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A Grounded Theory to Understanding Police Officers' and Child Care Officers' Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Barbados

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**A Grounded Theory to Understanding Police Officers'  
and Child Care Officers' Responses to Child  
Sexual Abuse in Barbados**

**Ena Trotman Jemmott**

**A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**Dated: April 2012**

## **Declaration**

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## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my dear mother Florence Gertrude (a.k.a Dean), who made this academic journey possible.

To the many people who also played a role, major or minor, in this dissertation, thank you very much for your support, encouragement and patience. All of you have my sincere gratitude.

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# Contents

DECLARATION .....	II
COPYRIGHT STATEMENT .....	II
DEDICATION .....	III
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	IV
CONTENTS .....	V
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES .....	X
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS .....	XII
ABSTRACT .....	XIII
<b>1 INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 THE PRELUDE TO THIS STUDY - FIRST TIME FRAME .....	1
1.2 SECOND TIME FRAME .....	2
1.3 DEFINING MOMENT FOR THIS STUDY .....	2
1.4 FURTHER SITUATING MYSELF .....	3
1.5 WHOSE VOICES? .....	5
1.6 THE CHAPTERS OF THIS THESIS .....	6
1.7 SITUATING THE GENDERED ASPECTS OF THIS STUDY.....	9
1.8 THE STUDY'S MODELS AND PARADIGMS .....	10
1.9 AIMS OF RESEARCH .....	11
1.10 THE NEXT STEPS .....	11
<b>2 SITUATING THE RESEARCH.....</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1 LOCATING BARBADOS HISTORICALLY.....	13
2.2 ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY .....	13
2.3 BARBADOS' HISTORY .....	17
2.3.1 <i>Institutions' roles, statutory agencies and committees</i> .....	17
2.3.2 <i>The judiciary and the civil service</i> .....	20
2.3.3 <i>Police officers</i> .....	20
2.3.3.1 Professional training.....	20
2.3.3.2 Qualifications and training (PO).....	21
2.3.4 <i>The Child Care Board</i> .....	21
2.3.4.1 Qualifications and training (CCO) .....	22
2.4 SECONDARY DATA: ROYAL BARBADOS POLICE FORCE .....	22
2.4.1 <i>Secondary data: Child Care Board</i> .....	23
2.4.2 <i>The hard to ignore evidence in Barbados</i> .....	27
2.4.3 <i>The hard to ignore evidence- multiple forms of child maltreatment</i> .....	28
2.5 GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION AND ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY .....	31
2.5.1 <i>Economic stability amidst violence</i> .....	32
2.6 SOCIO- HUMAN DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT .....	33
2.6.1 <i>Development indices in Barbados in the 21st century</i> .....	33
2.6.2 <i>HDI dimensions of inequality</i> .....	34

2.7	GENDER BASED VIOLENCE WITHIN THE CARIBBEAN.....	35
2.8	MAKING THE LINKAGES: SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN.....	39
2.9	PROFESSIONAL CULTURES.....	43
2.10	DEFINING CULTURE.....	43
2.11	CULTURAL ECOLOGICAL MODEL.....	45
2.11.1	<i>Technology and material cultural aspects</i> .....	47
2.11.2	<i>Education, research and law - aspects of the model</i> .....	48
2.12	PROFESSIONAL CODE OF ETHICS AND VALUES - FINDING COMMON GROUND.....	48
2.13	THE ETHICS AND VALUES OF SOCIAL WORK.....	50
2.14	ROYAL BARBADOS POLICE FORCE CODE OF ETHICS.....	51
2.15	CONCEPTUALISING CULTURE AS A PHENOMENON.....	52
2.15.1	<i>Influencing factors on the development of police and social work culture</i> .....	52
2.15.2	<i>Impact implications of professional cultures for child sexual abuse</i> .....	54
2.16	PERSPECTIVES ON CULTURAL ENVIRONMENTS.....	56
2.16.1	<i>Women police officers – gender and policing</i> .....	56
2.16.2	<i>Gender in the workplace in Barbados</i> .....	57
2.17	UTILITY OF AN ECOLOGICAL APPROACH.....	58
2.18	NEXT STEP.....	60
<b>3</b>	<b>PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW: RESPONDING TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE.....</b>	<b>61</b>
3.1	INTRODUCTION.....	61
3.2	RESPONDING TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE.....	61
3.3	REVOLVING WHEEL OF MEANINGS ASSOCIATED WITH CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE.....	63
3.4	HARM TO SELF AND OTHERS.....	65
3.5	LINKING THE MEANINGS OF THE BARBADOS EXPERIENCE.....	67
3.5.1	<i>Children as property chattel</i> .....	68
3.5.2	<i>For the use of others</i> .....	68
3.5.3	<i>Birth status, quality of family life and associated meanings</i> .....	70
3.5.4	<i>Meaning of fathering and mothering in childhood</i> .....	71
3.5.5	<i>Meanings associated with children as modern day property of parents</i> .....	73
3.6	THE NATURE AND DEFINITION OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE.....	74
3.7	HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES OF WHO IS A CHILD AND WHO IS A SEXUALLY ABUSED CHILD....	76
3.7.1	<i>Child sexual abuse and the influence of feminist theory</i> .....	77
3.7.2	<i>Histories of learning and meanings in sex crimes: rape</i> .....	78
3.7.3	<i>Sexual abuse in the first half of the 20th century 1910-1960 - societal reactions and decision-making responses</i> .....	79
3.7.4	<i>Child maltreatment including sexual abuse in the latter half of the 20th century – 1960-1990</i> .....	81
3.7.5	<i>World-wide approach to the harmful effects of child sexual abuse</i> .....	82
3.8	SOME PERCEIVED INFLUENCING FACTORS IN RESPONDING TO CSA.....	83
3.8.1	<i>Children’s perceived credibility in allegations of their sexual abuse</i> .....	83
3.8.2	<i>Children’s perceived credibility: victims’ characteristics likely to impact on decision making</i> .....	85
3.9	THE STORYING CREDIBILITY CONUNDRUM.....	86
3.10	BARBADOS - THE CHILD PROTECTION CONTEXT.....	88
3.10.1	<i>Aspects of Barbados child protection legislation</i> .....	88
3.11	PROGRESSING STEPS.....	90
<b>4</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>91</b>

4.1	RESEARCH AIMS .....	91
4.2	EPISTEMOLOGICAL POSITION.....	91
4.3	BUILDING THE CASE FOR USING GROUNDED THEORY.....	92
4.3.1	<i>The historical foundations of grounded theory - further evidence for my methodology.....</i>	93
4.3.2	<i>Brief comparison with some other qualitative studies.....</i>	96
4.4	CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION OF GROUNDED THEORY.....	97
4.4.1	<i>Purpose of grounded theory.....</i>	98
4.5	PRINCIPLES AND FUNDAMENTALS OF GROUNDED THEORY: APPLICATION TO THE RESEARCH PROCESS .....	99
4.6	THE GENERATION OF THEORY AND ANALYTICAL DEPTH - QUALITATIVE VERSUS QUANTITATIVE APPROACH.....	100
4.7	RESEARCH EVALUATION CRITERIA: THE QUALITATIVE/QUANTITATIVE DEBATE FOR JUDGING QUALITY.....	102
4.7.1	<i>Establishing research trustworthiness.....</i>	102
4.8	METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	105
4.9	PROGRESSING STEPS.....	106
<b>5</b>	<b>METHODS .....</b>	<b>107</b>
5.1	RESEARCH AIMS REVISITED.....	107
5.2	PLANNING THE DATA COLLECTION AND ENTRY INTO THE FIELD .....	107
5.2.1	<i>Accountability and accounting for the research process.....</i>	109
5.3	FORMAL APPROACH TO ROYAL BARBADOS POLICE FORCE AND CHILD CARE BOARD .....	110
5.4	SAMPLING.....	110
5.4.1	<i>Meeting and introducing research to participants.....</i>	111
5.4.2	<i>Meeting child care officers.....</i>	111
5.4.3	<i>Meeting police officers.....</i>	113
5.5	INTERVIEW VENUES (CCOs AND POs).....	114
5.5.1	<i>Interview venue (focus group).....</i>	115
5.6	INTERVIEWING PARTICIPANTS (CCOs AND POs).....	116
5.6.1	<i>Interviewing focus group participants.....</i>	118
5.6.1.1	<i>Case study.....</i>	120
5.7	DATA ANALYSIS – OPEN CODING, CONCEPTS DEVELOPMENT, THEMATIC ANALYSIS.....	121
5.7.1	<i>Development of categories and constant comparison.....</i>	121
5.7.2	<i>Thematic analysis.....</i>	122
5.8	ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF A FOCUS GROUP APPROACH .....	124
5.8.1	<i>Triangulation.....</i>	125
5.9	ACHIEVING TRUSTWORTHINESS THROUGH TRANSFERABILITY, DEPENDABILITY AND CREDIBILITY.....	126
5.9.1	<i>Research ethics in the field.....</i>	126
5.10	PROGRESSING STEPS.....	127
5.11	LOOKING BACK TO GO FORWARD .....	129
<b>6</b>	<b>FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION - DATA OF POS AND CCOS .....</b>	<b>131</b>
6.1	INTRODUCTION.....	131
6.2	HEARING THE STORY - DEFINING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN BARBADOS.....	132
6.2.1	<i>Reframing child sexual abuse.....</i>	138
6.2.2	<i>Co-related CSA and adolescent pregnancy.....</i>	142
6.2.3	<i>Prevalence rates and gendered subjectivity.....</i>	142
6.3	TELLING THE DISCLOSURE STORY: THE DYNAMICS OF TELLING THE STORY/WANTING TO TELL.....	143
6.3.1	<i>Child sexual abuse disclosure patterns to CCOs and POs.....</i>	145
6.3.2	<i>Police Prosecutions.....</i>	146
6.4	TELLING THE STORY AND TAKING CARE OF IT .....	149

6.4.1	<i>Finding the truth, guarding against falsehood</i> .....	151
6.4.2	<i>Factors impacting on police officers' assessment of child's perceived credibility: different discourses</i> .....	154
6.4.3	<i>Ensuring the allegation is supported: medical examination of children alleging sexual abuse</i> .....	155
6.4.4	<i>The child versus alleged perpetrators' position</i> .....	156
6.5	TAKING CARE OF THE STORY - CHILD CARE OFFICERS - RESPONSE TO DISCLOSURE .....	158
6.5.1	<i>Defining and responding to the allegation: the intervention</i> .....	159
6.5.1.1	Intervention techniques with the child.....	162
6.6	GIVING NEEDED SUPPORT - WORKING WITH THE MOTHER AND CHILD.....	165
6.7	CHILD CARE OFFICERS' AND POLICE OFFICERS' EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS .....	170
6.8	FACTORS ALIGNED TO DISCLOSURE, REFERRAL AND OUTCOME OF ALLEGATIONS.....	172
6.9	THE DISCLOSURE MODEL INTERVENTION TRAJECTORIES .....	173
6.10	MEANINGS ASSOCIATED WITH HEARING, TELLING AND TAKING CARE OF THE CSA STORY .....	176
6.11	NORMALISATION OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: ROUTES TO THE PERPETUATION OF RISK .....	178
6.11.1	<i>Perpetuation of risk</i> .....	179
6.12	NEXT STEP.....	180
<b>7</b>	<b>CONCEPTUALISING POLICE AND CHILD CARE OFFICERS' RESPONSES - COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE PERSPECTIVE .....</b>	<b>181</b>
7.1	INTRODUCTION.....	181
7.2	THE DOMAIN .....	185
7.2.1	<i>The community</i> .....	187
7.2.2	<i>The practice - the theoretical and practical</i> .....	188
7.3	SITUATING PRACTICE: LEARNING AND MEANING.....	191
7.3.1	<i>Identifying features and characteristics of a CoP</i> .....	195
7.3.2	<i>The emergence of behaviours – CoP five stage development model</i> .....	198
7.4	THE FOCUS GROUP .....	201
7.5	UTILITY OF CoP TO PROFESSIONAL RESPONSES TO CHILD ABUSE IN BARBADOS.....	206
7.5.1	<i>Participation and non-participation by POs and CCOs</i> .....	207
7.5.2	<i>Reification</i> .....	211
7.5.3	<i>Application to this study's data</i> .....	213
7.6	CONCLUDING COMMENTS – CONCEPTUAL MAPPING FOR UNDERSTANDING PROFESSIONAL RESPONSES...	213
7.7	NEXT STEPS .....	215
<b>8</b>	<b>DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS THROUGH A FEMINIST LENS .....</b>	<b>216</b>
8.1	INTRODUCTION.....	216
8.2	THEORISING PROFESSIONAL RESPONSES TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE .....	217
8.2.1	<i>Theories of social structure and structural oppression: structural responses to child sexual abuse</i> .....	218
8.2.2	<i>Situated knowledge as structural oppression</i> .....	222
8.3	THEORIES OF SITUATED EXPERIENCE: LOCATION OF SELF, PROFESSIONALS' OWN EXPERIENCES.....	225
8.3.1	<i>The professional response from a situated power position</i> .....	227
8.4	LINKING THEORIES OF STRUCTURAL POWER AND RESPONSES TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN BARBADOS .....	230
8.4.1	<i>Applying Foucaultian theorising to professional responses</i> .....	231
8.4.1.1	Scientific classification .....	234
8.4.1.2	Classifying and dividing practices .....	236
8.4.1.3	Objectification through self-subjectification.....	237
8.5	THE SUBJECTIVITY OF VALUES, ATTITUDES AND FEELINGS .....	239

8.5.1	<i>Male power, privilege and patriarchy</i> .....	243
8.6	THEORIES OF IDENTITY - CARIBBEAN MASCULINITIES AND FEMININITIES .....	245
8.7	THEORIES OF PRACTICE: EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE - INFLUENCE ON CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE ALLEGATIONS .....	249
8.8	THEORISING LANGUAGE FOR ITS EFFECTS ON PROFESSIONAL RESPONSES .....	252
8.9	EXERCISING AGENCY.....	256
8.10	THE NEXT STEPS.....	257
<b>9</b>	<b>A THEORY OF RISK PERPETUATION - INTEGRATING THE FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>258</b>
9.1	INTRODUCTION.....	258
9.2	RESPONDING TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: HEARING THE STORY .....	261
9.3	DEFINING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE - SOMETHING LESS OR MORE THAN THE CRIMINAL ACT? .....	262
9.3.1	<i>Prevalence of child sexual abuse</i> .....	265
9.3.2	<i>Gendering of child sexual abuse</i> .....	266
9.4	TELLING THE STORY .....	269
9.4.1	<i>Disclosure patterns and limitations</i> .....	270
9.4.2	<i>Factors influencing the child sexual abuse story and its definition</i> .....	272
9.4.3	<i>Evidencing socio-familial factors of child sexual abuse and pregnancy</i> .....	276
9.4.4	<i>The effect of the “ACE” arm of the triangle</i> .....	279
9.5	PROFESSIONALS’ USE OF EVIDENCE .....	281
9.6	TAKING CARE OF THE STORY – CULTURAL IMPACT.....	283
9.6.1	<i>The impact of culture on responding</i> .....	285
9.7	TAKING CARE OF THE STORY – EXPLANATORY THEORIES; MOTHERS’ RESPONSES .....	288
9.8	SHARING THE STORY: COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE POLICE AND CHILD CARE OFFICERS.....	291
9.9	CHILD CARE OFFICERS’ AND POLICE OFFICERS’ EMOTIONAL RESPONSES TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE .....	293
9.10	CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE .....	295
<b>10</b>	<b>SUMMATION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSES TO CSA</b>	<b>299</b>
10.1	SUMMARY OF THIS STUDY’S APPROACH .....	299
10.2	REFLECTION: THE ‘I’ IN CONSTRUCTING MEANING FROM GROUNDED THEORY METHODS .....	300
10.3	CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	302
10.3.1	<i>Macro level factors</i> .....	303
10.3.2	<i>Exo, meso and micro level factors</i> .....	303
10.3.3	<i>Further research</i> .....	304
10.4	LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH .....	305
10.5	FINAL COMMENTS.....	306
	<b>GLOSSARY .....</b>	<b>307</b>
	<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>310</b>
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>445</b>

## List of Figures and Tables

### List of Figures

FIGURE 2.1	AN INTER-RELATIONSHIP ECOLOGICAL MODEL.....	16
FIGURE 2.2	MAP SHOWING THE GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF BARBADOS .....	31
FIGURE 2.3	AN ECOLOGICAL MODEL OF CULTURE .....	46
FIGURE 3.1	STORYING CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE .....	87
FIGURE 4.1	CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE SYMMETRY: METHODOLOGICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	106
FIGURE 5.1	STAFFING LEVELS OF 'QUALIFIED' STAFF OF THE CHILD CARE BOARD AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY .....	113
FIGURE 5.2	DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS USING OPEN, AXIAL AND SELECTIVE CODING .....	124
FIGURE 5.3	REPRESENTATION OF GROUNDED THEORY STUDY FROM CONCEPTUALISATION TO THEORY DEVELOPMENT.....	128
FIGURE 6.1	DISCLOSURE PATTERNS TO POLICE OFFICERS.....	146
FIGURE 6.2	DISCLOSURE PATTERNS TO CHILD CARE OFFICERS .....	148
FIGURE 6.3	SELF-DEFEATING PARADOX OF CHILD DISCLOSURE: CONTRIBUTION TO THE PERPETUATION OF RISK.....	175
FIGURE 6.4	POTENTIAL FOR THE PERPETUATION OF RISK .....	180
FIGURE 7.1	A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE KEY, IDENTIFYING FEATURES LEADING TO COHERENCE 196	
FIGURE 7.2	TRAJECTORY STAGES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CoP .....	199
FIGURE 7.3	THE CONCEPTUAL UNDERPINNINGS OF WENGER'S (1998) CoP .....	214
FIGURE 8.1	SYNERGISTIC USE OF CoP AND FEMINIST THEORIES .....	217
<b>FIGURE 9.1</b>	ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY OF SOCIAL-CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON BEHAVIOURS 260	
FIGURE 9.2	CONCEPTUALIZING FROM LITERATURE REVIEW .....	278

### List of Tables

TABLE 2.1	NUMBER OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PROSECUTED ALLEGATIONS BY THE POLICE FOR THE YEARS 2008-2010 .....	23
TABLE 2.2	NUMBERS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE ALLEGATIONS BY GENDER REPORTED TO CCB: 2004/5-2006/7 .....	23
TABLE 2.3	NUMBERS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE ALLEGATIONS BY AGE GROUP REPORTED TO CCB: 2004/5-2006/7.....	24
TABLE 2.4	CHILD CARE BOARD'S CSA DATA FOR THE PERIOD 2007/8 TO 2010/ 11 .....	25
TABLE 2.5	CHILD CARE BOARD'S CSA DATA FOR THE PERIOD 1990/91 TO 1999/ 2000.....	25
TABLE 2.6	CATEGORIES AND NUMBERS OF CHILD ABUSE REPORTED TO CCB: 2004/5 TO 2006/7...	28
TABLE 5.1	POLICE OFFICERS COMPARISON BY GENDER AND RANK AT SPECIFIED POLICE STATIONS .....	114
TABLE 6.1	EXAMPLES OF CSA CASES CITED AT INTERVIEWS BY CCOS .....	136

## List of Appendices

Appendix 2.1: Demographical and training information on child care officers.....	312
Appendix 2.2: Child Care Board organisational chart .....	313
Appendix 2.3: Demographical and training information on police officers.....	314
Appendix 2.4: Extracted principles: IFSW & ASSW.....	315
Appendix 2.5: Royal Barbados Police Force Code of ethics.....	318
Appendix 3.1: A snapshot of CSA reports in the media: main Barbadian newspaper .....	320
Appendix 5: Research submission and accompanying documentation.....	322-341
Appendix 6.1: Interview transcripts: child care officers.....	343
Appendix 6.2: Interview transcripts: police officers.....	377
Appendix 6.3: Focus group case study .....	410
Appendix 6.4: Transcript of focus group discussion.....	415
Appendix 6.5: Codings - core categories from child care officers' data.....	429
Appendix 6.6: Codings - core categories from police data.....	435
Appendix 6.7: Focus group analysis - joint police officers' and child care officers' data.....	438
Appendix 6.8: Sexual Offences Act 1992.....	440

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

**CARICOM:** CARICOM's purpose is to promote economic integration and development among member states. It formulates policies regarding health, education, labour, science and technology, tourism, foreign policy, and the environment. In 2005 the organisation established the Caribbean Court of Justice for participating nations, as a final court of appeals. In 2006 Caricom inaugurated its single market and economy where six of its members participated in the establishment of a CARICOM single market.

CCB:	Child Care Board
CCO:	Child Care Officer
CID:	Criminal Investigative Department
CIDA :	Canadian International Development Agency
CoP:	Community of Practice
CoPs:	Communities of Practice
GNI:	Gross National Income
GT:	Grounded Theory
HDI:	Human Development Index
HIV:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IMR:	Infant Mortality Rate
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organisations
OECS :	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PO:	Police Officer
RBPF:	Royal Barbados Police Force
SCCO:	Senior Child Care Officer
SMCCO:	Senior Male Child Care Officer
UNECLAC:	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
UNICEF:	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM:	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WmPO:	Woman Police Officer

## **ABSTRACT**

The complexities inherent in managing child sexual abuse stem from the intersection of micro factors (e.g., personal values, histories of learning and trauma in some cases), exo level factors (such as agency mandates and professional codes) and macro factors (e.g., socio-economic and societal attitudes). Professionals in Barbados who deal with gender-based violence (including sexual exploitation) have a key role to play in addressing this problem. The ways in which they respond, through their criminal investigations, child protection assessments and interventions, are critical in assisting with the amelioration of the effects of CSA and reducing its prevalence.

This study furthers our understanding and expands knowledge on the subject by examining professional behaviours in responding to child sexual abuse. Factors such as professional identity and codes of ethics, together with institutional regulations and cultural mores, determine how professionals are likely to respond. A grounded theory approach was employed, in an interpretative constructionist manner, to explore the responses of twenty one (21) participants, comprising ten police officers, eight child care officers and focus group members comprising three new participants and four others previously interviewed individually.

Two theoretical paradigms were employed as conceptual lenses to assist data exploration and analysis of emerged meanings. These were the socio-cultural theory of 'community of practice', and the feminist perspective, which helped to inform how gender and power might impact on responses. Sitting alongside these approaches is the ecological systems theory, which I have used to ensure that the problem (child sexual abuse) has been located within its wider socio-cultural context.

The grounded theory to emerge from the study is that professional responses to CSA result in, and from, multisystem actions within hierarchies of power and status, which validate particular narratives of abuse and minimise others. Professionals are embedded within these systems and, therefore, often find it difficult to respond to CSA in ways that address root causes and provide justice to its victims. The study highlights the need for the training of police officers and social workers to facilitate a greater level of reflection on issues such as power and gender inequality, and to create opportunities for collaborative practice.

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# 1 Introduction to the Thesis

## 1.1 The Prelude to This Study - First Time Frame

The responses of police officers and child care officers (social workers) who deal with child sexual abuse on a daily basis in Barbados are represented within this thesis. It is my hope that the results of this study add to their empowerment as professionals in some way.

The stimulus of this thesis goes back in my mind to two specific time frames when, in one capacity or another, I was dealing directly or indirectly with child sexual abuse cases, during which time I was, at least subliminally, attuned to their effect on families and professionals. The first time frame was working in England within the National Health Service (NHS) as a Health Visitor, and then as a manager, during the 1970s and 1980s. This was a time when child abuse consisted of the well-documented physical abuse of children, later to be expanded to include cases of sexual abuse, the upsurge of which was thought to be a new form of child abuse. This 'discovery' further added to the emotional strain of Community Health Visitors, usually the first professionals to come into contact with a maltreated child. Observing a child who had signs of physical abuse was a distressing situation, but there were usually some physical signs and clear guidelines to follow, including referral to medical and social services. Health visitors, social workers, probation officers and police officers (POs) were working colleagues in the protection of children from physical abuse and neglect. Case conferences for planning the intervention - who were going to do what - were part of the official instruments for interdisciplinary professional responses to the perceived maltreatment.

Then there was child sexual abuse. My recollection of the response at that time, to one allegation by a little girl accusing her father, was of an arranged medical examination of the little girl together with interviews with the mother, which produced no evidence of anything. The father denied the allegation. The feelings of uneasiness and questions such as "how does one respond?" to such allegations, in the absence of education and training on the subject; and guidance such as that which existed for physical abuse and neglect, was

professionally quite worrying. There were no histories to lean on, no yardstick to call upon.

During the 1980s, as a manager of a Health Authority Community Nursing and Health Visiting Unit, I was catapulted into the lead role as the named nurse for Health Authority Child Protection matters - a role that demanded specific attention to interagency collaboration, policy and procedures and the empowerment of staff to respond competently to allegations of all forms of child abuse. This was at a time when child sexual abuse was gaining national and international prominence. It was during this period that I decided my postgraduate education would be in a subject which looked at organisational strengthening and the empowerment of staff. To this end, I completed a Master's degree in Occupational and Organisational Psychology during the 1990s, which was instrumental in my later work in the Caribbean.

## **1.2 Second Time Frame**

The second time frame in which I was plunged into the reality of child sexual abuse was during the early to mid-2000s, this time working as a project manager for a charitable organisation - Action for Children (UK) - but based in the Caribbean. The nature of the work included some research into child protection service delivery, and organisational strengthening. It was during this time that I became acutely aware that social workers across the Caribbean were growing increasingly concerned and vociferous about child sexual abuse allegations coming to their attention.

## **1.3 Defining Moment for this Study**

It was during 2008, when I became the second lead researcher on a UNICEF (Barbados and Eastern Caribbean Office) funded project on child sexual abuse across six Caribbean countries, that this study crystallised in my mind. Action for Children (for whom I was still working) was selected, with the University of Huddersfield as the lead research agency, to execute the study. The study looked at the public's perception, attitudes and opinions on child sexual abuse. I felt the time was right to also seek professionals' responses to child sexual abuse. It was a time of much media attention to the perceived

'growing' problem. The Child Care Board (CCB) in Barbados was, for several years, sharing information in open forums on the increasing numbers of child sexual abuse cases brought to their attention. The CCB remains the statutory agency employing the child care officers (CCOs), one of the two professional groups in this research, the other group being POs as indicated in the title of this study.

#### **1.4 Further Situating Myself**

My primary reason here now, is to situate myself as a woman and a researcher with the important task of representing what was said to me during the series of interviews with individual POs and CCOs: 'I am now a voice of a different kind.' In this study of child sexual abuse and organisational responses to it, I have the important task of reporting, and in so doing, "learned what to see" (Haraway, 1988). I have accomplished this through the vehicle of my grounded theory methodological approach and with the help of the perspectives on feminism and communities of practice which are employed within the findings and discussion chapters.

When speaking of a feminist perspective I must, at the very outset, acknowledge that there is no one perspective and hence I recognise that there are differences within and between feminism viewpoints, in the same way as there would be differences between non-feminist and feminist researchers. As Ramazanoglu (1992) states, "What one means by feminist methodology depends in part on which authors one takes as examples" (p. 208).

In being this voice, I see myself taking a feminist approach, a conscious intent in this research (Freedman, 2001, p. 5), and becoming much more acutely aware of my other feminist activities. My professional experiences in the Caribbean have been impacted on by the activity and inactivity of political and social systems of governance catering to children's welfare. Some of this experience includes the absence of strategic planning reflected in didactic operational service, in which creativity is stifled and innovation is only in the form of the lip service paid to it. Such experiences must, however, be framed

from the children's reality, their lived experiences together with the strengths and vulnerabilities of their family life. The quality of this service is influenced by the political agenda and the quality of professional intervention. There can therefore be no *personal* (aspect) untouched by the *political*, both from the service users' perspective and from that of the service providers, of which I was a part. Many of us operate within, and are impacted by, systems of governance at the macro level of policy and resource allocation (or lack of) and the quality of the implementation at the meso and micro levels.

Having explained the above, I am also aware that situating myself thus now means that my "Personal is Political" (Hanisch, 1971) - a rallying cry of some during the second-wave feminist period. It acknowledges power relationships rather than narrow electoral politics, although of course they are interlinked. I see in this the recognition that any personal problems (of any individual) associated with any of the many fights and activities for justice, cannot be personal only, as they are situated within cultural and political systems of ideologies and governance.

Child sexual abuse at this point in time in Barbados comes with no personal solutions which children themselves can produce. Many of these solutions, I would argue, lie in the political systems and the isolated but interconnected spaces of the homes, other spaces where the abuse takes place and the organisational responses by professionals. How do professionals' voices speak to the subject of child sexual abuse in Barbados? When taken together with the institutional policies and practices such as the law and other standards of practice, we may begin to see an *organisation of responses* with which the sexually abused child is confronted. It can be argued that, over this situation, they will have little or no control. The inequality that exists between their personal circumstances and the *organisation of responses* is a case of the political affecting the personal.

Collins (2009), in the introduction to 'Black Feminist Thought', reminds us of the ease with which one's sense of self and voice can be reduced in size and visibility, culminating in eventual silence, as the majority audience reminds

one of one's socially denigrated and prescribed status, be it a lesser or minority one. She elaborates further in stating that her eventual voice is many things. It is individual, collective, personal and political, "...reflecting the intersection of my unique biography with the larger meaning of my historical times" (Collins, *ibid*, p. vii). The sexually abused child is in such a 'minority and lesser status', but there are many other voices, some of which are the professional responses to their allegations, important in the search for justice.

### **1.5 Whose Voices?**

I have indicated a number of voices associated with this study: my voice; that of the professionals; and a voice from the literature. Collectively, these voices are all contributors in this research, making a contribution in synergistic ways. As the researcher, I am mindful that the voice I bring to this research is representative of my several identities: the self which Reinharz (1997, pp. 3-5) describes as the *research based self* which, for instance, chose this topic to investigate in the first place; the *bought self* (that which historically, socially and personally helped to form my standpoints), and my *situationally created self*, which represent other dimensions of self (this author's italics). Each of the other voices impacting this research is in an identical position, with their respective, distinctive say. As researcher, my position within my chosen philosophical and methodological standpoints must be informed by a process which makes explicit my subjectivities, which are impacted on by the above selves and which cannot be taken off and hung up in a closet for the duration of the research period, like the garment metaphor spoken of by Peshkin (1988). My answer to managing my subjectivities lies in reflexivity, described simply as "...the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher..." (Lincoln & Guba, 2005, p. 210). As Peshkin further asserts:

It is no more useful for researchers to acknowledge simply that subjectivity is an invariable component of their research than it is for them to assert that their ideal is to achieve objectivity. Acknowledgments and assertions are not sufficient...subjectivity is inevitable....researchers should systematically seek out their subjectivity, not retrospectively when the data have been collected and the analysis is complete, but while their research is actively in progress.

(Peshkin, 1988, p. 17)

A researcher's use of reflexivity is therefore akin to their subjectivity management, in that both need to be claimed by the researcher, but each of which runs the risk of being elusive, unless caught and managed from the inception of the research. Fortunately, reflexivity can be used to control subjectivity, with the latter in turn providing the energy within reflexivity. This symbiotic relationship of reflexivity and subjectivity is one which I was mindful of from the very outset of this research, and one which receives attention throughout this study. For example, my quantitative background is one of my subjectivities, of which I was mindful, at least at the conceptualisation of this study. This was a better known and therefore a more comfortable paradigm – as I wrestled with the nuances of qualitative research for this study. The process of reflecting critically as a researcher is therefore one that began before this research. It is part of my historical and situational selves, requiring ongoing interrogation of each self and of any inherent paradoxes and contradictions likely to shape the research (Lincoln & Guba, 2005).

## **1.6 The Chapters of this Thesis**

In Chapter Two of this thesis, I discuss the research location and present a brief overview of Barbados' demographical, socio-cultural and historical position. This is information to help situate the research. Against the legacy of imperial colonialism, I outline the transmission from this status to the present socio-economic environment of stability and developmental progress. Violence and gendered violence is, nevertheless, a reality for Barbados in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The chapter introduces an ecological framework to help explain the nested nature of violence, some gendered, and some of it faced by children. The model serves also to explain how the distal factors of histories of learning with the present socio-political and legal situation, can impact the proximal influences of professional responses to allegations of child sexual abuse today. I also took a contextualising look at some aspects of professional culture as they relate to the two professional groups and how responding to CSA may be impacted by it. Responding to child sexual abuse arguably evokes some emotional passion among some members, if not all, of

these two professional groups. These responses are likely to reflect, and be mediated by their respective organisational culture.

In Chapter Three, I look generally at some of the literature on child sexual abuse and meanings associated with it from some of its historical and contemporary positions. This is not a comprehensive literature review normally done before the actual study, as such is not recommended for a grounded theory study such as this (Glaser, 1992; Glaser & Holton, 2004). Rather, this was done to assist me in contextualising my methodological approach and my thinking on the subject.

In Chapter Four, I discuss my methodology, and position myself as the researcher within the epistemological and methodological perspective of grounded theory. I explain how I have adopted a flexible approach to its use by acknowledging and incorporating into my research methodology the principles of classic grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978, 1992) using, flexibly, the analytical procedures of Strauss & Corbin (1994; 1990). I also explain my preference for a Charmazian interpretative framework (Charmaz, 2006), as the social constructionist approach for interrogation.

The chapter further explains my reasons for choosing a grounded theory approach, part of which includes the argument that the complexity within the area of study demands a qualitative approach for theory development. In clarifying and justifying this methodological approach, the chapter interrogates the complementary and divergent merits of a positivist and constructionist approach to a study such as this.

In Chapter Five, I describe research planning and my data collection methods at the two research sites of the POs' stations and the offices of the CCOs. I discuss the details of how I went about this data collection, inclusive of the focus group discussion.

In Chapters Six, Seven, Eight and Nine I discuss my findings. Chapter Six explores the findings from data drawn from interviews with CCOs, the police and the focus group. I identify several categorical themes which form the basis of my theorising.

In Chapter Seven, I utilise a conceptual framework which outlines the social, cultural and learning theory of communities of practice (CoP). As a conceptual lens, it assists understanding of the ways in which professionals respond to child sexual abuse, based on:

- their participation/membership of various communities of practice (CoPs);
- behavioural responses of CoPs which can, in turn, reflect the value placed on the professionals' participation in the activities of the CoP;
- participation in various CoPs, shaping the identity of members, an identity which is in turn sustained through the behaviours, knowledge and sense-making of the members.

Using the development trajectory concept of a CoP, one begins to see how child sexual abuse, as a practice, comes into being and can be maintained, both in its practice and in the responses of professionals to the phenomenon.

In Chapter Eight, I conceptualize professional responses by drawing on several theoretical approaches, underpinned by feminist perspectives, to help explain the linked systemic forces that can contribute to a child being sexually abused, and the factors influencing professional responses to the abuse. I use a multi-perspective conceptual map to assist understanding of the data and of professional responses and actions in the complex field of child sexual abuse. This is consistent with a feminist approach to research which acknowledges that there are multiple truths, residing in more than one epistemology (Burgess-Proctor, 2006; Campbell & Wasco, 2000). In exploring the literature, I draw upon various theoretical perspectives for interrogating social structures and structural oppression, power, identity, subjectivity, situated experiences, meaning and practice. Each of these theoretical perspectives can underpin behaviours, particularly at the distal level, where philosophies and cultural values can impact on professional actions. Finally, the conceptual map is a bridge between this chapter and Chapter Seven, both of which are instrumental in providing an enabling theoretical base for assistance in understanding the phenomena emerging from the study.

In Chapter Nine, I integrate the findings through this study's theory of risk perpetuation. In discussing the findings, I further engage with the literature, which as secondary data show the relationship with the core phenomenon. The chapter examines the interrelationship between the trilogy of child sexual abuse, adolescent pregnancy and adverse childhood experiences, as significant contributors to the theory's development. In this trilogy, child sexual abuse is seen as the common denominator.

Finally, in Chapter Ten, I present the main theoretical positions derived from the study, with the caveat that it is through my interpretative lens that I arrive at this point. This lens is but one; there are other lenses. For example, Peshkin (2001) offers some of these for a researcher's consideration; these are: patterns, time, positionality, ideology, themes, metaphor, irony, silence and emic. Some of these are an intrinsic part of my lens, e.g., patterns of responding and ideology as it informs culture. Peshkin argues that:

Each one invites researchers to perceive in a certain way. They are not mutually exclusive ways of learning or exhaustive of the ways of perceiving. Moreover, we do not easily use one lens at a time, because just as we begin to see things in one way, other things come into focus and get connected, so that we move away from our starting point.

(Peshkin, 2001, p. 242)

### **1.7 Situating the Gendered Aspects of this Study**

In this thesis, I will often refer to the girl child as the victim of sexual abuse. This is *not* to be read that I am saying that boys are not sexually abused. Rather, it reflects the higher reporting levels to the police of girl victims (Snyder, 2010) and the possible lack of empirically sound research to better understand male sexual abuse (Dhaliwal, Gauzas, Antonowicz, & Ross, 1996). Some of the reasons for this situation are explored in the literature review by Holmes, Offen & Waller (1997) who, in applying a social constructionist model, argue that failure to recognize and confront male abuse results from the non-legitimation of it at the levels of society, clinicians and the individuals themselves (Holmes et al., *ibid*, p. 69). That the sexual abuse

of boys does occur, primarily by men and adolescent boys as it does to girls, is therefore not being disputed here.

In exploring professional responses to child sexual abuse in Barbados, it may also appear that I am focusing only on the abuse by men and not acknowledging that women and female adolescents also engage in sexually abusive behaviours with children. This is not the case. I am here acknowledging the fact that, whilst the majority of the reports of sexual abuse of children continue to be of men, the spectre of female perpetrators of child sexual abuse is increasingly being recognized and brought to the attention of medical and other practitioners (Denov & Cortoni, 2006; Ford, 2006; Welldon, 1990; Wilkins, 1990).

However, in this study, the central focus is more likely to be on the sexual abuse of girls, because from the Barbadian secondary data shown in Chapter Two, we see confirmation that this is a male on female crime, where the overwhelming majority of reports are of male perpetrators and most of the victims are female children.

### **1.8 The Study's Models and Paradigms**

In this study, I draw on models with their various theories and hypotheses to assist my understanding and interpretation of the data. I also develop and use models to expand my thinking and explanation of this study's findings. As working tools, these models allow focus on what I see as noteworthy. They also enable a reduction of the study's observed data into manageable proportions of what seems relevant (Sidebotham, 2001, p. 100). In executing this study, I will also be drawing on paradigms or conceptual frameworks, with their implicit body of theoretical and methodological approaches and beliefs, to assist the development of this study's aims. The utility of paradigms is seen within their:

...scientific observations and experiments... (being) robust and relatively enduring...allow(ing) for various theoretical and other working models to be developed and tested within the overall accepted conceptual framework.

(Sidebotham, 2001, p. 99)

The complexity of child sexual abuse calls for an understanding of its probable causes, its effects and the impact of professionals' assumptions and direct responses to the phenomenon (Hunter, 2006). Models and paradigms can therefore assist the development of new knowledge and assist in revisiting positions which are taken for granted. They are therefore integral to the advancement of this study. However, this study remains mindful that models in themselves can create a level of complexity and rigidity which can be at odds with the clarifying intention. A good example of utility, however, is the ecological model which is used and introduced in the next chapter. As a complex framework it can, nevertheless, provide understanding of violence through simplification rather than complexity.

### **1.9 Aims of Research**

The following are my aims for this study. They were developed from my interest in the subject, the potential for furthering a better understanding of it and assisting the ongoing development of service delivery to children and families in Barbados. They will be revisited several times in this work.

- How is CSA defined, and how do such definitions impact on professionals' responses (to CSA) in Barbados?
- What organisational and other factors impact on, and promote/inhibit responding in the best interests of the child within the social and cultural context of Barbados?

### **1.10 The Next Steps**

In the next chapter, I begin this study by presenting some contextualizing information on Barbados, the site of the study. Some of this information further situates Barbados within a Caribbean context, which is part of its geopolitical and economic identity. The use of ecological systems theory is presented, to assist with the analysis of socio-cultural/historical contextual factors impacting on this study's development. At the end of Chapter Three, I

discuss the rationale of Chapters Two and Three, and how they both informed my research aims.

## **2 Situating the Research**

### **2.1 Locating Barbados Historically**

This chapter gives a broad contextual description of the historical, social and political character of Barbados. This helps to situate this study within the island's developmental progress. A view of its socio-economic gains and problems, such as gender violence of which child sexual abuse (CSA) is a recognized part, is intended to help contextualize this study. Professional responses to CSA allegations are situated within this environment, where distal and proximal ecological factors are likely to affect how the professionals respond. An ecological systems theory is capable of capturing changing situations within different but related environments, because of their impact on each other. It is therefore introduced below and discussed for its utility to this study.

### **2.2 Ecological Systems Theory**

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1989) is a useful theoretical framework for understanding the nature of societal violence, and how professional actions, which are embedded within the society, respond to child sexual abuse. When Bronfenbrenner applied the theory to human development, he described it as a system of relationships within a person's environment, wherever that maybe. The model captures the development of these relationships throughout the life course, between an active growing human being, and the changing properties of their immediate settings. This process is affected by the relations between these settings and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded. The theory can be extended to what happens in a society and its population of people, and an organisation with its formal and informal members.

Bronfenbrenner's (1989) initial theory shows the ecological environment as comprising four functional levels which interact in complex ways. These can both affect and be affected by the person's development and their actions. A

fifth dimension that comprises an element of time was added later. Each of the four system levels are described below, and depicted in Figure 2.1 as a conceptualized representation and as an explanatory framework for use.

The microsystem can define activities, roles, and interpersonal relationships in an environment where persons interact with others in a reciprocal way. This level is conceptualized in two ways: as the situational context in which an individual is traumatised and otherwise affected by violence, and as the context in which professionals respond with a service to that violence.

A microsystem is a pattern of activities, social roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given face-to face setting with particular physical, social and symbolic features that invite, permit or inhibit, engagement in sustained, progressively more complex interaction with, and activity in, the immediate environment.

(Bronfenbrenner, 1994b, p. 1645)

The mesosystem is one representing the relationship existing between two or more microsystems. In this study, it can be conceptualized as the dynamic interaction of microsystems of victims and parents; victims, parents and professionals, and groups of professionals responding in their unique ways to child sexual abuse.

The exosystem is representative of the wider social system within which the microsystem members are embedded. From the situational context of this chapter, it represents decisions and policies over which the victim of sexual violence has no influence. However, from the professionals' point of view, this system can directly impact on activities at the mesosystem level, as it includes rules, regulations and resource availability which, in turn, determine the level of direct service to victims:

The exosystem comprises the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings, at least one of which does not contain the developing

person, but in which events occur that indirectly influence processes within the immediate setting in which the developing person lives.

(Bronfenbrenner, 1993, p. 24)

The macrosystem represents the overarching cultural values, beliefs, opinions, attitudes and perceptions within a society. It encompasses also the political, social, and economic environment of a society, local community or organisation, and has direct and indirect effects on the exosystem and microsystem.

The chronosystem represents a time-based dimension which can be short term or long term in its influence on the ecological systems. As such, it can refer to the socio-historical time dimension of a country's development and cultural life, the professional trajectory of an agency or inter-generational patterns within families.

The gendered nature of the socio-economic, health and other vulnerabilities posed by structural systems within the Caribbean region is summed up by Carrington (2005), Secretary General of CARICOM, on International Women's Day:

Persistent stereotypical attitudes towards women continue to pose a challenge to achieving gender equality. The stresses and vulnerabilities faced by women as a result of HIV/AIDS, the persistent scourge of violence against women, the risks associated with the pursuit of transactional sex and the plague of gender-related poverty are some of the prevalent social issues that negatively impact on the quality of life for women of the Region. Insufficient access to, or control of economic resources, and continuous low levels of participation in decision-making processes, including representation in governments, continue to hamper women's advancement and in so doing, will have implications for the Community's development.

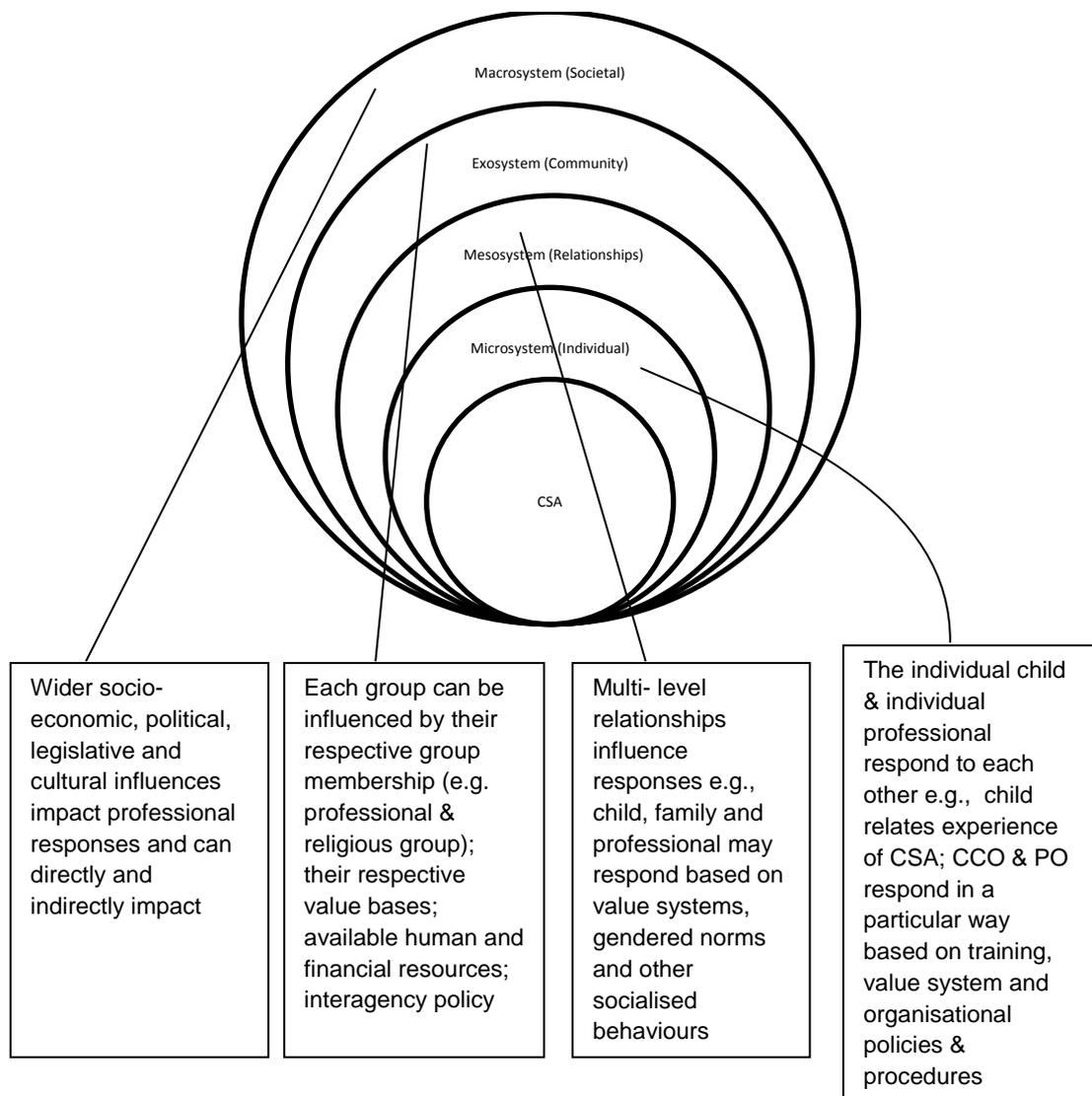
(Carrington, 2005 p. 1)

This chapter will show that, from studies within the Caribbean region and Barbados, violence in many forms, e.g., sexual abuse of children and intimate

partner violence, can be common experiences. Carrington’s observation above reflects this picture. The need for a study such as this will be partly supported by the evidence within the chapter.

Below is a representation of an ecological model, to assist the understanding of interrelationships impacting on professional responses to CSA in Barbados. The nested nature of responses influences each other.

**Figure 2.1 An inter-relationship ecological model**



## **2.3 Barbados' History**

### **2.3.1 Institutions' roles, statutory agencies and committees**

Barbados gained its independence from Great Britain in 1966. This followed a period of colonisation which went back to 1627, a period of three hundred and forty-two years of interrupted rule by one imperial power – Great Britain.

By the mid-seventeenth century, migration to Barbados was said to be greater than to other colonies such as Massachusetts and Virginia (Greenfield, 1969), with a population of approximately 11,000 landowners in a population of about 30,000 Europeans (Williams, 1984). The success of the Barbados economy came from the growth of sugar cane and the export of its by-product, sugar. This economy was supported by cheap slave labour, mainly from West Africa, which made much wealth for the ruling plantocracy of Barbados. The success of this was such that, by the middle of the seventeenth century, Barbados was said to be the most prosperous and profitable of the British colonies (Williams, *ibid*). Success sprang from exploitation. Exploitation of one group by another was legally and socially permitted, thus maintaining a position of inequality through subjugation by race and class.

Very soon after the British settlers arrived, local government was instituted to administer a system, such as taxation for infrastructure maintenance. By 1639 a parliament house and assembly modelled on the British system was established, “resulting in one of the longest uninterrupted traditions of parliamentary practices as a British colony...its path to independence in 1966 was smooth” (DaCosta, 2007, pp. 3-4). This stability is exemplified in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by an equivalence of traditions through histories of learning which help to maintain the status quo and the interest of one or other powerful group in society. Two status quo issues spring to mind which are of interest to this research:

- the outdated criminal law relating to sexual violence (a relic of British rule), and its subjugation of females through the *mens rea* principle, and

- the issue of corporeal punishment of children which remains on the statute books and is permitted in schools and as a judicial sanction.

This second point is a confirmatory example of the one above and it has also prompted the Committee on the Rights of the Child to state in section 4.19 - Civil Rights and Freedoms:

The Committee is concerned about legislation and policies that allow the use of flogging of children as a disciplinary measure...and its use as a judicial sentence...The Committee encourages the State party to conduct a public awareness-raising campaign and to review its legislation and policies in order to eliminate flogging as a judicial sentence and as a disciplinary measure in the prison system.

(CRC, 1999)

By 1645, this early system of governance extended to each of the eleven parishes, represented in the House of Assembly by two members each. By the time of full emancipation in 1834, this representative government had been in place for nearly 200 years, covering trade, the economy, local government and education.

The electoral system is patterned after the British Westminster multi-party system. The system allows for the appointment of a Prime Minister as the Head of Government, who may serve a term of five (5) years and may be re-elected. Constitutionally, the British Monarch continues to be the Head of State and is represented on the island by a Governor General who is appointed on the advice of the Prime Minister. Following a General Election, the Prime Minister is appointed by the Governor-General. The Cabinet is the body having overall responsibility for the management of the Government.

Having moved from being a former British colony to full independence on November 30, 1966, Barbados remains a member of the Commonwealth. Its main gross domestic product (GDP) contributors are the tourism industry, the sugar industry and other agricultural activities, some light manufacturing, banking and the financial services sector.

As one would expect, there appears to be a strong regulatory framework connected with these industries, which are vital for the economic health of the nation. This contrasts sharply, in my opinion (supported by various United Nations Committees' concluding reports), with the absence of evidence of a strong regulatory, child protective framework which focuses on:

- the best interest of the child, and
- actively sets targets for children's and young persons' development.

For example, The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, twenty-first session (May 1999), considered the initial report of Barbados (CRC/C/3/Add.45) and adopted the following concluding observations:

The Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts, and if necessary, request international technical assistance from inter alia UNICEF, on the collection and analysis of statistical data on child rights, systematically disaggregated by gender, age, socio-economic background, geographic location, etc., and with an emphasis on vulnerable groups.

(United Nations Population Fund, 1999, p. 1)

Figures from the 2000 National census of Barbados show the population to be 268,792. The child population in the 0-14 age category was 59, 587 or 22 per cent of the total. There were 27, 667 males recorded and 26, 934 female children.

A variety of institutions exist to advise the government of Barbados on the efficacy of legislative matters, recommend reform issues and carry out statutory mandates. Three of these, the Child Care Board, the Family Law council, and the National Committee on the Rights of the Child are involved in the decision-making within child sexual abuse management, either directly or through their influence on other institutions. The Child Care Board, as described below, has the legal mandate for the care and protection of children in Barbados.

### **2.3.2 The judiciary and the civil service**

The Constitution of Barbados makes provision for a Supreme Court. Section 80 of the Constitution provides for the establishment of the Supreme Court, consisting of a High Court and a Court of Appeal. Judges are appointed by the Governor General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition. It is within the High Court that cases of child sexual abuse are heard.

The Civil Service sector is the largest employment division within the country. POs and social workers form part of this administrative/professional workforce. These two key institutions are directly responsible for the protection of children from sexual abuse, under their respective legislative mandates.

### **2.3.3 Police officers**

The Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF), as outlined by the Constitution of Barbados, is a part of the Government responsible for local law enforcement. The RBPF is divided into three territorial divisions: the Operations Support Division; the Administrative Support Division, and the Criminal Investigations Division. The organisation structure of the RBPF is modelled after London's Metropolitan Police Service.

#### **2.3.3.1 Professional training**

Where this study is concerned, the RBPF training in violence against women and children is reflected in Barbados' third periodic report (2006) to the United Nations Human Rights Committee - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR). A section of the report states:

Training for the members of the Royal Barbados Police Force in domestic intervention is seen as a crucial aspect in the Government's strategy to reduce the incidence of domestic violence. As a result, all new police recruits are now trained in domestic violence intervention. Modules on domestic violence, based on the Commonwealth Secretariat's Manual "Guidelines for Police Training on Violence Against Women and Child Sex Abuse," are

included in the training programme of members of the Royal Barbados Police Force.

(CCPR, 2006)

Police training is carried out in Barbados at the Regional Police Training Centre (RPTC). It was established in 1956 by the British Colonial Government of the Caribbean, to provide entry level basic training for police and law enforcement officers, within the colonies of the Commonwealth of Dominica; St. Lucia; Turks and Caicos Islands; British Virgin Islands; Cayman Islands; Grenada; St. Vincent, and the Grenadines. Today, the programmes offered at the Centre are fully funded by the Government of Barbados. It still provides basic entry-level training for Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat and St. Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force, (RPTC, 2007).

#### **2.3.3.2 Qualifications and training (PO)**

The POs' stated qualifications and training appear in Appendix 2.3. There is no dedicated unit working with victims of child sexual abuse. The specialist needs of child sexual abuse victims fall under the purview of the criminal investigative team, with referral to the victim support unit which offers a generic counselling and support service to victims of crime. Training in child sexual abuse forms part of the generic sexual offences course offered by the Regional Police Training Centre.

#### **2.3.4 The Child Care Board**

Established by the Child Care Board Act (1969), the CCB is a statutory independent governmental body responsible for implementing and administering the Child Care Board Act (ibid). The original act was replaced by another in 1981 to allow the Board a wider scope of operation. This Act (1981) empowers the CCB to:

- (a) provide and maintain child-care centres for children in need of care and protection (such as day-care centres and children's homes);
- (b) provide counselling and other services such as would meet their special needs:

- (i) for children in need of care and protection;
- (ii) for the parents and guardians of those children;
- (c) place children in foster care;
- (d) supervise foster children and foster parents;
- (e) register, license and regulate private day-care services;
- (f) undertake such other functions as the Minister directs.

The Act further states: “The Child Care Board works with public and private sector agencies and individuals in order to achieve its objectives” (Child Care Board Act, *ibid*).

#### **2.3.4.1 Qualifications and training (CCO)**

CCOs in Barbados working within child protection services receive their training from tertiary level institutions in Barbados and abroad (most frequently the USA, Canada, and the UK). Most qualifications are in social work and/or a related discipline of Sociology and Psychology as shown in Appendix 2.1. The ‘specialist’ training related to child protection appears to be done in-house.

#### **2.4 Secondary Data: Royal Barbados Police Force**

The secondary data in the table below on the numbers of child sexual abuse allegations which resulted in prosecution, show a consistent pattern in terms of numbers and gender breakdown over the three year period (2008-2010). No figures were available from the police on the numbers of withdrawals/dismissals before formal investigation; and/or the numbers of non-prosecutions following investigations, or how many accused were on trial.

**Table 2.1 Number of child sexual abuse prosecuted allegations by the police for the years 2008-2010**

AGES	2008			2009			2010			TOTAL OVER 3 YRS
M F	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
0-4	0	3	3	0	3	3	1	3	4	10
5-11	0	18	18	4	12	16	1	11	12	46
12-16	0	49	49	1	32	33	3	36	39	121
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>177</b>
<b>TOTAL OVER 3 YRS</b>	<b>MALES: 10</b>									
	<b>FEMALES: 167</b>									

Source: Research department of the Royal Barbados Police Force, 2010

In the section below, this evidence is further examined in relation to additional information from the CCB.

#### 2.4.1 Secondary data: Child Care Board

The statistical information in Tables 2.2 and 2.3 below show the data obtained from the CCB for a three year period 2004/5 to 2006/7, where each year begins in April and ends in March the next year.

**Table 2.2 Numbers of child sexual abuse allegations by gender reported to CCB: 2004/5-2006/7**

CSA allegations by gender				
Gender	2004-5	2005-6	2006-7	Total over 3 yr. period
Male	11	22	32	65
Female	179	204	227	610
<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>675</b>

Source: Child Care Board, 2010

**Table 2.3 Numbers of child sexual abuse allegations by age group reported to CCB: 2004/5-2006/7**

CSA allegations by age categories				
Age group	2004-5	2005-6	2006-7	Total
0-4	14	20	26	60
5-11	37	52	70	159
12-16	135	154	162	451
16+	04	0	01	05
<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>675</b>

**Source: Child Care Board, 2010**

These figures relate to different time periods and are therefore not directly comparable. Furthermore, the police statistics are for prosecuted cases while the CCB data is on reported cases, and this, rather than any drop in CSA cases, is the most probable explanation for the disparity between the data sets. Each agency compile their data in somewhat different categorical formats, e.g., the police data are aggregated per calendar year and are broken down by age groups and gender as shown in Table 2.1. On the other hand the CCB's data are aggregated by financial year with their CSA data disaggregated by gender and also by age group as seen below in Tables 2.2 and 2.3. Both agencies currently collect a wealth of information but an agreed 'standardised' recording format between agencies could prove beneficial for enhancing the monitoring and analysis of trends and for improving intra and inter-disciplinary child protection planning and intervention.

From Tables 2.2 and 2.3 what is remarkable is the high number of allegations recorded by the CCB as compared to those prosecuted by the police. This research understood from CCOs (interviewees) that numbers in succeeding years remain at high levels and hence the striking variance between the reported numbers of CSA to the CCB and those eventually prosecuted, are said to be of an equally consistent pattern. This is supported by the later information supplied by the CCB which is shown in Tables 2.4 and 2.5. This later data is aggregated only by year and number of reported cases. As a

consequence of this, the disaggregated data (Tables 2.2 and 2.3 above) have been retained for their more detailed descriptions of gender and age.

**Table 2.4 Child Care Board's CSA data for the period 2007/8 to 2010/ 11**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Physical abuse</b>	<b>Sexual abuse</b>	<b>Neglect</b>	<b>Emotional abuse</b>	<b>Abandonment</b>	<b>Total Children</b>
<b>2007 - 2008</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1,278</b>
<b>2008 - 2009</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1,091</b>
<b>2009 - 2010</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>617</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1,251</b>
<b>2010 - 2011</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>690</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1,187</b>
<b>Total children</b>	<b>1,012</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>2,553</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4,807</b>

Source: Child Care Board - August, 2012

**Table 2.5 Child Care Board's CSA data for the period 1990/91 to 1999/ 2000**

<b>Year</b>	<b>No of CSA cases</b>
1990-91	187
1991-92	152
1992-93	134
1993-94	190
1994-95	106
1995-96	142
1996-97	183
1997-98	184
1998-99	282
1999-2000	264
<b>Total</b>	<b>1, 824</b>

Source: Child Care Board - August, 2012

The historical data in Table 2.5 above confirm the consistency in the numbers of CSA allegations reported over the years, where it will be seen that between 1991 and 2000, there were 1, 824 cases- an average of 180 per annum. Looking further back at more historical data, a documented pattern is described by a former Director of the Child Care Board (Roett, 1989):

Taking the years 1986 to 1987 in which 123 and 116 cases respectively, were investigated by the Child Care Board, the Police registered 27 cases of rape, carnal knowledge and incest in both years and brought charges against 16 and 19 persons, respectively. The Police referral rate was 22% and 23 % of the Child Care Board's annual total. Unfortunately, further breakdown of these cases into those referred by the Child Care Board and those self-referred was not possible.....It is noteworthy however that the % of those charged by the police range from 59% to 70%.

