

**PERCEIVED EFFECTS
OF
SEXUAL ABUSE
ON
CHILDREN**

**AN UNDERGRADUATE THESIS
PRESENTED TO THE
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES
PADRE FAURA, MANILA**

**IN PARTIAL FULLFILLMENT
OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS
IN SOCIAL SCIENCE
MAJOR IN
BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE**

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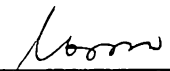
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MARCH 1998

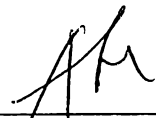
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APPROVAL SHEET

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Social Science, Major in Behavioral Studies, this thesis entitled "PERCEIVED EFFECTS OF SEXUAL ABUSE ON CHILDREN" has been prepared and submitted by Charina M. Glorioso



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DEDICATION

I sincerely dedicate this thesis to

my wonderful parents – who gave me everything. I could not ask for more.

Thank you for bringing me into this world and for teaching me the facts of life. Thank you for always believing in me and for letting me, be me.

Thank you for all the guidance, the support and all the love.

I love you both - VERY MUCH!!!

I shall forever be grateful!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Prof. Ramiro, for giving me this topic and for being so patient and understanding.

To Charmaine, for always keeping me posted on what to do with the thesis and for being like my thesis mate. Thanks!

To Gerry, thanks for helping me get data (maski commute lang) and for handwriting the other info. And thank you for the wonderful poems and all the sweet stuff.

To Mikee, for offering to accompany me to research (maski hirap kang gumising) and for all the motivation you gave me. It really means a lot!

To Alfred, thanks for always being there no matter what. I really appreciate everything you've done for me. I hope you find your destiny.

To Joan, for allowing me to use your computer and for being such a wonderful cousin. Love you!

To Wency, for fixing the printer and for heeding to my call of help despite the fact. Thank you!

To the BIGTIME people, thank you for all the good memories.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The children of the world are innocent, vulnerable and dependent. They are also curious, active and full of hope. Their time should be one of joy and peace, of playing, learning and growing. Their future should be shaped in harmony and co-operation. Their lives should mature, as they broaden their perspectives and gain new experiences.

But for many children, the reality of childhood is altogether different.

Each day, countless children around the world are exposed to dangers that hamper their growth and development. They suffer immensely as casualties of war and violence; as victims of racial discrimination, apartheid, aggression, foreign occupation and annexation; as refugees and displaced children, forced to abandon their homes and their roots; as disabled; or as victims of neglect, cruelty and exploitation.

Each day, millions of children suffer from the scourges of poverty and economic crisis -- from hunger and homelessness, from epidemics and illiteracy, from the degradation of the environment. They suffer from the grave effects of the

problems of external indebtedness and also from the lack of sustained and sustainable growth in many developing countries, particularly the least developed ones (quoted from a declaration adopted by the World Summit for Children in September 1990).

A major aspect of the philosophy behind this is that children, too, are equals; as human beings they have the same value as grown-ups. The affirmation of the right to play underlines that childhood has a value in itself; these years are not merely a training period for life as an adult. The idea that children have equal value may sound as a truism, but is, in fact, a radical thought -- not at all respected today.

In the United Nation's Declaration on the Rights of the Child, the 9th principle states that the child shall be protected against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation. He shall not be subject of traffic in any form. The child shall not be admitted to employment before an appropriate minimum age; he shall in no case be caused or permitted to engage in any occupation or employment which would prejudice his health or education, or interfere with his physical, mental or moral development. However, this has not been the case.

Abused children are a familiar sight, in the Philippines alone. They could be seen in depressed areas, in the middle of thoroughfares, in front of department stores, restaurants, tourist spots and even in affluent families. You cannot fail to

notice them because they are just about everywhere. They are the beggars, sweepstakes, cigarette and sampaguita vendors and child prostitutes that most often encounter in the streets of Manila. These children have now become a major issue of concern to both the government and private sectors.

Child abuses take many forms such as physical abuse, physical neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. Child maltreatment crosses all ethnic, social and economic lines. Those responsible may be parents, guardians, relatives, or friends.

The problem of child sexual abuse, particularly child prostitution can be linked with the nation's prevailing economic condition. Likewise, natural calamities destroy the sources of livelihood in the rural areas, compelling the families to immigrate to the city in search of a better life. But due to the existing dilemma of unemployment or the lack of job opportunities even in the urban areas, some families resort to forcing their children to beg on the streets. It is sequential that these children become victims of pimps serving foreign pedophiles and white slavery syndicates.

It is not much fun being a poor child in a poor country. Added to all the other strains of growing up is the constant hopelessness of the situation into which they are born. Once aware of their situation, children begin to look for ways

to escape from the grind and the depression they see all around them in the adult world.

The options for escape are few. Education for the poor is minimal and elementary and the possibility of employment is consequently reduced to an already overcrowded and under-paid market for unskilled labour. For most young people, there is no escape. Children grow up in a packing-box house in a slum or in a poor village and for many of them there is no way out. Where they are is where they will die.

But no matter how poor they are, children do have one resource which is always in demand -- their youthful bodies. In today's commercialized world, fresh young bodies are a commodity which can be bought and sold for big money -- big, that is, for the dealers though rarely for the child and the guardians. It is the child who ultimately loses in this process.

There is a saying that the children are the hope of the nation. Therefore, we must reach out to these children -- children who have been victimized and are now in an anguished cry of pain. The people who care about their future and those who are committed to the realization of a community that is just and God-fearing must constantly protect and uphold their dignity and worth.

In this light the researcher would like to review and analyze researches made with regard to perceived effects of sexual abuse on children. The researcher

would also present case studies that could be of aid for a better comprehension of the said topic.

B. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Sexual abuse of children within their families is a prevalent problem that have captured and gained the attention of many government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and mental health professions. Most of the literature concerning child sexual abuse focuses on the offender not the child. But because of the arising problem which puts the children at risk, various related literature and studies came out.

This research study aims to review and analyze from broadening empirical literature the perceived effects of sexual abuse to children. Specifically, it will answer the following questions:

- a) What is the profile of the sexually abused children by the following factors?
 - a.1) sex
 - a.2) age
 - a.3) profile of the abuser/father, mother, and child victim
 - a.4) type of abuse
 - a.5) no. of times abused
- b) What are the initial effects of child sexual abuse in relation with?

b.1) somatic complaints, emotional reactions, and self-perception

b.2) sexuality

b.3) social functioning

c) What are the long- term effects of sexual abuse to children in relation with:

c.1) somatic complaints, emotional reactions, and self-perception

c.2) sexuality

c.3) social functioning

C. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Sigmund Freud believed that “the child is the father of man.” He was probably the first psychological theorist to emphasize the developmental aspects of personality and in particular to stress the decisive role of the early years of infancy and childhood in laying down the basic character structure of the person. Indeed, Freud felt that personality was pretty well formed by the end of the fifth year, and that subsequent growth consisted for the most part of elaborating this basic structure. He arrived at this conclusion on the basis of his experiences with patients undergoing psychoanalysis. Inevitably, their mental explorations led them back to early childhood experiences that appeared to be decisive for the development of a neurosis later in life.

Freud stated that personality develops in response to four major sources of tension: (1) physiological growth processes, (2) frustrations, (3) conflicts, and (4)

threats. As a direct consequence of increases in tension emanating from these sources, the person is forced to learn new methods of reducing tension. This learning is what is meant by personality development.

Freud considered the identification of the Oedipus complex to be one of his greatest discoveries. The behavior of the three-to-five year old child is marked to a large extent by the operation of the Oedipus complex, and although it is modified and suffers repression after the age of five it remains a vital force in the personality throughout life. Attitudes towards the opposite sex and toward people in authority, for instance, are largely conditioned by the Oedipus complex. The repression of the Oedipus complex causes the superego to undergo its final development.

The emergence and development of the Oedipus and castration complexes are the chief events of the phallic period, and leave a host of deposits in the personality.

In the minds of many scientists, the most original of Freud's contributions to psychological theory was his assumption of unconscious mental processes. He argued that these unconscious mental activities played an important role in psychological functioning, in mental health, and in the determination of behavior.

Freud's concepts of the id, ego, superego, anxiety, and defense mechanisms were crucial in describing personality development. However, the importance of these concepts does not become clear until Freud's notion of stages in the psychosexual development of the child are considered. Freud believed that the

first five years of life are the most critical in the development of the personality. During these five years the child passes through a series of three psychosexual stages of development in which particular bodily regions serve as focal points for the child's libidinal energy.

Freud believed that the nature of the flow of the individual's psychic during the childhood and adolescent years is critical, particularly during the first five years of life. If the child experiences extreme anxiety during these years, it is possible that the psychic energy will not continue to flow in a reasonable way. As the child advances to the next stage in psychosexual development, he may have left some of his psychic energy at the previous stage. This process which Freud referred to as *fixation* could be expected to manifest itself in adult life through regressive behavior under stress.

Erik Erikson's major contribution was that of his psychosocial theory. It means specifically that the stages of a person's life from birth to death are formed by social influences interacting with a physically and psychologically maturing organism. In Erikson's words, there is a "mutual fit of individual and environment – that is, of the individual's capacity to relate to an ever expanding life space of people and institutions, on the one hand, and, on the other, the readiness of these people and institutions to make him part of an ongoing cultural concern."(1975, p.102)

Development, proceeds by stages – eight in all, according to Erikson's timetable. He feels that a given child has his own timetable, and therefore it would be misleading to specify an exact duration for each stage. Moreover, each stage is not passed through and then left behind. Instead, each stage contributes to the formation of the total personality. In Erikson's words "... anything that grows has a ground plan, and that out of this ground plan the parts arise, each part having its time of special ascendancy, until all parts have arisen to form a functioning whole"(1968, p.92). This is known as the *epigenetic principle*, a term borrowed from embryology.

The earliest basic trust is established during the oral-sensory stage which lasts from birth to about a year. The quality of maternal care is critical during this time. Daily routines, consistency, and continuity in the infant's environment provide the earliest basis for a sense of psychosocial identity. Through continuity of experiences with adults the infant learns to rely on them and to trust them; but perhaps even more importantly it learns to trust itself.

The proper ratio of trust and mistrust results in the ascendance of hope. "Hope is both the earliest and the most indispensable virtue inherent in the state of being alive" (1964, p.115). The foundation of hope relies on the infant's initial relations with trustworthy maternal parents who are responsive to its needs, who provide such satisfying experiences as tranquillity, nourishment, and warmth. All the verifications of hope originate in the mother-child-world.

During the second stage of life which lasts from about the close of the first year until around the end of the third year, the child learns what is expected of it, what its obligations and privileges are along with what limitations are placed upon it. This is the stage that promotes freedom of self-expression and lovingness. A sense of self-control provides the child with a lasting feeling of good will and pride; however, a sense of loss of self-control can cause a lasting feeling of shame and doubt. How this stage is resolved is crucial to later development, for it is here that the seeds of autonomy are sown.

The third psychosocial stage of life which is between the fourth and sixth years, corresponds to the genital-locomotor stage of psychosexuality, is that of initiative, an age of expanding mastery and responsibility. The child during this stage presents itself as being decisively more advanced and more “together” both physically and mentally.

When the parents guide these initiatives with sensitivity and encouragement, all the while unobtrusively protecting the child from serious harm, an attitude of initiative and self-sufficiency will arise. Excessive punishment or ridicule can foster feelings of guilt, as can the parents unwillingness to allow the child to complete self-initiated activities.

The personality of a person relies on the experiences he/she has encountered in his/her childhood. Any traumatic events or dire experiences could alter and affect the prospective behavior and disposition of a person.

Sullivan's basic emphasis was on the individual and his or her interaction with the environment. For Sullivan, every situation was an *interpersonal* one; even when alone, the individual is in tune with past experiences with others.

