is om meer te wete te kom van die menings en kennis van isiXhosa-sprekende mense met betrekking tot kinder- seksuele misbruik in die landelike gebiede van die Oos-Kaap, en ook om te kyk na die strategieë en programme wat geïmplementeer kan word om ouers, kinders en die gemeenskap in die geheel van isiXhosa-sprekende gebiede bewus te maak van kinder- seksuele misbruik. Doelbewuste steekproefneming is uitgevoer met Forensiese Maatskaplike werkers by die Suid-Afrikaanse Polisiedienste, maatskaplike werkers by die Departement Sosiale Ontwikkeling en maatskaplike werkers by Umtata Child Abuse Resource Centre, ouers wat met kinders werk en gemeenskapslede wat lede van Lekgotla is.

Die navorsing wat in die landelike gebiede van die Oos-Kaap uitgevoer is, toon dat die isiXhosa-sprekende mense van die landelike gebiede van die Oos-Kaap oor min

kennis van kinder- seksuele misbruik, en dié wat wel oor kennis beskik word gedwarsboom deur hul oortuigings oor kinder- seksuele misbruik; gevvolglik rapporteer hulle dit nie en sommige beskou dit nie as seksuele misbruik nie. Die betrokkenes wat in hierdie gebiede werk is bang om voorvalle van kinder- seksuele misbruik te rapporteer, want hulle dink dat hulle hul werk sal moet prysgee as hulle die voorvalle aan wetstoepassingsers of aan maatskaplike werkers sou rapporteer. Die studie toon dat nóg bewusmakingsprogramme aangebied is, nóg onderrig oor kinder- seksuele misbruik in hierdie gebied gegee is.

Kinders in hierdie gebiede is kwesbaar weens ongeletterdheid, hul ouers se oortuigings en dié van hul oortreders en 'n gebrek aan kennis. 'n Geweldige groot behoefte bestaan aan uitgebreide programme, bewustheid en onderrig wat deur die maatskaplike werkers in Regerings- en Nieregeringsorganisasies vir die afgeloë gebiede, by skole, in die gemeenskappe van die gebiede wat reeds in hierdie studie geïdentifiseer is, aangebied moet word met die oog daarop om die kwessie van kinder- seksuele misbruik te ondervang terwyl die geloofsoortuigings van isiXhosa-sprekendes in die oog gehou word. Onderwysers op voorskoolse en primêreskoolvlak en die ouers moet onderrig word oor kinder- seksuele misbruik.

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## **FOREWORD**

The article format was chosen in accordance with regulations A.7.2.3 for the degree MA in Social Work, Forensic Practice. The article will comply with the requirements of the journal Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk.

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## **INSTRUCTIONS TO THE AUTHORS**

### **Social Work**

To the journal that publishes articles, brief communications, book reviews and commentary articles already published from the field of Social work, contributions can be done in English. All contributions will be reviewed by at least two referees on whose advice contributions will be accepted or rejected by the editorial committee. All refereeing is strictly confidential. Manuscripts may be returned to the authors if extensive revision is required or if the style of presentation does not conform to the practice. Commentary on articles already published in the Journal must be submitted with appropriate captions, the name(s) and address(es) of the author(s), preferably not exceeding or more than five pages.

The manuscript must be submitted, plus one clear copy as well as a diskette with all the text, preferably in MS Word (Word Perfect) or ASSII. Manuscripts must be typed, one spaced on one side of the A4 paper only. Use the Harvard system for references. Short references in the text: When word-for-word quotations, facts or arguments from other sources are cited, the surname(s) must appear in parenthesis in the text. More details concerning sources referred to in the text should appear at the end of the manuscript under the caption "References". The sources must be arranged alphabetically according to the surnames of the authors.

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# BELIEFS AND KNOWLEDGE OF ISIXHOSA SPEAKING PEOPLE ABOUT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN A RURAL AREA

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**Keywords:** Child, isiXhosa-speaking people, rural area, sexual abuse

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

The widespread rape and sexual abuse of children is a serious social and health issue in South Africa and therefore also in the Transkei sub-region of the Eastern Cape Province (Jewkes, 2007:136; Jewkes *et al.*, 2003; Meel, 2008:69a; Nqaphi, 2013:2). According to Banwari (2011:117) the widespread rape and sexual assaults of children is a serious social and health issue in the Transkei sub-region of the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa. In a study conducted by Meel (2008:69) regarding victims (all ages) of sexual assault seen at Sinawe Centre (a centre in the Mthatha district that deals with cases of sexual assault that renders services to a population of about 400 000 people) over a period of six years (2001-2006), 46.3% of children were under the age of 16 years. Children of five or younger represented 9.4% of the sexual assault victims. According to Meel (2008:69a-69b) the rate of sexual abuse is increasing in the Mthatha area of South Africa. It is a common belief in the rural area of Transkei that rape is underreported. It is, for example, estimated that for every 36 rapes only one is reported. If this estimate is valid, then the Mthatha region probably has the highest burden of rape in the world. The prevalence of rape has increased more than tenfold between 2001 and 2006. "The reported cases represent the tip of the iceberg; with an estimated eight out of every nine cases remaining unreported" (Meel, 2008:69b).

The researcher is a social worker in the Mthatha, Mqanduli, Libode, Ngqeleni and Lusikisiki areas of the Eastern Cape Province which are rural areas where most of the people living in these areas are isiXhosa speaking people and also most of the researcher' and her colleagues' client systems are isiXhosa speaking people. The

researcher and her colleagues experienced in their daily service delivery in these areas the high numbers of child sexual abuse cases and therefore the researcher wanted to explore the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa speaking people regarding sexual abuse of children in these areas.

The researcher included social workers and Lekgotla members in the community. The 11 social workers have all experience in the sexual abuse of isiXhosa speaking children and through their assessments with the children and their isiXhosa speaking primary caregivers could give information regarding the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa speaking people about child sexual abuse. The two Lekgotla members (both Xhosas) could assist with their knowledge regarding the beliefs of isiXhosa-speaking people. Although social workers were one group of the respondents in this study it was not about their own beliefs and knowledge but about the isiXhosa-speaking people's beliefs and knowledge who are known to them through serving delivering regarding the sexual abuse of the isiXhosa speaking people's children.

Information on the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people concerning sexual abuse of children in this rural areas will provide social workers with information needed to gain a better understanding of the situation and to start empowerment programmes to prevent the sexual abuse of all children but who are mostly isiXhosa speaking children in the Mthatha, Mqanduli, Libode, Ngqeleni and Lusikisiki areas of the Eastern Cape Province.

## **1 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Child sexual abuse is a world-wide problem. It is experienced in America, Africa, and various provinces of South Africa including the Eastern Cape Province (Galloway, 2013:1; Meel, 2008; Rape Statistics, SA, 2007-2008). The problem is severe in South Africa (Calitz, 2011:66; Goosen, 2012:1; Mengel, 2008:1). According to Dr Ganyago (2012:1), South African Police Service (SAPS) Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences (FCS) Units statistics showed that the rate of violence against children (aged 18 and younger) had increased in all the provinces between the financial years 2008/2009 and 2009/2010. From a legal point of view a person committing sexual abuse is defined by the Criminal Law Sexual

Offence Amendment Act 32 of (SA, 2007) as any person that engages a child (a person under the age of 18) in a sexual act without the child's consent. Child sexual abuse takes place in almost every context of the child's life.

In the rural areas such as the Transkei sub-region of the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa, the problem is also severe (Meel, 2008:69). For example, Jewkes *et al.* (2002:320) indicated that girls have nowhere to stay at peace because they are sexually abused at home, in the community and at school. This has also been revealed by the Human Rights Watch (2001) indicating that girls are being sexually abused and sexually harassed at school both by teachers and male students. According to Human Rights Watch (2001) girls from all levels of society and ethnic groups have been exposed to sexual violence at school in bathrooms, empty classrooms, dormitories and many more places where girls can be easily found as victims. It is not only girls that are sexually abused. The sexual abuse of boys, are significantly unrecognized and untreated. This is caused by the character given to boys that they are strong and they do not have to report everything (Ferguson, 2011:155).

Lan (2008:44-55) reminds the reader that child sexual abuse is an old global and complex phenomenon which deprives children of their childhood, human rights and dignity. It can be seen as a commercial sexual exploitation of young girls in many parts of the world. The South African Police Service Rape Statistics (South Africa, 2010) indicate that South Africa has one of the highest rates of sexual assaults in the world, with adolescent girls between 12 and 17 years particularly, being at risk. Child rape is more common in South Africa. In 2000, over 52,550 cases of rape or attempted rape of women were reported to South African Police Service, of these cases 21 438 victims were minors under the age of 18 years and 7 898 of these cases were younger than 12 years. The wider spread of rape and sexual assaults of children is a serious social and health issue in the Transkei sub-region of the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa.

The Sinawe Centre situated in Mthatha in Transkei sub-region has according to Banwari (2011:2) different professionals such as Doctors, Nurses, Social workers and Police officials who are dealing with victims of sexual abuse with a multi-disciplinary approach. Some of the cases cited were as follows:

- A girl of 13 years was sexually abused by a known person and the matter was never reported. Instead, it was settled by the payment of R500.00.
- The second victim was paid the sum of R10.00 and/or R20.00 by the perpetrator for each sexual act.
- Another incident is that in which a 17-year-old girl was abducted and gang raped by three men in an empty house and her grandfather received money for what happened.

Although there are campaigns addressing all forms of abuse such as physical, emotional, verbal and child maintenance abuse, child sexual abuse seems to be the most predominant in many reported cases in Southern African societies (Mathews, et al., 2013:1). In America the feminists, according to Whittier (2009:7) saw child sexual abuse as a societal problem. People of different nationalities and from different cultures differ in the way they believe and address the matter of child neglect, child abuse and sexual abuse of a child (Browne, et al., 2005:103; Fontes, 2008:140).

Jewkes et al. (2011:295) conducted a cross-sectional study in which they identified two provinces, namely the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, to conduct research in three districts of the two mentioned provinces. The participants were men from rural areas living in a community that owned land under the traditional leadership. The aim of the study was to explore factors associated with rape and to describe how men explained their acts of rape. There were several responses to how men explained their acts of rape. Participants in this study indicated that they wanted to have fun; some said they wanted to clean themselves of a disease and they targeted young girls; some stated that they have been exposed to abuse whilst young and therefore they developed hostile ideas about women; some participants said they wanted to exercise power over females (masculinity); this is culture related. They also believed that by engaging sexually with a girl they were cleansing themselves after a traditional circumcision (cultural factor). It was discovered that the sexual act was viewed by participants as legitimate according to their cultural understanding. The participants also disclosed that they raped young girls under the

age of 15 years (not necessarily virgins) with the belief that they will be cured of HIV.

The belief in some cultures that it is normal and acceptable for men to be engaged in sexual practices with young girls, contribute to the problem (Ngubane, 2010:27). Madu (2011) studied male and female undergraduate students from Limpopo province who had experienced sexually abusive acts during their childhood. 68.2% of male victims and 83% of female victims did not perceive the acts to be abusive. Madu (2011) concluded that, according to their cultural beliefs, they saw the behaviour as normal. In Botswana there is a Tswana proverb that promotes sexual abuse '*ba tiisa mokwatla*', which means that the perpetrators of child sexual abuse claim that they are strengthening the 'child's back' by having sexual intercourse with them at a tender age (Richter *et al.*, 2007:68). In the migrant labour (in mines) young males are victims of older ones. They are being forced by other males to be their sexual partners (Richter *et al.*, 2007:105).

