

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Short-term Effects of Child Sexual Abuse on Self-esteem in a Survey of
Young Adult Males

by

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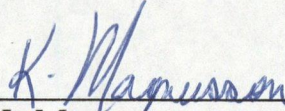
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THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES


The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Short-term Effects of Child Sexual Abuse on Self-esteem in a Survey of Young Adult Males" submitted by Mark Genuis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.



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ABSTRACT

Despite substantial interest, the extent of sexual abuse (defined in various ways, and studied in numerous populations), is still not well-understood. The initial or short-term psychological sequels of such abuse for the victims are fields which are only now beginning to be understood. Briere (1989) in a textbook on therapy for "adults molested as children" conceded that although progress is being made in the treatment of females, knowledge of psychological harm to male victims and the knowledge base which would allow effective treatment, is still fairly rudimentary. In a review of 1200 books and articles on child sexual abuse published between 1976 and 1987, Bagley and Thurston (1988) could locate only 41 studies which yielded valid or important information in male victims. There is clearly a need for well designed research in this area.

In the present study, 200 males between the ages of 18 and 27 who were registered as students at the University of Calgary completed a questionnaire (original in this work was that the questionnaire was programmed onto the Macintosh computer by the present author. On evaluation forms completed after the subjects completed the questionnaire, 93% of the subjects stated that they preferred this format over either personal interview or paper and pencil questionnaires). The rate of

disclosure of child sexual abuse was 14%. This was found to be significantly higher ($p < 0.05$) than the disclosure rate in a similar work (Sorrenti-Little, Robertson, & Bagley, 1984) conducted at the University of Calgary where the paper and pencil format was used.

The four main findings were that (a) student's in non-professional faculties of enrolment reported a significantly higher rate of child sexual abuse than those in professionally oriented faculties, (b) subjects separated from a parent during childhood for a period of more than six months reported a significantly higher rate of sexual abuse, (c) those subjects whose father's were either working as unskilled labourers or were unemployed reported a significantly higher rate of sexual abuse, and (d) at the time of the study, subjects who had been victims of child sexual abuse were significantly more interested in having sex with male children than the subjects who were non-victims. The main finding related to self-esteem in the short-term is that the type of feelings the victim had for the perpetrator (sexual versus not sexual) prior to the abuse was significantly related to the self-esteem of the victim after the abuse. Implications for future research are discussed.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Approval Page.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgments.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
List of Tables.....	ix
Chapter I: Introduction.....	1
I. Definitions of Child Sexual Abuse.....	2
II. Short and Long-Term Effects.....	3
III. Why Focus on Self-Esteem.....	5
Chapter II: Literature Review.....	7
I. Definitions of Child Sexual Abuse.....	7
II. Prevalence of the Sexual Abuse of Males.....	13
III. Underreporting.....	15
IV. Effects of Child Sexual Abuse on Male Victims.....	18
a. Short-Term Effects.....	19
b. Short-Term Effects Lasting into the Long-Term.....	20
c. Long-Term Effects.....	21
V. Possible Reasons Why Sexual Abuse Affects Victims.....	23
VI. Abuse Relevant Findings.....	25

a.	Age of Onset.....	25
b.	Gender Related Risk	26
c.	Single Incident Versus Multiple Abuse.....	27
d.	Types of Abuse.....	27
e.	Perpetrators of Abuse	29
f.	Other Information Relevant to Abuse.....	30
VII.	The Victim/Perpetrator Cycle.....	30
VIII.	Importance of Self-Esteem.....	32
a.	Global Self-Concept as a Predictor of Behaviour.....	33
VIII.	Using Computers to Gather Data	36
IX.	Summary.....	36
X.	Hypotheses.....	37
Chapter III:	Method.....	39
I.	General Procedures.....	39
II.	Sampling Method.....	40
III.	Specific Procedures.....	40
IV.	Subjects.....	44
V.	Instruments.....	45
VI.	Ethical Issues.....	47
Chapter IV:	Results.....	49
I.	Description of the Sample	49
II.	Descriptive Characteristics of Abused Males.....	50

III. Variables Related to Child Sexual Abuse of Males.....	51
IV. Nonsignificant Variables.....	54
V. Stepwise Discriminant Analysis.....	55
VI. Factors of Abuse Influencing the Self-Esteem of Male Victims.....	57
V. Trends in the Data.....	58
VI. Evaluation of the Hypotheses	60
Chapter V: Discussion.....	72
I. Summary of the Findings.....	72
II. Possible Reasons Why the Hypotheses Were Not Supported.....	72
III. Implications for Future Research.....	76
IV. Limitations of the Study.....	78
V. Clinical and Counselling Implications.....	79
VI. Conclusion.....	80
REFERENCES.....	82
Appendix A.....	96
Appendix B.....	98

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Descriptive Statistics of the Total Sample.....	62
Table 2	Relationship Between Faculty and Child Sexual Abuse.....	63
Table 3	Relationship Between Early Separation From a Parent and Child Sexual Abuse.....	64
Table 4	Relationship Between Father's Occupation and Child Sexual Abuse	65
Table 5	Relationship Between Father's Consumption of Alcohol and Child Sexual Abuse.....	66
Table 6	Relationship Between Child Sexual Abuse and Present Interest in Sex with and Older Male Partner.....	67
Table 7	Relationship Between Child Sexual Abuse and Interest in Sex with Male Children.....	68
Table 8	Stepwise Discriminant Analysis for the Abuse Predictor Variables.....	69
Table 9	Predicted Group Membership Based on the Canonical Discriminant Function	70
Table 10	Feelings for the Perpetrator Prior to Abuse with Short- Term Self-Esteem	71

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

While the sexual misuse and exploitation of children has existed at all times in history and in all types of social structures (Ennew, 1986; Rush, 1980), such abuse was not widely recognized by policy makers and human service professionals until the late 1970s (Bagley, 1984; Bagley & King, 1990; Bagley & Thurston, 1988; Government of Canada, 1984).

The extent of sexual abuse is still not well understood, however, and the initial or short-term psychological sequels of such abuse for the victims are only now beginning to be explored. Briere (1989) in a textbook on therapy for “adults molested as children” conceded that although progress is being made in the treatment of females, our knowledge of psychological harm to male victims and the knowledge base which would allow effective treatment is still fairly rudimentary. In a review of 1200 books and articles on child sexual abuse published between 1976 and 1987, Bagley and Thurston (1988) could locate only a limited number of research studies on male victims which had an acceptable methodology, or which produced substantive findings or generated testable hypotheses (Briere, Evans, Runtz, & Wall, 1988; Bruckner & Johnson, 1987; Burgess, Hartman & McCormack, 1987; Davis & Leitenberg, 1987; Finkelhor, 1982; 1985; Freeman-Longo, 1986; Freund, Watson & Freund, 1987; Groth & Birnbaum, 1978; Risin & Koss, 1987; Sebold, 1987; Spencer & Dunklee,

1986; Vander-Mey, 1988).

The causes of sexual abuse and therapy for the traumatic outcomes for female victims are now beginning to be understood (Briere, 1989; Browne & Finkelhor, 1986). Research on male victims is scarcer than on females, and there is less agreement or clarity on what psychological outcomes in the initial or short-term as well as the long-term might be. Writers in this area usually preface their work by pointing to the lack of research, and conclude with the need for further research.

The issues of defining child sexual abuse, why we should study the short-term effects of such abuse, and why we should focus on the effects of child sexual abuse on the self-esteem of the victims are addressed below.

This chapter ends with a summary outline for this thesis.

Definitions of Child Sexual Abuse

A central difficulty in finding rigorous work within the limited number of studies that have been conducted in the area of sexual abuse is the variations of the definitions of child sexual abuse used by different researchers. Both Greenburg (1979) and Browne and Finkelhor (1986) in their respective reviews of child sexual abuse noted that not all studies in this area employ compatible definitions of child sexual abuse. Some focus on experiences with older partners only, excluding coerced sexual experiences by peers, while others narrow in on child sexual abuse occurring solely within the family. Both Greenburg (1979) and Browne and Finkelhor (1986) stated that these differences in the samples made it

difficult to make comparisons among relevant studies. Browne and Finkelhor (1986) focused their review on child sexual abuse of females because “few clinical, and even fewer empirical, studies have been done on male victims...and it seems premature to draw conclusions at this point” (p. 66). Given the hesitation of these authors to include males in their review along with the finding of Bagley and Thurston (1988) that only a limited number of works involving males had an acceptable methodology, it seems clear that the difficulty of comparing studies and obtaining consistent relevant information between works focused on, or including males, is even greater than it is with works focusing on female victims. In the present thesis, child sexual abuse is operationalized as unwanted sexual contact (genital touching and fondling through to intercourse) while the victim is considered a child by legal definition. Since in the Province of Alberta a person is considered an adult when he or she turns eighteen years old, childhood is defined as including people up to the age of 17 years (see Chapter 2 for a more complete discussion).

Short and Long-Term Effects

It is clear that much more research is needed examining both the short and the long-term consequences of child sexual abuse of boys. In the research conducted to date, some relationship has been found between these short and long-term effects (Bagley & King, 1990). Moreover, a clearer understanding of the short-term effects may provide for a clearer understanding of the development of long-term consequences of being

sexually abused as a child. Bagley and King (1990) noted that long-term effects are based on reactions which emerged in childhood, and continue to mar adult adjustment of the victim of child sexual abuse.

The present research is designed to explore further the parameters and effects of sexual abuse of male children. Results from this may also provide questions for future examination. Results obtained from the present study are also intended to provide for a better understanding of the short-term effects on the self-esteem of males who have been sexually abused as children. Such understanding may enable effective treatment programs to be established in order to: a) aid the victims to subsequently function in a healthy manner on a daily basis, b) help victims resolve intrapsychic conflicts that have resulted from their abusive experience(s), and c) prevent a possible victim/perpetrator cycle (Sebold, 1987) from being completed. Another goal is to provide information which may help to establish policy and social regulations that will help provide for primary prevention of child sexual abuse, since Freeman-Longo (1986) observed that the majority of sexual abusers were sexually abused as children, but very few overcame their victimization. Bagley and King (1990) also emphasized that “adolescence may be the only time for many individuals when intervention and treatment can prevent the cycle of sexual abuse” (p. 190). A major focus of the present thesis is the victim’s self-esteem since it appears to play a key role in healthy psychological functioning.

Why Focus on Self-Esteem?

Both the development of and the importance of self-esteem has been a central concern of numerous researchers over the past four decades (Adler, 1969; Bowlby, 1946, 1965, 1969, 1979; Davis, Hoffman, & Quigley, 1988; Dinkmeyer & Dinkmeyer, 1983; Foa, 1961; Freedman & Hurley, 1979; Hauser, 1978; Hummel & Roselli, 1983; Hurley, 1976a, 1976b; Maslow, 1970; Offer, Ostrov, & Howard, 1982; O'Malley & Bachman, 1983; Rogers, 1980; Shoemaker, 1987; Widra and Amidon, 1987). From their work, these authors have argued that behaviour develops as a consequence of the level of self-esteem. Young and Bagley (1982) argued that in adulthood, it is global self-concept which is the important factor in determining behaviour, and that a positive self-esteem in adolescence is a necessary precursor to a positive global self-concept .

Findings from previous research on sexual abuse of males indicate a long-term negative impact on the self-esteem of the victim. However, findings related to the short-term effect of sexual abuse on self-esteem are somewhat conflicting and it is unclear as to whether the sexual abuse has any effect on the self-esteem of the male victims in the short-term after the abusive experiences.

One of main goals of this thesis is to gain further understanding about the relationship between child sexual abuse and the self-esteem of male victims. Such understanding may have implications for both prevention of self-esteem problems and treatment of problems that may

arise.

The second chapter of this thesis contains a review of the findings from the literature on the child sexual abuse of boys and a presentation of four hypotheses to be tested. The method of this study is discussed in chapter three which is organized into the following areas: general procedures, sampling method, specific procedures, subjects, instruments, and ethical issues. Chapter four contains the results obtained in the present study. The findings are reported in subsections and are supported by tabular presentation. This chapter ends with an evaluation of the hypotheses. Chapter five is a discussion of the findings together with the limitations of the study. This chapter ends with a conclusion and implications for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter focuses on findings from research on child sexual abuse of males. Particular focus is given to those aspects which are relevant to the present thesis. These include an overview of definitions of child sexual abuse which have been used in previous works. Moreover, the issues surrounding prevalence rates of sexual abuse of male children and underreporting are also addressed. Finally more specific and pertinent issues relevant to the thesis are examined. Because the focus of this work is on the short-term effects on the self-esteem of male victims of child sexual abuse, the importance of self-esteem in this context is underscored even though its role as an essential element in human development is also discussed.