He also made great use of the concept of self. This is not an inborn self but a self-dynamism that grows out of the "reflected appraisals" of others. Positive interactions with significant adults as the child is developing will lead to positive view of the self – negative interactions will produce negative self-esteem. The major aspect of the self, then, are firmly established in the early years of childhood. All of us become socialized and assume the essential qualities of our personalities as we seek to gain the approval of the significant others in our environment.

Sullivan was very assiduous in spelling out the sequence of interpersonal situations to which the person is exposed in passing from infancy to adulthood, and the ways in which these situations contribute to the formation of the personality.

Although Sullivan did not reject biological factors as conditioners of the growth of personality, he did not subordinate them to the social determiners of psychological development. Moreover, he was of the opinion that sometimes these social influences run counter to the biological needs of the person and have detrimental effects upon his personality. Sullivan was not one to shy away from recognizing the deleterious influences of society.

Perhaps the most prominent and distinctive feature of Jung's view of humans is that it combines teleology with causality. Human behavior is

conditioned not only by individual and racial history (causality) but also by aims and aspirations (teleology). Both the past as actuality and the future as potentiality guide one's present behavior. To paraphrase Jung, "the person lives by aims as well as by causes."

Jung maintains that both standpoints are necessary in psychology if a complete understanding of personality is sought. The present is not only determined by the past (causality) but it is also determined by the future (teleology). Psychologists in their quests for understanding have to be Janus-faced. With one face they look into a person's past, with the other they look into the person's future. The two views when combined yield a complete picture of the person.

Karen Horney's primary concept is that of basic anxiety, which is defined as... the feeling a child has of being isolated and helpless in a potentially hostile world. A wide range of adverse factors in the environment can produce this insecurity in a child: direct or indirect domination, indifference, erratic behavior, lack of respect for the child's individual needs, lack of real guidance, disparaging attitudes, too much admiration or the absence of it, lack of reliable warmth, having to take sides in parental disagreements, too much or too little responsibility, overprotection, isolation from other children, injustice, discrimination, unkept promises, hostile atmosphere, and so on (1945). In general, anything that disturbs the security of the child in relation to his parents produces basic anxiety.

To meet such a threat, the child must develop ways of coping with this basic anxiety. Horney discussed several strategies that are commonly employed: (1) moving toward people – protecting oneself by overtures of affection, dependence, and submission to others, (2) moving against people – protecting oneself through aggression, hostility, and attack, (3) moving away from people – protecting oneself by isolation and withdrawal. Everyone normally uses all three of these strategies. Neuroticism arises when we rigidly adopt a reaction pattern that dominates our personality and takes over our life.

Both Sullivan and Horney continued to move psychoanalytic theory away from a confining conception of biologically derived instincts and psychosexual stages. They saw the environment not just as a frustrator of biological and sexual urges but as a dynamic sociocultural force that shapes our behavior, aspirations, and emotions. We can understand ourselves only in the context of social surroundings.

D. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The problem of child abuse has emerged in recent years as a growing epidemic and should be recognized as a major health issue. This problem has implications not only on a child's immediate physical health but on his or her future life in terms of psychological, emotional and mental health. In short, child

abuse will affect the normal development of a child into a functional, well-adjusted and mature adult in society.

Children because of their age and dependency live at home either with parents, guardians, relatives or adoptive parents. Caretakers of children whether related or not are considered members of the family or household. Children depend on their parents/guardians/caretakers for care, nourishment and affection. Depriving them of any of these necessities constitute abuse. Children are relatively helpless and physically incapable of defending themselves from adults. They depend upon and are subjected to the authority of their caretakers; thus they have to trust their caretakers. The abuse of this authority and betrayal of this trust constitute child abuse. Child abuse is, in essence, INTRAFAMILIAL VIOLENCE.

Child sexual abuse is one of the immediate problems perceived in our country today. There are various factors which causes and intensifies this phenomenon that could justify why child sexual abuse is considered a serious problem.

Since time immemorial, male wantonness has been promoted and every expression of female sensual indulgence has been suppressed. Men are still of opinion that they do not have either the right or the capability to restrict the instinctive drives of men. The conception of the sexual guilt of women, original sin, is ubiquitously recognized that many fathers after being sentenced, claim that

they were seduced by their daughters and could not protect themselves. Many daughters willingly take on the responsibility for what has happened.

The allegory that the woman is a seducer is closely associated to the previous one on the sexual hazardousness of women. As with rape, the excuse for the violation of the autonomy and self-determination of women is the same as for the child sexual abuse, that they were the one who seduced the man.

The abused girls live in a status of constant threat and insecurity. The abusers make it clear to them through the application of coercion and intimidation. Numerous girls have deep anxiety about the abuser carrying out these threats.

With the question of who is answerable for the abuse, the myths about the affected children appear. These myths stem from the thought that girls are the guilty ones. They want the sexual affiliation with the father; the abuse is fabricated, an illusion, they are just telling stories to get away from home; if it was really as bad as they say, they should not have stayed passive for so long.

There are different norms which tolerate sexual abuse that serves as reasons as to why it exists and persists. One is our societal norms.

In our society using the word “sexy” should mean as a complement to women. We also indulge in sexual humor. Males have a tendency to sexualize emotional needs and they excuse that males have an inability to identify with the needs of children. There is also a social tolerance for deviance committed while intoxicated and very weak criminal sanctions against offenders. The reality that

there are certain barriers concerning women's equality and the social powerlessness of children – they perceive the children as less valuable. The value of Filipino hospitality that allows anybody in the luxury of our homes without knowing that he could be dangerous. We value “utang na loob” so much that at times, we don't even think if it is reasonable or sometimes we just can not do anything but pay back our dues. Society also mandates us that we should obey our elders. But up to what point?

There are also norms in the Filipino family that give rise to sexual abuse which includes: a masculine requirement to be dominant and powerful in sexual relationships; ideology of patriarchal prerogatives for fathers; unavailability of sexual education for children; the notion that one should not interfere in other's affairs; the misuse of “respect”; and children being perceived as properties of their parents.

Furthermore, the norms of the Church creates grounds for sexual abuse to linger. There is the ideology of the family sanctity. We consider the family as “holy” or “sacred” that something like sexual abuse can and may never happen. We have repressive norms about masturbation. The Christian mandate that is “to obey your father and mother”. Anything they tell us, we should follow. Our “bahala na” attitude wherein we say it's God's will whatever happens to us. We accept confession as enough repentance. And the desire for quick forgiveness and reconciliation or “cheap grace”.

These factors and myths which are linked to child sexual abuse are just ways of orienting the readers and aiding them in generating an account of the situation of the sexually abused children. The review of several studies construed in relation to the topic plus case studies would furnish the readers the entire representation.

E. SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This paper consists of reviewed studies, articles, and books made about sexual abuse of children. Due to inaccessibility, child sexual abuse will only be limited to incest and rape and will not tackle child prostitution. Furthermore, it will present case studies of each form of sexual abuse, after which it will be summarized and analyzed by the researcher.

Most of the foreign studies found by the researcher is about incest. However, this research focused its study on the problem of child sexual abuse in the Philippines. That is why most of the case studies presented are locally based.

This paper will discuss the profile of the abuser/father, mother and child victim involved in incest and rape, and briefly on the causes. Although its main focus would be on the effects of sexual abuse on children.

F. DEFINITION OF TERMS

1) ABUSED CHILDREN - refers to boys and girls who have been physically and/or corporally punished, sexually abused and/or exploited, abandoned and physically neglected, and inadequately supervised, by their parents/guardians and/or adults.

2) SEXUAL ABUSE - refers to any activity between adult and child. It includes incest, rape and child prostitution.

3) INCEST - refers to sexual intercourse or acts of deviant sexual behavior, including sexual molestation, between persons who are related, including stepchildren.

4) RAPE - means to seize and against the wishes of the female and by means of physical force to have sex relations with her.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

A. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is descriptive in nature, thus it made use of a descriptive research design. The rationale behind it being a descriptive one lies in the certitude that the research was used to illustrate the effects of sexual abuse to children. It is also analytic, for the reason that it analyzed the different case studies and literature gathered.

This research study interpreted the consequences of sexual abuse to children by gathering all accessible related local and foreign literatures and studies. Findings accumulated were either attained from clinical literatures or non-clinical literatures.

Furthermore, it would present cases of each type of sexual abuse covered by this paper namely, incest, and rape.

B. INSTRUMENTATION

This study made use of documents (articles, books, studies, journals) in the acquisition of information. Documents obtained from non-governmental organizations such as the Children and Youth Foundation of the Philippines (CYFP), Consuelo Z. Alger Foundation and Institute of Women's Studies, and government agencies like the DSWD, UP Center for Integrative Development

Studies and UP College of Social Work were the significant contributory factors in discerning the profile of the father, mother and child victim, as well as the effects of the assault to the children.

C. PROCEDURE

The researcher accumulated all available materials that would be of use in this research from different NGOs and government organizations. This research is divided into two namely: foreign studies and local studies. Most of the foreign literature which consists mainly of studies about incest, came from the Consuelo Z. Alger Foundation. The local studies on the other hand were gathered from the CYFP, DSWD, UP-CIDS, and vitally from the UP- College of Social Work and Institute of Women's Studies.

Documents collected, which consists of the child's family and personal profile, and details from different agencies like the DSWD and Institute of Women's Studies will be reviewed.

D. ANALYSIS

The related studies and literature collected about the effects of sexual abuse to children are supported by the case studies presented. The result of the case studies were analyzed and classified according to the following: a) profile of the abuser/father, mother, and child victim; b) initial effects; c) long-term effects.

CHAPTER III

INCEST AND RAPE

A. FOREIGN STUDIES

Disposition about sexual acts and children have diversified intensely, throughout the course of history and across cultures. During the last respective decades, Western society has concentrated on the adult perpetrators of such conduct within a classification of social deviance. However, with the more current studies of child sexual abuse, there has been a heightened focus on the children who are entangled in sexual dealings with adults.

Sexual and physical abuse both represent a misuse of power over children by adults, but there are a number of significant differences between the two. Girls are predominantly the victims of sexual abuse; however, in physical abuse, there is a more nearly equal distribution, with a slight tendency for boys to be more abused. Physical abuse is frequent at very young ages (2 years and under) and tends to decrease with age. Sexual abuse is less frequent at very young ages but increases considerably from about age six (National Center on Child Abuse & Neglect, 1981). Physical abuse is almost always a result of actions by the parents. In sexual abuse, parents are involved to a large degree, but a substantial amount of abuse also occurs from relatives, friends, and strangers. In physical abuse, both mothers and fathers are frequently involved, with a slight tendency for mothers to be more involved. In sexual abuse, between 85 and 95% of the incidents are by males,

frequently by fathers or step-fathers. Females and mothers are seldom involved in sexual abuse. Statistically, physical abuse appears to be more prevalent than sexual abuse, although the rates for both are high. With physical abuse, generally obvious signs of injury or other trauma are present to substantiate the abuse. In sexual abuse, seldom can physical signs or trauma be used to substantiate the abuse. Physical and sexual abuse tend to occur largely in lower socioeconomic classes, although they can occur at any level. However, families in which sexual abuse occurs have incomes two or three thousand dollars higher than those of families in which physical abuse occurs (Finkelhor, 1985c). In sexual abuse, one of the motivators is sexual drive which results in appetitive behavior of a physical nature. Although there may be some organic basis to anger and hostility, there is certainly no clearly developed drive or appetite to physically abuse children. Sexual abusers enjoy what they are doing; physical abusers seldom do. Sexual abuse more often involves the police and legal justice systems because they perceive that a serious crime has been committed. Only extreme forms of physical abuse are perceived in this manner (Finkelhor, 1985c). Finally, in terms of learning theory, sexual abuse follows a positive reinforcement model in that the behavior itself is highly pleasurable and reinforcing. Conversely, physical abuse follows a negative reinforcement model, in that the behavior is intended to remove or eliminate an aversive stimulus.