Inadequate and unreliable infrastructure services are common in the majority of rural communities in Africa. Rural households do not have access to safe drinking water, electricity, reliable transportation or modern communication services. Only 34% of rural Africans live within two kilometres of an all-season road compared to 65% in other developing regions (African Monitor, 2013:1). As secluded communities, their behaviour is guided by norms and traditions and not exposed to different world views. The circumstances in these areas can contribute to the sexual abuse of a child due to the seclusion of these areas. Children who live in rural areas are almost twice more likely to be identified as victims of child sexual abuse according to the Children Assessment Centre (2013:1).

Not much has been known about the isiXhosa-speaking people's beliefs and knowledge regarding child sexual abuse. There may be different reasons such as the home/family, ethnic group, proximal social systems (neighbourhood, school, peer group), set of beliefs, attitudes, values and culture (Fontes, 2005:2-3; Paine & Hanson, 2002:275). Culture can play a very important role in child sexual abuse especially child victims belonging to ethnic and cultural minorities who are likely to encounter additional obstacles to disclosure (Fontes & Faller, 2007:169; Paine & Hansen, 2002:275; Townsend & Dawes, 2007:65-67).

In research done by Nqaphi (2013:19-29) regarding the disclosure of child sexual abuse in the Eastern Cape Province with social workers and parents of children who did not want to disclose, the following were reasons for the reluctance to disclose:

- Language vocabulary.
- The role of culture.
- People will not believe the child.
- The impact on the family.
- The perpetrator's role towards the reluctance to disclose.
- The parent's role towards the reluctance to disclose.
- Fear regarding the consequences of disclosure.

With this study the researcher intends to explore and describe the beliefs and knowledge of the isiXhosa-speaking people in a rural area of the Eastern Cape pertaining to child sexual abuse. Results from this research will provide social workers with insight regarding the sexual abuse of Xhosa children in order to empower Xhosa primary caregivers and the children with knowledge and skills on how to prevent the sexual abuse of these children.

The following research question arises:

- *What are the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people towards child sexual abuse in a rural area?*

## 2 AIM OF THE RESEARCH

**The aim** of the study was to explore the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people concerning child sexual abuse in a rural area.

### **Objectives of the research:**

- To explore and describe the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people towards child sexual abuse in the rural areas of Mthatha, Mqanduli, Libode, Ngqeleni and Lusikisiki in the Easter Cape Province.
- To make recommendations to the managers of the Department of Social Development, Child Welfare and the South African Police Service in these areas

to a better understanding of the situation and for social workers to start presenting programmes to prevent the sexual abuse of children.

### **3 CENTRAL THEORETICAL STATEMENT**

Information on the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people concerning sexual abuse of children in a rural area of the Eastern Cape Province will provide social workers with information needed to gain a better understanding of the situation and to start presenting programmes to prevent the sexual abuse of children in these areas.

With the data received from this study the children and their primary caregiver can benefit because social workers can start with programmes to the children and their primary caregivers in preventing the sexual abuse of children in these areas. At the end the whole community will benefit because the number of children being sexually abused will decrease.

### **4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study followed a qualitative research methodology approach. The qualitative approach was used to answer questions on the phenomena with the purpose of exploring and understanding the phenomena from the participants' perspectives (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:94-95). According to Creswell (2007:37-39) and Babbie and Mouton (2001:53) the qualitative researcher is concerned with the description and understanding of human behaviour and to develop a holistic view on a social problem. In this research the researcher wanted to get a holistic view on the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people on child sexual abuse. The research focused on the participants' views of the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people towards child sexual abuse in a rural area of the Eastern Cape.

#### **4.1 Theoretical orientation and literature study**

The review of literature aimed at providing a theoretical background contributing to a clearer understanding of the nature and meaning of the problem that has been identified (Fouché & Delport, 2011:134). This study attempted to understand the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people in rural areas of the Eastern

Cape Province on child sexual abuse. The literature review contributes to frame the problem and to provide the outline of what was studied (Botma *et al.*, 2010:208). Relevant and appropriate theories should form the theoretical framework in qualitative research to provide an overall orienting for the study and literature review should provide a theoretical context for the study and not a conceptual framework as it does not drive the study or provide an outline for the analysis (Botma *et al.*, 2010:196-199; Delport *et al.*, 2011:302). According to Mouton (2001:87) and Thyer (2001:401) the goals of literature reviews is to demonstrate the researcher's familiarity with the body of knowledge in order to establish credibility, to show a path of prior knowledge, to integrate and summarise what is known in this area of research, and to learn from others while creating new ideas.

Fouché and Delport (2011:134) consider the literature review to be "*aimed at contributing to a clearer understanding of the nature and meaning of the problem that has been identified*". The preliminary reading on the proposed topic was important to acquaint the researcher with the necessary knowledge. A literature study on the topics sexual abuse as well as the influence of culture on child sexual abuse equips the researcher with a complete and a thorough justification for the subsequent steps, as well as with a sense of the importance of undertaking the research. The aim of the literature study was to place the research problem in theoretical perspective by studies that have been conducted by other researchers concerning the problem in South Africa and in some provinces in South Africa. Local and international books that are relevant to the field of study were utilized in order to compile as much information as possible regarding the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people towards child sexual abuse. The researcher relied on relevant and accredited scientific works in the form of books and articles that were utilized. Although international studies could be found on child sexual abuse and the role culture plays in child sexual abuse no studies could be found internationally and nationally regarding the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people regarding child sexual abuse in the Mthatha, Mqanduli, Libode, Ngqeleni and Lusikisiki rural areas of the Easter Cape Province.

Social workers throughout their work with clients, communities and organisations must be able to apply a theoretical understanding of human behaviour, human

diversity and social functioning to their day-to-day practice (Du Bois & Miley, 2005:52). Social workers are trained to acquire a systems perspective in their work with individuals, groups and families (Zastrow, 2010:48). Although there are different theories in social work the researcher will focus for the purposes of this study on the systems theory. According to Zastrow (2010:48-49) systems theory “opposes simple cause-and-effect explanations”. The systems theory attempts to understand the individual such as the sexually abused child as a system of interacting elements (Toseland & Rivas, 2012:57). By means of the systems theory the researcher intervenes by looking at a holistic view of the role different systems such as culture can play in the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people towards child sexual abuse in the rural areas of Mthatha, Mqanduli, Libode, Ngqeleni and Lusikisiki in the Easter Cape Province.

The following Databases was consulted EBSCO Host, Science Direct, Psych lit, ERIC, South African journals, Social Sciences Index, Google Scholar, The Nexus of South African Magazine articles and the Catalogue – Ferdinand Postma Library, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus.

## **4.2 Research design**

The researcher did a qualitative study with an explorative purpose to gain insight into the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa speaking people about child sexual abuse in a rural area (Botma *et al.*, 2010:42-43; Fouché & De Vos, 2011:95). The research was exploratory in nature because little was known about the phenomenon and the researcher wanted to gain insight into the situation (Fouché & de Vos, 2011:95).

According to Grinnell (2001:231) research design is a plan which includes every aspect of a proposed research study from conceptualization of the problem to the dissemination of findings. The researcher followed the phenomenology design to describes the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people regarding the sexual abuse of children as accurately as possible “refraining from any pre-given framework, but remaining true to the facts” (Fouché & Schurink, 2011:316). According to Botma *et al.* (2010:190), Fouché & Schurink (2011:316).and Thyer (2001:266) the goal in phenomenology research is not to generate theories or

models, but to understand and describe the facts or causes of a social phenomenon. Researchers must be able to distance themselves from their judgements and preconceptions of experiences and events in the everyday world (Sachram, 2006, cited in Fouché & Schurink, 2011:317). Therefore the researcher wanted to describe and explore the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people on child sexual abuse in the rural districts of the Transkei region of the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa namely Mthatha, Mqanduli, Libode, Ngqeleni and Lusikisiki.

### **4.3 Participants**

The purposive sampling method was used. This means that the sample was composed of elements that best characterized the population serving the purpose of the study (Strydom & Delport, 2011:392; Marlow, 2005:145). The participants were social workers working with child sexual abuse cases of isiXhosa-speaking people which include social workers from the Department of Social Development, Child Welfare, the South African Police Service as well as members of Lekgotla until data saturation was reached. Data saturation, according to Polit and Beck (Botma *et al.*, 2010:330) and Strydom and Delport (2011:393) is the collection of data to the point where a sense of closure is attained because new data yield redundant information. The researcher evaluated collected data and found that saturation had been reached.

Besides social workers who can provide information on the knowledge and beliefs of isiXhosa-speaking people on child sexual abuse, members of Lekgotla (Xhosa people) can also provide information regarding the beliefs of isiXhosa-speaking people on child sexual abuse in the rural area. The social workers assess isiXhosa-speaking children that were sexually abused and their primary caregivers, and therefore know what the beliefs and knowledge of these people are. Lekgotla members are in contact with the isiXhosa-speaking people through meetings and discussions regarding different aspects such as culture beliefs and sexual abuse of children. Lekgotla, as defined by the Collins English Dictionary (2003) is a meeting place for village assemblies, court cases, and meetings of village leaders. Pienaar (2004:6) defines Lekgotla as a meeting where Africans discuss and/or resolve problems in their community.

All the participants were taken from the districts Mthatha, Mqanduli, Libode, Ngqeleni and Lusikisiki of the Eastern Cape Province which are rural areas and the inhabitants were isiXhosa-speaking people. The researcher used these participants based on the assumption that they should know the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people regarding child sexual abuse.

### **Inclusion criteria**

- Social workers from the Department of Social Development, Child Welfare and the South African Police Service that deliver services to sexually abused children in the Mthatha, Mqanduli, Libode, Ngqeleni and Lusikisiki areas of the Eastern Cape Province.
- Social workers from the Department of Social Development, Child Welfare and the South African Police Service that deliver services to sexual abused children in the Mthatha, Mqanduli, Libode, Ngqeleni and Lusikisiki areas of the Eastern Cape Province and that had given written consent to form part of the research and for interviews to be tape recorder. The social workers from the two departments are experienced in dealing with sexual abuse cases and through their assessments with the primary caregivers and children they are able to give information regarding the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people on child sexual abuse.
- Members of Lekgotla in the Mthatha, Mqanduli, Libode, Ngqeleni and Lusikisiki areas of the Eastern Cape Province that had given written consent to form part of the research and for interviews to be tape recorder. The Lekgotla members are Xhosa people and they are able to give information regarding the beliefs of isiXhosa-speaking people on child sexual abuse.