Definitions of Child Sexual Abuse

A general definition of child sexual abuse of boys has not as yet been achieved. This obviously makes research in the area difficult. To further add to the difficulty of comparing the findings of different studies which do not define child sexual abuse in the same way, some researchers have not reported clear definitions in their work (e.g., Tong, Oates, & McDowell, 1987). A standard definition has not been reached and thus the term child sexual abuse cannot be assumed to have a particular meaning when presented without a specific definition.

In the following discussion, outlines of those works which involved male subjects with clearly stated definitions of child sexual abuse are reviewed. The aim here is to develop a useful definition of child sexual abuse which can be operationalized and clearly measured so as to provide consistency throughout various research. Thus, findings from these different studies may be compared and knowledge may be advanced. The inconsistency in the definitions used between works studying child sexual abuse is important to address because the confusion is reflected not only in academic work, but also in the courts through laws and judgments which directly affect the victims of child sexual abuse, their families, the perpetrators, and society as a whole (Finkelhor & Redfield, 1984). These legal results have further muddled the waters.

As part of a national survey conducted in Great Britain, Baker and Duncan (1985) obtained data from 2019 men and women. In this study, the researchers defined childhood as ranging up to the age of sixteen years, and child sexual abuse as occurring when another person who was sexually mature, involved the child in any activity which the other person expected to lead to their sexual arousal. This might involve intercourse, touching, exposure of the sexual organs, showing pornographic material, or talking about sexual matters in an erotic way. Such a definition is very broad and unclear as it does not explain what sexual abuse is to the subjects, and is therefore difficult for the researchers to measure and compare cases. Other works which utilize equally broad definitions of child sexual abuse

are Finkelhor (1984, 1985), Finkelhor and Hotaling (1984), Finkelhor, Hotaling, Lewis and Smith (1990), Fromuth and Burkhart (1989), Pettis and Hughes (1985), and Reinhart (1987).

Pierce and Pierce (1985) examined the records of 205 reported cases of child sexual abuse (25 cases of abuse of males and 182 females). They defined sexual abuse as “exposure, fondling the child’s genitals, masturbation, intercourse, and attempted intercourse” (p. 192). This definition is more precise than those previously discussed, though it may be sometimes difficult to establish a measure to decide when seeing the body of another person is indeed exposure and thus constitutes abuse and when it does not.

Condy, Templar, Brown and Veaco (1987) reported data in California from college students as well as inmates in medium security prisons whose crimes ranged from non-sex crimes, to rape, to child molestation. Within their definition, Condy et al. (1987), allowed only for contact abuse. They considered childhood up to 16 years of age, and asked the males only about experiences with women who were at least five years older than themselves. Although perhaps appropriate for the specific requirements of Condy et al. (1987), this definition of child sexual abuse is inadequate as a general definition since children are sometimes abused by those less than five years older than themselves as Davis and Leitenberg (1987) have pointed out. Moreover, women appear to constitute only a minority of offenders (Finkelhor, 1984).

In a study where the data was gathered from adolescent male runaways, Janus, Burgess, and McCormack (1987) included both contact and non-contact acts within their definition of child sexual abuse. They did, however, explicitly state in their questioning that the acts, contact or not, had to be unwanted. This condition (explicitly asking if the sexual acts were unwanted) adds to the clarity of the definition as it removes any suggestion of consent or mutual sexual action. In a similar view, Spencer and Dunklee (1986) reported examinations conducted on 140 boys who had been sexually abused. Although no explicit definition was stated in this article, they discussed only contact abuse. In discussing the contact abuse, the authors were able to present their findings in a manner according to this operational definition. Faller (1989), however, did not use the criteria of consent in her report of cases taken from medical records of both girls and boys who had been sexually abused. The size of her sample of males was 87, collected over the time from 1979 to 1986. The criteria listed in the definition used by Faller (1989) was that the perpetrator had to be at least five years older than the victim, and that sexual contact had to have taken place. This study, therefore, suffered from the same shortcomings as the work of Condy et al. (1987).

Krug (1989) concluded that inadequate attention has been directed to the sexual abuse of male children, and particularly scarce are data of abuse on males by female perpetrators. Accordingly, Krug (1989) focused on child sexual abuse of males by their mothers; he reported case histories and

discussed the implications and consequences of such abuse. Krug (1989) defined child sexual abuse as inappropriate sexually related contact between mother and son which was prolonged and in which there was unsuitable intimacy. Such contact included “sleeping together with physical, but not necessarily genital contact; mother masturbating while sharing the bed with the son; actual sexual intercourse between the mother and son; etc.” (p. 112). The difficulty with this definition is that it requires multiple incidents. In many cases of sexual abuse there has been only one incident, however, and this single incident appears to have at least some effect on the victim (Bagley & King, 1990).

In their study of sexual abuse, Fritz, Stoll and Wagner (1981) administered a 45-item questionnaire to 952 college students who were above the age of 18 years. The questionnaire was administered to both male and female students. While no specific definition of sexual abuse was given, the authors indicated that questions were asked about the salient components of molestation, all of which included sexual contact. The work of Fritz et al. has important implications for researchers in defining child sexual abuse. The rate of disclosure in the work of Fritz et al. (1981) was 4.8 percent as compared to 15 percent reported by Fromuth and Burkhart (1989) in a parallel study which used a much broader and unclear definition of child sexual abuse which included both contact and noncontact experiences.

In Child Sexual Abuse: The Search For Healing, Bagley and King

(1990) defined sexual abuse as any activity which diminishes or damages the budding sexual development of a child. Steele (1986) argued for much the same definition. In a review, Bagley, (1991) used the same concept but added to the previous definition. Child sexual abuse, he argued, is any unwanted approach or action of a sexual nature involving a child and/or which causes the child (anyone younger than 17 years old) psychological discomfort or pain having more than transitory effects.

The use of Bagley's (1991) more inclusive definition may be important for empirical work as it may allow for more consistency in findings between studies as well as give a better indication of the extent of the problem of child sexual abuse. Bagley (1988), in a national Canadian survey, used a definition consistent with the one provided by Bagley (1991). In this survey, a sample of 935 Canadian males were questioned about "unwanted" sexual acts prior to their 17th birthday: 8.2 percent of the sample reported at least unwanted genital fondling while they were children or adolescents and one third of these assaults involved attempted or achieved anal intercourse on the victim. Sixty percent of victims experienced such assault on more than three occasions. For 19 percent of the male victims, the assaults resulted in "significant emotional hurt." The assailant was known to the victim in 75 percent of cases and in some ten percent of assaults, the assailant was a member of the immediate or extended family. Eighty percent of victims had not told anyone about the assaults.

The aspects of the definitions presented above which provide the clearest avenue and which allow for clear parameters to be established are those of unwanted contact. Therefore, in the present thesis, child sexual abuse is operationalized as unwanted sexual contact (genital touching and fondling through to intercourse) while the victim is considered a child by legal definition. Since in the Province of Alberta a person is considered an adult when he or she turns 18 years old, in the present thesis childhood is defined as including people up to the age of 17 years.

Prevalence of the Sexual Abuse of Males

While examining the rates of child sexual abuse of males reported here from other studies, it is important to be cognizant of the variability of definition between studies as this affects the incidents included as child sexual abuse in any particular study. In two surveys of university students, Finkelhor (1985) found prevalence rates of 4.1 percent and 4.8 percent in two surveys of college students. Fromuth and Burkhart (1989) who administered a questionnaire to 582 students in introductory psychology courses at two different American universities, reported a prevalence rate of 15 percent from one sample and 13 percent from the other. Fritz et al. (1981) reported a prevalence rate of 4.8 percent of child sexual abuse of males. Moreover, Bagley (1988) reported disclosure rates of child sexual abuse, defined as unwanted sex acts prior to their seventeenth birthday, of 8.2 percent. Baker and Duncan (1985) conducted a national survey in Great Britain, and reported a disclosure rate of child sexual abuse of males

of eight percent. Finkelhor et al. (1990) in a national survey involving 1145 men in the United States, reported that 15 percent of the male respondents disclosed childhood sexual abuse. In this telephone interview, 24 percent of the people contacted refused to participate in the Finkelhor et al. (1990) study. This biased sampling involved in telephone interviews may have distorted the disclosure rates in unknown ways. Moreover, the definition of child sexual abuse used in this survey included non-contact incidents and also left much interpretation of abuse to the imagination of the respondent, as each question gave a short description of possible events and then ended with the phrase “or anything like that” (p. 20).

In a comparative study, Condy et al. (1987) found that college men reported having fewer sexual contacts with a female at least five years older than themselves than did incarcerated men before the subjects turned 16 years old. Sixteen percent of the college men (n=359), 57 percent of the rapists (n = 65), 37 percent of the child molesters (n = 92), and 47 percent of the non-sex offenders (n = 55) in their sample reported such contact. The findings of this work are important, but the honesty of the incarcerated subjects may be questioned. In the Janus et al. (1987) study the subjects were runaways between the ages of 15 and 20 years old at the time of the study (mean = 18.1 years). They were quite variable in runaway behaviour, however, as they had run away from home from one to 40 times (mean = 5) and the age range at the first run away was six to 19 years (mean = 14.5). At the time of the study, 21 percent of the subjects

had been away from home for less than one month, 48 percent one month to one year, and 31 percent longer than one year. In this study, 79.4 percent of the subjects reported being both sexually and physically abused, with 38.2 percent of the sample being solely sexually abused. In addition to the problems of biased samples in this area, underreporting may also be a significant problem.

Underreporting of Sexual Abuse

Researchers studying the area of sexual abuse of boys have noted that there is a problem of underreporting of abusive experiences by victims and have attempted to explain why this may be so (Bagley, 1986; Bolton, Morris & MacEachron, 1990; Finkelhor, 1985; Nasjleti, 1986). Pettis and Hughes (1985) estimated that there were about three to four times as many cases of abuse than disclosed. The reasons presented for the lack of disclosure by males of their sexually abusive experiences are discussed below.

Bolton et al. (1990) argued that males are brought up and taught, both covertly and overtly, to be self reliant, to keep their feelings inside, and not to depend on others to take care of their problems for them. These authors wrote that males are often taught that to utilize the services of others rather than rely solely on oneself is a weakness. Perhaps then, rather than appear weak, males often follow their teachings, and keep their abusive experiences secret. Bolton et al. (1990) also pointed out that the fear of homosexuality remains present in the mind of the male victim who

is sexually abused by a male perpetrator. The victim may be questioning his own sexual identity after the abusive experience and could be afraid that others will confirm that fear and question his sexual orientation. Finally, the victim could be afraid of the embarrassment of public knowledge that the victim has been involved in such an act with the offender.

In support of these contentions is Nasjleti's work (1986) wherein boys who have been sexually abused felt at least ambivalence, if not dread about disclosing their experiences. Reporting may activate a number of fears in the victim: that he will be ridiculed, rejected, and considered unmanly, that he has a sexual abnormality or a mental illness, or that he will not be believed and nothing will be done. With so little known in this area, the last fear outlined may be a very real possibility. Nasjleti (1986) concluded that large gaps exist in the understanding of male victims of sexual abuse. She went on to explain that it is commonplace for males not to express feelings of dependency, fear, or helplessness. Most boys are encouraged to develop physical strength to protect themselves. Nasjleti (1986) stressed that the underlying message in games and toys is that being nonaggressive, nonassertive, noncompetitive is not masculine. Boys learn from early childhood not to depend on anyone and that being masculine means not being a victim (Nasjleti, 1986). If the abuse goes undisclosed, the victim may turn anger inward and if the desire to reach out is repressed, such expressions may manifest themselves unconsciously in an unpredictable fashion.

Nasjleti (1986) also discussed the belief by some that sexual abuse by a female perpetrator is a positive experience. Clinical observations suggest otherwise, with sexual aggressiveness (displayed in adulthood as rape, incest, and child sexual abuse), mental disorders, and homosexuality often being the outcome of sexual abuse of boys by a female perpetrator (Krug, 1989; Nasjleti, 1986).