(Roett, 1989, p.71)

These prosecutions by the police are however a small fraction of what is known to the CCB, which in itself is likely to be the tip of the iceberg. Equally, in all likelihood it is possibly not reflective of the prevalence of CSA since under-reporting is universally acknowledged, as reported in the United Nations General's-Secretary Study on Violence against Children (Pinheiro, 2006). It is noteworthy that the numbers of reported CSA allegations continued to rise in Barbados since statistics were first gathered in the 1980's. Nurse & Corbin (no date) state that the child abuse register was established during 1983-84 "...to keep a record of cases referred to the Department, and to monitor trends in the area of child abuse" (Nurse & Corbin, no date, p.3). This is two years after the government of Barbados:

amended the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act 1904, Cap.145 in 1981, so that the Child Care Board would be named as the lead agency to provide services for the abused child.

(Roett, 1989, p. 64)

This legislative change also led to the institution of the child abuse programme in 1981 (Roett, *ibid*).

The recording of a CSA category represented a growing concern by CCOs about the increasing numbers nationally and the formal acknowledgement that children are harmed in multiple ways by adults. It is also during the 1980s that CSA began to gain more global prominence by the revelations of survivors of such abuse. These disclosures by individuals, were also researched in relation to meso level factors nationally, see for example, Barrow (2003) and Rock (2011); regionally (Dunn, 2001; Eldemire, 1986; Sharpe, 1989); and researched internationally (Eneman, Gillespie, & Bernd, 2010; Finkelhor, 1994; Furniss, 1991; Glasser et al., 2001; Seymour, 1998). At the macro-level international agencies such as the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and UN Women, formerly -The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) were simultaneously developing and advocating for the implementation of international legislation, policies and programmes to help ameliorate the social, health and economic costs to countries of violence against women and children.

#### **2.4.2 The hard to ignore evidence in Barbados**

From this study's perspective, there are now as many as three to four times the numbers of CSA cases reported to the CCB as prosecuted by the police (Police data - Table 2.1 and CCB's - Tables 2.2 to 2.3). Likely reasons for the high attrition rate are instructive not only to this study, but also for present day child protection planning and intervention purposes, particularly when the historical picture over the last 20-25 years continues to be reflected in the contemporary data.

How then do the numbers of reported CSA cases in Tables 2.2 and 2.3, i.e., 675 cases, relate to the apparently high numbers of neglect and physical abuse cases (i.e., \*768 of physical abuse and \*\*1,544 cases of neglect over the same period) as shown in Table 2.6 below; and the consistency in reported cases in all categories in Table 2.4?

**Table 2.6 Categories and numbers of child abuse reported to CCB: 2004/5 to 2006/7**

2004-5						2005-6					2006-7				
	Physical	Neglect	Emotional	Abandon	Total	Physical	Neglect	Emotional	Abandon	Total	Physical	Neglect	Emotional	Abandon	Total
0-4	60	222	25	03	<b>310</b>	65	194	22	0	<b>281</b>	41	170	25	0	<b>236</b>
5-11	108	246	51	03	<b>408</b>	110	196	38	0	<b>344</b>	98	222	63	0	<b>383</b>
12-16	94	85	16	04	<b>199</b>	101	86	28	0	<b>215</b>	81	90	31	0	<b>202</b>
16+	0	01	0	0	<b>01</b>	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	03	0	01	0	<b>4</b>
NK	04	11	01	0	<b>16</b>	01	05	04	0	<b>10</b>	02	16	02	1	<b>21</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>266</b> *	<b>565</b> **	<b>93</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>934</b>	<b>277</b> *	<b>481</b> **	<b>92</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>225</b> *	<b>498</b> **	<b>122</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>846</b>

**Source: Child Care Board 2010**

NK= Not known

Abandon = Abandonment

Roett (1989) states that from the inception in 1981 of the Central Register recording all cases of abuse, the numbers of physical abused children in the seven years between 1981 and 1988 was 1, 118 and the recorded number of neglect cases was 2, 074 or “71% of the total abuse...in any given year, over 50% of the reported abuse is in the neglect category” (Roett, 1989, p. 68). Regarding CSA, Roett further states that: “To date since focusing on this issue we have recorded 483 sexual abuse cases” (Roett, *ibid*, p.70), which is 12% of the child abuse numbers recorded.

### **2.4.3 The hard to ignore evidence- multiple forms of child maltreatment**

To return to the earlier question of how do categories and numbers relate to each other, a further question must be asked: would rebalancing services by (re) focusing on primary prevention, and on more dedicated secondary

intervention and support to families, help reduce numbers of reported cases of CSA, and all other forms of child maltreatment? The research evidence shows that maltreatment does not exist in isolation, but rather children can often experience various forms of abuse simultaneously (Farmer & Owen, 1995; Tomison, 1995). As observed “there should be no doubt that the prevention of violence in the family, in general, begins with the prevention of child abuse and neglect” (Browne & Herbert, 1997, p. 300). By implication such prevention should result in less violence in the wider environment.

Within the difficult field of protecting children from violence and other multiple forms of maltreatment, the need therefore for a meaningful data management system based on national definitions and standards, assumes maximum importance, to assist in the ongoing improvement in planning and service delivery. At the same time this would also improve assessments of risk and needs, as Tomison (1995) explains:

[W]hen dealing with cases involving child abuse and neglect concerns, workers sometimes minimise the abuse and mislabel cases as neglect or emotional abuse. It is argued that this misclassification occurs because neglect cases are generally dealt with by the provision of family support services, whereas abuse cases, particularly physical and sexual abuse cases, are likely to require more stringent protective intervention. Thus, the perceived lesser severity of neglect and emotional abuse may in fact be used by some workers to minimise the seriousness of the abusive concerns and the level of protective intervention required.

(Tomison, 1995, p. 7)

It can be argued that tied up within the processes of professional classifications and definitions are ascribed meanings based on what has occurred and what is more expedient for intervention purposes. It is also possible that, as shown from the historic and contemporary trends of escalating reports of all forms of child abuse in Barbados and the lack of standardization in recording systems, that misclassification could occur. This is especially likely given the workloads and shortage of child protection staff

that were reported. To focus for the moment on the workload (where this study of CSA is concerned) the secondary data show that during the 1980's the number of referred cases to the CCB was approximately 100 per annum. In the 1990's CSA referrals were on average 180 per year representing an 80% increase. For the three years from 2004- 2007 (Table 2.2) an annual referral average of 225 cases of CSA were reported; this is yet another 80% on the preceding decade. While there are no figures on the ratio of professional staff to number of cases, CCOs consistently reported work overload when these statistics were obtained and discussed.

No country can measure its progress towards the elimination of violence against children without reliable data. To estimate the magnitude and nature of non-fatal violence against children accurately, surveys are required that explore the use of violence by parents and other adults, experiences of violence in childhood, and current health status and health-risk behaviours of children and adults.

(Pinheiro, 2006, p. 10)

Meaningful and accurate recording of child abuse cases as argued above is therefore an effective mechanism for understanding trends, but equally important for the professionals' usage in interrogating such developments. The importance of such reliable recording must be further understood and acted on, if and when a policy of mandatory reporting of child abuse by the public and other professionals is instituted in Barbados.

## 2.5 Geographic Location and Economic Geography

The map shown below locates Barbados' most easterly position in the Caribbean in relation to its neighbours.

**Figure 2.2** Map showing the geographic location of Barbados



Reproduced with the kind permission of Relief Web OCHA. (Relief Web OCHA, 2011)

Barbados is situated in the Eastern Caribbean archipelago of islands<sup>1</sup>. It is the most easterly in the chains and is really almost completely out in the Atlantic, as may be seen from figure 2.3. Its geographic location has been said to be its protector from major hurricanes which are likely to have developed from storms over the Atlantic, eventually becoming hurricanes in the Caribbean archipelago. Some of these have devastated neighbouring islands to Barbados, but by-passed the island on numerous occasions.

As a consequence of this fortuitous geographic location, Barbados, unlike some of its neighbours, i.e., St. Lucia in 2009 and Grenada in 2004, has not had to rebuild major infrastructures, such as hospitals, schools, hotels and housing stock and business premises, as have some of its neighbours, who have been devastated on many occasions.

<sup>1</sup> From this thesis' perspective the Caribbean is the geographic grouping of islands, including those South American countries such as Belize (Central America) and Guyana (Southern America), bordering

This climatic fortune has undoubtedly contributed to Barbados' contemporary development and economic stability. The main income generator is tourism which, from 1955 to 1966, replaced the sugar industry as the main income generator of the country. This period in Barbados' economic history marked one of its most significant periods of structural economic diversification, from sugar production to tourism.

Within this service economy, many mothers of young children are employed in jobs whereby reduced wages in the out-of-season tourist period can impact on the stability of their yearly economic livelihood.

Shifts in economic policy have been fundamental to sustainable development in Barbados, as described in the Human development index below. However, no significant policy shift has taken place beyond welfarism, a social policy which supports the most needy in society through monetary and some material assistance. The importance of this is not being maligned or minimised here. Nevertheless, some social policy remains reactive, i.e., doing tangible things which can be counted, rather than being proactive and visionary, particularly where child protection is concerned.

### **2.5.1 Economic stability amidst violence**

The aetiology of violence and its effects on the whole society is also less well addressed. Management of child sexual abuse therefore remains undeveloped and underresourced. I would argue that this is the case because CSA's short and long-term effects are not fully appreciated, given the paucity of therapeutic interventions and the apparent absence of current working strategic and operational plans. The effects of sexual violence and their contributory effects on economic development and health expenditure seem to be even less understood. Within this mindset, child sexual abuse is possibly seen as a non-violent act, compared to violent physical assaults against property and person. The inter-relatedness that exists between different types of child maltreatment, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and family violence, as well as the major health costs associated with this (Paz, Jones, & Byrne, 2005), are under-researched and underestimated, both

internationally and within a small island developing state such as Barbados. For example, comparative global quantification of mental disorder (Ezzati, Lopez, Rodgers, & Murray, 2005) has found substantial proportions of this global disorder burden to be attributable to the risk factor of child sexual abuse. The costs associated with disorders linked to CSA can be least afforded by small island developing states (SIDS), and therefore cannot be ignored. Equally, these known mental health implications ought to inform professional responses at all levels of the ecological system.

## **2.6 Socio- human Development Context**

Historically, the Caribbean region (and Barbados in particular) is regarded as one of the more politically stable regions of the world. Many countries are now fully independent, with a smaller number maintaining close links or partial dependencies (in relation to economic support, governance, and or legislative/judiciary functions) on their former colonial administrations, e.g., Anguilla and Montserrat. Maternal health, child mortality and life expectancy indicators are all good in Barbados, as assessed by the 2010 United Nations Development Fund Human Development Index. Levels of literacy are also good, with universal access to free education. Barbados, to date, is the only country in the region to have achieved the ‘developed’ nation status, as described below.

### **2.6.1 Development indices in Barbados in the 21st century**

In the 2010 Human Development Report, the Human Development ranking of the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP), Barbados received a ranking of 42<sup>nd</sup> on the Human Development Index (HDI), putting it in the league of developed countries.

In an online article, (Best, 2010, 8 November) this was said:

Without the riches of the United States, Canada or Britain, Barbados has joined the ranks of the world’s “developed” nations, albeit only in terms of providing people with an excellent quality of life...Barbados was the only Caribbean and Latin American state to be labelled “developed.” It’s among 16 states which don’t belong to the rich nations’ club in Paris, the Organisation

for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), but which were placed in a grouping set aside for “developed non-OECD members.

(Best, 2010, p.1)

Barbados’ HDI is 0.788, giving it a ranking of 42 out of 169 other countries with comparable data on the three well-being and human development indices of health, education and income. The direct relationship of this position to this study is shown below, where social indicators demonstrate how children’s childhood experiences are constructed and influenced by macro level factors. Factors such as social policy influence the care and protective environment(s) in which children live, and where parents’ accountability in this protection is unarticulated, and support of them in this is underdeveloped.

### **2.6.2 HDI dimensions of inequality**

The Human Development Report of 2010 introduced three new indices of inequality: gender, equity and poverty within the HDI. These now join health, education and income as the HDI’s summary measures of a country’s average achievements in terms of human development.

Where this study is concerned, all of these indicators are measurable in the structural systems which impact on children’s safety and well-being. For example, gender-based violence within the Caribbean, as discussed in the following section, can affect parents’ and children’s health, including reproductive health, educational attainment and ultimately labour force participation. These can all be linked to gender inequality, poverty and other inequalities, having an impact in a cyclical manner. For example, the proximal factor of child sexual abuse within some environments can result from the distal factor effects of reduced economic opportunity for some women. In return, this may lead to their financial dependence on exploitative men, which can put their children at risk of abuse.

The new Gender Inequality Index (GII) of the Human Development Index reflects women’s disadvantage in reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market, as assessed from the country’s data. A closer look at this Gender Inequality Index reveals some noteworthy information for this study.

Latin America and the Caribbean are shown to be the regions with the highest loss in terms of development capital, due to gender inequality, with reproductive health being the largest contributor to gender inequality. Further scrutiny of the 42<sup>nd</sup> position of Barbados' new-found "developed" status also reveals interesting data on reproductive health, when compared to the other countries. Barbados' adolescent fertility rate (Gender Inequality Index) is the highest of the 42 countries at 42.7. The relevance of this Barbadian GII to this study is the link between some of these adolescent pregnancies, and sexually abused girls under the age of 16 years. As a comparison, the GII adolescent fertility rates for other Caribbean countries with available data show the rate for Trinidad and Tobago as 34.60, Jamaica 77.3, Grenada 42.4, St. Lucia 61.6 and St. Vincent and the Grenadines 58.9.

Of particular note is the unenviable fact that the Caribbean has the second highest HIV transmission rate in the world (after sub-Saharan Africa). As many as 50 per cent of families are single-female headed, with women carrying both the financial and care responsibility for children.

## **2.7 Gender Based Violence within the Caribbean**

The English-speaking Caribbean countries largely share a common heritage of imperialistic rule preceding their independent status and a very similar development path. The socio-economic, cultural and political heritage is therefore similar among island states. There are of course variations, as systems of governance in the respective islands can reflect varying emphasis on social and economic policies which impact on the lives of children. Nonetheless, research findings in one country can reflect and resonate with the position in neighbouring countries. Any perspective on the historical legacy of oppression and violence, theorized as becoming institutionalised at various ecological levels, is therefore likely to reflect a Caribbean pattern.

The global spectra of gender violence, seen below in the WHO report, are also a Caribbean reality:

Violence against women and girls is a major health and human rights issue. At least one in five of the world's female population has been physically or

sexually abused by a man or men at some time in their life. Many, including pregnant women and young girls, are subject to severe, sustained or repeated attacks...prosecution and conviction of men who beat or rape women or girls is rare when compared to the numbers of assaults. Violence therefore operates as a means to maintain and reinforce women's subordination.

(WHO, 1997, p. 1)

Whilst the Human Development Index cites Barbados as the 42<sup>nd</sup> developed country, the country finds itself, like so many of its Caribbean neighbours, embedded within a culture of gender-based violence, the greatest threat of which is shown by Babb (1997) to come from families and partners where one in three adult women are victims of domestic violence (ECLAC, 2001). Where adolescent girls are concerned, research from nine Caribbean countries, including Barbados, found "that 48 per cent of adolescent girls who had had intercourse reported that their first sexual intercourse had been forced" (UNICEF, UNAIDS, & WHO, 2002, p. 18). Research in the island of Tobago (part of the Jurisdiction of Trinidad and Tobago) showed that one in six reported their first sexual experience as rape, of which seven per cent were incest (O'Callaghan, 2002).

In an earlier study in Jamaica, as part of a study on health and nutrition, a sample of 452 girls (13-14 age-groups), was randomly selected for their experience of violence and sexual harassment. They were drawn from the 1,064 in Grade 8 of 9 all-age and new secondary schools serving poor socioeconomic areas in Kingston, Jamaica. The study found that 19 girls (4%) had been raped, including 3 girls raped more than once, one of whom was a victim of incest. The offenders were usually casual acquaintances. Sixteen cases were reported to an adult, 6 were reported to the police, and 6 were seen by a doctor- the 6 of the 19 representing 32% in which there was legal and medical intervention. No girl received counselling. Furthermore, in the previous year, 22% of the sample had seen violent acts involving the use of a weapon at home, 40% saw these at school, and 64% saw them elsewhere. Twenty-one per cent were afraid to come to school because of the violence in

the community. Thirty-eight per cent had been beaten by an adult at home, and 57% had been beaten at school with an instrument (Williams et al.,1993).

Within nine of the CARICOM<sup>2</sup> countries, including Barbados, the World Bank study and report - 'Caribbean Youth Development, Issues and Policy Directions' (2003) - lists a number of negative outcomes common to, and severely impacting on, the safety and well-being of the region's youth. The outcomes, which include an association with rage and violence, show the following:

1. sexual and physical abuse is high in the Caribbean and socially accepted in many Caribbean countries. According to this nine-country CARICOM study, 1 in 10 school-going adolescents had been sexually abused;
2. the high incidence of sexual abuse among Caribbean boys stands out in comparison to other countries;
3. the onset of sexual initiation in the Caribbean is the earliest in the world (with the exception of Africa, where early experiences take place within marriage). Early sexual debut is known to predispose young people to early pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs);
4. the region has the highest incidence of HIV/AIDS outside of Africa and youth are an at-risk group. Among other things, HIV/AIDS is linked to cultural values about sexuality that are particular to the Caribbean;
5. the incidence of rage among young people is extremely high: 40% of school-going CARICOM students reported feelings of rage. High rates of sexual abuse and physical abuse among children are likely to play out in rage among young people, which can affect their school performance and lead to violence;

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<sup>2</sup> CARICOM Countries are Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. There are also 5 associate countries: Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands and Turks and Caicos Islands.

6. youth unemployment is especially elevated in some Caribbean countries. According to World Development Indicators from 1996 to 1998, St. Lucia had the highest youth unemployment rate in the Americas, followed by Jamaica;
7. gang violence is also high in the Caribbean, with 20% of male students and 12% of female students at one point having belonged to a gang;
8. although data on drug use are scanty, anecdotal evidence suggests a widespread social acceptance of alcohol and marijuana use in some Caribbean countries among both in-school and out-of school youth.

Other Caribbean studies on the high-risk behaviours in children and adolescents, and the association with early sexual initiation (Blum & Ireland, 2004; Ohene, Ireland, & Blum, 2005), show clear links with deviance and health problems. These high-risk behaviours linked with early sexual initiation include substance abuse, skipping school and weapon-related violence (Ohene et al., 2005). These examples are important studies showing the ongoing effects of negative childhood experiences on the long-term health and social well-being of the child and the wider society.

Where some of these studies are concerned, what is particularly striking are the descriptions of “sex with children”, “early sexual debut” and “consensual intercourse” during “childhood” (Resnick & Blum, 1994). Descriptions such as these demonstrate that adults choose sex with children, an action which is manifested through many forms of victimisation. It can be theorized that institutionalised violence is likely to impact on professional thinking and responses to child sexual abuse, to the extent that the quality of the professionals’ own training, professional culture and codes of good practice are able to act as a counterbalance.

Another study in Latin America and the Caribbean, which included Barbados, showed that, of the adult survivors who responded, 30 per cent of female participants from Barbados reported being sexually abused as a child (there were no figures for men). For the purpose of seeing how this compares to other countries in the study, we see similar rates for the region. In Nicaragua,

26 per cent of females and 20 per cent of male respondents reported sexual abuse as a child; for Costa Rica the reported rates were 32 per cent of women and 13 per cent of men. Figures such as these further situate the exploitative nature of CSA in the Caribbean and Latin America. This sexual abuse subculture also helps to account for the high teenage pregnancy rate, said to be one of the highest in the world, for Latin America and the Caribbean - 18 per cent of all births (Baine, 2009).

These studies of adult survivors of child sexual abuse, and children who continually report such abuse, situate the violation within a subculture of intimate partner violence (IPV) recognized as a serious international crisis (Ely, Dulmus, & Wodarksi, 2004). Equally, in the Caribbean, the nature of IPV as a serious social and public health problem has been well documented (Arscott-Mills, 2001; Babb, 1997; Le Franc, Samms-Vaughan, Hambleton, Fox, & Brown, 2008; Rawlins, 2000; Zellerer, 2000). Barbados is represented in some of these studies.

The spectrum of this violence in SIDS such as Barbados appears to be identical to that of wealthier developed nations with more resources for social intervention. The responses of frontline professionals, such as CCOs and POs in Barbados, are therefore critical in making a determined difference, in order to change this pattern of violence.

The literature review by Ely et al. (2004), demonstrates the international face of intimate partner violence which can often be linked to physical and sexual violence against children, with the reported sexual violence particularly directed at girls. Some of the effects of this violence are raised below, providing a connection also to the later findings of this study.

## **2.8 Making the Linkages: Socio-economic Environment and Sexual Exploitation of Children**

Barbados and other Caribbean countries are faced with similar patterns of violence to those of the international experience, as raised above, but there are some unique practices which are the lived reality of many Caribbean

children and families. The desk review of 16 Caribbean countries (Gardner et al., 2006), show numerous violent experiences faced by children:

...particularly worrying” were exposure to “drive by shootings, *sexual molestation at home and in the community*, school-yard bullying and widespread corporal punishment at school and at home ...

(Gardner et al., 2006, p. 25)

Some of the underlying socio-economic factors linked to this regional violence at the macro and micro levels are “historical precedents of violence for punishments...the rise of narco-trafficking...poverty...migration leading to family instability, and inadequate educational systems” (Gardner et al., *ibid*).

This lived reality is the context in which CSA happens in the Caribbean and professionals respond. This specific social problem of child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation in the Caribbean is, however, not widely acted upon, despite numerous studies over an extensive period pointing to its presence (Eldemire, 1986; Correia & Cunningham, 2003 (World Bank Study); International Organization for Migration (IOM), (2005); UNICEF, 2009). The socio-economic and psychological consequences of child sexual abuse, e.g., adolescent pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and prostitution, have also been highlighted within some of these studies. Contributing factors to adolescent pregnancy are high levels of drug and alcohol use, defective sex education and fragmented families (Barrow, 2008, p. 33). These are all seen as factors which are part of, and are deeply embedded within, the aforementioned culture of violence (Gardner et al., 2006) .

The translation of the pervasive social phenomenon, child sexual abuse, is seen as extending further into both prostitution and transactional sex as argued by researchers such as (Dunn, 2001); (Kempadoo & Dunn, 2001); (Ahmed, 2003) and (Barrow, 2007). The two phenomena of prostitution and transactional sex are both for reasons of economic gain. Prostitution, however, is more seen as a sexually exploitative act carried out on a commercial scale, and can be managed by organised groups, which may or may not include family members. It is also perceived to be linked to tourism,

the main income generating industry in some countries. The scholarship of Kempadoo (2004) argues that commercial sex has been a part of Caribbean tourism for a long time. In the case of Barbados, tourism is the main income generator of the economy. From the Caribbean research evidence that exists, it is not impossible to imagine a link between prostitution and CSA within some sectors of tourism in Barbados. Whilst this study found no mention of child prostitution in Barbados, it does not mean that it does not exist. Interestingly, in the promotion of gender equality, The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Exceptional session (5-23 August 2002), in considering the fourth periodic report of Barbados (CEDAW/C/BAR/4), adopted the following concluding observations:

...In view of the growing emphasis on tourism in the State party, the Committee requests it to provide in its next report, comprehensive information and data on the trafficking of women and girls and their exploitation in prostitution, and the measures taken to prevent and combat these activities...The Committee urges the State party to strengthen its activities and programmes to focus on sexual violence, sexual crimes, incest and prostitution, especially prostitution associated with tourism, and to provide comprehensive training for the judiciary, the police, medical personnel and other relevant groups on all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence.

(United Nations Population Fund, 2002)

Transactional sex is perceived to be more of an individual or family affair, which may or may not be done for reasons of poverty and is particularly linked to child labour in some countries (Ebigbo, 2003). Increasingly, within the Caribbean, it is also linked to 21<sup>st</sup> century expendable consumerism, where sex is exchanged for certain commodities, and children can be involved in this sexual-economic exchange market (Curtis, 2009; Jones & Trotman Jemmott, 2009 ). Economic development and the global rise in consumerism are reflected in Barbadian society. Consistent with its aspirations to be a developed nation, opportunities for linking such consumerism and transactional sex in Barbados are arguably increased through its ongoing economic development.

The plight of sexually abused children can be exacerbated by poverty, which, among other things, encourages parents to turn a blind eye to their children's involvement in transactional sex, because of the economic benefit it can bring to the entire family (Sealy-Burke, 2006, p. 7). The economic vulnerability of households headed by single women, which lead some women into multiple partnering arrangements for financial support to the household (Le franc et al., 1994), arguably make their children very vulnerable to sexual abuse. Much of this sexual abuse is perceived to be committed by mothers' boyfriends and stepfathers (Jones & Trotman Jemmott, 2009). The gendered nature of this situation, with men giving women money for sex and other domestic exchanges, can be viewed through the historical legacy of a dominant patriarchal hegemonic culture, which is chronicled by scholars such as (Beckles, 2003). What can be argued from the contribution of the histories of such socio-cultural learning, in which cycles of such economic dependencies, sub-cultures of violence and male privileges exist, is the potential contribution of these to the continuing sexual domination of children in Barbados.

Regionally, the Caribbean has limited exportable assets and therefore relies on fickle industries such as tourism (IOM, 2005). There are also high levels of unemployment, social class inequalities, gender inequalities and other social disparities, such as poor levels of education in deprived communities. With obvious variations between countries, evident weakening of economic stability across countries compounds these social realities (UNICEF, 2007). Poverty emerges as a key contributor to the sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation of children in the Caribbean. As a significant social ill, pervading all of society, it is often embedded in the gender inequalities faced by many women in the Caribbean. This situation is known by governments and civil society alike, with continuous articulations within numerous reports by a plethora of UN agencies such as UNICEF and UN Women, Barbados. A clear example of the financial burden faced by some women with children in Barbados is seen in the struggle to obtain child maintenance, which even when directed via the courts, still continues to be challenging for some single women in particular (UNIFEM, 2006).

## **2.9 Professional Cultures**

Although this is not a study concerned with culture directly, as a concept it is important, since the work of professionals is embedded in their respective organisational cultures. I am therefore interested in the concept as it relates to social work agencies and the police service, which may be linked to some of the socio-cultural factors specific to Barbados. It is therefore necessary to examine the concept of culture, and to clarify the ways in which I use the term.

The literature on culture is extensive, with many different definitions, interpretations (Paoline III, 2003), symbols, artefacts and espoused values. In looking at the definition I am mindful that, as a phenomenon, culture is something which is perceived and hence hard to define precisely (Handy, 1993; Mullins, 2007), except by way of its representations and symbolic manifestations. In conceptualising and exploring culture and how it might impact professional responses to situations such as child sexual abuse (CSA), I will explore questions such as:

- what does culture consist of?
- how might such culture manifest itself?

An equally important question is: what are the implications of this culture to this study, where child sexual offending is concerned?

## **2.10 Defining Culture**

One definition of culture that can be applied to POs and social workers is that of Manning (1995, p. 472), who states: "Occupational culture contains accepted practices, rules and principles of conduct that are situational, applied and generalised rationales and beliefs." Earlier, Hall (1980, p. 522) states that: "The concept remains a complex one – a site of convergent interests, rather than a logically or conceptually clarified idea."

Culture is therefore everywhere, yet can be hard to define in a definitive and conclusive way. Its characteristics can be named but this runs the risk of culture being treated as fixed or reductionist in nature. What is clear is that

culture changes over time, and within temporal spaces according to what become accepted practices. Essentialist or reductionist perspectives of culture therefore also change. As Park (2005) points out:

...essentialist definitions of culture are usually modified, appended often with caveats asserting that in fact, culture is not static but ever changing and additionally, that people being individuals have differing levels of identification or ties to their culture.

(Park, 2005, p. 23)

If one were to accept the above exploratory aspects of culture, these can then lead us to see culture as a phenomenon in which professionals such as social workers and POs act in a collective way, guided by the rules and principles emanating from the generalised rationales and beliefs that are spoken of by Manning (1995).

In further exploring what professional cultures mean, Schein (1985) describes culture as:

A pattern of basic assumptions – invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problem of external adaptation and internal investigation – that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members in the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems.

(Schein,1985, p. 9)

A pattern of behaviour therefore emerges which contributes to the development of culture. Reiner (2010) describes this pattern as one in which:

Each actor's response shapes the situation that others act within. In short, to paraphrase Marx: People create their own cultures, but not under the conditions of their own choosing.

(Reiner, 2010, p. 116)

These definitions speak to important aspects of culture formation and its sustainability (e.g., teaching new members the correct way of being). This resonates with socio-cultural learning theory, in which culture can be seen to

reside in the social constructions of members (i.e., by the assumptions which are invented, discovered and developed in relation to external and internal adaptations). How POs and social workers respond to their roles, the result of their (legitimate) participation in the workplace, is therefore all a representation of culture-forming behaviours.

Culture can therefore be conceptualised as emerging from meaningful intercourse with situations and other people. It can be taught, learnt and practised, suggesting a development trajectory. Such a trajectory is seen in Reiner's articulation:

Cultures are complex ensembles of values, attitudes, symbols, rules, recipes and practices, emerging as people react to the exigencies and situations they confront, interpreted through the cognitive frames and orientation they carry with them from prior experiences.

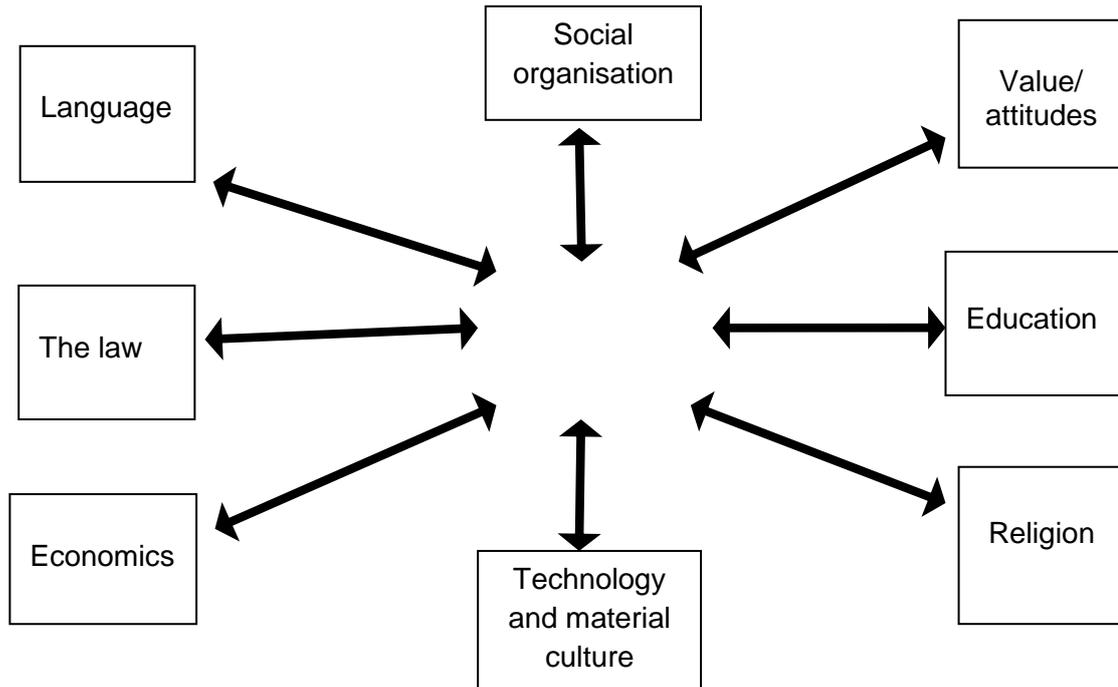
(Reiner, 2010, p. 116)

The expectations of a postmodern society render definitions such as that offered by Schein (1985) insufficient to account for the wider ecological factors that impact on culture and, in the case of this study, the ways in which culture intersects with society's expectations of POs and CCOs in Barbados. Here I again invoke ecological theory, this time to situate police and social workers within a cultural environment (Welford & Prescott, 1994). Figure 2.4 depicts such a conceptualization.

### **2.11 Cultural Ecological Model**

In the model below, some factors which collectively impact and reflect organizational culture are seen.

**Figure 2.3 An Ecological Model of Culture**



### **Cultural Environment**

Reproduced from Welford & Prescott (1994, p. 197). *European Business: an Issue-Based Approach*. Second edition, Pitman Publishing.

The model conceptualizes key organisational and institutional factors that can be seen as governing the actions of the professionals within the Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF) and the Child Care Board (CCB). Their systems of formal rules, policies, guiding philosophies, managerial hierarchy and occupational statuses can also be conceptualized. These macrosystem factors influence and decide on varied, but nonetheless, inter-related issues such as: the physical infrastructure of work environments, staff ethics and adherence to legislation. Their interaction with the exosystem factors decide on such matters as: employment practices, e.g., the educational requirements and human resources, e.g., staff numbers and gender mix of the RBPF and the CCB. Workforce issues are decided as to who gets promoted, who does what and how it is done, when (for example), working with each other, with victims and the accused. These are all inter-related macro, exo, meso, and micro factors, and the above model, whilst not fully representing the multi-level nature of such systems, nevertheless gives a picture of some of them.

I expand on some of these below by conceptualising them as examples which inform culture and are informed by it.

### **2.11.1 Technology and material cultural aspects**

Technology and material culture can be seen as a two-pronged contributor of culture, in which they both impact through public expectations of protection in an increasingly materialistic and consumerist world. More protection is needed to protect more consumables and infrastructure developments. There is also the expectation, and indeed imperative also, that police organisations will become more technologically advanced to improve their own performances in crime detection (e.g., child sexual abuse) from the advancements in communications and information technologies. Examples of such usage are seen by people with a sexual interest in children and who meet some of their needs through the use of child pornography, or the seduction of children through the Internet (Quayle & Taylor, 2003). Other usage extends to the commercial sexual exploitation of children and women nationally, transnationally and globally (Hughes, 2002), with offenders grooming and meeting children, and then initiating them into their own commercial self-exploitation (Eneman, Gillespie, & Bernd, 2010), as well as initiating and inciting other adults to commit CSA (Gallagher, 2007). Also shown is the practice by family and acquaintances who use the internet to groom and meet victims (known to them) online (Mitchell, Finkelhor, & Wolak, 2005). Internet grooming for this purpose is described as befriending, with the aim of emotionally controlling and then getting the child to acquiesce to sexual contact through a range of methods such as: engagement of the child in sexual conversations, sending sexual images and requesting webcam visual sexual activities of the child (Eneman et al., 2010). The pervasiveness of the acts speaks to the need for POs and social workers to be cognisant of these newer forms of cultural and sub-cultural developments, to which increasingly they will have to respond.

### **2.11.2 Education, research and law - aspects of the model**

The above examples of technology and material culture are multi-levelled (although the limits of the diagram present these as unilevel) ecological factors, which can be used to illustrate their cultural impact on the culture of POs and CCOs in Barbados. Where this contemporary development in the use of the Internet is concerned, challenges arise at the research and development levels (e.g., what is the situation in Barbados; what is the picture in relation to victims' and offenders' characteristics, offenders' modus operandi and effects on victims?). There are also implications for the use of a shared language, ongoing education and professional development, in order to remain connected to new and old forms of crime.

The challenges associated with new forms of sexual offences against children can provide opportunities in crime detection and child protection, whereby POs and social workers work together through new approaches. For example, a socio-cultural learning approach of a CSA community of practice (CoP)<sup>3</sup> or a subset of this, e.g., an internet CSA CoP monitoring and detection group, can help stimulate creative intervention.

### **2.12 Professional Code of Ethics and Values - Finding Common Ground**

The social work and police professions are guided by codes of ethics to aid them in performing their duties and to help ensure maintenance of high standards of personal and professional conduct. POs are said to be faced with a maze of obligations in the performance of their official duties, resulting in "Law Enforcement Codes of Ethics" and "Canons of Police Ethics", explicitly stating the conduct considered appropriate for POs and to guide them in the performance of their duties (Felkenes, 1984). Such duties change over time in profound ways, in keeping with political, societal and legislative developments.

Professional codes of ethics, which influence responses to child sexual abuse, coexist with the legislation and the work with others in the legal and

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<sup>3</sup> Community of practice: groups of people who engage meaningfully with each other around a shared passion or interest.

judicial professions, in addressing issues of victims' allegations, victim credibility, victim culpability and offender culpability. The size of the gap between the code of ethics and ethical behaviour might be determined by a range of factors, such as over-arching cultural values and sub-culture behaviours within a profession. As a consequence, I am arguing that the utility of codes of ethics is more about encouraging ethical reflection and debate, rather than being "... treated as 'tablets of stone' or rigid rulebooks prescribing the minutiae of professional practice" (Banks, 1998, p. 27), given the complexity of some professional practices.

Parton's (2000) view of this need for ethical reflection in the action orientated practice of social work is one which recognises the inherent uncertainty and ambiguity in the practice of 'helping' individuals, families and communities with many of the 'problems' faced (p. 452). This professional assistance and therapeutic intervention is primarily through the bottom-up informal negotiation process with an individual or several individuals, rather than in any top-down prescriptive manner. Protecting children from serious harm has to find its right level in this approach, which may mean being prescriptive. In the professional practice of social work, any such negotiation is derived from knowledge and ascribed meanings and learning, which stems from the context of the problem as much as the theory. Imposing force and authority is, however, against social work ethics and practice. Indeed, it is often the very law-breaking individual or family with whom police exercise force that social workers have to work. The process of *negotiation* within an ethical framework would now seem imperative, this time between social worker and police (as much as social worker and client) as they face the complexities of CSA, as professionals, who have to respond to the crime. Part of this negotiation entails finding a common language, given that "language is itself a form of practice" (Loftus, 2007, p. 195). The role of language in the fight against child sexual abuse can indeed be seen as action which is political in nature, and which is also a powerful means of enabling or subjugating (Ahearn, 2001).

The complexity and associated challenges of CSA faced by both PO and social worker is evident in the apparently straightforward questions of:

- Can the child be believed when he or she reports sexual abuse?
- How should the system respond to the reports?
- How should the system deal with offenders?

These questions will be confronted from within the different professional cultural milieu of the two professional groups. Their values may be different from each other but may also be different from the victim's and those of the accused and the wider community. A situation arises for both groups akin to that said to be faced by the social work profession whose values are said to exist in a practice world of competing and often contradictory value positions (Beckett & Maynard, 2005). Finding a professional common ground would seem imperative when responding to CSA. Finding this ground is likely to be influenced by the political climate of the day.

### **2.13 The Ethics and Values of Social Work**

The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW & IASSW), together with the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IFSW & IASSW), both adopted a comparatively recent joint international definition of social work, recognising it as one which “embraces both traditional social work activities and social development, and addresses social work knowledge, values and practice in an age of globalization” (Hare, 2004, p. 407). As an intrinsic component of ethical principles, a value associated with all aspects of living will be found in any cultural system, and has been explained in an early description as:

An enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end state of existence.

(Rokeach, 1973, p. 5)

The IFSW/IASSW statement, in its acknowledgment of the universal status of the code and the need to cover a range of national associations, identifies

core principles of Human Rights and Human Dignity and Social Justice. These are supported by a set of statements denoting the responsibilities of social workers to support social justice, challenge negative discrimination and challenge unjust policies and practices (Gilbert, 2009). The social work code, as a professional set of rules, serves to guide on ethical issues and dilemmas faced in practice, as well as providing ethical standards to guide conduct, and can also be used as a reference point in adjudication matters. The IFSW/IASSW supported code, values and definition are ones to which CCOs in Barbados subscribe:

The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilizing theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work.

(IFSW & IASSW, 2009, p. 1)

The IFSW/IASSW ethical principles are summarized in Appendix 2.4

#### **2.14 Royal Barbados Police Force Code of Ethics**

Comparing the Royal Barbados' Police Force (RBPF) Code of Ethics, in Appendix 2.5, with the example of that of the social work profession (Appendix 2.4), both place an emphasis on high personal conduct, egalitarian values, and the expected standard of service delivery to the public, all aimed at maintaining the integrity of the profession. Where this study is concerned, in the case of child sexual abuse, the ethical principles of each group, I would argue, is more likely to result in the police valuing and privileging the *facts* of the matter over the *effects* on the child victim - the basis of what informs social work.

One of the fundamental differences between the two professional codes is the therapeutic/helping role of the social worker's, as compared to the police's, which is one of enforcement. The more prescriptive nature of the police's Code also cites values of protecting the deserving, the innocent against

deception and the peaceful against violence or disorder. The RBPF, in its fundamental duty “to serve mankind”, is nonetheless more concerned with what is right and what is wrong, which then must be enforced. The social worker is, in contrast, encouraged to acknowledge:

Their active participation in creating images of their clients, their problems, and their possibilities for change (regarded as) a fundamental assumption of the constructivist paradigm (which leads) to the rejection of objectivity and suggests a stance of responsible participation instead.

(Allen, 1993, p. 32)

Conversations which POs and CCOs have with persons who come to their attention will be based, therefore, on their different intervention paradigms. The police seek facts from within a hierarchical relationship. The CCO engages the client from a more collaborative relationship from which the construction of both parties’ reality emerges.

## **2.15 Conceptualising Culture as a Phenomenon**

When culture is viewed as phenomenon, it can be argued that social workers’ and police response(s) to situations in their professional environment will stem from particular attitudes, values and norms which arise out of necessity (Paoline III, 2003) from what they have to deal with. So, within the regulatory ambit of professional and managerial rules and regulations, there appears to be a role for collective and individual responses, shaped by both the profession and personal values.

### **2.15.1 Influencing factors on the development of police and social work culture**

In this section I examine the how and why of professional culture by looking at some of the specific issues which are described in the literature as informing police culture. I will draw on the United Kingdom’s literature, as there is limited research evidence on policing in the wider Caribbean including Barbados. The further justification for this is that Barbados, being a former colony of Great Britain, continues to model its systems and practices on those that exist in the

UK, some of which would have been inherited. In doing this, I draw some comparisons with social work culture. How then, do police and social work culture manifest themselves to the man in the street, the victim, perpetrator and the witnesses? The literature describes particular “situationally applied” contexts (Manning, 1995, p. 472) which influence the aetiology of police culture. These are the occupational and management environments in which POs experience a range of proximal factors which influence their work and how they respond to the complexities of crime such as CSA. These same “situationally applied” contexts apply to the social work profession and, therefore, that of CCOs in Barbados who, like the police, are managed by an occupational and management hierarchy.

The occupational environment in which POs operate, particularly the patrol or the rank-and-file officers who interface with the members of society, is one environment where the police perceive a constant threat of potential danger or face its actual presence (Barker, 1999; Skolnick, 1994; Reiner, 1985; Brown, 1988). Traditionally, within such an environment, POs are expected to execute the roles of service, order maintenance and law enforcement (Brown, 1988; Reiner, 1992, 2010; Clark, 2005). This occurs within an organizational environment that is said to mainly reinforce the law enforcement element through its focus on crime statistics - how many crimes have been solved relative to those reported and prosecuted - and further focusing on the reward-system of performance evaluation and promotion (Reiner, 2010; Walker, 1999).

Police responses in the complex environment of the mix of “services in addition to crime prevention...helpers as well as enforcers” (Reiner, 2010, p. 105) have shown them to be preoccupied with danger and violence, always expecting both, to the extent that strategies are employed for controlling the uncertainty (Skolnick, 1994). This threat creates a bonding effect among POs as a response to the perceived source of danger, i.e., citizens (Kappeler et al., 1998), a bonding which is indicative of the cultural allegiance of the profession. Other coping mechanisms developed by POs develop in response to their working environment are those of developing suspiciousness (of the

general public) (Kappeler et al., 1998; Reiner, 1985; Skolnick, 1994) and “maintaining the edge” (Brown, 1988; Van Maanen, 1974).

These two adaptive modalities (developing suspiciousness and maintaining the edge) result in and from certain policing orientations toward their role, and are seen as occupational values. It is said that “The value of the police derives from the hazards of police work and seeks to minimize these hazards and protect members” (Brown, 1988, p. 85). We therefore can see in these examples why some police cultural values develop in the way that they do. For example, in response to the *hazards of the work environment*, manifested in particular ways, e.g., *developing suspiciousness* and *maintaining the edge*, where it is important to adopt the cultural value of *having an ability to read people and situations* (Muir, 1979; Van Maanen, 1974).

I would argue that, from the foregoing discussion on the ethics and values of the two professional groups, the social work profession operates from a very different paradigm. This is one where the value of social work derives from the hazards of helping (e.g., with social problems faced by clients and how clients respond to them), and not from the hazards of enforcement work, as argued by Brown (1988).

### **2.15.2 Impact implications of professional cultures for child sexual abuse**

Children who have been sexually abused often find it difficult to disclose, and listeners can equally find it difficult to hear and understand. As a sensitive topic, it will not lend itself easily to ascertaining how it impacts on the values, attitudes and norms of the police cultural environment in Barbados. For example, using the police norms above, what do suspiciousness and maintaining the edge mean where the subject is concerned? It could be hypothesised, given that both concepts are closely related, that these attitudinal elements of police culture could work in favour of either victim or alleged perpetrator.

The other key “situational applied” context (Manning, 1995, p. 472) with which the police and social work professions have to interface is the formal organisational environment. This is the one in which supervisors reside, and from which policy and practice guidance emanate and hence act as a regulatory framework for professional actions and sanctions. Professional culture is therefore impacted by this and may result in adaptive responses to the issues which are confronted. In this organisational environment of public service, where maintenance of order and law enforcement is a fundamental role, the improper or inappropriate application of the law can lead to sanctions. This is a situation which the literature shows can be of an unpredictable and punitive supervisory oversight (Manning, 1995; Skolnick, 1994). Yet POs have authority, described as unique coercive power over citizens, an authority which they are expected to display in every situation (Manning, 1995). This can lead to a feeling of uncertainty among POs. As a consequence, one of the coping adaptive modalities used by POs is adherence to the law enforcement element of their role(s), one that has historically been seen as the official mandate of the police (Fielding, 1988), and one that is seen as “real” police work, as compared to service and order maintenance (Brown, 1988; Sparrow, Moore & Kennedy, 1992). The downside of the police’s focus on law enforcement more than on the service oriented part of their mandate is, however, possible isolation from the public.

Victims of child sexual abuse come with many disclosure faces. Some of these arguably make it difficult, if not impossible, for the police to do “real” policing. Will the police be prepared to spend resources in pursuing cases which arguably call for some degree of “service type” policing, when dealing with young traumatised victims? Such questioning is reasonable given that some CSA criminal investigations may ultimately be abandoned through known histories of some children’s recanting, and refusal or inability to testify. POs’ *developing suspiciousness* about this possibility, may very well lead to them maintaining a cautious approach (or indeed seeking to *maintain the edge*).

## **2.16 Perspectives on Cultural Environments**

Among the research on the cultural environment in which the police operates are two competing views: the interactionist and structuralist theories. First, there are what Reiner (2010) calls interactionist studies looking broadly at rank and file sub-cultural autonomy. These studies look, for example, at the formal rules governing police conduct, the ethical terms of which have to be justified but do not necessarily affect practice (Chatterton, 1995; Holdaway, 1983). Within these interactionist studies it is the sub-culture that arguably demonstrates the values and ideals of police culture. These interactionist studies show that formal rules and controls do impact on sub-cultural autonomy, manifested in “rank-and-file solidarity”, a position aimed at shielding deviant practices from the senior ranks, and the need to always have a good story to “cover your ass” (Reiner, 2010, p. 209).

The second competing view in the research literature which throws light on police culture are the structuralist studies; these put forward a view which examines the formal rules and controls, and the way in which they are transgressed. The deviant behaviours within police sub-culture is found to be supported, not only through rank-and-file sub-cultural autonomy, but extends to structuralist reasons where, for example, police practices are accommodated by Judicial Judgments as argued by Chan, (1997) and Cape & Young, (2008)

### **2.16.1 Women police officers – gender and policing**

The culture of the police, described as one which promotes values considered to be masculine (Waddington, 1999), has been identified as the reason for some differential and unequal treatment between male and female POs. The nature of this masculine culture is said to be the basis of this inequality as shown by Brown (1988); Reiner (1992a) and Holdaway & Parker (1998), because the feminine ways of female officers are seen as a threat to the very notion of real police work (Waddington, 1999). This is work which involves dealing with danger and violence. Interestingly, Morash & Greene (1986, p. 248) challenged this dominant view of danger and violence on the grounds that it is more reflective of a ‘romantic notion of law enforcement’.

Nevertheless, these masculine values in police culture can see women as only suitable for certain tasks, which can extend to excluding them from the informal socialisation between male officers (Fletcher, 1996), seen as helping male bonding and solidarity. Earlier research shows another influence of the masculine values within police culture on female officers, i.e., the promotion of sexist views of women, resulting in policemen acting in hostile ways to women officers (Balkin, 1986; Young, 1991). The construction of such masculinities and femininities within the police cultural environment, as they apply to roles and stereotypes, therefore provokes the question: how are women (and by extension children), mothers, women POs and the overwhelmingly female social work profession in Barbados, perceived and treated by local male POs? In particular, how are child sexual abuse allegations viewed and responded to by male POs, when perpetrators are overwhelmingly male?

#### **2.16.2 Gender in the workplace in Barbados**

Police and social work cultures are not monolithic entities which apply to all. This is pointed out by Paoline III (2003), who states that any perceived cultural homogeneity, in fact, varies by police rank, individual officers and differences in the organisations themselves. A range of factors impact on the execution of duties and, in turn, impact on responses and decision making in criminal activities.

This type of argument can be compared with the previous gender perspectives discussion and with some available evidence carried out on police work in the Caribbean (Flavin & Bennett, 2001). The quantitative study across three islands: Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica looked at aspects of policing, working conditions and the nature of their duties. These authors concluded that few differences emerged between genders within the Caribbean study, but that it would be premature to say that gender exerts no influence over police attitudes, perceptions and behaviours, as these are not necessarily solely determined by gender. It was further contended that the experiences and attitudes of male and female POs reflect elements of the larger society and cultural context in which police organisations function.

Specifically where this study on professional responses to CSA is concerned, Flavin & Bennett's (ibid) and Paoline III's (2003) conclusions both lend some support for a range of ecological factors which have the potential for impacting police behaviours in the execution of duties. It may be that, if sexually abused girls are assigned to women POs in Barbados for part of the investigation, that could mean that the matter becomes a less important criminal matter due to some implicit, or even subconscious, gendering of the crime. That is, female POs find out the facts of the matter where female victims are concerned, and then male POs find out the facts from the accused males and then make the decision on the cases' prosecutorial strength. The obtuse gender potential here is that the women POs in Barbados might also be adopting masculine values, being influenced by the traditional culture of masculinity, as (Reiner, 2010) suggests. So the extent to which gender, cultural homogeneity, and the organisational environment influence each other, where responses to the crime of CSA are concerned, is arguably not clear cut.

The wider ecological factors which impact on crime (particularly, I would argue, crimes that are not immediately impacting on economic development and public safety, such as CSA) can be summed up from some of the conclusions drawn from another study looking at police governance in Trinidad. It is argued that the success of initiatives to reform and transform governance and police performance is also dependent ultimately on "major changes in the habits of all governing entities, changes that only committed leadership in government, the police and party politics can ensure." (Mastrofski & Lum, 2008, p. 481). The same could be said of governance where CSA crimes are concerned, in that States have to give the direction and stimulate a culture of change in the protection of children from harm.

### **2.17 Utility of an Ecological Approach**

In concluding this chapter, I see the need to conceptualise the range of individual, collective and systemic cultural realities which impact on child sexual abuse and professional responses to them, within an ecological model; for ease of representing distal and proximal interactions which construct behaviours. Using an ecological model with interconnections at the micro,

meso, exo and macro levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), as described at the beginning of the chapter, can assist in understanding lived realities and contingent behaviours relating to CSA. The utility of such an ecological model is seen in its treatment of development, which is defined as:

...the phenomenon of continuity and change in the bio-psychological characteristics of human beings, both as individuals and as groups. The phenomenon extends over the life course, across successive generations, and through historical time, both past and future.

(Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, p. 793)

What occurs at the individual level is socialisation and learning from witnessing and experiencing harmful incidents, such as violent behaviours within the immediate family (Eillsberg et al., 1999). This is experienced by females of all social groups (Kishor & Johnson, 2006). This can then be reinforced by relationships which aid the transmission of behavioural norms. The resultant learning can contribute towards promoting gendered roles and male dominance in some circumstances, such as intimate partner violence (IPV) (Heise, 1998). Occurring at the community level, violent behaviours and other criminal acts can become standardised, creating cultural norms and cementing perceptions. The probability exists, therefore, for neighbourhood crime and violence norms to affect other crimes such as intimate partner violence (IPV) (O'Campo et al., 1995). Intimate partner violence can, in turn, include sexually abusive behaviours towards children (DeShong, 2007). At the societal level, cultural norms become embedded from the experiences at the individual, relationship and community levels. Such knowledge and experiences, in turn, shape learning, meaning, and psycho-social responses to social problems such as child sexual abuse.

What appears to be absent from the research on violence in the Caribbean is an ecological approach, situating child sexual abuse within this culture of violence, the interrelated factors which help to sustain it, and the structural responses to its presence. This study's aim is to theorize on this situation by looking at professional responses.

### **2.18 Next Step**

In the next chapter (3), I continue my contextualizing journey, this time to further assist my thinking on this study and on my methodological approach. I do this through a selective look at the literature, as opposed to a comprehensive literature review. This is in keeping with the grounded theory methodological approach to research, a methodology I am to adopt in this study.

## **3 Preliminary Literature Review: Responding to Child Sexual Abuse**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This review was done to obtain preliminary information to assist me in formulating my approach to this study. Given that this is a grounded theory (GT) study, it is not a comprehensive literature review. This is consistent with the grounded theory approach of not carrying out such a review before the actual study. Rather, it serves to assist in the formulation and the contextualising of my methodological approach.

It is critical in GT methodology to avoid unduly influencing the pre-conceptualization of the research through extensive reading in the substantive area and the forcing of extant theoretical overlays on the collection and analysis of data... It also runs the risk of clouding the researcher's ability to remain open to the emergence of a completely new core category that has not figured prominently in the research to date...Practically, it may well result in the researcher spending valuable time on an area of literature that proves to be of little significance to the resultant GT. Instead, GT methodology treats the literature as another source of data to be integrated into the constant comparative analysis process once the core category, its properties and related categories have emerged, and the basic conceptual development is well underway.

(Glaser & Holton, 2004, p. 12)

In this review, I briefly look at some international responses to CSA together with an examination of regional and national meanings associated with CSA from some historical and contemporary theoretical perspectives. Finally, I look at aspects of Barbados' current child protection legislation and its relationship to a wider regional legislative reform framework.

### **3.2 Responding to Child Sexual Abuse**

Responding to child sexual abuse allegations and making decisions in child protection is a highly complex task (Hunter, 2006). A multiplicity of factors

such as lack of substantial corroborative evidence, the defendant's rights, and denial of the abuse by family members and the accused, as well as reluctance on the part of the victim to fully disclose or to delay disclosure, can make the assessment difficult. These all add to the challenges of the task. It is estimated that 30% to 80% of victims do not purposefully disclose CSA before adulthood (Alaggia & Kirshenbaum, 2005). These authors contend that disclosure can be significantly compromised when certain conditions such as gender roles based on a patriarchy-based family structure; family violence; closed, indirect communication patterns, and social isolation exist (Alaggia & Kirshenbaum, *ibid*, p. 227). Some of these factors are indicated in studies of Barbados (Barrow, 2001, 2003) can help to explain differences in reporting and professional responses. Barrow (2003, p. 41) states that "under-reporting is particularly evident in cases of sexual abuse".

Countries such as the United Kingdom and Canada now have strict investigative assessment and child protection practice frameworks which mandate professionals to respond in often standardised ways to allegations of child maltreatment. This is to the extent, some may well argue, that the workers' use of their professional judgement and intuition are now subsumed to prescribed timescales and excessive audit demands. Standardised risk assessment tools and quality control systems can all add to the fear of failing to measure up to such standards (Broadhurst et al., 2010; Parada, Barnoff, & Coleman, 2007). Prescriptive ways of working result in the expectation that procedures meant to be indicative of good practice on the ground will be followed. Such procedurisation and routinisation of practice may, however, result in mistrust of the systems. This is particularly the case when professional judgement points to the need to respond in a contrary way, by not overlooking important contextual factors (Munro, 1999).

Keeping protection services children-centred and responding to their needs, while also remaining professionally and organisationally accountable, would appear to be a significant professional challenge in the midst of increasing bureaucracy. Parton reminds us that:

The challenge is to ensure that the systems being introduced do not become inherently complex and unstable, and are subject to human control, so that they become the vehicles for the increased safety and emancipation of children and young people, rather than their opposite.

(Parton, 2006, p. 187)

Loss of such professional autonomy, influenced by prevailing political and organisational climates can, arguably, impact professional responses in complex cases. The complexity of CSA cases compounds these inherent difficulties. The following question was posed: “How do we reduce the capriciousness and increase the rationality of decisions?” (Proctor, 2002, p. 3). This can be a useful question to draw on when looking at the consistency of professional responses in difficult circumstances such as sexual violence against children. Indeed many questions can be and need to be posed. Where this preliminary review for this study is concerned one useful one in my opinion is – what are some of the stable meanings, and their possible genesis, ascribed to CSA, that may influence the consistency of professionals’ response to CSA. This review looks at this in the following section.

### **3.3 Revolving Wheel of Meanings Associated with Child Sexual Abuse**

The fact that violence still remains a global problem in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is evidenced in The UN Secretary-General’s study on violence against children confirming that “... violence exists in every country in the world...socially approved, and is frequently legal and State- authorized” (Pineiro, 2006, p. 5). The pattern has continued throughout history where children have been seen as the property of adults to be sold to other adults; prostituted, beaten, overworked and violated in various other ways (Crosson-Tower, 2008).

Within the Caribbean, this history is predicated on slavery. This reality and the Barbados examples which are discussed later in this section, illustrate this particular form of adult exploitation and the implicit meanings ascribed to childhood. In other parts of the world historical maltreatment may be predicated on this type of domination (slavery) and, or other forms of adult abuse. Indeed this situation may have prompted the observation that:

Some have theorized that the root causes of violence [in the Caribbean] lie in the legacy of slavery. Given the high reported levels of violence found in societies without this kind of history, however, alternative explanations may need to be identified. In any event, it seems necessary to accurately identify the *current* factors that “justify” violent solutions. More attention needs to be given to identification of the dynamics, mores, and values in the wider cultural and social systems that may condone and even encourage violent behaviours.

(Le Franc et al., 2008, p. 418)

The present is closely linked to the historical context, where the experience and re-enactment of violence towards children is concerned. Le Franc et al. (2008) suggest however that there is another vitally important dynamic in need of explanation namely, the ways in which violence is sustained and becomes embedded as part of the wider ‘cause and effect’ paradigm. There are two models for such consideration. In these, associated meanings of experienced violence to both victim and victimizer can be seen to be embedded. The first model is ‘The Four Traumagenic Dynamics’ Model as conceptualized by Finkelhor & Browne (1985) and Finkelhor (1987), consisting of traumatic sexualisation, betrayal, stigmatization, and powerlessness. These provide the experiences “that cause trauma by distorting a child's self-concept, worldview, and affective capacities” (Finkelhor, 1987, p.348). Within an assessment model such as this are historic and current meanings associated with what it means to be a child who has experienced such violence, through:

*Traumatic Sexualisation [when] it occurs through the exchange of affection, attention, privileges, and gifts for sexual behavior [means] that a child learns to use sexual behavior as a strategy for manipulating others to satisfy a variety of developmentally appropriate needs....Betrayal ... that someone whom they loved or whose affection was important to them treated them with callous disregard...Powerlessness...is exacerbated by whatever coercion and manipulation the offender may impose as part of the abuse process...Stigmatization...the negative connotations (e.g., badness, shame,*

and guilt) that are communicated to the child around the experiences and that then become incorporated into the child's self-image.