### **4.4 Data collection**

One-to-one interviews with the social workers were conducted to gain a detailed picture from the participants about isiXhosa-speaking people's beliefs and knowledge concerning sexual abuse of children (Greeff, 2005:296). The researcher used an interview schedule (**annexure 7**) with 3 questions on the identification particulars of the social workers regarding their educational qualification as well as their experiences on child sexual abuse. These questions were necessary to know

their qualifications and if some of them have a specialised qualification in forensic social work as well as how experienced they are in child sexual abuse cases. The question on “how often they deal with child sexual abuse cases were asked to know how serious are the problem of child sexual abuse in their caseloads. Six open-ended questions were used to gain information on isiXhosa-speaking people’s beliefs and knowledge of child sexual abuse. The researcher used social workers and Lekgotla members because as already discussed social workers can provide information on the knowledge and beliefs of isiXhosa-speaking people on child sexual abuse as they assess isiXhosa-speaking children and their primary caregivers that were sexually abused, and therefore know what the beliefs and knowledge of these people are. Lekgotla members are in contact with the isiXhosa-speaking people through meetings and discussions regarding different aspects such as culture beliefs and sexual abuse of children. The researcher used these participants to know from them how the isiXhosa-speaking people think and to discover what is really their beliefs and knowledge regarding child sexual abuse (Delport and Roestenburg, 2011:196). The interview schedule was tape recorded with the permission of the participants (Greeff, 2005:292-293). Field notes were also taken during the interview to give account of the things the researcher heard, saw, experienced and thought. The schedule was evaluated by two social workers that did not form part of the research (Strydom, 2005:209) as well as experts from the Social Work Division of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus (Botma *et al.*, 2010:137). Once the schedule was evaluated adjustments were made to the schedule.

- **Procedures**

The researcher pursued the following procedures in the study:

- Written permission **NWU-0027-09-S1** was obtained from The Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of the Faculty of Health Sciences of North-West University to conduct the research (**Annexure 1**).
- The District Managers in the Department of Social Development in Mthatha, Mqanduli, Libode, Ngqeleni and Lusikisiki areas of the Eastern Cape Province were then contacted during which the aim of the research was explained to them

because they had to give written permission to include social workers from their Department for the research. After having received consent from the mentioned District Managers, the social workers were contacted (**Annexure 5**).

- The National office of the South African Police Service was also contacted during which the aim of the research was explained to them asking to give permission to use forensic social workers in the South African Police Service for the research. After having received written consent from the National Office of the SAPS, the social workers were contacted. Only social workers that have experiences of the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking on child sexual abuse were included in the study (**Annexure 3**).
- The supervisors of Umtata Child Abuse Resource Centre of Child Welfare in the Mthatha area of the Eastern Cape Province were also contacted. After explaining the aim of the research they were asked to give written consent for the social workers to participate (**Annexure 4**).
- Only social workers that have experience of the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people about sexual abuse of children were included in the study.
- The researcher also asked permission from the chief of the Lekgotla to access the community.
- Members of Lekgotla were contacted. The aim of the research was explained to them. After which they were asked to give permission to conduct interviews with members of Lekgotla.
- Participants that could speak and understand English were included in the study.
- After having received permission from the Department of Social Development, Child Welfare and the chief of Lekgotla the participants were contacted and the aim of the research was discussed with them as well as the procedures of the research. The participants were informed about the benefits for the department, organisations and the community regarding the study. It was also emphasised that there would be no cost to them as a result of their participation in the study and they would not receive any payment. They could withdraw from the research

at any time without any consequences. They were also informed that the interview would be tape recorded.

- The participants were given a week to read the consent form before they decided to take part in the study.
- After each participant gave written consent to form part of the research and that the interview may be tape recorded, the researcher arranged the time, place and date of the interviews and confirmed this information with them.
- The environment was a place agreed upon with the participant (Greeff, 2011:350).
- The interviews with the social workers were conducted in their offices at the department and organisation and with the Lekgotla members in the office of the researcher. Interviews were conducted in a quiet and private place with each participant separately to avoid interruptions.
- The researcher used an interview schedule to gain data from each respondent regarding the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people about the sexual abuse of a child (**Annexure 7**).
- The researcher allotted a number in advance to each participant's document such as participant 1, participant 2 et cetera, instead of using their names, with a view to maintain confidentiality.
- After each interview a report was written.

#### 4.5 Data-analysis

The researcher analysed the data according to Botma *et al.* (2010:213) and Schurink *et al.*'s (2011:402) guidelines which are the following:

- The initial research was borne in mind.
- All data were transcribed.
- The correctness of transcripts was ensured by an external person that transcribed the data and the researcher verified the correctness.
- During transcription, enough space was left on both the left and right margin to allow the researcher to make notes during analysis.

- The topics were coded.
- The processing and interpretation of the qualitative data was done by hand and themes and sub-themes were identified.
- To ensure qualitative validity the researcher made use of member checking. According to Botma *et al.* (2010:231) member checking is to determine the accuracy of the findings by taking the final report back to the participants. This could be done by a follow-up interview with each or some of the participants.
- The researcher also used one of the senior social workers as a co-coder and a peer reviewer to ensure the accuracy of the data (Botma *et al.*, 2010:224; 232).
- The researcher checked the reliability of the data by checking the recorded transcripts for correctness and also used a senior social worker to double check for the correctness of analyzing the data (Botma *et al.*, 2010:231).

## 5 ETHICAL ASPECTS

Written permission **NWU-0027-09-S1** was obtained from The Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of the Faculty of Health Sciences of North-West University to conduct the research. (**Annexure 1**) According to Strydom (2011:113) the research should have the basis of mutual respect between the researcher and participants such as between all people involved in a study. The ethical issues guide the researcher regarding the way in which to handle and deal with the respondents. Ethics are defined as a set of moral principles suggested by the individual or a group (Strydom, 2011:114). The researcher took into consideration the following ethical issues concerning the participants:

- **Informed written consent**

According to Monette *et al.* (2005:53) informed consent "*refers to telling potential research participants about all aspects of the research that might reasonably influence the decision to participate*". It was explained to each participant that his or her participation was completely voluntary and withdrawal at any stage was allowed without any consequences (Butz, 2008:249-250; Strydom, 2011:117). Written consent was obtained from the participants after they had been informed about the research in a transparent manner.

➤ **Confidentiality**

Participants were assured that no identifying information would be published or made public in any way or form. The researcher allotted a number in advance to each participant such as participant 1, participant 2 et cetera, instead of using their names with a view to maintain confidentiality. Participants were also given as much information as possible about the purpose of the research and topics to be discussed and the opportunity to opt out if they do not feel able to comfortably participate in the study (Strydom, 2011:119).

It was the researcher's responsibility to make it clear to participants that the research was confidential. According to Rubin and Babbie (2005:78) it is important to never use the term anonymous when you mean confidential. The participants were informed of the confidentiality that would apply regarding their identity by providing them with numbers and no names or surnames. The collected data will be kept safe in a locked cabinet at the office of the researcher for three years.

➤ **Protection from harm**

Participants can be harmed according to Strydom (2011:115) "in a physical and/or emotional manner". As a registered social worker the researcher obeyed the codes of ethics and rules for social workers of the South African Council for Social Service Professions and therefore informed the participants beforehand about the potential impact the interviews on sexual abuse of children may have on them. During the interviews participants may recall some bad experiences regarding cases they have assessed.

In this research it was not necessary to refer participants for debriefing sessions (Strydom, 2011:122). There was also no need for further assistance which could cause the participants to be referred for further assistance by their supervisors or other organizations for help. The researcher treated all participants with respect in order not to harm them emotionally.

### ➤ **Voluntary participation**

Participation in research studies should always be voluntary and no one should be forced to participate (Rubin & Babbie, 2005:71; Strydom, 2011:116). Written permission was obtained from the participants where it was made clear to them that participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw at any stage from the research without any consequences. Non-participation in the study will not be disadvantaging in anyway (Strydom, 2011:117). The researcher ensured participants for the purpose of the study that all parties are aware that no one is obligated to participate.

### ➤ **Benefits and risks**

Benefits to participants arise when they receive the intervention being studied; society benefits when knowledge is gained that will result in new products, treatments or cures or when they are applicable to many different social groups (Botma *et al.*, 2010:21). Benefits for the participants in this study will be to explore what the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people regarding child sexual abuse in rural areas are. If professionals such as social workers in rural areas have a better understanding of the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people regarding sexual abuse, they will be able to empower parents, children and community members with knowledge and skills to prevent the sexual abuse of a child.

Botma *et al.* (2010:22-23) explain that risk equates to harm and injury. They identified six types of risk or harm that can occur, namely physical, psychological, social, economic, legal and dignitary harm. No risk or harm was experienced as a result of participation in this research. The benefits of participation in this research outweighed the risk for harm (Botma *et al.*, 2010:24).

### ➤ **Costs and remuneration**

The research cost the participants nothing. All the costs such as fuel were on the budget of the researcher. Participants did not receive any kind of payment for their participation in this research.

## **6 TRUSTWORTHINESS**

The constructs of reliability and validity of qualitative data are complex issues because these constructs are unsuitable for verifying the “truth value” of a qualitative research study (Schurink *et al.*, 2011:419). Trustworthiness, as Botma *et al.* (2010:232) define it, has four epistemological standards, namely truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality. According to as Botma *et al.* (2010:232) truth value “determines whether the researcher has established confidence in the truth of findings with the participants. Applicability refers to the degree to which the findings can be applied to different contexts and groups. Consistency considers whether the findings will be consistent if the inquiry was replicated with the same participants and in similar context. Neutrality entails freedom from bias during the research process and refers to the degree to which the findings are a function solely of the informants and conditions of the research, and not of other biases, motives or perspectives.

The following procedures were carried out to ensure validity and reliability:

**TABLE 1: STANDARDS, STRATEGIES AND APPLIED CRITERIA TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS**

Epistemological standards	Strategies	Application
Truth Value	Credibility	The researcher ensured that prolonged engagement was applied by establishing initial rapport with the participants and conducting the interviews herself. Field notes were written directly after each interview with the respective participants. The researcher reviewed all data and make use of member checking and another senior social worker as co-coder.
Consistency	Dependability	The researcher gave a dense description of the research methodology. A co-coder was used during the analysis of the semi-structured interviews.
Applicability	Transferability	Selection of the sample was clearly described. Saturation of data was from the sources in the study. A dense description of the methodology ensured the possibility of transferability.
Neutrality	Conformability	Field notes were made by the researcher. The researcher ensured that as far as possible the study's results are objective and are not based upon biases, motives and perspectives of the researcher. For purposes of the study conformability was demonstrated by making field notes available for auditing

## 7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The researcher struggled to get the participants, especially at the Department of Social Development. Even if appointments were arranged with, social workers they cancelled the appointments. The researcher had to be patient enough in order to get the participants.

- The participants were located in different scattered areas and the researcher had to travel a lot to conduct the interviews with them.

## **8 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

### **8.1 Child**

According to the Children's Act 38 of (South Africa, 2005) a child is a person under the age of 18 years. Grinnell (2001:13) defines the child as a person who is 18 years or older but under the age of 21 years due to certain circumstances.

### **8.2 Forensic social work**

Maschi and Killian (2011:12) define forensic social work as "*the application of social work to questions and issues relating to law and legal systems*". According to the South African Council for Social Service Professions (2010:1), forensic social work is "*a specialized field of social work that focuses on the interface between society's legal and human systems and is characterized by the social worker's primary function of providing expert testimonies in courts of law with the primary client being the judiciary system*".