Bagley (1986) also cited shame and lack of confidence in a system which might protect the child as reasons that a male victim may not report being sexually abused. Bagley (1986) also wrote, however, that threats by the perpetrator may prevent disclosure by the victim, or a lack of confidence in any adult figure would reduce the chances of disclosure.

In a similar vein, Finkelhor (1985) described three main reasons why boys are less likely to report their sexually abusive experiences than girls. First, as described above, boys are raised with a male ethic of self-reliance and silence about traumatic experiences. Second, is the fear of being labelled homosexual. Third, Finkelhor (1985) argued that the boys may fear that reporting will take away their own freedom and independence. Moreover, Finkelhor (1985) also claimed that child protection agencies see fewer cases of sexual abuse of boys because such agencies deal almost exclusively with intrafamilial child sexual abuse, and this occurs less frequently to boys. While little is conclusive about the underreporting of sexual abuse of boys and possible underlying reasons, much work remains to be done in this area. The effects of such abuse

needs further study as well.

Effects of Child Sexual Abuse on Male Victims

Commenting on the effects of sexual abuse, Kempe and Kempe (1984) wrote that:

boys do worse than girls as victims of sexual abuse. Both mother-son and father-son leave the boy with such severe emotional insult that emotional growth is often blocked. Some of the boys tend to be severely restricted and may be unable to handle stress without becoming psychotic, while others may have symptoms but will never be recognized as incest victims. Incest then, can be ruinous for the male, while it can be overcome with, or sometimes without help by many girls (p. 190).

The above statement by Kempe and Kempe (1984) draws attention to the seriousness of sexual abuse of male children. Their comparison of recovery between genders, however, has not been supported empirically.

Intra and extra-familial sexual abuse of boys has at least three sorts of results: short-term effects (those exhibited within two years after the ending of the sexual abuse), short-term effects found to last and become long-term effects, and long-term effects (those exhibited more than two years after the ending of the sexual abuse which were not necessarily present in the short-term).

Short-Term Effects

Short-term effects related to the self-esteem of the victim have been found to vary as the evidence on this point is scanty and conflicting. Most findings are tentative and definitions vary between studies, as do the method of data collection. Most studies have utilized either a structured personal interview (e.g., Baker & Duncan 1985; Courtois 1979), paper and pencil questionnaires (e.g., Condy et al., 1987; Fromuth & Burkhart, 1989), a combination of the two (e.g., Tong et al., 1987) or checked medical records or clinical reports (e.g., De Jong, Hervada, & Emmett, 1983; Farber, Showers, Johnson, Joseph, & Oshins, 1984; Herbert, 1987; Reinhart, 1987) in order to gather the necessary data. Finkelhor (1990) used telephone interviews to collect data regarding child sexual abuse experiences.

Most researchers report diminished self-esteem for the victim in the short-term following sexual abuse (Bagley & King, 1990; Bagley & Ramsay, 1985; Bagley and Young, 1990; Blake-White & Kline, 1985; Bolton et al., 1990; Conte & Shuerman, 1987a, 1987b; de Young, 1982b; De Francis, 1969; Steele, 1986). At least one study, however, reported no difference between the self-esteem of boys in the short-term after being sexually abused as compared to that of control subjects (Tong et al., 1987). The same authors who reported no difference in self-esteem did report a diminished self-confidence in those male subjects who had been victims of child sexual abuse (Tong et al., 1987).

Other short-term effects of child sexual abuse which have been noted for male victims are depression, guilt, feelings of inferiority, dissociation, initial fear, homosexual tendencies, suicidal feelings, learned helplessness, distrust and, shock and surprise leading to anger and resentment (Adams-Tucker, 1982; Bagley, 1986; Bagley & King, 1990; Bagley & Ramsay, 1985; Bagley and Young, 1990; Blake-White and Kline, 1985; Conte & Shuerman, 1987a, 1987b; de Young, 1982a; de Young, 1982b; De Francis, 1969; Steele, 1986; Tufts New England Medical Centre, 1984; Woods & Dean, 1984).

Behaviour associated with child sexual abuse includes self-destructive behaviour, increased suicide attempts, eating disorders, delinquency, interpersonal problems, substance abuse, prostitution, failing grades in school, school dropout, anger and hostility, acting out, inappropriate sexual behaviour, running away, victim/perpetrator cycle, fewer friends, increased aggression, and increased sexual awareness (Bagley, 1984; Bagley, 1986; Bagley, 1989; Bagley & King, 1990; Bagley & Ramsay, 1986; Bagley & Young, 1987; Bagley & Young, 1990; Briere, 1984; Briere & Runtz, 1986; de Young, 1982a; Dixon, Arnold & Calestro, 1978; Groth & Birnbaum, 1978; Janus, Scarlon, & Price, 1984; Jones, Gruber, & Timbers, 1981; McCormack, Janus, & Burgess, 1986; Silbert & Pines, 1983; Steele, 1986; Tong et al., 1987).

Short-Term Effects Lasting Into the Long Term

Numerous writers have noted that many of the short-term effects

become long-term effects in the sexually abused child (Bagley, 1985; Bagley & King, 1990; Bagley & Young, 1990; Bruckner & Johnson, 1987; de Young, 1982a; Freeman-Longo, 1986; Gomes-Schwartz, Horowitz & Sauzier, 1985; Groth & Birnbaum, 1978; Hilberman-Carmen, Rieker, & Mills, 1984; Janus, Scarlon, & Price, 1984; Tufts New England Medical Centre, 1984; Vander-Mey, 1988). This trend may provide justification for the use of the term initial effects by Browne and Finkelhor (1986) rather than short-term effects as is commonly used. The wording “short-term” carries with it the implication of not lasting or soon ending, whereas these effects may last over a long period of time (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986).

These lasting effects are alienation (Bagley, 1985; Bagley & King, 1990), a desperate and often ineffective search for nurturing (Bagley, 1985; Bagley & King, 1990), distrust (Bagley, 1985; Bagley & King, 1990), low self-esteem (Bagley, 1985; Bagley & King, 1990; Bagley & Young, 1990; Steele, 1986), depression (Bagley, 1985; Bagley, 1986; Bagley & King, 1990; Bagley & Young, 1990), guilt (Bagley, 1985; Bagley & King, 1990), and self-harm (Bagley, 1985; Bagley & King, 1990; Bagley & Young, 1990; de Young, 1982a; Halliday, 1985; Janus et al., 1984)

Long-Term Effects

The following is a summary of factors, many of which are the same as those experienced in the short-term, associated with child sexual abuse in the long-term: low self-esteem, depression, learned helplessness,

attribution of control to external factors, confusion regarding sexual orientation, guilt, alienation, distrust, homosexual tendencies, victim/perpetrator cycle, problems in psychosexual relations, becoming a neglectful and/or abusive caretaker, multiple personalities, sexual masochism, asthma, frigidity, promiscuity, eating disorders, self-harm, addictions, prostitution, obesity, epilepsy, and increased acceptance of pain (Bagley, 1985; Bagley, 1986; Bagley & King, 1990; Bagley & Young, 1990; Bolton et al., 1990; Brunold, 1964; de Young, 1982a; de Young, 1984; Finch, 1967; Finkelhor, 1984; Freeman-Longo, 1986; Groth & Birnbaum, 1978; Halliday, 1985; Janus et al., 1984; Johnson & Shrier, 1987; Krug, 1989; Meiselman, 1978; Nasjleti, 1986; Steele, 1986; Swift, 1979; Woods & Dean, 1984). Many of these researchers speculated causal links between abuse and these factors. It is not likely, however, that sexual abuse alone could lead to this array of psychopathology. A more likely explanation may be that many victims of child sexual abuse are raised in environments which are very traumatic where other deleterious conditions interact with the sexual abuse to cause these factors within the victims. A serious consequence of such experiences is the victim/perpetrator cycle. Steele (1986) specifically referred to this when he noted that the type of abuse perpetrated does not necessarily transmit from one generation to the next. But abuse (whether sexual, physical, or psychological) can often be traced back through three or four generations in the history of the perpetrator.

The work conducted in this area of study points to a trend where the short-term effects of child sexual abuse remain steady and worsen throughout the lives of the victims. Why are sexually abusive experiences related to the factors that are summarized above?

Possible Reasons Why Sexual Abuse Affects Victims

Bolton et al. (1990) wrote that those in the field of child sexual abuse agree that such maltreatment of children can cause harm to the victim, but authors disagree as to the nature and severity. Bolton et al. (1990) went on to argue that:

The single most important variable in reducing trauma associated with the sexually abusive event for both sexes was the availability of a support system for the child. Simply put, victims from families which demonstrate significant problems and pathology do worse than those who have supportive relationships with nonoffending adults and siblings. (p. 76).

If the social support in the child's life is lacking, then the effects of the sexual abuse may be magnified. Both Steele (1986) and Bagley and King (1990) are in agreement with this. One of the reasons for child sexual abuse having deleterious effects on the victims is that through such abuse, there is a disregard by the abuser for the child's own state of development and needs within that state. The corollary of this disregard of the child is that the interactions between the caregiver and child are excessively oriented toward the caregiver's own whims, needs and

satisfactions. Inconsistency of caregiving, where the caregiver is the perpetrator, also adds to the confusion for the child. No caregiver, even the most devoted, can be completely consistent in child care, but infants can adapt to these “normal” inconsistencies. Extreme inconsistencies, however, such as is shown through child sexual abuse may leave the child in a state of confusion and disarray (Bagley & King, 1990; Steele, 1986).

Children, both boys and girls, who have felt inadequately cared for by their mothers, and have also been sexually abused by other family members, seem to have an especially difficult time as they grow up and try to be part of society. They have an especially low self-esteem and a poor sense of identity which is particularly evident in the sphere of sexuality. They continue to feel exploited and may have the same tendency exploit others. Males tend to feel much more ashamed, embarrassed and denigrated by their past experiences, whereas girls seem to feel more degraded and dirty or despoiled. Both carry a deep lasting, although often unconscious, sense of fear, anger, and hatred toward authorities and against those whom they feel have exploited them in the past and will do so again in the future. A significant number of such youngsters of both sexes eventually get into prostitution but most have other types of sexual problems and true intimacy seems unattainable (Steele, 1986).

These findings are in agreement with Kempe and Kempe's (1984), conclusion that “a single molestation by a stranger...may cause only transitory harm to normal children living with secure, reassuring parents.”

(p. 188). The information about social support outlined above may be a critical variable in determining the extent of both the short-term and lasting effects of child sexual abuse. There are several other pertinent findings that are relevant to abuse.

Abuse Relevant Findings

Age of Onset

Reports on the victim's age at the onset of child sexual abuse vary with some reporting males to be younger than females when first sexually abused; Pierce & Pierce (1985) reported 8.6 years of age as the mean age of onset for males versus 10.6 years as the mean age of onset for females. De Jong et al. (1983) reported 8.6 versus 10.4 years respectively. Davis and Leitenberg (1987) also reported that when the perpetrator is an adolescent, and the victim is a child, the proportion of male victims is higher as opposed to when the victims are peer aged or older than the offender. Other findings indicate that the males are older than girls at the time they are first sexually abused with Finkelhor et al. (1990) reporting 9.9 years versus 9.6 years, Baker and Duncan (1985) reporting 12.03 years versus 10.74 years and Finkelhor (1984) reporting 11.2 years as the mean age of male victim's at the onset of child sexual abuse versus 10.2 years as the mean age of onset for female victims. The modal age of the male victim at the time of onset of sexual abuse was reported by Pierce and Pierce (1985) and De Jong et al. (1983) to be seven years of age. The modal age for onset of abuse for females was reported by Pierce and

Pierce (1985) to be 14 years. De Jong et al. (1983) reported bimodal ages of six and 15 years for female victims. No social class differences between victims has been found according to sex (Baker & Duncan, 1985), and the younger the age of onset, the more abuse the victim experiences (Baker & Duncan, 1985). Younger victims appear to be at greater risk of being abused by known assailants, either relatives or friends (De Jong et al. 1983; Pettis & Hughes, 1985).

Gender Related Risk

Baker and Duncan (1985) and Farber et al. (1984) report males to be at higher risk of abuse by known assailants, whereas Reinhart (1987) and Tong et al. (1987) reported females to be at higher risk, and De Jong et al. (1983) reported an equal risk of children of both sexes to be sexually abused by someone known to them.