PROFILE

Incest is seen as functional to isolated and inward looking families. It is seen as a way for tension to be reduced in the family and for the eldest daughter in particular to fulfill the wifely role which the mother cannot. Intervention involves the whole family system and the parents are considered mutually responsible for the abuse.

Sexual abuse, particularly within the family is seen as being acceptable and normal. It is one of the many expressions of the abuse of power, particularly by men over those less powerful, both within and outside the family setting. The abuse of power becomes sexual because the socialization of men places less emphasis on the context of sexual relationships than on the partners to be undemanding and compliant. Intervention does not pathologise the abuser, the abused or family members, but confirms the reality of the above, placing the responsibility firmly with the abuser.

Many writers and researchers have commented on the social isolation of families in which sexual abuse occurs (Finkelhor, 1984). A clinical observation by the present authors is the high degree of religiosity that appears to pervade many families in which sexual abuse of children occurs. Strong religious belief does not prevent sexual abuse of children. Low intelligence and/or low educational level have been implicated (Groth, Hobson, & Gary, 1982), although most individuals involved in sexual abuse are probably normal in these respects.

David Finkelhor developed the Sexual Abuse Risk Factor Checklist which he found to be highly related to the occurrence of sexual abuse of female children. The factors he includes in his list are: (a) a step-father is present; (b) the child has lived for a time away from the mother; (c) the child is not emotionally close to the mother; (d) the mother never finished high school; (e) the mother is sexually punitive in her attitudes toward the sex education of the child; (f) there is no physical affection from the father; (g) income is under \$10,000; (h) the child had two or fewer friends in childhood (Finkelhor, 1984).

Numerous circumstances appear to produce a situation in which abuse is most likely to occur. As suggested under some of the other factors, if the mother is unavailable or unwilling to engage in normal sexual relations with the father, there is a higher risk that he will turn to one of the children. Inadequate supervision of children (e.g., single-parent families and latchkey children) may place them at higher risk to be involved in sexual activity. Circumstances in which the perpetrator is given major responsibility over the child, such as caring for the child in the evening while the mother works, assisting the child in taking baths, and putting the child to bed, make the child particularly vulnerable. Sleeping arrangements in which adults sleep in the same room or in the same bed with children because of either space limitations of the house or an occasional visitor increase risks.

All of these components interact in complex combinations. The result may be abuse or no abuse depending on the force of the factors that might produce sexual abuse as opposed to the strength of the factors that would tend to prevent it. A couple of examples may help to clarify the use of this model in the area of sexual abuse. It would be possible to have an individual in the family who has a relatively high sexual drive and interest but who is well-functioning in all areas of life. If such a person (a) is coupled with a well-functioning partner who is in very good control of his or her behavior, (b) has a child who does not have many of the risk factors associated with abuse, and (c) is in a stable family in which there are few times when the children are in the care of the possible abuser, it would be unlikely that any abuse would occur. However, assume that this same individual loses his or her job with the result that the other parent must find a job outside the home (the job turns out to be a night shift). Therefore, the parent with the potential to abuse is home alone with the children and must that they get a bath and are put to bed with the full knowledge that the other partner is at work and will not be home for several hours. If this occurs, the possibility of abuse greatly increases.

Another possibility is an individual who (a) has some personality characteristics similar to those of abusers, (b) has a partner who is significantly depressed and shows no interest in sex, and (c) has a partner who does not endeavor to provide much support or care for the children. If the child in this family is either significantly disturbed or has some of the risk factors, such as being

overly solicitous of adult attention, there would be a significant possibility that sexual abuse may occur.

Likewise, consider the highly pathological individual such as a severe drug abuser or a schizophrenic who has characteristics of a possible abuser. If this person is paired with a partner who is disorganized or incapacitated by pathology and a child who is, say, retarded and they live in one room with very minimal income and a variety of other factors of this sort, it is highly likely that abuse will occur. However, this same individual paired with a well-functioning partner might be prevented from abusing the children by the skillful management of the situation and protection of the children by the well-functioning partner.

One final example might be a stranger who would be in the middle or in the high end of the continuum and who might sexually molest a child in a family that is well-functioning, socio-economically advantaged, and in a very favorable general living environment. Generally speaking, this child will rebound from the experience with relatively little difficulty and the parents will take precautions to see that no further abuse occurs. As a result, there may be little consequence to the episode.

Another interesting model that has been proposed to account for sexual abuse was developed by Finkelhor (1984). In his model, he includes four major components as preconditions for child sexual abuse. The first he terms ***motivation to sexually abuse***. This component includes: (1) emotional congruence - relating

sexually to a child satisfies some important emotional need, (2) sexual arousal - the child comes to be a potential source of sexual gratification for the individual, and (3) blockage - alternative sources of sexual gratification are not available or not completely satisfying. The second factor in his model he calls ***overcoming internal inhibitors***. A variety of personal and social factors may serve to overcome inhibitions that the individual might have towards becoming sexually involved with a child, such as: (1) alcohol abuse, (2) emotional disturbance, (3) senility, (4) social toleration of sexual interest in children, (5) low impulse control, (6) setback to ego, (7) stress, (8) frustration in other sexual relationships, and (9) weak criminal sanctions against offenders. The third component of the model is ***overcoming external inhibitors***. A variety of individual or social circumstances may have the effect of reducing the normal external inhibitors of sexual activity with children, such as: (a) a mother who is powerless, absent or ill, (b) a mother who is not close to or protective of the child, (c) a mother who is dominated by an abusive father, (d) social isolation of the family, (e) geographical isolation, (f) erosion of social networks, (g) opportunities to be alone together, and (h) unusual sleeping or rooming conditions. The final component of the model refers to ***overcoming the child's resistance***. Again, individual and social considerations may be involved such as: (1) coercion, (2) social powerlessness of children, (3) an emotionally insecure or deprived child, (4) child is socially isolated, (5) child knows the adult, (6) child has special fondness for adult, (7) a child who lacks

knowledge about sexual abuse, and (8) a child who is sexually repressed and has sexual curiosity. In this model, all of the foregoing factors play a role in determining whether or not sexual abuse occurs. If there is no motivation to sexually abuse, sexual abuse will not occur. However, if there is motivation to sexually abuse children, the individual may be inhibited by internal inhibitors and therefore will not abuse. If the internal inhibitors are overcome, there may external inhibitors that will prevent the abuse. If both internal and external inhibitors are overcome, the resistance of the child may still prevent abuse. However, if the motivation is present and the various inhibiting factors and the resistance of the child are overcome, abuse will occur.

The Abuser:

Parents who abuse their children had themselves been abused (The First Asian Protective Behaviors, Engineering and Management Services). They were reared in traumatic manner and had poor experiences of parenting. These parents usually have a ***poor self-image*** which includes: having a poor self-esteem; being immature and dependent, are poor in forming and sustaining close relationships, are unable to meet their needs and other's needs, and distrust people which leads to an inappropriate choice of partner.

They have a ***low impulse control*** which means they get easily frustrated and ordinarily act rather than think. They have ***unrealistic expectations*** of the

children and *can not separate their own needs from those of their children*. The care-givers lack of knowledge of child's physical, intellectual and emotional development may also result in unrealistic expectations of child abilities.

One of the more useful typologies has been proposed by Groth & Birnbaum (1979). They first divide sexual offenders against children into two major categories, **molesters** and **rapists**. **Molesters** are individuals who use enticement, negotiation, entrapment, and mild pressure to involve a child in sexual behavior. **Rapist** are individuals who use force and assault. Molesters may further be broken down, in this system, into those who are *fixated* and those who are *regressed* (Groth & Birnbaum, 1979). *Fixated abusers* are individuals who have never matured sexually to the point where they relate effectively to adult age-appropriate sexual partners. These individuals have a strong or exclusive preference for children and their major form of sexual satisfaction in interacting with children. They find adult contacts as either less satisfying or abhorrent. This group would include pedophiles as well as a variety of other offenders. These individuals are generally described as immature and interacting with the child in a manner that is appropriate to the age of the child rather than to their own age. A common speculation about these individuals is that they find adult contacts threatening in that such contacts raise anxieties about who controls the relationship, the adequacy of their performance, possible negative comparisons with other lovers, rejection, and so forth. It is thought that individuals who engage in this behavior find

children more easily controlled and less critical because of their more limited experience. This places the adult in the position of being the one who is powerful and all-knowing, in control of the situation, and who introduces the child to many things that the child does not know rather than being in the position of a rather inept adult partner. The *regressed offender* within this classification system is an individual who has a normal sexual orientation and relates in general to age-appropriate adult partners. However, under certain circumstances such as (a) times of stress during which the individual finds his self-esteem threatened; (b) cases in which marital conflict or difficulties eliminate normal sexual outlet; or (c) following excessive use of alcohol or other drugs, the individual may impulsively choose a sexual partner of a younger age. In contrast to the fixated offender, these offenders generally treat the child as an older person and attribute a high degree of maturity and experience to the child, which then classifies the child as an acceptable substitute adult partner. Whereas fixated molesters generally have come to terms with their attraction for children and regard this as a basic part of their personality, the regressed offender tends to deny that this is a basic facet of his sexual orientation. Such individuals rationalize their behavior on the basis that the child was more mature than others realized and that special circumstances resulted in sexual involvement. They consider themselves to be normal in their sexual orientation - certainly not a child molester.

The second major category of sexual offenders against children, **rapists**, can also be divided into subcategories. Groth & Birnbaum (1979) suggest three major categories: **anger**, **power** and **sadism**. Thus, some rapists who attack children may do so because of *displaced anger* in which the child victim becomes the object of rage that has developed out of other sources. The **power rapist** uses force because of a desire to control and dominate another individual. Choice of a young child makes successful exertion of power more likely; therefore, a young person becomes an extremely attractive target. **Sadistic rapists** are the most dangerous of all in that they experience a high degree of sexual satisfaction and arousal (in some cases it is only under such circumstances that they experience sexual excitement) through inflicting pain on another individual during sexual interaction. Fortunately, there are fewer rapists than molesters of children, and sadistic rapists represent only a small percentage of all rapists.

The Father:

A “heterogeneous picture” is postulated for fathers involved in incest. They may show an established employment as professionals or blue-collar workers (Meiselman, 1978; Weinberg, 1976) or they may have a history of habitual unemployment. They are commonly not psychotic. Although alcohol abuse is often cited as a contributing determinant in the instigation of incestuous activity,

most of these men are not alcoholics (Browning, 1977; Butler, 1978; De Young, 1982).

Almost all were prone to emotional outbursts and physical violence as specified by their wives (Browning and Boatman, 1977). The early histories of fathers implicated in incest often mirror a childhood pattern of economic deprivation and disturbed parent-child relations, including physical and sexual abuse.

The Mother:

The mothers of sexually abused children are frequently characterized as being passive, dependent, immature, sexually inhibited, unable to protect their children, subtly promoting abuse of the daughter to divert sexual demands from themselves, lacking in emotional bonding toward their children, involved with role reversal with a daughter (the daughter cooks, cares for the house, and eventually becomes the sexual partner of the father in lieu of the mother), and having been sexually abused themselves as children (Mrazek, 1981; Sgroi, 1982b; Holder & Schene, 1981; Rosenzweig, 1985). The mother's part in the father-daughter incest was noted by their physical absence, which afforded the opportunity for the incest to occur and by their poor functioning due to chronic depression (Burgess Groth, Holmstrom, et al, 1978). Frequently, an illness or disability causes her to absent

from the home or restrict her ability to fully meet the requirements of her role (Browning and Boatman, 1977; Herman, 1981).