### **8.3 Sexual abuse**

From a legal point of view sexual abuse is defined by the Criminal Law Sexual Offences Amendment Act 32 (South Africa, 2007) as "*any person that engages a child (a person under the age of 18 years) in a sexual act without the child's consent*". The Act further defines child sexual abuse as an "*assault of a child, allowing a child to be sexually abused or assaulted and encouraging, inducing or forcing a child to be used for sexual gratification of another person. Procuring or allowing a child to be procured for commercial sexual exploitation or in any way participating or assisting in the commercial sexual exploitation of a child. Using a child in or deliberately exposing a child to sexual activities or pornography*".

According to the Children's Act, Act 38 of 2005 (South Africa, 2005) sexual abuse, in relation to a child means molesting or assaulting a child or allowing a child to be sexually molested or assaulted and encouraging, inducing or forcing a child to be used for the sexual gratification of another person and using or exposing a child to

sexual activities or pornography. Procuring or allowing a child to be procured for commercial sexual exploitation or in any way participating or assisting in the commercial sexual exploitation of a child.

#### **8.4 Rural area**

A rural area according to the Free Dictionary (2014) is an area outside cities and towns. Rural communities comprise a group of inhabitants that live a rustic or country lifestyle. Rural communities typically have smaller populations and an agricultural setting, but some areas also contain forests (Wikipedia, 2015).

### **9 RESEARCH RESULTS**

The researcher will discuss the results of the study based on the main theme of the study. The main purpose of the research was to explore the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people towards child sexual abuse in a rural area. The respondents in this study were the perspectives of a forensic social worker, social workers and members of Lekgotla on the beliefs and knowledge of child sexual abuse in a rural area of the Eastern Cape Province. Eleven social workers and two members of Lekgotla were interviewed in order to compare their responses. All participants in the study were given numbers from 01 to 14. The results of respondent four could not be used because the respondent withdrew from the research.

The researcher used an interview schedule to conduct interviews with all participants in the study (**Annexures 7 and 8**).

#### **9.1 Profile of the social workers**

Qualifications of social workers

**TABLE 2: EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF THE SOCIAL WORKERS N=11**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
Degree	7	3
Master degree in Forensic Social Work	1	0

Ten social workers (7 female and 1 male) have a degree in social work and only one female social worker a Master's degree in Forensic Social Work. They all deliver services to sexually abused children and therefore one can agree with the recommendations of Gogela (2013:35) who did her research in the Eastern Cape and recommended that social workers doing assessments with sexually abused children need to have a postgraduate degree or specialized training in forensic social work.

The Social workers used in this study belong to the districts of the Eastern Cape that have been mentioned in the approved research proposal. Four social workers were from the South African Police Service, five from the Department of Social Development and two from a non-governmental organization, Umtata Child Abuse Resources Centre (UCARC).

Years of experience as social worker in dealing with child sexual abuse

**TABLE 3: EXPERIENCE N=11**

Years	Female	Male
1-3 years	2	0
4-6 years	5	2
7-9 years	1	1

Only 2 (25%) female social workers have less than 3 years of experience in child sexual abuse cases, 5 (62.5%) between 4 to 6 years and 1 (12.5%) more than 7 years of experience. 2 (25%) of the male social workers have between 4 to 5 years of experience and 1 (12.5%) more than seven years of experience. From this data it is obvious that most of the participants were experienced social workers regarding child sexual abuse cases.

How often dealing with sexual abuse cases

The purpose of exploring how often social workers are dealing with child sexual abuse cases was to determine how serious the problem of child sexual abuse are in the Mthatha area of the Eastern Cape.

**TABLE 4: HOW OFTEN DEALING WITH CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE N=11**

Time	F
Everyday	4
Once a week	1
Every second week	2
Every month	2
Other (Specify)	
“It all depends”	1
“Not all the time”	1

From the data above it is clear that most of the social workers (7) are dealing with sexual abuse cases either every day, once a week or every second week. The sexual abuse of children in the areas such as Mthatha in the Eastern Cape is a problem that needs the attention of all professionals in this community (Gogela, 2014:34; Ntshobane, 2009:1; Nqaphi, 2014:2-3).

## 9.2 Profile of the Lekgotla members

The members of Lekgotla are the people from rural areas working hand in hand with the headman in the localities to discuss issues including the issues of allegations of child sexual abuse that have been brought to their attention.

The two Lekgotla members in this research were both males and both between 51 and 60 years of age. Both have a grade 11 qualification and both are isiXhosa-speaking people that have experience in dealing with sexual abuse of children by means of their discussions with the headmen and other Lekgotla members as well as their knowledge on this issue as a Xhosa. The Lekgotla members were included in this research to give information on the beliefs of isiXhosa speaking-people because the experiences of the researcher regarding the culture in rural areas tends to offer particular difficulties and barriers in reporting sexual abuse cases because of situations such as the victim that could be related to the perpetrator, the isolation of services, lack of medical facilities and law enforcement members dealing with such cases untrained. There are various reasons, even amongst isiXhosa-speaking

people, why child sexual abuse cases are not reported to the law enforcement agency (Gogela, 2013:18-29; Levy, 2002:1).

### **9.3 Themes and sub-themes**

Data collected from all participants in the study indicated that the isiXhosa-speaking people have their own beliefs regarding child sexual abuse. In America, the feminists, according to Whittier (2009:7) saw child sexual abuse as a societal problem. People of different nationalities and from different cultures differ in the way they believe and address the matter of child neglect, child abuse and the sexual abuse of a child (Browne, *et al.*, 2005:103; Fontes, 2008:140). The data received from the participants on the beliefs of isiXhosa-speaking people regarding the sexual abuse of a child can be classified into the following themes and sub-themes:

Theme 1: Beliefs of IsiXhosa-speaking people regarding child sexual abuse

- **Sub-theme 1: Child sexual abuse believed to be taboo and a secret by isiXhosa-speaking people**

According to participants 1, 6, 9 and 10 isiXhosa-speaking people believe that child sexual abuse is taboo, something that needs to be kept secret at home and not talked about nor discussed, even if it had happened to the child. Even though child sexual abuse is taken as taboo, Muller and Hollely (2009:125) state that children are also unwilling to “share their secret” with anyone. Spies (2006:12) said in cases of intra-familial sexual abuse the matter is regarded as a family secret due to the following reasons:

- It is taboo to discuss sexual issues in a family context.
- There is little sexual guidance and information given to the family members.
- In some cases children keep a secret in order to protect their family, (Spies, 2006:13).

it seems that cultural scripts regarding respect and obedience to elders make it probable that children do not speak out against abusers who are senior to them (Townsand & Dawes, 2007:66).

## **Sub-theme 2: The child and the perpetrator is regarded as sick**

Participants 3, 6, 9 and 12 responded by saying that the isiXhosa-speaking people believe that the child is sick and a ritual needs to be performed for both the child and the perpetrator. According to Fontes (2005:145) for children such as girls that had been sexually abused, and consequently rejected by certain cultures, “the sense of being defiled seems to rub into the very fibre of victims so they no longer think of themselves as having been dirtied, but rather define their very being dirty”.

- **Sub-theme 3: The sexually abused child and the perpetrator is bewitched**

Participants 3, 6 and 9 in the study have responded that the isiXhosa-speaking people believe that the child is bewitched and she needs a ritual and they also believe that the perpetrator also needs a ritual with the belief that everything will then vanish. Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre (2008) describes ritual abuse as a brutal form of abuse of children consisting of all forms including sexual abuse. Some of the survivors of child sexual abuse mentioned that the ritual was performed as part of satanic work for purposes of indoctrinating them into satanic beliefs and practices.

- **Sub-theme 4: Male dominance over women**

According to participant 3 isiXhosa-speaking men believe that they have dominance over women and girls. As a result they use girls as their sex objects. Muller and Hollely (2009:92) state that child sexual abuse is an expression of power and authority and the abusers are mainly concerned with the vulnerability of the victim; hence children are always victims because they are helpless and always overpowered by the perpetrators. Most perpetrators are known to the child, are trusted and are usually in a position of authority over the child (Community Agency for Social Enquiry, 2005:8). According to Savino and Turvey (2011:11) men manipulate intimate partners in order to achieve domination and control.

- **Sub-theme 5: Sexual abuse of a child can heal men from HIV and AIDS**

According to participants 3 and 5 men who sexually abuse children believe that they will get healed from HIV if they have sex with a child. *“They believe that when they are HIV positive and have sexual intercourse with a child, they will get healed.”*

The belief that having sex with a virgin can cleanse a man of HIV is one which has wide currency in sub-Saharan Africa including South Africa. Fear of HIV drives some men towards seeking very young partners in the belief that they will then be freed from the virus (Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002:1231). According to the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (2005:38) there is an alleged belief (virgin myth) that sleeping with a young virgin will ‘cleanse’ or cure a person who is HIV positive. This belief has emanated on many cases of sexual abuse of infants in South Africa and there is a fear that the increasing HIV and AIDS infection may fuel child sexual abuse due to the virgin myth people have concerning curing of HIV/AIDS. Zaccaroli (2012:4) mentioned in a study amongst isiXhosa-speaking people in the Ngqeleni district of Canzibe in Transkei that in that rural area there is a perception which persists that sleeping with a virgin is a cure from HIV. The young girls in that area are being abducted by old men triple their age and some of the men are HIV positive seeking a virgin in order to cure their illness.

- **Sub-theme 6: Children are to be blamed for the sexual abuse**

According to participants 11 and 12 the isiXhosa-speaking people believe that being sexually abused is because the child was flirting or seductive and that they got what they wanted or deserved. Fontes (2008:139-140) pointed out that most children seek affection and if they receive sexual abuse instead, they may believe that they are responsible for being sexually abused. This is particularly difficult for the child when the offender does not take responsibility for his acts.

#### Theme 2: Knowledge of IsiXhosa-speaking people regarding child sexual abuse

The researcher collected data on the issue of knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people regarding child sexual abuse in the rural area. According to participants 1 and 8 isiXhosa-speaking people did not know about child sexual abuse while participants 2, 7 and 9 said these people know about child sexual abuse. Participant 1 started with awareness campaigns in the area and after the campaigns people started being well-informed about the matter of child sexual abuse.

Participant 3 and 5 reported that isiXhosa-speaking people know that child sexual abuse is a crime and that they are taking away the virginity of the child but they do not report it. Instead they benefit by being paid with a cow or money for the sexual

abuse of the child. According to participant 6, isiXhosa-speaking people do not consider child sexual abuse as a crime. Instead they associate it with a ritual practice people are not aware of. According to Faller (2003:29) there is a type of sexual abuse which is known as "*ritualistic sexual abuse*." This type of sexual abuse involves ritualistic maltreatment of children and adults. The first category of ritualistic sexual abuse is being done with children in the context of the practice Satanism. The secondary category is similar to this but associated with religious beliefs with the purpose of instilling fear and ensuring children's silence and the third and last way of practising ritualistic sexual abuse is by sexually abusing the children and then killing them.