(Finkelhor & Browne, 1985, pp. 531-532)

These can be seen to be historic and current in nature; a revolving wheel of violence in which children and adults are caught and which leads to ongoing victimization and its consequences.

### **3.4 Harm to Self and Others**

The second model linking historic and current violence is 'The Compulsion to repeat the Trauma' model (Van der Kolk, 1989).

Many traumatized people expose themselves, seemingly compulsively, to situations reminiscent of the original trauma. These behavioral reenactments are rarely consciously understood to be related to earlier life experiences.... [Moreover] In behavioral re-enactment of the trauma, the self may play the role of either victim or victimizer.

(Van der Kolk, 1989, p. 389)

In studying the association between childhood abuse and the subsequent victimization of others as argued by Lewis, Shanok & Pincus (1981) and Van der Kolk (1989), the re-enactment of victimization seems to be a major factor in violence and its perpetuation. The research findings connected with this re-enactment model, show the pernicious revolving wheel of violence where many people who have committed violent offences have been found to be physically or sexually abused as children (Briggs & Hawkins, 1996; Groth & Burgess, 1979; Seghorn, Prentky, & Boucher, 1987). The person may play the role of either victimizer or victim in behavioral re-enactment of the trauma. Lewis, Pincus, Barb, & Richardson (1988) found that of 14 juveniles condemned to death for murder in the United States in 1987, 12 had been brutally physically abused, and five had been sodomized by relatives. Re-enactment of such past trauma can be manifested at many levels including the behavioral, emotional, physiologic, and neuroendocrinological levels.

Repetition on these different levels causes a large variety of individual and social suffering. Anger directed against the self or others is always a central problem in the lives of people who have been violated and this is itself a repetitive re-enactment of real events from the past.

(Van der Kolk, 1989, p. 406)

The connection between being a victim and a being a perpetrator of violence is also seen in the Caribbean where studies have found the major risk factors for youth involvement in violence, to be physical and sexual abuse, skipping school and rage (Blum & Ireland, 2004) and (Correia & Cunningham, 2003). What is clear from the literature is the significance of the interlink between past experience of violence and perpetration of violent acts, arguably through the psychological mechanisms outlined above. It must be acknowledged however that many (perhaps most), people who experience violence as children, do not go on to repeat it in later life and for those who do, the primary reason is likely to be a complex interplay of multiple social and behavioural factors and not the experience of violence by itself. Research into the intergenerational violence link is now well researched (Edleson, 1999; Kovacs & Tomison, 2003) and equally studied for its effect on development in Latin America and the Caribbean (Heinemann & Verner, 2006). One 20-year prospective study found among other things that:

...exposure to violence between parents and power assertive punishment during childhood significantly increase the risk for using violent conflict resolution within intimate relationships.

(Ehrensaft et al., 2003, p. 751)

Barrow (2003) makes some of these linkages. These concern the physical abuse of children and sexual abuse practices of adolescent girls in particular, which are arguably now historically and culturally embedded and are therefore also rooted in intergenerational ideologies. Barrow (ibid) furthermore makes the call for rethinking present social policy and thinking more fundamentally about correcting the balance between children's rights and the rights of their caregivers.

### **3.5 Linking the Meanings of the Barbados Experience**

In Barbados there has been a transformation from enslavement to democratic and independent governance through some robust social and welfare policies. Nevertheless public and social policy needs to continually be updated in its approach to remain relevant. New forms of violence and indeed relics from the past which continue to endure through socio-cultural forms of learning and the meanings ascribed to them cannot be ignored and should be interrogated for their contribution to the perpetuation of violence. One of the most notable and much debated relics in the Caribbean is the legally sanctioned corporal punishment of children.

Trends through history aligned to cultural influences show that the status of children is legally prescribed (e.g. the common law in England) and culturally adopted. These circumstances (as I have argued elsewhere in this brief review of the literature) are shown to be the product of patriarchal systems in which meanings of childhood are embedded. Later I briefly explore the historical and legal situation of what it meant to be a child in England, where from the point of view of this study, incest was not a crime until the 1908 Punishment of Incest Act. In Barbados, the same would have applied as the legal system like many other English-speaking Caribbean countries was and is based on the laws of Britain, stemming from the former colonial period. Such laws were usually enacted within Barbados by the colonial legislature often with few alterations. What it meant to be a child in Barbados has historically been prescribed by an exploitative macro system of slavery permitted by the legislation and woven into the cultural fabric through practice.

The meaning of childhood in Barbados during the colonial period was inscribed within values of 'chattel slavery' where property ownership and economic exploitation extended to ownership of the life of a slave. In this cultural environment, meanings of childhood were specified and constructed by repressive economic and legal measures enacted within the various meso and microsystems of everyday servitude. Children were socialised into 'knowing their lesser place' as were their parents. It is therefore useful to further explore the literature in order to broaden the contextual picture of

historical and contemporary meanings associated with children's status through the colonial period. The possibility of relics of these meanings becoming part of the histories of learning and thus translating into a developing society's culture can be assessed against this knowledge.

### **3.5.1 Children as property chattel**

The colonial period in Barbados - 1627 to 1961 (The Barbados Parliament, 2009) was maintained through a dominant capitalist system. Within this system, identities were ascribed to maintain the superior status of one group by race, class and economic dominance. This subjugation intersected with the economic and legal structures, which sustained powerlessness and enforced disenfranchisement. Within this system a child of an enslaved African woman, as part of the slave owner's chattel property, could be auctioned and sold off from his/her mother and also used according to the master's wishes. The statement by Harriet Ann Jacobs (1813-1897) depicts this:

I now entered on my fifteenth year .... He tried his utmost to corrupt the pure principles my grandmother had instilled. He peopled my young mind with unclean images..... I turned from him with disgust and hatred. But he was my master. I was compelled to live under the same roof with him - where I saw a man forty years my senior daily violating the most sacred commandments of nature. He told me I was his property; that I must be subject to his will in all things. My soul revolted against the mean tyranny. But where could I turn for protection? No matter whether the slave girl be as black as ebony or as fair as her mistress. In either case, there is no shadow of law to protect her from insult, from violence, or even from death.

(Jacobs, 2009, p. xx)

The exploitative processes of slavery led to ways of perceiving and thinking that in turn influenced attitudes and values.

### **3.5.2 For the use of others**

One fundamental meaning of life was the sex role of women and children. Sexual exploitation coexisted and intersected with economic exploitation in two ways. These ways were manifested in serving the slave master's

predilections and in encouraging pregnancies which maintained the workforce of the plantations. The spectacle of sexually exploited children in the Southern States of America in the period (1662- 1865) is chronicled by Warner (1999) where the ensuing pregnancies resulting from sexual exploitation, helped to provide the future workforce of slave masters and as saleable commodities to others.

Beckles (2003) writing on Barbados states, “ It was part of the entertainment culture of slave-owning males...to finish a dinner function by providing enslaved girls for overnighting guests for sex” (Beckles, 2003, p.148). The powerlessness of mothers’ and their inability to protect their children (and indeed themselves) from sexual exploitation was enshrined within the property ownership rule of law. The sexual and gendered nature of this domination meant that childhood consisted of furthering the needs of others who were more powerful than their parents, who were themselves used as a commodity.

The imperialistic goal in Barbados and the wider Caribbean further extended its economic and social objectives by ascribing class status to children according to shades of pigmentation. Some children deemed more worthy of preferential treatment, were enshrined within a class stratification. The socially constructed ‘mulattoo’ classification of children, born of a miscegenation union of black slave and (white) master, meant that such children could be assigned lighter work indoors such as serving roles rather than the harsher field and other manual work. Further social and class distinctions among children were enshrined in the matrilineal inheritance rule, in which children at birth took their mother’s status (Beckles, 2003, p. 147). This ascribed classification served two related purposes. It ensured that such children of African mothers remained slaves and importantly this status also ruled out any claims to their father’s property. Relics of such disinheritance remain on many statute books within the English speaking Caribbean to this day.

### **3.5.3 Birth status, quality of family life and associated meanings**

Semblances of this 'matrilineal position' in the form of discrimination on the basis of birth status resonate within several English speaking Caribbean countries. For example legal discrimination exists against children born out of wedlock, for inheritance and succession purposes<sup>4</sup>. Barbados however enacted anti-discriminatory legislation in the form of the - Status of Children (Reform) Act 1979. Jamaica had succeeded in this, three years earlier with their Status of Children Act 1976. Nevertheless (McDowell, Circa 2002) states:

Further, an examination of the legislation of those countries which do have such legislation in place will show that even then, the legislation appears inadequate and requires further expansion or reform.

(McDowell, Circa 2002, p. 4)

Many OECS countries (the subjects of the OECS legal Reform project 2001-2005) nevertheless, appear to have no such legislation in place. These countries are cited as Anguilla, Dominica, Montserrat and St. Lucia (McDowell, *ibid*). Within these countries where no anti-discriminatory legislation exists, some children, those born in wedlock, are referred to in law by the positive term of 'legitimate' while those born out of wedlock in the more deprecating term of 'illegitimate'. Even as there are progressive developments in respect of children's rights across the Caribbean, there are still some things that remain representative of the past.

My argument is that at the meso level, multi- level relationships e.g., between master and slaves and within the prescribed class system, influenced the meanings of childhood within the family and the wider cultural environment, with children being treated according to prevailing value systems, gendered and patriarchal norms. Children's socialisation within their immediate familial systems, in which they were born, ascribed their human worth and oppressive

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<sup>4</sup> Examples of regional countries enactment of anti-discriminatory legislation against children born out of wedlock include: Belize, Families and Children Act 1998; Guyana, Children Born Out of Wedlock (Removal of Discrimination) Act 1983; Trinidad and Tobago, Status of Children Act 1981 (McDowell, Circa 2002)

controlling systems determined their identities, which in turn were linked to slave status. However even these aspects of children's lives were uncertain and changeable on the death of the slave owner and/or the separation from mother through auction to another slave owner:

I WAS BORN A SLAVE (sic); but I never knew it till six years of happy childhood had passed away. My father was a carpenter, and considered so intelligent and skillful in his trade, that, when buildings out of the common line were to be erected, he was sent for from long distances, to be head workman...In complexion my parents were a light shade of brownish yellow, and were termed mulattoes...His strongest wish was to purchase his children; but, though he several times offered his hard earnings for this purpose, he never succeeded...and, though we were all slaves, I was so fondly shielded that I never dreamed I was a piece of merchandise, trusted to them for safe keeping, and liable to be demanded of them at any moment.

(Jacobs, 2009, p. 5)

Although children under the age of six were automatically 'free' persons (post emancipation), unless they were then 'bonded' back to work under the apprenticeship scheme, plantation owners were not obligated to provide them with food, medical and other care provisions. Parents worked unpaid for four years, approximately forty five hours per week and were rewarded with free food and shelter (Vasconcellos, 2006).

The meaning of childhood during this period was shrouded in the various states of powerlessness children were subjected to, where others had control over their lives and those of their parents.

#### **3.5.4 Meaning of fathering and mothering in childhood**

The preference for black women over black men as purchased slaves was based on the usefulness of women for working in the field and also bearing children for work or for sale. Beckles (2003) states that in 1806 the year before importation of Africans became illegal, Barbados slave- owners:

[B]oasted that the colony was very well stocked with labour.....Barbados after 1807 was a net exporter of slaves...in an increasingly important internal (inter-colonial) slave trade.

(Beckles, 2003, p. 155)

Enslaved men and women were debarred from marrying and living in a household until the end of the eighteenth century when the anti-slavery movement became vociferous and the importation of slaves was banned. This policy of encouraging procreation but forbidding family life ensured an alienation culture where mothers, fathers and child (ren) triads were deliberately and consistently fractured by an engineered institutionalised system. The absence of many fathers in the lives of children due to the fracturing of families under the conditions of slavery did not necessarily become easier during the post-emancipation period. What it meant to be a child post emancipation (from 1834) was characterized by a family life which included poverty, deprivation and racial prejudice with little or no recourse to education (McDonough, 1994).

Following emancipation in 1834, in which children six years and under were born free, it comes as no surprise that mothers were reluctant to bond their children back to the apprenticeship system. Meanings of childhood from slavery to emancipation existed on the continuum based on perceptions of the human being as an owned commodity which was valuable, saleable, dispensable and not valuable or worthy of care (as under the apprenticeship scheme post-emancipation. However:

Despite the treachery and inhumanity of the plantation experience, it brought to the fore the potential for production, self-sufficiency, rebellion and the relentless quest for personal autonomy still present in Caribbean women today.

(Reddock, 1994, p. 11)

If one were to accept Reddock's characteristics of womanhood and motherhood (by implication) one can also infer that many mothers fiercely protected their property (i.e., their children), which were solely theirs for the

first time when they became freed persons at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The transition from property owned by others to children owned by parents was no doubt made easier by the ability to provide the necessary financial and other provisions necessary for the care and wellbeing of the child. The role of the state in this care and in providing the infrastructure would have assisted, or impeded this process.

In the case of Barbados, the insurrection and riots of 1937 against poverty and discrimination no doubt helped to pave the way for the present social and education infrastructure which provides 'free' health care at the point of delivery for all children and education up to tertiary level.

### **3.5.5 Meanings associated with children as modern day property of parents**

One of the observations of parents in the Caribbean is that they see children as "their property" (UNICEF, 2006, p. 17). An assessment of this 'possession' can be viewed as a throwback to the days when children clearly were not theirs (under slavery), a position in which histories of learning can be seen extending into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This analysis can be extended to include the situation where some parents, as single mothers, have to bear most of the financial and other costs associated with their children's care, often alone. This is exacerbated by the legal structures which continue to treat the children of married and unmarried mothers differently. This is evidenced in the case of the lower amount of maintenance provisions that is awarded by the Lower Magistrate's Courts for unmarried mothers and the higher discretionary amounts awarded to married mothers whose cases are heard in the Higher Courts. Robinson & Pierre (2002) state:

...applications for child support and spousal support in the Magistrate's Court / Family Court are still in many OECS countries limited to very small amounts, and this is the only forum available to unmarried mothers seeking child support. While in the High Court there is no ceiling on the awards that can be made, but only married persons can apply.....this system of managing disputes ....with different consequences.....only serves to preserve the hierarchal class structure, a role family law should be loathed to play.

Despite the progress that has been made, some aspects of institutional practice still resemble the discriminatory practices reported in historical accounts. The transition from stark poverty to a more stable economic environment for children and families in Barbados mean that childhoods are more celebrated and cherished. Firm evidence of this is seen in the high importance many Barbadian parents place on educating their children, extending to the yearly eleven-plus examination fervour which seems to grip the nation as it determines a child's placement at a particular secondary school.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which Barbados ratified in 1990 (UNICEF, 2006, p. 14), represents a modern day legal and policy instrument which assists in establishing meanings of childhood, contingent with meeting their developmental, emotional, social and health needs. Among the provisions of this legal instrument are those articles which speak specifically to sexual abuse and the recommended action to safeguard children from exploitation. Ratification helps in the recognition and re-scripting of CSA as abhorrent and wrong. Nevertheless, despite ratification of the CRC, Barbados' legislation is not fully reflective of the CRC principles. Meanings of childhood, particularly where this study is concerned, remain compromised by such legislation.

In acknowledging that not all men are brutal and repressive (Mikell, 1995) the meaning of childhood in Barbados during the days of slavery and apprenticeship was nevertheless characterized by the burden of patriarchal oppression. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, a mixed picture is seen with sound evidence of childhood being highly valued; yet at the same time some institutional practices and ingrained cultural norms continue to contribute to some of the historically ascribed meanings of undervaluing childhood.

### **3.6 The Nature and Definition of Child Sexual Abuse**

The act of CSA is mostly a secretive crime, characteristically occurring in private and usually leaving no physical signs except in pregnancy, the

contraction of a sexually transmitted infection, or in the abuse of babies and very young children. Child victims are usually at different stages of cognitive and language development, which can make disclosure of the abuse harder to articulate. In the final analysis also, this particular form of child maltreatment involves the act of human sexuality and sex, which can make it more difficult for an adult society to address. This also further adds to its complexity. Definitional clarity of CSA aids its diagnosis and by implication, treatment intervention. The exploitative and victimising nature of CSA extends to include incest between immediate family members. One of the most used and enduring definitions states that CSA is:

The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities which they do not fully comprehend, are unable to give informed consent to and that violate social taboos of family roles.

(Kempe & Kempe, 1978, p. 60)

Some researchers, such as Finkelhor (1981), have favoured the term sexual victimisation, which was seen to represent the power imbalance between abuser and victim. Sexual abuse and sexual assault were seen as terms depicting physical violence. Where there is sex in exchange for monetary or material gain, this power imbalance is still present and is not necessarily labelled as violent, being seen more as an economic exchange as in the case of transactional sexual abuse, discussed in Chapter Two.

A cross-cultural definition is seen in Australia's Victorian Parliamentary Crime Prevention Committee on CSA, which recommended that the term 'child sexual assault' should be used, highlighting it as a criminal assault, to be so treated from the beginning of the investigation (Tomison, 1995, p. 3). This policy demonstrates some different cultural perspectives which can impact on responses and outcomes, e.g., more emphasis on crime reduction.

The study by Jones & Trotman Jemmott (2009, p. 11) refers to 'harmful sexual behaviour', explaining the term as 'behaviour that contributes to the sexual harming of children' – not as a legal descriptor, but to clarify the

definition of sexual abuse and its usefulness as a guide for policy formulation, practice interventions and public education. This raises interesting questions about the relationship between definitions and professional responses. The application of definitions must have an intended target. It may be that such definitions are influenced by a range of factors which are historically and culturally determined.

### **3.7 Historical and Cultural Perspectives of Who is a Child and Who is a Sexually Abused Child**

The recorded practice of incest/CSA is well recorded in both Western and Eastern cultures. There are descriptions of such abuse in ancient Greece, where the pederasty of boys was common and incest not unknown (Kahr, 1991). Child marriage in parts of India was and still remains very commonplace. Martin (1995, citing Mayo, 1927) also records the sexual masturbation of the female child in India to help her sleep, and of the boy to make him manly. Martin (2005) describes the institutionalised pederasty of boys by priests and warriors, and the widespread prostitution of both boys and girls in ancient Japan as resembling that of India and China. In the United Kingdom, Corby (2006, citing Pollock, 1983) highlights a survey from the UK's *Times* newspaper of child cruelty between 1785 and 1860, where 385 reported cases of child neglect, physical and sexual abuse were found.

The hundred year period from 1860 to 1962 saw the 'discovery' of CSA, its suppression and its discredit. Notable during this time was Freud's 1896 seduction theory of children, put forward in his *Aetiology of Hysteria*, acknowledging that childhood sexual abuse experiences were a major cause of adult neurotic behaviour. This declaration was followed by Freud's subsequent publication in 1899, which recanted this and proclaimed his oedipal theory through the publication of the *Interpretation of Dreams*. Freud's action allegedly abandoned children to their continuing sexual abuse, and contributed to clinicians' connivance and a failure to protect defenceless children in the decades that followed.

### **3.7.1 Child sexual abuse and the influence of feminist theory**

The early work and voices of the second wave feminists have been fundamental in the fight for justice for sexually abused children. An example of this is their identification of the Freudian psychoanalytic movement's influence on social work and family therapy in silencing abused children and excusing male abusers (Nelson, 1982; Rush, 1981). Other feminist work also highlighted the practice of silencing disclosure of CSA by treating complaints as fantasies, a practice which drew very selectively on Freud's work (Driver & Droisen, 1989).

Some radical feminist perspectives (McLeod & Saraga, 1988) argued the position of CSA as an expression of male power and being "one part of a spectrum of male violence against women and children" (McLeod & Saraga, *ibid*, p. 40). Such work was instrumental in countering the prevailing family dysfunction theory of CSA, with its gendered bias of female blame.

Other seminal feminist work on CSA speaks of its gendered nature within systems of patriarchy. This is seen from the review by Featherstone & Fawcett (1994), in which the conceptual positions of knowledge, gender and power as female oppressive agents are questioned in a way which opens up these systemic symbols to scrutiny.

More recent contributions have expanded the early feminist scholarship by their work in several areas. Some (examples only) include: the harm story in CSA (O'Dell, 2003); the relationship between memories of CSA and the adult survivor's sense of identity and agency (Reavey & Warner, 2003); exploring understandings of 'survivors' of CSA and false memory syndrome (Woodiwiss, 2007); research centred on discourses of childhood sexual abuse, multiple personalities, false memory syndrome and women's engagement with these (Woodiwiss, 2009), and agency in memory (Reavey & Brown, 2007). These are conceptually different but related foci on the subject, which help us to understand that there many perspectives in the range of theories, reflective of the complexity of CSA.

### **3.7.2 Histories of learning and meanings in sex crimes: rape**

Feminist theory's contribution to the aetiology of CSA is evident and informed in its scholarship on rape, and on how the practice of sexual crimes is understood and has been responded to within a historical notoriety of claims and counter claims. The historical legacy of this sexual crime is not without its share of struggles, a position summed up by Kelly when she states "...for centuries, the 'wrong' of rape has been seen not so much as the violation of women's bodies and rights, but as the vengeful women falsely accusing innocent men" (Kelly, 2008, p. 128). Such a view still resonates today within the research evidence on CSA. The reported sexually abusive act, perpetrated largely by men, mainly on the female child, is still not believed by many when reported by the child.

Part of the legacy associated with the contested nature of rape lies in at least two related areas: individual identity and ownership rights.

The implicitly gendered 'ownership' notion of married women being the property of their husbands was historically reflected in legislation, effectively making rape a non-prosecutable offence. This effectively meant that married women had no individual identity in law, and sexually active females were seen as 'common property' (Bourke, 2007, p. 9). In Barbados, there is the historical legacy of men's property rights over women's bodies (and children's), which are historically embedded through slavery and colonial relations as described earlier.

The influence of this 'owned identity' of women by men, in the eyes of the law, meant that the rape of unmarried women was also framed and interpreted in the legal context of having sex with a woman who does not 'belong' to the perpetrator (Bourke, *ibid*).

The subjugation of women, through the structural system of the law, is a powerful manifestation of asymmetrical power. Where did this leave the sexual abuse of children, of which the most recognised form is incest? Under the common law in England, incest was not a crime until 1908. Children were seen as the property of their fathers, as would be their mothers, reflective of

the legally sanctioned patriarchy which confined and reinforced women's and children's dependent status.

Within the Caribbean, scholars have chronicled the multiple types of abuse, such as physical, emotional and sexual, faced on a regular basis by women (Clarke, 1997, 1998; Hadeed & El-Bassel, 2007). Others, such as International Development Agencies (Ayres, 1998), have also been vocal about this gendered crime and its effects across the ecological spectrum. The legacy of such violence, and other forms of gendered subjugation, has been critically examined for their effects on women and children, family life and development.

### **3.7.3 Sexual abuse in the first half of the 20th century 1910-1960 - societal reactions and decision-making responses**

One of the key institutional responses to CSA, which equally governs professional response to CSA, is the law. For the purposes of this discourse, it is useful to look at British law, on which criminal law in Barbados is modelled (as a consequence of former colonial rule). The research 'Reconsidering the Recent History of CSA, 1910-1960 in England and Wales' (Smart, 2000) shows the array of rival accounts of sexual abuse - usually referred to as sexual assaults, or even just as "outrages" - during the fifty year period of 1910-1960. The milestone 1908 Punishment of Incest Act was arguably a phenomenal achievement, given the patriarchal power of men over their families at that time. It provided the most significant legislative attempt to achieve some form of justice for girls sexually violated within the family. Smart's (ibid) research can be used to gain some insight into the cultural meaning of childhood at the time, with its debate over the sexual innocence of young girls. Situations such as "...the significance of discovering venereal diseases in babies and in children's homes" (Smart, ibid, p. 55) were legal, moral and medical challenges facing the emancipatory discourses, the feminist lobby and the child protection organisations of the time. Smart (ibid) argues the point also that "...insufficient attention [was] paid to the role of the legal establishment and the practices of the criminal justice system in the

persistent, but multifaceted, inability to define adult/child sexual contact as abusive or harmful” ( Smart, *ibid*, p. 55).

The professional responses to CSA during this period show several factors appearing to influence choices in the failure to better protect children. These include: the prevailing medical dogma (contingent to some extent on the state of medical knowledge at the time); the political and legal patriarchy as mentioned above, and the psychoanalytic therapeutic climate of the period.

Children consequently continued to suffer sexual abuse at the hands of adults. This is in spite of changes to the statutes such as the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1922, and the Departmental Committee on Sexual Offences against Young Persons (1924-5), set up by the Home Office and resulting in many policy recommendations of how to deal with CSA. The numbers of alleged cases paint the picture. Smart further states:

As the law stood, before 1922 a man could engage in an act of indecency with a girl under the age of 16 years and then defend himself by claiming that she consented or by claiming that he thought she was over 16 years. It was recognised that many men were escaping conviction through these loopholes, and that charges of rape were often reduced to indecent assault and so even very serious offences were going unpunished.

Mr Archibald John Allen, the representative of the bishop of London, in giving evidence to the Joint Select Committee in 1920 stated among other things: There are an appalling number of indecent assaults on children all over the country. ...These cases are so numerous that some further protection is absolutely required for children. As to rescue homes – it seems a shocking thing that there should be rescue homes for children between 13 and 16 – the Salvation Army have very large numbers in their homes. The Church of England has places which are full of children who have been tampered with at these early ages.

(Smart, 2000, reporting on the Joint Select Committee *Report*, 1920, p. 884)

Further evidence in the literature for this (sub)-culture of CSA is seen in Corby (2006, citing Behlmer, 1982), who reports that the NSPCC in its first year

(1914) dealt with 95 “domestic victims” cases, of which 12 were of an evil which “is altogether too unmentionable (CSA or incest)” (p. 80). The numbers of cases reported were seen as an under-representation of the scale of the problem in pre-industrial times (Vander Mey et al., 1986, p. 41). Corby also states that it was a reflection of the general attitude to the issue...“a conspiracy of silence” (Corby, 2006, p. 27). This snapshot provides some insight into the continuing abandonment of children to their sexual predators, reminding us that the legislation of the time was also discriminatory. It also illustrates how structural protective systems can fail to protect. For example, the micro and meso-systems can operate through patriarchal actions or some other positional power within the family to silence incest; the exo-system, through the discriminatory nature of legislation and social structures (e.g. medical and welfare), can also fail to acknowledge the abuse or label it as something other. The macro-system, through the cultural ideology, influences through dogma such as the “honest belief” plea and assigned gendered roles.

A conspiracy of silence has become part of the legacy of child sexual victimisation. This heritage continues to be one of the dominant factors which maintains the sexual abuse of children. Furniss (1991, p. 33) describes syndromes of secrecy and addiction in CSA, which are powerful interlocking processes that maintain the sexual abuse. The secrecy syndrome includes adults disbelieving the child and/or not reporting the alleged criminal matter. The addictive element shows striking resemblance to other addictions, with adults habitually engaging in the abusive act.

#### **3.7.4 Child maltreatment including sexual abuse in the latter half of the 20th century – 1960-1990**

This period was one of the times responsible for an awakening to the fact that children could be physically and sexually abused at the hands of parents. For example, Henry Kempe and his colleagues redefined child abuse, coining the phrase “battered child syndrome” and propelling child abuse into the public and medical spheres. Child sexual abuse gained increasing attention through research into the problem, and as a consequence of examples such as the professionals’ allegations of organised sexual abuse in the alleged Cleveland

situation of 1987, and the 1991 Orkney case of ritualistic, satanic and sexual abuse in Great Britain. However, these allegations also helped fuel the backlash against the professionals, who were accused of a 'witch-hunt' against parents. Such a backlash, when viewed from a decision-making perspective, reminds professionals that decisions to intervene into allegations require a high level of assessment skills in an area where firm evidence can be hard to find. This period was also characterised by an upsurge in CSA allegations and reported cases in the United States of America and the United Kingdom, that had not been seen previously. Many adult 'survivors' of CSA also emerged, seeking treatment and therapeutic help for pathologies later associated with their childhood sexual abuse. The implication for decision-making was significant, resulting in improved inter and intra-professional training for staff in the field of CSA, inclusive of more attention to the needs of families traumatised by allegations. The 21<sup>st</sup> century, as will be seen from the next section, has heralded in a time of the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

### **3.7.5 World-wide approach to the harmful effects of child sexual abuse**

The sexual abuse of children is a worldwide phenomenon, as confirmed at the three world congresses on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE) of Children, held in Stockholm in 1996, Tokyo in 2001, and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 2008. The commercial sexual exploitation of children has an undisputed place as a gross violation of children's personhood and their rights, as enshrined within several United Nations international policy instruments, of which the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), with its optional protocols, is the most notable. Arguably, therefore, the world is committed to protecting children from abuse in all its forms, of which CSA is a particularly insidious example. Known for its harmful effects on the developing brain of a young child (Glaser, 2002), further manifestations are seen in: poor mental health; known harmful psychological outcomes (Gidycz, Orchowski, King, & Rich, 2008); disruption and retardation of educational achievements; early sexualisation with concomitant early motherhood; sexually transmitted infections; prostitution, and post-traumatic stress syndrome (Briggs & Joyce,

1997). This is a catalogue of maladies which carries over into adulthood and parenthood, its tentacles reaching out inter-generationally. It must be pointed out that, fortunately, an earlier review by Kendell-Tackett, Williams & Finkelhor (1993) shows that not all children who have been sexually abused are left with problems. This review also points out that there is no "post CSA syndrome", and suggests that harmful sequelae associated with the abuse are not inevitable but are, furthermore, linked to interpersonal differences.

The worldwide movement against the commercial sexual exploitation of children is a galvanised response to late 20th and 21<sup>st</sup> century exploitation of children for commercial profit by organised and corporate bodies. The decision-makers at the macro level (e.g., governments) have ratified various international treaties such as the CRC and International Labour Office Conventions. Yet there can be a disconnection within small island states such as Barbados, between this macro level commitment, and the exo-systems (the institutions and professional groups) where there can be a paucity of resources for responding to needs of the sexually abused child and non-abusing families.

### **3.8 Some Perceived Influencing Factors in Responding to CSA**

We earlier observed, in the Parada et al. (2007) study, some of the processes in use by professionals when making child protection decisions. What then are some of the factors which influence responding? Two aspects are examined below: children's perceived credibility in allegations of their sexual abuse, and children's perceived credibility/victims' characteristics.

#### **3.8.1 Children's perceived credibility in allegations of their sexual abuse**

The way children are perceived can influence whether they are believed when they report sexual abuse by an older person. The prevalence rate of such abuse continues to show that sexual abuse affects both males and females and that the perpetrators can be of both sexes (Finkelhor & Dzuiba-Leatherman, 1994; Finkelhor, Hotaling, Lewis, & Smith, 1990; Pereda, Guilera, Forns, & Gómez-Benito, 2009a). Embedded within the construction of

childhood, as it relates to the sexually abused child, are gender components shown within the discourses on patriarchy. Gender-role belief attribution is seen to affect girls nearing the age of consent, when they are perceived as (nearly) adult females who should be sexually available to men (Quas, Bottoms, Haegerich, & Nysse Carris, 2002). This gender stereotyping also contributes to perceptions that the sexual abuse of boys is less damaging than male-perpetrated abuse against girls.

Rogers & Davies (2007), using quantitative methods in their hypothetical CSA case research, found evidence of gender-role and age stereotyping, as well as significant differences in attributions according to respondent, victim, perpetrator's gender and the victim's age. Males, particularly, considered assault on a 15-year-old male victim by a female perpetrator to be less severe, and the victim less credible and more culpable, than a corresponding assault on a female victim or assault by a male perpetrator (p. 578). Conversely, it was found that when the perpetrator was female and the victim a young male (i.e., 10 years old), victimisation of the child was considered to be very severe, with blame attributed to the female (p. 580). Other studies on the age/gender blame attribution are cited by Rogers & Davies (*ibid*, p. 568). Kendall-Tackett & Watson (1991) also found evidence supporting this young-age credibility dilemma, this time among professionals, law enforcement officers and social workers, which is discussed below.

One of the serious implications in the age/gender dichotomy is seen in the potential non-treatment of adolescent boys, who could be perceived as receiving an important 'harmless' sexual induction to manhood, even when they are clearly being abused by the female. The challenge, therefore, for therapeutic intervention with sexually abused adolescent males, is in dispelling this 'harmless passage of rites' misconception. For example, in the study of 747 male subjects attending a specialist forensic psychotherapy centre (Glasser et al., 2001, p. 482), a high percentage of those abused in childhood by a female relative became perpetrators. Being a victim was a strong predictor of becoming a perpetrator, as was an index of parental loss in childhood. The characteristics of age and gender of a sexually abused child

can be seen as influencing factors in whether they are seen as sexually abused or not.

### **3.8.2 Children's perceived credibility: victims' characteristics likely to impact on decision making**

An earlier study (Kendall-Tackett & Watson, 1991) found evidence supporting this young-age credibility issue, this time among professionals. They studied the victim credibility and culpability theory by assessing whether professionals actually apply to their evaluations the presumption of children's innocence in sexual matters, hence making them more credible in reporting any sexual abuse. Supporting their prediction that children under the age of six years were more convincing than children 6-9 or 10-12 years when they demonstrated adult-level knowledge of sexuality, was the confirmation by Rogers & Davies (2007) above, with a different population. These researchers raised the important concept of the "convincingness" effect of children's allegations from the responses of the two research groups. The law enforcement professionals, whose role it is to investigate and ultimately bring criminal charges against the alleged perpetrator, were less convinced by general, ambiguous and sexualised behaviour evidence.

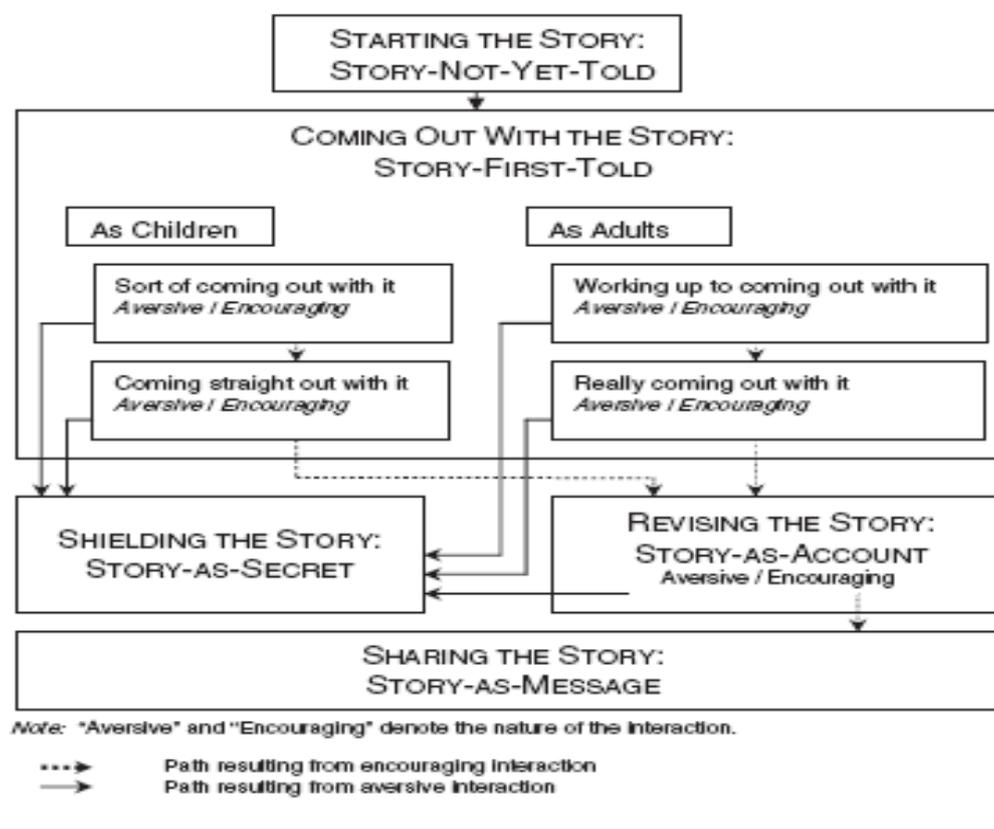
Social workers and other therapeutic personnel, on the other hand, were more likely to be convinced by both general and specific behavioural indicators. Women were more convinced (as predicted) by both general sexualised behaviour and specific behavioural indicators. These are interesting findings for responding to CSA, in that POs seem less influenced by behaviours which have been shown to be exhibited by some abused children, behaviours which can require skilled training to help determine the veracity of what is said. It seems that normal behavioural responses could be working against the victim where POs are concerned. These quantitative studies show the inherent complexity involved when responding to CSA among the two professional groups, and raise an important question for *this* research, i.e., might attributional blame exist among professional groups working with CSA cases in Barbados?

### **3.9 The Storying Credibility Conundrum**

Using a grounded theory method approach, Draucker & Martsof (2008) developed a theoretical framework to explain how survivors of childhood sexual abuse tell others about their sexual abuse experiences as a child. They show reported evidence of children's inability to start telling the story and/or tell the story outright for the first time, being couched in behaviours such as confusing and ambiguous verbal accounting, arguably mirroring the child's interpretative confusion of trying to understand what and why it (the sexual abuse) is happening to them. Professionals' investigative approaches and manner either help or hinder this "storying" stage. One of the perceived challenges is the child's gradual or deferred timing to tell, versus that of the professionals' timing, where, for example, law enforcement officers might demonstrate a sense of urgency to make a decision (or indeed social workers, depending on the nature of the allegation). The two (children's timing vs. the professionals') appear to be at variance with each other. Rogers & Davies' (2007) study above has some relevance here, where POs are seen to be less convinced by ambiguity. The framework developed by Draucker & Martsof (ibid) is presented below, highlighting the challenges inherent in getting the child to tell their story in order to make investigative or therapeutic decisions.

Figure 3.1 Storying childhood sexual abuse

**Figure 1**  
**The Theoretical Framework “Storying Childhood Sexual Abuse”**



**Source: Draucker & Martsof (2008, p. 1039)**

Another challenge in responding to CSA, seen from the literature, is the ‘arrival route’ used by POs and social workers. POs are guided by concrete evidence, whereas social workers can be less so, being also needs-led, trained to understand human development and behaviour and professionally mandated to consider the best interest of the child as the paramount principle in decision making. Understanding the significance of behavioural markers is critical to eventually knowing as full a story of the sexual abuse as possible for adequate representation before the courts and for therapeutic intervention. This representation is, in turn, guided very much by the law of the land.

### **3.10 Barbados - The Child Protection Context**

The law within most Caribbean countries, including Barbados, is modelled on Great Britain's laws of the early and mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century. Many of these laws in Barbados are updated from time to time, but not necessarily in a unified or comprehensive manner. There are two examples of legislative reform in the Caribbean region. The first is the Barbados example, where comprehensive legislation affecting children's care and welfare exists, but is largely unharmonised with other national legislation dealing with family matters, and with the CRC. Secondly, this Barbadian position can be contrasted with the eight (OECS) countries (namely Antigua and Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, The Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Saint Lucia). The governments of these countries, in 2002, agreed to embark on a reform of their family law and domestic violence legislation, producing the six model bills below. However, there is no implementation of these bills so far within the wider OECS countries, with the exception of Grenada and Antigua, who are in the process of further customising and implementing some of the following:

Child protection

Child Care and Adoption

Domestic Violence

Juvenile Justice

Status of Children

Family Court

However, laws in themselves do not bring about change and consequently the challenge will first and foremost lie in resourcing the required skilled and trained professionals necessary for meaningful implementation.

#### **3.10.1 Aspects of Barbados child protection legislation**

Barbados is seen to have some of the more progressive legislation within the Caribbean in family and child care law e.g., children born out of wedlock have the same inheritance rights as those born in wedlock. Yet Barbados is not

moving to harmonise its family law as is the intent of its OECS neighbours. A recent report by Ince & Cornelius has this to say:

...Disharmony plagues the system...There is a dire need for reform of the Child law system in Barbados. Such reform should include the consolidation of all the relevant legislative provisions relating to children, amendment of inadequate provisions and repeal of provisions which do not accord with international standards, along with increased clarity on child protection procedures and obligations.

(Ince & Cornelius, 2009, p. 4)

The absence of updated legislation and its proper implementation, together with shortages of staff to support the proper implementation of the law, were common comments cited by practitioners and policy interviewees within recent research on “Perceptions of, Attitudes to and Opinions on CSA within the Eastern Caribbean” (Jones & Trotman Jemmott, 2009). Other examples of the failings and injustices within the current systems for protecting children from sexual abuse are also documented in the study’s report. Within her study, Sealy-Burke (2007) also reports many paradoxes and deficits seen within the child protection systems, which are struggling under the heavy burden of inefficient legislation and uncoordinated multidisciplinary responses, the effect of which is a medico-socio-economic cost to the state. Not surprisingly, therefore, the number of alleged cases of CSA in Barbados is assessed to be high by the professionals and from the reports in the media, examples of which appear in Appendix 3.1.

This contextualising look at the literature helps to make transparent my approach to this research and the steps I have taken in the achievement of its goal. It also intentionally looks at a range of literature concerned with the theory and practice of making decisions, the complexity of CSA and some ways of responding to it. This complexity is defined by histories of ascribed meanings with attendant responses that are legally and culturally situated. It may be that professional responses are guided both by rational theories of

responding, as well as by the more reflective based approach, both of which are situated within the same ecological context as CSA.

### **3.11 Progressing Steps**

Grounded theory does not involve the testing of pre-established theoretical propositions or hypotheses. The identification of a pre-determined set of research questions therefore runs counter to the notion of exploratory studies, which allow the data to speak for itself. Nevertheless, my analysis of socio-cultural/historical contextual factors (Chapter Two), together with my preliminary review of the literature on child sexual abuse, historical and contemporary responses to it among other things, (Chapter Three), have led to the identification of the aforementioned broad research aims. The next chapter discusses the methodological approach and its justification for use in this study.

## **4 Methodology**

### **4.1 Research Aims**

In this chapter I reaffirm my research aims and my epistemological position, which are arrived at through my exploration of grounded theory, and a discussion on qualitative vs. quantitative approaches to research. I reach the conclusion that my research aims are best served by the use of a qualitative research approach to this present study.

Epistemological and methodological approaches were linked to my research aims, which were derived from the three sources discussed in the preceding chapters. These are: my professional interest in the topic; the social context in which abuse takes place in Barbados, and the preliminary review of the literature, which identified a gap in knowledge related to an understanding of the relationship of professionals to their social/organisational/environmental contexts, in their responses to child sexual abuse cases. The aims of this present study were to understand:

1. How is CSA defined, and how do such definitions impact on professionals' responses (to CSA) in Barbados?
2. What organisational and other factors impact on, promote/inhibit responding in the best interests of the child within the social and cultural context of Barbados?

### **4.2 Epistemological Position**

A grounded theory methodology and the application of its methods were chosen for this study because of my interest in developing theory in this area of professional responses to child sexual abuse. These responses are by two key groups of professionals involved in its management in Barbados, viz: POs and CCOs. The theory generated from this study is therefore expected to offer some insight into the interactional processes involved in responding to child sexual abuse (CSA) in Barbados. A grounded theory approach further assists theory development relating to the why, how, where, when, under what

conditions, and with what consequences, the phenomenon exists (Birks & Mills, 2011; Charmaz, 2006).

This is the first study of its kind to my knowledge within the Caribbean. Generating theory in the study of CSA in a Caribbean context will be an important contributor to knowledge within the region. In the search for meanings within the study, the responses of professionals will play a central part. A study of this nature will also assist future inductive and deductive studies which may wish to verify the postulates of the theory emanating from this research. The most recent catalyst for this study stems from my involvement in the Caribbean study (Jones & Trotman Jemmott, 2009 ), as described in Chapter One. My interest is further galvanized because the sexual violation of children in small islands states, such as Barbados (with limited financial and highly skilled specialist manpower resources) appears, from the anecdotal evidence, to be prevalent and negatively impactful on victims and society. This picture seems to reflect those in the more developed and economically prosperous countries as well as the poor developing ones. Prevalence rates, therefore, are of international concern. Professionals dealing with child sexual abuse in Barbados are therefore some of the most valuable 'assets' to make a significant and positive impact on outcomes for sexually abused children. A study exploring their ways of responding, and the influencing factors on these responses, will represent an important contribution to scientific enquiry in the management of child sexual abuse in Barbados.

### **4.3 Building the Case for Using Grounded Theory**

Sociologists Barney G. Glaser and Anslem L. Strauss formulated grounded theory methods and followed them up with a detailed methodology for the inductive discovery of theory. Charmaz (2006, p. 4) describes the timely arrival of these two researchers' ground breaking work, at a time when the methodological assumptions of qualitative research was in the ascendancy, whilst quantitative research was gaining strength. In their book, "The Discovery of Grounded Theory...", Glaser & Strauss (1967) challenged the positivist dismissal of qualitative research such as grounded theory by

providing “a powerful argument that legitimized qualitative research as a credible methodological approach in its own right, rather than simply a precursor for developing quantitative instruments” (Charmaz, *ibid*, p. 9). Theory was arrived at through a systematic analysis of data in which it (the theory) is “grounded” ( Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The widely-used grounded theory research uses the qualitative method of constant comparison procedure, where similar data are grouped, coded and conceptually labelled. The concepts formed from this process are then categorised and organised through linkages in their relationships and dimensions into categories (and sub-categories). This constant comparison process is accompanied by the strategy of theoretical sampling “of obtaining further selective data to refine and fill out...major categories” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 12). It is this qualitative approach (only briefly discussed here and expanded below) which leads to the emergence of theory as postulated by Glaser & Strauss (1967); Glaser (1978, 1999); Strauss & Corbin (1990) and Charmaz (2006).

Grounded theory’s utility, as a qualitative methodology, is now evident in its wide use beyond sociology to other disciplines, such as: Marketing and Business Management (Goulding, 2002, 2005); Social Work (Gilgun, 1994; Padgett, 2008); Nursing and Health Studies (Benoliel, 1996; Chenitz & Swanson, 1986; Cutcliffe, 2000), and Psychology (Elliott, Fischer, & Rennie, 1999; Henwood & Pidgeon, 1992).

#### **4.3.1 The historical foundations of grounded theory - further evidence for my methodology**

The historical legacy and theoretical underpinnings of grounded theory, influenced by Symbolic Interactionism (SI), is a better application than a positivist approach for my study, as it is more of a “problem-solving endeavour concerned with understanding action from the perspective of the human agent” (Haig, 1995, p. 282). Understanding actions related to child sexual abuse entails the perspectives of a range of actors (“human agents”) - some of whom are victims, parents, perpetrators and professionals.

Symbolic interactionism, as one of the theoretical interpretivist approaches in research, can be described as the approach which seeks to understand “the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it” (Schwandt, 1994, p. 118). In order to achieve this goal, the SI approach goes “in search of portraying and understanding the process of meaning making” (Schwandt, *ibid*, p. 123), in an environment of the respective individuals’ social and psychological action and interaction.

Blumer’s (1969) early symbolic interactionism work is widely regarded as one of the most seminal in the area. Kendall (1999) argues that there is a similarity between grounded theory and symbolic interactionism, where meaning is constructed and action portrayed by persons in social interaction situations. Consequently, there is a co-constructing of both meaning and actions which is ongoing, reciprocal and varied.

The symbolic interactional approach rests on the premise that human action takes place always in a situation that confronts the actor and that this actor acts on the basis of *defining* the situation that confronts him.

(Murphy et al., 2001, p. 27)

Allard & Anderson (2005) further suggest the following of Blumer’s (1976) symbolic interactionism:

- people act towards things based on the meaning those things have for them;
- these meanings are derived through interaction with other people;
- meanings are managed and transformed through a process of interpretation and self-reflection.

Symbolic interactionism and the grounded theory method therefore emphasize the actor’s perspectives of reality in the interpretation of that reality (Goulding, 1999). From a qualitative research perspective, Goulding (1998) argues that grounded theory enables researchers to systematically study human interactions in a way that embraces the interrelationship between action, the conditions in the environment shaping the action and the consequences of taking action.

The intent of grounded theory research is therefore one of theory construction in order to understand the phenomena emerging from participants' data. In their paper, "Saving the Phenomena", Bogen & Woodward (1988) remind us of the important distinction between data and phenomena in a way which challenges the positivist deductive view of the role of scientific theory, which predicts and explains facts about "observables" (p. 303). Glaser and Strauss' inductive grounded theory developed in the 1960s, as described earlier, in opposition to this prevailing hypothetic-deductive method of the time, and as an equally legitimate practice for social science inquiry.

Bogen & Woodward (ibid) argue that: "Typically, scientific theories are expected to provide...systematic explanations of facts about phenomena rather than facts about data" (p. 322). It is argued that while data produce evidence for the existence of phenomena, "...data typically cannot be predicted or systematically explained by theory." In contrast to this, "well developed scientific theories do predict and explain facts about phenomena...detected through the use of data, but in most cases, are not observable in any interesting sense of that term" (Bogen & Woodward, pp. 305-306).

I share this example of Bogen & Woodward (1988) because, in my opinion, it supports the empirical inductive-deductive stance of the Glaserian and Straussian Schools (described below). At the same time, it acknowledges the constructivist dimension in which the researcher has to interpret what is going on – detecting the phenomena from the data.

A clear understanding of the research paradigm is important as argued by Creswell (2007, 2009) and Lincoln & Guba (2000). Grounded theory is useful when investigating social problems and/or situations to which persons have to adapt (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Schreiber & Stern, 2001). It can also best explain "...how social circumstances could account for the interactions, behaviours and experiences of the people being studied" (Benoliel, 1996, p. 413). In facilitating a move from description of what is happening, to

understanding the processes by which it is happening (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), it allows the development of substantive theory.

The assumptions of grounded theory are, therefore, reflected within this chapter, where the intention is one of theory development, achieved by following recommended grounded theory principles and procedures.

My use of ecological theory so far is to contextualize this study; in other words, professionals do not operate in a vacuum, but in direct relationship with their social circumstances, in which their behaviours are linked to such interaction. This is compatible with the grounded theory method, which enables the emergence of a fuller understanding of *how* social circumstances influence behaviour.

#### **4.3.2 Brief comparison with some other qualitative studies**

Qualitative research needs to articulate its fundamental assumptions and how they compare with the belief of other paradigms. This view is reflected by Munhall (2010, p. 34), who argues that “Using the concreteness of placing paradigms in stark relief to one another, should be of assistance to our...understanding of various worldview”. I, therefore, briefly compare below grounded theory with two other paradigms, those of phenomenology and ethnography, to demonstrate the utility of grounded theory for the development of theory in this study.

Ethnography’s usefulness as a qualitative research tool is well known in the study of social conditions, roles and interpersonal relationships, an approach this study could have adopted, some might argue. However, as Omery (1988, p. 29) states, it is the development of “descriptive theory” that many ethnographers believe reflects cultural knowledge, behaviours or meaning, which is the goal of ethnographic studies. This capability in theory development is nonetheless recommended to be approached cautiously (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994; Omery, 1988). In contrast, grounded theory is widely recognised as the qualitative methodology used for substantive theory development, the goal of this study, as opposed to descriptive theory.

The second paradigm which I briefly compare with grounded theory is phenomenology, the primary goal of which is the description of phenomena (Koch, 1995), or to describe how they are interpreted (Rapport, 2005). An understanding of people's lived experiences is well suited, therefore, to the research approach of phenomenology. It does not, however, develop substantive theory and hence would be unsuitable for theory development within my study. Polit & Hungler (1997, p. 203) further argue that certain positivist/realist assumptions, rather than interpretative ones, are more representative of phenomenology. My study adopts an interpretative position rather than realist ontology.

My choice of grounded theory, therefore, in acknowledging the ontological position of human beings as the constructors, interpreters and owners of meaning, allows me, in this study, to better move beyond description to developing theory. For example, meanings are produced in the context of professional and everyday practices (i.e., socially negotiated). Such meanings are also defined within a broader economy of meanings from which they get their value. Ownership of these meanings operates at both individual and collective levels (Wenger, 2008, pp. 199-202). Consequently, to interrelate epistemological positions such as CoP and grounded theory also demands a methodology which enables meanings to be garnered and analysed, enabling substantive theory development. The right methodology is argued to be the one which can answer the research question (Holloway & Todres, 2003) and, in the case of this study, to develop substantive theory.

#### **4.4 Conceptual Definition of Grounded Theory**

Grounded theory (methods, principles and procedures) is a process involving both articulation of method and an articulation of methodology. For example, in setting out the basis for grounded theory, Strauss & Corbin (1990, p. 23) describe it as "...a qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon." Later on, Glaser (1992, p. 16) describes it as "...a general methodology of analysis linked with data collection that uses a systematically

applied set of methods to generate an inductive theory about a substantive area.”

Glaser and Strauss & Corbin all present arguments which indicate different positions on the concept of grounded theory. I have steered clear of these philosophical debates and have drawn eclectically and principally from Glaser & Strauss (1967), Corbin & Strauss (1990) and Strauss & Corbin (1998) to guide my understanding and data analysis approach to the subject. I can, however, identify with Strauss & Corbin’s (1998) conceptualisation of grounded theory which takes into account time, place, people and other contextual situations, and which I have interpreted to include organisational culture, power dynamics and professional identity. I am contrasting this with Glaser (2002, p. 8), who argues for timelessness in the applicability to the concepts’ generation. All of these researchers, however, appear to adopt the position of “not forcing the data” which manifests itself through the rigorous process I have followed as described in the methods section below. This non-forcing of the data also enables my search for meaning which emerges from the data.

#### **4.4.1 Purpose of grounded theory**

My quest for any ‘compulsive’ truth of what I was researching was reassuringly replaced by the knowledge (and my eventual acceptance) that the purpose of grounded theory is not to make truthful statements about reality, but rather, to elicit fresh understandings about patterned relationships between social actors and how these relationships, interactions and the meanings which underpin them actively construct reality (Suddaby, 2006, p. 636). An understanding of this purpose and the utility of a methodological approach, and its resultant theory, is summed up by Glaser & Strauss, who state “Theory in sociology is a strategy for handling data in research, providing modes of conceptualisation for describing and explaining” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 3). The roles of this theory are to:

- enable prediction and explanation of behaviour;
- be useful in theoretical advance;

- be useable in practical applications - prediction and explanations giving the practitioner understanding and some control of situations.
- provide a perspective on behaviour - a stance to be taken towards the data;
- guide and provide a style and stance on research on particular areas of research.

#### **4.5 Principles and Fundamentals of Grounded Theory: Application to the Research Process**

These roles stated above will be explicated through the following grounded theory principles which underpin this research methodology. For example:

- ✓ this grounded theory research process will remain flexible and creative;
- ✓ theory generation will be through the ongoing comparison method adopted during the data collection and analysis phases;
- ✓ theory will then emerge from the empirical nature of the research data, rather than from inferences or existing theories.
- ✓ memo writing (the formulation and revision of theory throughout the research process), which was adopted from the commencement of this research, will inform development.

There are three fundamentals of grounded theory, as postulated by Glaser & Strauss (1967) and Strauss & Corbin (1990), which are pivotal to the generation and development of the grounded theory approach. These are:

- Concepts, which are the central units of analysis.
- Categories - the cornerstones, or the means by which theory can be integrated, combine with concepts to make two of the three central planks (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 7).
- Hypotheses (propositions), the means by which concepts and categories are wedded together so to speak, highlighting the relationship between the two (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

These three theoretical planks make up the iterative process in grounded theory, through which the phenomenon in the study is inductively derived. Through this process, the phenomenon is discovered, developed and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis, allowing the theory to emerge. This contrasts with the deductive approach which is based on *a priori* identification of theory.

This qualitative approach enables me to theorize in a way which is of a substantive nature (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, pp. 32-33), as opposed to formal (more abstract) theorising. Strauss & Corbin (1998) further posit that substantive theory is also more specific than formal theory, allowing the latter to develop from the former (the substantive). Meanings also emerge better from a qualitative paradigm such as this one (i.e., from which substantive theory can be developed). Such meanings are a fundamental part of a CoP paradigm, which can ultimately assist my interpretation and understanding of the POs' and CCOs' responses to child sexual abuse.

#### **4.6 The Generation of Theory and Analytical Depth - Qualitative Versus Quantitative Approach**

Using this grounded theory approach, I have sought to achieve analytical depth by the two qualitative analytical procedures which follow below. Such analytical depth is denied by quantitative methods which, by their positivist nature, represent meaning through numbers, including other tenets such as: seeking objective knowledge (facts); a value-free philosophy; the development of causal laws, and explaining events in relation to one or other general law, as described by Robson (2011). A positivist approach would therefore not allow the emergence of meaning, arguably then, denying insights such as those which can be gained from qualitative narratives. The methods for achieving analytical depth within the grounded theory paradigm are:

- Constant comparison: Charmaz's definition concisely states this as:

A method of analysis that generates successively more abstract concepts and theories through inductive processes of comparing data

with data, data with category, category with category, and category with concept. Comparisons then, constitute each stage of analytic development.

(Charmaz, 2006, p. 187)

Within this constant comparative method, there is ongoing exploration of variety and difference in meaning in the life of the research - "shifting and comparing elements - such as basic data instances, cases, emergent categories and theoretical proposition" (Pidgeon, 1996, p. 78).

- Theoretical sampling: active sampling of new cases as the analysis proceeds, to modify or extend the emerging theory. The creative interplay of the two ensure that the analysis they afford moves beyond the selection and processing of the data to:
  - the epistemological position (e.g., theorising how knowledge is constructed, that is, knowledge as described by Wenger (2008, p. 134-42) as "knowing in practice"); and
  - the axiological stance (theorising about the nature, types, and governing criteria of values and value judgments) of the data set.

Yin (1989) reminds us of at least three specific reasons for our informed choice of each new case theoretically sampled:

- to *extend* the emerging theory, and/or
- to *replicate* previous case(s) to *test* the emerging theory; or
- to *extend* the emerging theory, by choosing a case that is a polar opposite (pp. 53-54).

The result of each new case, once selected, should act in a confirmatory manner, producing similar results to its predecessors, up to the point of saturation (i.e., the extending and replicating aspects above). I consider the third choice above - of a polar opposite case - to be one which produces some contrary results, but is instrumental in extending theory based on the

meaning that can be constructed from what is going on (i.e., the actions and responses) in line with the research aims.

The early work of Glaser & Strauss (1967), whilst not mentioning open coding as such, encouraged the categorisation of each incident (identifiable unit of meaning) into as many categories as possible, without reducing emergent ideas or abstraction at this open coding stage. Emphasising the constant comparative method for generating theory was promoted. Strauss & Corbin (1998) elaborated on this, clarifying that any troubling overlap of some categories and subcategories be dealt with by answering questions about the phenomenon, such as *when, where, why, who, how and with what consequences?*

I have outlined above, in brief, some details of the approach to analysing the data generated from this study through the use of grounded theory methods. I also said at the beginning of this chapter, that the appeal of grounded theory lies in the generation of a theory which explains what is happening in the data. However, I must also pay regard to the debate on how the quality of a qualitative study, such as this one, should be assessed. Some perspectives from the literature are explored below.

#### **4.7 Research Evaluation Criteria: The Qualitative/Quantitative Debate for Judging Quality**

Unsurprisingly, the evaluation criteria debate for assessing the quality within qualitative research reflects the historic quantitative/qualitative, reliability-validity debate. Who should be the judge of what is good and what should be the yardstick? Rolfe (2006) argues that a universal standard for judging is problematical and futile, as the very term “qualitative research” itself is open to question (p. 305). This is especially the case when it is viewed as a single paradigm (which clearly it is not) which is distinct and separate from quantitative research (Morse & Field, 1996).

##### **4.7.1 Establishing research trustworthiness**

The traditional positivist criteria of objectivity, validity, reliability and generalisability, described as “scientific canons” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), are

deemed inappropriate for research evaluation purposes. Others argue that objectivity is impossible or even undesirable (Archbold, 1986). Sandelowski (1993) argues that the *positivist canons of reliability* and, to some extent, validity, should be replaced by the concept of *trustworthiness* in qualitative research. It thereby becomes "...a matter of persuasion whereby the scientist is viewed as having made...practices visible and therefore auditable" (Sandelowski, *ibid*, p. 2). This situation, it is argued, now enables the reader to make a judgment on the quality of the research and its trustworthiness.