Farber et al. (1984) reported males to be at higher risk of child sexual abuse by a member of their immediate family, while Baker and Duncan (1985), Finkelhor et al. (1990), and Tong et al. (1987) found females to be at higher risk. De Jong et al. (1983) and Reinhart (1987), however, reported an equal risk for both male and female children of being abused by a member of their immediate family. To add to the confusion, Tong et al. (1987) reported females to be at higher risk of child sexual abuse by a member of their extended family, whereas Baker and Duncan (1985), De Jong et al. (1983), Farber et al. (1984) and Reinhart (1987) report both males and females to be at the same risk of this

occurrence.

Finally males are reported to be at higher risk than girls of being abused by strangers (Finkelhor et al., 1990; Tong et al., 1987). Findings are also conflicting here, however, as Baker and Duncan (1985) found females to be at higher risk of being abused by a stranger, and De Jong et al. (1983), Farber et al. (1984) and Reinhart (1987) reported an equal risk of child sexual abuse at the hands of strangers for both boys and girls. Children who are sexually abused may have the experience once or several times.

Single Incident Versus Multiple Abuse

Baker and Duncan (1985) reported that strangers are more likely to perpetrate abuse on a victim in a single incident than they are to repeatedly abuse the same child. Baker and Duncan (1985) also found males more likely to be subject to repeated abuse by the same person whereas females were more likely to experience multiple abusers. Finkelhor et al. (1990) and Reinhart (1987), however, found both males and females to be at equal risk for multiple abuse. Abuse can also take a variety of forms.

Types of Abuse

Males appear to report a greater variety and number of sexually abusive experiences than females, and penetration (anal for male victims and both vaginal and anal for female victims) seems equally likely in both genders (Baker & Duncan, 1985). In the De Jong et al. (1983) study, most males reported anal assault, and oral-genital contact between perpetrators

and male victims was reported by Farber et al. (1984) to be more likely than when the victim was female.

In the Finkelhor et al. (1990) study, 62 percent of the male and 49 percent of the female respondents reported experiencing actual or attempted intercourse. For male victims, force was reportedly used in 15 percent of the cases and in nine percent of the cases for female victims. Swift (1979) reported that males are at greater risk of intercourse and other completed acts (e.g., fondling and oral-genital contact) than females.

Reinhart (1987) examined reports of male respondents who had experienced contact child sexual abuse and divided the sample into groups according to the age of the victims at the time of the onset of the sexual abuse. For respondents who were sexually abused between birth and two years of age, 94 percent reported contact. Of those sexually abused between the ages of three and five years, 84 percent reported contact abuse. Of those respondents who were sexually abused between the ages of six and eight years, 89 percent disclosed contact sexual abuse. Ninety-four percent of the subjects who had been abused between the ages of nine and 11 years reported contact sexual abuse. Of the respondents who disclosed being sexually abused between the ages of 12 and 14 years, 82 percent reported contact abuse, and finally 100 percent of the 15 to 17 year old victims reported physical sexual contact in their experiences of being sexually abused. Contact abuse then seems to be very frequent across all ages and becomes universal for adolescents who are sexually abused. Who are the

perpetrators of the abuse?

Perpetrators of Abuse

De Jong et al. (1983) found that the perpetrators were generally young, the same race as victims, most assailants were male, and that most of the female assailants acted with a male accomplice. Finkelhor et al. (1990) found that half of the perpetrators were authority figures to the victims and most were ten or more years older than the victims. He also found that 83 percent of the perpetrators of male victims were male, which is similar to Swift's (1979) report that 84 percent of the perpetrators were male. Reinhart (1987) reported that 96 percent of the perpetrators were male and that half of the female perpetrators assaulted children with a male accomplice. For adolescent perpetrators, Reinhart (1987) found that adolescents represented 19 percent of the perpetrators of male victims and eight percent of the perpetrators of female victims. This is inconsistent with the report of Davis and Leitenberg (1987) who reported that up to 50 percent of sexual abuse was perpetrated by adolescent offenders. Moreover, the adolescent offenders assaulted female children, and 47 percent of the male assailants assaulted children while baby sitting. Sixty-three percent of the female assailants also assaulted the children while baby sitting. Davis and Leitenberg (1987) concluded that adolescents were less likely to be coercive and use force than were adult perpetrators.

Finkelhor (1984) found that 79 percent of the perpetrators in his sample were over 21 years old, but that 50 percent of the reported cases

involved assailants of under 21 years of age. One possible explanation for the discrepancy in the Davis and Leitenberg (1987), Reinhart (1987) and Finkelhor (1984) findings is that the adolescent may not have the power or resources to keep the abuse hidden that an adult may have. Therefore, disclosure of abuse perpetrated by adolescents is higher than the disclosure perpetrated by adults.

Other Information Relevant to Abuse

Pierce and Pierce (1985) reviewed the records obtained between 1976 and 1979 from a child sexual abuse hotline. In reviewing these reports (n = 25), they found that 38 percent of abused males had no father figure, compared to 12 percent of female victims and that only 24 percent of male victims lived with their natural fathers as compared to 58 percent of the female victims. When abuse occurred within the family, the stepfather was most likely to be the perpetrator

Farber et al. (1984) found no major differences in the assault characteristics between female and male victims. They concluded that the lack of major differences between female and male victims suggests that offender variables, such as power over a helpless victim, may be more influential in choice of victim than sex of the child. De Jong et al. (1983) found that violence and coercion decreases with victim-perpetrator familiarity.

The Victim/Perpetrator Cycle

Summit (1983) speculated that for many victims of child sexual

abuse, the rage they feel incubates over years of not reporting the abuse. This results in inadequate coping and frustration, and counterfeit attempts at intimacy, only to erupt as a pattern of abuse against offspring in the next generation. Summit (1983) went on to write that male victims of child sexual abuse are more likely than female victims to turn their rage outward in aggressive and antisocial behaviour. They are even more intolerant of their helplessness than the female victim and more likely to rationalize that they are exploiting the relationship for their own benefit.

Child molestation and rape seem to be part of the legacy of rage for the sexually abused boy (Summit, 1983). Sebold (1987), in an article where he discussed the indicators of child sexual abuse in males, also argued that when they become adults, male victims of child sexual abuse may be more likely to become perpetrators than either female victims of people who have not been sexually abused. Reinhart (1987) similarly noted that some male victims of child sexual abuse later become perpetrators. Davis and Leitenberg (1987) reported that through clinical experience they noticed that male adolescents who molest younger boys have a particularly high incidence of having themselves been sexually abused when they were younger. More formally, Gomes-Schwartz (1984) found that 38 percent of a sample of adolescent sex offenders confirmed reports of having been sexually abused at an earlier age. Longo (1982) also reported 47 percent of a sample of adolescent sex offenders being sexually abused, while Becker, Kaplan, Cunningham-Rathner, and Kavoussi (1986) reported 23

percent, and Fehrenbach, Smith, Monastersky, and Deisher (1986) reported 19 percent. Davis and Leitenberg (1987) noted that in the Fehrenbach et al. (1986) results, approximately the same frequency of having been sexually abused was found for adolescent offenders accused of rape (20%) but was lower in the case of offenders accused of noncontact offences.

It appears from this information that the concern of the boy victim becoming a perpetrator is a real possibility. Nevertheless, further research is required to confirm this. Factors influencing the completion of the cycle need to be explicated, and research directed at treating and preventing the completion of the victim/perpetrator cycle from occurring is urgently needed. Meanwhile, self-esteem is also central to understanding the impact of sexual abuse.

Importance of Self-Esteem

In this section attempts are made to explain global self-concept and illustrate the importance of a positive global self-concept in people's lives.

Young and Bagley (1982) have developed a model for the development of global self-concept. In doing so, they differentiated between self-esteem, self-concept and self-image and placed each of these concepts in perspective within a model outlining the development of global self-concept. The development of global self-concept begins with situated self-esteem, which is defined as evaluations of the self in various situations, and self-concept, which is an awareness of self-characteristics becoming more salient with age. The situated self-esteem and self-concept are

incorporated to form the self-esteem, which is an evaluation of self-characteristics, based on prolonged and complex interactions with others.

From here individuals are able to form personal identities as well as cultural identities, which is an awareness of themselves in relation to, and the forming of an identification with, a particular cultural group.

Cognitive identity is developed as a result of the forming of both a personal and a cultural identity. It is defined as the knowledge of oneself as a member of a group, or as a particular person. From the cognitive identity comes the emotional identity or self-image, which is an affective component representing an individual's sense of personal and cultural belongingness, meaningfulness, and a sense of worth. From here the global self-concept is formed through the integration of all of the parts of the self, related to one another in particular configurations representing varying degrees of ego integration, and differing degrees of success in the resolution of Erikson's life crises or fulfilment of Maslow's life-stage needs (Young & Bagley, 1982).

Global Self-Concept as a Predictor of Behaviour

Through secure attachment to a primary care giver during infancy and childhood, the child progresses through the phases in the model presented by Young and Bagley (1982) in order to develop a positive global self-concept (Bowlby, 1946, 1965, 1969, 1979; Coopersmith, 1967; Mead, 1934). Furthermore, it is out of this global self-concept that personality and behaviour arises.

Bowlby (1946, 1965, 1969, 1979) studied the importance of attachment and its long-term effects on the development of global self-concept. In a case study of 44 juvenile thieves, Bowlby (1946) demonstrated that the development of a restricted and/or impaired global self-concept as a result of insecure attachment often had predictable and severely negative consequences in the personality development and behaviour of adolescents. Offer, Ostrov, and Howard (1982) conducted a study using two hundred and forty-one teenagers as well as their biological parents from three middle class suburban schools in Chicago where each family was intact. They found that in normal populations, parent-child interactions were significantly correlated with the quality of the child's self-image ($p < 0.05$). In general, better parent-adolescent communication was associated with more positive adolescent self-image. These authors went on to argue that this finding indicates that smoothly functioning families have good parent-adolescent communication and positive self-perceptions among adolescent children. The more communication deviance there is among individuals in a family, the greater the risk children in those families face of developing severe psychopathology.

This finding converges with the work of Bowlby (1946, 1965, 1969, 1979), who stressed the importance of caregiver interaction with the infant or child in developing the child's self-esteem and self-concept in order that he or she may develop a positive global self-concept in adolescence. The difference in scores between parents and adolescents was less than ten

percent on 26 of the 38 items of the Offer Parent-Adolescent Questionnaire (OPAQ). This suggests that differences between parents and adolescents perceptions of how the adolescents perceived themselves was minimal. Offer et al. (1982) concluded that in normal families, the adolescents and their parents generally agreed about how adolescents perceive themselves.

The development of a positive global self-concept is in large part demonstrated by acceptance of self and significant others. Both theoretical and empirical work have demonstrated the centrality of these dimensions. These attributes have emerged as the two prepotent dimensions of personality (Foa, 1961; Hurley, 1976a). Hurley (1976b) wrote that:

precedents...clearly indicated that the Acceptance versus the Rejection of Others (ARO) is a rather noncontroversial label for the first prepotent dimension...the behaviour represented by [the second dimension] appears to reflect a broad social emotional acceptance of the self which facilitates outward expression (p. 79).

Maslow (1970) also viewed global self-concept as a central determinant of behaviour. He described each level of his hierarchy of needs as dynamic and a major determinant of behaviour. Moreover, according to Maslow, the current need level of an individual will have a major influence on the personality of that individual. Maslow also explicitly stated that higher levels attained in the hierarchy bring higher levels of psychological health. Self-acceptance and acceptance of others is

seen as a definitive characteristic of mental health which is discussed by Maslow (1970) as being related to the behaviour of self-actualizing individuals (Freedman & Hurley, 1979).

Using Computers to Gather Data

Computers have been used effectively to gather data and conduct interviews in areas such as suicide risk, substance use disorders, mental status examination and sexual dysfunction (Baskin, 1990; Mezzich & Mezzich, 1988). Baskin (1990) argued strongly for increased use of the computers for assessment in both psychiatry and psychology. Although limited work has been conducted using computers to gather data on sensitive issues such as child sexual abuse, individual assessment tools have been programmed onto computer and implemented with success (Baskin, 1990; Bagley & Genuis, 1991).