Participants 9 and 11 said the Government Departments are trying to make isiXhosa-speaking people aware of child sexual abuse but they ignore the information about child sexual abuse. She further said The Governments have the knowledge but they are too rigid.

Participants 13 and 14 reported that isiXhosa-speaking people attain their knowledge from the imbizo. Mavundla and Williams (1999:62) mention that the information children receive from parents and the community regarding sexual matters was found to be so inadequate that it could not equip informants to face the pressures they encounter with regard to sexual matters. One Non-Governmental Organization in the Eastern Cape is concerned about educating the community people and school children about child sexual abuse and they focus on approximately two to three communities at a time. This is not sufficient, since the Transkei sub-region with isiXhosa-speaking people is a vast area with remote rural areas. This is the only organization; hence it is difficult for this organization to reach the approximately 5.3 million people of Transkei sub-region, according to the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (2005:23):

NGOs in rural areas are lacking; therefore services are not equally distributed and this leads to large gaps in the provision of welfare services to vulnerable children. Some NGOs work at national and regional level, which leads to inconsistency in the services offered and they tend to focus only on certain areas of work and lack the resources to provide a wide range of services.

### Theme 3: The way IsiXhosa-speaking parents deal with child sexual abuse

According to Spies (2006:74) parenting “*is one of the most difficult and demanding jobs anyone can undertake even under the best circumstances*”. To a question posed to the participants on how isiXhosa-speaking people deal with cases of sexual abuse, participant 2 said it is difficult to report a case where a perpetrator is a family member and, according to participant 3, sexual abuse of a child is taken as a family matter and is not reported, especially if the perpetrator is the breadwinner.

*“There is still a problem in communities. If the abusers are breadwinners, it becomes a problem to mothers because mothers are reluctant to report the incident thinking of losing the money when the breadwinner is arrested, thinking that no one will bring food on the table.”* [1]

Participants 11 and 12 were told that isiXhosa-speaking parents blame the child and protect the perpetrator as they do not want to embarrass him. Parents, as participant 12 was told, also do not believe children and they are informed by the parents that if the matter is taken and reported to the police, it will cause conflict in the family. Heitritter and Vought (2006:79) mention a case where a mother blamed her child for talking out about intra-familial sexual abuse. According to the mother, the child was causing a family break up and she further blamed the child for failing to resist sexual abuse advances. In another case a mother’s boyfriend, with whom she had a love relationship, was sexually abusing her child, and her reaction to the incident was: ‘*you got yourself into this, you get out of it*’.

*“Parents protect their children by placing them with their relatives living far from the place where the child is being sexually abused without reporting the incidents of child sexual abuse. Some report the cases and some negotiate with the family of the child who had been sexually abused. The family of the child will get a reward in a form of “lobola”. “Lobola” is a prize paid to the family of the child that had been sexually abused. It is paid in a form of livestock and the case is settled when “lobola” is paid.”* (5)

*“They do not report child sexual abuse in most incidents. They set their meetings in the village in order to make peace between the family of the victim and the family of the perpetrator not considering the health and emotional scars of the victim.”* [8]

*“They prefer to report cases to their community chief, or discuss it as a family and charge the perpetrator a cow or a goat. If the perpetrator is a breadwinner it is not reported. Instead they treated it as a family matter, afraid of losing the breadwinner.” [9].*

*“It depends to the families as some report and some treat it as a family matter if the perpetrator is a family member and a breadwinner, they are afraid to lose the person who supports the family.” [3] [6] [10]*

According to participants 2, 7, 8 and 10 some parents report the case to people such as social workers or the police for intervention. Rape and the sexual abuse of a child are very serious offences, according to Lawrence and Janse van Rensburg (2006:127) “*constituting as it does a humiliating, degrading and brutal invasion of the privacy, the dignity and the person of the victim*”. The rights to dignity, privacy and the integrity of every person are basic ethos of the Constitution in South Africa; therefore women and children are entitled to the protection of these rights. The Criminal Law (Sexual offences and Related Matters) Amendment Bill 2007 (South Africa, 2007) makes provision for the protection of children in terms of sexual offences.

According to participants 7, 9, 13 and 14 the case must be reported to the Headman and usibonda (tribal authority). The alleged perpetrator must be punished by means of lashes and his parents must pay the medical fees of the child. In most cases the sexual abuse of a child is not reported to the law enforcement agencies thinking that it will vanish or disappear. Stigma and discrimination were also mentioned as reasons for parents to not want to report cases of child sexual abuse. According to the South African Family Practice (2008:1) about the trends of sexual abuse in Mthatha area of the Eastern Cape, both stigma and discrimination exists in this area. Muller and Hollely (2009:110) define stigma in a case of sexual abuse as a dynamic that refers to the negative connotations associated with sexual abuse communicated to the child during the abusive experiences. These negative connotations are incorporated into the child’s self-image; hence the child will show the feelings of sadness, shame and guilt and blame herself for what happened to her. The child is usually being stigmatized by people in the environment.

Community Agency for Social Enquiry (2005:8) mention that home is one of the most common settings in which child sexual abuse occurs and this complicates the possibility of disclosure. It further states that the child has a fear of not being believed or feels ashamed or guilty. The same sexually abused child at home may fear the loss of needed resources (basic needs) in a case where the abuser is the breadwinner at home. According to Muller and Hollely (2009:142) in many cases the parent may be more concerned with about self-protection and protection of the family than about the psychological well-being of the child.

Duncan (2004:59) mentioned that the abusive families have rules that are arbitrary and rigid which cannot be changed or compromised. There is seldom discussion, questioning, talking, or listening among family members. The given rules need to be obeyed, resulting in children not being allowed to question it. Instead, when they do ask their actions are labelled '*back talking*'. This therefore means parents or any care-giver is aware of the sexual abuse of the child but they ignore it.

According to Community Agency for Social Enquiry (2005:4) sexual abuses are profoundly cultural matters because cultures create norms for sexual relations and the violations thereof. This happens even among the isiXhosa-speaking people because they are more concerned about gratification than about considering the age of the child and the consequences of the sexual abuse or the future of the child.

Many studies conducted by Child Helpline International Oak Foundation's (2014) Stop It Now project, show that 88% of cases of sexual abuse are never reported. According to the South African Family Practice Official Journal of the South African Academy of Family Physicians (2012:1) the following were cases that had taken place in the sub-region of the Transkei that remained unreported. Instead, a cow and some money were paid as compensation to the family of the victim.

A 13-year-old girl was on her way to the night church service and on the way she was grabbed by a man that took her to his room where he coerced her for sex and when the child refused he raped her twice. The perpetrator was known to the child and he allowed the child to go home the following day. The matter was discussed among the families – the family of the victim and the family of the perpetrator – and it was agreed that the sum of R500.00 and a goat be paid to the family of the victim

and it was paid as compensation for damages done by the perpetrator to the child. No case was opened until such time when the child had a yellowish discharge from her genital organs. Her grand-mother took her to the perpetrator who gave her herbal medicine. The grand-mother refused the offer, the perpetrator did not pay and the case was then opened.

In another case a 17-year-old girl was gang-raped by three men in an empty house and the grandfather accepted money as compensation.

**Theme 4: From whom do IsiXhosa-speaking children receive the information about sexual abuse**

The researcher wanted to explore from whom isiXhosa-speaking children received information regarding sexual abuse so as to know whether they are well informed or whether they need more information so they can be able to prevent the incidents from happening.

- **Sub-theme 1: Non-Government organizations**

According to participant 1, who works at a Non-Governmental organization (NGO) as a social worker, said the isiXhosa-speaking children receive the information about child sexual abuse from field workers of Umtata Child Abuse Resource Centre (UCARC), Village Child Protection Workers and from the Children's clubs at school. UCARC is a child abuse prevention NGO situated in the ex-homeland of Transkei. The main programmes of UCARC involve conducting awareness campaigns and providing training workshops on child abuse prevention in surrounding communities. UCARC also empowers communities to take responsibility for issues of child abuse, using the decentralization model. They approach chiefs (traditional leaders), political leaders and religious leaders in communities. These already mentioned leaders call community meetings where the field worker of UCARC addresses the issue of child abuse, child sexual abuse and children's rights. Due to the meetings held, there are people from the community that volunteer to assist in identifying the signs of child abuse and child sexual abuse and in referring the affected children and their families to the relevant services. The volunteers are first trained to do the work in their communities. These volunteers are known as Child Protection Village Workers.

- **Sub-theme 2: School**

According to participants 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 children receive the information on child sexual abuse from school. They said teachers are talking about child sexual abuse, especially because it is a subject in the curriculum which is known as Life Orientation. According to Delport (2010:vi) teachers are the only other persons apart from the family that have daily contact with the child. According to her, teachers need to possess enough knowledge of sexual abuse of a child and how to report it to the different professionals (Delport, 2010:37). The City Press (2010) highlighted that sex education should be introduced at schools. It was stated in the paper that school children must be supported in their right to a preferred sexual orientation.

- **Sub-theme 3: Parents**

Participants 2, 7 and 12 said children need to receive the information from their parents. A parent serves as a reliable resource and consultant for children in areas of importance, not only by providing information and values but also by helping children to develop the confidence to carry out effective behaviours (Brooks, 2008:386). Very few parents, according to some participants, are able to talk about and discuss the issue of sex with their children. There is a controversy concerning the information about child sexual abuse given by parents to their children because in the isiXhosa culture there are issues which cannot be discussed with children. If children ask something pertaining to sex she/he is seen as a child that does not have respect. According to Duncan (2004:61) children learnt that if they question an adult's behaviour they are punished and according to him, one childhood survivor of child sexual abuse said she remembered when her father said: "Trust me, no matter what I do to you, and you are never to question what I do". This shows that children have nothing to discuss with their parents concerning child sexual abuse, let alone disclosing the incident when they are sexually abused.

- **Sub-theme 4: Church**

Participant 2 said that children must obtain their information from the church. According to Kohl (2005:1) sexual activity *is* a problem today and according to her teens need help in understanding and dealing with their sexuality, but not all kinds of

“help” is beneficial. According to her the church has to play an important role in sex education of children.

- **Sub-theme 5: Friends**

Participants 3, 5 and 7 mentioned that children of isiXhosa-speaking people receive the information about child sexual abuse from friends. According to them, children, especially those at adolescent stage, prefer to share their secret with their peers because at that stage they believe in what is being said by peers more than in what is said by parents. According to Brooks (2008:387) adolescents “report that their relationships with friends provide intimacy, companionship, and understanding, whereas relationships with parents provide affection, instrumental help, and a sense of reliability in relationships.”

- **Sub-theme 6: Media**

Participants 3 and 12 said children receive the information from the media such as radios, television and magazines. There are talk shows on Community radios and SABC radio stations which are concerned about child sexual abuse, where different role players are called to explain and clarify to the listeners, including children and parents on how to go about when the incident of sexual abuse took place. Although the media play an important role in sex education, one cannot ignore the role of the Internet which offers a new avenue to paedophilia and other sexual predators for enticing victims such as children (Bezuidenhout & Campher, 2006:23).