Trustworthiness of the research is evidenced in the researcher's ability to convince the reader that the research methodology and the findings are "worth paying attention to and worth taking account of ..." (Lincoln & Guba, 1989, p. 398). Four (4) criteria for establishing the trustworthiness of qualitative data consist of its: credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability as argued by Lincoln & Guba (1985). Furthermore, Lincoln & Guba (*ibid*) and Graneheim & Lundman (2004) argue that most of these concepts have been aligned to the positivists' world view: *credibility* to the positivist concept of internal validity; *dependability* to reliability; and *transferability* to external validity.

Sandelowski & Barroso (2002) argue that a single set of criteria cannot adequately judge wide-ranging qualitative epistemologies. Evaluative judgment, they argue, should be directed at the research report itself and what is represented within the report. Judgement of evaluation criteria is also very diverse and varied, extending to the language used, with Sandelowski & Barroso stating:

We prefer the word *appraisal* as opposed to evaluation, as appraisal more explicitly encompasses understanding in addition to estimating value...If writers...have an obligation to write well, readers...have an obligation to read well. (Original italics).

(Sandelowski & Barroso, 2002, p. 78)

The appraisal/evaluation of research is also seen as entailing aesthetic criteria (coherence, attractiveness and economy), together with rhetorical considerations. What this means is that communities of researchers, together with communities of reviewers/readers, are jointly engaged in the practice of producing/seeking research evidence which conforms to certain principles. Arguably, when both communities can agree somewhat, that the research report conforms to their respective epistemological world view of trustworthiness and other appraisal ideals, then expectations are not violated but kept intact. Given the controversy that can exist over the presentation/representation by the writer, and the evaluation/appraisal criteria of the reader/reviewer, different CoPs are unlikely to agree on whether certain principles and criteria have been met. This ongoing contentious position is made somewhat easier by Sandelowski and Barroso (2002) who argue that "...the only site for evaluating research studies - whether they are qualitative or quantitative - is the report itself..." (p. 78), a representation report which is then presented to the reader by the researcher/writer.

A lack of consensus continues within qualitative research, the "home" of a wide variety of research scholars (Schwandt, 2000, p. 190), with counter-arguments to those suggested by Sandelowski & Barroso (2002) where the reader becomes the judge of rigour at the completion of the qualitative study. It is argued by Morse et al. (2002) that:

...qualitative researchers should reclaim responsibility for reliability and validity by implementing verification strategies integral and self-correcting during the conduct of inquiry itself. This ensures the attainment of rigor using strategies inherent within each qualitative design, and moves the responsibility for incorporating and maintaining reliability and validity from external reviewers' judgements to the investigators themselves.

(Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002, p. 1)

What is clear is that the researcher needs to articulate what terms mean, guard against unhelpful or misleading dichotomous labelling and demonstrate within the study an approach by which the quality of the research can be evaluated, whatever the methodological paradigm adopted. The complexity of

the theoretical debate commands the attention of the researcher, but must also meet the needs of practitioners attempting to apply to their work evidence-based information from qualitative research (Meyrick, 2006).

#### **4.8 Methodological Approach and Conceptual Framework**

This grounded theory approach is best suited, in my opinion, to complement the conceptual underpinning of this study, as I integrate ideas and hypotheses towards an integrated theory which can account for the behaviours of POs and CCOs in responding to child sexual abuse in Barbados. This means that, within this qualitative study, the empirical data from the participants' interviews are explored systematically and the literature is searched in relation to it, in line with the grounded theory approach; that is, not to impose theoretical hypothesis, but as a means of triangulation. I draw on the epistemologies of CoPs in Chapter Seven and feminist approaches in Chapter Eight as the conceptual framework in exploring, understanding and developing theory. My role as researcher is important here in the analysis. Strauss & Corbin (1998) highlight this role when they state: "Analysis is the interplay between the researcher and the data" (Strauss & Corbin, *ibid*, p. 13). My epistemological stance is one of constructivism, which can form a bridge between grounded theory and conceptual framework.

The constructivist grounded theory approach looks to the meaning which participants attribute to their realities (Charmaz, 2000). Charmaz further elaborates:

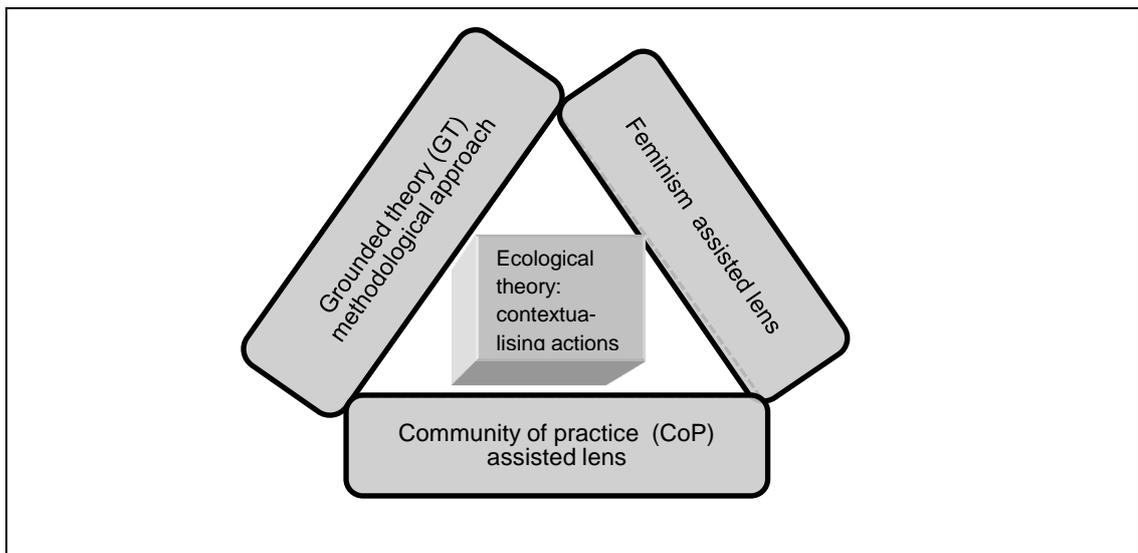
The researcher constructs theory from the data. By starting with data from the lived experience of the research participants, the researchers can, from the beginning, attend to how they construct their worlds. That lived experience shapes the researcher's approach to data collection and analysis.

(Charmaz, 1994, p. 68)

In other words, looking beyond the written transcripts to the underlying meanings and their significance, this constructivist view accords with the social learning theory of CoPs. It also accords with the grounded theory methodological approach of this study, which looks also to meanings and the

co-construction of what is voiced and what is left unsaid. Finally, with the use of a feminist lens (the other component of my theoretical framework), further understanding of phenomena from historical, cultural and contemporary perspectives, in which power and gender influences are evident, will be interrogated. The conceptualisation below demonstrates the symmetry of these relationships.

**Figure 4.1 Conceptualisation of the symmetry: methodological and conceptual framework**



#### **4.9 Progressing Steps**

My use of ecological theory enables me to situate professionals within the wider social context, but CoP theory takes this further. As an interpretative tool, it has particular value in understanding organizational identities and the practices they give rise to. As socio-cultural theoretical approaches, CoP and grounded theory sit easily together – one for contextualizing the study and the other for assisting in the data interpretation. Feminist perspectives assist in understanding the ‘political’ nature of thinking and action within various ecological levels, and how professional responses are impacted by this. In the next chapter, I discuss how I went about planning the data collection and my entry into the field. The chapter concludes with a representation of this grounded theory study, from conceptualisation to theory development, and some of my reflexivity thoughts.

## **5 Methods**

### **5.1 Research Aims Revisited**

The aims of this study, as stated previously, are to find out:

- How is CSA defined, and how do such definitions impact on professionals' responses (to CSA) in Barbados?
- What organisational and other factors impact on, and promote/inhibit responding in the best interests of the child within the social and cultural context of Barbados?

My epistemological position, also discussed in the previous chapter, supported my choice of using the grounded theory methodology. In this chapter I now describe my research methods, for example, my sampling approach, participants' selection, an overview of individual and focus group interviews and information on the study's data analysis. I conclude the chapter with some thoughts on the ethics of the research and reflections.

### **5.2 Planning the Data Collection and Entry into the Field**

Before my data collection commenced, I followed the University of Huddersfield's ethical standards and procedures in the preparation and submission of the documentation on my research design to the ethics committee. This documentation is outlined below with the evidence in Appendices 5.1:1 to 5.1:11. This was preceded by my supervisor's approval, stating that the information which I supplied met the submission standard. This information contained evidence on my systematic and logical approach to the research, for example, the clarity of the proposed study, my time management and the study's utility. Within this submission and its acceptance lie the proof of my research credibility, the research achievability and my capacity to execute the study (Robson, 2011, p. 388) and (Silverman, 2000, p. 117). I received permission from the Ethics Committee in August 2009, and

was thus able to begin my field research in Barbados from the mutually convenient time (with participants) of November 2009 through to June 2010.

I produced evidence on the following to the University's Ethics Committee, evidence of which is contained in Appendix 5:

- i. overview of my research methodology, its design and proposed execution;
- ii. exemplars of my research design on:
  - a. information sheet on the purpose of the study for participants, which also covered proposed dissemination of results;
  - b. consent forms for participants' attention and their signed agreement to willingly participate;
  - c. draft of letters to appropriate key gatekeepers to gain permission to access participants;
  - d. draft questionnaire guide and interview schedule;
- iii. information on self as the researcher;
- iv. evidence of my supervisor's knowledge and approval of the research proposal;
- v. confirmation of all relevant permission from key gatekeepers in Barbados that they would support me in this study;
- vi. my planned access to the identified participants;
- vii. how I planned to deal with confidentiality and anonymity issues on the collected data;
- viii. my plans for psychological support for participants;
- ix. confirmation of the plans for my safety and support as researcher;
- x. completion of University of Huddersfield Risk Analysis and Management form.

The development of this Ethics' Committee evidence marked an important step for me as a researcher. It demanded that analytical thinking and planning went into ensuring a research design that was capable of producing good and useful results; ensured that malfeasance was understood and therefore guarded against and that I as the researcher remained accountable for my

actions at all times. This argument is supported by this documentation, where the information on thinking about key aspects of the research planning and design is seen (in sections i-ii above); ensuring my accountability for the whole research process (sections iii-x above); and attention to help ensure non-maleficence (sections v-vii above). These are not mutually exclusive but are interrelated, with the distinction drawn here only to support my rigour claim.

### **5.2.1 Accountability and accounting for the research process**

Planning and designing the research in any study, particularly one as sensitive and complex an area as CSA requires a thorough understanding and evaluation of one's motivation for doing and competence in the effective design and execution of the research. In the case of this study, I also considered its ultimate utility to the development of child protection services in Barbados, and as a result of this, attended to the important area of gaining the full co-operation of the professionals in the execution of the study. For example, prior to the field research I ensured that I met with as many key gatekeepers as possible to discuss the study; gain some insight into feelings on the subject; become familiar with the professional environments; begin building trust and gain access to professionals in the field as described in the sampling approach below. So, in addition to writing formally, I also made many personal visits to the offices of senior police officers (operational and management), the patrol and investigative officers, as well as the research unit to gather secondary data which appears in Chapter Two. I repeated this exercise with the CCOs, visiting the central office, the base of both management and field staff. In the case of the CCOs, my presence in the central office on numerous occasions, contributed in my opinion, to staff's expectancy towards participation. Key gatekeepers will also have an eventual role to play in receiving and considering the value of the study to their organisation. Accountability thus extends from thinking conceptually to ensuring a cogently applied research process.

### **5.3 Formal approach to Royal Barbados Police Force and Child Care Board**

In line with the University of Huddersfield's ethical standards and the respective agencies' protocols on granting permission for this research, I formally contacted, by letter, the senior personnel in each organisation, i.e., the Commissioner of Police of the Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF) and the Director of the Child Care Board (CCB) - the statutory agency employing the CCOs. This letter contained full details of the research, anticipated outcomes and the offer to meet to answer any questions on the research process and further discuss any other matters to the satisfaction of each agency.

I planned follow-up telephone conversations and personal visits with these senior persons and/or their delegated staff to discuss the research goals. I met with the Director of the CCB and received her permission to interview CCOs. In my telephone conversation with the Assistant Commissioner of Police, representing the Commissioner of Police, he stated that written permission from the Commissioner to conduct the study was given. It was therefore in order for me to contact the senior PO in charge at the respective police stations to make arrangements with them and their staff. In making this personal contact and making myself available to speak with any volunteer participants prior to the study, I was indicating openness and transparency in my approach, which I hoped would facilitate the identification of volunteers to participate in this study. This goal was achieved.

### **5.4 Sampling**

All participants (N=21) were selected through the purposive sampling method. These were the POs and CCOs who were deemed knowledgeable and experienced by their managers, and who later confirmed this prior to their interview with me, the researcher. I adopted this purposive sampling approach in keeping with my expectations of obtaining "excellent" data from "good informants" (that is, those who are deemed knowledgeable and have experience of the area under study), with "the capability to reflect and

articulate...time to be asked...have time ...ready to participate in the study” (Flick, 2009, p. 123).

This study was designed to achieve its goal through:

- face to face in-depth individual interviews with the two professional groups of POs and CCOs who are actively involved in child sexual abuse investigations and case management;

one joint focus group discussion with representatives from the two groups of professionals.

#### **5.4.1 Meeting and introducing research to participants**

Whereas interview appointments were made with each CCO, in the case of the police, there was a combination of scheduling interviews and, as requested in some instances, turning up at the respective police station and criminal investigation department office (CID) and interviewing the available officers on duty, who fulfilled the minimum selection criteria of recent and ongoing involvement with child sexual abuse allegations (for at least one year). In the absence of knowing in advance the degree of involvement by POs with child sexual abuse cases, I decided on this broad selection criteria. Whilst I perceived that the approach of not making appointments in all cases might be problematical and seen as conscription, in fact, all the POs (and indeed CCOs also) were willing to talk to me on the subject of child sexual abuse in Barbados and their respective involvement in cases.

#### **5.4.2 Meeting child care officers**

Prior to meeting with participants, I met with the senior CCO in charge of child abuse services (the name ‘child abuse’ is the recognised name for child protection/child safeguarding issues) to apprise him of the research and hear from him on any matters on which my entry into the organisation might impact. In this regard, he also acted as a key informant prior to meeting other members. He had been in this post for the past two years, and was likely to be soon reassigned to another department under the CCB’s two-year internal

rotation policy. As the only male in the team of females, this position resulted from his 'rotation' turn to be in charge as a senior CCO.

Eight CCOs, seven females and one male, volunteered to be interviewed. This represented the majority of the professional staff working with children and families within the CCB Services. They had all worked with children alleging child sexual abuse. Each CCO had substantial experience in managing child sexual abuse cases. This was either as part of the intake team, which carried out the initial reception and interviewing of the child and parents, or as part of the child abuse team, which was responsible for the in-depth assessment and case management of all child abuse cases. The most junior CCO had been in the post for 17 months. Seven officers had been in post long enough to experience the department's internal two year rotation policy for all professional staff members. The majority, therefore, also had working experience of all of the Child Care Board's operational services, consisting of: Care and Protection; Foster-care and Adoption; Residential Services, and Nursery and Pre-school programmes. The demographical and training experience profiles for these participants appear in Appendix 2.1.

This information was obtained from a short questionnaire seen in Appendix 5.1.7; constructed by the researcher, which interview participants were asked to complete at the individual interview. Through this, some demographical and training experience details were obtained. This information was considered by the researcher to have contextualising relevance for the study and it equally confirmed participants' selection eligibility. To ensure it was easily understood and completed with the minimum ease, one participant was asked to complete it during my sensitisation/ briefing visit – prior to the interviews. The questionnaire was then modified very slightly in line with the feedback from the 'trial' completion. This questionnaire was also administered to the police officers in the same manner.

Below, I list the staffing levels of the CCB professional staff, with a complete organisational chart appearing in Appendix 2.2.

**Figure 5.1 Staffing levels of 'qualified' staff of the Child Care Board and areas of responsibility**

Personnel	Management teams and their reporting lines
1 Director	Reports to a Statutory Board comprising a chairman and other members appointed by the Government of Barbados.
1 Deputy Director	Reports to the Director and deputises as required.
6 Senior Child Care Officers	With supervisory and support responsibility for the services of intake and child abuse; foster care and adoption; residential care; government provided nursery and day care, and the standard setting and monitoring of private nurseries and day care.
16 Child Care Officers (CCOs)	Report to the Senior Care Officers and work within the range of above services.  4 CCOs are nominated to the child abuse team and 4 to the intake team, but on occasions the former have to cover intake duties in times of absences.

**Source: Child Care Board, 2010**

### **5.4.3 Meeting police officers**

Ten POs were initially interviewed with a gender mix of five males (two CID officers and three from the uniform section) and five females (one CID officer and four from the uniform section). Eight of these interviews were eventually used in the data analysis; the two omissions, one male (CID) and one female (uniform section), were due to insufficient experience with dealings with child sexual abuse. The experience of each was in a station-relief capacity, with direct experience of one case only. This did not fit the research criteria of substantial involvement in cases over a minimum period of one year, where they were responsible for particular aspect(s) of the allegation(s), such as interviewing of and forensic investigation with victims and/or alleged perpetrators as part of their daily delegated duty. Officers from three police stations were interviewed. These were stations in the more urban parts of Barbados and recommended as the ones dealing with more allegations than their more rural counterparts. The demographical and training experience

profiles for these participants which appear in Appendix 2.3 were obtained by the same procedure as that of the CCOs, i.e., each PO was asked to complete the short questionnaire (Appendix 5.1.7) which all but one did.

Below is a breakdown of the staffing levels at these three stations. The final number of POs interviewed was ten, as mentioned in the Abstract and as explained in section 5.6, below where two further interviews were conducted with police prosecutors.

**Table 5.1 Police officers comparison by gender and rank at specified police stations**

Police Stations	X			Y			Z		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Inspector	1		1	1		1	1		1
Station Sergeant	1		1	2		2	1		1
Sergeant	5	1	6	9	2	11	4	1	5
Police Constable	14	5	19	30	8	38	24	8	32

**Source: Research department of the Royal Barbados Police Force, 2010**

### 5.5 Interview Venues (CCOs and POs)

All interviews were conducted in private at the offices of the two agencies. Each interview was conducted in a private room, except in one instance, at a police station. In this case, the interview had to be conducted in what can best be described as a thoroughfare open office, which had heavy human traffic of both POs, members of the public and arrested ‘suspects.’ The interviewee, a female PO, explained that this was her lived reality and that members of the public (complainants) were interviewed in the same place within this particular station, as there was no available interviewing room in the very old building which was described as “needing to be pushed down” (PO reporting) and built

anew. Child complainants were, wherever possible, interviewed in one of the only two offices with doors, which belonged to senior POs.

This interviewee also expressed concern at this lack of a basic facility which impacted on each working day, with its constant interruptions and noise level from the human traffic and, by extension, the quality of service she offers clients who might be tearful and traumatised. This lack of a fundamental amenity, such as a quiet and private space for the preliminary and subsequent investigative work with children alleging the serious crime of child sexual abuse, appeared to be an occupational stress and a serious professional concern. This PO expressed other concerns during our preliminary greetings and introductions, where she felt that women alleging rape or domestic violence felt they were on show when interviewed so openly, where everyone could see them and feeling their story might be overheard. Indeed, during our interview, I was acutely aware on several occasions of conspicuous floor cleaning by a person within earshot, resulting in my agreeing with the interviewee to temporarily halt the conversation on more than one occasion. The quality of the information from this interview was, however, rich, descriptive and informative, at variance with the lack of basic privacy needs within this building.

In my reflection following this interview, I could not help thinking that this situation seemed analogous to the concerns expressed by this woman PO and other interviewees, where the slow and old systemic responses to many CSA victims were often at variance with their urgent intervention needs.

#### **5.5.1 Interview venue (focus group)**

The session with the focus group took place in a medium size conference room at the CCB office. I had earlier assessed through my search for a venue that the POs would be very happy to meet at this venue. Two of the three (3) POs appeared very familiar with the surroundings and personnel, as evidenced from the noticeable exchange of pleasantries and greetings taking place as they entered the building.

## **5.6 Interviewing Participants (CCOs and POs)**

The in-depth interview of approximately 60-75 minutes duration with individual participants was conducted between November 2009 and June 2010. I conducted two further interviews in August 2010 with two senior police prosecutors as part of my theoretical sampling method. This means that a total of ten POs and eight CCOs were interviewed as described earlier.

Interviews from both groups were digitally recorded (with the exception of the police prosecutors', due to ambient noise) with permission granted from all but one female PO; in this case (and the police prosecutors''), field notes were made during the interview and completed directly after the session. The interviews were transcribed by me after each session and complemented by memo writing and field notes. This process, whilst time consuming and very arduous, nonetheless provided me with the benefit of becoming more deeply immersed in the data.

All participants had willingly signed the consent form attesting to their respective willingness and agreement to participate in the study. With each person I shared information on the nature and aims of the research. This was accompanied by the names of two counsellors who I had mobilised to speak with any participant who, as a result of their participation in this research, then felt the need for a debriefing/counselling session with an independent counsellor. This was also one of the University's ethical requirements. No interviewee, as far as I know, made use of this service. In fact, many CCOs thought it was on offer to their clients.

An interview guide (Appendix 5.1.11), was developed by this researcher from a range of contextualising knowledge acquired from the preliminary national and international literature review and informed to some extent by questions arising from my academic and professional experience which I have wanted to explore for some time. All of this was then simplified to inform and to achieve the aforementioned research aims. The questions in the guide were therefore not administered as a questionnaire in this qualitative study, but instead were used to prompt and to steer the discussion, enabling the

discourse between researcher and participants. Consequently the questions which underwent several refinements were not posed as they appear in the guide, but rather served as referent points within the interviews.

Using this guide, CCOs were asked to share their involvement with, and management of, child sexual allegations from referral to conclusion of the case. In doing this, they were also encouraged to share at least one case (as an example) of their choosing with which they were very familiar, and in which they were the principal worker. A total of ten case exemplars were discussed during the interviews with this group, with several other examples used in reference. It was interesting to see the selection process going on in the minds of the CCOs as they selected a case from their intimate knowledge store, which resonated with them and which had some particular significance. Some of the reasons offered for the selections included: the considerable degree of professional involvement and time invested with the child and family; the case *reaching* the high court, and the freshness in the mind despite the fact that the child was now discharged, sometimes a long while ago. In some cases, the information shared was on a case now classified as “a dormant case” (i.e., no current services offered to the child, but case still pending before the high court). In nearly all of these examples, the pain and distress of the child, and the disruption in their lives from the constant adjournments, were conveyed. Equally shared were the corresponding frustration, anger and sadness on the part of the CCO at the disempowerment caused by the lack of speedy resolution in the serious allegation. Transcripts of two full interviews with CCOs appear in Appendix 6.1.

From the guided prompts in the interview schedule, POs were equally asked to share their involvement with child sexual abuse allegations, from the time of first referral through to conclusion (whatever form that might take). Within this format, several examples were given, typifying a first encounter with child and parent and the criminal investigative process. The impact on this process by the wider contextual environment of parents, other support agencies, the alleged perpetrators and the characteristics of the child were discussed. POs talked freely on these matters, sometimes with restrained anger at the

heinousness of the crime, but also spoke of the perceived precociousness of some complainants in sexual matters. Transcripts of two full interviews with POs appear in Appendix 6.2.

### **5.6.1 Interviewing focus group participants**

The focus group was organized to explore issues arising from the first stage analysis of the interviews with individual participants, and to strengthen the consistency of my methodological approach. This use of this group for the purpose of having a “group in-depth interview” (Stewart, Shamdasani, & Rook, 2007, p. 6), conducted with experienced and purposively selected participants, served as a data collection method in its own right (Kidd & Parshall, 2000). It was also designed as a planned complement to the individual interviews, and equally served as an important triangulation method for checking the trustworthiness (Morgan, 1996) of some of the key themes emerging from the previous interviews.

The focus group participants who agreed to be interviewed were four (4) CCOs: three (3) females and one (1) male, and three (3) POs: two males and one (1) female. Also in attendance was a male CCO student who had previously worked as a PO. I arranged note-taking assistance from an experienced secretary, as a backup scribe to the audio recording at this focus group interview. All participants agreed to take part voluntarily. The POs and CCOs all had knowledge and substantial experience of dealing with child sexual abuse allegations. Consequently, they were considered able to meaningfully engage in the topic in both depth and detail. The participants, with the exception of one male PO and two CCOs, had previously participated in the individual interviews.

Within the focus group I acted as group facilitator as well as researcher. The dual role was one which allowed me to clearly set out the purpose of the group, create an atmosphere of comfort and ease among members and stimulate ongoing interaction between the two groups, who were meeting for the first time to discuss this topic. Discussion and debate were facilitated by asking open questions, whilst remaining focused on the purpose of the

interview. Some challenging questions were also put to the group when it was assessed that more elaboration by participants would add to the depth of the data.

Among my enquiries and observational comments, I deliberately posed two non-threatening questions during the interview. The first was in the first fifteen (15) minutes of the discussion, when I asked if there would be communication between two professionals on a “traumatised” child whom they had both interviewed. This was posed to generate more depth to the discussion. The second challenging type question occurred towards the latter half, when I asked the police ( CID Officer) if things were seen in the same cooperative light by her department as by that of her peers - the uniform police section. I sensed there was an unvoiced difference of opinion. These two facilitatory type interjections provided further information which proved to be catalytic in furthering the discussion on:

- respective agency responses to child sexual abuse (first challenge); and
- unearthing a disagreement and a fundamental difference of opinion between the CID officer and the CCOs (second challenge). There was evident frustration on the part of the former, followed by an apparently calm, clarifying response from the CCOs.

I should point out that, as researcher, I posed more clarifying and information-seeking questions to the group. These two questions however, were more deliberate, based on what I perceived to be going on and not going on within the group. The interaction under these circumstances provided information and also insight into the types of dynamics at play (Kitzinger, 1994). Very useful verbal and observational data were obtained from this focus group session, in pursuance of the objective of exploring interagency collaboration between the two groups.

### 5.6.1.1 Case study

A case study was conceptualized following the first set of in-depth interviews, with the intention of further testing out individual responses, but now also extended to interagency, collaborative approaches to child sexual abuse; another objective of this study. This approach also assisted the generation of further in-depth discussion on the subject. I chose a case study divided into two parts, which I felt would be very familiar to both groups, yet challenging in some respects. This case study also reflected some of the themes emanating from the individual interviews with both groups.

This approach went beyond the questions, answers and surface discussion, to a more participative engagement in which participants adopted roles and responded according to their professional identities. Voice tone, body language and both verbal and non-verbal communication with each other seemed to me as the researcher, to be indicative of existing professional positions. For example both groups discussed the case as though it was real (rather than fictitious). They turned the case study into a 'real life' enactment. Their responses therefore seem to typify their lived reality, confirming to me the researcher, the value of a 'real-life' story such as Kim's. Support for a case discussion which lends itself to meaningfully playing out roles as opposed to superficial discussion is seen in the example from the literature:

A second problem emerges from the tendency to use exclusively direct questions and verbal responses to them. This not only is inconsistent with the historical nature of focus groups, but it also defies current scientific understanding about the workings of the human mind.

(Stewart et al., 2007, p. 120)

In making my approach explicit within this research, I present the case study scenario in Appendix 6.3 and the transcript of the discussion in Appendix 6. 4. Themes were generated from the analysis of this transcript, which are described in Appendix 6.7, in the analyses section of the appendices.

## **5.7 Data Analysis – Open Coding, Concepts Development, Thematic Analysis**

Below I revisit the analytical procedures mentioned in the previous chapter, to demonstrate their application to the data in this present chapter. The approach to individual interviews is followed by that of the focus group.

The analysis of the qualitative data was done through the grounded theory methods. Using the open coding approach, the first stage of identifying, naming and describing the presenting phenomenon in each transcript was carried out through reading each transcript line by line. Coding of lines and/or paragraphs was then executed according to what emerged. This stage was followed by the development of concepts, the beginning of abstraction (i.e., the opening up of meaning within the presenting data) and the construct(ing) of ideas towards theory development.

### **5.7.1 Development of categories and constant comparison**

The development of categories was the next step in the data analysis, where information from the preceding coding stages was organised into a classification on the basis of similarity in meaning. The two data sets (from the police and CCOs) were analysed separately using this coding process. The categories of each were then compared with each other with differences and commonalities, variations and possibilities of conceptual linkages highlighted.

In the data categorisation of each group, I employed the constant comparison method which entailed continuous revision, comparing the basic data sets and patterns looking for similar emerging themes, but also exploring for variety and differences in meaning, which also served as a deconstructive analysis.

The constant comparison of the concepts eventually evolved into what I was able to see as meaningful categories. At this stage in the coding process, revision was carried out to the point where I considered no new information was found to fit a category, and that the categories themselves were adequately delineated and theoretically saturated (Creswell, 2009). These “categories are ‘saturated’ when gathering fresh data no longer sparks new

theoretical insights, nor reveals new properties of these core theoretical categories” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 113).

### **5.7.2 Thematic analysis**

I adopted the thematic analysis approach to coding the focus group data. The coded units of analysis (from the transcribed data) came from sentences, small and meaningful chunks of data, speech interactions and, on some occasions, a combination of these (Gasson, 2004, p. 82). This approach to coding suited the focus group data (both written and observational) in which I was looking for group interaction as they described their respective and collaborative responses within the discussion of the case study (Please see Appendices 6.3 and 6.4). Within this interactive session, the members of the two professional groups demonstrated their roles to great effect and on occasion appeared to be role-playing their part as the discussion on the case study progressed.

In the next chapter (6), I present the findings from the interviews with CCOs, POs and the focus group. They are presented to reflect the main categories and sub-categories within the study, and to foreground the theory development on the CCOs’ and POs’ responses to child sexual abuse allegations in Barbados. The principles followed, which contributed to the development of categories by the processes of open coding, i.e., line by line, axial (reassembling data after open coding) and selective coding (determining the core category representing the core data phenomenon) (Birks & Mills, 2011; Charmaz, 2006), are illustrated below in Figure 5.2. The primary object here is to show how categories and the main core phenomena in the study are integrated (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The emergence of core categories from the professionals’ interview data and key themes from the focus group are listed in Appendices 6.1 to 6.4 of this study.

Two challenges existed within this research. The first was to ensure that a high quality was applied, maintained and demonstrated in the data collection and analysis connected with the individual interviews and the focus group discussion. The second challenge was to ensure that the methodology, which

engaged two disparate professional groups and then synthesised the findings, was executed in a way that reflected coherence, attractiveness and economy. It was important, therefore, to pay close attention to the detail of transcript coding and the development of concepts and categories to reflect, as accurately as possible, participants' experiences and their constructions of events.

**Figure 5.2 Data analysis process using open, axial and selective coding**

<b>Coding Process</b>		
<b>Open Coding</b>	<b>Axial Coding</b>	<b>Selective Coding</b>
<p>Asking questions of the data e.g., simple questions: what, where, how, when, how much, and engaging in constant comparisons to develop categories &amp; sub-categories.</p>	<p>Development of main categories: what is the central phenomenon in the data?</p>	<p>Final coding phase which integrates all the interpretive work of the analysis. Primary object is to explain the story (Strauss &amp; Corbin, 1988)</p>
<p>Identification of key words &amp; phrases</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Naming, labelling, coding</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Concepts</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Categories &amp; sub-categories</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Subcategories and categories</p>	<p>Conditions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Actions/interactions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Consequences</p>	<p>Writing storyline; drawing diagrams; reviewing and sorting memoranda.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Select core or central category</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Refining the theory (reviewing and consolidating the theory)</p>

### **5.8 Advantages and Disadvantages of a Focus Group Approach**

The value of a focus group discussion, and its utility to this study, is the joint professional discussion on the topic of child sexual abuse in Barbados, the first of its kind, as far as I could ascertain. Other advantages which I found were some insights into the groups' perceptions and assumptions that might underpin their attitudes to the subject (Watts & Ebbutt, 1987). I guarded against some of the disadvantages by carefully setting the scene and

encouraging a spirit of open discussion and honesty in the available time. The case discussion/role play facilitated this position. Difficulties such as conflict within the group, and the expression of dominant views by the most vociferous person(s), were also minimised by the case discussion and my active role of encouraging and stimulating exchanges. As a result, the chances of having less balanced views and more biased narratives (Robinson, 1999) were also kept in check.

One of the most significant advantages to this focus group, however, was my conceptualisation of a particular focus, resulting in "...explicit use of the group interaction as research data" (Kitzinger, 1994, p. 103). A focus group lends itself to this type of case discussion which, when meaningful and reflective of participants' lived reality, becomes a rich source of information which I would argue is less forthcoming when the mind is less engaged.

### **5.8.1 Triangulation**

In this research, I sought to strengthen the scope, depth and consistency of my methodological approach by the use of a focus group. In doing this, another objective, that of completing "the possibilities of knowledge production" (Flick, 2009, p. 445), was realised through the data generated and its subsequent analysis. Using a focus group also allowed me to approach my research questions from a different angle. This triangulated method enabled me to obtain and achieve:

- additional and different information from the case example(s) presented for discussion;
- participant observation of the two professional groups interacting with each other as they discussed management of the presented case. I was, however, mindful of possible "observer effect", which can lead to what Denscombe (2002, p. 107) sees as "normal" activity...temporarily adjusted to take into account the person who is doing the observation and the ways in which the data might be used."

The quality of my data is nonetheless further enhanced by this alternative/complementary approach of using a focus group in a creative manner, by bringing the two groups together for the first time, in a manner which may impact on policy and research development in the future (Linhorst, 2002). The meaningfulness of the experience may stimulate further meetings to discuss important proposals, such as the mandatory reporting that is being championed by the Child Care Board, and of which the POs (and indeed some CCOs also) seemed both sceptical and cautious.

### **5.9 Achieving Trustworthiness through Transferability, Dependability and Credibility**

The previous chapter explored in some detail the case for and against establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research. It would therefore be redundant to repeat the case here. I am, as a result, mindful that trustworthiness goes beyond the content of the final study report, to a clear demonstration that the study is worthwhile and worthy of being taken seriously by the reader.

This study's dependability and credibility, i.e., holding true to what was found and said in the field, with a reporting of results from the findings that can be relied upon (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), is demonstrated through my ethical approach (described below) and my reporting of findings. The triangulation method through the focus group process, discussed above, is another way in which the trustworthiness of this qualitative study is enhanced (Speziale & Carpenter, 2010).

#### **5.9.1 Research ethics in the field**

The importance of gaining regulatory ethical approval from the university was acknowledged and matched by my ethical action in the field. Some moral principles, such as doing what is right and avoiding pitfalls that might endanger both research and researcher, were acknowledged by obtaining this approval from both the training and the participating institutions. Nonetheless, this had to be extended to my methodological approach in the field. For example, ensuring non-maleficence in the field (Beauchamp, 1982) was

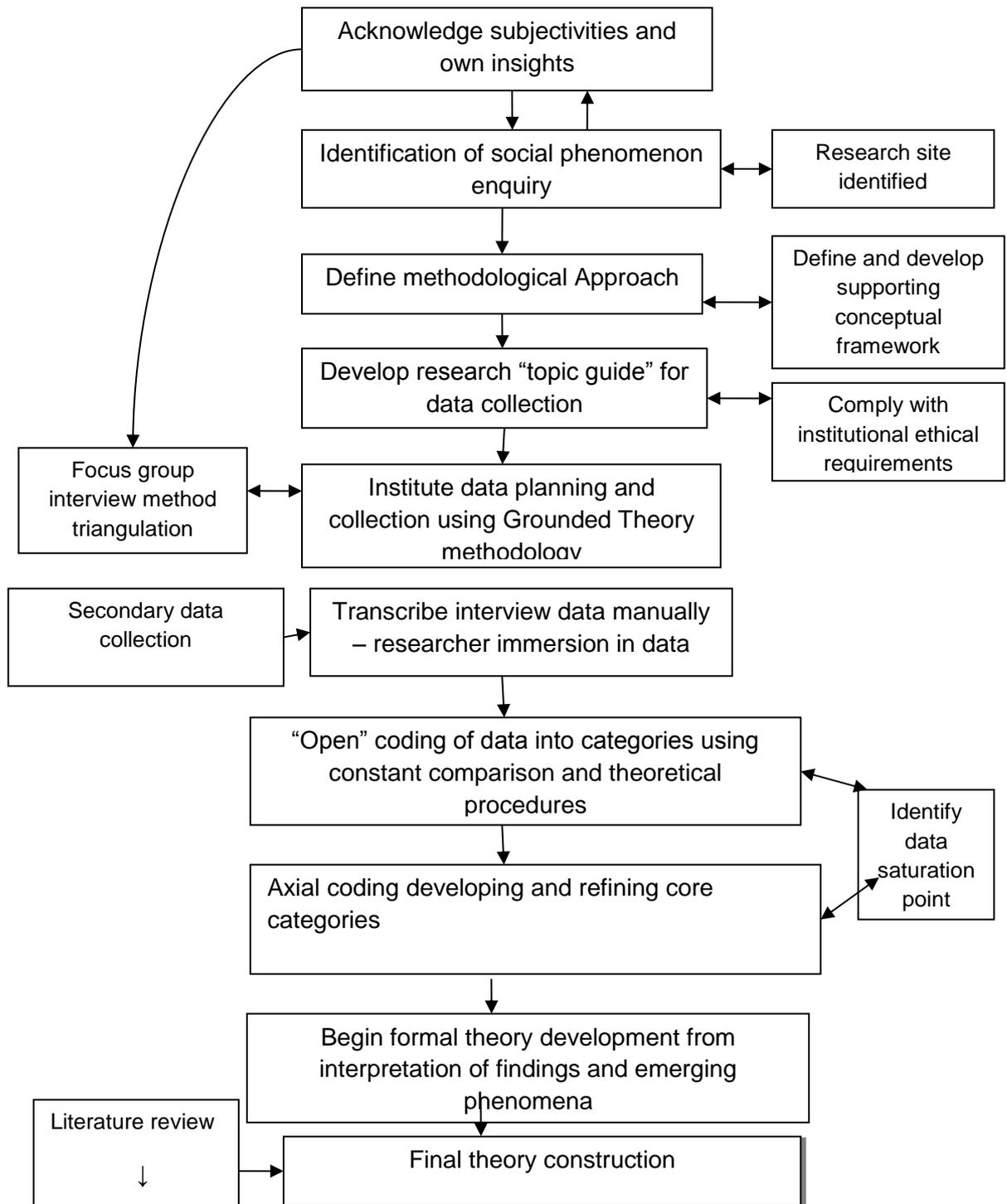
practised through my approach of showing respect at all times for each participant's expressed views and values within the interview. Furthermore, both groups were treated with equal fairness in this regard, with equal time allotted for expressing their views. This observance also extended to the termination of one interview with a female PO after half an hour, when it was made clear to me that (from the interviewee's perspective) that all that was going to be said had been said.

In conveying the research aims to the participants, I was demonstrating that I perceived the research to be a useful endeavour and not one being carried out for its own sake. Inviting their comments on the study's utility was equally important in helping to establish trust, comfort and free dialogue between us. Such an approach helps to "de-emphasise the researcher's technical control and seeks to empower research participants" (Howe & Moses, 1999, p. 55). In establishing a comfortable interview climate, I was nonetheless aware of the importance of my own safety and that of participants at all times. This was assisted by the identification of mutually suitable times for interviews during the day, in spaces that were private and where information could be shared confidentially. Part of the research debriefing was to allow time for each participant to talk more generally at the end of the interview, and to share with each the arrangement I had put in place for an individual counselling session. This was counselling for any reason emanating from talking about the study topic. This was important, in my view, to reduce the ethical issue of any stress arising from my approach, a point which Kelman (1982) argues can be created by "certain genres of social-psychological experiments" (p. 40). This qualitative study does not fall into this category, but the topic is a stressful one, as was evidenced by the emotions expressed by some participants, which appear in the findings and discussion chapters.

### **5.10 Progressing Steps**

Below is a representation of this grounded theory study from conceptualisation to theory development (Figure 5.3). It represents my plans, intentions and ultimate goal in this grounded theory study. In the next chapter (6) I begin the presentation of my findings and discussion.

**Figure 5.3 Representation of grounded theory study from conceptualisation to theory development**



### **5.11 Looking Back to Go Forward**

Interviewing professionals, who willingly partnered with me in arranging convenient locations and mutually acceptable times to meet, reinforced in my mind that these individuals need space (like a researcher) to confront difficulties, articulate achievements and assess their impact on their daily tasks, especially when working with complex situations such as CSA. My difficulties were minor, e.g., identifying and locating some senior key gatekeepers in the police force who I felt ought to know about the research, even though they were not directly involved. I realized that my approach had to be a very open and honest one in terms of my expectations of my research goals, which were shared with participants. This in turn prompted the observation from a CCO that other colleagues might feel their work was under scrutiny, a situation which might hinder free discourse. In my assessment, this turned out not to be the case, as interviewees spoke openly of their working and workload situations, possibly helped by the fact that their work was not being scrutinized - always a potentially stressful situation.

I take the example of the woman PO mentioned earlier, whose interviewing space was unacceptable in her expressed opinion, but was the only space available to us and to her 'clients.' Her evident exasperation, which I felt initially was directed at me when I enquired about a more suitable space for our interview, was in effect directed at the system for failing to provide an adequate working environment. These are emotions which the professionals have to manage, together with the associated emotions of hearing and dealing with victims and the accused.

Part of the ongoing reflection on my subjectivities was to ensure no gender-biased thoughts infiltrated my interactions with participants or the data analysis. This was done through ongoing reflection after each interview and through my memorising notes, which included how I felt I impacted on the interviewees and vice versa.

As the researcher, I was aware that there were a whole range of organisational and interagency issues (satisfactions and dissatisfactions)

which interviewees brought with them to the interview on the day. Apart from the example of the police woman above, some evident frustrations and tensions also surfaced in the focus group. I am also mindful that my presence as an outsider was likely to affect what was said and what was left unsaid.

## **6 Findings, Analysis and Discussion - Data of POs and CCOs**

### **6.1 Introduction**

In this qualitative study I use grounded theory as my methodological approach. Within this chapter and the others that follow (Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine), the presentation and analysis of the findings occur simultaneously and in relation to relevant literature.

The main focus of this chapter is to explore and understand the phenomena arising from ways in which categories of CSA are defined; the discourses on victim versus perpetrator culpability; discourses on CSA outcomes (e.g., pregnancy) and equally, how criminal and judicial procedures impact upon professional responses. In line with grounded theory, I present the findings and analysis as integrated aspects of the research process, using illustrations from the data to support the analysis. I refer to other studies where appropriate to corroborate or deepen understandings of the findings. The chapters that follow explore 'the hidden', factors which underpin professional responses, and in these chapters I apply specific theoretical frameworks for interpretation: CoPs (Chapter Seven) and feminist perspectives (Chapter Eight). In Chapter Nine, the threads are pulled together to produce a coherent understanding of the contextual factors which influence responses to child sexual abuse. These four chapters are therefore parts of a whole and together examine the meanings and processes behind the responses as well as some of their outcomes. Chapter Ten concludes the study.

In this chapter I have clustered the themes that emerged from the data under the headings: hearing the (disclosure) story, telling the story and taking care of the story. I draw on interviews as well as focus group responses to illustrate the findings and clarify the sources of the data as I present them. As described in the data analysis section of Chapter Five, the emergence of core categories from the professionals' interview data and key themes from the

focus group are listed in Appendices 6.1 to 6.4 of this study. It is these which have informed the aforementioned headings.

## Hearing the (Disclosure) Story

### 6.2 Hearing the Story - Defining Child Sexual Abuse in Barbados

Child sexual abuse is described by the social workers, hereafter called by their Barbadian title of child care officers (CCOs), as a very common occurrence in Barbados.

**CCO #1:** It is an everyday occurrence

**Interviewer:** ... but what I hear you say is that there are a lot of teen pregnancies?

**CCO #1:** I remember getting a lot of teen pregnancies, but it would still be balanced. You will still have the rapes.

Interestingly, from these responses and others in the data, there is a clarifying distinction being made here between abuse that results in pregnancies and rapes, suggesting that they are mutually exclusive and perhaps treated as such.

The allegations are made mainly by girls, about alleged perpetrators who are mainly males. Some of the female abused children (hereafter called victims for ease of presentation) are in the same household as their alleged perpetrators, as described by CCOs.

Perpetrators are also often related to the victim or known to them in some capacity. Included in this list are: mothers' boyfriends, a family relative, visitor of the family, opportunistic neighbourhood predator, and some others who have positional status over the child, e.g., teacher, stepfather.

**WmPO #3:**...boyfriends of the parents or of a family member because, as I said, the cases I normally get are females. The only male is this one I am dealing with at the moment... But it is normally the boyfriend of the mother, the stepfather...boyfriends of cousin or aunt or some person like

that. Those are the main perpetrators we normally get. Hardly do we ever - I cannot say that I ever got a case involving a father (sic), but it is always someone who is not an immediate member of the family but a friend of the family.

In Table 6.1, I present a list of examples of the children who alleged sexual abuse to the CCOs, as representations of the different faces of sexual abuse victims in Barbados. The definition of child sexual abuse is summarised from the CCOs' interview data as:

Any act against a child which exposes them to inappropriate sexual behaviour, be it by way of pornography, or by way of videos, and talking to them in a sexual manner, touching them inappropriately or coercing them....to be involved in sexual acts, not necessarily with the person themselves, but maybe a friend or another relative.

The sexual violation includes penetrative and non-penetrative acts variously described in the Sexual Offences Act (1992) of Barbados, as rape and indecent assault (Appendix 6.8).

The rape of girls was the classification used most often by the police in defining child sexual abuse. The term "rape" that was used appeared to be in keeping with the police's law enforcement and the State's prosecutorial role, reflected in the Sexual Offences Act (1992) of the Barbados Criminal Law which defines rape as:

Sexual intercourse with another person without the consent of the other person; - knows that the other person does not consent; - is reckless as to whether the other person consents.

A police station sergeant gave this graphic example of rape:-

**Station sergeant:** This is where somebody grabs you and tears off your clothes and has sex with you.

Another PO, a sergeant expressed the view that:

**Senior PO #1** : Some people might think it is mainly females it happened to but there are some perverted dirty old men out there that will also attack little boys.

In describing unlawful sex with children by adults, a distinction was made between allegations which were “non-consensual” in nature, compared to what appears from the discourses to be its absolute opposite - “consensual sex” with children under the age of 16 years. Both situations are unlawful acts as described in the Act, but carry different penalties. In Section 4 (1) of the Act, sexual intercourse by a person with another, who is under the age of 14 years and who is not the person’s spouse, carries a maximum legal sanction of life imprisonment, whether or not the child consented and irrespective of whether the person believed the child to be over 14 years of age. This compares to the legal sanction of 10 years for unlawful sex with certain conditionalities, as stated below, where children are between the age of 14 and 16 years and consented.

Section 5 (1) of the Act states:

- (1) Where a person has sexual intercourse with another with the other's consent and that other person has attained the age of 14 but has not yet attained the age of 16 that person is guilty of an offence and is liable on conviction on indictment to imprisonment for a term of 10 years.

A person is not guilty of an offence under subsection (1)

(a) if that person honestly believed that the other person was 16 years of age or more and has reasonable cause for the belief; and

(b) if that person is not more than 24 years of age and has not been previously charged with the same or a similar offence.

It is not the intention here to fully critique the Act which appears in Appendix 6.8. However, it is important for the purpose of the phenomenon which emerged from the study data to expose this area which lends itself to adult

abusers claiming that a child consented, whether or not they did (as the law currently permits such a contention). This is an area of distinction where professionals can become embroiled over whether a child is as guilty as the accused, if not more guilty, by virtue of them 'consenting' to the sexual abuse as alleged by the accused. Furthermore, it seems anomalous to have an Act whose principle states that a child under the age of 16 years cannot consent to sex under the law, and then in the Act itself makes a distinction on just that fact, i.e., whether there was consent or non-consent. Then there is the issue of the '24 years' of age proviso for the perpetrator, which opens up a wide window of offending for young men. The literature shows that a significant amount of sexual offending is perpetrated by adolescents. Over the past two to three decades, children and adolescents exhibiting sexually harmful behaviours have been of growing concern to governments and clinicians. In England and Wales the Criminal Statistics for 2004 show that of the 6400 individuals cautioned for, or found guilty of, sexual offences, approximately 17% were aged between 10 and 17 years (Hutton, 2007). A similar picture is shown in the United States of America, where it is estimated that juveniles account for up to one-fifth of the rapes and one-half of the cases of child molestation (Hunter, 2000; Snyder & Sickmund, 2006). This growing recognition has important implications for the Sexual Offences Act of Barbados, seen to be in urgent need of modernising to reflect the widely acknowledged sexual offending by and against children and adolescents.

**Table 6.1 Examples of CSA cases cited at interviews by CCOs**

Child		Allegation	Alleged Abuser		Aspects of Family Dynamics	Comments
Age	Sex					
14 yrs.	Female	Penetrative sexual abuse	Male school teacher		Lived with mother	
<i>Child(ren): Same household complex</i>						
7 yrs.	Female (cousin to below)	(1) Fondling and kissing of vagina. Attempted penetration.	Uncle		Lived with mother in own apartment within a family house complex	Father working overseas
4 yrs.	Female (cousin to above)	(2) Vaginal penetration	Same uncle as above		Lived with mother in own apartment within a family house complex	
10 yrs.	Female (mentally challenged)	Sexual assault	Older brother who is also mentally challenged		Lived with mother (also mentally challenged) and sister (the least mentally challenged)	Father lived elsewhere. Described as "slow, but not as slow" as mother.
10 yrs.	Female	Penetrative sexual abuse	Teenage male neighbour - son of mother's friend		Lived with mother	Mother subsequently dropped case because she is not 'the prosecuting type'.

5 yrs. (at time)	Female		Stepfather	Lived at home with mother and stepfather until alleged sexual abuse.	Child In residential care from that time. Appeared in court approx. 3 years later to give testimony.
8 yrs.		Fondling of child's private parts. Requested child to reciprocate	Uncle	Lived with mother.	Uncle visiting family following recent release from prison
6-7 yrs. (approx.)	Male	Viewing pornographic video at night (allegedly unknown to mother); self-masturbation while bathing.		Lived with mother	
5 yrs.		Oral penetration and fingering while bathing	Father	Occurred whilst visiting father who lived elsewhere. Reluctant to go back  Parents going through a divorce	Case pending
13 yrs.		Sexual abuse	Church pastor	Lived at home with mother and two siblings	Sentenced for rape. Reduced to indecent assault on appeal on.....
9 yrs.		Penetrative sex	Two artisans on two different occasions.	Lived at home with brother and mother who was ill and subsequently died	Case(s) subsequently dismissed

### 6.2.1 Reframing child sexual abuse

Two things of interest are found embedded in the description and circumstances emanating from the definition of sexual abuse of children.

First, when a pregnancy results from the abuse, the professional responses suggest a refocusing from their policy definition and the legislation. A different discourse emerges which, from the perspective of the police, is reframed as “consensual”, particularly in cases where there appears to be conflicting evidence. Where CCOs are concerned, the refocusing can be the same, and in cases of pregnancy it also shifts away from the criminal act, becoming one of support for the pregnant child and preparation for the baby’s arrival and after-care. Such supportive intervention is a critically important role within social work as described by the CCOs. As with POs, some reframing is occurring here too, running the risk of redefining the criminal act by focusing solely on the adolescent pregnancy which, ironically, also minimises the criminal act. This contention is supported by the following influencing factors emerging from the data:

- the alleged perpetrator is now seen as a future father;
- his promise and potential for supporting the mother and child is the new focus of intervention;
- the statutory agency, the Child Care Board, generally follows the lead and eventual outcome of the criminal investigation by the police and the judicial system. Civil action on behalf of the child is not practised as an alternative to criminal proceedings;
- the victim is now seen as a mother-in-waiting;
- the accused is now a father-in waiting.

...are we going to put the father in prison and then there is a child there to be supported. That is the dilemma here. Nobody is going to prosecute the guy because he is supporting the child and we are left with a pseudo acceptance of abuse – *Station Sergeant reporting*.

- the “Nobody is going to prosecute” above refers to the pregnant child and parent (usually the mother). The term can also extend to the police who, in the absence of a statement from the child and/or a willingness to give evidence in court, have no case with which to proceed.

The second point of interest which influences the reframing of child sexual abuse, is that abuse is not officially accepted as having taken place until proven, as it remains an ‘allegation’ for many years. Respondents commented on the extended length of time it takes in Barbados for such cases to be heard in the high court. It would appear that this includes all cases, regardless of age or gender, as the example from the police shows:

**WmPO #3:** Yes because I have a case now going on where the girl was (*officer pauses to recall the details*) is that indecent assault or rape? (*WmPO asks herself and recalls which the charge*) — It is rape; and she is a big woman now and the case is back and forth, back and forth; and it is done by someone in authority, who should know better. Understand? And she is now of adult age. When she gets at that age she is of a legal age that she can say: “Look, I have been going through this from the time of XYZ, I tired, I done.” But are we really giving her justice because the system takes long in dealing with the matter?

Ironically, this long wait is to decide whether the accused is innocent, or the degree of guilt under the Sexual Offences Act. The harm of the crime to, and the waiting by, the victim are minimised, unvoiced or unrecognised by the court. The long wait then has little to do with whether the crime took place. It can alter the outcome of the criminal proceedings to a situation where - legally - nothing has occurred. CCOs report that many children and families have lost hope of the case ever being heard as time goes by.

**CCO #3:** That child could be about 8....she handled it well but she cried ...It is very frustrating but - they are prepared to talk and...tell...Then the attorney would say they did not hear of this...then it has to be adjourned again – so that they (*the attorneys*) can prepare themselves ...then nothing...then you go back to court...

**CCO #1:** That upsets me. It is very frustrating because on reflection with another case- the girl was 13, I was not working with her initially, and the case finally came to court when she was 20 yrs. Seven years later.

The definition of child sexual abuse is consequently strongly influenced by two co-related factors: adolescent pregnancy and delays. Whilst there is a legal definition (used primarily by the police, with its evidence requirement), and a professional definition (for CCOs – which requires a lower threshold of proof for intervention), other factors such as pregnancy and ineffective systems lead to CSA being reframed or minimized. This obviously accrues to the benefit of the accused persons, who are likely to know that the cases never reach the high court in a hurry.

The indecent assault definition also accrues to the benefit of the perpetrator. As a sexually abusive act, indecent assault seems to be reserved for those allegations deemed to be “consensual” in nature. Whilst it remains an unlawful activity, the labelling of a child as a “willing participant” and “promiscuous,” appeared to result in a lessening of professional concern as compared to cases of rape. The extent to which this labelling is equally a protective professional response, to buffer outcomes (e.g., judicial delays and parents’ lack of support) over which there is little or no control, and/or a case of victim-blaming, is likely to be guided by intersecting factors. I would argue these factors to be the child’s character and the support system within the family, as seen from the discourse of the SCCO below. These intersect with the ‘labelled’ allegation. Examples of this labelling are seen in the first example below, concerning a 13-year-old girl. The second example was used hypothetically, demonstrating some of the further thinking and views on “consensual” sex, and ties in with the same labelling that might be done by some mothers, as seen from the third example, the SCCO’s.

**PO (CID) #3:** A lot of doubts were cast on the allegations. Witnesses came forward with information to cast doubts. That was a tricky one.

**Interviewer:** What makes it tricky?

**PO (CID) #3:** Her promiscuity. The accused admitted to it being consensual...he even went a step further and said the mother knew about it. The mother reported it, but our investigations seem to show that the mother came under some neighbourhood pressures and then reported it.

**WmPO (CID):** We would come to the consensus that this girl is worthless (worthless) or something, but then we take emotion out of it and then we apply the law. Ok we say you know this man did this thing ... we do it very cut and dry. She says that he do this and we have to charge the person. We don't get emotional as we would when a child who has been authentically raped.

**SCCO #7:** Sometimes you might have a child who may be exhibiting behavioural problems or something, but it does not negate the fact that she was sexually abused by a perpetrator within the home. So if a child that might be mouthy or not doing so well at school, or whatever, for a mother to deal with a boyfriend, that her boyfriend abused her, especially if she herself, if the mother had to speak to her about boys or whatever (sic), you know she is going to figure that "she is no use", or she "wotless" or whatever, that kind of thing. You get all these different kind of variables and stuff coming in there of how parents, mothers especially, will respond to their daughters, especially the older child.

The 'non-culpable' situation of the confessed abuser in the first example is shown in sharp contrast to the negative light in which the victim and her family are portrayed. The mother comes under pressure, but not the perpetrator. The issue of whether a child is regarded as having consented is, in the eyes of the police, sufficient to label her (a child) as not worthy of any supportive emotions. The process of labelling is closely linked to ascribed meanings of who is really sexually abused and who is not. Gendered categorisation, which can be reflective of a culture as discussed in Chapter Two and later in Chapter Eight, is arguably mirrored in the responses of both male and female POs; where stereotypes of male entitlement to sex and female promiscuity seem to be at play. There are implicit gendered meanings of female culpability and complicity in their abuse, with less censor of sexual abuse by males.

Below is an example of POs' and CCOs' discourses on CSA, as emerged from the data (Appendix 6.1 to 6.2 and 6.4).

Police		Child care officer
Rape	'Consensual' sex	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Something different to consensual sex</li> <li>▪ Child does not agree</li> <li>▪ Traumatic experience</li> <li>▪ Violation of mind and body</li> <li>▪ Violence and trauma</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Of own free will</li> <li>▪ Girl gives permission</li> <li>▪ Mental and emotional giving</li> <li>▪ Just a violation of the law</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any act against a child which exposes them to inappropriate sexual behaviour.</li> <li>• Pornography, or watching videos</li> <li>• Talking in a sexual manner; touching inappropriately or coercing to be involved in sexual acts</li> <li>• Acts are with the perpetrator who can also incite others to be involved e.g., a friend or another relative.</li> </ul>

### 6.2.2 Co-related CSA and adolescent pregnancy

These two co-related factors, of adolescent pregnancy on the one hand, and the long wait for an alleged case of child sexual abuse to be adjudicated in the courts on the other, are two aspects of a many-sided social problem which can define responses by the professionals and parents in Barbados. Pregnancy, labelling and delays in the criminal justice system emerge as factors which all have a bearing on how abuse is defined. This finding may also account for children choosing not to disclose their sexual abuse.

### 6.2.3 Prevalence rates and gendered subjectivity

The ways in which child sexual abuse is defined influence the estimates of prevalence rates in a society. These definitions also influence how professionals respond to the crime and how it is treated before the courts. Prevalence rates, which help to guide much of the theorising on the subject, can also help determine the identity of the crime and influence policy

development. Examples of these are seen in issues relating to differences in age between the victim and the alleged perpetrator, the nature of the sexual contact and the victim's perceived actions in the criminal act. For example, the effect of including abuse by peers can increase prevalence rates by up to 9% (Finkelhor, 1986). The inclusion of penetration versus non-penetration can increase rates by about 16% (Kelly, Regan, & Burton, 1991; Russell, 1983). The study by Kelly et al. (ibid) also suggests that the contentious issue of whether a child has consented, or whether a perception of victimisation exists, if factored into the definition of abuse, may in turn also impact on prevalence rates. The higher female to male prevalence rates, however, remain constant. Seymour (1998) cites sexual offending rates of 90% and 99% for male offenders, and between 90% and 99.7% of females as victims. The cited ratio of women to men who have experienced CSA is often double. Rates of 16.8 % women and 7.9 % men (Putnam, 2003) exist, but with some definition difficulties, as shown in the research which is cited above and in other early studies (Wyatt & Peters, 1986). The gendered nature of these prevalence rates, in which girls are overwhelmingly sexually abused by adolescent boys and men, are reflected in the above statistics. One explanation for this pervasive situation is the feminist perspective, which theorises that such domination of children, in all socio-cultural contexts, occurs because of men's positional authority, whereby they hold the most economic and public power (Levett, 2003, p. 56).

## Telling the Story

### **6.3 Telling the Disclosure Story: the Dynamics of Telling the Story/Wanting to Tell**

The journey between initial disclosure, referral and interviewing by the CCOs and POs is representative of the child's maturational, emotional and secure status, in terms of how they might tell their story. The parent (usually mother) plays a pivotal role in this, and is shown to also have specific responses to what has been disclosed by her daughter. How some mothers respond to the allegation can be indicative of the pressures, expectations, feelings and sense

of duty to her child. Such feelings traverse various terrains, from disbelief to support to denial.