The Child Victim:

Victims of sexual abuse do not fit a classic profile but most reported cases are girls. Boys are actually abused often but tend to refrain from reporting due to fear and shame of homosexual labeling. The ratio is 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 10 boys. Ages 3 and 11 are the most common ages for child sexual abuse to begin (Council of Elders for the Protection of Children).

In a recent field study by Lucy Berliner and Jon Conte, a sample of 23 victims was recruited from the Sexual Assault Center in Seattle, most victims already know the offender before the first episode of the abuse. In this case, approximately 74% of the victims knew the offender for 1 year or longer before the abuse began. Their feelings toward the offender were ambivalent: 87% described the relationship as positive or neutral; however, almost half of the children also endorsed the statement, "I hated him."

Almost 61% of the children said they did not know that they were being sexually abused initially. Only in retrospect could they recognize the pre-abuse grooming behavior as a process leading to abuse: "I didn't know anything was wrong with it...I thought he was showing me affection." "He was teaching me

how to do all the stuff, so when I got older...I knew how to keep my body satisfied...”

The age and sex of the child interact with the preferences of the perpetrator in determining whether or not the child will be an attractive target. Commonly, the oldest female child will be at greatest initial risk for sexual abuse in the home (Finkelhor, 1984), although younger siblings may also be victimized as the father “progresses” through the family. Fathers begin by singling out their eldest daughter both to fit the maternal role and to participate in the secret sexual relationship. As that daughter advanced into adolescence and become more rebellious, the father often moved on to the younger sisters (Herman and Hirschman, 1981). Boys are more at risk for abuse by strangers outside of the home (Finkelhor, 1984).

Children who are precocious in their interests and sensitivity to sex may thereby make themselves more at risk. Such precociousness in some cases may be biological. In others, it may result from observing sexual behavior of adults who are not discreet, (e.g., divorced mothers who entertain boyfriends in the home). This should not be misunderstood as meaning that such children are responsible for the sexual behavior or have seduced unwitting adults. The latter is an extremely rare occurrence, if it occurs at all and the adult must ultimately assume responsibility for his or her own behavior.

Individuals who are the object of rape are often described as passive people who present with a demeanor that suggests they would be an easy victim (Amir, 1971). Similarly, children who are low in self-esteem, highly seeking of nurturance, and do not have good bond with their mother may well be easy victims (Sgroi, 1975; Summit & Kryso, 1978). Finally, retarded children often make relatively easy targets for abuse.

A general clinical impression supported by some research is that siblings do show considerable confusion, upset, and fearfulness as has been demonstrated when any type of family crisis occurs or when any child in the family becomes victim of a serious illness or trauma (Lourie, 1984). It is important to remember such siblings in the evaluation and treatment of families in which sexual abuse has occurred, because these individuals can be affected by the family circumstances and may also later become victims of sexual abuse themselves if preventive measures are not taken.

INITIAL EFFECTS

By initial effects, the researcher means those reactions occurring within 2 years of the termination of abuse. Sexual abuse can damage the physical, social and psychological life of the child (Kempe, 1981). Kelly (1989) contends that, “there are a range of possible impacts, some of which are physical, some emotional, psychological, some behavioral, some material”.

Somatic Complaints, Emotional Reactions and Self-perception:

The possible physical effects are urinary infections, genital damage, migraines, abdominal pains. They eat differently than they used to – either they may have anorexia or overeats (Kempe, 1981). They sleep more than usual. But other times, they have a hard time relaxing (Council of Elders for the Protection of Children - CEPC).

Their emotional reactions are feeling depressed, sad or withdrawn. They are emotionally upset. They get mad easily and hold anger inside. They also try too hard to please or do things just to please. They give or receive affection from any person, even someone the child does know well (Ibid. p.7-8).

As of self-perception they dislike how their body looks. They may develop a low self-esteem or low belief in one's own abilities. She may blame herself for things and feels very inferior to others (Ibid. p.7-8).

Psychological Effects:

There is the sudden attacks of panic and anxiety. They hear voices and is out of touch with reality. They usually daydream and appear preoccupied. They are fearful of certain places, situations and people. They perform activities or behaviors over and over in a ritualistic way. They are unable to stop thinking about or going over certain thoughts in mind. They get easily startled and get confused easily.. They have drastic mood swings. They have difficulty making

decisions and lose interest in doing things they used to enjoy (CEPC). The child may have feelings of worthlessness and powerlessness. She has feelings of insecurity. And she may burden the feelings of guilt and shame (Kempe, 1981).

The pressure for secrecy is an inevitable component of the incestuous relationship and this burden may warp the child's view of herself and others. The incestuous relationship provides the child with special and terrible powers, for she knows that revealing the secret can destroy her family (Herman, 1981).

Fear and guilt are additional tensions in the secrecy burden – victims report a fear of abandonment, fear of not being believed (Butler, 1978), fear of punishment (Herman, 1981; James, 1977), and the fear of being blamed for allowing the incestuous activity to occur and continue (Goodwin, 1982; Meiselman, 1978). This fear of being blamed is linked to the child's guilt over a sense of complicity in maintaining the secret (Burgess & Holmstrom, 1975).

The genital stimulation and physical contact may also be experienced as pleasurable, further compounding the feelings of guilt (Swanson and Biaggio, 1985)

Several fathers threatened the girls with abandonment and family dissolution if they revealed the incest. Some children felt a need to protect their mothers from the knowledge of the incest or feared violence from their fathers if it were revealed.

Effects on Sexuality:

Two recent papers (William Friedrich, 1993) have presented research with the Child Sexual Behavior Inventory (CSBI): one on a sample of 880 children ages 2 to 12 and screened for the absence of actual or suspected sexual abuse, and one on 276 children ages 2 to 12 whose sexual abuse history had been confirmed.

Sexual behavior was found to be related to several aspects of the sexual abuse experience: severity of abuse, number of perpetrators, and the use of force. In addition, sexual behavior in children was related to the sexual family environment for both abused and non-abused children, with greater sexual behavior associated directly with the child's exposure to parental nudity, nudity and sexual behavior in media, and witnessing parental sexual behavior.

The research underscores the validity of Finkelhor's traumatic sexualization factor as explaining in part, the traumatic impact of sexual abuse of children. It said that sexual abuse does appear to be related to sexual behavior response in children. Although this is not true for every sexually abused child (particularly for older females), of the numerous variables that have been hypothesized as related to the impact of sexual abuse, sexual behavior is probably the most robust and systematically identified.

Gender differences in sexual behavior are expected for several reasons. For example, for males, sexual abuse is more often associated with physical abuse; for females, stress is more often internalizing in nature.

It also showed a large age or gender difference. For example, in 2 items where the differences between younger abused and non-abused males appear relatively small, clinically the differences for older boys are significant. Likewise, although 2 to 6 year old abused and non-abused boys reportedly touched or tried to touch their mother's or another woman's breast at a very similar rate during the previous 6 months, older sexually abused boys were twice as likely to exhibit this behavior than non-abused boys. The same is true for kissing non-family children, where younger boys of both groups are very similar, but older boys are more than twice as likely (and older girls another 50% more likely) to have tried this at least once.

The younger boys are also the only normative children for which parents reported the item "puts mouth on sex parts." Although this is the least frequent behavior overall, through interviews, they found out that this behavior may relatively be innocuous. For example, the mother of one 5 year old in this category reported that her son had spontaneously kissed his 10- month old sister on her labia after she had been bathed. Apparently, this behavior was in response to the mother's telling him how "beautiful" his baby sister was; the boy told his mother he kissed her "because she's so pretty." The mother that his behavior was benign, reported no other sexual behaviors for her son, and had no reason to believe that he either witnessed this behavior or been abused himself.

Other effects of sexual abuse are: sexually inappropriate behavior such as masturbating in public or touching genitals of others as mentioned earlier; is sexually preoccupied in talk and play; is shy or uneasy with the opposite sex; hates or fears sex or just the idea of sex; association of sex with anger, pain or shame; and association of sexuality with “gaining approval”.

Effects on Social Functioning:

The effects of sexual abuse on children are: self-abusive behavior; under-achievement at school; delinquency; running away; and withdrawal from family and friends (Kempe, 1981).

LONG-TERM EFFECTS

One of the physical effects that could be long-term is AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases. The child may grow up as being defiant or rebellious that he/she might commit minor criminal violations or be involved in serious criminal problems. He/she may have problems with drugs and alcohol.

Studies indicate that women who have been sexually abused as children suffer specific sexual dysfunctions as adults including higher levels of frigidity, vaginismus, terrifying flashbacks, emotional problems related to intimacy, sex guilt, and sex anxiety (Finkelhor, 1984; Browne & Finkelhor, 1986a). Individuals sexually abused as children also appear to show higher vulnerability to

revictimization later in life. Studies report a higher incidence of adult rape among former child sexual abuse victims (de Young, 1982; Fromuth, 1983; Herman, 1981; Miller, Moeller, Kaufman, Divasto, Pather & Christy, 1978; Russell, 1984), and some studies show that they are even more subject to physical abuse by their spouses (Briere, 1984; Russell, 1983). A history of child sexual abuse was found in studies of prostitutes (Fields, 1981; James & Megerding, 1977; Silbert & Pines, 1981), child molesters (Groth & Burgess, 1979; Langevin, Handy, Hook, Day, & Rosson, 1983; Pelto, 1981; Bard et al., 1983), rapists and physically abusing parents (Finkelhor & Browne et al., 1986). Finkelhor reported a connection between homosexuality in male adults and child sexual abuse (Finkelhor, 1984). There is evidence that children of adults who were sexually abused when they were children are more likely to suffer sexual abuse in their lifetime (Finkelhor & Browne et al., 1986). Sexually abused individuals generally show impaired personal and emotional functioning as adults (Steele & Alexander, 1981). For example, in adult life they show more signs of depression (Bagley & Ramsay, 1985; Briere, 1984; Briere & Runtz, 1985; Peters, 1985; Sedney & Brooks, 1984), a high incidence of substance abuse (Briere, 1984; Herman, 1981; Peters, 1985), high levels of anxiety (Bagley & Ramsay, 1985; Briere, 1984; Sedney & Brooks, 1984), poor self-esteem (Bagley & Ramsay, 1985; Courtois, 1979; Herman, 1981), poor sexual self-esteem (Finkelhor, 1984), feeling of isolation and stigma (Briere, 1984; Courtois, 1979; Herman, 1981), fear of others (particularly men) (Briere,

1984; Courtois, 1979; Meiselman, 1978), hostility towards parents (especially their mothers) (Herman, 1981; Meiselman, 1978; Wickes & Madigan, 1985), and a higher incidence of eating disorders (Oppenheimer, Palmer, & Braden, 1984). They are reported to have a higher incidence of self-destructive behavior, suicide (Bagley & Ramsay, 1985), multiple personality disorder (Kluft, Braun & Sachs, 1984), and borderline disorder (Meiselman, 1978).

It should also be possible to relate specific characteristics of the sexual abuse, such as frequency, relation to the abuser, and whether or not force was used, to the degree of harm incurred. Although the details must remain sketchy because of the limited data, there is little doubt that many individuals who suffered sexual abuse as children have significant emotional and adjustment problems as adults because of the abuse (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986).

Finkelhor and Browne (1986) reviewed existing literature on the effects of sexual abuse on children and identified four general components that they referred to as '**traumagenic dynamics**', which appear to summarize the data. The first traumagenic factor is *traumatic sexualization*, by which they mean that a child who is sexually abused is introduced to sexual experiences that are developmentally inappropriate. Such experiences interfere with the normal and healthy development of sexuality as well as predisposing the individual to future episodes of inappropriate sexual involvement. For example, children who have sexually abused often aggressively and inappropriately make sexual approaches to

other adults and children. They are also more likely to be sexually victimized in other contexts later in life.