The present work was aimed at utilizing this knowledge and attempted to expand on the findings of these other researchers. The questionnaire was programmed on to a Macintosh computer and the subjects interacted with the computer in order to complete the questionnaire.

Summary

Self-esteem is an essential precursor to the development of a positive global self-concept in people. From the state of global self-concept comes both intrapersonal affective state and behaviour. The findings of previous research aimed at investigating the effect of child sexual abuse on the self-

esteem of male children are conflicting and further investigations are needed to work towards an understanding of the effects of sexual abuse on male victims.

From the foregoing review, the following findings may be summarized: (1) a universal definition of child sexual has not yet been arrived at, (2) the actual prevalence of child sexual abuse of boys is not agreed upon and findings from different studies contradict each other, (3) the effects, both short and long-term, of child sexual abuse are not well understood, (4) male victims of child sexual abuse may complete a victim/perpetrator cycle and become abusers, (5) many perpetrators of abuse are in the victims immediate family, (6) abuse can range from mild to severe, and, (7) victims of sexual abuse may experience multiple incidents and multiple assailants. From these general findings, specific hypotheses can be proposed.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: If the perpetrator of the abuse is in the victim's immediate family, then the effects of the sexual abuse on the self-esteem of the victim will be greater than the effects on the self-esteem of victim's in cases where the aggressor is outside of the victim's immediate family.

Hypothesis 2: If the sexual abuse is severe (defined as penetration or where the victim is required to commit sexual acts on the perpetrator), then the impact of the sexual abuse on the self-

esteem of the victim will be greater than for cases where the abusive acts were less severe (not involving penetration or where the victim is not required to commit sexual acts on the perpetrator).

Hypothesis 3: If the subject is abused by more than one perpetrator, the impact of the sexual abuse on the self-esteem of the victim will be greater than for cases where the subject is abused by only one perpetrator.

Hypothesis 4: If the victim is under the age of six years at the time of the onset of the sexual abuse, then the impact of the sexual abuse on the self-esteem of the victim will be greater than for cases where the victim was six years of age or older at the time of onset.

Other variables explored in this work for their relationship to self-esteem of the victim in the short-term include the duration of the abusive relationship, frequency of the abusive episodes, coercion used by the aggressor in order to enact the sexual abuse, and physical injuries sustained as a result of the sexual abuse. Personal variables include interpretation of the sexual abuse as a direct attack on the victim, the victim taking responsibility for the sexual abuse, the victim taking fault for the sexual abuse, and the emotional attachment of the victim to the abuser. The significance level for the test of the hypotheses and any other significant relationships which may emerge was set at $\alpha = 0.05$.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter contains a description of the general procedures of the study, the sampling method, data collection techniques, instruments used, and ethical considerations and implications.

General Procedures

The present study was designed to collect data from a sample of young adult males between the ages of 18 and 27 years, who were registered as students at the University of Calgary at the time of the study, about experiences which they had undergone as children (prior to the age of 17 years old) so that the four aforementioned hypotheses could be tested. The present study was embedded in a larger, more general study conducted on campus at the University of Calgary. Questions about current sexual interests were included along with demographic information and details regarding experiences as victims of sexual abuse. As questions were of a sensitive and personal nature, questionnaires were completed on an individual basis, with each participant working alone in a private room. A research assistant was situated in an adjacent office for the time that the participant completed the questionnaire and was available in the event that the subject decided to discuss or disclose any personal or other information. University Counselling Services was also notified about the work and agreed to accept referrals if requested or agreed to by the

individual participant.

Sampling Method

A non-probability sample of male volunteers was used in this study. Male students at the University of Calgary were approached by the author and asked to participate in a childhood experiences study which dealt with a wide range of events occurring in childhood (defined as life before the age of 17 years) as well as about their present life situations. Each prospective subject was notified of the payment rate of \$10.00 per hour with a minimum payment of \$10.00 as well as the assurance of confidentiality (the money for the payment of the subjects were provided by the larger study which was funded)¹. Students were approached throughout the University campus. In addition, advertisements were posted throughout campus. The posters were checked on a weekly basis and replaced if necessary. Interviews were arranged with volunteer subjects who called the telephone number specified on the posters. The information on the advertisements was the same as the information communicated in the personal recruitment process. Clarification of appropriate details was also made during the telephone conversation before an interview time was arranged. It took approximately five months to recruit and interview two hundred participants.

Specific Procedures

The measure of sexual abuse in childhood was based on a

¹ This larger study was conducted by Dr. C. R. Bagley of the Department of Social Work at the University of Calgary.

questionnaire administered to each subject individually. An adapted version of the Coopersmith self-esteem inventory was being used to collect the relevant data on self-esteem². Other questions were also prepared to collect relevant information according to the specified variables.

The use of computers to gather data and conduct interviews has been used effectively in areas such as suicide risk, substance use disorders, mental status examination and sexual dysfunction (Baskin, 1990; Mezzich & Mezzich, 1988). The present work was aimed at utilizing this knowledge and attempted to expand on the findings of these other researchers. The approach of this work was original in that the questionnaire was programmed on to a computer and the subjects interacted with the computer in order to complete the questionnaire. Sheets of paper were placed beside the computer for the participants to write more about particular questions or at any time the subject wished, while he was completing the questionnaire. A graduate student majoring in Counselling Psychology was also in an adjacent office and was available, if the participant desired, to discuss any aspect of the questionnaire or talk further about any given question.

Potential advantages of using computers in this work include the possibility that participants would view the computer as less threatening than an interviewer when discussing sensitive or personal issues. Other advantages included time saved and convenience for the participant as

² Permission was granted by Stanley Coopersmith to Dr. C. R. Bagley, who subsequently adapted the instrument.

compared to using paper and pencil measures. Data was also automatically entered into the computer and therefore no further data entry was required. A possible disadvantage of using computers is that it may have been cumbersome for participants who had little experience with computers. This was compensated for in three ways. First, there was a short introduction at the beginning of the interview to familiarize the participant with the computer. Second, the researcher was available to the participant to help with any related difficulties. Third, the questionnaire was programmed to be user friendly. Pilot data was gathered from a sample of 50 volunteers who had no prior experience with a Macintosh computer. The present method was followed with these volunteers who subsequently reported on the clarity of the instructions and the ease with which they were able to use the software.

By contrast, other studies in this area have utilized either a personal interview (e.g., Baker & Duncan 1985; Courtois 1979), paper and pencil questionnaires (e.g., Condry et al., 1987; Fromuth & Burkhart, 1989;), a combination of the two (e.g., Tong et al., 1987), or checked medical records or clinical reports (e.g., De Jong et al., 1983; Farber et al., 1984; Herbert, 1987; Reinhart, 1987) in order to gather the necessary data. Finkelhor et al. (1990) used telephone interviews to collect data regarding experiences of child sexual abuse.

Each interview was structured in a manner which allowed for the subject to be informed about the work as well as to allow them an

opportunity to become familiar with the computer if that was necessary. Upon their arrival at the designated office, each participant was greeted by the interviewer and provided the appropriate information about the study (see Appendix A for a copy of the information given to subjects). All subjects had at least some previous knowledge of the work as they had read the posters requesting their participation as well as spoken to the researcher to arrange an appointment. Each subject was given an opportunity to ask questions about the research at the time of arranging an appointment, before beginning their participation, and at any time during their participation as well as after completing the questionnaire. Once they were finished reading the information, the interviewer reiterated each main point on the information form which they had just read. Each participant was then given the opportunity to ask questions about the research or leave if they wished. If they decided to leave they would have been paid for their time as part of the work called for the payment of subjects at a rate of \$10.00 per hour with a minimum payment of \$10.00. Once the participant was satisfied that all his present questions were answered, and if he agreed to continue participating in the work (none of the 200 subjects left at this point), the researcher introduced the participant to the computer. It was at this time that the interviewer coached the participant through the introduction section of the questionnaire so as to make sure that the participant was clear as to how to use the computer to answer the questions. When both the participant and interviewer were satisfied that the subject

was clear about how to use the computer appropriately, he was then left to complete the questionnaire in private.

Upon completion of the questionnaire and a computer interaction evaluation, the participant notified the interviewer who was in the adjacent room. At this time the participant was paid at the specified rate, and thanked for his participation in the work.

Subjects

There were 200 subjects in this study, all of whom were male. The ages of the subjects ranged from 18 to 27 years with a mean age of 21.27 years and a standard deviation of 2.54. Faculties of enrolment were grouped into three categories: (1) Non-professional, (2) Professional-Humanities, and (3) Professional-Sciences. The Non-professional category included the faculties of General Studies, Fine Arts, Arts, and Unclassified Students ($n = 64$). The second category, the Professional-Humanities group included the faculties of Physical Education, Social Sciences, Education, Humanities, and Social Work ($n = 61$). The third category, the Professional-Sciences, included the faculties of Engineering, Management, Nursing, Science, and Graduate Studies ($n = 62$). There were 13 subjects who failed to indicate their faculty of enrolment.

The majority, 135 (67.5%) of the subjects, were white and 57 (28.5%) were either Oriental or Asian. There were no Black or Native Indians participating in this study as no one from either of these races responded to the advertising. The remaining eight (2%) participants were

of either a mixed or another race.

Socioeconomic status was determined by using father's occupation. This was divided up into three categories. One hundred and forty nine (74.5%) subjects were from an entrepreneurial or professional background. This was defined as the father having his own business, or working in a professional field such as law, medicine, teaching and so on. Thirty-five (17.5%) subjects had fathers who were employed as skilled labourers, defined as electricians, plumbers, carpenters and so on. Fifteen (7.5%) of the subjects come from homes where the father worked either as an unskilled labourer, or was unemployed. One subject failed to indicate paternal employment.

Instruments

The measure of sexual abuse in childhood was based on the use of the Sexual Abuse Investigation Inventory (SAII) developed by Bagley and Genuis (See Appendix B for printouts of sample screens from this instrument). This questionnaire includes a variety of standardized scales asking about a wide range of childhood experiences as well as present day functioning. The scales included within the SAII are a) the Middlesex Hospital Questionnaire (Bagley, 1980), b) the Suicidal Ideas Questionnaire (Bagley & Ramsay, 1985), c) the Centre for Epidemiological Studies in Depression Scale (Radloff, 1977), d) the Memories of Childhood Rearing Questionnaire (Arrindell, Perris, Hjorkis, Eisemann, Van der Ende, & Von Knorring, 1986), e) the adapted Coopersmith Adult Self-esteem Scale

(Bagley, 1989), f) the Dissociation Experiences Scale, g) the Trauma Symptom Checklist (Briere & Runtz, 1988a & b), h) the Modified Sexual Activities Questionnaire (Sorrenti-Little, Bagley & Robertson, 1984), i) the Social Support Questionnaire (Barrera, Sandler & Ramsay, 1979), j) the Measure of Role Adjustment (Ramsay & Bagley, 1985), k) the Self-description Measure of Sexual Interests and Activities (Langevin, 1983) and, l) the adapted Coopersmith Self-esteem Scale for Children and Adolescents (Bagley 1989).

In the area of sexual abuse, there are questions about “unwanted” sexual acts occurring before the victim’s seventeenth birthday. Specific to the areas examined in this study, the SAII includes questions about what sexually abusive acts occurred, coercion, attachment type (described as sexual or not sexual if the perpetrator was not a stranger) and level of attachment to the perpetrator (positive, neutral, or negative) before, during and within two years after the ending of the abusive relationship, how the victim interpreted the acts of the abuse and who the victim saw responsible for the abuse both during and within two years after the ending of the abusive relationship. Included within the SAII is the adapted Coopersmith self-esteem scale for children and adolescents to measure the subjects’ self-esteem within two years after the ending of all sexually abusive acts. The adapted version of the Coopersmith self-esteem scale has 22 items. This scale is most specifically geared towards adolescents and normative data has been gathered in the City of Calgary. The scale was

shown to have good internal consistency (Chronbach's alpha of 0.92 for 2715 subjects) and a test-retest reliability of 0.58 for 345 subjects over 14 months. This instrument has been shown to have high face validity in previous studies (Bagley, 1989). The sexual interests of former victims were also examined to determine whether or not these subjects would have different sexual interests than those subjects who were not sexually abused as children.