**CCO #1:** Well she was, (*interviewee pauses*) her immediate concern was that she did not come to her at first to tell her what happened, but then she was very supportive of her daughter. She didn't question or doubt her...

**CCO #5:** Well the mother was really concerned and she did believe her daughter. So that assisted a great deal...

.....

**Interviewer:** And can you remember if he were living in the same home with the child at the time of the alleged abuse?

**CCO #4:** Yes he was in the home - the whole issue was that was the reason the child was removed because he and the mother were in a relationship together and what we realize too that the mother did not come at any time to give support to the child .

**Interviewer:** What about visiting the Children's Home, what was the relationship like?

**CCO #4:** The mother never really visited – but she will call at times but you know it was just off and on. I guess she will call when the case is coming up but she would not be there to say she come to support the child. I guess she did not want to show the man that she was supporting even her own child. The thing about it the child left here and there was no outcome to that case.

.....

**WmPO #4:** I find that the most of the children I have interviewed I tend to believe what they tell me because they are very vivid with the details. Extremely vivid in the details. They are so many things they would like to say, but because the parent is there...

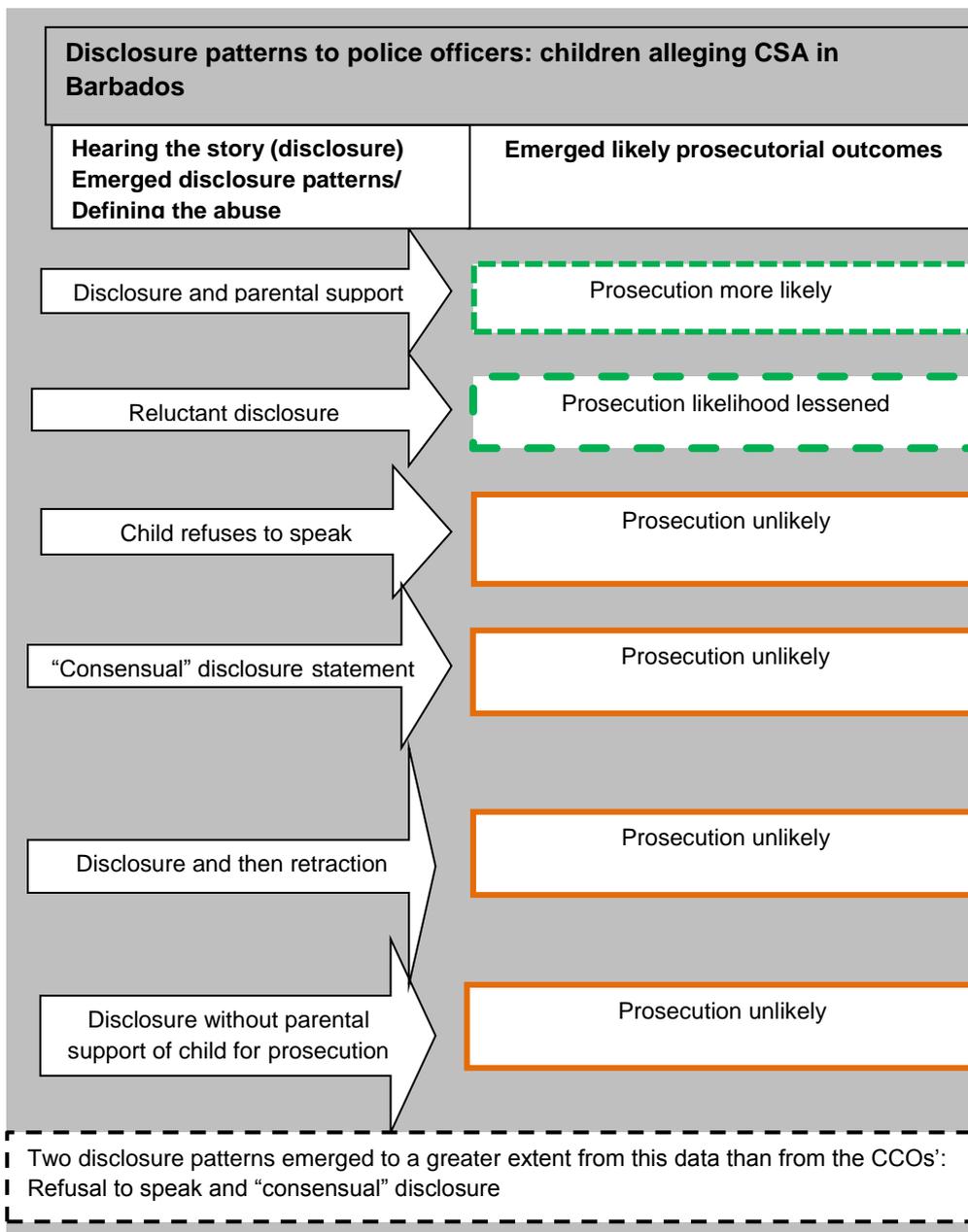
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### **6.3.1 Child sexual abuse disclosure patterns to CCOs and POs**

The police interview data reveal the mixed disclosure patterns as seen in Figure 6.1 below. The range includes: reluctance; refusal; retraction; consensual disclosure, and disclosure with or without parental support. The emerged pattern is indicative of the approach of some of the police to defining child sexual abuse as discussed above, e.g., “consensual” sex and rape, and is also implicated in the discussion on the likelihood of prosecution.

In my analysis there appeared to be a clear relationship between disclosure patterns and prosecution likelihood, as indicated below. (Figures 6.1 and 6.2).

**Figure 6.1 Disclosure patterns to police officers**



**6.3.2 Police Prosecutions**

The child sexual abuse disclosure patterns to CCOs were similar to those of the police, but with the notable difference of the therapeutic input versus the prosecutorial, as seen in Figure 6.2 below. All disclosures to CCOs are referred to the police, although the reverse is not necessarily the case.

The interview data from the two police prosecutors show confirmatory evidence of this pattern. In particular what emerged from the prosecutors'

discourse was the significant numbers which are thrown out at the lower Magistrate's court for lack of evidence and other reasons cited below.

**Police prosecutor # 2:** The majority are thrown out because of the time it takes to come to the court.... also, sometimes the accused men don't come, the accused men are present but their attorneys are not... something the child might not be there.

Emerging also from the police prosecution data were two themes which resonate with some of the POs and CCOs i.e.,

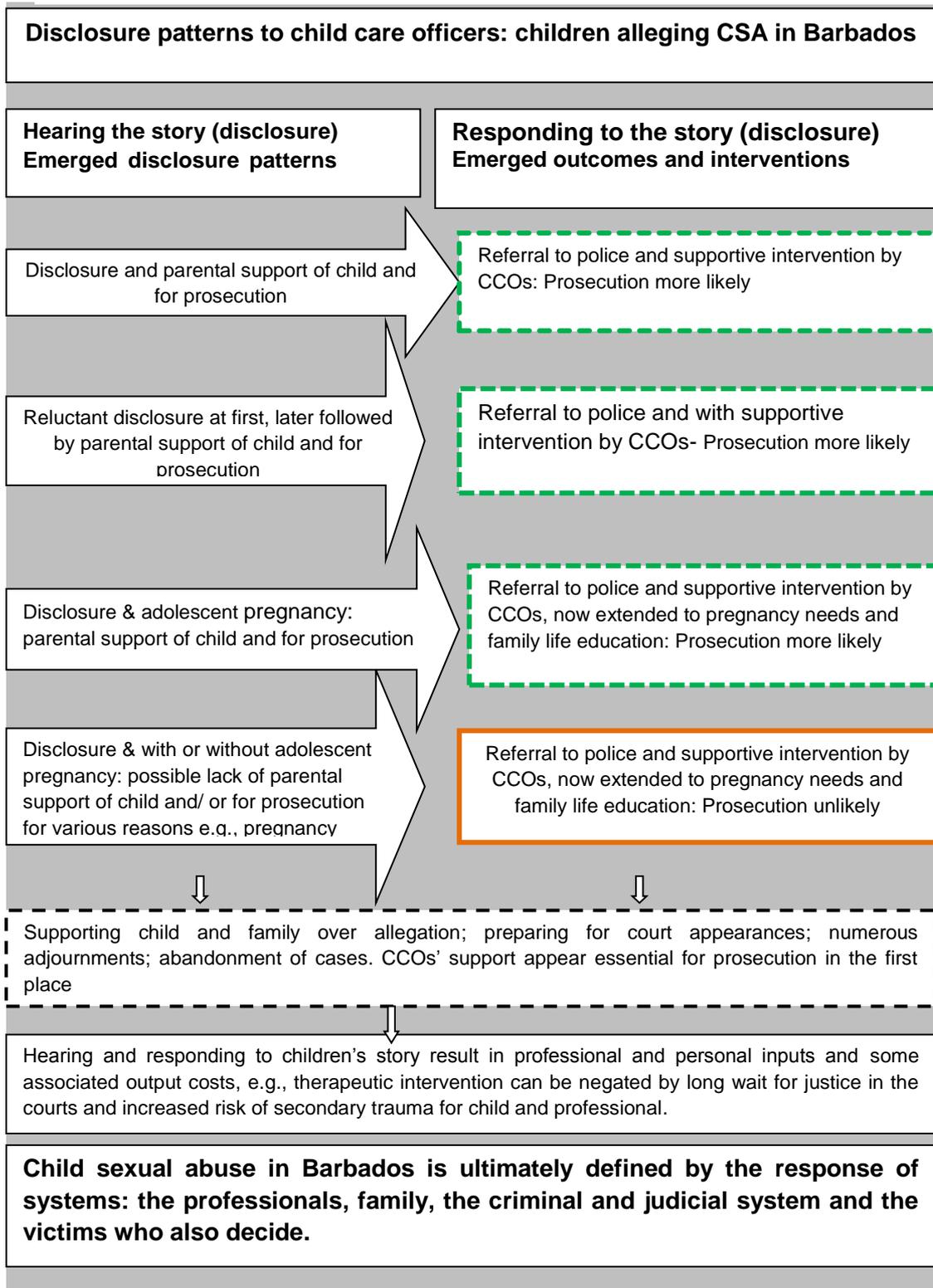
- the number of times a case appears in the court linked to dismissal
- level and type of parental support.

**Police prosecutor # 1:** Some parents find it very hard to believe their child's allegation of sexual abuse...other times they will come outright and say I don't believe it.

**Police prosecutor # 2:** The matter came up 5-6 times before the Magistrate and the mother said each time 'she telling lies'...on reaching 16 years the child withdrew the case [saying] " up to this day my mother don't believe me so I am not going through with it...everybody else will believe that I am telling lies too."

One can argue that the implicit meaning embedded within some familial relationships is that CSA should not be disclosed and if it is, it will be denied. The 'everybody' above, in the child's eyes logically, also include the courts' processes, to the extent that the child feels that his / her experience of sexual abuse is not important to adults, who can act with impunity.

**Figure 6.2 Disclosure patterns to child care officers**



The data showed a consistency in the CCOs' support to victims of CSA and their parents. Respondents suggested, however, that their capacity to

respond was negated by other factors, e.g., high numbers of referrals and very limited resources, coupled with delays in the criminal justice system, which create high numbers of 'dormant' cases (i.e., children who are no longer receiving a current service) within the CCOs' workload:

**SCCO #7:** ...because it means that you are...stuck with a case longer than you need to be, because you still have to follow through with it. But then the aspect of getting it before the court is out of your hand... you have done that, but getting it heard is out of your hand...Whereas, if these things were done expeditiously where you would know that within 6 months or so that matter has been dealt with, and the child whatever the conclusion is, that child can go on with his or her life. Fine, but you are stuck with a case for all of these years and this is just one, right? ...I used to have a caseload of 400 and something at any one time. So and even though some of them were "dormant" 'quote/unquote' they had a mind of their own; as soon as you file them under inactive, they came back up (*light ironic laughter*).

#### **6.4 Telling the Story and Taking Care of it**

In telling the story, its truth/falsehood is assessed by both police and CCO. Credibility can often be judged from the way the story is told, and from the assessments which are made in connection with the disclosure storying. Some children were said to want to tell their story, while others could not/did not. Furthermore, in cases where the sex was 'consensual', respondents reported that children did not see it as a violation of the law, as in the explanation "He is my boyfriend." Some children were also said to fabricate the story and usually later confess the reasons for doing so, e.g., out of revenge or to get back at a parent. The police's objective in the story's disclosure was for a strong prosecutorial case; the CCOs' was one of protection and therapeutic intervention.

In presenting the findings relating to taking care of the sexual abuse allegation by the child, I am acknowledging the divergent nature of POs' and CCOs' responses, based on their different mandates and different cultural values, as

discussed in Chapter Two. I am therefore, at this point, presenting their main modus operandi as they emerged and linking some responses for coherence.

Two key aspects of police responses in hearing a child sexual abuse story (disclosure) emerged from this research. Taking care of the story entails:

- assessing the legitimacy and credibility of the victim's claim from the interview;
- ensuring that the allegation is supported by medical evaluation and other forensic investigations.

A key response of the police to allegations of sexual abuse by children is assessing the legitimacy of the child's claim. This process is assisted by the parent's, usually the mother's, intervention. The parent's/mother's role here helps to define what is real, as seen by the comment below in which there is acceptance of the 'truth' of the allegation and the pursuit of justice; but there can also be acceptance of 'truth' and no pursuit of justice .

**Station sergeant:** ...In real abuse cases where the parents come to the police and brings the child, is where we are able to get those matters before the court and started (sic); where the parents themselves say now "hey you interfere with my daughter"... you understand?..."my daughter came to me the parent and report this matter" (sic) so they come here and we proceed and pursue those matters in a very positive way as we do all the others; but these are the ones that go into the system really and we are able to prosecute somebody. But then there are areas where the abuse occurs but there is acceptance. There is acceptance (parental) for one reason or another.

In the statement above, it is clear that pursuing the veracity of allegations is countered by parental acceptance of the abuse, and the parent's/mother's role thus impacts on the police's response. Acceptance/non-acceptance here serves as a lever to finding out the truth of the claim. This can be regarded as a dichotomy between *truth – acceptance* and *truth – falsehood* (Diagram 1).

#### **6.4.1 Finding the truth, guarding against falsehood**

Assessing what is fact and what is fiction is part of the PO's assessment. The focus group data presents a noteworthy corroboration of this situation. The PO, in the search to find the truth of the serious allegation of rape, acknowledges the roles of the child and centrality of the mother's position on the matter. The truth - falsehood dichotomy proposed earlier surfaces as a constant consideration.

**Senior PO #1 (Focus group):** We will then have to notify our supervisors, because it is a rape, a serious matter; so all cases as these, we will have to notify our supervisor for direction, guidance, as to what we should do. It all depends on what is said and done in respect of what is said at the interview between the female police officer, the mother and the complainant in this matter; because sometimes as you interview them, there is a tendency that some of them might be lying and then as a result of what is said and done at the interview, then we will know which way we should go.

The truth - falsehood contradiction is a situation which somehow the police must successfully manage in an effort to gain credible evidence for the prosecution. Some clear idea of the truth or falsehood of the allegation is therefore important, as "rape is a serious matter" (Senior PO #1). The seriousness of it means that a false allegation by the child is to be identified at the interview where possible. Linked to this is the view that some children are voluntarily having sex. However, acknowledgment of the possibilities of coercion, threats and the authoritarian power of an adult over a child, did not emerge to any significant extent.

**Interviewer:** What makes a story believable?

**WmPO #2:** Consistency in what they are saying and then from the report of the doctor and bringing in and interviewing that child, you can tell certain things. I don't know how to really put it; really put it to you in how to believe a child (sic) but consistency in certain things that they are saying...Some children are very timid and you can tell a child that really don't get out there, don't really know what is going on and is

really new to certain things; you can tell. Some as I said do it for attention, some doing it because they want to get back at the parent, the father...

**WmPO #3:** They don't have the sex, but they come and report that they did get rape or this person sexually assaulted them; because it is something they couldn't get from that person, or that somebody does something to them and they are willing to get back to this person first, or it could be jealousy too.

**Interviewer:** How common is that?

**WmPO #3:** That is not very common, it is not very common, it is not 1%. I can tell you that much, it is not very common, but when we are doing sexual cases, these are all things that we look into...Is that child being alienated from their parent, in that they want somebody's else's attention in that they will do anything to get that person's attention even sleep with that person; and when it is found out that is when it is reported. Let me tell you something, some of these children out there are having sex, and you know when it is found out? When they get caught. The parents catch them and then the parent brings them. They want this body charged; they want the third body charged. The next thing that gives way is when that child gets pregnant. But there are a lot of children out there who are underage, who are having sex with persons who are older, that the parents don't know (about)...If they find out ...that is when the can is opened.

To assist the child's comfort level in this matter, women POs are assigned the task of interviewing the child, as seen in the example from the focus group and the individual interview:

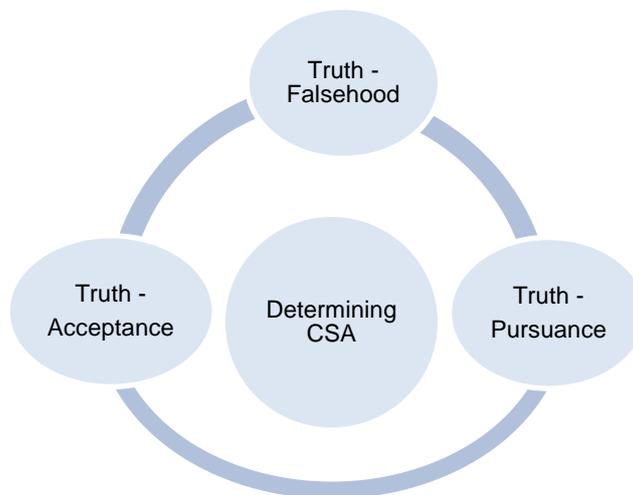
**Senior PO #1 (focus group):** This is normally done by a WmPO because we realize she is traumatised and she may not want to see a male figure in front of her. So most of the cases when they are reported (sic) at the station, a WmPO will interview that person in the presence of a guardian, mother, father, whoever comes and that is done privately.

**WmPO #4 interviewee:** Even if it is a male child, you a female will do the interview. You hardly see a man interviewing someone who has been sexually assaulted unless it has been the request of the victim.

**Interviewer:** Does that policy work well in your opinion, of females...? (WmPO breaks in on unfinished question).

**WmPO #4 interviewee:** Not all the time, honestly, not all the time, because there are some damn good male investigators out there who might be able to get a lot more information than you, because they have a lot more experience. But because of the policy of the force, they are not allowed to. Unless it is explicitly requested. This to me ties the hand of the law. It ties the hands of the law.

.....  
**Diagram 1**



Having a clear sense of the veracity of the child’s allegation emanates from the forensic interview, conducted usually by a female officer, to which senior officers then respond and decide on its prosecutorial merit. How the children present themselves and tell their story is therefore critical. There is a guarding and filtering of the information along the conceptualised scales shown above in Diagram 1:

- truth-acceptance of CSA (by parents and professionals);
- truth-falsehood of CSA (by parents and professionals);

- truth-pursuance of justice (by parents and police).

These are critical responses by the police and parent to this (allegation) information for prosecutorial purposes. In other words, the information has to be court-worthy.

The child and parent/mother would have also done their own guarding and filtering of the allegation, as seen from the dynamics of the emerged disclosure patterns in Figures 6.1 and 6.2. Many, if not all, of these children and parents/mothers, have initially been seen and interviewed by a CCO and are now repeating their story under criminal investigative rather than therapeutic supportive conditions.

#### **6.4.2 Factors impacting on police officers' assessment of child's perceived credibility: different discourses**

Knowing a child's past history of sexual abuse (either rape or 'consensual') was important to the police in helping to define the credibility of the allegation. A different discourse surrounds the sexual abuse allegations of children who are labelled promiscuous, as opposed to those who are seen as 'innocents'. This appears to approximate the discourse levelled at women who allege rape. A similar standard of judging some children who are not believed, or who are victimised under "consenting" situations, appeared to affect their credibility and reduced the chances of prosecuting of alleged abusers.

**Interviewer:** So how do the children seen to be "consenting" present themselves?

**WmPO (CID):** Very, you know they are apprehensive; you can tell if they are telling you a story, you can sense that piece is missing and you have to try to get it out of them, to tell you the whole story. Because usually, remember that all of these interviews are done in the presence of an adult. You don't want your mother sitting there and you saying you had sex umpteen times; and she is ready to kill you. So that is the problem.

A different discourse prevails between mother, child and professional in cases of incest.

**WmPO (CID):** The few that I have had, the child is very very (sic) especially if the mother is not believing, the child is very aggressive and sad and emotional at the same time; don't know who to talk to because my father is doing this to me and my mother don't believe; so the child is crying and usually those are very stressful, because the mother has put trust in the father and can't believe that this is actually happening.

**WmPO (CID):** ...I have had a few cases where the mother turn around and said this is my daughter and I believe her, but there are some that the mother doesn't believe...the child is confused and kind of feel rejected in a way.

#### **6.4.3 Ensuring the allegation is supported: medical examination of children alleging sexual abuse**

The second key aspect of police responses to a child sexual abuse story (disclosure) which emerges from this research is the search for proof to present to the courts.

Hearing the child tell their story is then followed by search for proof of the alleged sexual abuse. The great importance of the forensic medical examination to police evidence emerged consistently. Furthermore, it was clear that age matters, in terms of the law and policy, and the perceived sexual experience of the child, and these factors were discussed in terms of culpability rather than victimisation, as evident from the comment below:

**Station Sergeant:** So it will come to me and having read it I will assign an investigator to go and contact the parents in this matter. They will come with the child and we will interview them and have the details of the statement recorded of the occurrences of this matter, right? And we will then look at the statement...the statement determines the course of our action, what we are going to do...The statement is important...The statement is the first thing; we have that statement and in the case of a sexual abuse, it must be the doctor who has to examine that person.

The public medical officer will examine that female. That gives you an idea of what that person's life might be. For instance some parents are shocked when the doctor writes hymen not intact, which says she is not

a virgin - you understand me - and it was not this particular incidence that caused that not to be so, it was so for a little while – you understand me?.

.....

**Senior PO #1 (focus group):** After the interview with the consent of the mum, we will take that person to the doctor where an exam will be done to confirm the allegation and then we will look to interview the complainant in the matter; written statement; location as where it happened; name of the person that would have committed the offence. Then we would take the clothing for evidential purposes and after all of that have been done, we will visit the scene with the complaint; this is where the CID will get involved... (Focus Group discussion)

.....

**WmPO #3:** ...The child was about 12, and we had the report that a young girl was in a house with a group of men, about 6-8 men. She had sex with about 4 or 5 of them. They were charged and went to court. When that landed our aim was to get her to the station, first thing to contact her parents, the next step for us is to take her to the doctor. Now recently if a child is under 12...she is taken to the doctor, before we can do any interview or anything like that. Then she is turned over to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for a series of treatment. She is seen by the Child Care Board, She goes through a series of medication (sic) for pregnancy, AIDS that sort of stuff, then she comes back to us on release from the doctor and then we do our investigation, as long as she is under the age of 12 yrs. (Interview setting).

#### **6.4.4 The child versus alleged perpetrators' position**

When POs receive an allegation of child sexual abuse for a child under the age of 16 years in Barbados, the investigative processes include, among other things, hearing the child's story through detailed interviewing, accompanied by the search for any supporting corroborative evidence through medical examination of the child and the gathering of forensic evidence from 'the scene of the crime'. The other investigative processes involve interviewing the accused, reported to be usually males over the age of 16

years. POs therefore have to make decisions based on the complaints and on any denial by the accused, which was said to nearly always be the case. The child's perceived sexual culpability is set against the alleged criminal act, as seen below in the first example. Minors are described as rampant in their sexual activity, as opposed to perpetrators being rampant in such criminal activity. In some cases the abuse emerged as part of sub-cultures of sexual violence, as seen in the second example.

**Interviewer:** Would you say the numbers are increasing?

**Station Sergeant:** Yes or being recognized. Because sometimes a lot of things happen and are never reported to the police. We get a lot of referrals from the CCB, where sexual activity among minors is rampant, right...

**Interviewer:** Under 16 yrs. of age?

**Station Sergeant:** Yes, this is under 16 and they are so rampant, that even the girls are challenging men "to live with them" to have intercourse with them. Two weeks ago, we had a 13 yr. old student, while the police was patrolling, recognised that she was in an area, somewhere in the area of the...Took her up and brought her here. She was almost naked; ...Brought her and another gentleman here (sic), and whilst interviewing the gentleman, the gentleman said that she approached him.

.....  
**Interviewer:** The men that were...? (*WmPO anticipates my question on what happened to the perpetrators of the abuse against the 12-year-old above and she answers before question is completed*)

**WmPO #3:** Young boys between the age of 17 years and I think the oldest was 25; but young boys.

**Interviewer:** And did you say some were charged?

**WmPO #3:** They all were charged. The ones that were involved were charged and it was a court case, but I can tell you this much, I cannot remember what became of the court case, because as I said, as much as we go to court, and that young girl cares not to open her mouth or

say anything, there is nothing, I can't say there is nothing we can do, but as I say you can't suppress (sic) her into saying something that she doesn't want to say.

The process of charging alleged perpetrators can also be linked to meanings emanating from the above data, suggesting that girls are often the guilty party, when men (and even 'young boys' as shown above) commit a sexual crime against them. They (the girls) are never blameless whatever their age. In particular when girl children are described by men as sexually knowledgeable, they can be seen as 'consenting predators', making the adult male even less culpable: "*I hear that you have a big penis*" – alleged comment by child to the man who reported this comment to the police and who also confirmed his abuse of her. Additionally, meanings implicit in the forensic examinations of CSA allegations can work against the child's best interest. This is seen where only tangible evidence will be acceptable proof of sexual abuse. Psychological and other expressive evidence of harm to the child can be of secondary evidential importance. This leads to a system which I term patriarchal nepotism, which arguably can become an institutional norm and part of a professional culture where combatting child sexual abuse is concerned.

### **Taking Care of the Story**

#### **6.5 Taking Care of the Story - Child Care Officers - Response to Disclosure**

CCOs respond to allegations of sexual abuse from a number of sources. These include reports from:

- the child's parent, usually the mother;
- a concerned individual (e.g., a relative or someone in the child's community);
- another government agency, e.g.,
  - a named person from the school the child attends, e.g., guidance counsellor or head teacher;

- the police to whom the child's parent may have first reported the allegation;
- the hospital who sees the child (for example) as a result of a confirmed pregnancy, or for a requested abortion;
- the child directly (occasionally).

At any one time the four (4) CCOs (child abuse team) are dealing with a network of referral agents and others associated with the referral, such as family members, the public and other professionals. At the centre is the child, for whom some coherent response is to be organised.

These initial responses include the assessment interview and referral of some children for a medical examination (e.g., those not immediately referred to the police).

**CCO #2:** Another thing we go by as well is the doctor's report, a medical report, which would say in the child (sic) whether any signs of sexual assault were seen. So we go by the medical reports as well.

Within the group of referrals are children who have disclosed their alleged abuse willingly and cooperatively, and others who have done so to a lesser extent, as seen earlier in Figure 6.2.

### **6.5.1 Defining and responding to the allegation: the intervention**

The data show that the CCOs' formal response to allegations of sexual abuse by children is characterised along four key dimensions. These are:

- work with other agencies: sharing the story;
- work with the child: listening to and taking care of the disclosure story;
- work with the child and parent (usually the mother): taking care of the story - the mother's role;
- working on the self: emotional responses to the story.

The responsive interventions by the CCOs include the therapeutic interview, in which an assessment of need is made of the child, the family and their relative circumstances. The majority of children report the allegations in a

credible, consistent and convincing manner, to which CCOs now have to respond. The assessment interview represents an important signpost for further action, including referral to the police. The policy of referring all children to the police is a consistent practice of the CCOs, irrespective of whether they believe the allegation or not, regardless of whether the child is near the age of consent and the perpetrator being of similar age, and regardless of the child's relationship with the alleged perpetrator or the perceived lifestyle choices of the family and child. The following are quoted examples of referrals and some of their characteristics. They reflect a wide range of referrals to the police, prompting the observation that different and creative ways of responding are needed.

**CCO #1:** The father helps me out; there is no need to report the matter to the police (*pregnant teenager expressed wish to CCO*).

**SCCO #7:** "...we know that children when they step into adolescence they start exploring their sexuality and so on; it does not mean their case is any less serious, because a 14-year-old case might be very serious...she was raped – she did not want this ... but as I said we have a huge percentage of these young people who are into sex, who are exploring sex, and as I said, you have to give them a different type of counselling, because they want to have sex. They do not see themselves as sexually abused...So those types of case might not necessarily get before the courts; so the police would drop them. Drop it in an instance (*interviewee clicks her finger to indicate her assessed rapidity of the dropping*).

.....

**CCO #2:** "When she was questioned she said just how a little girl would put it – simple ...The matter has been referred to our psychologist. We report the matter to the police and go through the court process with her to the end whenever it ends." (*reporting on an interview with a four-year-old*).

The centrality of the referral arrangement between the two agencies helps to ensure that the police are able to execute their mandate with respect to the

investigation of the alleged criminal offence. Examples of this are seen from the joint focus group data below.

### Focus Group data

**WmPO (CID):** The only time we would really speak to the CCB is when we need guardianship, say for instance in the case reported and that person is living within the household, we would speak in that case, or if the CCB send a memo to us, relative to a sexual offence, but if there is none, a case like this we would not speak to the CCB, not unless it comes right down to the end and it comes to court, whereby to inform them as to the fact that she is a minor and what happened.

**SMCCO :** It contains what is relevant so that the police can start their own investigation. If the person presents and says they were raped by John Brown (*fictitious name*) who is 25 years old and he lives at...we would provide the police with that information so that they would do their own investigation.

**CCO #3:** We share what is necessary, the referral is not as detailed; is not everything that would have taken place in the interview. It is what is required for the police to do their investigation.

**Interviewer:** What do the police feel about that? Do you share what is necessary also?

**Senior PO #1:** Yes there are certain things that the complainant would have told us. There isn't everything that you need to highlight unless it is necessary, because a person might tell you something in confidence; however before we can divulge that information... *\*well you know our job is to put people before the court (sic)*. Even though we put persons before the court, we still have to be sensitive in certain regards...

**WmPO (CID):** I wanted to say there is no formal method in the police of sharing information with outside organizations...when we are sent a memo from the CCB, correspondence is sent back, but there is no detailed sharing of information. Correct me if I am wrong, there is none.

**Interviewer:** So that lack of detail something which is not prejudicial, is that something that you could have more of on both sides? Would you like more information sometimes?

**Senior PO #1:** If we need more information we would request it from the officer, that is why the statement...

The CCB therefore plays a pivotal role in the execution of the RBPf criminal investigative mandate. However, reciprocity on the part of the police, in assisting the CCB in protecting children from harm, is mainly in relation to gaining credible evidence, evidence which Senior PO #1 above states is part of their duty “...*Well you know our job is to put people before the court...*” This evidence, which police policy dictates must be of a certain quality, is vetted for its sufficiency prior to charging and for its court-worthiness prior to prosecution.

**WmPO #3:** (Interview data): We will go like to our Divisional Commander... because there are persons in each department, an inspector of crime, because it is a crime; (sic)...so the person who deals with crime at the higher level, that information goes to them and they will make a decision whether this person must be picked up and charged on that sufficient evidence that is given (sic). If we do not have sufficient evidence on which to charge that person we cannot, because the police force is liable to wrong doing (sic).

#### **6.5.1.1 Intervention techniques with the child**

In the case of a pregnancy, CCOs described their intervention as one of support and preparation for motherhood, the eventual return to school and the planning for the nursery care arrangements for the child’s baby. These are critical dimensions which coexist with the counselling support over the abusive act.

The frequently mentioned use of anatomically correct dolls is one of the techniques employed in the interview assessment by CCOs to assist some children (particularly the very young) in telling their story. This medium, which approximates a role play using an anatomically correct doll, helps children in becoming more comfortable, particularly the very young and the mentally challenged child.

**CCO #4:** ...there are some children who are very articulate mind you, and then there are some who would not sit down and have a dialogue with

you, so then there is the use of the anatomical dolls...The purpose for that is while the child may not be able to express verbally what has happened or what their concerns are, during the course of play they may be able to show or demonstrate something that they may otherwise be uncomfortable saying. So that is something that is used as well...

In addition to the counselling which is tailored to need, there are mutually supportive sessions through an eight (8) week survivors support group, offered to those children to whom it would be beneficial. The conduct of two groups is coordinated by a CCO. One group is for children under the age of 12 years and another for those over 12 to 16 years. This is within an environment seen as safe and supporting. This service helps to fulfil a need which is complementary to the one to one counselling by the CCOs, who all admit that the demand (due to the high numbers of referrals) outstrips available resources. Each child is not necessarily receiving a tailored service from the psychologist or the CCO.

**CCO #6:** ...Because child sexual abuse is not all you deal with, I think it would help if there was obviously more people to spread the work around. I think it would improve the efficiency of the whole system as it relates to following up especially. Because the reality is that case loads are heavy and as I said, sexual abuse is one thing, then there are other things as well...

A recurring situation within the data was the CCOs' key role in preparing and supporting the child's appearance in the magistrates and high court for the hearing of the allegation. Appearance in the magistrates court might occur within a relatively short time of the allegation, as compared to appearance in the high court, which can take a much longer period of time to be heard in the first instance and then be concluded.

Roles also include responding to children with whom they may not be working, but whose court appearance they want to support. This provoked an expression of dismay from the CCOs.

**CCO #3:** It takes up a lot of time, you go back to give the child support – you can go to court and sit for hours -- sometime it looks better, (sic) sometimes it takes forever – sometimes you go to the prosecutor and ask that it is heard early, especially if it is likely to be adjourned so you don't have to wait all day with the child sitting around. I have been here six years and none of the child sexual abuse cases I have had reached high court as yet; none of the ones that went through the magistrate's court. The children gave their evidence beautifully; they did their part and some 4, 5, 6 years later nothing else is heard. -- some are now in secondary school, some finished too and it has not yet reached high court.

**CCO #4:** She was able to relate from the statement that was sent to the police at that time (sic). She was able to relate exactly what was done to her --- the issue of her remembering exactly after three years --- and here she has to recollect. You know dates and times and things like that which would be hard for her --- you know you turn up go through this whole thing (*recalling involvement with a child now eight years, who alleged abuse at approximately 5 years of age*).

**CCO #4:** That upsets me. It is very frustrating -- on reflection with another case, the girl was 13, I was not working with her initially, and the case finally came to court when she was 20 years. Seven years later. So then I was working with her but at least that had a conclusion. But this waiting and then you have to go to court and then it is adjourned. Children could be eight and then you are going back to 18 to remember when you were small (sic).

These findings demonstrate two key factors:

- there is an interconnectedness between what the CCOs can achieve through their interventions with the child, and the criminal justice process, which significantly impacts their work. The delays in the court appear to significantly disrupt workloads;

- the locus of control CCOs have in responding to child sexual abuse in Barbados resides largely in external agents such as the courts and the family, as further described below.

## **6.6 Giving Needed Support - Working with the Mother and Child**

CCOs work with parents/mothers of children alleging child sexual abuse, and respond to their reactions. These range from disbelief, denial and wonderment at how they could have missed what was going on, to ambivalence and shock.

In a minority of cases, some mothers' allegiance to the alleged perpetrator appears to take precedence over support of the child. The vast majority of mothers, however, were said to be supportive of their child and of the case being prosecuted. It is at the latter stage, due to the lengthy nature of the court hearing, that many parents/mothers feel a sense of injustice and withdraw their support for the continuance of the matter in court. The CCOs reported that the *giving of needed support* to mothers was a critical intervention at all stages of the referral and intervention process.

Chief among the CCOs' supportive intervention with a parent was understanding what role the parent would adopt towards the child, the allegations and the perpetrator. The existing relationship between the parent/mother, child and perpetrator can play a key role in the nature of the mother's support for a case being prosecuted. CCOs' knowledge of anecdotal evidence (through hearsay) of mothers receiving money from a perpetrator to drop a sexual abuse case must be weighed up with what is actually shared at the assessment. A range of other factors such as case fatigue, case distress and wanting to see a conclusion to the court case were juxtaposed against the impact of the abuse and the need for justice to be allowed to be done. CCOs' ongoing professional support to both child and mother is therefore pivotal to the child's court appearance and to the continued pursuance of the case.

Disentangling those cases in which the mother does not support prosecution (e.g., a pregnant adolescent, for whom the prime concern has now shifted to

how her pregnant daughter will be supported financially), from those who support the case going forward, but who might nevertheless be daunted, are significant challenges for CCOs. Other challenges are of an interagency nature, seen from the focus group data in which the PO challenges the CCO over information sharing (Example 1 below). Other challenges are seen in the institutional responses to a case of child sexual abuse which lasted eight years (Example 2). This latter example reflects a range of factors found in the overall data, such as: the embodied emotions experienced by CCOs; the challenges associated with supporting child and mother over the disclosure; referral, and payment to the mother to drop the prosecution against the perpetrator. Also emerging from the data is the critical importance of giving legal support to the child and a having a cooperative working relationship with the police.

**Example 1 - Focus Group Data: Challenging Exchange between Police Officer and Child Care Officer in their 'Traditional' Collaborative Relationship**

**WmPO:** ...When we are sent memos, yes we are supposed to carry out investigations, but sometimes these individuals that you all interview they might not want prosecution in the matter, but the letter would come and say, that John Brown raped so and so on this day; and you have information that you know that these people do not want to prosecute, but your mandate is to protect. It would be helpful to know so that we know what we are dealing with when we first get it...

**CCO #2:** But we don't always know it.

**WmPO:** That is not true, sometimes you all know it.

**CCO #2:** I think it is rare that we would know at that point, because it is later down, well for me it used to be later down into the discussion. Months later perhaps when it is found out that they are not interested in pursuing. It is hardly ever up front that they would say we are not interested.

**Senior PO# 2:** That is why it is always good to liaise with each other, because of this same scenario now.... (PO referring to the case study).

## Example 2 - Interview Data: CCB/CCO Responses to a Sexual Abuse Case of Eight Years Duration

In the case below, the POs, and especially the police prosecution (i.e., the section which presents the case in court on behalf of the State), worked in a productive and meaningful partnership with the CCO. This case example also represents several sub-categories from this study, e.g., a parent's/mother's role; the impact of time and the impact of significant persons on the allegation; the commodification (economic/monetary exchange arrangement between parties) of the sexual abuse allegation, and the secondary traumatising of professionals involved in managing child sexual abuse. What is particularly noteworthy also is that this case was subject to similar adjournments and delays to any other which did not have the same level of support.

<b>Interviewer:</b>	You don't have to mention him either; you call him by a fictitious name
<b>SCCO #7:</b>	That was my case, and I dealt with that (pause); she is 21 years now, that is when she was 13 years old, right, just gone into secondary school.
<b>Interviewer:</b>	You would have needed some counselling then... yes?
<b>SCCO #7:</b>	It was so traumatic in terms of...(pause)...especially at the beginning, at the onset, when there was a lot of...(pause)...it was very public too, the media was in it, because of the church and who he was; the church members were involved and they were intimidating as well or wanted to be....We probably went to court about fifteen to twenty times and had the cases, adjourn, adjourn, adjourn and adjourn (sic). The last year or so of the case I was not managing the case..., but I was still supporting the other officer who was managing it. I went to court with her a couple of times and stuff until the verdict came that the alleged perpetrator was guilty. ( <i>Interviewee sighing heavily and emphasises</i> ) That was a major one; that was a major one (sic).
<b>Interviewer:</b>	Given that you have talked about that landmark one, I am going to ask you to tell me a little bit more...
<b>SCCO #7:</b>	This case was a little different from other cases in that it was so dynamic. As I said there were a lot of other elements, a lot of other persons who vicariously if you like were involved that would not necessarily be involved in other sexually abused cases. As I said, there were church members who were very involved.
<b>Interviewer:</b>	She was 13; and what happened...?
<b>SCCO #7:</b>	Ok my supervisor at the time who doesn't work here anymore, he called me and said that this case is going to be - he believes- a huge one and he would want me, based on my experience to take this one....
<b>Interviewer:</b>	What kinds of issues?

**SCCO:#7** In terms of the mother who was going through some difficulties with their father, like access issues, and there was some financial matters. She was just into adolescence too so you know, be that as it may, she was giving her support...So dealing with the multiplicity of all the things and juggling everything I used to visit sometimes twice a week, once a week (sic) because I said because of the "public reach of the case" she needs a lot of support.

**Interviewer:** So what did she say to you?

**SCCO #7:** She said to me, I don't remember the details, and I wouldn't want to; but the extent of the information was, that he (sic) of course he was well loved, all the church members loved him and she trusted him; and he called her one day to come to his house and when she got there he was wearing a towel, I think yeah, I think I know, that is what she said, then she still came in and then he eventually took her to the bedroom and he had sex with her. I think it happened on two occasions. Then I think he gave her some sweets or something at the end of it.

**Interviewer:** Did you believe her when you interviewed her?

**SCCO #7:** Yes I did.

**Interviewer:** What made her believable?

**SCCO #7:** What made me believe her? The fact that she was able to stand all the pressure that was coming at her, and the pressure from the church was tremendous.

**Interviewer:** Was she a member of that church?

**SCCO #7:** Yes she was. The church members visited, they called; when she wouldn't recant, they would quarrel and threaten her and curse, you know what I mean, and say bad things about her family, her mother...

**Interviewer:** Where was her father in all this...?

**SCCO #7:** Her father, he lent support, but his support was from the outside looking in, because there was this strained relationship between the father and the mother. But I got him into the situation as far as the sexual abuse was concerned, and there were a few times when he actually went to court with her.

**Interviewer:** Tell me a little bit about the role of the police in this particular case...?

**SCCO #7:** ...we dealt with so many different police over that long period, eight years or so, what I can remember is that the police prosecutor, who dealt with this matter for most of the time he was really supportive... he would tell me to bring her to court early so that she could read her statement before hand, if she gets to go on the stand..... And I think she got involved at the point where it was crucial where they had offered her 2, 500.00 dollars to drop the case ...Yes the mother told me. So (pause) she took it, but then our attorney did not allow her to drop the case... So in spite of the money the case still went through...I think there were two things. They were poor, number one, and secondly I think it was at the point when she was at breaking point, because of all the pressures and she was about (sic) like kind of finish with it....

The strength of CCOs' working relationship with POs was dependent on alliance-building by individuals. The formal written referral of all cases of alleged abuse coexists with telephone calls between the two agencies about individual referrals. The custom and practice of minimalist information sharing is supplemented by these calls, with visits to each other as judged necessary by individuals. A shared history of learning and interagency collaboration on dealing with sexual abuse appeared nonetheless to be underdeveloped between the two agencies. The relationship between CCOs and the police was primarily to ensure the police had the basic information so they could carry out their responsibilities.

This notion of *giving the police what they want/need* became more evident during the focus group discussion, where the CCOs' collaboration pivots around the role of the police. Sometimes, there are situations where the working relationship is of a more symbiotic nature, as seen below:

**Senior PO #1 (focus group):** The Child Care Board (CCB) will now give us permission; if the child is now a ward of court and they proceed now...The child has moved now to a different environment, because you would not want to put her back in the same environment where she is being molested all the time. So once we can prove that something happened, what we would do, we would normally take the statement etc., carry out the investigations and look to bring Tony (fictitious name) before the court. However now the mother would not be the complainant, the CCB would be.

The police's role (i.e., pursuing a criminal investigation) is buttressed by the referral pattern and information sharing of the CCOs. The reciprocal collaborative measures currently existing on the police's part, in the fulfilment of the CCOs' ongoing and extended role with child and family, appears however, to be a variable one. The case of *giving a child what she/he needs* currently appears subsumed to *the police getting what they want*. The credibility of evidence concerning the allegation and its trustworthiness for charging and prosecutorial purposes underpin the collaborative working

relationship between the CCO and the police. The supporting role of the CCO is critical here because it increases the likelihood of a successful prosecution.

The regular collaborative liaisons which exist between CCOs and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Barbados, over sexually abused children, were in sharp contrast to the liaison with the police. There is an automatic referral system by the hospital to the CCB of all cases of sexual trauma, abortion and pregnancies involving children under the age of 16 years. CCOs are also part of hospital discharge planning before such children can be released. This planning results from a case conference practice in which medical personnel, paramedical staff and the CCO convene to discuss the needs of each child who is admitted to hospital.

Currently in Barbados the management of CSA allegations appear to be dominated by criminal and judicial proceedings, in spite of the important parallel intervention work by social workers, psychologists, medical and paramedical staff. Outcomes to child sexual abuse allegations therefore remain bounded by particular hegemonic interventions in which perpetrators are more likely to escape prosecution. This contrasts with therapeutic interventions which can demonstrate the harm done to the child and which seem to be accorded a lesser professional value in combatting child sexual abuse. This is a situation which can be described as professional relativism because of the apparent belief that one methodology can better substantiate a CSA allegation.

### **6.7 Child Care Officers' and Police Officers' Emotional Response to Allegations**

The impact of child sexual abuse allegations on CCOs' and women POs' working life is characterised by how they respond as professionals and how allegations affect them at the personal level. Emotional responses to the perceived pain of the child and trauma of the abuse resonate through statements such as - "Most often quite angry;" "bafflement," "sadness" and "anger."

**CCO #4:** So I mean for me...having the child breaking down is like you want a strict court procedure...thinking of the human face of it in relation to the child...this one case that stood out for me you know in dealing with children that especially have to testify in court how insensitive the court process is to me, in relation to dealing with sensitive issues sometimes. I understand why persons are reluctant to you know say anything...to report anything because when they go to court - it is like they are being victimised the second time. Yes we understand the perpetrator he needs to advocate on his behalf too but the sensitivity that supposes to be given to the victim is not there.

**Interviewer:** How did that impact on you at that time?

**CCO #4:** Well it was quite emotional for me too you know...I could sense the pain the child was going through and still at the same time the parents was saying...the perpetrator...who was opposite me and...he was smirking as the way how his facial expression was, more like trying to intimidate the child (sic).

**WmPO #3:** Anger. I do get angry a lot - I don't show it to the person - But I does (sic) vent when it is all done, I vent (*WmPO once again passionately emphasising this feeling*) because I do get angry when I see it happen. I get angry after, because the young girls have no esteem of themselves, to me they seem to think that they are not worth anything - just letting a man come and live with you knowing that this is wrong. What he is doing is against the law. I get vex with the parents for allowing it to happen and then saying she is lying, especially when you have a young girl come and report it and that she reported it to her mother who did nothing. When you get those types of report, you get vex, you get angry, but as I said I don't show it to them, but when they go their separate ways, I do vent. I do vent because I sometimes put myself in that child's position.

## **6.8 Factors Aligned to Disclosure, Referral and Outcome of Allegations**

From the CCOs' and POs' data, at least two phenomena are likely to impact the timeliness of the referrals, prosecution and eventual outcome of child sexual abuse allegations by children. These are outlined below.

- The time interval period, i.e., the proximity of the alleged offence to the time of disclosure. This is the time interval occurring between the alleged offence, the disclosure and referral to the Police or Child Care Board. It is also a time in which some children might have disclosed to someone, but with no official complaint or referral made to one or other of the child protection services. This can also contribute to opportunities for private transactions between the victim's family and the alleged perpetrator to settle the matter out of court. A delay in reporting can therefore reduce the credibility of the claim and influence prosecutorial chances.
- The second impacting factor on reporting is the people power potential, i.e., the child's relationship with the alleged perpetrator, family, and the significance of these to the child's life. For example, from the early discussion on pregnancy, the two factors of time interval and people power would have influenced, in all likelihood, both the disclosing and referral dynamic. The data supports this in that some pregnant adolescents say the father is "my boyfriend." Equally, by the time the pregnancy is revealed, some families do not want to press criminal charges against the perpetrator. In return, the response of the CCO to the referral appears to be mediated by the willingness or unwillingness of the child's mother to support the prosecution of the alleged perpetrator, for example, because of his status in the family and significance to the child. From Table 6.1 we see that the majority of allegations concern a person with significant personal power arising from status or relationship to the child, potentially capable of affecting both disclosure (in the first place) and secondly, referral to an authoritative agency. The table shows that of the 11 cases discussed, six are within a family and close neighbour context and two, those

involving the teacher and the pastor, concern someone in a position of trusted extra-familial authority.

The time interval factor, and the power related to the status of the perpetrator, both have an effect on outcomes within a system that currently suffers from systemic inertia as characterised by the very long delays for child sexual abuse cases to be heard in the high court.

These two factors further impact on the disclosure pattern of the child, which can become a self-defeating exercise; a paradox which contributes to the perpetuation of further risk of sexual abuse. Table 6.3 below is conceptualised to indicate two things:

- the influence of the time interval period and the people power potential in relation to disclosure by the child;
- the action by the CCOs and the eventual outcome within the judicial system. It is theorised that disclosure within the current child protection system in Barbados is a self-defeating experience for child, mother and the professionals, and contributes to the perpetuation of risk.

## **6.9 The Disclosure Model Intervention Trajectories**

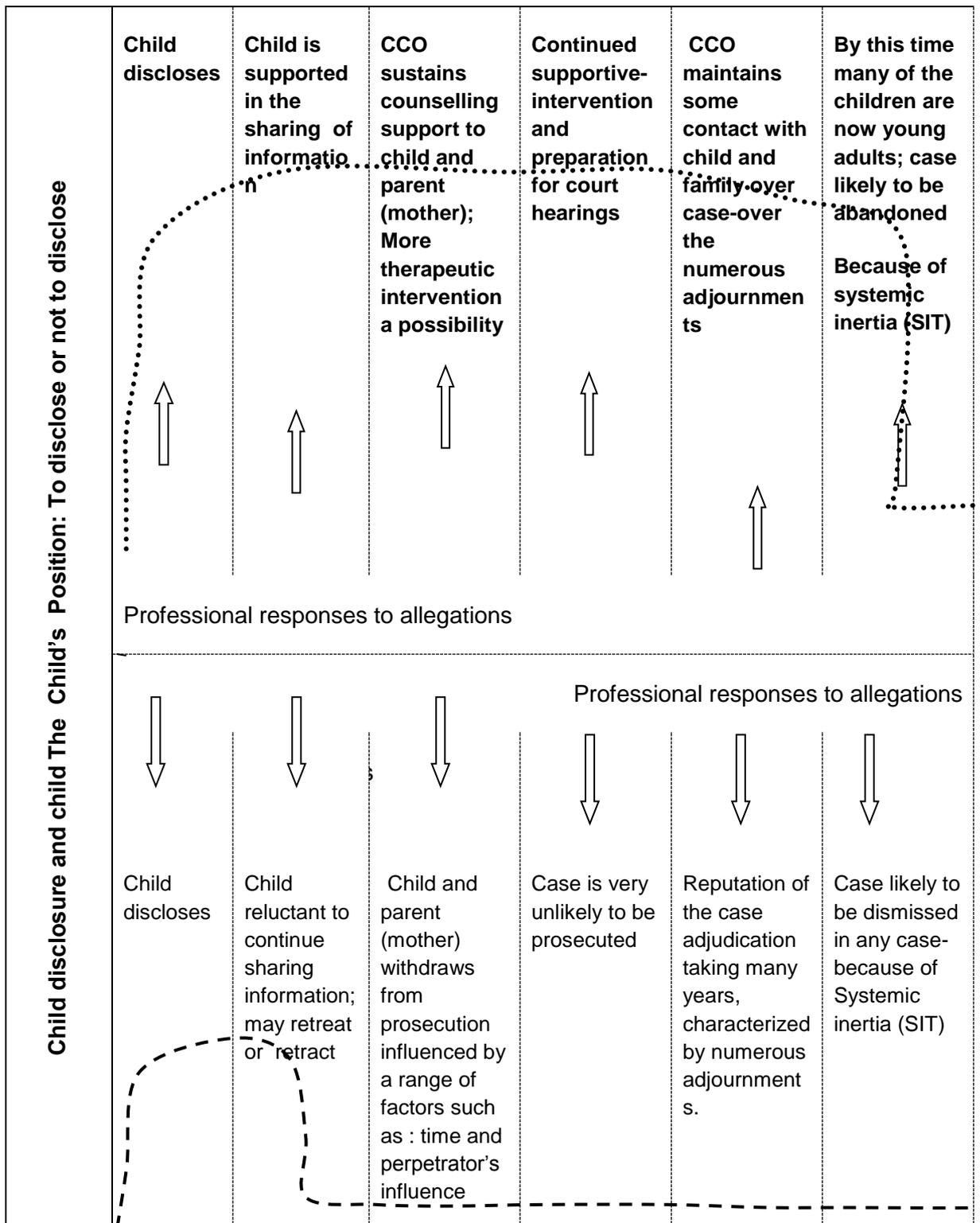
The disclosure model below shows two child disclosure and two CCOs' intervention trajectories. Above the line the child and parent are supported in their desire to see the prosecution of the alleged rape of the child. The experience with the criminal justice system is characterised by a lengthy period of waiting for the case to be heard in high court. The end result is a likely abandonment/dismissal of the case, as witnesses fail to appear in court and the desire of child and parent is to put the matter behind them after years of waiting.

Below the line there is reluctance on the part of mother and child for the case to proceed, with possible withdrawal of allegation. The outcome in the court and for the child (where the case is not prosecuted) is the same as the situation in 'above the line'; abandonment and the potential for the

perpetuation of risk of sexual abuse, as many perpetrators are never brought to justice.

Some of the processes associated with professionals' responses to CSA in Barbados, show the child's position is a subjugated one, subsumed by systemic inertia and patriarchal nepotism as introduced in section 6.4.4. Therapeutic intervention by the medical and social work professions, as yet do not appear sufficiently able to help change this position.

**Figure 6.3 Self-defeating paradox of child disclosure: contribution to the perpetuation of risk**



Key:  (Below the line) Child's disclosure ends in withdrawal of allegation and court case

(Above the line) Child's disclosure leads to prosecution, characterized by a lengthy period of waiting for case to be heard in high court - possible withdrawal.

## **6.10 Meanings Associated with Hearing, Telling and Taking Care of the CSA Story**

What might be some of the deeper meanings associated with professionals' focus on pregnancy other than the obvious health and welfare of the child? Such focus or re-classification in Barbados is synonymous with what Dingwall, Eekelaar and Murray (1983), cited by Tomison (1995), describes as cultural relativism, under the circumstances which show that:

... 'cultural relativism' is applied, [when] acts of child abuse and neglect become not abusive or neglectful, but positive attempts to comply with alternative standards that would allow them to be recognised as appropriate parental behaviour.

(Tomison, 1995, p.7)

Child maltreatment therefore means what some adults say it means, allowing them to act in a protective or an indifferent manner.

In looking at some of the professionals' responses to CSA in Barbados in this chapter, arguably, such 'cultural relativism' can mean that some will see parents as having rightful control over all aspects of their children's lives with the expectation that they (the parents) will also act in their child's best interest; to the extent of deciding what is 'real' sexual abuse and what is not. With parents' graduating from not having such control historically, to having such responsibility, may well be seen by some professionals as a parent's inherent right. The absence of a holistic state policy to intervene more proactively to support parents in their parenting role and to actively recognize that some parents need such support in order to prevent and ameliorate the maltreatment of some children might also be reflective of this 'cultural relativism'. Corporal punishment and its excesses is a case in point.

The reluctance on the part of policy makers to update the family law and child protection legislation in a holistic and comprehensive manner and to prosecute CSA cases judiciously can be interpreted as resonating with imperialistic and patriarchal monopolies as described in Chapter Three.

One can see that abusers under these circumstances are given opportunities to escape prosecution. For example the promise to support the unborn child, thus being seen as responsible and 'taking care of businesses.' Such a promise then becomes part and parcel of parents' and professionals' reclassification of the sexual abuse to a less serious crime or to designate abuse as simply the child's 'misfortune.' Arguably therefore, whilst children may be seen to be in need of care and protection by some professionals who understand the importance of promoting their best interest, other adults may have the latitude to violate this best interest. Children may therefore be cherished and it may be that this remains the case until some questionable and unacceptable treatment of them by some adults is challenged.

On the other hand, the meanings of the sexual abuse (to the child) may stem from a distortion of the child's self-concept, worldview, and affective capacities as discussed under the 'Four Traumagenic Dynamics' Model in Chapter Three (Finkelhor & Browne, 1985). Should this be the case, and should it not be recognised as part of the intervention assessment, it arguably becomes easy for the child to see the sexual abuse as a re-ordering of circumstances by adults to comply with whatever standards are being applied to protect particular interests; rather than addressing the harmful effects where they exist. These standards might be to prevent criminal proceedings against the abuser, to obtain financial gain from the abuser and /or to safeguard the child against further trauma from the criminal and judicious processes. The meaning of CSA in any case to the child might very well be one of being further abused, powerless acceptance or indeed rage.

The 'Four Traumagenic Dynamics' Model in Chapter Three also helps to explain some of the meanings professionals may ascribe to CSA. For example in *Traumatic Sexualisation* if and when it occurs and when it results in the child learning to use sexual behaviour as a manipulating strategy, this can be (mistakenly) seen as promiscuous and consenting behaviour to the adults. Some attitudes and behaviours are difficult to shift in the face of sexual and gender inequalities. Even though some aspects of the law might change, it does not sufficiently translate into the protective principles to help change

behaviours. Neither is there a government or national civil society programme to help bring about such change. UNICEF's valiant representation and advocacy programmes are insufficient by themselves. The social conditions of gender inequality and in some cases poverty, remain as cementing forces even though CSA may be re-scripted as wrong and harmful.

### **6.11 Normalisation of Child Sexual Abuse: Routes to the Perpetuation of Risk**

Some of the emerged phenomena in the data indicate that the way in which child sexual abuse is defined in Barbados leads to its normalisation, which in turn leads to the risk of perpetuation of child sexual abuse.

The normalisation of CSA occurs through:

- re-defining some cases of sexual abuse as “consensual”, with less robust prosecution effort, resulting in the potential for case abandonment;
- the masking of child sexual abuse numbers through constant adjournments, which redefines its serious violation nature to one of ordinariness, making young children (mainly females) wait, on a regular basis, over five years for a complete judicial hearing of their allegation;
- unintended adolescent pregnancies and a main focus on remedial and supportive actions of the adolescent, often leading to pardoning the abuse because of a promise to support the baby when it is born;
- the gendering of child sexual abuse, a reflection of the wider societal norms of gender violence against women and children.

Examples of the gendered effects include:

- mothers' traumatised by the experience of their child's sexual abuse
- the commodification of child sexual abuse by some mothers' witting or unwitting actions of being paid to drop the allegation by her child;

- the neutralisation of maternal supportive strength to the child by the passage of time, and on occasion coupled with payment not to pursue the case in court;
- CCOs' (mainly females) and women POs' vicarious distress and disempowerment by the criminal and judicial system, which redefine child sexual abuse to one of ordinariness through labelling and delays;
- CCOs' (child protection) professional disempowerment within a system which (on a daily basis) repeats the above experiences;
- the system's contribution to the protection of perpetrators by the high likelihood that accused men will not be prosecuted.