The second factor is ***betrayal***, which refers to the loss of a sense of security and trust that results when someone that the child has depended on and trusted starts to take advantage of the child and use him or her in an abusive and callous manner. Third is ***powerlessness*** or ***disempowerment***. This component reflects the anxiety, fear, and helplessness that develops in the child because he or she is unable to prevent or terminate the abusive situation. This traumagenic effect is heightened if satisfactory action is not taken when the child reports the abuse. Finally is ***stigmatization***, which refers to the negative connotations applied to individuals who have been sexually abused. The child realizes that this is a socially unacceptable thing to happen and feels “bad”, guilty, and ashamed. Therefore, the child often feels ruined for life and has very low self-esteem. Finkelhor and Browne (1986) point out that these factors can serve as a model in evaluation and treatment as well as guide future research on the effects of sexual abuse in children.

B. LOCAL STUDIES AND LITERATURE

There is no place like home especially for child victims of sexual abuse who no longer find a safe shelter in the family. Statistics obtained from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) showed majority of child abuse cases

happens within the family, shattering a Filipino concept that the family is the safest ground there is (Manila Standard, April 11, 1997, p.2). Although incest remains among the least reported crimes, statistics show that such abuse is quite common in the Philippines.

The Women's Crisis Center (WCC) documented incidents of incest reported in 10 tabloids within a span of nine months, from April to December 1989. The result showed that incest cases accounted for 22 of the 45 cases reported in one month. The Center itself recorded a total of 29 reported incest cases from 1989 to 1990 through its Crisis hotline program.

Statistics from the Child in Health Intervention and Medical Evaluation also show that 15 of 300 cases of sexual abuse in Metro Manila that were reported at Camp Crame and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) involved incest.

The Children's Ward of the National Center for Mental Health also admitted eight cases of incest in 1990, one of which pertains to five sisters raped by their father.

The Marillac Hills in Alabang, Metro Manila reported two cases of incest as of December 1991. A church-based center for unwed mothers in Metro Manila also attended to 15 incest cases within a period of 8 to 10 years.

The police blotter meanwhile showed that from July to October 1991, only two of 17 reported rape cases at the General Assignment Division of the Western Police District (WPD) Headquarters involved incest.

A study conducted by students from St. Scholastica's College in March 1991 indicated 13 incest cases of a total 94 rape complaints. The study was conducted in police headquarters in Manila, Pasay, Kalookan, and Quezon City.

The Philippine National Police (PNP) reported 30 percent or 624 of the total 2,133 child abuse cases recorded in 1996 was incest, committed by the victim's father, brother, uncle or even grandfather.

PROFILE

Four studies commissioned by the DSWD, one done by the DSWD itself and two studies done by University of the Philippines on incest, rape and domestic violence were reviewed to at least have a profile of the victims and perpetrators as well as causes of abuse (Lourdes G. Balanon, 1997).

The Child Victim:

The respondents are the child victims sheltered at the DSWD centers, NGOs and the community.

The average age of the victim is 12 years with age ranging between 7 - 16 years old at the time of reporting. The youngest victim is a one and one-half year old child molested by the stepfather. The peak age for the initial occurrence is between 7 and 12 years (Gozo and Leynes, 1996).

The abuse start at an early age. Studies showed that abuse had been happening from 2-4 years and sometimes as long as 5-7 years before disclosure is made particularly in cases of family members as perpetrators. The abuse start with fondling and caresses and disclosure only occurs at the age of 13-15 years when they have greater discernment of the situation as well as courage to report the abuse.

Females are generally the victims (95%) but there could be more abuses among boys although not reported due to some socio-cultural factors. The fact that sexual abuse can also happen to men is not recognized/accepted.

Majority of the victims reached elementary level. Those who are out-of-school are placed in compromising situations in their homes especially if the perpetrator is unemployed or always in the home.

The Abuser:

Professor Ricardo Zarco was commissioned by DSWD to study the rapists. In his interviews with the detainees in the police stations of Metro Manila and those convicted for rape at the National Bilibid Prisons, everyone professed their innocence.

The perpetrators are all male and are in their middle and late adulthood (30-59) years old. The average age is 35 years. It was noted that the age of perpetrators is getting younger.

Majority are skilled workers and has an elementary education.

Most of the offenders are known to the victims and the abuse takes place within the territory of the offender. The closer the relationship between the victim and the offender, the more likely the abuse is committed more than once.

Offenders and victims generally come from lower class; 77% of offenders and 90% of the victims. However, child abuse happen among the middle and upper classes but many of these are not reported.

In a survey conducted by Professor Zarco, upper and middle coeds in the university sustained a rape victimization incidence of 2.3% by the age of 18. One percent of the 2.3% are domestic rapes wherein the perpetrators are relatives or members of the victim's household. The mean age of victims is 7.3 years; their perpetrators' is 27.3 years. The 1.3% are non-domestic rape where the perpetrators are male admirers, friends, acquaintances and schoolmates. The mean age of the victims is 16 years and their perpetrators is 26.5 years. Not one single rape incident in this survey was reported to the police.

Contact sexual molestations or abuse short of the legal definition of rape varies with socioeconomic level. The incidence by economic level are: upper class, 9.6%, middle class, 17.2% and upperlower class, 33.2%.

EFFECTS:

Shattered now is the age-old belief that a child is safe at home. Incest happens. And it happens a lot. Yet, because of the traditional Filipino reverence for virginity and family honor, thousands of abuses go unreported. And once reported, incest falls under crimes such as qualified seduction and acts of lasciviousness because there is no specific law on incest. The result is a public uneducated about a phenomenon that destroys Filipino families and continuously perpetuates women's inferiority in society.

“Incest is a reality that is painful to confront,” says Evelyn Ursua, a lawyer and deputy executive director of the Women's legal bureau. “It strikes the heart and questions our beliefs about family and security at home. We can accept rape happening outside the home, but not in our homes.”

Feminists believe that incest is a violation not only of the body but also of trust. In Filipino culture, the customary labeling of the non-blood related as family figures – father, brother, grandfather, uncle, ninong – forms emotional bonds. Child minders or baby-sitters also fall in this category. Such is the case of Cecilia, a 28-year old single parent, who, as a child, was sexually abused by a houseboy, the son of a “trusted” family yaya of 10 years. “ Minsan gusto kong maniwalang/hindi iyon totoo/Mahal na mahal niya ako/Lagi niya akong inaalagaan/Lagi niya akong binabantayan/Hindi niya ako gigisingin/Tuwing

hatinggabi/Hindi niya ako gagapangin.” For someone who never made a noise for years, this poetry is a vicious fighting sword.

Trying to recall their childhood three years ago, Cecilia couldn’t remember a thing, but her younger sister blurted out, “Kapag nakita ko siya, papatayin ko siya.” At that moment, Cecilia knew they were both abused.

Unfortunately, few people believe the children and women when they say that they have been abused. Precy claims she told her parents about the abuse when she was five, but they told her, “Huwag mong sabihin sa iba, pamilya din natin iyan.” Since she went public, her ties with her parents have become almost non-existent. They hardly talk to each other at home. She claims they can’t understand why she has exposed the abuse.

Some mothers have become “passive accomplices”, sacrificing their daughters to keep their husbands from sleeping with other women. For some, denial is much more comfortable than accepting that “something bad” happened to their daughters.

The effects of the abuse on the survivors vary in the degree and frequency. But there is one sure thing: it is never easy.

Precy grew up trembling at the sight of worms, especially the white kind. She didn’t know why perforations that resemble skin pores terrified her. Nor did she understand why an orange-colored man, staring and laughing at her, would appear in her dreams. Sometimes the dream would show her running from a group

of men in blackhooded capes. A Zen Buddhist once explained to Precy that orange meant sexual energy and her running away was her wish to escape the abuse.

Fel had a problem with intimacy. While making love with a boyfriend when she finally could, she was haunted by an image of her cousin, “staring at me blankly, as if he were saying, *‘Bawal kang mag-enjoy, mahiya ka sa sarili mo.’* And I would tremble like having chills.

Both Fel and Precy excelled in school, joining extra-curricular activities or studying till dawn. Precy never entertained her suitors. She punched them instead. Precy’s friends vouch her for being jumpy, especially when touched.

One boyfriend told Fel she was not raped because she did not resist it. “Narape nga ba ako o hindi?”, Fel second-guessed herself. “I was enjoying what he (the abuser) was doing to me, but I could not understand why. My parents said sex was wrong, but my older cousin was doing it to me, so how could it be bad? I got confused. *Feeling ko dapat din akong sisihin. Mahirap tanggapin na na-enjoy mo yung act.*”

Fel realizes that she is still “detached, can not easily trust,” and shies away from someone who offers a deeper friendship or love because “people who loved me were the ones who hurt me in the past.”

Cecilia can not say no and can not tell if she is being taken advantage of, a “mapang-aping situation.” She says she always projected an independent image

yet she was emotionally dependent on her husband, whom she left after five years of being together.

At first, motherhood scared her. “I could not find the nurturing in me.”

Many survivors go through the depression, sometimes spacing out. But that is only natural. Years of repressed anguish will take time to heal. Precy says that when she is alone and depression sinks in, “Para kang bata, iyak nang iyak.”

A recent article by Sr. Pilar Versoza, RGS, *Dark Secrets: Helping Victims of Child Abuse* (1997), provides the reader with details of physical marks to look for. Some of them are excessive bathing or poor hygiene, unexplained pain, irritation,, or swelling of the mouth, genital or anal area, unexplained bruises, human bite marks, blade marks, weight loss, and sleep disturbances. Versoza also described the psychological, emotional, and social effects like: blank stares, absentmindedness, fear or dislike of certain people or places, aggressive behavior, persistent sexual play with other children / themselves / toys / pets, display of sexual knowledge through language or behavior that is beyond what is normal for their age.

A summary report by the UP Center for Women’s Studies Foundation, Inc. on Family Violence obtained a total of 1,000 documented cases on family violence, covering the period from 1994 to the first quarter of 1996. Some significant findings reveal that family violence consists of several forms of abuses – physical,

verbal, economic, emotional and sexual. Physical abuse occurs most frequently (36.9%) with sexual abuse coming in as close second (26.7%).

Almost all victims are women. Minors (aged 0-17) comprise a third of the total number of victims. More than half of the cases involve some form of sexual abuse. Incest constitute 33% of the cases against children. Only 17% of the cases involve physical abuse. The average age of the victims is 11 years old. The child molester is significantly older than his victims. The most frequent abusers of female children are their fathers (29%), followed by their uncles (16%). Most child abuses take place at home while the victim is alone, and usually occurs at night.

Lack of sexual awareness is a reason cited by nearly 2 out of 10 of the young victims of sexual abuse –they have no idea that they are being violated. Nearly 4 out of 10 victims are institutionalized as a result of the incident.

Case 1: Violy, 32 years old

Profile:

Violy was born in Cebu City, the third daughter of five children, and her parents' first daughter. Her father was a seaman whose job keeps him away from his family most of the time. The responsibility of raising the children was left to the mother. Violy was her father's pet and was lavished with material things like jewelry, clothes and toys. She was also well-protected by her mother, especially since she was the most fragile of the children.

But Violy was a violent child. She often had tantrums when she would tear her clothes, push and kick around chairs and tables, and pull her hair. But when she was sober, she was unusually quiet. She hardly went out and wants to stay at home.

Circumstance of the Abuse:

Because Violy grew up frail and weak, at 16 she was ordered to quit school to rest. That same year, she was raped by an 18-year old nephew (by her first cousin) who was boarding in their house. Her health declined and her mother sought the help of an *herbolaria* (woman folk doctor), who diagnosed Violy's problems as intestinal in nature.

Since the rape, Violy found difficulty sleeping and began eating poorly. Within 3 weeks of the *herbolaria*'s treatment, Violy began to change. She began displaying strange behavior, chattered about senseless things, and would regularly rouse her siblings from sleep and say somebody was robbing the house.