- **Sub-theme 7: Social workers**

Participants 7, 8 and 10 say that children also receive the information from social workers at the Department of Social Development and from other Government Departments. The various Government Departments are working together in launching awareness campaigns in rural areas and distributing pamphlets containing information on child sexual abuse. However, the participants say it becomes a problem for the isiXhosa-speaking people, especially parents, to be able to read the pamphlets distributed. In the rural areas in Transkei the localities are scattered, with bad roads which make it difficult for the role players to reach these places that need the awareness campaigns and education on child sexual abuse.

According to van der Westhuizen *et al.* (2012:468) and Delport *et al.* (2008:307) social workers have a responsibility to communities in enhancing the children's quality of life and therefore play a very important role in service delivery to children.

- **Sub-theme 8: Community imbizos**

Participants 13 and 14 imparted that information on child sexual abuse is normally and commonly addressed at the community imbizos, which are mostly attended by parents. The same Government Departments call for imbizos in the communities so as to address issues including child sexual abuse and giving the opportunity to the people in the community to ask and discuss with them things that are not clear to them. The difference with imbizos is that they are only attended by the old people and the children do not usually attend the imbizos because they are meant for adults only.

Theme 5: Changes in beliefs and knowledge of IsiXhosa-speaking people regarding child sexual abuse

The researcher explored the improvement that could have taken place in beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people regarding child sexual abuse. It is important to know whether information isiXhosa-speaking people received, has changed their beliefs and knowledge regarding child sexual abuse. Different answers were received from the participants.

According to participants 1 and 2 they see the improvement regarding changes in the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people due to the awareness campaigns and workshops they offer to the community volunteers and to the school pupils' structures which work hand in hand with them to address the issue of child sexual abuse. *"Yes, community members report cases of sexual abuse to SAPS and the Department of Social Development ever since I started working with Village Child Protection Workers."* Participant 1 refers to the areas in the sub-region of Transkei in the Eastern Cape that are being serviced and attended by Umtata Child Abuse Resource Centre (UCARC). According to the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (2005:37) there is one NGO in the Transkei region that deals with child sexual abuse and their services involve community members as volunteers and also children at school who help in spreading information regarding child sexual abuse.

*“Yes, there is a little bit of change because child sexual abuse is broadcasted on radios and television though other rural areas do not have electricity; therefore they find difficult to view television. They report at local headmen because they are far from Police stations.” [3]*

*“Yes, they are changing every year because there are social workers, Non-Governmental organisations, Police and community members who make awareness campaigns and educate isiXhosa-speaking people about child sexual abuse. In a case of isiXhosa-speaking people living in remote rural areas they are far and awareness campaigns do not reach them every time. They are changing gradually as imbizos are taking place may be two times a year.” [5]*

*“Yes, now that children are schooling and they get the information through life skills programmes as a subject, they are more sensitive about these topics in order to protect themselves or report as early as possible.” [6]*

*“Yes, they changed as people now are taking sexual abuse cases very seriously.” [7]*

*“There is little transformation because there are social workers who conduct awareness campaigns in rural areas and now they know what to do if sexual abuse happened in a family and in a community at large.” [8]*

*“There are few clients who are coming up front to report incidents of sexual abuse.” [9]*

*“A little bit as some cases are reported but still there is much that should be done to eliminate child sexual abuse amongst isiXhosa-speaking people.” [P10]*

*“In remote rural areas cultural beliefs are still dominant in dealing with child sexual abuse.” [11]*

*“There is no change as they hide such incidents.” [12]*

The participants in this study have different views concerning the improvement in child sexual abuse among the isiXhosa-speaking people in the rural area of the Eastern Cape. The cases of child sexual abuse that have been reported at Sinawe

centre, situated in Mthatha, which deals with victims of child sexual abuse including the sexual abuse of adult women seem to be many. The Official journal of the South African Academy of Family Physicians (2001-2006) shows high numbers of child sexual abuse cases that have been reported between 2001 and 2006. Sinawe Centre mentioned that a total of 2 378 victims of sexual assault were seen at Sinawe Centre over a period of six years. The average rate of sexual assault was 198 per 100 000 women a year. Sinawe Centre mentioned that there was a tenfold increase of sexual assault from 39 per 100 000 women in 2001 to 417 per 100 000 women in 2006. Of the victims 70,9% were children under the age of 20 years and 22,9% were younger than 11 years. Children of 5 years or younger represented 9,4% of the sexual assault victims. According to this Official Journal the rate of sexual abuse is increasing in Mthatha area of the Eastern Cape (Transkei region) in South Africa.

According to Stop It Now Project (Child Helpline International Oak Foundation (2014) child sexual abuse is so often hidden and the statistics vary widely. The study done shows its wide spread and it has a devastating impact on families and on communities. The studies also show that 88% of cases of sexual abuse are never reported to authorities. In all the statistics of Sinawe Centre the cases that have been reported were negotiated by families of isiXhosa-speaking people and not reported. Instead, the family of the perpetrator pays for the sexual abuse of the child which means that not much improvement can be seen. Regarding the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people, South Africa has still one of the highest rates of sexual assault in the world. Rape and sexual abuse of children is a serious social and health issue in the Transkei sub-region of the Eastern Cape (Meel, 2008:69).

#### Theme 6: How to enhance IsiXhosa-speaking people's beliefs and knowledge regarding child sexual abuse

The data has been collected from the respondents on what to do to improve isiXhosa-speaking people's beliefs and knowledge regarding child sexual abuse with a view to prevent the sexual abuse of a child. The participants gave very practical advice on how to enhance the knowledge and beliefs of these people.

*“More campaigns and education need to be done about child sexual abuse in deep rural areas. Urging the South African Police Service to follow these cases, so that the perpetrator can be punished.” [1]*

*“More visibility of police in communities and the to start with local structures which will be enable people to report to Government Departments.” [2]*

*“They need to be educated about the seriousness of child sexual abuse. Government has to provide mobile services, awareness campaigns in remote area.” [3]*

*“All role players concerned with child sexual have to educate isiXhosa-speaking people by means of workshops, awareness campaigns and imbizos”. Education of children at school from grade 0 to high school level.” [5]*

*“Professionals have to conduct awareness campaign at schools, rural areas and at the chief’s/headman’s place.” [6]*

*“Awareness campaigns by social workers.” [7]*

*“Conducting imbizos in the communities, awareness campaigns and educational talks including all age groups in the communities.” [8]*

*“Education through awareness still needed to the rural areas. Education can change the mentality of community members concerning child sexual abuse. Community dialogue and information sharing amongst children at school.” [9]*

*“More awareness campaigns, community dialogue and information sharing to equip children and people about child sexual abuse and its effects to children.” [10]*

*“Awareness campaigns and integration in Departments should be strengthened so that the issue of child sexual abuse should be dealt with in an integral way, door to door could be of help, and capacitating children at school about what needs to be done.” [11]*

*“Equip people on how to deal with sexually abused children.” [12]*

The participants realised that the problem of child sexual abuse needs to be addressed in a multi-disciplinary approach. It needs a team of all stake holders from various Departments and also to form local structures that will assist the Government Departments and the Non-Governmental Organizations that are concerned with problems of child sexual abuse. Nqaphi (2013:42) recommends that inter-sectorial collaboration between various stakeholders in the community be strengthened, otherwise the number of rape cases will accelerate every hour if those gaps between stakeholders are not strengthened.

In the Transkei sub-region only UCARC deals with child sexual abuse and which goes as far as the rural areas of the Transkei sub-region. Community Agency for Social Enquiry (2005:27) points out that UCARC is also the only child abuse prevention NGO situated in the ex-homeland of the Transkei. It is conducting awareness campaigns and providing training workshops on child abuse, child sexual abuse and prevention in surrounding communities. UCARC developed a 'decentralisation' model due to a lack of capacity to reach new areas or provide sufficient follow up and support. This model is community based and promotes sustainability and it empowers communities to take responsibility for issues of child abuse. The community people (volunteers) are trained to form part of addressing child sexual abuse in the area. UCARC believes that training local people that remain in the community also strengthens the possibility of changing attitudes at a broader community level.

Other programmes have been developed to assist in addressing the issue of child sexual abuse such as the National Programme of Action (NPA) looking at developing a policy framework for prioritising the best interests of children in South Africa. NPA was developed by the Government and a broad spectrum of NGO's to ensure that the rights of the children are prioritised in policy making, budget allocations and public service delivery (Community Agency for Social Enquiry, 2005:24).

The Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Association which is also composed of a multi-disciplinary team comprises the following: Representative of community members; Police officials; Nurses; Advocates and Public Prosecutors of Sexual Offences Courts; the management of Department of Health in the Eastern Cape

Province; the management of Police; the management of the Department of Social Development in the Eastern Cape; the forensic social workers at the Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences management and Investigating Officers of the FCS Unit. All these stakeholders are concerned with the justice legal process of the sexual offences cases in which children are involved. They are more concerned about the conviction rate including the pros and cons that stagger the system, the problems encountered by each role-player and how to go about addressing the problems. The Sexual offences courts were also introduced in the Transkei sub-region in order to assist in the cases of children.

Although a large amount of education is being done concerning child sexual abuse of the isiXhosa-speaking people in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape, one can draw the conclusion that IsiXhosa-speaking people are still, to a great extent, ignorant and rigid about the issue of child sexual abuse. Therefore it means more education needs to be done and awareness campaigns be launched in the area in order to prevent child sexual abuse because the children are the future of this country.

According to participants 13 and 14, isiXhosa-speaking people do not believe that child sexual abuse is a crime. Cases of this nature are reported to the local headman who is seen as a person who has authority to rule, even in cases of child sexual abuse. As statistics of incidents of child sexual abuse increase among the isiXhosa-speaking people, they nowadays start reporting the cases more often to the law enforcement agencies. Before the increase of child sexual abuse cases, they were never reported to these agencies. Meel (2008:69) points out that incidents are being hidden by adult people who do not report incidents of child sexual abuse to professionals such as the social worker and legal system. Meel (2008:69) reports that children at adolescent stage (between 12 and 17 years), are at risk in Transkei.

## **10 RESEARCHER'S OBSERVATIONS**

The study shows that the isiXhosa-speaking people living in rural areas, especially the sub-region formally known as Transkei in the Eastern Cape, have their beliefs and limited knowledge regarding child sexual abuse. As a result they are reluctant to report the incidents of child sexual abuse. They consider child sexual abuse as

taboo, secret, a disgrace and they end up discussing it within the family as a case of intra-familial abuse rather than reporting it to the social worker or police officer. If a community member is involved as a perpetrator they report it to their local headman or kwa-sibonda in which case the family of the victim will be given a cow to pay damages done by the perpetrator. The isiXhosa-speaking people do not consider the child's emotions concerning the incident of sexual abuse.

## 11 SUMMARY

Meel (2008:69) accentuated that the problem of child sexual abuse in the rural areas such as the Transkei sub-region of the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa, is severe. Jewkes *et al.* (2002:320) indicated that girls have no place to stay at peace because they are sexually abused at home, in the community and at school. The Human Rights Watch (2001) also revealed that girls are being sexually abused and sexually harassed at school both by teachers and male students.