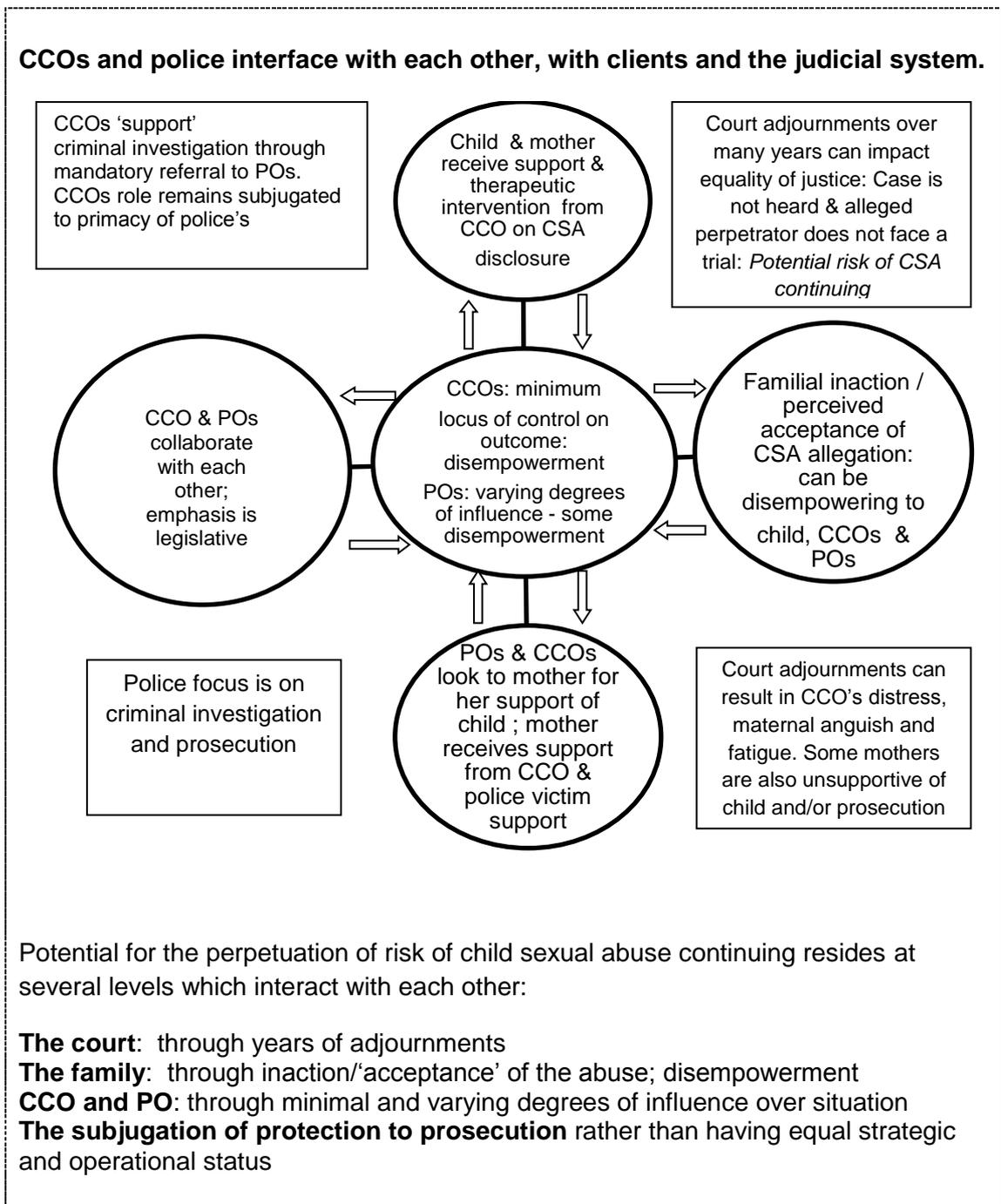
Perpetuation of the risk of child sexual abuse is the result of this conceptualised normalisation of the criminal act of child sexual abuse.

#### **6.11.1 Perpetuation of risk**

My research aims re-articulated at the beginning of Chapter Four were not intended to pre-determine this study's outcomes (as in keeping with grounded theory). Research in this paradigm can lead to findings which the researcher was not expecting; it is part of the story-ing journey. The study data, rather, determine the path and final destination, as opposed to the research aims. The conceptual lens/map of CoP and feminism assist me, the researcher, along the path of understanding.

What therefore emerges from this data analysis using grounded theory is the perpetuation of risk for the continuance of child sexual abuse, seen from the discourses of the CCOs and POs. This potential for the perpetuation of this risk, despite the many interventions by the professionals in this study and a range of other services, is represented in Figure 6.4 below. This is a part of the representation of this study. I discuss this discovered phenomenon in the next chapters, following the grounded theory principle of engaging more fully with the literature on this perpetuation of risk story.

**Figure 6.4 Potential for the perpetuation of risk**



**6.12 Next Step**

In the next chapter (7), I utilise the CoP component of my conceptual framework to assist understanding of child sexual abuse as a practice and the professional responses to it. I consider what some of the likely maintaining factors are, and how a CoP might contribute to the manner in which professionals respond to the phenomenon (CSA).

## 7 Conceptualising Police and Child Care Officers' Responses - Communities of Practice Perspective

### 7.1 Introduction

In this chapter I analyse the findings of this study using a CoP lens for understanding some of the socio-cultural learning factors which result in certain professional behavioural responses. The ontology of Communities of Practice (CoP) helps us understand that behaviour emerges from participation in the shared activities of specific organisational groupings (CoPs), which in turn gives rise to particular organisational identities which shape professional responding. The latter part of Chapter Two on professional cultures contains examples of these collective modes of being which reflect the cultural identities of POs and CCOs. For example, the chapter speaks to the organisational activities of POs maintaining public order and enforcing the law, as compared to the helping and empowering social work role of CCOs. As a result, the police collectively and individually place a value on, and adopt the value of maintaining the edge, which works for them in the execution of these roles. Within the emerging themes (Appendix 6.7) from this study's focus group data, the police are seen to be demonstrating this cultural value through the following two themes:

- **Knowing child's previous history:** where previous history, either as a victim or as a "willing participant" to their 'sexual abuse', needs to be investigated by police before the court hearing.

**Senior PO #1 (focus group)...** let's say that this girl came to you six months ago with her mum and call the same man name, and money paid (out) (sic), and you went out in the district, because you have to go out and talk to the people in the district, to find out how this mother treats this child, what goes on in the house... you will be able to say to the officer - "Last year Kim (fictitious name) and her mother made two reports against this same man and he pay money." He wrote a cheque or he gave them cash as the case may be... (sic).

This is especially important as the defence might use some aspects of this information to discredit the child victim and, by extension, the police prosecutorial evidence. *Maintaining such an edge* here is important in all cases, including CSA. Occupational hazards need to be minimised and the identity of the police safeguarded.

- **Discovering if a child victim alleging sexual abuse is lying:**

**Senior PO #1 (focus group):** We will then have to notify our supervisors, because it is a rape, a serious matter...we will have to notify our supervisor for direction, guidance...It all depends on what is said and done in respect of what is said at the interview...because sometimes as you interview them, there is a tendency that some of them might be lying...well you know our job is to put people before the court...

From this data we can infer the police's need to protect their professional identity and not to be discredited at prosecution. Developing suspiciousness, another professional value discussed in Chapter Two, does two things: it helps in maintaining the edge and also serves as a coping function (Brown, 1988; Kappeler, Sluder, & Alpert, 1998). The practice of the police in these examples is tied up with their professional identities and values and, like the CCOs whose roles emerged very clearly in Chapter Six, both groups are directly involved in the domain of prosecution as part of their CSA statutory responsibility. In this prosecutorial role, there is also a joint response from CCOs.

**CCO #2: (focus group):** There have been times when I have had to give statements to the PO in cases like this because I was the CCO taking the information as I was working with the case... And more than once, I have been to the police station and given a word by word statement ...

**CCO #3: (focus group):** Sometimes police officers would call to get clarification if it is a case that has been known to us before...It

[communication] is beneficial, because sometimes they have information that we want, so it is vice versa.

The collaborative efforts between the two groups, however, seem to be ones of expediency in the execution of their separate mandates. This emerged from themes from within the individual interviews, as well as the focus group, which acted as a triangulation method. For example, another theme of ‘collaborating to facilitate the police’s mandate’ in CSA cases (Appendix 6.7) emerged from the group interaction, in which the CCB facilitates the primacy of the criminal investigation, with less reciprocity on the police’s part towards the CCB.

**WmPO (CID) (focus group):** The only time we would really speak to the CCB is when we need guardianship...we would speak in that case, or if the CCB send a memo to us, relative to a sexual offence, but if there is none, case like this we would not speak to the CCB, not unless it comes right down to the end and it comes to court...

‘Communities of practice’ (CoPs), as an expressed term first used by Lave & Wenger (1991), is one that is pivotal to the theory of ‘situated learning’. This theory accounts for workplace learning as occurring through participation in practice and interaction with colleagues, rather than through formal instruction or training. The relevance and utility of this concept of ‘situated learning’ within a CoP is seen in the benefit of the knowledge gained within the group, where learning occurs naturally during the course of individuals becoming competent in a practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Collective performance is more likely to be effective, by engendering cooperation, ownership and commitment among individual workers. In other words, ‘learning to be’ occurs, identities are born or strengthened, and values are developed from being an explanatory tool, to one which is investigative and motivational. Businesses and other groups use it to motivate performance, enhance commitment and make use of the implicit knowledge assets held by employees as argued by Turner (1999); Wenger (2000); Wenger & Snyder (2000); Davenport & Hall (2002) and Le May (2009). The identities of the RBPF and the CCB in Barbados are reflected through their respective statutory responsibilities of law enforcement and child protection, being informed by their code of ethics as discussed in Chapter

Two. These are two very different mandates, but yet ones that have to respond jointly to CSA. What appears to be the case, however, is that the opportunities for coming together in an environment of 'situated learning' for meaningful collaboration are currently not available in Barbados.

**WmPO (CID) (focus group):** I wanted to say there is no formal method in the police sharing information with outside organizations...When we are sent a memo from the CCB, correspondence is sent back, but there is no detailed sharing of information. Correct me if I am wrong, there is none.

**CCO #3: (focus group):** We share what is necessary; the referral is not as detailed... not everything that would have taken place in the interview. It is what is required for the police to do their investigation.

It would seem that the respective work domains have not been challenged to work in non-traditional and responsive ways with others on areas of mutual endeavour. My reason for this statement comes from the evidence which emerged from this study, with examples given above.

In the book, "Communities of Practice: Learning Meaning and Identity", Wenger (1998, 2008) pursued the theoretical development and expansion of the theory of CoPs, and its fundamental underpinning concepts. This was achieved through the articulation of the socially interactive dimensions of situated learning, where the importance of meaning was theorised (Wenger, 1998). For example, Wenger, and Wenger with colleagues, theorised on the wide applicability of CoPs to work and social settings. They described CoPs as informal groups bound together by a common interest or passion (Wenger & Snyder, 2000), consisting of three fundamental elements. These are: a *domain*, a *community* and a *practice* (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). In this study, the way these concepts are used is seen where 'domain' for the police refers to the investigative and prosecutorial role; 'community' means the RBPF and POs, and 'practice' means the application of criminal procedures. The 'domain' for the CCOs consists of their support and therapeutic role; 'community' means the CCB and the staff who make up its officers, and 'practice' involves the processes of assessment and provision of

support services. These concepts explored below are used for their analytical usefulness to this study.

## **7.2 The Domain**

The *domain*, or the area of shared inquiry, "...creates common ground and a sense of identity...inspires members to contribute and participate, guides their learning and gives meaning to their action" (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002, p. 29). These respective domains are not purely an area of interest, more importantly, they are goals or subjects that matter to members. It is also not a fixed entity, and may change with the CoP's development (or lack of development). The domain example, from the data of this study, is child sexual abuse. This domain area sees the police responding according to their mandate and the CCOs according to theirs. This study further shows a great need for coming together over the domain of CSA, in order to respond coherently to issues such as adolescent pregnancies (a phenomenon arising from the study and a concern of both groups). However, professional responses to CSA remain largely separate, with the police pursuing the domain of the law, and CCOs the well-being of the victim, e.g., as in the case of the tangible evidence of pregnancy. Opportunities appear limited to create a jointly shared area of child protection enquiry, where a cross-fertilisation of professional ideas and learning occurs and implicit and explicit meaning of actions critically examined. These remain unexplored areas and ones of need between the two professional groups in Barbados. This is especially seen in cases such as the aforementioned unintended pregnancy and its co-relation to a history of sexual abuse, as shown in the literature (Noll, Shenk, & Putnam, 2009).

I cite another example (below) from this study's data, which is of concern to both POs and CCOs, because it impacts directly on their respective domains, i.e., the length of time victims have to wait for the high court in Barbados to adjudicate, linked to the child's continuous repetition of the allegations in the various criminal, child protection and judicial forums.

**WmPO #4:** There is one instance which I remember, I dealt with a young girl...at the time she spoke to me I was at District XY police station. The girl gave me all the information, but the way she gave it to me I could see that when this case got to court she would not be able to speak in front of the magistrate, the witnesses and the accused. This girl would not be able to speak...

And it so happened that when she went to court I wasn't present - but one of the other police officers who dealt with the case was - they told me that the girl was an emotional mess. She was seeing the psychiatrist; she was a big girl and she went back to wetting her bed. In that instance I think the case was discontinued...I personally believe the police should be able to use a statement of the victim to prosecute the accused person.

**Interviewer:** And that does not happen?

**WmPO #4:** That does not happen, not in our legal system.

.....  
**Interviewer:** By the police?

**CCO #4:** By the court system, and most of the time ... another issue (sic), when I went to court...that was when I became concerned. I felt that the child should have a legal representative, not just the police representing the child, because the police is not in the position to represent the child in the way how a defence attorney is allowed to...

These are some of the many and varied situations which are of individual and professional concern. Both professional groups expressed concern about aspects of this *victim - official structure(s) interface* (my italics).

A shared enquiry exists, but actions are executed independently, without any created opportunity or *created common ground* for sharing different creative responses. There is a potential tension which this study is also showing, one where domains in common promote some collaboration but on the other hand, might militate against this engagement because of separate and distinct mandates, which in some of the professionals' view might be seen to be in

conflict with the other group, e.g., “Our job is to put people before the courts” – Senior PO #1 (focus group).

### **7.2.1 The community**

The second element of a CoP is the *community*. “The community creates the social fabric of learning...it is a group of people who interact, learn together, build relationships, and in the process develop a sense of belonging and mutual commitment (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002, pp. 28 - 34). Individuals, on becoming a community, are therefore assisted by:

- interacting regularly in relation to their domain;
- ensuring members of the community work together on the domain of interest, together with:

...management/organisational support which helps to structure fragmented practice and which encourages alignment (as opposed to directing). The quality of this support is critical as the working together (of a CoP) does not necessarily occur on a day to day basis, nor do the members need to be of the same profession or organization.

(Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, *ibid*, p. 34)

The examples from the data given above show both professional groups expressing concern about the thing they have in common, i.e., the victim of CSA; but this concern is obviously insufficient to bring the two groups together to work as a community in the victim’s best interest (from their respective mandates). Central to how members of a community operate is through an understanding of how they respond to the situations with which they are faced. Interpretations of, and meanings ascribed to, these circumstances both guide responses and help confirm identity. The identities of the two groups are vastly different, which could be a hurdle to working together and creating a shared focus in which there is mutual engagement. Examples of these cultural differences have been discussed in Chapter Two, and revealed in the findings chapter (6), with more concrete examples of the parallel workings shown within the individual and the focus group discourses. However, through the presentation of these findings explored through the

principles of a CoP, the opportunity is explored for understanding differences and the routes to mutual commitment in responding to CSA.

### **7.2.2 The practice - the theoretical and practical**

The third fundamental element of a CoP is the *practice*. This *practice* is the “specific knowledge the community develops, shares and maintains” (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, *ibid*, p. 29).

They may create tools, standards, generic designs, manuals and other documents;...develop a unique perspective on their topic, as well as a body of common knowledge, practices and approaches...and established ways of interacting...They become a community of practice.

(Wenger et al., 2002, pp. 4-5)

Training emerged from this study as an area directly related to ‘practice’ which impacts on the management of CSA by POs and CCOs. Such training can impact on the quality of how one responds to situations.

**WmPO #4:** The training since I joined the police force, I must say, the training that I had has been generalised. It has not been basically to deal with children... Some of the training has been to deal with sexual cases as opposed to cases to do with children.

What emerged from the police data is that the training is generic and focused on the importance of the technicalities of evidence gathering, being adult-centred, as described by the female officer who had been in post ten years at the time of the interview.

**WmPO #4:** ...Since I came down (from police training school) I went on a course, a four week training course - at the regional police training centre, which dealt with sexual offence cases, and part of that was like interviewing victims on video camera, processing scenes, statement taking, speaking to different people...interviewing different people...

Fundamentally, this study revealed that the CCOs receive support specific to child protection and CSA management, from in-house organised training and

from supervisory sessions. Specialist training in CSA management appears to be less structured and available.

**Interviewer:** Have you any training in the use of the (anatomically correct) dolls?

**CCO #2:** ...No. Well they give us the dolls and the dolls come with like some little books...I think they are very useful if used correctly, appropriately... like you are giving power to the children, the children are then becoming the story teller.

**Interviewer:** How then is knowledge passed on from one person to the next?

**CCO #4:** Well generally it is expected that your supervisor is the one who would pass on such knowledge to you, but then it could be a twofold situation because your supervisor might be now learning the programme...every area needs their own training and expertise...We have more informal training...but not on a consistent basis, and then we don't have the opportunity to receive the amount of training that we would need.

Specialist training is fundamental to the acquisition of knowledge and learning in child sexual abuse management. Within CoPs, knowledge management and learning are of a socially participatory nature. The relevance of this concept to this study is that, in the absence of such learning, the two professions of the POs and CCOs are unlikely to meaningfully respond to allegations of CSA when they work in an individualistic manner. Wenger et al. (2002) argue that a "knowledge strategy" (p. 7) is important to drive the business strategy of an organisation, as it details how to develop and apply the necessary skills and capabilities to the business. Knowledge becomes alive through continual updating and sharing, through the development of working documents and various tools of the trade. As a consequence of this participation, "communities of practice do not reduce knowledge to an object" (p. 9). Because it is not reified to the extent that it becomes a static object, the approach allows CoPs to:

...accumulate knowledge, they become informally bound by the value they find in learning together...It also accrues in the personal satisfaction of knowing colleagues who understand each other's perspectives...

(Wenger et al., *ibid*, p. 5)

This study is showing evidence, from the above examples, that the types of training POs and CCOs receive routinely helps in the maintenance of their respective mandates, i.e., the police's generic four month basic training in sexual abuse with an emphasis on investigatory techniques, and the CCOs' supervision support of their day-to-day practice. Interestingly, neither group benefit from specialist training in child protection or CSA management. Knowledge acquisition and organisational learning in this area, which enable a CoP to execute its functions effectively, attain its goals and develop and concretize the meaning of its (CoP) practice, seems to be currently undeveloped. Wenger (1998) explains how CoPs help to structure this organisational learning and its identity in relation to the world. He states that this is done through the knowledge they (CoPs) develop at the *core* (the centre of their expertise), and at their *boundaries*, i.e., with other CoPs (original italics). Consequently, the strength of an agency's domain (its discipline or field of work) will also benefit from interagency collaboration. The potential exists for POs and CCOs as "communities of practice [to] truly become organisational assets when their core and their boundaries are active in complementary ways" (Wenger, 1998 p. 6). In this we see that CoPs can impact on each other to the benefit of their respective enterprise or, more powerfully, when as a collective, they adopt a joint enterprise in which they learn from one another. Learning and knowledge management are therefore important building blocks in the relationship between persons within a CoP, both interdepartmental and intra-professional.

Problems can still prevail in the complex domain of CSA when new ways of working are introduced and old values and attitudes are unchanged. This study found some concerns over a CCB proposal for mandatory reporting of CSA by the public and professionals of known cases. Below are two examples of this concern:

**Station Sergeant:** Well you have to speak to mandatory in terms of saying who you are saying it should be mandated by whom (sic). It can't be a general mandating...

**CCO #4:** ...first we would be overloaded...

In Chapter Six, this issue of mandatory reporting (having as one of its aims to better manage CSA reporting and referrals) emerged as a specific operational area which will directly impact on the practice of both groups. There are concerns about it on both sides. The police question the need for it and the CCOs expressed concerns over the automatic increase in referrals that it would stimulate, compounding an already heavy workload. Challenges are posed here to the identities of both groups. Such proposals might very well lead to alienation or an absence of meaningful collaboration, both within each CoP and with others, through their participation or non-participation as modes of responding, as discussed later in this chapter.

### **7.3 Situating Practice: Learning and Meaning**

The way in which the police and the CCOs in Barbados carry out their professional mandates can be through the CoP's "situated learning", as described by Wenger (2008).

**CCO #2:** .. So as I said, they will contact us and they do not discharge the child unless we come...so any case of sexual abuse... A lot of our cases come through the hospital, because once the child has been raped or sexually abused in some way and they present at the accident and emergency department, to me it is automatic...they call the CCB. So we work well with the hospital. Nearly every week we have a case conference up there. So they work pretty well with us.

The nature of this learning, being a socially interactive activity, comes about through the established group norms and implicit and explicit organisational rules and mores. This learning is established through the interconnected areas of mutual *engagement*, *joint enterprise* and *shared repertoire* (Wenger, 1998a, pp. 72-84) which sustains the practice as discussed in the next section 'identifying features and characteristics of CoP'. An example from this study

which can be analysed by this situated learning concept is the collaborative CCB hospital model, which appears to be one of meaningful engagement over every child under sixteen years admitted as a result of sexual abuse, as seen above and below:

**Interviewer:** Who are present are the case conferences?

**CCO #2:** The medical social worker, the paediatrician, the psychiatrist, because depending on the case, these children are sometimes placed on ward C4, which is the psychiatric assessment ward for observations... The child care officer, senior child care officer... At case conferences the supervisor is always present, so the child care officer is never on their own; because with any sexual abuse there is a standard set of tests the children get, e.g., HIV, pregnancy, STIs and other specific names...

.....  
**Interviewer:** I want to talk about now about multidisciplinary working...do you ever have any multidisciplinary meetings with other agencies?

**CCO #4:** Yes, we normally would have case conferences. Basically we would deal with the hospital, sometimes we would include Welfare (Department) in issues with parents to do with housing...

What emerges from this study is that the type and quality of the daily interactions POs and CCOs have with each other, and with other professional organisations, are influenced by the significance of the meaning of CSA to each group. Such meanings can be expressed either in word or action. Wenger (1998a) argues that *learning* and *meaning*, together with the distinctive CoP's *identity* and the imperative of *negotiation* (which involves *interpretation* and *action*) and its constant renewal, are important elements to the functioning of a community. They are seen as very closely related.

The CCB – hospital model of engagement is representative of a distinctive identity which the CCB has with the hospital, with an agreed meaning of CSA. The negotiation of such meaning, of how, for example, victims of child sexual abuse should be treated, or even what CSA is, is explained by Wenger (2008, p. 286), where the 'interpretative', as well as the 'construction of the problem'

is described. In terms of interpretative meaning, as an example only, both professionals' responses are likely to be guided by a narrow interpretation of what the law or what medicine says (as in the case of the forensic medical examination). The construction of the problem in Barbados, in turn, could be influenced not only by this only, but also by the wider cultural environment, which might be disbelieving of such allegations or see them as normative, with responses such as "that is how it is with these children."

The 'construction of the problem' can also be conceptualised from the viewpoint of groups of male dominated organisations seeing CSA allegations as doubtful or untrue: "A lot of doubts were cast on the allegations. Witnesses came forward with information to cast doubts" (P.O (CID) #3). Whereas a largely female fraternity might be more believing and/or more open-minded, but nonetheless, voiceless. This, of course, is not denying that some females can be, and also are, doubtful of the occurrence of CSA, and others might be complicit in its perpetration. Emerging from this study is evidence of such scenarios in this mother's apparent unconcern:

**SCCO #7:** ...sometimes they end up in residential care, especially in the case where the mother don't believe them or choose not to believe them, and would rather side with the alleged perpetrator for whatever reason...

Arguably, therefore, the sources from which the two professionals groups will find meaning in their responses to child sexual abuse will lie in places where their identity is embedded, such as: the legislation; their respective institutional rules, hierarchical structures and practices; their specialist training in social sciences; criminal law; human rights international statutes; cultural mores, and the history of their respective organisations; or indeed their own cultural experiences.

Responses from the wider society in Barbados, such as the political directorate, the church and the media, will also influence society's and professionals' responses to child protection through their own CoPs. These organisations will also impact on professionals' responses.

**CCO #4:** From how I look at it, yes, we in our society boast of being religious or Christian, but sometimes our morals and values don't meet up when it comes to the practical, human nature of it.

The professionals within the study are likely to be members of some of these wider CoP forums in Barbados, which (for example) may present themselves as extremely religious, and some others may be dominated by a variety of service, professional and occupational clubs. But contradictions exist, and will be represented in professional responses as well as seen in the apparent societal contradiction above and below in this CCO's observation.

**CCO #4:** I remember talking to a friend of mine from England...telling me that she was dealing with a child who was mentally and physically challenged and she was looking to have that child placed for adoption with a young couple. And I said to her, you mean to tell me that you can get a child that is mentally and physically challenged adopted, and we have whole children (sic) for foster care and we can't even get them out?

Something is wrong and we have to deal with the behaviours and psych of our people.

Similar sentiments resonated throughout this study about CSA allegations. CCOs in particular found it difficult to understand some mothers' responses and the predictable court adjournments.

As Wenger observes,

We engage in different practices in each of the communities of practice to which we belong. We often behave rather differently in each of them, construct different aspects of ourselves and gain different perspectives.

(Wenger, 1998a, p. 159)

The theory of a CoP enables our understanding that CoPs can coexist with others, where there will be overlap, e.g., the police medical forensic team overlapping and interacting with that of the preliminary investigative team, and with the police prosecution team where different. The contiguous nature of these CoPs' boundaries means that there will be multiple meanings attached to CSA allegations. The findings from this study, relating to the forensic

medical examination, can be examined against “this multiple meaning” paradigm, where continuities and discontinuities exist in attributive meanings, as seen from the POs and CCOs’ responses.

Meanings can therefore be seen to spring from several sources, not least of which are the culture and society, which also influence thinking and the ways in which meanings are ascribed. The absence of mutual engagement around child protection makes it more difficult to have agreed meanings and consistent joint approaches to helping victims.

### **7.3.1 Identifying features and characteristics of a CoP**

Conceptualising the respective CoP mandates of the CCB and the RBPF can be summed up as child protection services and law enforcement, as discussed earlier in this chapter. The three fundamental elements of a CoP as concepts for understanding and explaining behaviours were also discussed. I now summarise these by capturing below, in Figure 7.1, the key identifying features of a CoP for ease of reference and ongoing understanding of the characteristics of a CoP’s identity as the analytical tool in this chapter. In the three dimensions which Wenger (1998, pp. 72-84) identifies as the hallmarks by which practice is sustained in a CoP, there are three factors:

- there is mutual engagement, where members establish norms and build relationships; “We do have lectures, weekly lectures...but we also have roll call” - Senior PO #1.
- there is joint enterprise, over which there is a clear understanding of how the CoP should respond; “I don’t know how we get it done but all of us, we look at things objectively” – WmPO (CID)
- over time a shared repertoire of communal resources is developed, e.g., language, stories and routines. “Topics are discussed, but they don’t have to be police subjects”...Senior PO #1.

These behaviours extend over a time span during which the behaviours of the CoP emerge and develop. These accord with the professional identity and cultural values of the two groups, which were discussed in Chapter Two. From

this we are assisted in understanding the nature of the two groups' responses to child sexual abuse based on certain identifying features.

Where this study's findings are concerned, it was revealed in Chapter Six that child sexual abuse is defined and reframed in particular ways by the two groups. Through the hallmarks above, we are assisted in our understanding that labels such as "willing participants" and of "real CSA" are both terms emanating from the domain of CSA, and are part of the professional identity vocabulary. Roles associated with this domain are ones which are likely to be fixed, particularly in the absence of training, new knowledge management and learning about CSA, as discussed earlier. It would be insufficient, therefore, to expect the responses of the two groups to be any other than what has developed over time and become imbedded as part of the respective CoPs' established shared repertoire, as summarised below in the CoP's representation from the literature, and from the emerged findings of this study.

**Figure 7.1 A community of practice key, identifying features leading to coherence**

Identifying features from literature	Study data	Characteristics features from literature	Study data
<p><b>The Community:</b> Made up of members of the domain who interact and engage in shared activities, building relationships that allow learning within the community and the development of technical knowledge or skill. It creates the social arrangement for learning and relationship building.</p> <p><i>For example, CCOs and the POs in Barbados.</i></p>	<p>CCOs and POs make up the respective communities in Barbados.</p>	<p><b>What it is about / what it does</b> – A CoP's perspective of what it does is through an understanding of its <i>joint enterprise</i> (i.e., negotiated situation (Wenger, 2008, p. 77), which influences the way the world is seen by its members. Wenger sees this as contributing to the tendency to "come up with certain interpretations, to engage in certain actions, to make certain choices...all by virtue of participating in certain enterprises" (Wenger, <i>ibid</i>).</p>	<p><b>E.g.,</b> responses to CSA are influenced by: legislation (POs) and social work training (CCOs). Both CoPs also respond based on their histories of learning about CSA on the job.</p>

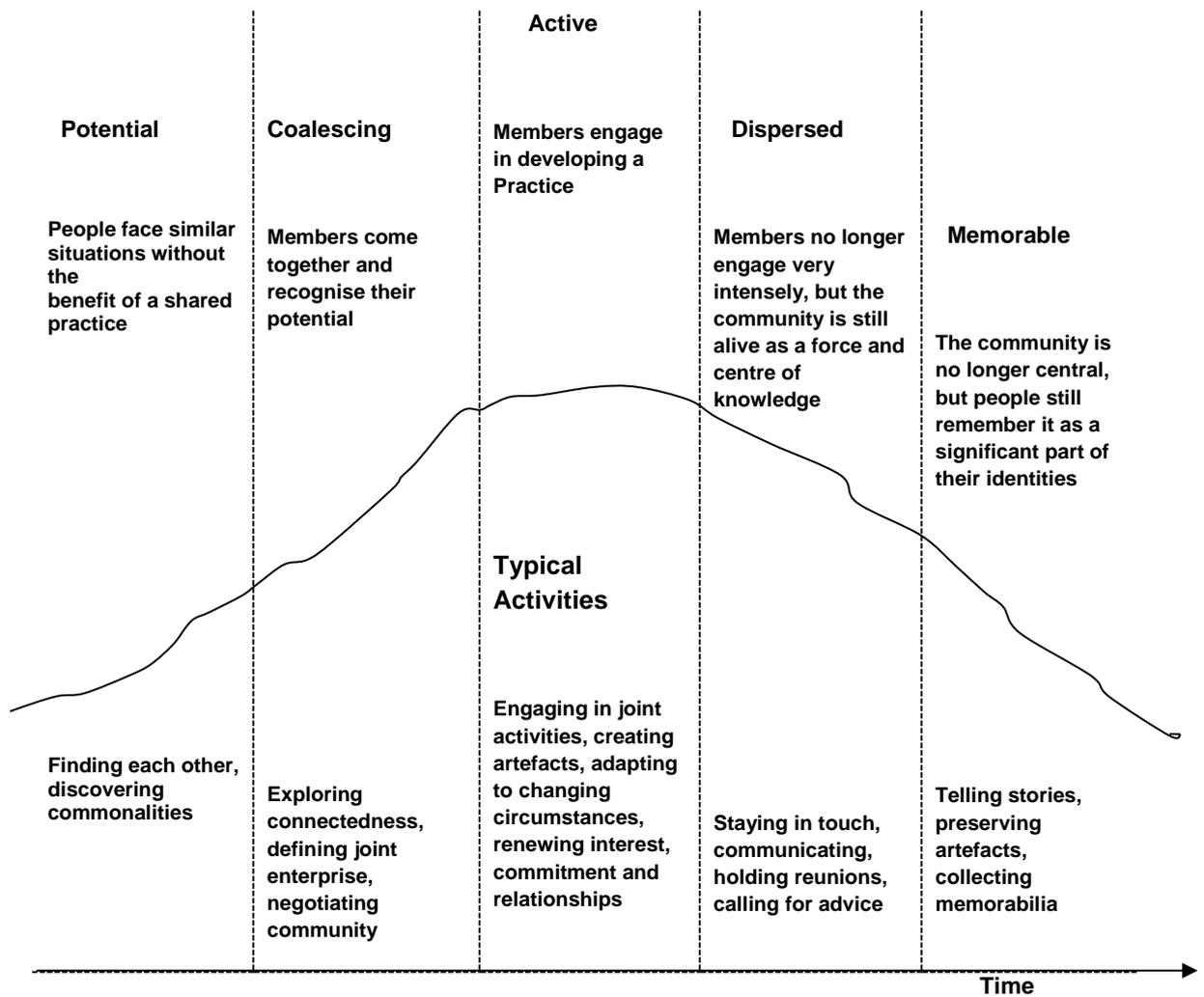
<p><b>The Domain</b> (the field or discipline): A shared domain of interest in which there is commitment and shared competence and knowledge management. It creates a shared sense of common identity.</p>	<p>The domain for both groups is CSA within this study.</p>	<p><b>How it functions</b> – Through <i>mutual engagement</i>, a CoP binds members together into a social entity in which their identities are defined by their practices, usually of a sustained nature with both positive and negative attributes. As Wenger points out, through mutual engagement, “interrelations arise out of engagement in practice and not out of an idealized view of what a community should be like” (Wenger, 2008, p. 76).</p>	<p>POs: Defining and re-framing CSA is influenced by criminal justice approaches to solving crime (POs) “our job is to put people before the courts”. (POs). The police identity is underpinned by their cultural values and professional mandate.</p> <p>CCO’s define CSA by their social work training, reframe it by its socio-cultural presentation and the degree of available support system.</p>
<p><b>The Practice:</b> Members of the CoP are practitioners sharing a repertoire of resources providing a framework for the practice, e.g., work procedures and routines, ideas, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems. These are developed over time, allowing it to function effectively.</p>	<p>CCOs: The practice is evident through assessments of need and support services.</p> <p>POs: Practice is evident through criminal, investigative and prosecutorial routines and tools of the trade.</p>	<p><b>Its capability and productivity</b> – through a <i>shared repertoire</i> (represented by a history of practices) a CoP identity is further shaped. This shared repertoire is one in which their ways of doing business are through wide-ranging communal resources (e.g. experiences, artefacts, styles, vocabulary, stories etc.). These are representative of “...the discourse by which members create meaningful statements about the world as well as the styles by which they express their form of membership and their identities as members” (Wenger, <i>ibid</i>, p. 83).</p>	<p>CCOs: Formal social work training; job experience; supervisory support; use of therapeutic and empowering language and artefacts, e.g., anatomically correct dolls.</p> <p>POs: Criminal and forensic training and investigative techniques; four weeks SA training course; on the job training; use of formal legal and criminal investigative language.</p>

### **7.3.2 The emergence of behaviours – CoP five stage development model**

Wenger (1998b) suggests a developmental trajectory for a CoP, which is summarised below. It captures a CoP's identity, which "extends in time...is a trajectory in progress that includes where you have been and where you are going, your history and your aspirations" ( Wenger, 2000, p. 241). Figure 7.2 is a representation of the five trajectory stages, consisting of:

- potential: the stimulus for coming together;
- coalescing: connecting with a purpose in mind;
- active: becoming active and engaged;
- dispersed: partial disbandment but still some engagement
- memorable: disbandment but remaining engaged and establishing the legacy.

**Figure 7.2 Trajectory stages of the development of a CoP**



**Source: Based directly on Wenger (1998b)**

The analytical utility to this study is seen where the model is conceptualized as POs and CCOs CoPs responding to child sexual abuse allegations, or dealing with families in the aftermath of such claims. For example, its application to the two different CoPs can be seen in the resolution of some cases of alleged sexual abuse, the memories left behind (as seen from the 'memorable' trajectory phase) and the likely impact on new cases, new relationships and the activities within existing practice.

- Potential and coalescing stages:** These stages are symbolic of entry into the cultural environment of the RBPF and the CCB and/or involvement with child sexual abuse allegations for the first time. Responses to child sexual abuse allegations are likely to be influenced

by professional training, induction to CSA management and knowledge management from their respective organisational 'histories of learning'. The way new recruits are treated or new CSA cases perceived are likely to determine whether a CoP will be developed beyond the superficial and the bureaucratic.

- **Active stage:** The two groups (CoPs) demonstrate their competences, develop behaviours, programmes and relationship based on their knowledge, experience and the ascribed importance of CSA within their mandate, having successfully negotiated the stages above. It is at this developmental stage that a particular child sexual abuse CoP (CSA-CoP) identity can be created.
- **Dispersed stage and Memorable stage:** The learning, ascribed meanings and knowledge directly related to CSA management are either passed on successfully to new entrants through organized methods, or the wheel of knowledge and competences have to be reinvented each time because the knowledge leaves with the experienced, knowledgeable members who are no longer part of the CoP. The possibility also exists that the knowledge base might be weak, due to ineffective participatory learning and inadequate knowledge management.

In this trajectory model, different forms of CoPs develop for specific purposes, with behavioural actions that are maintained through very concrete principles of learning and socio-cultural practices. This trajectory model can also explain other sexually abusing CoPs, of young persons, as seen in this female PO's description: "...young boys between the age of 17 years and ... I think the oldest was 25, but young boys" (WmPO #3), and older persons within families or within child care institutions, who find opportunities to engage in sexually harmful behaviours towards children and with whom POs and CCOs have to respond.

The model enables us to see that POs and CCOs will have different patterns of learning and development, in keeping with their professional identities and respective mandates of criminal investigation and child protection. Their behavioural responses to CSA are likely to follow very different pathways to each other. From this study's focus group data below, some characteristic features of each CoP emerge.

#### **7.4 The Focus Group**

In devising the focus group, the use of the case study in Appendix 6.3 was conceptualised to aid understanding of how each group responded individually and collectively to child sexual abuse, and how they collaborated with each other. The case was designed in such a way that each group had similar information, and also some different written information that was not known to the other until the discussion took place within the group. The following factors emerged:

- each group's articulation of what helps to define CSA;
- how the groups of CCOs and POs responded to each other in the sharing of information and in requesting information;
- tensions and differences of opinion over the referral process by the CCOs to POs. It was noteworthy that communication done informally through a telephone call to each other, and formally through writing to the most senior manager in each organisation (for cascading down to the operational level), was of an administratively minimalist nature, rather than on the basis of agreed child protection/best interest of the child.

Nonetheless, what also emerged were examples of mutual engagement presented below, indicating the continuities and discontinuities that can occur within groups. To the best of this study's knowledge, the focus group was the only time the study participants were in the same physical space as an organised group discussing a child who was a victim of sexual abuse. Although a CoP does not have to reflect this proximity, nevertheless, it represented an opportunity to assess the symbolism of this meeting in relation

to the potential development trajectory of the two groups. How the groups responded to each other, and to the sexually abused child in the case study, demonstrated the need for their respective development as a CoP. The group's actions, symbolic of the potential and coalescing trajectory stages, showed some promise for joint working together around protocols. This contrasts with the proposed mandatory reporting of CSA which was discussed earlier, and which appeared contentious from the articulations of both groups. Two examples are given below from the focus group findings:

**Example 1:**

**Focus group data**

**An aspect of CSA domain: removing children from home for their protection  
(the legislative aspect)**

**MSCCO:** ...not necessarily because sometimes they call us to go and check....sometimes they check it by themselves; because if you go on your own and the child is there you still can't remove the child, you still need the police officer to remove the child. So if we go - if it is nearby - we go by ourselves.

**WmPO (CID):** Are you saying you can't remove the child at that age?

**MSCCO:** No, we can't enter the house.

**POs:** But you can remove them (*back and forth discussion about whether the CCB can remove a child from its home without the police's presence*).

**WmPO (CID):** Because when we remove them where are we going to put them?

**MSCCO:** We are not talking at cross purposes here, but I want us to clarify one or two points when the tape is turned off. [*Male CCO indicating to the POs that he wants to talk with them at the end of the focus group session about the matter*].

In this study's assessment, the above example is representative of the coalescing and (potentially) active stage within a CoP's development trajectory, where there is engagement and relationship building around a particular domain of interest, i.e., the legislation on child protection.

## Example 2

### An aspect of CSA domain: removing children from home for their protection

#### Focus group data

**MSCCO (male):** Yes, this does not happen very often, but once we believe Kim is at risk although she has retracted her statement, we can take the necessary steps to have her made a ward of court and placed in a different environment. So although there might not be a criminal allegation any more, we will still pass on the information to the police to do their investigation, because once it has been reported by the teacher that Kim has stated A or B, the police will do their own investigation to see if there are criminal charges to be brought. But in terms of the social aspect, we would look at what has been happening to Kim, to determine what is the best environment for her, so if the mother does not cooperate then we will have to take another step in terms of making Kim a ward of court and let the court determine the best determination as relates the care and protection of Kim.

**Senior PO #1:** ...if the child is now a ward of court...when she goes to the doctor now she must be examined. So once we can prove that something happened, what we would do, we would normally take the statement etc., carry out the investigations and look to bring Tony (*fictitious name*) before the court. However, now the mother would not be the complainant, the CCB would be.

*[Senior PO #1 turns to other colleague and says "Have I left out anything?" Senior PO #2 answers]:*

**Senior PO #2:** "There is more than one way to skin a cat", because the mother is saying no and there might be reasons why she is saying no, because the man might be contributing to the house and other aspects, right? So she don't want the man lock up.

**WmPO (CID):** But if we have history like that we would know that something is happening, it is not just a one-off thing. We would be more propelled, you know.

What is again noteworthy from the above is some semblance of the coalescing and active phases of the trajectory development model, where members engage mutually around the domain of CSA.

This possibility for more “active” engagement further arose from within this focus group discussion, where the two groups differed in their opinion in interpreting one aspect of the legislation. A CCO felt that the Child Care Board’s officer had no power under the law to remove a child from its home unless a PO was present. One of the three POs present thought otherwise, i.e., that the CCO had this power. Some group members decided to meet after the focus group discussion to further explore this development and what the law actually permits.

Each CoP engaged from their different perspective but arguably with some semblance of mutual engagement on the subject. Negotiating meanings, and learning, however, requires more than this one meeting, as some identification with and sense of belonging to a community must exist; this was discussed earlier ( Wenger, 1998). Furthermore, Wenger (2000, p 227-8) cites three modes of belonging, which the POs and CCOs now need to further develop from what emerged within this study:

- an act of *engagement*: by doing things together and/or specifically on the domain area, such as producing tangible outcomes in their management of child sexual abuse. For example, agreeing a referral protocol, as this appeared, from the focus group data and the example from the individual interviews, to be a key area of engagement, but without any new and different ways of strengthening and developing the process and the service to victims;
- *imagination*: to construct an image of themselves, to reflect their identity as a CSA CoP and to explore the possibilities for growth. This would change the parallel ways of working to a more joint approach, changing the present communication pattern below.

**WmPO (CID):** The only time we would really speak to the CCB is when we need guardianship; say, for instance, in the case reported and that person is living within the household, we would speak in that case, or if

the CCB send a memo to us, relative to a sexual offence, but if there is none...

The third mode of belonging, argues Wenger (ibid), is:

- *alignment*: where the level of engagement, and the CoP's identity help to ensure that local activities connected with child sexual abuse management are sufficiently aligned to extend beyond the CoP's own engagement. For example, the mutually agreed activities would create a culture for better protecting children. When engagement is less intense, or when a particular domain is no longer the focus, there still remains a store of knowledge to be referred to in the protection of children.

These three modes of belonging demonstrate that, at the meso level, mere talking by professionals on a regular basis is insufficient to transform their responses to CSA.

This also means that policy and legislation at the exo and macro levels are, of themselves, insufficient to bring about change, because what is needed is a working state of engagement and use of creative imagination by the professionals, to respond to child sexual abuse at a deeper level of understanding. An understanding of this nature would address issues raised in this study, such as treating some forms of child sexual abuse differently to others. Some cases are in need of a different kind of counselling, as opined at this individual interview:

**SCCO #7:** ...but as I said, we do have a huge percentage of these young people who are into sex, who are exploring sex, and as I said, you have to give them a different type of counselling, because they want to have sex. They do not see themselves as sexually abused, right? The...man is their boyfriend, that is their man, you understand? So we need to deal with that. So those types of cases might not necessarily get before the courts; and sometimes when you do send them, they would say that they are not going through with it.

While some cases are reified (“those are the consensual ones”), some others are minimised (denied by, and/or ignored by, some mothers) and others abandoned through choice or after periods of constant postponements in the high court.

### **7.5 Utility of CoP to Professional Responses to Child Abuse in Barbados**

The appeal of a CoP, as part of the interpretative lens of this study, is based on its flexibility to be adapted to the management of the complex field of CSA in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, addressing knowledge management within and between organisations, and allowing them to keep abreast of the rapid pace of change (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002). Other examples of this change agenda extend to a better understanding of the magnitude and ecological implications of the problem in Barbados, including its prevalence, i.e., the number of individuals who report being sexually abused as a child (Fallon et al., 2010; Finkelhor & Araji, 1986), and its incidence, i.e., the number of new cases reported or detected within a defined time period as stated by the aforementioned Fallon et al. (2010) and Finkelhor & Araji (1986). The latter (the incidence) is collected yearly in Barbados by the Child Care Board, presented to the appropriate government ministry responsible for children and families, and ultimately, shared with the general public.

A CoP can, therefore, be theorised to assist the development of a 21<sup>st</sup> century police force and child protection agency, charged with managing “evidence-based” knowledge connected with the changing environment in which the sexual victimisation of children can be found. Such maltreatments often exist within wider cycles of violence (as raised in Chapter Two), including incestuous, pornographic, prostitution-based and transactional sexual abuse. Prevalence rates also extend to cybercrime, part of the changing culture that professionals need to address.

From some of the previous discussion one sees important identifiers of CoPs consisting of characteristics, which set them apart from entities which might

be seen as similar. Indeed, Wenger (1998b) clarifies further by pointing out that the existence of CoPs in any organisation is due to their membership, which is based on participation rather than on official status. They are also not bound by organisational affiliations, but can span institutional structures and hierarchies. They can be found within and across work units and also across geographical boundaries where the CoP exists.

A critical observation of this CoP ideology is that it could be seen as conflicting with the official employment roles to which POs and CCOs are assigned, because it seems to suggest that official employment status negates participation within a CoP. Behaviours within a CoP, whilst not dependent on status, might, nevertheless, be constrained by it, especially in hierarchical and bureaucratic systems. This might, in turn, influence how practice emerges.

The theory of a CoP enables our understanding that CoPs can coexist alongside others, where there will be overlap and interaction, e.g., the police medical forensic team overlapping and interacting with that of the preliminary investigative team, and with the police prosecution team. The contiguous nature of these CoPs boundaries mean that multiple professional meanings attached to CSA allegations are part of professional responding, where they influence definitions and levels of responsiveness to CSA, as shown in Chapter Six.

Meanings can be seen, therefore, to spring from several sources, not least of which are the culture and society, which also influence thinking and the ways in which meanings are ascribed.

### **7.5.1 Participation and non-participation by POs and CCOs**

The degree to which POs and CCOs participate in their respective CoPs, and those with whom they are associated, is likely to be governed by the extent to which non-participation also happens.

### Participation and Non-participation

**Interviewer:** How long have you been a police officer?

**WmPO #4:** Fifteenth June (2010) will be ten years.

**Interviewer:** So you are quite an experienced officer?

**WmPO #4:** (*Hearty laughter*) I won't say so.

**Interviewer:** But you must have seen quite a bit in that time?

**WmPO #4:** I have seen quite a bit.

**Interviewer:** We are talking about child sexual abuse, have you been involved with cases?

**WmPO #4:** Yes, I have dealt with cases where children have been raped, they have been indecently assaulted, they have been done all kinds of heinous crimes to (sic); because the policy of the force is that you being the female, you have to deal with them, you might not have to do the complete investigation; however you the female officer have to interview the victim, especially if it is a female. Even if it is a male child, you a female will do the interview. You hardly see a man interviewing someone who has been sexually assaulted unless it has been the request of the victim.

**Interviewer:** Does that policy work well in your opinion, of females...?

**WmPO #4:** Not all the time, honestly, not all the time, because there are some damn good male investigators out there who might be able to get a lot more information than you, because they have a lot more experience, but because of the policy of the force, they are not allowed to.

Participation by the female POs in the assigned interviewer role is notable within the three research sites:

“...so most of the cases when they are reported at the station, a WmPO will interview that person” (Senior PO #1, focus group).

It is through participation that identity and behavioural responses within practices develop. It refers:

...not just to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing process of being active participants in the *practices* of social communities and constructing *identities* in relation to these communities.

(Wenger, 1998a, p. 4)

Wenger puts this into its broad perspective when he argues that non-participation can also be an opportunity for learning, it being a step towards full participation. Conversely, non-participation as an enforced situation can lead to closed opportunities, in the present and in the future. The mix of such participation and non-participation includes, among other things:

...what we care about and what we neglect. What we attempt to know and understand and what we choose to ignore. With whom we seek connections and whom we avoid...

(Wenger, 2008, pp. 167-168)

The concepts of participation, non-participation and negotiation which govern behaviours have some utility, therefore, in understanding the responses of the two professional groups as they balance the challenges associated with child sexual abuse cases in Barbados.

The non-participation of the male POs in the above examples is representative of several issues: the meaning of the interview within the RBPF; the gendered nature of the interview - female PO interviewing victims (mostly females), and the lost opportunities for male POs to become more experienced with victims of CSA as they tell their story. Such lack of involvement and experience is likely to reduce knowledge in this area, further assigning it to a gendered position which, in a male-dominated profession, can lead to the subjugated status of CSA.

Participation and non-participation emerged in different ways which impacted professional responding.

**The family and victim:**

**Interviewer:** Where was her father in all this...?

**SCCO #7:** Her father, he lent support, but his support was from the outside looking in, because there was this strained relationship between the father and the mother. But I got him into the situation as far as the sexual abuse was concerned, and there were a few times when he actually went to court with her.

.....

**The professionals and victim:**

**Interviewer:** Tell me a little bit about the role of the police in this particular case?

**SSCCO:** ..the police prosecutor who dealt with this matter for most of the time, he was really supportive. He was really supportive of her and of me and seeking to protect us. Always make sure, he would tell me to bring her to court early so that she could read her statement beforehand, go on the stand. As I said, I think the mind games were that every time we go to court the case would be adjourned. We go to court and it would be adjourned. We go to court and it would be adjourned. Our attorney got involved, because she is a QC so she had a little bit of, well more clout. That gave us a little more leverage, but it didn't stop it from being adjourned again.

.....

**The system and victim:**

**Interviewer:** What were some of the reasons for the adjournments?

**SCCO #7:** His attorney was ill, his attorney couldn't make it; the magistrate couldn't make it; something was wrong with the court; we had to come back (sic). There was once or twice where her mother didn't come, but I think it was "under pressure time". There were a number of reasons, but mostly it was about him or his attorney. It was always about him or his attorney (sic) and I think the prosecutor admitted or said that it seems as if they are trying their best to frustrate her so, you know, that she would give up and not go through with the case...there were numerous and numerous adjournments (sic).

This study is showing many modes of participation and non-participation. Examples from the CCOs' data above present a different view of participation, this time with clients. The CCO's response is arguably constructed and defined through participation centred on commitment to the goals of the CoP to which she belongs. One dimension of this response is the consistent

support to victims of CSA, in the face of strained family relationships and frustrations with different levels of the judicial system.

Non-participation within one's own CoP, and/or with another agency's CoP, can result from a lack of commitment; lack of understanding of, and lack of sympathy with, goals and mandates, or an absence of the required specialist knowledge underpinning the domain. Non-participation, therefore, not only impacts on responses, it helps to define and shape learning in a particular direction.

The action-oriented nature of participation means that in 'taking part', one can see how meaning is negotiated, when there is engagement with (commitment to) the domain's goals (Wenger, 1998a, p. 55), e.g., goals set for responding to CSA.

### 7.5.2 Reification

**Interviewer:** And the male ... the male officers are not pushing at the door saying we want this experience [*interviewing victims of CSA*] as well?

**WmPO (CID):** Of course not. They stay as far away as possible. If I am in my office down there interviewing a lady, I am the only female in nine men, so they will give me the whole office and just go (*laughs*).

As described earlier, CoP theory suggests that meaning ascribed to CSA is negotiated through participation and non-participation (as seen above in the male/female modes of engagement). Meaning is also defined by reification - another mode of engagement by the professionals within this study.

**Interviewer:** You said a medical was carried out and there was some evidence...?

**CCO #2:** Yes, a medical was carried out and there was some evidence that she was... the four-year-old her hymen is not intact - no doubt it was as a result of that (*sexual molestation*), because a four-year-old would not be out riding horses.

**Station Sergeant:** The public medical officer will examine that female. That gives you an idea of what that person life might be; for instance some

parents are shocked when the doctor writes hymen not intact, which says she is not a virgin...and it was not this particular incidence that caused that not to be so, it was so for a little while ... then the doctor would have taken certain things that have to be sent off to the forensic lab, and then we will have to see where this thing would have happened and have it photographed. We begin to collect evidence and after that there is the accused and it is his side of the story which we have to hear.

The medical examination from the two examples above emerged as a standard method which gave critically important information in defining CSA. Its meaning, representative of the light it can shed on life stories and behaviours, is captured in a succinct way that is easily understood by both professional groups. From the emerged medical findings, meanings are ascribed as to the character of the victim, and culpability is assigned.

Reification of important routines such as these is therefore the process and outcome of shared meanings, resulting in a practice, as shown in this study's data above. One of the pitfalls of the reification process, however, is that it may become important for its own sake, where its utility is no longer questioned, reviewed or abandoned (in the face of evidence for this). This is not to say that reified practice is not useful, as it can encapsulate learning and meanings in a concise manner, as said earlier.

Wenger's (2008, p. 59) description of reification as a concept is that it is more than an abstraction. Its utility to this study is seen in the broader definition of the various processes it covers, described as: "making, designing, representing, naming, encoding and describing as well as perceiving, interpreting, using, reusing, decoding and recasting..." (Wenger, *ibid*). All of these are representations of what POs and CCOs do in Barbados to ensure some artefactual continuity of purpose.

This study's data is presenting some evidence that, because reification "shapes our experiences" (Wenger, *ibid*), it is important in defining the nature of CSA. The power of such reification, argues Wenger (2008, p. 61), is seen in "...its portability, its potential physical persistence, its focusing effect."

These reification attributes help to account for the fact that reification is both an intrinsic part of a CoP and, furthermore, is “indispensable to the process of negotiation that sustains...practices, and thus to the experience of learning” (Wenger, *ibid*, p. 135). The potential for inherent tensions and difficulties exist, however, if the two professional groups’ CoPs were to rely solely on one or either form (participation or reification) at the expense of one or the other, in their negotiation of the meaning of CSA.

### **7.5.3 Application to this study’s data**

What is particularly important from this study is that what is reified within the POs’ and CCOs’ CoPs can be powerful and dominant, to the exclusion of meaningful participation and managing any necessary changes within the domain. The example above, of the male POs’ non-participation in the interviews of CSA victims, means that those interviews are reified in their thinking and actions.

Another issue arises here: such reification may not be understood (or even observed) by outsiders. CCOs and POs may reify different elements within their CoPs, which may or may not affect their interagency collaboration with each other and their response to CSA allegations.

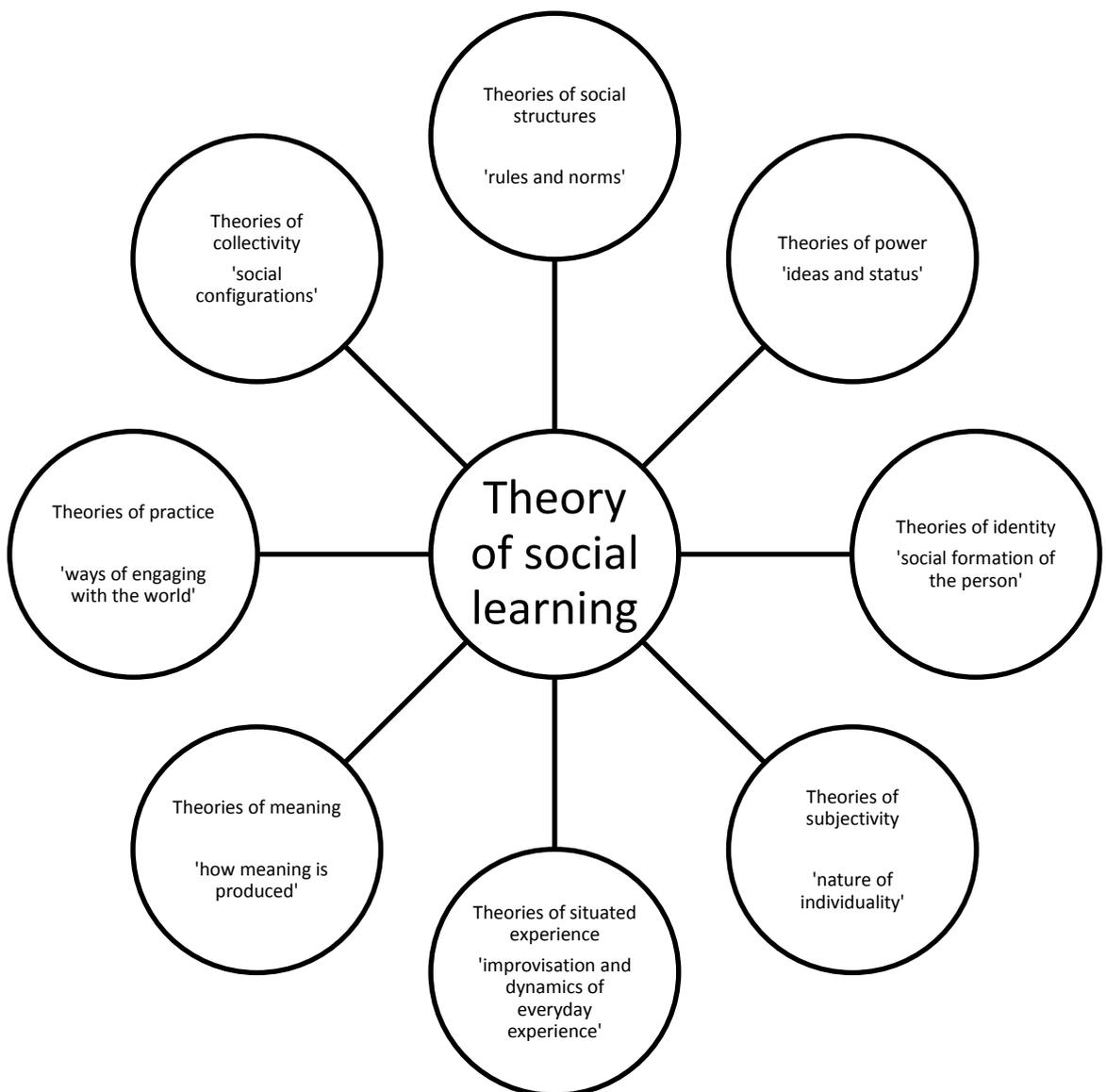
## **7.6 Concluding Comments – Conceptual Mapping for Understanding Professional Responses**

In summary, we see that the development of a CoP’s identity is shaped by a position involving a set of relationships over time (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 98), with its development centring around things that matter to people (Wenger, 1998), and from the activity of its practitioners (its practice) which emerges through participation and reification. The socio-cultural and learning theory of CoPs can therefore explain how the two groups’ professional identities are shaped, and how they respond to and define CSA in Barbados.

Le May (2009, p. 7) summarised some of the theoretical underpinnings of CoPs within a conceptual map, shown below (Figure 7.3). This map provides a useful device for the conceptualizations within social-cultural learning theory, where several pivotal planks reflect some key intellectual positions on:

theories of social structures; theories of situated experience; theories of power; theories of meaning; theories of practice; theories of identity; theories of subjectivity, and theories of collectivity. I modify this map (as seen in the next section) as a means of linking the discussion of CoP with describing the factors that shape professionals' responses to CSA using a feminist approach.

**Figure 7.3 The conceptual underpinnings of Wenger's (1998) CoP**



The conceptual underpinnings of Wenger's (1998) theory of social-cultural learning in communities of practice (Le May, 2009).

## **7.7 Next Steps**

In Chapter Eight, I conceptualize professional responses by drawing on several theoretical approaches, underpinned by feminist perspectives, to help explain the linked systemic factors influencing professional responses to the abuse.