Violy was rushed to the Cebu Community Hospital where the doctor discussed her mental disorder with the mother in secrecy. Earlier, Violy had opened up to her mother about the rape, and the mother promptly drove the man out of the house. Violy's siblings, however, was not informed about the cause of her instability. The youngest chanced upon her medical records which read: "findings: schizophrenia, guilt feelings, paranoia, phobia."

Violy was confined 3x within a whole year. She was saturated with tranquilizers- 500 mg. benadryl (both potent tranquilizers) 3x daily.

She eventually graduate from high school. But years had passed, and her health condition did not progress. At 18, she was transferred to Manila to receive better medical treatment. At the same time, she was made to pursue a Secretarial Course. Her mother had judged her mentally incapable of taking up a 4-year course. Throughout her college years, Violy regularly suffered a relapse.

In 1983, Violy was admitted at the National Mental Hospital (NMH) for lifetime confinement without her siblings' knowledge, and her mother left the country to work as a domestic helper. Violy remembers the day of her confinement: "Minura ko ang mama ko dahil ang feeling ko pinabayaan niya ako, na wala na kong kuwenta." She recalls struggling violently against the doctors because she wanted to strangle her mother.

She was confined for 3 weeks at the violent women's pavilion. She was shackled - hands and feet - to a steel bed without the comfort of a pillow or a mosquito net. She remembers alternately crying, laughing, and singing.

Violy was claimed by her sister after 3 months. For a year, Violy did not suffer any relapse. It was her sister, however, who had difficulty handling Violy and in fact, very nearly had a serious breakdown.

When the sister married, Violy was devastated and went wild. She was passed on from one relative to another. She lingered in the home of her sister-in-law, although her claim was that she was treated like a slave.

After a few months, Violy had another breakdown. She was brought to the mental hospital without extra clothes and underwear. She felt so miserable that

she thought of slashing her wrists. She was confined at the mental hospital 4 more times, and on her last confinement, was given electric shock.

Her fits grew worse. She nearly burned her sister's house during one visit. She also actively looks for sex with men. Out of concern and despair, the sister urged her to try her luck with pen friends.

Violy found a husband in a 57-year old Canadian businessman. But this was not her first marriage. When Violy was 22 years old, she had married a US marine, but this relationship only lasted 3 weeks, when she went to the United States to live with him. The marriage was dissolved on the grounds of Violy's mental instability.

Her marriage to the Canadian businessman was not happy either. She was battered and deprived of money despite the fact that she worked for him as a secretary.

After a year of marriage, Violy became pregnant. Doctors in Canada, however, advised an abortion since she was taking potent tranquilizers that could harm the fetus. The couple did not heed the doctor's advise. Violy bore a baby boy.

The couple is now residing in Cebu, where the husband is in a dilemma of whether to go back to Canada and leave Violy behind, or to remain with her.

(source: Institute of Women's Studies)

Of the few studies on the effects of abuse, one of the notable ones is Dr. Carandang's in-depth psychological assessment of street children (1995). The book featured the drawings of the children and together with other tools, the inner worlds of the children were exposed. Sexually abused children often drew images of themselves without clearly defined hands. This was interpreted as feelings of helplessness. There are also general feelings of being irreparably damaged, shame, mistrust of men, anger and betrayal, and guilt. The traumatic experience also resulted to "highly distorted and repulsive attitude towards sex.." They averted discussions on the subject, and they conveyed fear of the sexual act and that it is dirty.

Case 2: Nan, 28 years old

Family profile

Nan grew up with her mother and a 40-year old stepfather in North Cotabato in Mindanao. Her stepfather has a history of raping two of his daughters by his first wife, even impregnating the eldest one. He also raped househelpers. All five children by the first marriage are now living in Quezon province in Luzon. Nan's mother meanwhile is a small landowner in North Cotabato. She has her own colorful background when it comes to relationships. Nan remembers her father telling her that he was her mother's seventh husband.

Nan described her stepfather and mother as sexually hyperactive. She believed in her stepfather's "magical powers" because he had an anting-anting (talisman).

Nan is now married with two children – a boy and a girl. At the time of her interview, she was 28 years old, though she looked much older.

During the interview, she seemed seriously troubled and on the brink of breakdown. It took some time before she related her story. Once started, however, she could not be stopped.

Nan is skilled in sewing. She used to work for an exporter of sporting goods and clothes but was laid off from work in December 1991 because of irregular attendance. She now earns by preserving food and selling this.

Circumstance of the Abuse

The stepfather first attempted to rape Nan when she was 13 years old, but he was unsuccessful.

It was not until four years later, when Nan was 17, that the stepfather succeeded. Just before the incident, Nan was upset about her mother and drank alcohol as a way to let off steam. She got drunk and fell under the table. Her stepfather took advantage of the situation and raped Nan in front of her mother.

She was pinned down so she could hardly breathe. Even if under the influence of alcohol at that time, Nan recalls what exactly took place. She knew her stepfather was not drunk. Nan suspects that her mother knew of her stepfather's plan to rape her from the start. She even believes her mother may have requested him to rape her own daughter so she will gain stronger control over her relationship with him. The mother framed up Nan by feigning illness everytime Nan was around.

The abuse continued with the blessings of Nan's mother. Nan recalls experiencing battering from her mother whenever she resisted to have sex with her stepfather. She was tied in bed and the door bolted from the outside so she could not escape.

After her stepfather finished raping Nan, her would join him and they would perform sex acts in front of her. Nan also recalls an incident when her mother actually participated in the abuse. However, she did not supply details of this particular experience.

Nan became pregnant at age 17 and attempted suicide, unsuccessfully. She then begged her stepfather to let her leave Cotabato and eventually was taken to Davao. But Nan's mother caught up with her and her stepfather and accused Nan of stealing her husband away from her.

Nan came to Manila when she was 20. She worked as a factory worker in Quezon City and left her son in the care of relatives in Laguna. However, she later learned that the couple to whom she entrusted her son had already taken the necessary legal steps to adopt him

This turn of events deeply disturbed Nan. She almost had a nervous breakdown, if not for the support and comfort of her lesbian friend Emmy.

Nan and Emmy later became involved in what became a stormy relationship. Nan admitted she was the violent one. After 4 years of living together, they parted with much bitterness.

Immediately after the break-up, Nan's neighbor, Ben, started to court her. She and Ben, who was involved in drugs and alcohol abuse, lived together after Emmy left, and the two plunged into another problematic relationship

When Nan left Ben because she could no longer endure his vices, she already had a son. She did not know she was moreover pregnant with her second child.

Nan went to the Women's Crisis Center and underwent counseling for months. Ben also went through counseling with 2 representatives from the center. Nan and Ben reconciled recently. During a follow-up interview, it was learned that Ben had stopped taking drugs and is helping Nan in her food preserves business.

Nan's spirited narration of what took place 10 years ago were interrupted by moments of silence when she would just stare outside. After one such lull, she asked, "Sa tingin mo, among klaseng nanay meron ako?" (What sort of mother do I have?)

(source: Institute of Women's Studies)

The Children's Help and Assistance Foundation, Inc. (CHAFI) initiated a study on the "Self-esteem of the Physically and Sexually Abused Children and Analysis of their Roles in the Group." It was a comparative study of the self-

esteem of abused and non-abused children. Findings revealed that sexually abused children had significantly low self-esteem as compared to non-abused children. There was no significant contrast between physically abused children and non-abused ones. The findings on self-esteem were related to how the children acted in a group. Those with low self-regard had difficulty relating to others and their environment as they tended to isolate themselves or work for their own gratification even at the expense of the other group members. These behaviors were described as self-oriented which in effect is a coping mechanism that aims to develop the self.

Case 3: Didith, 19 years old

Family Background:

Didith's father is 47 years old. He used to work as a bus driver but lost his job when Didith was 13 years old.

Didith's mother, who is 5 years younger than her husband, is dark and beautiful woman. Since the time Didith's father lost his job, her mother was forced to sell cigarettes and candies in Luneta Park to support her husband and 7 children. But this later on became a conflict when, out of jealousy over customers in the park her husband would beat her.

Didith's father was violent toward the children as well. He would beat his 15 year old son if he refused to sell cigarettes in the streets or turn in his daily earnings. He also inflicted violence on his 5 year old daughter whom he suspects is not his own daughter.

Didith is 19 years old, but she looks older than her years. She is a replica of her mother, tall at 5 feet 6 inches, dark and beautiful, with cascading hair down to her waist. She is withdrawn and evades conversations. Her physical features betray the suffering she has been through. She wears a nondescript, blank mien, which is replaced by a look of terror everytime her father's name is mentioned. Then, the veins in her temples would visibly throb.

The eldest of 5 children, Didith feels responsible for her siblings while her mother is at work.

Didith longs for friends but is hindered by the close guard of her father. Unknown to her father, however, Didith maintained a relationship with a married man who supported the family secretly.

Circumstance of the Abuse:

Didith's father started raping her when she was only 13, the time he was laid off from work as a bus driver.

The family was living in an urban poor community in Novaliches, Quezon City. At that time her mother was away Wednesday and Friday nights to attend regular meetings of the Cursillo, a Christian fellowship group. It was during these meetings that Didith's father raped her.

The father threatened to kill the entire family if Didith revealed the abuse. Didith was terrorized and convinced that he would make good his threat, she never told anybody about it.

In May 1989, Didith's parents got into a particularly ugly fight. Her father suspected her mother was seeing another man. He beat her up so badly that Didith was driven to tell her about her father's abuse. The abuse she herself suffered, she could bear, but she could not endure the violence her father was inflicting on her mother, and she was prompted to reveal what had happened to her.

Didith's mother was shocked by the disclosure. She gathered all her children and went to her sister's house. Didith accompanied by her mother and aunt, went to Novaliches police substation to formally file rape charges. The father was arrested and imprisoned.

3 days after her husband's detention, Didith's mother felt guilty and asked for the release of her husband. Her guilt was reinforced by pressure from the husband's relatives who found the charge scandalous.

Didith's father was then released on bail.

After this, Didith was pushed by her mother into prostitution. Her mother said: "*Nasira na siya, kaya dapat lang siyang pakinabangan. Siya ang bubuhay sa mga kapatid niya.*" (Since she was already ruined by her father, she might as well be put to use. She will provide for her siblings.) Didith had no choice but to submit to further degradation, or else the family would go hungry.

Didith worked as a stay-in entertainer in a pubhouse in Cubao on the recommendation of a neighbor who worked in the same club. She was given free meals and accommodation. Soon, she was able to buy fashionable clothes for herself. Life presented fewer trials, until she discovered she was pregnant. She was unsure, however, whether the child was her boyfriend's or her father's.

Didith also learned that her mother was pregnant. She was one month into her pregnancy, her mother was on her second. It was learned later from Didith's aunt that her parents had reconciled while she continued in prostitution to sustain her child.

(source: interviews with victim mother
and aunt of Institute for Women's Studies)

There are case studies that recount instances where children who initially filed court cases against their abusers finally back out and drop all formal charges all too often. There are even mothers who initially support their children in filing a legal case turn their backs on their children and support their husbands accused of abusing their child. There are cases which do not get reported. Their number is estimated to far exceed those cases that are brought to the attention of the authorities or the NGOs. The victims do their best to cope on their own resources. Some succeed to a certain level of coping. Sadly for others the decision to keep quiet proved to be crippling or fatal.

There are cultural elements at play in the situations described. In particular, values are manipulated and misconceptions are perpetuated to subjugate the child and other family members into submission.