Child sexual abuse amongst isiXhosa-speaking people is viewed in this study as follows:

- It is secret, taboo, a disgrace and a family matter.
- It is a stigma to the victims.
- The family members do not want to talk about it, especially if the perpetrator is a breadwinner at home and they are scared to lose someone who supports them.
- They believe that the child is bewitched and therefore she needs a ritual, and they also believe that the perpetrator is also sick and he also needs a ritual. The ritual is performed for the child victim and for the perpetrator.
- Men who are HIV positive also believe that if they have sexual intercourse with a girl under the age of 15 years they will be cured / healed of HIV.

The information provided in this study shows the way children are being used as objects of sex. They become exposed to sexual activities at a tender age, that is, at the age which is inappropriate to the child's developmental stage. This therefore exposes the child to a Trauma-genic dynamic known as traumatic sexualisation

(Muller & Hollely, 2009:101-102). Dunne *et al.* (2006:89) cited in De Wet *et al.* (2008:97) observed that young girls are increasingly becoming the targets of rape because of the myth that sex with a virgin cures AIDS.

Jewkes and Abrahams (2012:10) report that women are unable to refuse sex because they are dependant and they fear to be abandoned or to lose economic support in a case of intra-familial sexual abuse. Children are likely to be ignored and not believed when they report incidents of sexual abuse and sometimes parents blame them for what had happened. Almost all social workers that formed part of the study mentioned the beliefs and limited knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people concerning child sexual abuse as the main problem that places the child's life at risk as the child becomes exposed to many detrimental factors such as sexually transmitted diseases, teenage pregnancy, being infected by HIV and AIDS and to trauma.

The researcher, during the study, found that children, especially girls, are living at risk. They need protection from the Government by it developing programmes that will reach the children even in remote rural areas of the Eastern Cape. The non-Governmental organisations such as Love Life and Umtata Child Abuse Resource Centre need to be supported and funded by Government so that they can reach all areas of the Eastern Cape, targeting the most rural areas. Teachers at all levels, from Grade 0 to High school level need to be sensitized about child sexual abuse in order to assist in identifying children at school who have been sexually abused and in reporting the incidents of child sexual abuse.

The participants in the study mentioned that a multi-disciplinary approach should be followed by Government in order to address child sexual abuse among the isiXhosa-speaking people in rural areas, by launching awareness campaigns to people in rural areas. Mobile services can be used in order to reach isiXhosa-speaking people living in rural areas. Parents, communities, headmen and the members of Lekgotla need to be educated on what to do when such cases are being reported to them. Community training and workshops need to be done and expanded, especially among the isiXhosa-speaking people living in rural areas of the Transkei sub-region.

Regarding a lack of knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people about child sexual abuse little is being done by the Government Departments in this rural area of the Eastern Cape. Although the Government Departments have their programmes they do not reach the isiXhosa-speaking people living in remote rural areas of the Eastern Cape. NGOs in rural areas that also deliver services are not equally distributed across the Eastern Province consequently causing large gaps in the provision of welfare services to vulnerable children. NGOs also suffer from a lack of money, staff and resources, which affects the quantity and quality of service delivery.

## **12 RECOMENDATIONS**

The following are recommendations based on the research findings:

- South Africa should develop programmes whereby all parents and primary caregivers, children and community members could be educated regarding child sexual abuse.
- These programmes should be presented in a language that is understood by all children and adults in rural areas such as those in the Eastern Cape.
- Sexual abuse should be included in the school curriculum and children should be involved in Life Skills programmes to enhance their knowledge regarding all the aspects of sexual abuse.
- All social workers and field workers should come together and form teams that will visit the rural areas of the Eastern Cape to sensitise people and children about child sexual abuse.
- The Lekgotla members should also be trained and informed about the importance of reporting cases that involve children that have been sexually abused and to know more about reporting of such cases to the law enforcement agency.

- Specialized training is needed for social workers in service delivery to sexually abused children. Specialized training is needed to fully equip social workers with knowledge and skills in assessing sexually abused children.
- On-going training should also be provided to police officers, teachers, and Lekgotla members on how to deal with the sexual abuse of a child.
- If one wishes to address the problem of sexual abuse of the child in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape, role-players in the different government departments, NGOs and community, need to take hands in order to educate parents, caregivers and children regarding child sexual abuse. Without knowledge of the beliefs of the isiXhosa-speaking people regarding child sexual abuse, the number of child sexual abuse in the Eastern Cape Province will not decrease.
- Professionals such as social workers have a responsibility towards the children of this region in preventing child sexual abuse.

## **13 CONCLUSION**

The findings of this study conducted lead to the conclusion that children of isiXhosa-speaking people in rural areas of the Eastern Cape are living at risk due to the limited knowledge of their parents and other adults about child sexual abuse. The beliefs of the isiXhosa-speaking people make it difficult for the children to be well cared for when such incidents place. Some parents of these children are too rigid to change, as they allow their children to be victims of sexual abuse. The family members engage in sexual activities with children and they expect these incidents to be treated as family matters due to dependency on economic support from the perpetrator.

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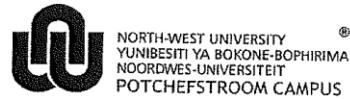
# **ANNEXURES**

## ANNEXURE 1: ETHICAL APPROVAL

From:SAPS FLEET

To:0865226650

06/11/2014 12:50 #117 P.001/003



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom  
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222  
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

To whom it may concern

Faculty of Health Sciences  
Tel: 018-299 2092  
Fax: 018-299 2088  
Email: Minrie.Greeff@nwu.ac.za

26 November 2013

Dear Dr. Roux

**Ethics Application: NWU-00027-09-A1 "The development and evaluation of programs and a protocol in Forensic Social Work"**

Your request to include the sub-study, entitled "Beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa speaking people about child sexual abuse in a rural area" under the above mentioned umbrella project has been ethically approved.

Yours sincerely  
A handwritten signature in black ink.

Prof. Minrie Greeff  
Ethics Sub-committee Vice Chairperson

Original details: Prof. Minrie Greeff(10187308) C:\Users\13210572\Documents\ETIEK2009 ETHICS\NWU-00027-09-A1 Additional Request 4.docm

26 November 2013

File reference: NWU-00027-09-A1

## ANNEXURE 2: ETHICAL PERMISSION OF UMBRELLA PROJECT



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY  
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA  
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom  
South Africa 2520

Tel: (018) 299-4900  
Faks: (018) 299-4910  
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

### Ethics Committee

Tel +27 18 299 4850  
Fax +27 18 293 5329  
Email Ethics@nwu.ac.za

2009-09-25

Dr. C Wessels

### ETHICS APPROVAL OF PROJECT

The North-West University Ethics Committee (NWU-EC) hereby approves your project as indicated below. This implies that the NWU-EC grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the project may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

<b>Project title</b> The development and evaluation of programs and a protocol in Forensic Social Work															
<b>Ethics number:</b>	N	W	U	-	0	0	0	2	7	-	0	9	-	A	1
	Institution	Project Number						Year			Status				
<u>Status:</u> S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation															
<b>Approval date:</b> 12 August 2009						<b>Expiry date:</b> 11 August 2014 Extended to June 2015									

Special conditions of the approval (if any): None

**General conditions:**

*While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following:*

- *The project leader (principle investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the NWU-EC:*
  - *annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project,*
  - *without any delay in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project.*
- *The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the protocol be deemed necessary during the course of the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes at the NWU-EC. Would there be deviated from the project protocol without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.*
- *The date of approval indicates the first date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date, a new application must be made to the NWU-EC and new approval received before or on the expiry date.*
- *In the interest of ethical responsibility the NWU-EC retains the right to:*
  - *request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project;*
  - *withdraw or postpone approval if:*
    - *any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected,*
    - *it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the NWU-EC or that information has been false or misrepresented,*
    - *the required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately,*
    - *new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.*

The Ethics Committee would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Committee for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely

Prof Amanda Lourens  
(Chair NWU Ethics Committee)

# ANNEXURE 3: PERMISSION FROM THE MANAGEMENT OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

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PAGE 01/08

G.P.S. 002-0222

SAP 21

SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

SUID-AFRIKAANSE POLISIEDIENS

Verwysing Reference	11/3/1
Navrae Enquiries	Lt. Colonel Ryan AC V Keka
Telefoon Telephone	(012) 334 3581 (012) 407 2010
Faksnummer Fax number	(012) 334 3563

THE HEAD: GENERAL RESEARCH AND  
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT  
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

PRIVATE BAG X 177  
PRETORIA  
0001

Captain NT Zantsi  
CRADOCK SAPS  
FCS UNIT  
CAROCK

RE: APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF RESEARCH TO BE CONDUCTED IN  
THE SERVICE: BELIEFS AND KNOWLEDGE OF ISIXHOSA SPEAKING PEOPLE  
ABOUT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN RURAL AREAS OF THE EASTERN CAPE

1. The Technical Research Committee situated in the Division: Human Resource Development sat on the 2014-03-11 to review your application.
2. It is pleasure to inform you that your application has been approved for you to continue with your research.
3. Please make sure the research is in line with your topic "Beliefs and knowledge of IsiXhosa speaking people about child sexual abuse in rural areas of the Eastern Cape.
4. Please supply South African Police Service (SAPS) with a copy of your final research report on completion.

Kind regards

MAJOR GENERAL  
CHAIRPERSON: RESEARCH COMMITTEE  
DIVISION: HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT  
LL GOSSMANN

DATE: 2014-04-06

1

TAD

09 APR 2014 10:14 HP LASERJET FAX

## ANNEXURE 4: LETTER OF PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FRO UMTATA CHILD ABUSE RESOURCE CENTRE

P.O. BOX 53108  
MTHATHA  
5099

TEL: (047) 531 1103 / 531 4643  
FAX: (047) 5313494 / 086 659 9447  
Email: ucarc@intekom.co.za



Reg. No. 005 - 681

22 April, 2014

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to confirm that Ms N.T. Zantsi was granted permission to conduct research in the organisation by interviewing our two social workers on her topic; **BELIEF AND KNOWLEDGE OF ISIXHOSA PEAKING PEOPLE ON CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN THE RURAL AREA OF THE EASTERN CAPE.**

Yours sincerely,

*N.T. Mdubeki*  
N.T. Mdubeki  
PROGRAMME MANAGER

# ANNEXURE 5: LETTER OF PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



Ground Floor – Ngqeleni Development center – Private Bag X102 – Ngqeleni- Libode area office 5140 – REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA  
Tel: +27 (0) 47 5680304 \* Tel/Fax: +27 (0)47 5680083 \* Email address: [poria.leve@socdev.ecprov.gov.za](mailto:poria.leve@socdev.ecprov.gov.za) Website: [www.socdev.ecprov.gov.za](http://www.socdev.ecprov.gov.za)

Enquiries: P.Z. Leve

Date : 30 April 2014

Ref.: Request for conducting research on the research title: Beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa speaking people about child sexual abuse in rural area of the Eastern Cape

This serves to confirm that Miss Nomahomba Thelma Zantsi has been granted permission to conduct interviews with Social Development officials based on the research titled beliefs and knowledge of IsiXhosa speaking people about child sexual abuse in rural area of the Eastern Cape.

Good luck in your studies.

A handwritten signature of P.Z. Leve.

Date ..... 30 / April / 2014 .....