As noted above, the instruments employed to obtain data on the current sexual interests of the subjects are found within the SAI. These are the measure of role adjustment for those with a spouse or partner of the opposite sex developed by Ramsay and Bagley (1985) while items from the self-description measure of sexual interests and activities were developed by Langevin (1983). Little reliability or validity data are available for this measure. Upon examining its structure, however, it was decided to utilize this instrument in gathering data pertaining to this important area since there is a paucity of instruments for measuring these variables of interest. Moreover, some Canadian normative data do exist for this measure which was developed by Langevin at the Clark Institute, Toronto (Langevin 1983).

Ethical Issues

The informed consent of all subjects was sought and confidentiality of information was assured. Subjects were informed that they could terminate their participation at any time for any reason whatsoever without

penalty. Any problems which subjects wished to discuss were attended to with empathy and the appropriate agency contact was suggested if this was thought to be necessary. Subjects were told that this was an investigation of the possible links between adjustment through childhood and adolescence and earlier events in childhood, including stressful events. Moreover, subjects were informed that psychological benefits would not necessarily be obtained through participation. Medical and social agencies agreed to accept referrals should this have been appropriate. All research procedures complied with the University of Calgary ethical regulations governing research with human subjects.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The findings of the present work are reported in this chapter. Results are reported in several sections: (1) Description of sample, (2) Descriptive characteristics of the abuse of males, (3) Variables relevant to child sexual abuse, (4) Nonsignificant variables, (5) Factors of abuse influencing the self-esteem of male victims, (6) Stepwise discriminant analysis, (7) Trends in the data, and (8) Evaluation of hypotheses.

Description of the sample

This sample consisted of 200 males registered as students at the University of Calgary. The mean age of the sample was 21.27 years with a minimum age of 18 years, a maximum age of 27 years and a standard deviation of 2.54. The mean number of siblings the subjects had was 1.61, with each subject having at least one sibling and no subject having more than two siblings.

Table 1 shows the distribution of all the respondents on seven other characteristics: faculty of enrolment, ethnicity, religious denomination when the subject was a child, religious denomination now, separation from a parent, stability of living arrangements, and child sexual abuse. Faculties of enrolment were characterized as (1) Non-professional (General Studies, Fine Arts, Arts, and Special Students), (2) Professional-Humanities (Education, Physical Education, Social Studies, Humanities, and Social

Work), and, (3) Professional-Sciences (Engineering, Management, Nursing, Science, and Graduate Studies). As can be seen in Table 1, approximately equal numbers of subjects come from each faculty category. Most of the sample were white subjects ($n = 135$; 67.5%) with the next most frequent category consisting of a combination of Orientals and East Indian subjects ($n = 57$; 28.5%). There were no black, or native participants in this study. Four (2%) subjects were of another ethnicity which was not specified and four (2%) subjects were racially mixed. The mixture of races was not specified by the subjects. Forty-five (22.5%) subjects had been separated for at least six months from either or both of their parents on at least one occasion before the subject turned 16 years old, and a total of 28 (14%) of the sample disclosed unwanted sexual contact before the age of eighteen years. None of the hypotheses were supported in the present data. These findings are discussed in a later section of this chapter (see page 57), once the results have been summarized.

Descriptive Characteristics of Abused Males

In this sample of 200 males between the ages of 18 and 27 years, 28 (14%) disclosed the occurrence of unwanted sexual contact in their lives before turning 18 years old. Of these 28 subjects, seven (25%) were abused by a stranger, 13 (46.4%) were abused by someone they knew other than a relative, and eight (28.6%) were abused by a relative (relationship to initial perpetrator is reported here for those subjects who were abused by

more than on person). At the onset of the sexual abuse, seven (25%) of the victims were five years of age or younger, ten (35.7%) were between six and ten years, and 11 (39.3%) of the victims were between 11 and 17 years of age. Twenty (71.4%) of the perpetrators were male. This is lower than reports from other studies. For example, Finkelhor et al. (1990) reported that 83 percent of the perpetrators in his study were male. Likewise, Swift (1979) reported that 84 percent of perpetrators to be male, and Reinhart (1987) reported that 96 percent of the perpetrators of sexual abuse of boys to be male. Twenty-one (75%) of the subjects who disclosed child sexual abuse reported being victimized by one perpetrator only. Three (10.7%) of the victims of child sexual abuse reported being abused by a total of two perpetrators, one (3.6%) of the abused subjects reported being abused by a total of three perpetrators, and, three (10.7%) of the subjects who disclosed childhood sexual abuse in their histories reported being abused by a total of four perpetrators. None of the subjects reported being abused by more than one perpetrator at a time. Twenty (71.4%) of the victims in this sample had never disclosed their experiences to anyone. Of the eight (28.6%) victims who disclosed their abuse, two disclosed to a family member, three confided in a friend, one disclosed to a teacher or counsellor, one told a social service agency, and one talked to a female stranger.

Variables Related to Child Sexual Abuse of Males

In order to examine possible relationships between variables,

contingency table analyses were conducted using chi-square as the test statistic. Of primary interest were variables that were related to child sexual abuse.

As shown in Table 2, there were significantly ($\chi^2 = 9.59$; $df = 2$; $p < 0.01$) more subjects from non-professional faculties (General Studies, Fine Arts, Arts, and Special Students) who disclosed child sexual abuse than either professional-humanities (Education, Physical Education, Social Studies, Humanities, and Social Work) or professional-science faculties (Engineering, Management, Nursing, Science, and Graduate Studies).

Separation from either parent for a period of at least six months before the subject turned 16 years old also proved significant ($\chi^2 = 4.20$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.05$) as shown in Table 3. It did not make a difference which parent the separation occurred from, at what age the separation occurred, or what the reason was for the separation. The only significant finding was separation from a parent, for a period of at least six months, before the child turned 16 years of age. A possible reason for such separation being significantly related to experiences of child sexual abuse is that with only one person being responsible for all parenting duties, there may be less time spent with the parent and thus less protection for the child. This may then leave the child open to perpetrators of sexual abuse who otherwise would be inhibited by the presence of the caregiver..

The occupation of the father of the subject was significantly ($\chi^2 = 6.99$; $df = 2$; $p < 0.05$) related to child sexual abuse in this sample (Table

4). Entrepreneurs or professionals was defined as the father owning his own business, or working in a professional capacity in law, medicine, teaching, and so on. Skilled labour consisted of fathers who were employed as licensed trades, such as electricians, plumbers, carpenters, and so on. The third category consisted of fathers who either worked as unskilled labourers, or were unemployed. The interesting element in this finding is that none of the fathers, stepfathers, fosterfathers or other father figures were themselves the perpetrators of child sexual abuse of these subjects. Note that in Table 4 there were more abused subjects in both the professional and skilled labour categories but also notice that the number is much higher than in the unskilled/unemployed category. The important element to notice in this breakdown is the percentages (in parentheses) of those subjects whose fathers were in a particular category. Therefore, only five subjects whose fathers were in the unskilled/unemployed category were sexually abused as children, but this constituted 33 percent of that classification, which was significantly higher than the other two classifications.

Table 5 summarizes the relationship between the amount the fathers of subjects consumed every time the fathers would drink alcohol. This finding was significant ($\chi^2 = 11.51$; $df = 2$; $p < 0.01$) and tells us that those subjects whose fathers consumed more than five drinks each drinking episode were significantly less likely to have been victims of child sexual abuse than subjects whose fathers consumed less than five drinks each time

the fathers drank alcohol. Forty-five (22.5%) of the 200 subjects reported that their fathers were complete abstainers from alcohol.

Table 6 shows the distribution of answers to the question asking about the subjects' interest in "Sex with a male partner at least 5 years older than yourself." Although the results indicate significant differences, caution is required in interpreting the results because of the small numbers found in each of the first two categories. These findings are nevertheless suggestive and further research is needed to support this trend. Here it appears that those who were sexually abused as children are presently significantly ($\chi^2 = 5.93$; $df = 2$; $p < 0.05$) more interested in sex with older males than themselves than those who were not sexually abused as children.

Table 7 reports data relevant to the victim/perpetrator cycle. Significantly ($\chi^2 = 7.16$; $df = 2$; $p < 0.05$) more subjects who were sexually abused as children were interested in having sex with male children. This empirical result supports the opinions of other authors (Bagley & King, 1990; Freeman-Longo, 1986; Sebold, 1987). None of these authors based their conclusions on formal empirical research examining the development of the victim/perpetrator cycle, nor did any of these reports claim conclusive evidence but reported possible trends. The present finding is also far from conclusive (due to the small numbers) but these results were obtained empirically and suggest the need for further research.

Nonsignificant Variables

Those variables which were nonsignificant in relation to child sexual

abuse of boys were mother's occupation, stability of living arrangements, religious denomination (either when the subject was a child or now), ethnicity, number of siblings, parent's education level, separation from father or mother specifically (although separation from a parent was significant), reason for separation from a parent, whether the parents consumed alcohol (either parent or both), how often the parent consumed alcohol (either parent), how much alcohol the mother consumed each time she drank alcohol, and how much stress parent's drinking of alcohol was to the child.

Nonsignificant differences were demonstrated for the variable of sexual interest in females at least five years older than the subjects, males and females the same age as the subjects, male and female adolescents, males and females at least five years younger than the subjects, and female children. Caution must be employed, however, because of the low number of subjects that have been sexually abused as children in the present study, as a larger and more representative sample of subjects may provide different findings.

Stepwise Discriminant Analysis

As a secondary analysis to confirm the univariate findings, a stepwise discriminant analysis was conducted. The main purpose of these analyses was to derive a discriminant function to distinguish between the two groups, sexually abused and non-abused. Four variables (faculty of enrolment, time of separation from a parent, father's occupation, and

father's consumption of alcohol) were selected for entry into the discriminant analysis. In this procedure the number of variables tested for significance is restricted by the number of subjects in the smallest group (Stevens, 1986). In the present study, there were only twenty-eight abused subjects so that only four variables could be entered as Stevens (1986) recommended a minimum of seven subjects per variable entered (i.e., $7 \times 4 = 28$). The four variables were selected on the basis of their statistical significance in the univariate analysis. The results from this analysis are summarized in Table 8.

Three of the four variables ((1) father's occupation, (2) separation from a parent, and, (3) faculty of enrolment produced one significant discriminant function ($\chi^2 = 11.79$; $df = 4$; $p < 0.05$) as summarized in Parts A and B of Table 8. Part C of Table 8 contains the standardized canonical coefficients. The single discriminant function produced a canonical correlation, $r = 0.24$.

Table 9 contains the results of the subject classification using the derived function. As can be seen from this, 69.5 percent of the subjects were correctly classified into group membership. This is both better than chance (50%) and statistically significant. These analyses then, confirm that the groups can be distinguished with one discriminant function thus confirming the univariate findings. Interestingly, however, father's alcohol consumption does not contribute significant discrimination after the entry of the other three variables.

Factors of Abuse Influencing the Self-Esteem of Male Victims

The present section reports the results of the analysis examining aspects of child sexual abuse of males thought to negatively affect the self-esteem of the victims in the short-term (within two years after the ending of all sexually abusive episodes). Here too cross tabulations were used to examine the relationship between the specified variables and their relationship with the self-esteem of the victim in the short-term. Both significant and non-significant findings are reported here in order to demonstrate those aspects of the abusive relationship which did not have a significant effect on the short-term self-esteem of the victims as well as those which did.

Self-esteem was divided into three categories ((1) low, (2) average, (3) high). The maximum possible score on the adapted Coopersmith self-esteem questionnaire is 44. The sample mean in the present study was 36.00 with a variance of 28.22 and as standard deviation of 5.31. The minimum score on this instrument was 23.00 and the maximum was 43.00. Subjects were classified as having a low self-esteem if their score was less than 31 (mean minus one standard deviation), normal if their score ranged between 31 and 39 (mean plus or minus one standard deviation), and subjects were classified as having a high self-esteem if their score was 40 (mean plus one standard deviation) or higher. The only finding which proved significant in relation to self-esteem was the type of feeling the

victim had for the offender prior to the occurrence of the child sexual abuse ($\chi^2 = 10.42$; $df = 4$; $p < 0.05$) as reported in Table 10. Interestingly, all of the subjects ($n = 2$) who had sexual feelings for the perpetrator prior to the occurrence of the sexual abuse had a low self-esteem within the first two years after the ending of all sexually abusive experiences. One of the subjects who was abused by a known assailant did not specify the type of feelings he had for the perpetrator prior to the sexual abuse.