Hiya and *utang na loob* are positive Filipino values. Salazar (1981) identified two aspects of *hiya*: the *labas* (external/interpersonal) and the *loob* (internal/being). The *labas* oriented aspect has a social dimension pertaining to social interactions such as *pakikitungo*, *pakikibagay*, and *pakikisama*. The *loob* related have an emotional dimension pertaining to the integrity of *hiya* – the

qualities and foundation of *karangalan* (self-dignity). These aspects are manipulated by the abuser to keep the victim silent. The abuser appeals to the *loob* aspect particularly to *karangalan* which could be interpreted to mean as the honor of the individual. The abuser may lead the child into believing that an individual is honorable if she or he honors his parents and elders and if she or he puts welfare of the family above all else. This require the child to keep quiet, obey the parents and elders, and thus the family honor is protected. The abuser places the “responsibility” of keeping the honor of their family on the child. This responsibility weighs him to silence.

The *labas* aspect of *hiya* is also often used since victims of abuse see what happened to them as *nakakahiya*. Something which is socially and morally unacceptable. This is sometime manipulated by other family members who want the child to keep quiet to avoid scandal.

Utang na loob is described by Enriquez as “a value which moves to recognize, respect, promote, and at times defend the basic dignity of each person.” De Mesa’s analysis of *utang na loob* is that it is “a debt owed to another person who shares a common humanity (*loob*), exists just because we are fellow human beings.” But there is a general misconception that *utang na loob* is actually a “debt of gratitude” or a “repayment” of a favor granted. The abuser uses the twisted interpretation of this value to keep the child submissive. He invokes *utang na loob* upon the child: “*Malaki ang utang na loob sa akin - ako ang nagpalaki*

sa iyo, nagpakain, at nagpaaral. Gawin mo ang gusto ko.” In the manipulation of *utang na loob*, no payment or price is too high. The child or other family members mistakenly submit to this value.

Case 4: Myrna, 17 years old

Family Profile:

Myrna's family lived in a one-room affair in Manila. The family income of about P50 a day was provided by the eldest child who washes and jeeps and cars. But since this amount was hardly sufficient, the family resorted to their maternal aunt for help, including the expenses for their children's education. This favor was returned by Myrna's mother, who did the laundry for her sister's family.

Myrna's father, who is 46 years old, was born to a Mexican soldier and a Filipina during World War II. He worked as a car-wash boy when he was 8 years old to meet his daily fare and support his mother. He did not finish his elementary education.

In 1986, he met an accident that blinded his left eye. He was forced to stop working as a jeepney driver and is now unemployed.

He coped with boredom by sleeping; he also acquired the habit of drinking liquor. When he got drunk, he beat his children. He also beat his wife when he turned down his sexual advances.

Myrna's mother, 36 years old, is his second wife. He has 3 children by the first.

Myrna's mother was working as a canteen helper when she met her husband. After a month of courtship, she decided to move in with him..

The mother admits that even at the start of the marriage something was already amiss. Her husband often abused her when he got drunk. Despite such a perception, she had six children by him.

Then she had another child out of wedlock, and since then, she had no sexual contact with her husband. She surmises that this was the reason why her husband turned to their daughter.

Myrna is 17 years old and the eldest of the brood. She is stocky build, fair complexioned, and has brown eyes and long, straight hair.

Myrna describes herself as shy and quiet, and with few friends. She is now in her first year in high school and is among the outstanding students in her class. She considers herself average in academics, except for Mathematics, where she is proficient. She dreams of becoming a Computer Engineer.

Circumstance of the Abuse:

Myrna was sexually abused by her natural father beginning when she was only 11.

The first time it happened, Myrna was roused from sleep with her father fondling her breasts. Her father said, "*Tuturuan kita para pag nag-asawa ka ay alam mo na*" (I am going to teach you so you know already what to do when you get married). She begged her father to stop, but he forced down her underwear instead and penetrated her.

Myrna suffered severe bleeding after the rape. Her father warned her against telling anyone and threatened to kill both her mother and her otherwise.

These abuses took place while her mother did the laundry at their neighbors or at her aunt's house. Her father would bribe her younger siblings to play outside, after which he would rape her.

Terrified of the consequences, Myrna never told anyone of the abuses. In December 1990, her mother caught Myrna crying while her husband had a knife in his hand. Her husband appeared uneasy.

She confronted Myrna about the scene and the latter confessed that she was being abused by her father.

Apparently, nothing was done about it. The abuse continued. Afraid of the backlash on the entire family, Myrna could not muster the courage to report her rape to authorities.

On May 9, 1991, Myrna was raped by her father again. Unable to stand the situation any longer, she decided to confide in her aunt. Her aunt in turn confronted her parents.

Subsequently, Myrna's aunt reported the incident to the police. Her father was arrested and detained on the same day.

Upon learning of the incident, Myrna's paternal relatives were enraged that their brother was charged with "raping" his own daughter.

At present, Myrna and her mother remain civil to each other although they argue whenever the abuse is mentioned. When Myrna was interviewed by her social worker, she said she wanted her father dead.

Despite everything, Myrna maintains a positive disposition in life and plans to pursue higher education as an insurance for a brighter future.

As for her mother, she pities both her husband and daughter. She admits that she still loves her husband and that at one point, she even blamed Myrna herself for the husband's imprisonment. However, she said she is generally grateful that the abuse has stopped.

(source: documentation of the Department of Social Welfare and Development)

Case 5: Piso, 19 years old

My God, I really did it! I just punched my father. And you know what? It felt damn good. How could I not help it? He has punched me three times, and for what? Once, for not feeding the dog on time! Shit!

My God, I did it. I should feel guilty, but no! How many years have I had to endure him? I'd hear him enter my room at night, lie beside me grasping my hand, for me to fondle his...his thing! I felt like a lowlife prostitute, but what could I do? He's my father and it's a sin to go against your parents – the bible said so.

I was molested. So what? I did not want to break up the family. I was scared that my mom would think that I had seduced him. Hah! Me, what did I know about sex back then anyway? The only thing I associated with sex then was the menstrual cycle. But finally, I had to tell my mom. An ugly fight followed. My mother wanted a separation, my father didn't. My mother told me not to feel bad about what I had gone through. She assured me that the separation wasn't my fault for he had it coming anyway. I wanted to tell her that the word 'bad' does not even suggest the humiliation when he touched me at night. I didn't just feel 'bad'. I actually died from the shame each time it happened.

But the kind of peace their separation might have brought either me or my mom, just can't be. Though my mom never got to filing for that legal separation because of my father's threat that he would kill her first, we actually planned to leave him. But we were held hostage by his own violence. We once left him by himself in an apartment, but the owner turned him out only three days after. He would create such a ruckus at night, banging the doors of neighborhood stores and forcing them to open up. Both my mom and I were trapped.

I no longer had to attend to him, in the evening – in bed. Instead, I had to clean up the mess his affair with alcohol leaves behind.

Do you know how it feels like to have to clean your father's puke and waste? After I exposed to him to my mother for being the maniac he is, I had to watch while he little by little destroyed himself – how he turned to the bottle, maybe for solace, maybe for a scrap or sanity. I tried to talk him out of drinking – and narrowly escaped another session of oral sex. I tried praying (I don't give up easily) and even encouraged him to join bible sessions to strengthen his faith.

To my horror, he turned hypocrite. Good on the outside, a nightmare on the inside. For years I hoped against hope. But he couldn't be sober even just once. Our Christmases were always ruined, and birthdays were invariably a disaster that brought only tears of anger. Once my mother and I were summoned by our household help to quiet him down. My mom and I arrived to see him and my brother trying to strangle each other. It was my parent's wedding anniversary that day.

My mom and I steadily lost weight. We were living in hell. But I was still willing to continue trying to overcome my fate, until yesterday. Yesterday, I

realized he simply does not care. He couldn't care less if I died this very minute. "Eh, ano ngayon kung mamatay ka? Wala akong pakialam kung ano ang iniisip mo?" he said in between obscenities. ("So what if you die? I don't care what you think.") This shocked the sanity out of me. What do we have here? What happened? I thought I had a father, I thought I had a family. You know, this father-and-mother-I-love-you-both bit?

It dawned on me that this guy here, my father, he ain't worth your ulcer.

He still gets violent and beats us up at night. But I'm already 19 and can no longer report this to ABS-CBN's "Bantay Bata." I never thought that a desire for legal separation, let alone working on one, would cost so much. But I'll get even. Yes, I will...

Mercy? Mercy is for the saints in the churches of Quiapo and Baclaran. Me? I'm just human. I feel shame when I go to school with scratch marks on my chest and bruises on my arms. I can only cry in frustration when the beating is over.

And I know I'm not the only one suffering like this. I know that some reader feels the same way or is in a similar (or even worse) situation. And I know this has got to stop. But how? When? What can I do? I've contemplated all courses of action, from running away to drugs to suicide.

I have resolved to study as hard as I can, find a job, then take my mom with me and leave this godforsaken place. I'm graduating (hopefully) this year so that's no problem.

Hey, this is no work of fiction. I have heard of worse cases, and I'm glad I've so far managed not to land on the front page of *People's Tonight*. And I have no intention of doing so.

(This account was first published in the school organ of an exclusive girls' school in Metro Manila. The writer, who called herself Piso, dropped the manuscript at the school's editorial office. Later, she identified herself to a top school official who, on behalf of the school, gave the victim counseling sessions and help her find a job after graduation. The victim's identity remains anonymous to the rest in the campus.)

It is said that girl-children are raised to fit the "woman's place" when they grow up. The "woman's place" is to take care of the home (the housework and child rearing activities) and be a good wife (subservient to the husband, and provide for all his sexual and other needs). They are raised to be economically

dependent on men and their husbands when they grow up. Men are socialized to expect that women attend to their roles without question. There are men who abuse their daughters rationalize that their wives refused them whenever they made sexual advances. They reason that their daughters must fulfill the role of their mother since it is the woman's role to serve the needs of the man of the house.

Case 6: Nena, 15 years old

Nena is the second child of a poor peasant family from Mindoro. She has two sisters and a brother. Her youngest sibling was only a toddler when the mother, Lucia, left for abroad to work as a domestic helper. The children were left in the care of the father.

The mother sent money for the family's support through her sisters in Batangas. Neither the father nor Nena or her sibling knew that the support was coming from Lucia for it was made to appear that the money was loaned by Lucia's sisters.

Lucia barely maintained contact with her children or her husband. In the 11 years she was away, she wrote only three times.

In November 1990, Lucia suddenly came home. She was not alone, however. She had brought with her a child by another man. They stayed for a few weeks and then left. Her relationship with Nena's father was presumed to have ended.

The counselor described Nena as contemplative and silent, and obviously reluctant to talk about herself. Only during formal counseling would she open up.

At 15, Nena was beautiful. She is the only one among the daughters who resembles their mother. When Nena's mother left, the father apparently developed sexual desire for his own daughter.

Nena was in high school when her incestuous relationship with her father was discovered. Her teacher noticed physical changes in her, and they later discovered that she was five months pregnant.

Nena was brought to a sisters' convent in Mindoro, then was eventually sent to Manila for further help. One of the religious centers for unwed mothers in Metro Manila came to her assistance.

Nena gave birth nine months later and gave up her child for adoption.

Nena's counselors were able to talk to the father who said he was sorry about his daughter's situation and regretted the incestuous relationship. He also resigned himself to the reality that his daughter will not be going back to Mindoro as the whole barrio now knows about the incestuous aspect of the father and daughter's closeness.

According to her counselor, Nena perceived her relationship with her father to be natural. She has no rancor for the father and even confided that she loves him very much.

Nena was placed in the care of relatives after her discharge from the center. She has expressed her desire to finish high school.

(source: interview of Institute of Women's Studies with counselor)

According to the Child and Family Service Philippines, Inc., some of the effects of sexual abuse on children are said to: have sudden attacks of panic and anxiety; act younger than their age; be depressed, sad and withdrawn.