P.Z. Leve - (Ngqeleni: Service Office Manager)

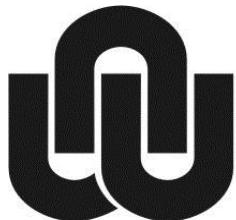
A handwritten signature of F. Nompozolo.

Date ..... 30. 4. 2014 .....

F. Nompozolo - (Area Manager)

"Building a caring society, together"

## ANNEXURE 6: CONSENT OF SOCIAL WORKER



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY  
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA  
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT  
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

### **RESEARCH TITLE: Beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people about child sexual abuse in a rural area**

I, Thelma Zantsi am a social worker doing research on beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people about child sexual abuse in a rural area. This research is part of the requirements for the fulfillment of my MSW (Forensic Practice) degree programme. Please peruse the information provided below prior to attesting, in the form of signing the declaration of consent for participation of you.

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

To explore and describe beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people about child sexual abuse in a rural area

#### **2. DATA COLLECTION**

For the purpose of this research the qualitative way of data collection by means of semi-structured interviews will be used. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted in order to gain a better understanding of the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people about child sexual abuse in a rural area

#### **3. PROCEDURE**

If you agree to participate in this study the following procedures will be followed:

- The research protocol will firstly be submitted for approval to the Health Research Ethical Committee of the Faculty Health Sciences of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. After approval has been given, the proposed study will be started.
- A letter will be written to the managers of the Department of Social Development, Police Service and Child Welfare where the aim of the research will be explained to them and to ask their permission that social workers who meet the requirements, can be part of the research.

- The researcher will ask the social work managers of the above mentioned areas for the names, addresses and contact numbers of social workers who meet the requirements of the research.
- Once you have been identified, you will be contacted by me.
- You will be informed about the aim of the study, the benefits and risks of taking part as well as the ethical aspects regarding this research.
- Written permission will be requested from you taking part in the research as well as for the interviews to be audio recorded. A consent form will be given to you to be completed for voluntary participation. You may withdraw at any time if you do not want to go on with the research.
- I will arrange convenient dates, time and venues for the interviews with you in a suitable, private place and the time the interview will take place will be scheduled.
- I will ensure that the specific place maintains the confidentiality of you as participant.
- The interview with you will last approximately 60 to 90 minutes.
- I will write detail reports after each interview.
- I will determine the accuracy of the findings with you by discussing the report with you.

#### **4. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Due to the sensitive nature of the subject of the research, you can be assured of confidentiality. All tape-recorded materials and completed interview schedules will be safely stored in a locked cabinet in my office, where no one has access to, and thereafter, it will be stored in a store room at the Social Work division of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, prohibiting all people, including the researcher and study leader from having access to the material. Interviews will be held with you individually in a quiet, private office, to avoid interruptions. You will be allocated a number beforehand, such as respondent 1, respondent 2 et cetera, to maintain confidentiality. I will maintain anonymity as far as possible during the research process, by attributing a number to each participant and referring to the participants by their numbers during the study and the report writing.

It should be noted that some of the privacy may be lost during the study but your name, as well will never be made known and data will be handled confidentially. No identification will be used in any publications resulting from this study and only the selected team of researchers will work with the information that you shared. All sensitive information will be protected by locking it up and storing it on a password protected computer.

#### **5. RISKS/DISCOMFORTS**

Emotional harm may occur due to the information that will be divulged by you during the interviews as some of the questions may cause embarrassments. You will be given the

opportunity of working through your embarrassments. I will clarify possible misunderstandings of the information received from you after the interview.

Benefits for you as social worker in this study will be that you will discuss your perceptions on the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people about child sexual abuse in a rural area. The social work field will benefit from this study, by contributing new, rich information regarding the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people about child sexual abuse in a rural area. This can lead to opportunities for further research studies and for the development of an action plan to deal with these types of cases. This can eventually lead to more prevention of child sexual abuse and the successful finalisations of child sexual abuse cases and the prosecution of the alleged perpetrator.

## **6. COSTS**

There will be no cost as a result of your participation in this study.

## **7. PAYMENT**

You will not receive any payments for taking part in the study.

## **8. FEEDBACK OF FINDINGS**

The findings of the study will be introduced to the reading public in written form by means of a dissertation as well as an article in an accredited journal. You and your organisation will be informed of results regarding the research project.

## **9. QUESTIONS**

You are welcome to ask any questions to the researcher before you decide to give consent. You are also welcome to contact my study leader if you have any further questions concerning your participation in the study.

Researcher: Mrs Thelma Zantsi

Study Leader: Dr AA Roux (018 290 5760) (082 704 3922)

You may also contact Mrs Carolien van Zyl of the Human Research Ethic Committee at 018 299 2094

We want to thank you for your kind consideration of our request.

Kind Regards,

.....  
Mrs Thelma Zantsi

MA student: Social Work: Forensic Practice

.....  
Dr Adrie Roux

Study Leader

## **INFORMED CONSENT OF SOCIAL WORKER**

**Research title :** Beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people about child sexual abuse in the rural area of the Eastern Cape.

**Name of student :** Nomahomba Thelma Zantsi (MAW: Forensic Practice)

**Supervisor :** Dr A. A. Roux

**Co-ordinator :** Professor C.C. Wessels

### **DECLARATION BY THE PARTICIPANT :**

I..... declare that I voluntary participate in this research study. I know that I am free to withdraw to be part of the study at any time during the period of the study.

I give the permission to the researcher to record the interviews with me as I understand that the recording will be made available to the researcher and her study leader. The recorded interviews will assist in the analysis and the interpretation of data and it will be destroyed after use.

I was informed of the following aspects and they were explained to me :

- **Purpose :** To understand the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa speaking people about child sexual abuse in the rural area of the Eastern Cape Province.
- **Procedures :** I was consulted by the researcher concerning the participation in this study.
- **Confidentiality and anonymity :** The identity of the participant will remain anonymous and the information obtained will be kept confidential to a certain extent as the results of the study will be published in Professional journals and or presented in Conferences but confidentiality in terms of names of participants will be maintained.
- **Risk :** To withdraw to be part of the study is voluntary.

- **Possible advantages :** This research is looking to the best interests of the child as it is concerned about children who become victims of culture/beliefs by being sexually abused in our society.

### **SIGNATURES :**

#### **PARTICIPANT:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date : ..... Place .....

#### **RESEARCHER:**

..... Date:..... Place .....

#### **WITNESS:**

..... Date..... Place:.....

## ANNEXURE 7: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH SOCIAL WORKERS

**RESEARCH TITLE: Beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people about child sexual abuse in a rural area.**

### **INTRODUCTION :**

- The researcher is doing a research in order to know more about the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people about child sexual abuse in the rural area.
- The results of research will be of much use to address the issue of beliefs and the knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people towards child sexual abuse in a rural area such as the Eastern Cape.
- This study will be used by Mrs NT Zantsi to meet the requirements of her studies, MA (SW) Forensic Practice at North-West University (Pochefstroom Campus).

### **SECTION A: IDENTIFICATION PARTICULARS**

#### **1. EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF PARTICIPANTS:**

Diploma	Degree	Master's degree	Doctoral degree	Other (Specify)

2. How long (Years and months) have you been a qualified Social worker dealing with children who have been sexually abused?

.....

3. How often do you deal with cases of child sexual abuse of isiXhosa-speaking people?

Time	Mark/ tick
Everyday	
Almost everyday	
Once a week	
Twice a week	
Every second week	
Other (Specify)	

### **SECTION B:**

4. According to your experience, what are isiXhosa-speaking people's beliefs regarding child sexual abuse in the Eastern Cape?

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5. According to your experience what kind of knowledge do isiXhosa-speaking people have regarding child sexual abuse?


6. In your experience how do isiXhosa-speaking parents deal with cases of child sexual abuse?


7. From who do isiXhosa-speaking children receive their knowledge about sexual abuse?

School	
Father	
Mother	
Family (uncles, aunts, brothers or sisters: specify)	
Friends	
Church	
Other (Specify)	

8. Did the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people in the Eastern Cape regarding child sexual abuse changed through the years according to you?


9. What can be done to enhance isiXhosa-speaking people's beliefs and knowledge regarding child sexual abuse?


**RESEARCHER'S OBSERVATION**


Thank you for your cooperation.

Miss NT Zantsi

Master's student in Social work: Forensic Practice

North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus

## **ANNEXURE 8: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH LEKGOTLA MEMBERS**

**RESEARCH TITLE: Beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people about child sexual abuse in a rural area.**

### **INTRODUCTION :**

- The researcher is doing a research in order to know more about the beliefs and knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people about child sexual abuse in the rural area.
- The results of research will be of much use to address the issue of beliefs and the knowledge of isiXhosa-speaking people towards child sexual abuse in a rural area such as the Eastern Cape.
- This study will be used by Mrs NT Zantsi to meet the requirements of her studies, MA (SW) Forensic Practice at North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus).

### **SECTION A: IDENTIFICATION PARTICULARS**

1. Age and gender of Lekgotla member

<b>AGE (Between)</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>	<b>MALE</b>
21-30		
31-40		
41-50		
51-60		
Above 60		

2. Educational qualification of Lekgotla member
- .....

### **SECTION B: CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

3. What are isiXhosa-speaking people's beliefs regarding child sexual abuse now?



4. How do isiXhosa-speaking parents deal with cases of child sexual abuse?


5. From who do isiXhosa-speaking children receive their knowledge about sexual abuse?

School	
Father	
Mother	
Family (uncles, aunts, brothers or sisters: specify)	
Friends	
Church	
Other (Specify)	

6. What can be done to enhance isiXhosa-speaking people's beliefs and knowledge regarding child sexual abuse?



#### RESEARCHER'S OBSERVATION


Thank you for your cooperation.

Miss NT Zantsi

Master's student in Social work: Forensic Practice

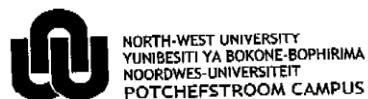
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# ANEXTURE 9: CONSENT TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS TO SOCIAL WORKERS AT GOVERNMENTAL AND NON- GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

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School for Psycho Social Behavioural Sciences:  
Social Work Division

29 April 2014

To whom it may concern,

**RE: INTERVIEW WITH RESPONDENTS AS PART OF THE FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS OF MASTERS PROGRAM IN FORENSIC PRACTICE**

Nomahomba Thelma Zantsi is a registered social worker currently busy completing post graduate studies in the field of forensic practice (Master Program: Forensic Practice).

As part of the successful completion of this course the student need to complete a research with the respondents.

You are kindly requested to complete the attached consent form whereby you will give permission for the above mentioned student to interview Social workers in your Organisation, as well as make an audio or digital recording of the sessions. Please note that understand that this audiotape or digital recording will purely be used for the compilation of the research report by said post graduate student. The digital recording of the social worker as well as all information pertaining to the child will be treated with the utmost confidentiality by the student as well as the lecturer.

After completion of the evaluation the student will give feedback to the relevant parties (yourself and or other parties involved) and make the necessary recommendations and referrals for further intervention should it be necessary.

Kind regards

Prof Cornelia Wessels  
Head of Masters Program: Forensic Practise