Nonsignificant findings in relation to the short-term self-esteem of the victims of child sexual abuse were severity of the sexually abuse, coercion, total number of abusive episodes, age of the victim at the onset of sexual abuse, physical injuries incurred as a result of the sexual abuse, relationship to the perpetrator (there were no father figures in this sample who were disclosed as perpetrators), type of feelings the victim had for the perpetrator during and within two years after the ending of the sexual abuse, the strength of the victim's feelings for the perpetrator before, during, and within two year after the ending of the sexually abusive relationship, placement of responsibility of the sexual abuse by the victim during the course of the abusive relationship, and the victim's interpretation of the sexual abuse, classified as either an attack on the victim, the perpetrator's problem with the victim being an easy target, something that just that happened, or the victim could not interpret the abuse either because of fear or because he was too young.

Trends in the Data

In the present section, those cases where the findings demonstrate important trends in the data are discussed. Although no conclusions can be stated from the findings reported in this section, the findings are important in that they may point out trends which may prove significant in larger, more representative samples. They are therefore reported here as suggestive and to encourage further research in this area of study.

The age that a child was separated from his father yielded a chi-squared value of 2.73 ($p < 0.10$, $df = 1$). Ages were broken up into two categories, five years old and younger, and older than five years. This suggests that boys who are separated from their fathers for a period of more than six months before the boys turn six years of age may be more likely to be sexually abused than both those boys who are separated from their father between the ages of six and 16 years, and those boys not separated from their fathers for longer than six months at a time.

The length that the sexually abusive relationship lasted in relation to the short-term self-esteem of the victim also demonstrated a trend ($p < 0.10$), with the longer the relationship lasting, the greater the negative effect on the short-term self-esteem of the victim. This contingency analysis resulted in a chi-squared value of 8.97 with four degrees of freedom.

Lastly, the placement of the responsibility of the sexually abusive relationship by the victim within two years after the ending of the

relationship showed an important trend ($\chi^2 = 5.12$; $df = 2$; $p < 0.10$) in relation to the short-term self-esteem of the victim. If the victim assumed at least part of the responsibility for the sexual abuse, there is a trend appearing which demonstrates that this assumption of responsibility may negatively affect his self-esteem in the short-term.

Evaluation of the Hypotheses

The hypotheses of this study can be evaluated given the foregoing results.

The four hypotheses were: (1) If the perpetrator was in the victim's immediate family, then the effects of the sexual abuse will be greater than the effects on the victims in cases where the aggressor was outside of the victim's immediate family, (2) If the the sexual abuse was severe (involving penetration or where the victim was required to commit sexual acts on the perpetrator), then the impact of the sexual abuse on the self-esteem of the victim will be greater than cases where the abusive acts were less severe, (3) If the subject was abused by more than one perpetrator, the impact of the sexual abuse on the self-esteem of the victim will be greater than cases where the subject was exposed to one perpetrator only, and (4) If the victim was under the age of six years at the time of the onset of the sexual abuse then the impact of the sexual abuse on the self-esteem of the victim will be greater than cases where the victim was six years of age or older at the time of onset. The level of significance for the statistical tests was set at 0.05.

None of the four hypotheses were supported in the present data. To test hypothesis 1, a contingency table analysis between relationship of perpetrator and effects of abuse on the victims' self-esteem was conducted and this failed to produce significant findings ($\chi^2 = 2.11$; $df = 4$; $p < 0.72$). To test hypothesis 2, a contingency table analysis between severity of abuse (severity 1 included contact only, severity 2 included penetration, and severity 3 included the victim having to perform sexual acts on the perpetrator) and effects of abuse on victims' self-esteem was conducted and this failed to produce significant findings ($\chi^2 = 4.49$ $df = 2$; $p < 0.11$). A contingency table analysis between total number of perpetrators and effects of abuse on victims' self-esteem was also conducted to test hypothesis 3, and also failed to produce significant findings ($\chi^2 = 4.40$ $df = 6$; $p < 0.62$). To test hypothesis 4, a contingency table analysis between victim's age at the onset of the sexual abuse and effects of abuse on the victims' self-esteem was conducted and this failed to produce significant findings ($\chi^2 = 3.78$; $df = 4$; $p < 0.44$).

Little work has been conducted to discover the specific factors surrounding the sexual abuse of boys which lead to the observed effects. In the present study an attempt was made and the four specific factors proved to be nonsignificant. Possible reasons for this are discussed in the next chapter.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of the Total Sample

Variable	Frequency (n)*	Percentage (%)**
Faculty		
Non Professional	64	32
Professional - Humanities	61	30.5
Professional - Science	62	31
Ethnicity		
White	135	67.5
Oriental/East Indian	57	28.5
Black	0	0
Native indian/Matis	0	0
Other	4	2
Mixed	4	2
Religion-When Growing Up		
Roman Catholic	46	23
Eastern Orthodox or United Church or Other Protestant/LDS	83	41.5
Jewish	3	1.5
Other Religion or No Religion	68	34
Religion-Now		
Roman Catholic	39	19.5
Eastern Orthodox or United Church or Other Protestant/LDS	59	29.5
Jewish	3	1.5
Other Religion or No Religion	99	49.5
Early Separation from a Parent	45	22.5
No Separation from a Parent	155	77.5
Child sexual abuse		
Abused	28	14
Not Abused	172	86

* Number of subjects within this category

** Percentage of subjects within this category

Table 2
Relationship Between Faculty and Child Sexual Abuse

Variable	Non- Professional Frequency (n)* (%)**	Professional Humanities Frequency (n)* (%)**	Professional Science Frequency (n)* (%)**	Total Frequency (n)* (%)**
Victims	15(60)	3(12)	7(28)	25(100)
Non-victims	49(30.2)	58(35.8)	55(34)	162(100)
Total	64(34.2)	61(32.6)	62(33.2)	187(100)

$\chi^2 = 9.59$; $df = 2$; $p < 0.01$

* Number of subjects within this category

** Percentage of subjects within this category

Table 3
Relationship Between Early Separation From a Parent and Child Sexual Abuse

	Early Separation	No Separation	Total
	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
Variable	(n)* (%)**	(n)* (%)**	(n)* (%)**
Victims	11(39.3)	17(60.7)	28(100)
Non-victims	34(19.8)	138(80.2)	172(100)
Total	45(22.5)	155(77.5)	200(100)

$$\chi^2 = 4.20; df = 1; p < 0.05$$

* Number of subjects within this category

** Percentage of subjects within this category

Table 4
Relationship Between Father's Occupation and Child Sexual Abuse

Variable	Professional Frequency (n)* (%)**	Skilled Labour Frequency (n)* (%)**	Unskilled Labour/ Unemployed Frequency (n)* (%)**	Total Frequency (n)* (%)**
Victims	16(10.7)	7(20)	5(33.3)	28(14.1)
Non-victims	133(89.3)	28(80)	10(66.7)	171(28)
Total	149(100)	35(100)	15(100)	199(100)

$$\chi^2 = 6.99; df = 2; p < 0.05$$

* Number of subjects within this category

** Percentage of subjects within this category

Table 5

Relationship Between Father's Consumption of Alcohol and Child Sexual Abuse

Variable	Fewer Than Three Drinks Frequency (n)* (%)**	From Three to Five Drinks Frequency (n)* (%)**	More Than Five Drinks Frequency (n)* (%)**	Total Frequency (n)* (%)**
Victims	11(50)	11(50)	0(0)	22(100)
Non-victims	93(69.9)	25(18.8)	15(11.3)	133(100)
Total	104(67.1)	36(23.2)	15(9.7)	155(100)

 $\chi^2 = 11.51$; $df = 2$; $p < 0.01$

* Number of subjects within this category

** Percentage of subjects within this category

Table 6
Relationship Between Child Sexual Abuse and Present Interest in
Sex with an Older Male Partner

Variable	Strong Interest Frequency (n)* (%)**	Unsure Frequency (n)* (%)**	Not Interested Frequency (n)* (%)**	Total Frequency (n)* (%)**
Victims	4(14.3)	1(3.6)	23(82.1)	28(100)
Non-victims	6(3.5)	6(3.5)	160(93)	172(100)
Total	10(5)	7(3.5)	183(91.5)	200(100)

$\chi^2 = 5.93$; df = 2; p < 0.05

* Number of subjects within this category

** Percentage of subjects within this category

Table 7
Relationship Between Child Sexual Abuse and Interest in Sex with Male Children

Variable	Strong Interest Frequency (n)* (%)**	Unsure Frequency (n)* (%)**	Not Interested Frequency (n)* (%)**	Total Frequency (n)* (%)**
Victims	1(3.6)	1(3.6)	26(92.8)	28(100)
Non-victims	2(1.2)	0(0)	170(98.8)	172(100)
Total	3(1.5)	1(0.5)	196(98)	200(100)

$$\chi^2 = 7.16; df = 2; p < 0.05$$

*. Number of subjects within this category

** Percentage of subjects within this category

Table 8

Stepwise Discriminant Analysis for the Abuse Predictor Variables

Part A:

<u>Significant Variables In the Equation</u>	<u>Wilk's Lambda</u>	<u>P-Level</u>	<u>Rao's V</u>	<u>Change in V</u>
Father's Occupation	0.97	0.05	5.65	5.65
Separation from parent	0.95	0.01	9.76	4.11
Faculty of enrollment	0.94	0.01	12.22	2.46

Part B: Canonical Discriminant Function

<u>Function</u>	<u>Eigenvalue</u>	<u>Canonical Correlation</u>	<u>Wilks' Lambda</u>	<u>Chi- Squared</u>	<u>Degrees of Freedom</u>	<u>Significance</u>
1	0.06	0.24	0.92	11.79	4	0.02

Part C: Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Coefficients</u>
Father's occupation	-0.46
Separation from a parent	0.47
Faculty of enrollment	0.58

Table 9
Predicted Group Membership Based on the Canonical Discriminant Function

Actual Group	Number of	Predicted Group	
	<u>Cases</u>	<u>Membership</u>	
	Frequency	Nonabused Frequency	Abused Frequency
	(n)* (%)**	(n)* (%)**	(n)* (%)**
<hr/>			
Nonabused	172(86)	124(72.1)	48(27.9)
Abused	28(14)	13(46.4)	15(53.6)
<hr/>			

Percentage of the "grouped" cases correctly classified = 69.5%

* Number of subjects within this category

** Percentage of subjects within this category

Table 10
Feelings for Perpetrator Prior to Abuse with Short-Term Self-Esteem

	Sexual Frequency	Not Sexual Frequency	Assaulted by a Stranger Frequency	Total Frequency
Variable	(n)* (%)**	(n)* (%)**	(n)* (%)**	(n)* (%)**
Low self-esteem	2(40)	2(40)	1(20)	5(100)
Average self-esteem	0(0)	9(69.2)	4(30.8)	13(100)
High self-esteem	0(0)	7(77.8)	2(22.2)	9(100)
Total	2(7.4)	18(66.7)	7(25.9)	27(100)

$\chi^2 = 10.42$; $df = 4$; $p < 0.05$

* Number of subjects within this category

** Percentage of subjects within this category

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Summary of the Findings

While none of the four hypotheses were supported by the data, four significant findings of the present study can be summarized as follows: (a) Students in non-professional faculties of enrolment reported a significantly ($\chi^2 = 9.59$; $df = 2$; $p < 0.01$) higher rate of child sexual abuse than those in professionally oriented faculties, (b) Subjects separated from a parent during childhood for a period of more than six months reported a significantly ($\chi^2 = 4.20$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.05$) higher rate of sexual abuse, (c) Those subjects whose father's were either working as unskilled labourers or were unemployed reported a significantly ($\chi^2 = 6.99$; $df = 2$; $p < 0.05$) higher rate of sexual abuse, and (d) At the time of the study, subjects who disclosed child sexual abuse were significantly more interested in having sex with male children ($\chi^2 = 7.16$; $df = 2$; $p < 0.05$) than those who did not disclose child sexual abuse. The main finding related to self-esteem in the short-term is that the type of feelings the victim had for the perpetrator (sexual versus not sexual) prior to the abuse was significantly related to the self-esteem of the victim after the abuse ($\chi^2 = 10.42$; $df = 4$; $p < 0.05$).