Case 7: Elvira, 17 years old

My childhood brought me both sad and happy memories. I was happy because I was free; I was not abused then. My terrible experience started when I was in Grade 6. My father did something wrong to me, but I could not refuse him because he was hurting me and even threatened to kill me.

I belong to a broken family – I never experienced peace. Not a year passed when my parents did not fight and separate. My parents had neither love nor affection for each other. But my younger has been obedient to me, especially with regard to housework.

I studied at the Porac Elementary School and I study now at the Pampanga High School. From Grade 1 up to Grade 6, I was always in the honor roll. I remember being asked to compete in an essay-writing contest. In high school, I was among the top 10 students, and I am now trying my best to be in the top 10 again.

I grew up with my parents, but I left and worked in Manila during my adolescent years to get away from my father. I have to many places, including Mindanao.

The one good thing I am proud of is that I worked to pay off their debts. My weakness is my being overly considerate, to my own detriment.

When my father abused me, he threatened me by holding a knife to my neck. Then he raped me. He did this several times until I thought of running away.

I ran away from home in May 1989 and sought my cousin's help. In May 1990, my parents asked me to come home with the promise to send me to school again.

In May 1991, my father started to rape me again. I gave in to him out of the fear that he might stop sending me to school.

He hit me sometimes when I turn down his demands.

On November 9, 1991, I ran away from home again. This time, I caught the attention of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and was temporarily sheltered in an RGS Home in Bicol.

I am very thankful to the sisters for taking care of me. I seem to have achieved my peace already. I hope to be happy again, have a peaceful family, and muster enough strength to endure everything. I want to continue schooling.

I also hope that what happened to me will not happen to my sisters.

What I wish for my life is to have inner peace and to end this chaos by facing my reality. I hope I still have a future ahead of me.

Probably, the sisters can protect me and help solve my problem. They can probably send me back to school and give me a new life. I hope they continue helping more people like me.

Right now, I feel I am alone in this life. But I have nothing to worry about because I have been brought closer to God. I pity my siblings, but I am angry with my parents.

I will stay away from my family and stay with my relatives instead. I can tell them about my problems and ask for their assistance.

(source: victim's written account submitted to the Religious of the Good Shepherd)

CHAPTER IV
DISCUSSION OF RESULTS
AND
DATA ANALYSIS

From the studies gathered, it showed that incest takes place across economic classes but is more prevalent in the lower classes. Majority of the 7 victims whose cases were presented and victims discussed in the literature, are the eldest or only daughter in the family. In some cases, the victim was a single child. The abusers were older male relatives, usually the natural father, and in some cases, a stepfather, an uncle, a brother, or a cousin. It is usually an expression of power particularly by men over those less powerful. The fathers usually have no affection for their children. He uses threats or force to keep the daughter from telling anybody about their sexual relationship. The mother on the other hand, is uniformly described as passive and dominated by an abusive spouse. She may have a knowledge about the incestuous activity but remains silent for fear that her partner might desert her.

Sexual abuse committed on children may vary on the perpetrators preferences. But it may start at a very early age (for the child) – as young as 1 and 1/2 years old may well be a victim up to adolescent age. This did not happen only once but repeatedly, until the victim resorted to something drastic like reporting

this to the authorities or running away from home. But the abuser would first manage to inflict untold damage for he always held a position of authority over the victim, using this advantage to command the child into submission. The child was invariably threatened to silence.

The victims who could not dare reveal their anguish escaped from the abuse by running away from home.

Myrna was first raped by her natural father when she was only 11 but she brought herself to confide in her aunt about these violations only 7 years later. Didith's abuse began when she was 13; it took 6 years before she exposed it.

Although this oath of silence is common among the victims, this cannot be mistaken for even the faintest trace of consent. For what lies at the roots of this silence is an interplay of factors – threats by the abuser, fear of losing parental love, fear of destroying the family and in most cases, the victim's complete trust in her abuser.

Didith's father threatened to kill the whole family if she told anyone of the rape. She was made to believe that she held the secret to keeping her family together. The burden of guilt automatically become hers if the family breaks up.

Elvira was raped at knifepoint by her father. She was beaten to submission, unable to resist lest her father discontinue her education.

In Myrna's case, her father claimed that he would teach her the "facts of life" to prepare her for marriage.

For Nena, the incestuous relationship with her father was “natural”, for she had assumed her mother’s role of running the household, which included a responsibility for her father’s sexual needs.

Piso did not realize at first, that her father was actually abusing her through forced oral sex. And on realizing this, she faced the dilemma of possibly initiating her parent’s separation.

Who were these victims to question the authority of their fathers? In Philippine society, the father is considered the head of the family, and the children are taught never to defy the father’s authority even when this is abused. They are taught to respect the sanctity of marriage and to value the family above everything else.

Hence, when the abuse begins, the victim sees no reason or need to question the righteousness of a father (or other male relative) whom she had trusted right from the start.

The sexual relationship could begin so subtly that the child does not realize that it is abnormal. Physical force then becomes unnecessary. Most daughters cooperate, and this is one reason why they suffer tremendous guilt later on. This is because children seldom question what grown-ups tell them to do.

Transferred Guilt

On learning of the abuse done to their daughters, the mothers reacted differently. Some were moved to immediate action. One demanded separation

from the husband but failed. One left her husband, and sought refuge for her and the children in her sister's home. She was so enraged she filed rape charges against her husband. However, she later withdrew the complaint, overcome by guilt and shame, as well as constant pressure from her husband's relatives.

While one can easily appreciate the mothers who acted immediately and decisively to stop the abuse, it would be unfair to judge the mothers who were less resolute or responsive as desired. True, there are instances when the mother refused to listen to the child and instead sides with the abuser. This is especially common in cases where the abuser is the father because for the mother, it is inconceivable that her own husband would be capable of abusing their own child.

Others who are made aware of the abuse prefer to pretend nothing wrong or irregular is going on. But in such cases, usually, it is not a matter of a wife's tolerance of incest but her sense of helplessness to change anything.

Philippine society holds marriage sacred. The majority think only the traditional nuclear family is acceptable to society, and that any deviation from this convention is equal to a social stigma, or to shouldering the awesome burden of raising the children alone.

The mother almost always resolves to ignore the problem, hoping this would go away by itself. Leaking the problem to the rest of the family could lead to a disastrous break-up of the marriage and the family. The irony here is that the more

the mother tries to preserve both her marriage and family, the more vulnerable to abuse she and her daughter become.

The risk is especially high in situations where the family is economically dependent on the father-abuser. This forces the mother to keep the family intact despite the father's repeated abuse of their child, if only for her children's survival.

Finally, Philippine society has always given men prerogative in practically any situation, while expecting the women to submit to the husband at all times. This thinking is promoted by all the powerful social institutions – the government, the church and the media.

The result is internalized subordination among the women, which immediately inhibits any negative reactions toward the husband. They do not dare question, much less defy, the husband, resigning themselves instead to their fate – including the sexual abuse of their child by the father.

In the case of the mother who, instead of sympathizing with her daughter, even accuses her of stealing her husband, this bizarre can be traced to the competition among women that is propagated by society's patriarchal structures. Because Filipino women are granted few privileges and rights, the tendency is for them to compete for limited resources, men included. As a result, women learn to compete with each other – even against their daughters – especially for the attention of the men they married.

Putting too much stress on the mother-woman angle, however is close to blaming her for the incest abuse. The accountability is shifted to her instead of on the man, the perpetrator of the crime.

The common reaction to an incestuous situation is : “What did the mother do or not do that triggered it?” The question implies not just the natural logic of a father’s abuse of his daughter but places the burden of curbing the abuse squarely on the mother.

“It is ironic that the family structure places the husband/father in the power position, yet responsibility for the incest is most frequently placed upon the least powerful in the structure, the children who are victims of incest, or upon the less powerful adult in the unit, the wife/mother.” (Scutt, 1990)

The tendency to consider incest as an abuser’s sexual gratification and not as his abuse of authority in the exercise of power is prevalent in Philippine society.

Even mothers rightfully angered by the discovery that their daughter was abused by the father are also often overwhelmed by guilt. They castigate themselves and argue that if they were only able to satisfy their husbands sexually, the incest would never have happened. The underlying belief here is that for many, providing sex is a wife’s obligation to her husband, so that if the husband seeks sexual satisfaction elsewhere, this is because the woman fails to fulfill her responsibilities as wife.

In the case of the working mother, she blames herself and thinks that if she had been a dutiful wife and stayed at home to watch over the children, the abuse would not have happened. As Scutt (1990) noted, “the inference is that women should remain at home to guard their daughters from their daughters’ fathers.” This thinking ignores a woman’s right, sometimes duty, to contribute to the family income and reinforces the patriarchal norm that a woman’s place is at home.

Employed or not, mothers of incest victims easily fall prey to self-blame, which leads to a guilt complex both self- and socially imposed.

The real issue are lost in the recriminations. This is not that the mother entrusted the children to the father and trusted their home to be a safe shelter for the family. The issue is that men abused this trust.

Effects of Incest

Incest victim suffer emotional depression immediately after the abuse. Many of them experience social withdrawal and a notable loss of self-esteem.

“Depression is...not merely sadness, but apathy; it is a state where nothing matters. One feels discouraged, disgusted, despairing; in depression one loses all hope. But because of having lost all expectations, one can no longer be disappointed...also said to be ‘anger turned against the self.’” (Blume, 1990)

The depression could get out of control, however, and the victims may develop suicidal tendencies. The victim contemplates killing herself.

“Life often hasn’t been worth much to the woman whose early years were filled with fears, horrors and virtual disregard for her needs and feelings.” (Blume, 1990)

In the case of Violy who was abused at the age of 5, social withdrawal was obvious. She was unnaturally quiet for a girl her age. At the same time , however, she had explosive tantrums, and would tear her clothes, roll on the floor and hurt herself. She often appeared nervous and could not look straight into people’s eyes, especially men.

According to Blume (1990), this kind of reaction could pave the way for more victimization.

“carrying herself ‘like a victim’ sets her up for continuing victimization. She often expects – even invites – disrespectful treatment...Or she acts so helpless, passive and apologetic for herself that others find her difficult to deal with...expecting abuse or rejection, she may become antagonistic and provocative. She unwittingly sabotages her own welfare.” (Blume, 1990)

Violy entered into noticeably destructive relationships, and convinced she could not build a mature relationship for herself, she set about destroying the relationships of other people.

Violy’s mood swings would drive her out into the streets in search of sex, consistent with Blume’s observation that sexual contact makes a relationship real

for many survivors, who often cannot make sense out of a relationship that contains no sexual activity (Blume, 1990).

Violy became too much for her family to handle and she was confined in a mental hospital. Yet, as she admitted, all she wanted was to be loved.

In a society that equates a woman's nubile worth with her virginity, a non-virgin (whether by choice or otherwise) is perceived as damaged, dirty and used. Some of the victims were in fact made to feel so. In the case of Didith, the mother herself forced her daughter into prostitution to make her condition of non-virginity productive. After all, she is no longer considered to have any personal integrity or virtue to protect.

The victim also suffers an emotional dilemma for it would have been easier to condemn the offender if he were a stranger. However, the abuse was committed by a man related to the victim, a man she was taught to love, trust and respect. The victim therefore feels violated but ultimately responsible, obliging herself to protect her abuser. The family could fall apart, or she could lose economic and emotional support if she speaks out.

The most common effects on the child victim are fear and shame. Sleeping patterns are disturbed. Most of them run away from home as effects of the sexual abuse. Psychological disorders occasionally spring up as a result of the experience. Although, some may suffer from physical injuries, it is the emotional wounds that takes so long to heal.

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher recommends that a similar study be made in the future. Due to difficulty in acquiring materials for reference, only a few studies were included. Attempts could be made to make it more comprehensive.

Future studies could focus their attention on local studies. Furthermore, interviews and observation could be made to give a first-hand information on the topic of child sexual abuse.

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