## **8 Discussion of Findings through a Feminist Lens**

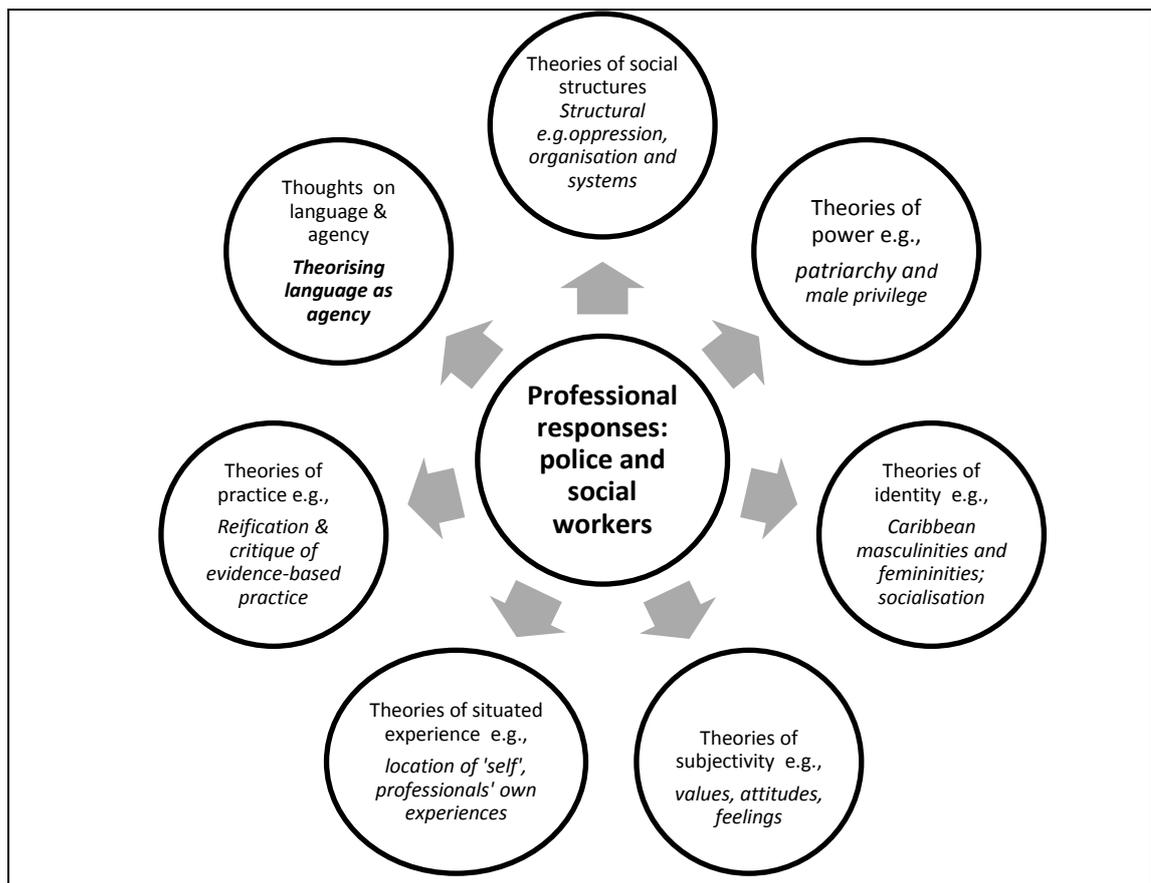
### **8.1 Introduction**

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is a complex problem whose understanding is helped by drawing on a wide source of knowledge. In this chapter, I explore feminist perspectives to assist this understanding, and to help see how professional responses to CSA might be influenced and/or understood. In conceptualizing gender as an organizing principle within society, I examine social constructions of what it means to be masculine and feminine, with their socially prescribed and demarcated boundaries: boundaries erected and maintained by identities, histories of learning and meanings. Of significance to my discussion is the observation that the Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF) is a male-dominated profession. In 2001, the number of women was said to be eight per cent in Barbados (Flavin & Bennett, 2001). On the other hand, social work is generally an overwhelmingly female profession (Nydegger, 2004), and this is the current situation in Barbados. Power relations structure all areas of women's and children's lives, e.g., the family; education and welfare; the world of work and politics; culture, and social spaces, determining who does what and for whom. At all of these ecological levels male authority is found to be presiding (Weedon, 1997).

I therefore explore the literature relating to theories likely to illuminate professional responses, given the distinctive gender identities of the professionals, and those of victims reporting CSA, i.e., almost exclusively girls in Barbados, as seen from the secondary data in Chapter Two and the international picture of prevalence rates discussed in Chapter Six. For their utility to this study, I interrogate the likely influencing factors on professional responses to CSA: male authority and female subjectivities, and identities of masculinities and femininities. As discussed at the end of Chapter Seven, mapping feminist theories onto a conceptual CoP framework which appears in the literature (Le May, 2009), I produce a new concept map which is conceptualised as the mapping of synergies between the two paradigms (i.e., CoP and feminism). This map is presented below in Figure 8.1, as this

author's representation of the original (Le May, 2009, p. 7), which appears at the end of the previous chapter. I keep this exploration grounded by using data from the professionals' interviews.

**Figure 8.1 Synergistic use of CoP and feminist theories**



## 8.2 Theorising Professional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

In the diagram above, seven aspects of CoP theory have been overlaid with understandings from feminist scholarship (in italics). In the chapter discussion that follows, using the circled descriptors as sub-headings, I discuss the findings according to each theme and support my analysis with relevant literature. Although the main focus of the chapter is the interpretation of data through a feminist lens, I also draw heavily on the work of Foucault for his seminal contribution on the nature of power, discourse and knowledge.

### **8.2.1 Theories of social structure and structural oppression: structural responses to child sexual abuse**

**PO (CID) #3:** A lot of doubts were cast on the allegations. Witnesses came forward with information to cast doubts. That was a tricky one.

**Interviewer:** What makes it tricky?

**PO (CID) #3:** Her promiscuity. The accused admitted to it being consensual...he even went a step further and said the mother knew about it. The mother reported it, but our investigations seem to show that the mother came under some neighbourhood pressures and then reported it.

The professionals in the study who have to respond to sexual abuse allegations by children, overwhelmingly reported by girls, exist in a culture characterised by male domination, in which the status quo of privileging men is often maintained. This situation, which can be characterised as “patriarchal necessity” (Miller, 1990, p. 8), often occurs within a masculine-dominant culture where, argues Miller (ibid.), even programmes created to help women become more independent often have the opposite effect. Analysing the extent to which professional responses might also reflect this prevailing status quo can be assisted by an ecological framework which portrays the interaction between the socio-political, economic, community, interpersonal and individual levels. All of these were found to have an impact on, and influence, constructions about the sexual abuse of children. The study’s data below demonstrate some of these constructions, where the PO is relating personal experiences constructed around perceived interpersonal and individual behaviours for socio-economic gain. In the above examples, the voices of the neighbourhood are seen in the voiced constructions of the PO. Equally, meanings can be ascribed to allegations, as seen below.

**Senior PO #1:** Well everybody that cries rape don’t get rape right, that’s what I was saying. Because they have some very crafty 13-year-olds and 14-year-olds that would set you up.

**Interviewer:** Why is this – in your experience?

**Senior PO #1:** Because they might be 13 but they are exposed to life from early (sic). They are street smart, so they are looking for money or something. And the parents might encourage it too - (saying): "Get some money from he, man, get some money from he." "Don't drop the case until you get 2,000.00." So that is how much they think they are worth. It happens.

Local meanings of CSA are constructed through conversations, how things are looked at and how interpretations merge into ways of understanding the world (Middleman & Wood, 1993). There are thus multiple perspectives within the milieu in which professionals operate, including the professionals' own constructions.

The professional responses of the mainly female workforce of CCOs in Barbados coexist with those of the male dominated Royal Barbados Police workforce. The ascribed meanings attached to CSA allegations by both groups are embedded within a cultural and legal context characterised by varying degrees of structural control, e.g., their agency's rules, the legislation and the administration of the judicial system. The professional approach of each group is therefore only one view within a domain of interest applicable to CSA. Others are reflective of the situated knowledge position within their CoP, but are also related to the situated knowledge of others as seen from the 'witnesses' who came forward with information above to cast doubts on the child's character.

The interdependency of knowledge sharing shows that the PO depends on the CCO to refer allegations of CSA to them for criminal investigations. Likewise, the CCO expects the same reciprocal referral from the police of cases known only to them, in order that a child protection investigation can be initiated. However, it may be that one form of knowledge (held by one group) is subjugated to the other's knowledge position, through the other's more dominant ascribed position in society. A situation arises, therefore, where the complex subject of CSA can become embroiled in a partially situated knowledge system of domination. This can be characterised by groups (or

individuals) pursuing professional mandates, rather than pursuing an agreed interagency mandate within a CoP paradigm.

**Interviewer:** The CCB had a discussion recently, I think police officers were also at the plenary where they are putting forward the case for mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse cases. How do you feel about that?

**WmPO (CID):** Do you mean mandatory to the CCB? Mandatory reporting of offences to the CCB? (sic)

**Interviewer:** Yes to the CCB, so by teachers, priests, by police officers, the general public...

**WmPO (CID):** That makes no sense, because they are going to do the same thing. All they want is statistics, because when it is reported to them, they have to report it to us. So why go through all of that when the person can just come to us and we can act upon that information. It makes no sense to me.

The above can be seen as an example of a challenge (of a structural nature) to the role and identity of the police, particularly over potential areas of conflict. There is therefore a need for the discourse to extend to these specifics, as well as to reporting and response times within any agreed interagency protocol.

The need for such an agreed interagency mandate on child protection has been on the agenda of the CCB in Barbados since at least the early 1990s, but remains unresolved. During this time span, UNICEF (Caribbean Area Office-CAO) appears to have remained committed to the achievement of this goal by supporting those ministries who have some level of responsibility for the care and protection of children. The lack of any semblance of interagency agreement on a comprehensive mandate is testimony, arguably, to the State's and professionals' ambivalence towards a child protection policy, as will be seen from the interview data below.

**Interviewer:** At the moment there is a move afoot by the CCB to have mandatory reporting of cases of child abuse, so it is abuse in its entirety,

which would include CSA as well. So there are discussions taking place. I don't know if you are aware of it?

**Station Sergeant:** I am aware.

**Interviewer:** ...where it is hoped that it will eventually lead to mandatory reporting, so people have to report if they know of a case. What is your view on that?

**Station Sergeant:** Well you have to speak to mandatory in terms of saying who you are saying it should be mandated by whom (sic). It can't be a general mandating...

**Interviewer:** I think it is in the professional capacity.

**Station Sergeant:** What we need to do is speak to the reporting, by agencies, of certain things and there is nothing wrong with that, but what has to happen is that it is the response to the reporting that has to be also unified; because it is easy to say I call you and say (sic)...”We have a case of abuse of a minor so and so”...and then you come two days later. If you are going to deal with that mandatory reporting stuff, then you have to make CCOs available to the police department. In which case, the mandatory reporting has a direct response mechanism in place, that there is somebody that you call and tell, look...there is a case of abuse...  
*(Phone interrupts and station sergeant talks. Recording paused).*

A collaborative effort between UNICEF-CAO and the government of Barbados occurred in 2009 (during the course of this study), where another representative forum, with persons from key ministries, together with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society and other interest groups, discussed what was seen as an urgent need for some measure of an interagency protocol on child protection. A national reporting protocol on child abuse in Barbados was proposed. The report by Sealy-Burke (2007), which makes the case for such a policy and operational practice, was the document that helped to inform the day's deliberations. To date no specific progress on this matter is known to this study.

The responses below are informative and highlight ascribed meanings to an interagency protocol by two policing departments: the uniform/territorial

policing branch and the criminal investigative department (CID). Threats to the police's role and concerns about public reporting and CCOs' ability to respond contemporaneously to referrals under a mandatory reporting system are seen from the above examples. The CCOs' view on the matter is exemplified by the response below, supported by other responses within the study data on high workloads and current high levels of CSA reports, as raised in Chapter Six.

**Interviewer:** How would the system cope if there were mandatory reporting...?

**CCO #4:** Right, first we would be overloaded.

**Interviewer:** Could the CCB cope?

**CCO #4:** I don't think so, because right now we are short staff. We have been asking for at least four more positions and it is like we don't have officers attached to one area, so everybody basically is one (sic) ...be a jack of all trades doing all the parishes...but of course if there was mandatory reporting we know that there would be a lot for us to deal with, seeing that we still have a high amount already; you know that it could escalate.

Responses to child sexual abuse allegations can become a contested area based on identities and respective knowledge domains, particularly where no meaningful collaboration exists. On this question of contested knowledge, Collins (2000) argues that even subjugated knowledge is not exempt from critical analysis, because subjugation is not grounds for an epistemology. She further argues that no one group possesses the theory or methodology that allows it to discover an absolute truth, or even to proclaim its theories and methodologies as the universal norm from which one can evaluate other groups' experiences. An interagency policy begins to reduce areas of conflict and cements identities around a common domain goal consistent with the discussion in the previous chapter. It furthermore assists in standardising practice such as inconsistent definitions.

### **8.2.2 Situated knowledge as structural oppression**

The extent to which professional knowledge and voices can further oppress and subjugate clients' shared information, particularly the voiceless and the marginalised such as a defenceless child, can also be further analysed

through the voices of black feminism. This voice speaks to the legitimacy of knowledge held by the subjugated, but also warns that such legitimacy can be marginalised by dominant epistemologies. How might the actions of the female workforce of CCOs, and female POs on the one hand, advocate for social justice for sexually abused girls, and on the other hand, through some other response, perpetuate their continuing sexual victimisation, and by implication that of others who are yet to report? From the data in Chapter Six, the labelling of female victims can be seen as one such potential vehicle for such perpetuation.

**WmPO (CID):** We would come to the consensus that this girl is worthless (worthless) or something, but then we take emotion out of it and then we apply the law. OK, we say, you know this man did this thing ... we do it very cut and dry. She says that he do this and we have to charge the person. We don't get emotional as we would when a child who has been authentically raped.

The extent to which such contradictions (e.g., a mandate to protect victims, yet labelling them as culpable) might exist can be understood through the “angle of vision” (Collins, 2002, pp. 18, 80, 232). Interrogation of the professional responses can be done through such an “angle of vision”, which focuses on particular forms of intersecting oppressions (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991), because “intersectional paradigms remind us that oppression cannot be reduced to one fundamental type, and that oppressions work together in producing injustice” (Collins, 2000, p. 21). This study shows that professional voices can themselves be oppressive. Such a situation is seen in the above example, and reflected within a different discourse below in the relationship between the CCOs and the POs. Emerging from this study, the voice of the PO is reflecting a professional inter-relationship position in Barbados. Criminal and child protection proceedings work mostly in parallel to each other, rather than collaboratively. Agreed principles on the child's best interest would automatically mean the professionals working together with the child at the centre, rather than the criminal investigation being the central and privileged goal. This does not mean one negates the other; indeed, one should

strengthen the other. The response below highlights an ideological and a professional position on interagency working:

**Interviewer:** Is there something in your Standing Orders or understood protocol that once there is a criminal investigation going on, other services like the CCB should not be involved, once you are carrying out your investigations?

**WmPO (CID):** No, there are none, but there is no reason to (sic).

**Interviewer:** There is no reason to have it (sic)?

**WmPO (CID):** There is no reason to (sic); there is nothing preventing us from involving them, but there is no reason to involve them, because we don't need their services for anything.

**Interviewer:** I mean from the child's point of view, for example, to refer the child to them that they don't know about.

**WmPO (CID):** I wouldn't say so, because Victim Support (sic), the Victim Support lady, people I should say (sic), they have a structure of persons who counsel. If she can't handle it, they will get a psychologist, stuff like that.

**Interviewer:** So you have your own organizational support system?

**WmPO (CID):** Yes, we have our own thing.

Sentiments such as these speak to some current inter-professional relationships and highlight the challenges of professionals working together in the absence of agreed protocols. This is especially the case when operating from the different mandates of law enforcement on the one hand, and therapeutic intervention on the other. The masculine culture of the police force is one of enforcing the law and bringing criminals to justice. The needs of voiceless and defenceless CSA victims who present with little or no tangible

evidence can easily become subsumed to a crime-fighting hegemonic agenda.

Representation of intersecting oppressions through the paradigm of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991) draws our attention to multiple systems of oppressions and the relationships between them. Whilst this analysis of oppressive intersections is usually from the very understandable positions such as race, class, gender, sexuality and disability, added to this can be the power of professional voices which can also act in a subjugating manner as seen from some of these examples cited so far in this chapter. When they intersect with gender, class and age, (of the child) together with other factors such as the socio-economic, one can begin to see the need for understanding the multiple levels which impact responses to CSA in Barbados.

### **8.3 Theories of Situated Experience: Location of Self, Professionals' Own Experiences**

Examples from this study also show that responding to CSA does evoke strong feelings in POs and CCOs.

**Senior PO #1:** I have daughters. I have two girls, one is 20 and my last one is six. I am wearing two hats, a police hat and also a parent's, so... as that person's dad now, it ... (sic) I would be angry, I would be very angry, so it would upset me.

**Interviewer:** How did that impact on you at that time?

**CCO #4:** Well it was quite emotional for me too you know...I could sense the pain the child was going through, and still at the same time the parents was saying...the perpetrator...who was opposite me and...he was smirking as the way how his facial expression was, more like trying to intimidate the child (sic).

In an early paper by McLeod & Saraga (1988) entitled "Challenging the Orthodoxy: Towards a Feminist Theory and Practice," the authors pose several questions about CSA: questions of "Why did it happen? Why did he do it? (p. 1). These questions are posed as ones which plague victims and

their families. In this study they also plague the professionals who work with children and their families, to the extent that, from the research evidence, professionals speak of its effects in embodied ways.

**WmPO #3:** Anger. I do get angry a lot - I don't show it to the person - but I does (sic) vent when it is all done, I vent (*WmPO once again passionately emphasising this feeling*) because I do get angry when I see it happen.

Such embodied responses are interesting, as they are seen as markers to meanings, described as being stronger when one is deeply involved with, and concerned about, a situation (Raingruber & Kent, 2003; Saleebey, 1989). Attending to these sensations and perceptions is seen to be of vital importance "because these responses serve as guideposts that help the individuals reflect on and understand appropriate courses of action in relation to people" (Raingruber & Kent, *ibid*, p. 450). Zuk & Wetmore (1993) also emphasise that sensory experiences and memories can help clinicians expand their own narrative understanding. Several exemplars of social workers' accounts of physical sensations and emotions connected with their work with sexually abused children further illustrate the emotional experiences of the work (Raingruber & Kent, *ibid*).

I feel things in my chest and in my gut literally. When that happens, I really listen and that's when I learn most...Dry bitter feeling in the mouth; a heavy feeling in my chest.

(Raingruber & Kent, 2003, pp. 463-464)

These reflect similar voiced emotions being felt by POs and CCOs in Barbados when faced with a child alleging sexual abuse. These questions of "Why?" together with the aforementioned visceral and emotional reactions, are not hard to imagine. But these situated experiences, when confronted on a particular day, will arguably be responded to from both an emotional and a gendered perspective. The two may of course be interlinked. The female and male professionals facing and interpreting their embodied feelings in this study do this personal assessment (which might be from a direct personal

experience or vicariously experienced) from gendered experiences and positions of status.

Meanings being local, not universal, and historically situated, not timeless (Middleman & Wood, 1993, p. 131), will be reflected in the answers to the questions posed earlier: why did it (CSA) happen? Why did he (the alleged perpetrator) do it? It is possible also that these questions, which can stimulate important ongoing professional reflection, may however remain unexamined because local services, historically, have been unresponsive to CSA allegations.

**SCCO #7:** ...Whereas, if these things were done expeditiously, where you would know that within six months or so that matter has been dealt with, and the child, whatever the conclusion is, that child can go on with his or her life, fine; but you are stuck with a case for all of these years and this is just one, right? ...I used to have a caseload of 400 and something at any one time.

**CCO #3:** I have been here six years and none of the child sexual abuse cases I have had reached high court as yet.

Theory on the structural approach to such social problems as CSA enables examination of the different types of oppressive social structures, in which the needs of the marginalised, the powerless and the stigmatized become subjugated within a society.

### **8.3.1 The professional response from a situated power position**

The lived reality of the aforementioned disempowerment which can vicariously affect professionals is one to which professionals respond when delivering a service to persons subjugated by circumstances such as their age, poverty, class and gender.

**SCCO #7:** ...they had offered her 2,500.00 dollars to drop the case ...Yes the mother told me. So (pause) she took it, but then our attorney did not allow her to drop the case... She went to court and she told the judge or the magistrate - whoever, what had happened and the case went

through. So in spite of the money the case still went through...I think there were two things. They were poor, number one...

The possibility of conflict arises in the case of CSA allegations due to the power of the situated knowledge of the professional, further situated within the *powerful* structure of the service on offer, versus that of the likely disempowered situation of the victim and his/her family. Here we have the professional's and the client's experiences which, by their very nature (of knowledgeable professional and service-seeking client), are unequal ones, but they are very much inter-related. They are dependent on each other to bring about meaningful change. Experience is therefore not unproblematic, since "... there is no such thing as "raw" experience" where, together, the professional (or indeed the researcher) and the client each give "...a construction of the events that occurred, together with an interpretation of them" (Maynard, 1994, p. 23).

Another equally important aspect is the power that resides in the other structures, such as the law (with its rules of justice), the judiciary, which adjudicates and the medical establishment, which provides the 'evidence' used in the adjudication of allegations of sexual abuse.

The extent to which professional responses reinforce the unequal power status implicit in structural responses, rather than interrogate this power for its effects on a child alleging sexual abuse, is one that is arguably determined by the culture of the organisation and of the law itself, as discussed in Chapter Two. The investigative role of the RBPF in its criminal proceedings of CSA is one of situated power mandated to enforce the law. The use of a report on the medical examination of the child in support of the police case is an important situated response in the criminal investigations.

All POs and CCOs mentioned the importance of this forensic medical examination to the criminal proceedings and the case management, as evidenced below. The professionals involved are therefore in a powerful position to decide and conclude on the likelihood of CSA. This is a position on which the child depends, for affirming *their* deeply subjugating experience.

**Interviewer:** What part does the medical evidence play?

**WmPO (CID):** It is important, but it does not always decide a case. It is important if you have DNA, say blood is left at the scene and you get the accused and you match them, that's good. If you have sperm or anything, anything medical, any samples. It is always good to back up the case, but it does not decide case. More than one element does...

**WmPO #4:** The person will also go to the doctor; you need to go to the doctor to verify if something has happened, because you might go to the doctor and the doctor might give you medical evidence saying that can't be possible because of XYZ (sic) situation here.

Yet the diagnostic forensic examination is not necessarily always conclusive on whether sexual abuse has indeed occurred, is occurring or has not occurred (Dubowitz, 2007; Paradise, Winter, Finkel, Berenson, & Beiser, 1999). This lack of absolute certainty may have important implications for ways of thinking and behaving towards a child for whom there is an inconclusive report. The assumptions behind the medical forensic examination illustrate the implicit gendered aspect of medically examining young girls for evidence of a crime committed by an adult male. Where there is a failure to find this evidence in the child, the adult can easily be exonerated from the crime.

**CCO #2: (focus group):** Because she has said she is not going forward, it doesn't mean that it ends there, based on the other information that we have. A medical examination would be requested of the mother on behalf of the child, so if you are saying then that there is nothing, then there should not be anything to hide, so we want to see what the medical says; and based on the information we have, we will still speak to her... although she is saying that she is withdrawing her allegation.

The quality of the diagnostic examination by physicians is one in which training in techniques and skill in interpretation and differential diagnosis is required. Paradise et al. (1999) urged that caution should be exercised and physicians should be alert to the possibility of diagnostic expectation bias, given the serious social and legal consequences of the results of this

examination. The literature shows some of the inherent diagnostic complexities. For example, earlier studies concluded that abnormal genital findings are not common in sexually abused girls (Adams, Harper, Knudson, & Revilla, 1994; Berenson et al., 2000). Other findings support the view that, even with a history of severe abuse, there is a low rate of abnormal medical findings (Heger, Ticson, Velasquez, & Bernier, 2002); even in pregnancy, low rates of definitive evidence of penetration exist (Kellogg, Menard, & Santos, 2004).

Dubowitz (2007) sums up the situation well when reminding us that girls who have been sexually abused generally have the same physical appearance as girls who have not been abused. Thus, although these children need a skilled and early medical evaluation, it is especially important that a detailed history be obtained. Additionally, it is stated that the physician's history should complement the forensic interview conducted by law enforcement and/or the child protective services. Furthermore, it is argued that the optimal evaluation of children suspected of having been sexually abused demands interdisciplinary collaboration, which should include mental health colleagues, for providing treatment.

Caution is urged, in these and other studies, in pursuing a legal focus on the child's history as one of the primary evidence of sexual abuse. The power within situated positions therefore cannot, by itself, decide on outcomes for the sexually abused child. Arguably, therefore, such heavy dependence on forensic methods premised on the idea of objectively measuring the experience of CSA can be viewed as "an excuse for a power relationship" (Stanley & Wise, 1993, p. 167). In all this, the child's actual experiences remain unmeasured.

#### **8.4 Linking Theories of Structural Power and Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Barbados**

Arguably, victims of sexual abuse in Barbados are in a deeply subjugated position because of the exploitative nature of the abuse and the victims' dependence on the structural systems to intervene. This unequal partnership can lead to further subjugation of victims through the authoritative power

which resides within the macro level structural systems, such as the legislation and the police's criminal forensic policy of evidence gathering. Child sexual abuse is a crime in which there are usually only two witnesses (child and perpetrator), and which might have an insidious longevity. A look at some representations of power is therefore useful. I therefore, at this juncture, draw on Foucault, but only to support feminist analysis in this chapter. I do this because the nature of power discourses and knowledge are evident within the ways in which professionals respond to CSA. These are not unproblematic situations; indeed they may often appear contradictory, attesting to the multiple lived realities.

#### **8.4.1 Applying Foucaultian theorising to professional responses**

Foucault's theoretical perspectives on discourse, knowledge and power represent an approach by which operating systems impacting on child sexual abuse can be theorised, and hence can assist in our understanding of this study's data.

Foucault's discourse is a system of representation of the ways in which:

...rules and practices produce meaningful statements and regulated discourses in different historical periods...Discourse, Foucault argues, constructs the topic...defines and produces the objects of our knowledge.

(Hall, 2001, p. 72)

Discourse further refers to the very specific patterns of language, but does so in ways which tell us something about the speaker, their culture or subculture, their opinions and other aspects of their identity, such as professional and political affiliations. Foucault sees discourse being operationalised in fundamental ways, as follows:

- the language used constructs the social reality;
- generating knowledge and *truth*, which is more aligned to cultural practices and norms than necessarily the correctness of the spoken word;

- giving information and telling us something about the biographical, professional and cultural identity of the speaker;
- conferring power on some *knowledgeable* individuals because of the type of discourses on specific subjects, or because of their specific position, e.g., the medical knowledge of a doctor or the authoritarian position of a politician.

Foucault's concept of discourse is noteworthy (to this study) as it "questions our self-image and shows some of the underlying realities of modern societies" (Stahl, 2004, p. 4330) and, specifically where this study is concerned, some of the features of the two communities (the RBPF and the CCB), their hierarchies and services described below:

**WmPO #3:** We will go like to our divisional commander who runs the whole...because there are persons in each department; an inspector of crime because it is a crime, a senior superintendent of crime, so the person who deals with crime at the higher level, that information goes to them and they will make a decision whether this person must be picked up and charged on that sufficient evidence that is given (sic)... If we do not have sufficient evidence on which to charge that person we cannot, because the police force is liable to wrongdoing (sic).

**Interviewer:** So not all cases are referred to the psychologist?

**SCCO #7:** No. But the point I am making that even that has its limitations. If you have a deficit in your resources as it relates to manpower it is obvious that you are going to have a deficit in terms of what this manpower is able to give and that includes counselling, the long-term counselling.

How discourses, knowledge and power are displayed within the institutions in which professionals operate, and with which victims of CSA interface, is instructive. These institutions are, of course, embedded within a cultural system which also impacts on both the professional and client as private citizens. Foucault, in his manifold works, identified certain areas of knowledge and their practice as the agents for the normalisation of institutions and social principles within modern society (Foucault, 1980). Such power is seen to be

operating within an institutional apparatus, e.g., both linguistic and non-linguistic:

...discourses, institutions, ... laws, administrative measures...morality...the apparatus is thus always inscribed in a play of power...strategies of relations of forces supporting and supported by types of knowledge.

(Foucault, 1980, pp. 194-196)

This Foucaultian normalisation is reflected by Ball (1990), as seen in:

...the establishment of measurements, hierarchy, and regulations around the idea of a distributionary statistical norm within a given population – the idea of Judgment based on what is normal and thus what is abnormal.

(Ball, 1990, p. 2)

If one were to accept the theory on the duality of power and knowledge (Foucault, 1977, 1980), one can use this concept to help analyse professionals' responses from their respective locations (of the self and the professional). Foucault argues that:

...power produces knowledge...there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose, and constitute at the same time, power relations.

(Foucault, 1977, pp. 27-28)

Foucault's argument sees that control through the use of power and knowledge is gained from ascribed position(s) and situations. The route to this control is through three conceptualised ways of socially constructing and modifying humans so that they acquire "certain attitudes" about themselves and others (Foucault, 1988b, p. 18). These social processes, concerned as they are with classifying, disciplining and normalising, and referred to as "technologies of power" (Foucault, *ibid*), are forms of objectification. This concept is very useful in theorising the subjugation of powerless persons who are not well served by the structural institutions and services (or lack of) designed to assist them, as in the children's position below within this study:

**Station Sergeant:** ...In *real abuse cases*, where the parents come to the police and brings the child, is where we are able to get those matters before the court and started (sic).

The real abuse cases presuppose that there are some cases which are not real and therefore they will have a different outcome to their allegation. The route to determining the truth however does not rest with the victim but often with the various ecological systems.

**SCCO #7:** ...a child that might be mouthy or not doing so well at school or whatever, for a mother to deal with a boyfriend, that her boyfriend abused her..., if the mother had to speak to her about boys or whatever, you know she is going to figure that “She in no use,” or “She wotless”... You get all these different kind of variables and stuff coming in there of how parents, mothers especially, will respond to their daughters, especially the older child.

Specifically where objectification is concerned, it can be argued that, from its theorised gendered nature, it exacerbates the vulnerabilities of some females, already vulnerable from violence. One aspect of objectification theory argues that:

Girls and women are typically acculturated to internalise an observer’s perspective as a primary view of their physical self...which...can increase women’s opportunities for shame and anxiety, reduce opportunities for peak motivational states...help to account for an array of mental health risk...Objectification theory also illuminates why changes in these mental health risks appear to occur in step with life-course changes in the female body.

(Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997, p. 173)

#### **8.4.1.1 Scientific classification**

Within this study, professionals are making regular assessments of children alleging CSA almost on a daily basis. Judgements are made and categorisation of presenting stories done.

**CCO #2:** There was sincerity about her... I have spoken to children before and somehow you can tell when something is not quite truthful or adding up... from the beginning, I just told her to tell me what happened. The questions I was able to ask her in different ways she was able to answer correctly on all occasions, so I had no doubt that she was truthful.

The mode of objectification described as scientific classification, ensures that people see themselves as subjects and objects of scientific knowledge. Foucault suggests that it is this scientific knowledge that operates through the “institutional apparatus” (Foucault, 1980, pp. 195-196), which can be a hospital, police station or social work department. They all have their standards from which assessments are made as seen in the above description of the little girl. Within this study, professionals make these assessments as a natural part of responding to CSA. Scientific classification can be further conceptualised as the reified knowledge used by professionals to label some sexually abused children as ones worthy of being protected because they are seen as innocent.

**Senior PO #1:** If a young lady comes to the station with her mum and we have grounds to believe she is telling the truth, because we will ask questions, a good investigator will ask questions now and ask the same question again but in a different format, but it is the same thing and depending on your answer or you might just say “I don’t know” when really and truly you have to know. So you pick sense from nonsense.

On the other hand, a teenager might be seen as less deserving of protection, especially if she is labelled ‘promiscuous’. Scientific classification, as part of the apparatus of the “technologies of ‘power’” (Foucault, 1988b, p. 18), can therefore confer status and exaggerate or even mythologise differences between groups.

**Senior PO #1:** Because they might be 13, but they are exposed to life from early. They are street smart so they are looking for money or something. And the parents might encourage it too - (saying): “Get some money...”

Within this study, when applied to a sexually abused child, such a child may be seen as willingly contributing to her own *classified* status. Such a

reductionist view of the act can have repercussions far beyond the label. I would argue that this reductionist view not only ignores the extensive body of work on the long-term and short-term psychological effects on some sexually abused children, but it is also likely to contribute to the perpetuation of CSA when perpetrators are excused, by one ecological system or another, of facing the legal consequences of their criminal act.

#### **8.4.1.2 Classifying and dividing practices**

A second means of objectification described by Foucault (1983a, 1988b) is through “classifying and dividing practices”, and can be further applied to this study. This consists of defining people and their circumstances by categories, where labelling often occurs and manipulation for treatment, research and other diagnostic reasons is achieved.

**Interviewer:** What makes for strong evidence in child sexual abuse cases?

**WmPO (CID):** Tangibles; meaning, you know, DNA, physical, clothing, the scene, any exhibits, evidence left at the scene, the statement itself from the victim and any corroborating witnesses, any witnesses themselves. Police procedure is important in handling the accused (sic).

An obvious dividing practice exists, for example, where persons are categorised by medical professionals as sick, getting better, or as an addict. In the case of this study, the alleged sexual abuse of a child, categorisation by forensic examination is standard practice, where evidence of a sexual violation (or not) is sought and then used in a very powerful way, i.e., in a police statement of ‘evidence’, as seen above and in the statement below:

**Station Sergeant:** ...in the case of a sexual abuse, it must be the doctor who has to examine that person. The public medical officer will examine that female. That gives you an idea of what that person life might be....

From a feminist perspective, dividing practices have the further potential for oppressive and subjugatory actions, when race, class, gender, sexuality and other differences result in a poorer service delivery because of the dividing

practice in question. When theorising using this Foucaultian perspective, this system of domination may be reflecting institutional tools of knowledge and other means with the power to divide, seen once again within this study's data:

**WmPO (CID):** That women are more motherly and will accept more things, but a man gets more - if he hears what a child has been through, he gets more aggressive... he says "I can't believe this, I can't believe this, I can't really take this" – because he thinks of his own children. Right? So those are the most comments I hear, that is why they deal with the accused person.

Dividing actions can also be seen as reinforcing measures within a CoP, reflective of values and beliefs and manifested in action. The learning of gendered meanings and displays of masculinities and femininities can be part of such dividing actions. For example, dividing actions can also occur within services responding to CSA allegations. POs and CCOs might very well be assigned to work with clients because they are of the same gender, and because they are perceived to have *natural* masculine and feminine attributes such as caring or aggression (because of their gender), as discussed in Chapter Two on cultures. When lesser importance is then assigned to outcomes based on this dividing practice, further subjugation occurs.

#### **8.4.1.3 Objectification through self-subjectification**

This study is showing that sexually abused girls, supported by their mothers, can be subjected to an extremely long and oppressive period of waiting for the criminal offence to be heard in court, as shown in the finding below. During this wait of subjectification imposed by the structural systems, many victims decide not to pursue justice any more, moving to a state of their own self-subjectification:

**WmPO (CID):** The system is slow and the child ages. By the time it gets to the court the child is 16 and she has that option. But during the time she doesn't have that option, the parent usually propels this never-ending thing, like go through. And then the child gets to the

stage and says ... they say they don't want to do anything anymore; they don't want to go through, because they never wanted to go through with it in the first place. Some of them just settle, because the guy is frightened and they settle for money, and some of them just go through and some of them just don't do anything anymore, it doesn't go anywhere.

This situation in Barbados can be viewed through the third way in which objectification can occur i.e., through one's own self-subjectification, as shown above (Foucault, 1988b; Rainbow, 1984). Through this process, described as voluntarily subjecting oneself to another, individuals become self-informed about social power relations and their understanding of how things work within a cultural environment. Oppression can be seen as instrumental in this subjectification, where the oppressed group grows to believe that the dominant groups' views are the accepted norm. The theory of objectification mentioned earlier (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) helps our understanding of the cultural and gendered nature of this act. When dividing practices and scientific classification coexist with subjectification, the theories of power and knowledge are at their most controlling.

In the case of CSA allegations in Barbados, the child and parent(s) seek assistance from the social services and the RBPF in putting right a wrong. This is an example of the power of the police, who are in an exclusive position to intervene and bring criminal charges against the alleged perpetrator based on their knowledge, status and the mandate of the State.

The CCB officers have a statutory responsibility for the care and protection of children. Although they are not the only ones who deliver therapeutic and supportive interventions, they nonetheless are also in a unique position prescribed by the laws of Barbados to protect children from harm. Accordingly, Foucault's thesis of "the voluntary study of one's self" situates these children and their families in the potentially objectified position with knowledgeable others, i.e., the CCOs and POs. However, Collins' (2000)

theorising on empowerment, through understanding how power is organised and how it operates, reminds us that:

...another way of approaching power views it not as something that groups possess, but as the intangible entity that circulates within a particular matrix of domination and to which individuals stand in varying relationships.

(Collins, 2000, p. 292).

In such a situation we can see that each player's action: the professional's, the victim's and that of his/her carer, all help to determine the extent of the effects of this domination.

Within this study a child might choose not to disclose, a mother might choose to support or not support the criminal investigation, and a professional might agree to limit his/her investigative and supportive intervention. All of these responses to CSA allegations arguably operate from situated experiences and within forms of social structures of control. Often these social structures can be conceptualised as the matrix of domination, the way in which the "intersecting oppressions are actually organised" (Collins, 2000, p. 21), for example, on grounds of gender, race, or sexuality and result in domination of one or other group by other(s).

### **8.5 The Subjectivity of Values, Attitudes and Feelings**

Working with children alleging CSA has two important implications for the values, attitudes and feelings of the professionals responding to the allegations and the likelihood of this impacting their decisions.

**SCCO #7:** It was so traumatic in terms of... (CCO *pauses and sighs*)...especially at the beginning, at the onset, when there was a lot of...pause...it was very public too, the media was in it, because of the church and who he was; the church members were involved and they were intimidating as well, or wanted to be.

Firstly, this study shows that self-examination of the emotional effects on the professional self is important, as shown above. The possibility exists that a sense of powerlessness, alienation and oppression can mirror what the child victim and/or parent might be experiencing, as discussed in an earlier section.

Another perspective is that insight is important here also for understanding that, in responding to the allegation, actions might be reflecting a patriarchal system of socialisation which assigns male entitlement to sex through masculine value systems and blameworthy culpability.

**WmPO (CID):** No, she wasn't pregnant, but the man was having sex with her and the daughter at the same time, and she was in shock. The girl told the mother; she brought her to the station - they met at the station actually, because someone else brought her, but she met at the station and she was told this by the daughter at the station. She was saying things like "I can't deal with this right now, I don't want to take her home"; but that was just a shock thing.

Equally, the values, attitudes and feelings of the child and/or parent may be directly associated with responses which subjugate or elevate the alleged abuse. In this the child might be seen as culpable. Understanding this allows the following:

- therapeutic responses by CCOs and criminal investigations by POs can become more focused in assessing and understanding the implications of the physical, psychological and emotional affects of sexual abuse on the child;
- acknowledgement that (violent) patriarchal environments can lead to sexually exploitative acts, of which sexual economic exchange arrangements between men and women might be a part. In a household in which this is practised, the child can become caught up within the psychological contract and the socio-economic arrangement. The phenomenon of this gender-based violence in the Caribbean is shown to be pervasive and socially acceptable (Clarke, 1998) and, furthermore, is deemed to be serious and escalating (LeFranc & Rock, 2002).

Furthermore, understanding feelings and attitudes towards mothers might help to guard against the attribution of blame, or assumptions that some

women do not want to change the sexually exploitative situation and thereby protect themselves and their children.

An earlier argument on the subject of where exploitative power lies (as discussed above), and its effects on women and child's subjugation, is that of Martin (1982), who credits radical and lesbian feminism with a shift in feminist theory and thinking:

...feminist theory and political strategies have affected a profound shift in conceptions of "politics" and in assumptions about the location and exercise of power...radical and lesbian feminists in particular have consistently refused to privilege the economic over the ideological condition of oppression and change; they have legitimised the struggle over the production and transformation of meaning as a focus for political intervention and opposition.

(Martin, 1982, p. 3)

This perspective confronts some of the arguments on the causes and effects of women's dependence on men.

In using the family preservation philosophy and suggesting its inappropriateness in CSA, a challenge is posed to fundamental values of social work practice, which include recognizing and supporting family strengths. Project reports show that it is important for women in their caring role to remain safe, thus keeping their children safe also (Schechter & Gary, 1991). When the family is the source of violence and dysfunction, this challenge is unmistakable. The social work profession was urged by Chambon & Irving (1999) to remember the need for ongoing reassessment of professional values, attitudes and feelings when confronted with social problems. Chambon & Irving (1999, citing Epstein, 1996, p. 117), shows the case being argued for:

...what we have gained during the process of developing the idea of scientific practice ought to be capable of being adapted to the emerging scene...Develop a different set of themes to help us enter the new era, in which repetition of the old themes no longer will do.

(Chambon & Irving 1999, p. xv)

Embracing Foucault's technologies of power (described above) for what they offer professional practice can enable a change in mindset and professional responses by both POs and CCOs.

**Station Sergeant:** ...girls are challenging men "to live with them"/to have intercourse with them. Two weeks ago, we had a 13 yr. old student, while the police was patrolling, recognized that she was in an area, somewhere in the area of the CBC, took her up and brought her here. She was almost naked. Brought her and another gentleman...Whilst interviewing the gentleman, the gentleman said that she approached him...

However, in reality, combating the impact of patriarchy and gendered norms which can account for CSA requires a greater level of action to counter male power and gendered norms than what is addressed by Foucault.

The question therefore arises, to what extent do the values, attitudes and feelings held by CCOs and POs, emanating from within their dominant cultures, subjugate or enable the voices of clients alleging CSA or the accused denying the allegation?

Part of this thesis is that CSA becomes normative among some groups in Barbados as a result of the privileged status of males' entitlement to sex, as discussed earlier and evidenced in the example above, where an adult is saying a child approached him for sex and he complied. This study has further shown, in the findings and discussion chapter, that victims of CSA are also subjugated by excessively long legal delays for a judicial hearing and conclusion of their criminal case. Associated with this, as further emerged from this study, are professional feelings of anger and helplessness on behalf of the child and themselves. What this situation can provoke is a determination on the part of the professionals to help change the factors within the macro level which permit this state of affairs in Barbados. The corollary of this is acceptance of this status quo, a situation in which the professional knowledge, criminal and child protection proceedings also become subjugated by the State.

### 8.5.1 Male power, privilege and patriarchy

**Interviewer:** Which one do you want to talk about?

**CCO #2:** I want to talk about the seven-year-old...the aunt's son - her cousin - and at times the aunt's husband would take her in the bedroom, fondle her, kiss her vagina... perform oral sex on her, and things like that (sic). He would tell her "Don't snitch on me"... So now the matter is before the courts...the sister is blaming the other sisters for trying to break up her marriage [saying], "How would her husband do that?" so it has been a real conflictual situation with the sisters.

**Station Sergeant:** We sometimes prefer to get the CCB on board, because they are parents who like the perpetrator better than the child.

The varied data from this study show the protection by women that can be extended to men in their alleged sexual abuse of children. In understanding male privilege and patriarchy, I draw on a feminist perspective of gender socialisation, which explains how social behaviours and structures assign distinct masculine and feminine roles, and from which the genesis of the privileged status of men in society arises. This control is linked to the Foucaultian technologies of power and the feminist model of domination, as espoused by some feminists (Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1989; Neville & Hamer, 2001).

In exploring the influence of culture on embedding male privilege and patriarchy, the question arises as to how cultural realities impact on professional responses to CSA allegations. Where privileged institutions such as the church are concerned, this can clearly add pressure on both victim and professional, who have to be themselves supported. This professional support needed by both victim and professional is clearly compounded by obvious support for the accused, as seen below.

**SCCO # 7:** ...The church members visited, they called; when she wouldn't recant they would quarrel and threaten her and curse [her], you know what I mean, and say bad things about her family, her mother, that amount of pressure (sic).... Yes she went through some really rough

spots, that is why I used to visit really often and she would call me at any time, any time (sic).

In his discourse, "Toward a pedagogy of the Oppressor", Kimmel (2003) draws an interesting connection between the dominance of male power and privilege and that of the person *marginalised* through race, class or gender privilege. Kimmel states:

The very processes that confer privilege to one group and not another group are often invisible to those on whom privilege is conferred...It is a luxury that only white people have in our society, not to think about race every day of their lives. It is a luxury that only men have in our society, to pretend that gender does not matter.

(Kimmel, 2003, p. 4)

It is from this position of invisible privilege or, as I would describe it, taken-for-granted vantage point, that the subjugation of the rights of others occurs, because these rights are perceived to be of lesser importance, not considered or not perceived at all. Privilege is therefore equated with the normalcy of entitlements, in which power resides. Kimmel's (ibid) argument suggests that, because such power and privilege are often invisible to those who have it, it makes it difficult, if not impossible, for the holders of them to see or understand how others might be dominated by this status. McIntosh (2003) describes the depth of this advantage in terms of it being "unacknowledged privilege," and as an "unconscious oppressiveness" (McIntosh, 2003, p. 149), as seen below from the sentiments within this study's data which are repeated here because of the stark gendered nature of the child's subjugation.

**Station Sergeant ...** whilst interviewing the gentleman, the gentleman said that she [a child of 13 years] approached him...

I am not naively ascribing male privilege to all males conferred by all or most females. Clearly, there are differences based on factors of class, age, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation. Professionals within this study show a mixture of appreciation for intersecting factors which can contribute to CSA,

particularly through mothers' socio-economic status and their own vicarious trauma (from their child's abuse), as shown below:

**Interviewer:** So the mother held onto the money?

**SCCO #7:** Yes, she had (sic). I think there were two things. They were poor, number one; and secondly, I think it was at the point when she was at breaking point, because of all the pressures and she was about like kind of finish with it...

It is important that professionals have an understanding of the different proximal factors that lead to some children's sexual abuse within their immediate environment, as shown from this study. The point I am making is one which is supported by the literature, i.e., men have more privileges than women, based on systems of patriarchy (Feldman, 2001; Hurtado, 1989). Examples of the power emanating from male hegemony are seen in historic reified practices of subjugation by race, class and gender (Davis, 2006). Deconstructing this from a socialist feminism perspective allows one to understand women's subordination in a coherent and systematic way that integrates class and sex, as well as other aspects of identity such as race/ethnicity. The aim of using such analysis can help liberate women (Holmstrom, 2003, p. 38), and by extension reduce the subjugation of their children.

## **8.6 Theories of Identity - Caribbean Masculinities and Femininities**

**Senior PO #1:**...but you will find some young ladies will get themselves sexually involved with an older man and she might be 13 or 14 and she ends up pregnant. The mother might be very upset about it, but the man might be bringing money in the house though, and it is then not reported, or the mother might bring the girl to the station and the girl refuses.

In the example above, representative of the two groups' data in this study, one sees mother and child acting in specific ways towards the abuse which has resulted in a pregnancy; the perpetrator is able to use his socio-economic position to subjugate the child's abusing experience, and the professionals, in

responding, are likely to be impacted by these perceived interactions, in addition to their own cultural and professional identities.

The ecological model introduced in Chapter Two allows one to see that gendered norms can become established and embedded at various conceptual levels, e.g., at the individual, situational and the socio-economic levels, and can affect responses to CSA. This is a complex web which helps in understanding how identities such as those in the above example are shaped and played out in various performances. As argued by the early work of Butler (1988), various socialised acts, performed and interpreted as being ones of masculine or feminine identity, are only real to the extent that they are performed.

**Interviewer:** Would they have said this to a child?

**Senior PO #1:** No, I am not saying to a child but to an adult; “Man, she did want that man” or “You get what you want and now you crying rape” or “Man she looking for a piece a money.” You know. These are statements that are made and not just isolated to police, but in the wider society, you will hear males saying that...

The example above is said to be applicable to women. However, from other descriptors elsewhere in this study, because labels of promiscuity and consensual sex are applied to children, it is not impossible to see that these same sentiments (about women) crying rape will be applied to some children.

Performing one’s gender wrongly initiates a set of punishments, both obvious and indirect, and performing it well provides the reassurance that there is an essentialism of gender identity after all (Butler, 1988, p. 528). In other words, male entitlement to sex should not be questioned and when it is, the accuser opens (her) self up to being labelled and discredited. Within the respective cultural performances and expressions of masculinities and femininities lie a range of actions symbolic of the ecological inter-relationships, as suggested in the model at the end of Chapter Two.

Masculinity, for example, argues Lewis (2003):

...is rather a whole constellation of practices and behaviours. It is a phenomenon that that is not fixed...always in the process of being negotiated, contested, even destabilised...ultimately, men seek the approval of other men in the performance of their masculinity. They engage in certain gender conventions in an attempt to impose some homogeneity on the category – a homogeneity that is decidedly illusive.

(Lewis, 2003, p. 95)

Nevertheless, Caribbean masculinity is like its international counterparts elsewhere. It is part of an asymmetrical power structure residing in a hegemonic patriarchy. Women occupy the other part of the asymmetry. These can be assigned subjugated positions stemming from structural domination, as seen earlier in the example from this study of long court delays leading to self-subjectification; in this the victim decided not to pursue justice anymore for her sexual abuse.

Patriarchy, as a dominant system in the Caribbean, informs the ways in which gender roles and identities are played out and contribute to sexual behaviours. Indeed, sexual prowess and domination are deemed primary signifiers of Caribbean masculinity (Reddock, 2004). Quamina-Aiyejina & Brathwaite (2005) further suggest that sexual violence is often tightly woven in constructions of masculinity and patriarchy.

This position is supported by the earlier work of Brown & Chevannes (1998). In their examination of gender socialisation in the Caribbean, male masculinity asserts its described 'rightful' position over women and children. Histories of learning, and the impact of hegemonic masculinity embodied by imperialist slave owners, have some influence on the meanings which some Caribbean males attach to power and control over women (Johnson, 1996) and, by extension, over children. These imperialistic behaviours - enslavement power, colonialism and indenture-ship within past Caribbean capitalist economies - also represent the stark economic disparities based on race, class, gender and age, categories in which women and children had the least status (Beckles, 2003).

From this study we again see the subjugating experience of mother and child based on gender, class and economic (in)security in the case of sexual abuse by the pastor (who was subsequently found guilty and sentenced to a time in prison):

Highlighting the dominating force of patriarchy (Lerner, 1986) helps us to understand the irony of the asymmetrical power as manifested in masculinities and femininities:

The system of patriarchy can function only with the cooperation of women. This cooperation is secured by a variety of means: gender indoctrination; educational deprivation; the denial to women of knowledge of their history; the dividing of women, one from the other, by defining “respectability” and “deviance” according to women’s sexual activities; by restraints and outright coercion; by discrimination in access to economic resources and political power; and by awarding class privileges to conforming women.

(Lerner, 1986, p. 217)

This asymmetry of power between men and women also resonates from within its historic, gendered, asymmetrical socialisation in the Caribbean. The British-influenced legacy (in the case of Barbados) of male dominance, inscribed on the culture and structural operations of the Caribbean region, is a fundamental identity marker of contemporary Caribbean patriarchy.

Enactment of identity through performing masculinities and femininities can impact on CSA reporting and professional responding. By this I mean that a sexually abusive male from a high status class and strong economic position arguably stands a better chance of non-disclosure on the child’s part, compared to a man from a poor background who might even be known to the police for misdemeanours. Feminists argue that the relational nature of masculinities and femininities is underpinned by gender ideologies. For example, in many relations, “power dynamics are an essential element in both the definition and the enactments of gender” (Kimmel & Aronson, 2004, p. xxii). The early normative definition of male masculinity as white, middle class and heterosexual not only problematised others of different ethnic and racial

groups and sexual orientation (Kimmel & Aronson, 2004), but also did not/could not explain variations in power within the marginalised groups, as is evident in this study's example of class in the Caribbean.

### **8.7 Theories of Practice: Evidence-based Practice - Influence on Child Sexual Abuse Allegations**

**CCO #4:** I felt at that time that I needed to be exposed to more training, being in charge of a programme

**Senior PO #1:** ...so as I was saying, that training is vital, and I think it was about two months ago they had a course where some officers, both male and females went to the training school for a course on unlawful sexual (sic) course. To me that was good but it needs to be spread across the board more. To select 20, and 15 of those are CID..., because... CID will deal with that.... [but] the uniformed police will be the first persons on the scene...

**CCO #2:** Well my knowledge base is in terms of social work and the fact that OK in social work we always look at systems, so we can say OK if something has happened here with this child, it has to have an effect. That propels me...

The findings from this study show that almost all participants spoke of the value of training in the work with sexual offences and CSA. Given that professionals' responses to CSA are likely to be guided by their training and education, professionally acquired knowledge, including research evidence, and also by their ascribed meanings of CSA, this finding is important. However, views on the value of, or need for, research-based evidence hardly emerged within this study. So what does this research evidence say regarding professionals' practice as it directly responds to CSA? Mildred's (2003) social constructionist approach to the subject argues that social work practitioners should:

...be taught to critically examine how the moral and political beliefs of researchers might influence the kinds of questions they ask and how they interpret and frame their research findings.

(Mildred, 2003, p. 492)

The same exhortation can be applied to approaches to interviewing children and parents in the aftermath of CSA allegations. The same critical approaches influence the various and varying CoPs in which CSA allegations are debated, silenced or not regarded as an issue worthy of having much professional resource spent on it. Two issues in particular arise here:

- the extent to which CSA allegations are seen as “real police work” and as genuine disclosures, worthy of CCOs’ time;
- the extent to which CCOs and police feel they can meaningfully intervene.

Such thinking and actions do not occur in a vacuum, but are influenced by cultural norms which mirror society’s values, and may very well “reflect moral and political as well as scientific, disagreements” (Mildred, *ibid*, p. 492).

Mildred’s (*ibid*) exhortation on the careful examination of evidence resonates with the view that practice should be informed by research (Gambrill, 2007; Shlonsky & Stern, 2007). This evidence-based approach is described as “the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individuals” (Sackett, Richardson, Rosenberg, & Haynes, 1997, p. 2). Scrutinising practices, such as the routine forensic medical examination of girls alleging CSA in Barbados (and other practices), for their continued authenticity against such evidence-based benchmarks, needs to be considered in terms of the centrality of these practices to CoPs.

Evidence-based practice (EBP) is not without its critics, however, with arguments being raised about the resource implications, such as training and supervision; its reified nature; the fact that it (EBP) is too mechanistic, and that it can lead to misleading, exaggerated claims (Rubin, 2007). These debates can nonetheless stimulate new and important discussions on responding to CSA in Barbados, where none currently exist.

Whilst this is not an in-depth look at EBP, it is very instructive to raise it here. This is important, as evidence, both the forensic kind gathered by the police and the theoretical kind mentioned earlier, that applies to both professions is

fundamental to how CSA allegations are managed from first report to their judicial or other intervention outcome. A critique by others of EBP (Nevo & Slonim-Nevo, 2011) also promotes the case for a fuller participation with evidence, which extends its evidence-based nature to evidence-informed practice. The imaginative judgements of practitioners engaging in constant interaction and dialogue with clients (Nevo & Slonim-Nevo, *ibid*, p. 1) assist this two-way evidence gathering and sharing. From a CoP perspective, the importance of knowledge sharing and full participation within practice is emphasised, rather than an over-preoccupation with procedures. CoP theory, as applied to the concept of EBP, also gives voice to all clients, whereby their stories can be heard and examined critically within the cultural mores of the family and the wider society, and not only from the pages of international research.

The two professional groups' responses are a function of their domains' available resources for their practice, i.e., the professionals' values, skills, experience, imagination and creativity, as well as alliance capacity to deal with the matter (Nevo & Slonim-Nevo, 2011), for dealing with CSA. The domain resources in this case are akin to what (Carr, 2008, p. 67) argues as making up the therapeutic alliance. The quality of this alliance (interpersonal relationship between the sexually abused child and family, and the professional) will include the clients' motivation, ego strength and their capacity for participation within yet another interpersonal relationship (Nevo & Slonim-Nevo, 2011).

From the previous chapter we see some evidence that there is likely to be some divergence between the police and the CCOs' responses to CSA in Barbados. The police tend to operate from a strict positivist stance, i.e., guided by what the forensic evidence says and how they should now respond, based on what the law requires. Their approach is problem-focused (on the reported crime), rather than supportive and empowerment-based. The social worker, on the other hand, decides on an intervention based on the unique features of each case, guided by what the child says and their assessment reveals. Underpinning this is the professional training and knowledge of the

effects and consequences of CSA, necessitating both treatment and prevention (Taylor, 1999). It appears from this study's findings that such training is lacking in Barbados.

## 8.8 Theorising Language for its Effects on Professional Responses

**Station Sergeant:** ...In real abuse cases....Yes, this is under 16 and they are so rampant, that even the girls are challenging men "to live with them" to have intercourse with them

**WmPO (CID):** We would come to the consensus that this girl is worthless (*worthless*).

**Station Sergeant:** ...are we going to put the father in prison and then there is a child there to be supported?

**SCCO #7:** We know that children when they step into adolescence they start exploring their sexuality and so on.

**CCO #5:** They are hurtful, they can be very depressing? Most often I am quite angry because...because the perpetrator have other means, they have girlfriends, they have wives, so there is no - it baffles me - it is hard for me to fathom why they would try to interfere with a minor child, who is trusting of them, who is looking to them for protection, food and guidance. So most often I am quite angry (*sigh*).

The examples above from this study's data show some of the different ways in which professionals use language to define CSA and respond to it in Barbados. This use of language not only transmits meaning, but also constructs it (Weedon, 1997). As a consequence, the ways in which CSA is spoken about in the above examples begin to demonstrate some of the thinking on specific cases which may or may not be extended to other or all CSA cases.

In the discussion that follows, I theorise the ways in which professional responses to CSA are likely to be influenced by the use of language. I use language to bridge discourses in this chapter and the ones in Chapter Seven on CoPs. In doing this, I am acknowledging the key role language played in

the professionals' responses to child sexual abuse, and the extent to which it can help to shed light on this complexity. In conceptualizing language as a social action (Ahearn, 2001) in which POs and social workers engage as they respond to CSA allegations, I adopt Ahern's (2001) analysis, in which language as social action is treated as agency. Language as social action, therefore, is more than a descriptive or explanatory action.

Scholars using language as social action have explored its embeddedness within other (social-cultural) relations, such as culture and society (Ahern, 2001). An understanding of how discourses both shape and are shaped by power dynamics and socio-cultural factors (Urban, 1991) is also important. It resonates with this study of CSA, in which language is a critical part in the management of the allegation. When theorised as social action, language then begins to pave the way for understanding the thinking behind some of the professional discourses and professional action, and hence assists in theory development. Bakhtin (1981) supports this:

...all words have the taste of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and hour. Each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially changed life...

(Bakhtin, 1981, p. 293).

An acceptance of this contention (including its social and historical situatedness) allows us to begin to see that language defines persons and situations. Language, therefore, is conceptualised/theorised as being of a gendered nature and as having a professional identity. As a consequence, language is also representative of the power (dynamics) to which Urban (1991) speaks: a professional identity where CSA is concerned. One can see how, at the surface level, the use of language can immediately be one of power and potentially one of subjugation in a situation where a maturationally immature child has to "compete" linguistically with "professionally oriented" language spoken by adults, especially those who are child-insensitive.

This is potentially a situation in which the child's lack of maturity is further diminished by the agency of the professionals, where agency is described as the socio-culturally mediated capacity to act (Ahearn, 2001, p. 112). Such agency, I would argue, can be used in two ways: to subjugate or empower. For example, a male PO making suggestive remarks that a female victim of sexual abuse is wasting police time in their allegations is arguably one of subjugation, even though it might be said out of frustration.

**CCO #3:** ...the police officer wanted to know why they [CCOs] keeping sending these cases to them....

Equally, professional body language and tone of voice can be either subjugating or empowering. Defence lawyers use language powerfully when a CSA case is adjourned, yet again because they have not seen a particular file or piece of evidence, as reported in this study by some of the professionals.

Ahearn's (2001, p. 115) review of the subject makes the point that scholars, in studying systems of domination, have been moving away from agency as being something that is exercised by completely autonomous individuals.

The point is of relevance to this study because it links agency through the medium of language in an interesting way. By this I mean that the language of the two professional groups intersects:

- with each other:

**CCO #3 (focus group):** We share what is necessary, the referral is not as detailed....

**WmPO (CID):** The only time we would really speak to the CCB is when we need guardianship, say for instance in the case reported and that person is living within the household;

- with the language of the child:

**CCO #4:** I could not say anything in court. I was a silent supporter of the child.

**CCO #2:** When she was questioned she said just how a little girl would put it – simple.

- and with the parents and other groups:

**CCO #2:** So as I said they will contact us and they do not discharge the child unless we come...so any case of sexual abuse... A lot of our cases come through the hospital, because once the child has been raped or sexually abused in some way, to me it is automatic...they call the CCB. So we work well with the hospital.