Possible Reasons Why the Hypotheses Were Not Supported

Reasons why the hypotheses were not supported, as well as many

other findings reporting nonsignificance in the present work may be attributed to any of four different reasons. The first is that the sample used in the present study is too small and thus had the sample size been larger, many of these variables may have demonstrated significance. Second, the variables in question may be truly nonsignificant and require no further examination. Third, the questions used to gather data on these variables may not have been valid and, fourth, the recall of the adult subjects may have been incomplete since this study was retrospective, and thus nonsignificant findings resulted. Specifically in relation to the four hypotheses in the present study, reasons for nonsignificance may be presented in the following manner, (a) The first hypothesis was focused on the familial relationship between perpetrator and the victim. Specifically stating that if the perpetrator was within the victim's immediate family then the effects of the sexual abuse on the self-esteem of the victim will be greater than in those cases where the aggressor was outside of the victim's immediate family. Three (10.7%) of the victims were abused by someone within their immediate family (two of these perpetrators were mothers and one was a brother). This is reasonable for the number of the abused subjects found (Bagley, 1988; Finkelhor et al., 1990), but the small sample may have imposed limitations on the findings. (b) The second hypothesis, if the sexual abuse was severe (involving penetration or where the victim was required to commit sexual acts on the perpetrator) then the impact of the abuse on the self-esteem of the victim will be greater than cases where

the abusive acts were less severe, demonstrated a trend ($\chi^2 = 4.49$; $df = 2$; $p < 0.11$) and a larger sample may have produced significant results. (c) The third hypothesis stated that if the subject was abused by more than one perpetrator, the impact of the sexual abuse on the self-esteem of the victim will be greater than cases where the subject was exposed to one perpetrator only. Twenty-one (75%) of the twenty-eight subjects disclosing sexual abuse in their history reported being abused by only one perpetrator. Therefore, only seven (25%) of the abused sample reported being abused by a total of more than one person. The small sample may have placed limitations on this finding. (d) The fourth hypothesis, if the victim was under the age of six years at the time of the onset of the sexual abuse then the impact of the sexual abuse on the self-esteem of the victim will be greater than cases where the victim was six years of age or older at the time of onset, was also nonsignificant in the data. The ages of the victims at the time of onset was divided into three categories (1) five years of age and under, (2) between six and ten years, and, (3) between ten and 17 years of age. The distribution was fairly even across the three age categories, seven (25%), 10 (35.7%), and 11 (39.3%) respectively and this finding was nonsignificant. The recall of those subjects who were abused prior to the age of six years may not have been accurate, however a more likely explanation is that the sample was too small to provide accurate results in this case.

It appears that the most plausible reason for the hypotheses not

receiving support is that the sample size in the present study may be insufficiently large. Also, as was discussed in relation to the fourth hypothesis, because the subjects were recalling how they felt about themselves as well as the actual incidents which occurred, inaccurate recall may have biased the findings in the positive direction on the self-esteem measure. With experiences as traumatic as child abuse, however, recall has been demonstrated in longitudinal research to be clear (Femina, Yeager, & Otnow-Lewis, 1990).

As there is a paucity of research examining the effects of child sexual abuse on the self-esteem of male victims in the short-term following the sexual abuse, no data can be cited at the present time to support or refute the preceding arguments with confidence.

None of the subjects in the present study reported being sexually abused by a father figure. This result finds support in the work of Metcalfe, Oppenheimer, Dignon, and Palmer (1990) who studied psychiatric patients (therefore providing similar results from a clinical sample), though it contradicts the work of Reinhart (1987) who reported that 47 of the 71 victims whose perpetrators were related to them reported being sexually abused by their fathers. Other studies (Baker & Duncan, 1985; De Jong et al., 1983; Finkelhor et al., 1990) are unclear as to this particular variable, but each of these works report that males are dominant as the perpetrators of child sexual abuse. Further research is required to establish which males are perpetrating sexual abuse of boys and to clarify

the relationship between the victim and the aggressor.

Implications for Future Research

Future research in the area of child sexual abuse of males is urgently required and the present study contains numerous implications for such work. In the present study, the traditional methodologies of paper and pencil or personal interviews were modified and a computer was used to gather the relevant data. One of the effects of this appears to have been an increase in the rate of disclosure of child sexual abuse among subjects. The rate of disclosure in this study was significantly ($\chi^2 = 4.22$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.05$) higher than that found in a similar study conducted at the University of Calgary (Sorrenti-Little et al., 1984) in which the paper and pencil method of gathering data was used. As well, 93 percent of the subjects answered that they preferred the present format over both the personal interview and the paper and pencil approach. The design of using computers rather than a personal interview or paper and pencil questionnaires to gather data proved to be very successful and future studies may very well incorporate such a methodology. If the present disclosure rate is accurate, it is possible that other information obtained may also be offered more freely and honestly by subjects and a better understanding of child sexual abuse may be attained.

Future research may also profitably use the present definition of sexual abuse as a practical and measurable operationalization of child sexual abuse (defined as unwanted sexual contact, genital touching and

fondling through to intercourse, while the victim is considered a child by legal definition). In doing so, it will become easier to compare the information gained from different studies.

Although the finding from the present study indicating that young adult males who have been sexually abused as children are significantly more interested in having sex with male children supports the writing of other authors (Bagley & King, 1990; Freeman-Longo, 1986; Sebold, 1987) replication is required as few works have gathered empirical data on this important area.

Replication of the finding that separation from a parent, prior to the age of 16, for a period of more than six months has not been a focus in previous work and may provide further insight as to the factors which put a child at risk of sexual abuse. Finkelhor's (1984) model in which four preconditions to sexual abuse required may be pertinent here. The third condition within the model is that the potential perpetrator must overcome external inhibitors (the other three preconditions presented by Finkelhor (1984) are (a) the perpetrator must have the motivation to sexually abuse, (b) the perpetrator must overcome intrapersonal inhibitors to sexually abuse a child, and (c) the perpetrator must overcome the resistance of the child). Separation from a parent for a period of more than six months before the child turns 16 years old may eliminate necessary external inhibitors (a parent watching over and protecting the child from possible abuse simply through his or her presence), and therefore leave the child

more vulnerable to sexual abuse than when the child is not separated from a parent for a long period of time.

Limitations of the Present Study

The present study attempted to examine some of the specific factors surrounding the sexual abuse of boys and determine what aspects of the abusive experience lead to a diminished self-esteem as well as other effects that boys appear to suffer after such experiences. As well as this focus, various aspects of sexual abuse of boys were examined with the intention of providing this nascent area of research with an expanded data base from which to draw and learn. There are, however, a number of limitations to the present study.

First, although the rate of disclosure was comparatively high (14% in the present study compared to 4.1 to 12% in typical research) the actual number of subjects that disclosed sexual abuse in childhood was 28. This small sample produces a limitation as the findings cannot be regarded as conclusive without further research to provide corroboration. Nonsignificant findings also may have become significant with a larger sample size.

Second, it should be stressed that the present methodology of interviewing a sample of males aged 18 to 27 in the population of undergraduate students at the University of Calgary certainly missed a number of victims whose sexual abuse may have been serious in nature, and damaging in its effects. Specifically, there was no clinical sample

included in the present study. Such a group would have provided for an important comparison to the present sample. Future research should incorporate such a group.

Third the subjects were all volunteers. As a result of this, it is not known whether those who were more severely affected by their abusive experiences for some reason opted not to participate in this research. In future research it may prove useful to include three specific samples for analysis. One sample would be obtained from a clinical population that had been sexually abused as children. The second sample would be gathered from the normal population and also have been sexually abused. The third sample, the control group, would be from the normal population and would not have been sexually abused.

Fourth the present study was retrospective as subjects were young adults recalling childhood experiences. Because the subjects were recalling incidents which occurred and feelings that they had anywhere from one to many years ago, accurate recall may not be guaranteed. Future research can correct for this limitation by collecting data from samples of the population who are presently being abused rather than from adults who have to recall such experiences.

Clinical and Counselling Implications

Some findings from the present study (e.g., males who have been sexually abused appear to be more interested in having sexual relations with male children than those not disclosing sexual abuse in their history,

and the feelings a victim has for the perpetrator before the abusive relationship begins may effect the self-esteem of the victim after the sexual abusive relationship is ended) may contain implications for clinical work with both victims and perpetrators of child sexual abuse. At the present time, however, it would be premature to make such claims as current knowledge in this area is inconclusive, tenuous, and contradictory. Much more research is required before prescriptions can be made with confidence based on actual data. Therefore, no clinical recommendations will be made at this time. Future research is necessary to test hypotheses and gain a clearer indication of the sequels of child sexual abuse of males.

Conclusion

The study of child sexual abuse of boys has been plagued with works whose methodologies are questionable and whose findings are difficult to compare, and when they are compared, are contradictory and confusing. The present study attempted to present a clearer definition of child sexual abuse and deal with some of the problems found in the methodologies of previous works. Results from the present study provide a basis from which further work may be conducted. Little which may be considered conclusive was found in the present study due to the inherent difficulties of conducting research in the area of child sexual abuse. A number of tentative results and trends in the data, however, suggest directions for future research.

Four important findings from the present study may be reiterated as

follows 1) multivariate analysis may be very helpful to researchers studying child sexual abuse. It will allow researchers to further examine factors such as those which may increase children's vulnerability to sexual abuse. Such analysis may also provide for a clearer understanding of direct effects of child sexual abuse. 2) The method used in this work appears to have elicited an increased rate of disclosure from subjects, even though the definition used was stringent. There may also have been more honesty in reporting experiences and feelings from subjects as 93 percent of the subjects stated that they preferred the computer method over either paper and pencil questionnaires or personal interviews. 3) The outcome of the stepwise discriminant analysis conducted in the present study provides confirmation that the groups (abused versus non abused) can be distinguished with at least one discriminant function. and, 4) Empirical data confirming that significantly more young adult males who have been victims of child sexual abuse are interested in having sex with male children than are young adult males who have not been sexually abused as children, has been gathered in the present study.

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Appendix A

Information given to subjects as they arrived for interviews

INTRODUCTION

Welcome, and thank you for taking part in our study. We are interviewing a sample of young adults, asking about events which occurred before the age of 17. We are also focusing on current functioning and adjustment.

All information given will be treated in the strictest confidence, and your name will not be reported anywhere.

The interview is not designed to be of benefit to you psychologically, however, the results of the study may assist the design of future programs aimed at helping and protecting individuals.

There are twelve main sections to this questionnaire. If you would like to take a break, there are refreshments available.

You may withdraw from the study at any time without loss of payment.

Lastly, if at any time during the questionnaire you have any questions or would like to talk at all, please do not hesitate to inform Mark. Thank you.

Appendix B

Sample Screen from the Sexual Abuse Investigative Inventory

*Welcome
To
Our
Study*

Please Click here ONCE to continue.

There are 12 sections to this questionnaire.
As you enter each section, you will be informed
which section it is and how many questions are in
that particular section.
In the first section of this questionnaire
there are 16 questions

[Please click here to continue](#)

Please let us know your present age by clicking
the appropriate space:

18 years

21 years

24 years

27 years

19 years

22 years

25 years

20 years

23 years

26 years



Please indicate the HIGHEST level of education you have reached to this point in your life.

Completed Primary

Completed Sr High

Now In College

Attended Jr High

Attended Tech. Schl

Completed College

Completed Jr High

Now In Tech. Schl

Attended University

Attended Sr High

Completed Tech. Schl

Now In University

Now In Sr. High

Attended College

Completed University



When you were growing up - that is BEFORE your 17th birthday - did anyone ever touch or interfere with the sex parts of your body when you didn't want this?

Never happened
to me.

1

Yes

2



How old were you when this person first assaulted you?

under 1 year old

5 yrs old

10 yrs old

15 yrs old

1 yr old

6 yrs old

11 yrs old

16 yrs old

2 yrs old

7 yrs old

12 yrs old

17 yrs old

3 yrs old

8 yrs old

13 yrs old

4 yrs old

9 yrs old

14 yrs old



On the following screen, please identify how the unwanted sex act happened - Identify as many numbers as are relevant.

[Please click here to continue](#)

There are a maximum of 22 questions in this second subsection.



The unwanted sex act with the person:

Was encouraged by someone else.

yes

no



Thank You

Very much for your time and cooperation today. You have completed the questionnaire and may inform the person outside the room. If there is anything further you wish to discuss, please do not hesitate to let him know.

Again, thank you.