This study's examples of agency and language above are two sides of a response coin on the part of the professional and client. This makes for a recipe in which CSA allegations are understood, marginalised or denied. This can be amidst conflict and connection (e.g., between parent and child). The same conflict and connection can occur between the professionals who are acting from within their respective structural systems and CoPs, as shown in the focus group in Chapter Six. It resonates with the conflict and identity issues relating to the proposed mandatory reporting of CSA.

Ahearn (2001, p. 115) quotes the historian Lalu, who captures (for the purpose of this discussion) the graphic way in which such agency moves beyond the person to the wider cultural and historical environment which can dictate (in this case) the responses to CSA. Lalu (2000) states:

The question of agency, it seems, may be posed in ways other than in terms of the autonomous subject or authorial subject ... [We] may have to think of the ways in which agency is constituted by the norms, practices, institutions and discourses through which it is made available.

(Lalu, 2000, pp. 49-50)

When we examine the ways in which professional agency (and thus language) intersects with children's and parents' agency/language, we can see the potential for cooperation, or resistance (passive or active). Given the different roles of POs and social workers when dealing with CSA, the question arises as to how the agency of children is facilitated or impeded by intersectional factors, given that each profession operates within structural

systems that can be seen as patriarchal. An example of this is a judicial system operating within outdated legal principles, a system which, historically, has been biased towards men.

Where CSA is concerned in Barbados, some feminists would argue that Lalu's (ibid) view of agency (as being informed by cultural and historical accounts) should manifest itself through activism and resistance (Goddard, 2000, p. 3).

MacLeod (1992) describes the agency of women in these terms:

...even as subordinate players, [women] always play an active part that goes beyond the dichotomy of victimisation/acceptance, a dichotomy that flattens out a complex and ambiguous agency in which women accept, accommodate, ignore, resist, or protest – sometimes all at the same time.

(MacLeod, 1992, p. 543)

## **8.9 Exercising Agency**

Finally, this study is demonstrating that all those working to protect children can exercise agency towards this goal within a CoP, and help girls to do the same, thus achieving a flattening-out of victimisation through their ways of defining and responding to CSA. A feminist approach which acknowledges reasons for such victimisation can be synergised with a CoP to better inform practice. Like the professor in Elly Danica's "Don't: A woman's word...a deeply distressing...incest survivor's tale..." (Zuk & Wetmore, 1993, p. 21), women professionals, and their male counterparts working with child victims of sexual abuse, have to find the language for themselves and enable the child's, before moving forward and enabling each other's agency. This joint agency approach is critical to defining the nature of CSA in Barbados. This chapter's analytical approach to the study data shows that the use of a feminist conceptual lens can bring some different insights into our understanding of the explicit and implicit modes of responding to CSA.

### **8.10 The Next Steps**

In Chapter Nine, I integrate the findings and articulate the grounded theory of risk perpetuation derived from this study. In discussing the findings, I further engage with the literature, in line with the grounded theory principle.

## 9 A Theory of Risk Perpetuation - Integrating the Findings

### 9.1 Introduction

In keeping with the grounded theory approach of this study, its broad aims were intended to give direction to this research, rather than to be of an a priori nature with the testing of hypotheses, as made clear in Chapters Four and Five. These aims were to understand:

1. How is CSA defined, and how do such definitions impact on professionals' responses (to CSA) in Barbados?
2. What organisational and other factors impact on, promote/inhibit responding in the best interests of the child within the social and cultural context of Barbados?

As a result of this 'organic' process and approach, in this chapter, I draw out the core phenomenon that emerged from the study: "*the perpetuation of risk, arising from the normalisation of child sexual abuse*", and discuss this in relation to relevant literature. Using the literature as a secondary source of data, in keeping with the grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) I consider such data for its usefulness in understanding the complexity of child sexual abuse, and the associated challenges in responding appropriately to its complexities. It is important to point out here that my broad research aim was focused on professional responses to CSA in Barbados. However, in using a grounded theory approach in this study, my research data have driven the research findings and led to the theorisation within this chapter. For example, I examine the interrelationship between child sexual abuse (CSA), adolescent pregnancy and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), for their influence on each other (Raj, Silverman, & Amaro, 2000) and their contribution to the perpetuation of risk from and to CSA. This is for the explicit reason that adolescent pregnancy emerged as a key response in defining child sexual abuse, with some reframing and redefining of CSA as a lesser concern and the pregnancy as of more concern. A resultant shifting in CoPs'

support and prosecutorial intervention occurred as another related outcome. It is therefore of critical importance to explore the literature for the associations between the two and any other factors. The trilogy of CSA, adolescent pregnancy and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) emerged from the literature as related. In Chapter Six, it was shown from the findings and analysis that some of the adolescents who become pregnant before the age of 16 years in Barbados are likely to have been involved in coercive sex, or at the very least, to have been the victim of a sexual offence of one kind or another as described in the Sexual Offences Act 1992 of Barbados.

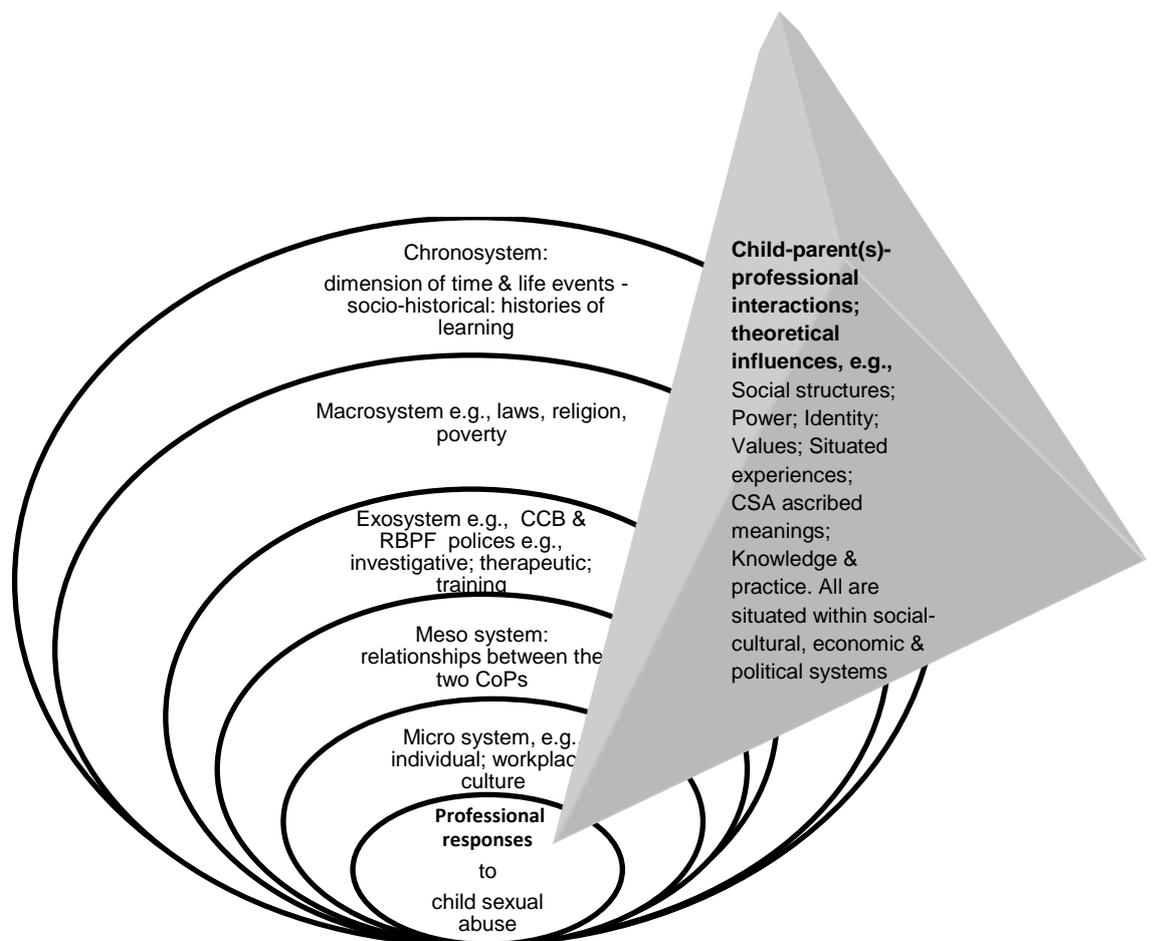
In Chapter Two we saw the relationship between CSA and adolescent pregnancies linked to adversities such as drugs and alcohol use and exposure to violence. When viewed from within an ecological paradigm and the socio-cultural theory of CoPs, several risk factors at the various ecological levels help to explain CSA which results in adolescent pregnancy, and the professionals' responses to it. These factors, and the decisions professionals make, are embedded within the social-cultural systems which can impact on the construction of responses. What I present here is the argument that the response process (which includes professional actions and rationale) is itself a product of the environment in which CSA and the meanings attributed to it occur, and thus socially constructed. As presented in Chapter Two, situating the research, I reintroduce below (Figure 9.1) the systems ecological theory model representing social-cultural influences on responses to CSA (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), in order to demonstrate two points:

- norms, roles and rules implicit in each nested system help to shape behaviour. The model therefore conceptualises the dynamic interrelationship between factors within the systems;
- conceptualising social-cultural influences in this way is supported by the feminist and CoP-inspired analytical framework of this study. All of these can help explain behavioural actions. This integration develops the *person-process-context* argument, and enables understanding of the interplay between individuals' characteristics, those of the

environment and the interaction between the two over time (Bronfenbrenner,1989).

While the main theoretical approaches for the interpretation of data were CoP and feminisms, I have consistently made use of ecological theory throughout this thesis as a means of demonstrating the interconnectedness of multi-level systems as a social context for CSA. Ecological systems theory is compatible with my interpretative framework and serves to strengthen understanding.

**Figure 9.1 Ecological systems theory of social-cultural influences on behaviours**



## 9.2 Responding to Child Sexual Abuse: Hearing the Story

Following disclosure of the sexual abuse by the child, the allegation is managed by systems characterised by repetitive enquiry and investigations by different personnel (e.g., POs, CCOs and doctors). Disclosure of the sexual abuse by the child might begin in the home or school and extend to the structural official systems mandated by law to investigate such claims. The disclosure can then be diverted to medical and forensic services, all part of the machinery to support the claim that the abuse has taken place. The system also offers treatment in those cases where a medical need has been identified. The less visible psychological and emotional need might not be seen, understood or prioritized as a need. This is especially so in cases where a child presents his/her physical and emotional self in a manner which does not fit a particular perception of a sexually abused child and, or where, resources are scarce.

**SCCO #7:** ...What are some of the key decisions? One is that we seek to have the child physically examined to decide if there is any way to determine whether or not some type of sexual molestation did occur, bearing in mind that there are some cases that you will not see the evidence. For instance if there was oral sex or looking at pornographic pictures, that sort of stuff, which will not necessarily leave a mark or scar...

...and officers (CCOs) have too big a workload...we try to deal with, say, the more cases where there are young children involved. So we try to prioritise the ones that we think we need to see in an emergency right away... But because the workload is too much I think, as it even relates to the counselling of the child, long term counselling, sometimes that falls by the way; and the resources are not in terms of paper and equipment, the resources are in terms of manpower.

**Interviewer:** So there is a prioritisation that takes place?

**SCCO #7:** Yes. Younger children – young children and the nature of the abuse, we try to do that.

Within these systems, there is the interplay of the child's immediate microsystem, which involves a range of inter and intra-familial face-to-face

relationships co-existing with symbolic, social, physical and other factors (Bronfenbrenner, 1994a). These can all influence how the child engages with the aforementioned official structures, which, themselves, are operating from within their respective ecological framework in which there are constraints on the service delivery.

**SCCO #7:** It would and it does because it means that you are - quote/unquote - stuck with a case longer than you need to be, because you still have to follow through with it. But then the aspect of getting it before the court is out of your hand...whereas if these things were done expeditiously where you would know that within six months or so that matter has been dealt with and the child, whatever the conclusion is, that child can go on with his or her life, fine; but you are stuck with a case for all of these years and this is just one, right? And you are looking at a case load – I used to have a caseload of 400 and something at any one time. So, and even though some of them were “dormant” - quote/unquote - they had a mind of their own, as soon as you file them under inactive, they came back up (*light ironic laughter*).

### **9.3 Defining Child Sexual Abuse - Something Less or More than the Criminal Act?**

From the findings discussed in Chapter Six, CCOs and POs are faced with high rates of reported CSA allegations. The high number of allegations appears to challenge the professionals' capacity to define, in a consistent manner, what confronts them on a daily basis, because of the disclosure patterns mentioned in Figures 6.1 and 6.2. In the face of obstacles which impede the defining of CSA (e.g., lack of parental support and a weak policy infrastructure), a pre-requisite for action, the task of defining, becomes more onerous. The numbers of CSA cases are also perceived by both groups of professionals to be on the rise. What is not known is whether this is due to heightened awareness leading to more reporting, or an actual increase in prevalence. The secondary information presented in Chapter Two shows consistent numbers of prosecutions (overwhelmingly female victims): seventy (70) females for the year 2008 and no males recorded; forty-seven (47) females for the year 2009 and five males recorded; fifty (50) females for the

year 2010 and five males recorded. Data were unavailable for the numbers which had reached the high court. What emerges from this study, however, is the very high reported attrition rate through judicial delays and postponements of those cases which are prosecuted. This leads to many cases being withdrawn by complainants, and leaves questions in the minds of professionals:

**SCCO #7:** I mean, sometimes the children have already settled down, you have done the counselling, yes they might still be some residual long term effects or whatever, but they are OK; only to hear ... a knock at your door one morning and a writ server would turn up with a summons to come to court the next day. Can you imagine what that does to a child?

**Interviewer:** What do you think it does in your experience?

**SCCO #7:** In my experience? It sometimes throw them into a tailspin and invariably what some of them might say is that I don't want to go through with it anymore, "I don't want to do this anymore." "Mummy I can't do this anymore, I am OK now, I have had my counselling, this is going to bother my school work; I don't want to go through this anymore"...you know...I don't know if the court is aware of this, and that is why - (*Interviewee pauses*) - I would hate to think so, that that (sic) is why they invariably leave this long space of time between the logging of the case and the actual hearing? (*Interviewee adopts a questioning, ponderous and perplexed demeanour at this stage*).

In the findings chapter, the definition of sexual abuse is strongly influenced by factors other than the criminal act itself, or the evidence from the labour-intensive criminal investigation as reported by the police. For example, CCOs repeatedly agonised about the ways in which the sexual abuse was likely to be perpetuated despite its investigation and prosecution. This is typified by this interviewee's sentiments:

**CCO #3:** Something needs to be done. They are victimized all over again....I am really upset when some parents say they want help for their children but they don't want to put them through the court system, especially when

the children are young ... I have been here six years and none of the CSA cases I have had have reached the high court as yet.

Between January and August 2004, this CCO was directly involved in thirty-three (33) cases of child sexual abuse. These were twenty-seven (27) females and six (6) males, ranging in age from 3.5 to 15 years. Here, during her interview in 2009, she is “really upset” at the judicial delays. She stated: *“The children gave evidence beautifully; they did their part and some four, five, six years later nothing else is heard...A police sergeant was very upset once asking why we keep sending such cases to them, what are they supposed to do?”* (CCO #3).

Understandably, it is the PO’s job to bring criminal charges against alleged perpetrators and to prosecute serious crimes such as the sexual abuse of children, and if there are lengthy delays before prosecution can take place in the high court, the question posed by the police sergeant above - i.e., “What are we supposed to do with these cases?” - is a legitimate one. It not only speaks to the futility of using police investigative resources for little prosecutorial gain, but also to the emotional toll on POs, as demonstrated below:

**Interviewer:** You seemed to be suggesting earlier that you are almost immune to it now, but what are some of the emotions you feel sometimes?

**WmPO #3:** Anger. I do get angry a lot - I don’t show it to the person - but I does (sic) vent when it is all done; I vent (*WmPO once again passionately emphasising her feeling*) because I do get angry when I see it happen ...

I am arguing that judicial delays, parents’ reluctance to press charges and the emotional toll on professionals, reflected in the evidence above, and repeated time and again within this study, point to the reassigning of CSA to less than the serious criminal act it is. It is redefined to *something other* through the long delays of silence by the courts, the unsupporting reactions by some parents to the whole disclosure experience and perceived delaying tactics by the accused:

**WmPO #3:** ... the person who is charged also holds up a lot of the delays in court (sic); they don't have their lawyer, their lawyer is out, their lawyer doing something else (sic); back and forth, people not coming forward anymore to give evidence and that sort of thing. It is not normally the court system; the process starts, but when you have people involved - who don't come in....

While this study has not explored the criminal justice system, the disempowering effects of legal and judicial delays, the burden of producing evidence by the police and the continuing pressured effect on the workload of CCOs and POs (from cases which remain in the system for years before final conclusion) were notable. The impact of these factors inter-relate in their reassignment of CSA.

CCOs defined sexual abuse by its wide ranging, violent and exploitative nature, as well as its health and social outcomes, e.g., adolescent pregnancy. An absence of modern child protection legislation and definitive child protection policy guidelines seem to contribute to inconsistent, variable and changing definitions of CSA, depending upon situational factors, gender and status. This allows each CoP (group of professionals) to respond to allegations from its respective professional mandate of protection or prosecution, but prevents the development of joint, coherent and integrated responses. The absence of a child protection CoP further results in a tolerance of some manifestations of abuse, such as unintended adolescent pregnancy. It is perhaps not surprising that the POs talked almost exclusively from the point of view of what the Sexual Offences Act 1992 of the criminal laws of Barbados says. The reification of the law in this respect confers the advantage to the police of responding to allegations from the criminal perspective only, to the exclusion of other considerations, such as protection in the best interest of the child.

### **9.3.1 Prevalence of child sexual abuse**

Historical accounts show that a tolerance of sexual victimisation can result in waves of public response, ranging from outrage in respect of high profile

cases, through to general acquiescence and also denial. This can go on for decades and for generations (Smart, 2000). Other authors state:

It remains to be seen whether the current backlash will succeed in re-suppressing awareness of sexual abuse, again concealing “vast aggregates of pain and rage” (Summit, 1988, p. 41)...If this occurs, it will not happen because CSA is peripheral to major social interests, but because it is so central that as a society we choose to reject our knowledge of it rather than make the changes in our thinking, our institutions, and our daily lives that sustained awareness of child sexual victimization demands.

(Olafson, Corwin, & Summit, 1993, p. 19)

These arguments are useful to my discussion in that the views expressed by Olafson et al. (ibid) speak to the open secret of CSA, its centrality in contemporary society and societal ambivalence on the matter; and whilst not one of my aims, it surfaced within this study as a contribution to what I have termed the ‘normalisation’ of CSA.

While CSA is an old problem, it is faced anew by a succession of *newcomers* as victims, and *newcomers* as professionals, intersecting with established cultural values and institutional responses which, unsurprisingly, therefore fail to produce new solutions; consequently, Olafson et al.’s (ibid) comments are as pertinent in 2012 as in 1993. The consistently gendered image of CSA is reflected over the decades in higher prevalence abuse among girls than boys, and with the majority of perpetrators being males as stated by Finkelhor (1994); Pereda et al. (2009a); Pereda, Guilera, Forns, & Gómez-Benito (2009b); Putnam (2003) and Rind, Tromovitch, & Bauserman (1998).

### **9.3.2 Gendering of child sexual abuse**

The telling of their sexual abuse by girls to the comparatively small workforce of mainly female CCOs and women POs (who have the delegated role of interviewing victims) further creates a gendering of CSA at the proximal level of responding. This is the environment where both victim and female professional might find themselves in approximate positions of subjugated status. For example, masculine values in the police culture, as discussed in

Chapter Two, see women as only suitable for certain tasks (Fletcher, 1996; Waddington, 1999) and can result in assignment of roles by gender (Brown, 1988). At the exo and macro levels, where outcomes can be decided in prosecutions, the female voice could be absent. Some limited support for this is seen from this study in Barbados where, from the employee information (Appendix 2) for the three police stations in this study, there were no female POs interviewed above the rank of constable. Reiner (2010) argues that there is a growing volume of evidence showing that women are discriminated against as POs in their career prospects, as well as being harassed on the job. Attention to such unequal employment and promotion opportunities for women is argued to be important in addressing issues of justice, but also...”to dilute the machismo element in police culture, which has been seen as an important source of abuse” (Reiner, 2010, p. 173). Importantly, Reiner (ibid) also argues that research evidence in the USA and Britain does not show any difference in policing between male and female officers. What is shown is that female officers “tend to be influenced by the traditional culture of masculinity” (Reiner, 2010, p. 173).

Where structural gendered bias exists in the wider society, it will be reflected not only in the workplace experiences of females, as discussed above, but is also likely to be reflected in responses to criminality such as CSA, where the perpetrators are predominately reported to be males.

Returning to the approximate status of female professionals working with CSA cases being akin to their victims’ subjugated position, this research evidence allows us to appreciate how CSA can be gendered in more ways than through the criminal act itself.

Female POs and CCOs are regularly faced with repeated allegations of the sexual victimisation of girls. They also know cases of the alleged perpetrators being in a privileged position, which results in many not facing the consequences of their criminal activity in court. Situations such as these capture the feminists’ rallying cry of the “personal is political,” reminding us

that the structural systems responding to CSA are embedded within political operating systems which privilege the position of males over females.

Intermingling with these circumstances, what this study shows is that these professionals also have to face a mixture of support for the child, denial, disbelief and stigmatizing shame, all of which can be emotional parental responses to the allegation. The philosophical and distressed responses of two CCOs reflect their acclimatised reactions to what others had said:

**CCO #6:** You get used to it....not saying it is no longer impactful but you get used to it.

**SCCO #7:** It was so traumatic (*interviewee pauses*) especially at the beginning, at the onset.

The politics of child sexual abuse, with its cycle(s) of suppression and rediscovery in America and England (Gordon, 1988; Smart, 2000), show how societal structures can respond to the sexual victimisation of children, rendering it “mute and invisible” through, for example, its reinterpretation assisted by powerful ideologies (Gordon, 1988, p. 56). Backlashes to the evidence of CSA, through ascribing new meanings and discounting reported allegations by children, is not new. Knowledge of the history of its suppression, its denial and other treatment can, however, assist professionals in a counter-response (Olafson et al., 1993). A counter-response in the best interests of the child is only possible if there is a dominant voice to counter the stumbling blocks.

The drivers of the aforementioned metaphorical “tanks” (Gordon, *ibid*) or powerful ideologies, are not usually women, and are certainly not children or other easily dominated groups. As discussed in Chapter Eight, I would conceptualize these ideological stumbling blocks to the Foucaultian “technologies of power” (Foucault, 1988a, 1988b), in which child victims of sexual abuse became objectified by a justified male privilege mentality. This position gains its support by a culture which permits it, by its historical inaction. Inferences can be made from such a culture and parallels can be drawn with the current long judicial delays in hearing CSA cases in Barbados.

So a mainly female workforce will still be constrained by a patriarchal system, potentially a suppression and muting of both professionals' and children's voices. The therapeutic intervention by a largely female workforce can be neutered by the aforementioned judicial delays. One CoP (e.g., the judicial system's or CCOs') can influence and impact on the boundaries of many others (e.g., families and the wider society).

#### **9.4 Telling the Story**

The ways in which children tell the story of their alleged sexual abuse can add to the inherent complexities of incompleteness, ambiguity and disorder (Westcott & Kynan, 2004). Westcott & Kynan (ibid) reviewed 70 videotaped investigative transcripts of the interviews of children suspected of being sexually abused. The majority of interviewers were POs (86 per cent, n = 60) while social workers were 9 per cent (n = 6). It was pointed out that clarifying unclear statements and seeking to understand non-verbal gestures by verbal clarification can improve the quality of the interview process.

A good example of the need for unbiased clarity is seen where there is an increase in ambiguity in the child's story (as in cases of repeated episodes of sexual abuse), which might lead to gaps and omissions in content when a child is trying to remember a specific event on a particular day (Powell & Thomson, 2002). Other impacts on the interviewing process include developmental factors which affect cognition, memory and understanding (de Rosnay & Hughes, 2006; Saywitz, 2002), as well as levels of communicative competence and understanding of the questions posed by the interviewers (Lamb & Brown, 2006). What emerged from these studies, however, was that children's forthrightness and clarity in telling their story were impeded when there was a lack of support by the mother and/or ongoing attachment to the perpetrator, as in the case of pregnancy. In exploring professional responses, such CSA storying patterns (and definitions) emerged as significant by themselves, reflecting the cultural context and influences on professional responses, and in turn impacting on the type of outcomes that are likely to ensue.

#### **9.4.1 Disclosure patterns and limitations**

The disclosure patterns in this present study in Barbados are plain from the accounts of practitioners who had interviewed a child, often in close time proximity to the time of the alleged sexual abuse. It is fair, therefore, to surmise that the disclosure patterns reported in Chapter Six indicate authentic recounting by the professionals of what children said to them on the day. This can be seen as fully reflecting the children's current lived experiences and in this regard lend support to the retrospective accounts of adults. This pattern reflects that of the police and CCOs' data (Chapter Six, Figures 6.4 and 6.5). The likely outcome, in many instances, is non-prosecution of cases, as also discussed in Chapter Six, despite the intervention of the aforementioned professionals.

There are clear patterns in the literature to the way children report their allegations of child sexual abuse. Research with adult female survivors of CSA has helped to identify disclosure patterns (Alaggia, 2004; Arata, 1998); the effects of the disclosure; the abuse characteristics, and disclosure-related outcomes (Jonzon & Lindblad, 2005). One of the limitations with this type of quantitative research, however, is its dependency on delayed memories (Flathman, 1999). Recall of a particular aspect of the sexual abuse experience is, in itself, associated with the difficulties in establishing authenticity (Loftus, 1996) and critics have challenged the "perniciously simplistic" nature of studies based on recalling a traumatic experience (Lindsay & Briere, 1997). Such research has, nevertheless, made an important contribution to our understanding of the ontology of child sexual abuse.

The development of a theoretical framework using a grounded theory approach (Draucker & Martsof, 2008, p. 1039) explains how children and adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse tell others about their sexual abuse experiences (as a child). Difficulty with telling the story can coexist with the child's interpretative confusion of trying to understand the sexual abuse (Westcott & Kynan, 2004). Arguably, this sense-making mirrors the

professionals' investigative approaches, either helping or hindering this "storying" stage (Draucker & Martsolf, 2008).

I am mindful that the storying by the professionals may be imbued with subjective interpretation and selective accounting. Within the professionals' descriptive narratives of the children's accounts, two sets of circumstances emerge:

- the storying is embedded within the prevailing cultural and historic moment (Bauman, 2001; Lawler, 2002) in which the professionals find themselves, and which is likely to influence their constructions of what they heard; and
- the story as told to the professionals in the first place, is the story that the child feels able to tell. Bauman (2001) puts it eloquently:

One lives one's life as a story yet to be told, but the way the story hoping to be told is to be woven (sic) decides the technique by which the yarn of life is spun.

(Bauman, 2001, p. 8)

In other words, this can be interpreted as the children, in telling their story (consciously or unconsciously), decides on how much or how little is told, bearing in mind its likely impact on their current and future lives.

**WmPO (CID):** The few that I have had, the child is very very (sic)... especially if the mother is not believing, the child is very aggressive and sad and emotional at the same time; don't know who to talk to because my father is doing this to me and my mother don't believe... usually those are very stressful, because the mother has put trust in the father and can't believe that this is actually happening.

**WmPO #3:** The child can clam up...

**WmPO (CID):** you know they are apprehensive; you can tell if they are telling you a story, you can sense that piece is missing and you

have to try to get it out of them, to tell you the whole story.... remember that all of these interviews are done in the presence of an adult. You don't want your mother sitting there and you saying you had sex umpteen times; and she is ready to kill you. So that is the problem...

The storying by both professional and child results in a situation in which not everything connected with the allegation of CSA will be or can be told, given the nature of sharing deeply personal experiences. One can therefore see where "all articulations open up certain possibilities and close down some others" (Bauman, *ibid*, p. 9), relating to the disclosure pattern. Nevertheless, what is said gives some measure of meaning to the disclosure of child sexual abuse, from which point both parties must now move forward.

#### **9.4.2 Factors influencing the child sexual abuse story and its definition**

Emerging from the data is the phenomenon whereby pregnancy arising out of unlawful sex, whether or not ascribed to be of a "consensual" nature, appears to exonerate perpetrators and leads to a redefining of child sexual abuse.

Why does pregnancy, as an outcome, impact the definition of child sexual abuse, a criminal act, in the way it does?

...are we going to put the father in prison and then there is a child there to be supported? That is the dilemma here. Nobody is going to prosecute the guy because he is supporting the child and we are left with a pseudo acceptance of abuse (– *Station sergeant reporting*).

This is a very important statement because of the overtones resembling the Caribbean's patriarchal and historical legacy of male entitlement to sex; but equally insidious is its intergenerational socialisation potential. On the surface, it would appear an obvious conclusion, but does it live up to its presumption that child support by the presumptive father automatically follows the pregnancy?

Defining CSA as more than a criminal act is now seen to be influenced by the characteristics and actions of the victim and family and, now, the perpetrator. This appears to be especially so where pregnant adolescents are concerned.

**WmPO (CID):** Yesterday I had a 16-year-old and a 17-year-old, they went to the CCB; the mother found out that they were having sex. The 16-year-old (the girl) is pregnant and the 17-year-old, the father, has found a job and he is supporting the child (plans to support the child) and she is telling me that “I love him and he loves me and my mother has talked to his mother and I am not giving any evidence”... and I have a file sitting on my desk saying this man needs to be charged (*incredulous laugh by CID officer*). You understand?

Perceptions about the consensual nature of unlawful sexual activity and adolescent pregnancies were features of the professional discourses of CSA and were significant in determining their responses. The question above posed by the PO: “...and I have a file sitting on my desk saying this man needs to be charged. You understand?” is begging the question “Of what use is it going to be?”

So what does the research evidence tell us about the association between pregnancy and CSA (whether or not it is perceived to be consensual)? This discussion is important to this study as it is a representation of the voices and opinions of professionals. However the issue is clearly wider than this, as it also relates to macro-level factors, some of which are now explored below.

The emergence of sexual abuse and adolescent pregnancy in Barbados, as two social phenomena in this study, has significant legal and social policy implications for health, education and social services. In their integrative review of 13 studies on the effect of childhood sexual abuse on adolescent pregnancy (Francisco et al., 2008), the authors concluded that the majority of the studies showed a relationship between childhood sexual abuse and adolescent pregnancy. These researchers cite nine of the studies which identified such a relationship. When viewed as a condition rather than an

event (Finkelhor, Ormrod, & Turner, 2007), the conceptualization of sexual abuse of children and its co-relationship with pregnancy may be particularly helpful for preventative and treatment interventions. For example, the inclusion of sexual abuse awareness in adolescent sexuality and pregnancy prevention programmes in schools as recommended by Raj, Silverman, & Amaro (2000) and Logan, Holcombe, Manlove, & Ryan (2007) would be important interventions.

An earlier study (Butler & Burton, 1990), and the more recent literature review by Logan, Holcombe, Manlove, & Ryan (2007), examined the relationship between a history of sexual abuse and adolescent pregnancy. In the Butler & Burton (1990) exploratory study, 54 per cent (of the 41 mothers interviewed), stated that they had experienced at least one sexually abusive act. Butler & Burton (*ibid*) compared their study to another, the Ounce of Prevention study (Ounce of Prevention Fund, 1987), which corroborated their findings and revealed that over 60 per cent of teen mothers in the study had been forced to have unwanted sex. Articulating coercive sex as aggression and victimisation, other researchers (Gershenson et al., 1989; Kenney, Reinholtz, & Angelini, 1997; Lodico, Gruber, & Diclemente, 1996) also examined the prevalence of coercive sexual experience in teens and reported a similar rate of 60 per cent of forced sex. These researchers also confirmed the link between coercive sex and pregnancy. From the literature, teenage sex resulting in pregnancy clearly does not necessarily occur out of choice, but can often be the result of sexual abuse from which another set of outcomes can flow, in addition to giving birth. For example, psychological effects include reports of a higher prevalence of psychiatric disorders such as:

- depression and suicidal ideation (McLeer et al., 1998); (Molnar, Berkman, & Buka, 2001) and (Zlotnick, Mattia, & Zimmerman, 2001);
- posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and posttraumatic stress symptoms (McLeer et al., 1998) and (Zlotnick et al., 2001); and
- significantly higher levels of anxiety than the non-abused (McLeer et al., 1998); (Briere & Runtz, 1988) and (Mian, Marton, & LeBaron, 1996) .

Many conclusions can be drawn from the contradictory and vexed question of *consensual sex* by under-aged children, who the law says cannot legally consent to sex; but the law then makes provision in legislation for such children, giving this illegal consent to adults. One conclusion is that the positional power adults have over children must be excused and maintained, even when (or especially when) it is used illegally. A second conclusion that can be drawn is that some subcultures in society are unconvinced that harm is done when adults have sex with children, as theorised by Ward & Keenan (1999), and this may very well include professionals in decision-making positions. The consequential argument, in my opinion, demonstrates the need for a multidisciplinary decision-making approach to the inherent complexity of CSA and sexually offending behaviours (Ward & Siegert, 2002).

This study among professionals in Barbados showed a dominant *consensual sex* discourse relating to normal developing sexuality on the one hand, and on the other hand, where a child alleging sexual abuse did not in fact *consent*, but might be perceived as having given *consent* at other times.

**SCCO #7:** ...Because we know that children, when they step into adolescence, they start exploring their sexuality and so on; it does not mean that their case is any less serious, because a 14-yr-old case might be very serious, but then you can gauge that, even though she is 14 or 15, she was raped, she did not want this...

...So teenage pregnancy (*interviewee exhales audibly*) are... (*interviewee pauses*) - it is headache. I don't see the numbers dropping...I don't see the numbers dropping (sic).

What the literature shows is that first voluntary (or 'consensual') sex is positively linked to sexual abuse (Fergusson, Horwood, & Lynskey, 1997; Kellogg, Hoffman, & Taylor, 1999; Roosa, Tein, Reinholtz, & Angelini, 1997). Where age is concerned, having sex at a younger age is equally shown to be associated with a greater risk of adolescent pregnancy (Kellogg et al., *ibid*; Roosa et al., *ibid*) arguably because of the greater length of time being sexually active. Linked to this are findings showing that victims of sexual

abuse are also likely to have a greater number of sexual partners during adolescence (compared to their non-abused peers) as shown by Buzi et al. (2003); Fergusson et al. (1997); Raj et al. (2000); Saewyc, Magee, & Pettingell (2004) and Stock, Bell, Boyer, & Connell (1997). As a consequence of this, these teens are also more likely to become pregnant, for the aforementioned reason of the greater frequency of sexual activity. The older age of the perpetrator is also associated with an increased risk of an adolescent pregnancy (Boyer & Fine, 1992; Kellogg et al., 1999). Additionally, these victims of the older perpetrator are also more likely to engage in voluntary sexual activities with similarly older partners (Kellogg et al., 1999).

**Senior PO #1:**...you will find some young ladies will get themselves sexually involved with an older man and she might be 13 or 14 and she ends up pregnant. The mother might be very upset about it, but the man might be bringing money in the house.

Coercion or forced sex and rape of children, whilst increasing their risk of pregnancy (Shrier, Pierce, Emans, & DuRant, 1998), also increases their risk of short-term and longer-term re-victimisation (i.e., the experience of more unwanted/coerced sex and intimate partner violence).

Unsurprisingly, many such studies show a positive association between the act of sexual abuse and age, i.e., being younger at first sex (Carpenter, Clyman, Davidson, & Steiner, 2001; Nagy, DiClemente, & Adcock, 1995; Noll, Trickett, & Putnam, 2003), serving as a reminder that sexual abuse can occur very early in childhood.

These research findings call into question the true nature of consensual sex. What is it really? They also provoke a re-examination of the term when one considers who has the greater agency to groom, coerce and victimize.

#### **9.4.3 Evidencing socio-familial factors of child sexual abuse and pregnancy**

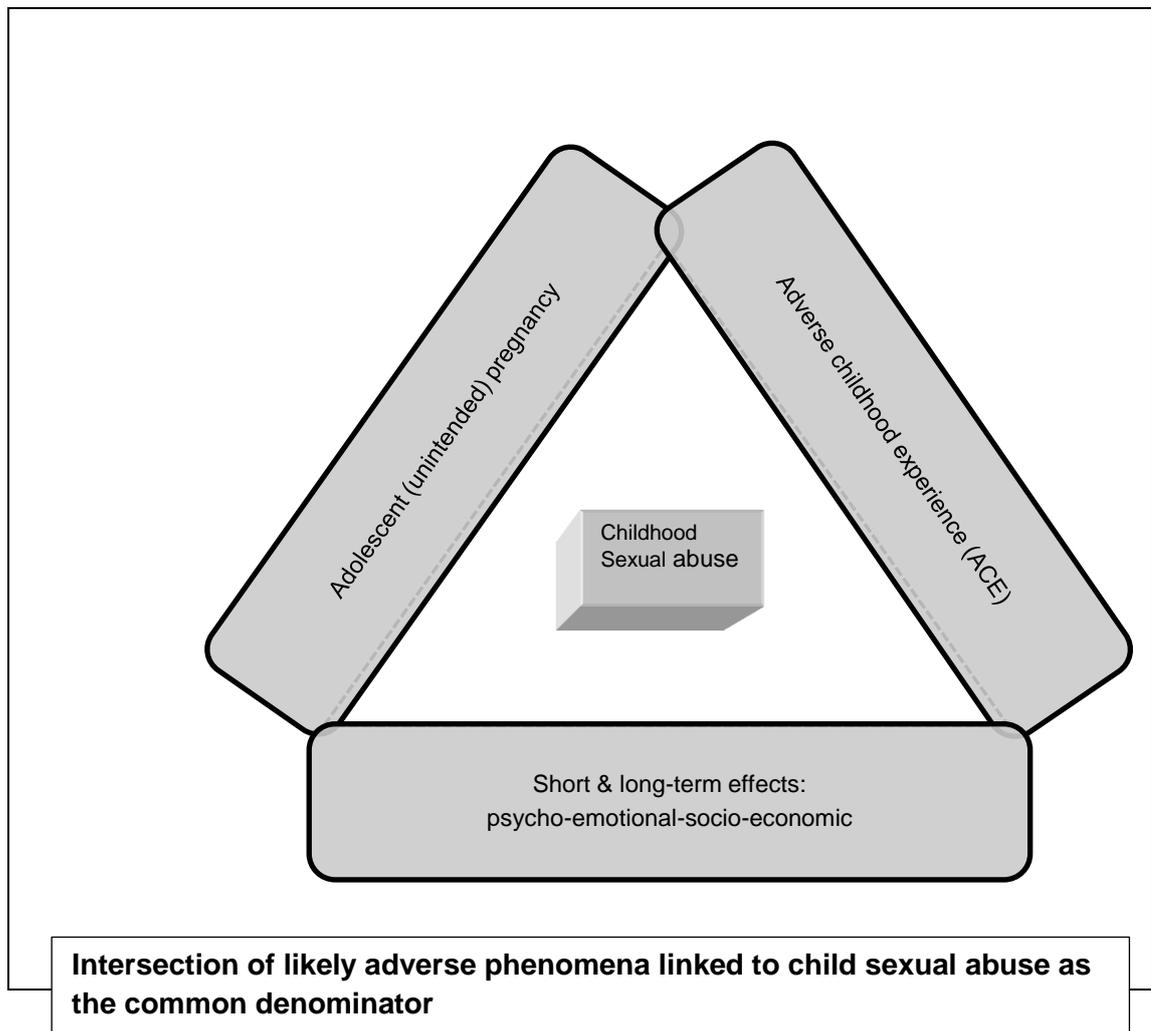
A re-examination of the nature of consensual sex also prompts an increased understanding of its nature as a route to gender domination of young females by usually older males.

The wider socio-cultural and familial factors can have an influence on this understanding. For example, gender roles impact on family life, such as the pervasive normative values which privilege men's authority over women's. Professionals are part of this culture and it is very possible that their responses to CSA will reflect these prevailing values, as exist in any patriarchal society. Given that the relationship between childhood sexual abuse and adolescent pregnancy/motherhood is established, I argue that this is a form of sexual socialization which perpetuates male dominance and female dependence, and will seek to minimize the offence of child sexual abuse by labelling it as something other. These processes both arise from, and affirm, the aforementioned patriarchal values.

Emerging from this research is a clear link between CSA and adolescent pregnancy, as seen above. This is supported in the literature, which shows a clear connection and a strong relationship between unintended adolescence pregnancies and CSA as shown by Swann, Bowe, McCormick, & Kosmin (2003); Hillis et al. (2004); and Noll, Shenk, & Putnam (2009). The literature also shows evidence of adverse childhood experiences linked to teenage pregnancies, as discussed below. The picture emerging from the literature is now one of further inter-connection between several significant life experiences faced by children.

In making these connections below, one can identify CSA as the common denominator.

**Figure 9.2 Conceptualizing from literature review**



The connections between adolescent pregnancies, child sexual abuse and adverse childhood experiences are important, as they show an additive impact. This triangle of relationships shows it can be conceptualized as a tool to help inform interventions aimed at all, or at specific arms of, the triangle. Arguably, an intervention at one level which is not fully cognizant of the contribution of the other arms is likely to be less useful. However, the model also lends itself to targeting one arm at a time, in keeping with the priorities and constrained resources of a child protection agency.

Using a feminist lens of intersectionality for this model, the intersecting factors that emerge from the data are that almost one hundred percent of children

alleging abuse are girls, the alleged perpetrators are males and it is not uncommon for a pregnancy to result from the abuse. A combination of age (the child's maturational and chronological position) and gender (female victims and male alleged perpetrators) intersect within a socio-economic dependency environment. These intersecting factors appear to result in a reframing of the sexual abuse act to a less serious one and, in so doing, set up a state of female dependency on males (where pregnancies exist).

#### **9.4.4 The effect of the “ACE” arm of the triangle**

Studies such as those cited above (Noll, Shenk, & Putman, *ibid*) examined the adverse consequences linked to many teenage pregnancies and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

The ACEs in the Hillis et al. (2004) study, i.e., sexual abuse; physical abuse; verbal abuse; parents divorced/separated; substance abuse in the household; mental illness in the household; exposure to intimate partner violence, and having an incarcerated family member, were found to be associated with an increased risk of adolescent pregnancy. As the ACE score increased, so did the risk of adolescent pregnancy. What was also found in this study was an enduring association between adults who suffered the adverse effects of ACE as a child, and their adverse life circumstances many decades afterwards. These women reported their lives to be plagued by “high stress”, uncontrollable anger and serious or disturbing problems with their families, jobs and finances. The connection here between the gendered nature of economic dependence by some women on men, the feedback loop to CSA within families, and pregnancies can be made.

One of the other disadvantageous socioeconomic effects and risks of adolescent pregnancy is increased likelihood of having five or more children, particularly when giving birth at the early age of 11-15, compared to reduced numbers of children when childbearing begins at the later age of 20-24. Welfare dependency and unemployment were also shown to increase following adolescent pregnancy (Olausson, Haglund, Weitoff, & Cnattingius, 2001). Further risks include: higher infant mortality (Berthoud, 2001), lower

than average birth weight baby, increased risk of poverty, and a greater likelihood of the daughters of teenage mothers becoming teenage parents themselves as shown by Kiernan (1995) and Botting, Rosato, & Wood (1998). 1995). Long term effects include adult mental health repercussions and difficulties within parenting relationships, extending to children's adjustments in the succeeding generation (Roberts, O'Connor, Dunn, & Golding, 2004).

One meta analysis showed that CSA increased the odds of experiencing an adolescent pregnancy by 95% (Noll et al., 2009). The trajectory of adolescent pregnancy leading to social-economic disadvantage and intergenerational victimisation is underscored by its association with CSA and adverse childhood experiences.

Arguably, CSA is the common denominator in the complex psychosocial web of interconnected risks and disadvantages for some teenage parents. Its direct association with adolescent pregnancy is clear from the research, which shows both of the factors to be further embedded within adverse childhood experience (Cybulska et al., 2011). Understanding these connections is fundamental to appropriately responding to CSA in Barbados. The psychosocial web can help in understanding inter-generational cycles of child sexual abuse.

I am not suggesting any direct causal pathways here. As always, there are limitations within the wealth of research findings, such as measurement and definitional difficulties which must be taken into account. For example, an important limitation within some studies looking at antecedents, outcomes and associated links within unplanned pregnancies is that very few studies are carried out in developing countries such as Barbados. The irony of this is summed up by some authors (Gipson, Koenig, & Hindin, 2008), who state:

That so few studies are available from developing country settings is particularly striking, considering that the financial, social, and physical costs of unintended pregnancy are likely to be greater in resource-poor settings. The scarcity...is surprising, given that the prevention of unintended pregnancy has

been a major rationale for the funding and provision of family planning, both in the United States and internationally.

(Gipson, Koenig, & Hindin, 2008, p. 29)

Chapter Two however, shows a range of negative child and adolescent behaviours, such as substance abuse and a high rate of rape, aligned to sexual abuse in Barbados. Like the findings above, these are likely to carry over into adult life, compromising health and economic viability. While my study did not explore these issues, it would seem that the ripple effects of the implicit sanctioning of CSA that results in pregnancy, and the responses of professionals that follow from this, may have wider ramifications at the societal level.

### **9.5 Professionals' Use of Evidence**

In Chapter Eight, I critique the concept of the evidence-based approach, with its emphasis on measurable outcomes, and argue that reducing social problems to a set of indicators inhibits consideration of the whole, the nuanced and the complex. In relation to child sexual abuse, the concept lines up only too well with the reification of some practices dominated by agendas which measure allegations. These practices include medical proof, e.g., of penetration, as well as other prosecutorial-focused evidence. The therapeutic intervention by CCOs appears to take second place.

What my findings suggest, however, is that, if one flips evidence-based practice on its head and emphasises the importance of the evidence of harm *rather* than the 'evidence' of investigative practice, spaces are opened up to fully consider the complex nature of the problem and the centrality of co-relationships and inter-linking factors. This would redeem and strengthen the concept of evidence-based practice and enable a fuller exploration of the range of factors which are critical for planning interventions. It would also highlight hidden gender implications which influence both the definition of, and intervention in, child sexual abuse. Sexually abused adolescents who become pregnant can set up a cycle of gendered domination through their dependence on the father of the child, who might be making no other contribution than promised financial aid. In other words, the child is now tied

into a relationship which prolongs her victim status, through which she inadvertently contributes to the socialization norm of sex/economic survival. This is not a new phenomenon, as it can be a common feature of a society. Indeed, within this Barbadian context, it also resonates with the historical practices and contingent histories of learning, where sexual violence was an endemic part of the socio-economic-legal culture of slavery.

My argument is this: that by encouraging paternity which arises from victimisation, there can be a redefining of the abuse. This contributes to the perpetuation of CSA and cements patriarchal power. On the question of power imbalance, in relation to gender in the Caribbean, (Barriteau, 2003) remonstrates on the past failure of feminist scholarship:

...to confront the raw power dynamics impinging on our ongoing attempts to expose and alter the systemic character of women's multiple experiences of material and ideological subordination. What has been visibly absent in feminist scholarship in the Anglophone Caribbean is an explicit acknowledgement, that in theorizing relations of gender, we are confronting one of the more repressive expressions of power.

(Barriteau, 2003, p. 5)

Barriteau (2003), in asserting the reluctance "to explicitly theorize the absence of power as a constraining factor in women lives" (Barriteau, *ibid*, p. 7-8), has noted the effect, which is the failure to critically examine repressive patriarchal practices in the Caribbean. The sustainability of this deficit in the Caribbean, in my opinion, is a failure to confront the effects of CSA and theorise the phenomenon as the intrinsic part of the repressive expression of power that it is. Adolescent unintended pregnancy is a commanding symbol of this power, to which females themselves (as victims, parents and professionals) have ascribed various meanings, such as consensual sex, expressions of developing sexuality and even loose morals. The presence of any of these ascriptions does not mean that abuse is not, and has not been, occurring. Such ascribed meanings are themselves relabeling and redefining the sexual abuse of children as though it is not really what it is. The "othering" of the perpetrators as fathers-in-waiting is also powerfully symbolic and one of the

more blatant examples contributing to the perpetuation of risk. These sexual offenders overtly join the covert other half of some fathers, pastors and friends, also exposed by feminist scholarship as common sex offenders (Kelly, 2010, p. 117).

The link between sexual victimisation and adolescent pregnancy, long reported in the literature (Russell, 1983) and eventually leading to parenthood, highlights the importance of understanding the likely contributing factors to its aetiology with the need for early intervention (Osborne & Rhodes, 2001). This intervention needs to extend to assessing the possibility of unreported sexual victimisation in adolescent pregnancy, the possible severity, also, of reported cases in terms of coercion, and the nature of the numbers of perpetrators and amount of incidences, as discussed earlier and by other researchers (Jones & Trotman Jemmott, 2009, p. 100). Fully understanding this relationship offers a strong evidence base for strategic planning and service delivery. It takes into account the fuller picture of the causes and effects of sexual offending (Ward & Beech, 2006), as well as the personal, social and economic costs to victims and the society.

## **9.6 Taking Care of the Story – Cultural Impact**

If one were to use a CoP approach, as discussed in Chapter Seven, to help understand what happens at this stage of taking care of the disclosure story, several things would be noteworthy. A CSA allegation, when conceptualized as the domain under investigation (i.e., the social problem in which there is a goal and inquiry which requires mutual sharing), needs to be cognizant of the following arguments. The CCOs need a clear understanding that their domain of interest will function differently from another; for example, the child's and family's perspective will differ significantly from theirs. This is central to the CCOs' understanding of the problem and their mutual engagement with the family to help ameliorate and/or resolve the matter. Impediments to meaningful, mutual engagement in Barbados include the gendered nature of male and female roles, in which many women are socialized to accede to a man's sexual needs, rather than see it as sexual exploitation. Within a CoP such as this, where men are sexually privileged, as explored in Chapter Eight,

some sexually abusive men are also unlikely to see the practice as unlawful. In Figure 9.10 we see an extract from an article where a young woman (actress portrayal) is recounting her experiences of a transactional sexual relationship with a man, and is encouraged in this by her mother. This example is not meant to depict any cultural reductionist thinking on my part, but serves to illustrate the argument that there are CoPs in which certain behaviours are encouraged, expected and which, in time, take on a “cultural” value as part of their gendered meaning.

In such cases, the CoP paradigm illustrates how the identities of sexually abusing adults, and sexually abused children, may develop over time in the absence (I would argue) of other sufficiently powerful and counterbalancing CoPs (such as the Child Protection Service and/or the Police Force). In Chapter Seven (Figure 7.2), I present a trajectory model showing that a practice such as dealing with a CSA can develop along a particular pathway and be an active one, or one that is weakened by variables such as poor knowledge management. The acquisition of knowledge concerning CSA, which will allow informed responses based on up to date research on what works and what does not work well, can come from training and specialist knowledge which is shared within the CoP and between CoPs. As was explored in Chapter Seven, the domain area of CSA, through such knowledge management, can then help to create a stronger identity within both professional groups in a joint enterprise (negotiated responses) specifically around CSA. However, this research is showing that training in this area is very weak.

**Senior PO #1:** Training (sic). I think there might be a lack in training...and getting more officers involved in it. I think there is a lapse there... I find that most males would hardly get a chance to investigate a rape or indecent assault. Most females do it.

**Interviewer:** So how do officers learn their craft within the station or within the police force?

**WmPO (CID):** I would say it is mostly experience; experience, hands on experience, (sic) actually being involved in the investigation, actually doing it over, repetition, repetition (sic)... Training? I wouldn't even say that, because some of us have not had training - specific to the particular (sic). Say I do sexual matters, I haven't had a sexual offenses course, but I know how to apply myself and do all these things. So I wouldn't say that (*referring to training*), I would say more hands on.

### **9.6.1 The impact of culture on responding**

The identity of the CCOs is situated within their membership of the various CoPs to which they belong. I argue this in Chapter Seven, where learning and meaning, as makers of identity, emanate from within various CoPs. All of these are culturally situated. To what extent, therefore, would the professional culture reflect the wider societal culture and attitudes towards child sexual abuse?

A mixed picture is presented in the literature. The work of researchers in Singapore (Chan, Elliott, Chow, & Thomas, 2002) conclude from their study that professionals (social workers, doctors, nurses, lawyers, educators and POs) are likely to maintain the typical cultural perceptions (i.e., no different from the public's) of child abuse and neglect, rather than a shared agreement on trans-cultural definitions.

An understanding of cultural factors (which can be reflected in public perceptions and within other professional CoPs) is important, particularly so as child protection agencies need to be aware of the nature of protective factors and the risk factors within the society. For example, cross-cultural studies affirming the valuing of children as a protective factor, and cultures of silence and male privilege as risk factors (Plummer & Njuguna, 2009), can be important signals to the way CCOs take care of the disclosure story. In the case of the anonymous female (Figure 9.10 below), one can surmise the futility of the best planned interventions if the prevailing risk factors are not understood or, at worst, not acknowledged.

In a Barbados study (Jones & Trotman Jemmott, 2009), there was majority agreement among the public about what counts as child sexual abuse, which was largely in line with trans-cultural/internationally agreed definitions. A very clear and similar picture emerged from the professionals' and the public's discourses on the perceived widespread nature of the phenomenon of CSA and its most prevalent forms (pp. 139-148). Like the Singapore study (Chan et al., 2002), the Barbadian study shows a close symmetry between public and professional views of child abuse.

In the Barbados study, (Jones & Trotman Jemmott, 2009) the public's ambivalence over whether the older adolescent (15-16 years) should be seen as being sexually abused, particularly when it is seen as "consensual" sex, was notable. Also of note is that this was not an expressed view among professionals working with children. The question that might be asked, however, is to what extent is the evidence on the association between early sexual abuse and adolescent sexualised behaviour (Martin, Bergen, Richardson, Roeger, & Allison, 2004) and (Erdmans & Black, 2008), able to counteract cultural views? Equally, there is the phenomenon that CSA appears to be the common denominator in adverse childhood experience, morbidity and intergenerational cycles of sexual abuse and adult mental health issues, as I have argued earlier. How can such evidence make a difference to professional responses to child sexual abuse, when there is a different, conflicting, public view?

It is simply not enough, therefore, to see teenage pregnancy only in the light of supporting mother-to-be and hoping the father will financially shoulder his new responsibility. The repercussions go beyond the present disclosure and pregnancy. It can extend inter-generationally, where a learnt submission and other patterns of subjugating experiences can ensue. The portrayal below from a Barbadian publication is used to illustrate the point that professionals cannot ignore those sexual-economic exchange situations which might be seen as normative, but which are abusive nonetheless.

Figure 9.10 Actress portraying forced transactional sexual experience



Pimped by a parent: The worst kind of betrayal' (Moore, 2010)

This allegory is used to foreground my interpretation that the CCOs' responses to allegations with which they deal every week or every month reflect a flavour of "cultural" possibilities. At a minimum there should be an awareness of the prevailing discourses, such as victim blaming and mothers' emotional responses to allegations of child sexual abuse. The importance of knowledge of some practices, their interpretation and response to the phenomena are all part of the cultural impact on responding.

### **9.7 Taking Care of the Story – Explanatory Theories; Mothers' Responses**

CCOs' role with parents (usually mother) in Barbados, whose child is alleging sexual abuse by a known person, was discussed in Chapter Six. The examples of cases cited during the interviews and appearing in Chapter Six (Table 6.1) show a wide group of alleged abusers, many of whom were known to the child and mother. From the CCOs' interview data, mothers most often occupy the role of supportive parent. There were some cases, however, when a mother was unsupportive of her daughter and/or of prosecution in the court.

Dealing with the notoriously long court process, it would appear, is a key factor in some mothers' refusal to support the prosecution of the alleged perpetrator. On occasions, this position can be compounded by other considerations, such as being offered money not to proceed with the case. In other instances, some mothers appear to support the alleged perpetrator over the accusation, rather than support their child. This is obviously a very complex situation, in which it is all too easy to apply the stereotype of an uncaring, callous and jealous mother. In this subjective caution I am mindful, nonetheless, that some mothers might present themselves in just this kind of manner.

In taking care of a child alleging CSA in Barbados, CCOs also have to be cognisant of the parents' (usually the mother's) responses to the allegation and equally understand why they might be responding in a particular way. In Barbados, it is very often (but not exclusively so) the mother who is the parent accompanying and supporting the child through the various interventions. The literature helps us understand some of the responses.

The research evidence shows that sexually abused girls adjust better to their experiences if they are believed, in particular by their mothers.

It is instructive, therefore, to examine the literature to see how non-offending parents react to their children's allegations. We saw from the disclosure patterns in Chapter Six that parental support for the child was evident in many instances. This is, however, not always the case. For example, the five-year-old child in Chapter Six (Table 6.1) was removed from her home to residential care because in this case the mother did not believe her very young child. Other CCOs also cited examples of non-believing parents, where some mothers showed reluctance in supporting their child alleging child sexual abuse. Hence, situations like this raise questions in the assessment process, of whether such children can be adequately protected from further abuse. Belief, support and protection as "highly interrelated and complex constructs" (Elliott & Carnes, 2001, p. 315) are therefore fundamental to the CCOs' intervention. It is instructive therefore, to see what some of the underlying psycho-socio-emotional reasons might be, why some mothers are unable or unwilling to support their child.

The literature review confirms the Barbados situation, with mothers usually believing their child, irrespective of who the alleged perpetrators were (Everson, Hunter, Runyon, Edelsohn, & Coulter, 1989; Heriot, 1996; Leifer, Kilbane, & Grossman, 2001).

In both intra-familial and extra-familial abuse, rates of 69% and 78% of mothers believing completely or in part were reported (Elliott & Briere, 1994; Heriot, 1996; Lovett, 1995). Additionally, a prediction of mothers' belief and their protective actions in intra-familial CSA was found to be stronger when mothers were not currently sexually involved with the alleged offender, and had no knowledge of the allegations prior to the disclosure (Heriot, 1996; Pintello & Zuravin, 2001).

Some of the earlier accounts within the research literature focused on family dynamics to explain the sexual abuse of children, particularly father-daughter incest and the mother's role in this. The focus has included the psycho-

pathology of individual family members, particularly the mother, who was often blamed in some way for the act. Gordon (1955), drawing on Freud's psychodynamic theory, explained the mothers' failure to protect as an unresolved masochistic<sup>5</sup> attachment (Energetics Institute, no date, p. 1) to her own mother during the oral phase of development. It was hypothesized that this oral fixation translates into incest as the mother's defence against the loss of the love she never received from her own mother. As a result, in cases of incest, the psychodynamic processes are seen translated to ones in which:

The mother's role in facilitating the incestuous relationship involved both strong unconscious hostility toward the daughter and considerable dependency upon her as a substitute wife-mother.

(Lustig, Dresser, Spellman, & Murray, 1966, p. 34)

In an earlier study, this role reversal was postulated as one of displaced hostility on the part of the victims' mothers towards their own mothers.

They relinquished their responsibilities as parents so that they, in effect, become daughters again - they deserted the fathers, who then become involved in the incestuous relationship with the daughters.

(Kaufman, Peck, & Tagiuri, 1954, pp. 270-271)

The psycho-emotional dynamics of how incest can be maintained can be explained through the subjugation of the mother, e.g., through perpetuation of violence coupled with her related health and psychological problems, or role reversal in which the child becomes the wife, sometimes coupled with the learnt sexual pleasure obtained from the incestuous exploitation and/or the desire for the father (Gordon, 1955). The theory proposed is that women are blamed for acts of both omission and commission. Perceptions of the failings of the mothers, their mothers and, it is suggested, also their daughters, continue to be affected by these histories of learning and their ascribed meanings. For example, females learn to submit themselves to the wishes and expectations of males and, as I discuss in the next section, some males

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<sup>5</sup> Described as the need for a child to separate from the mother/ parents, to become an individual, and form their own unique identity.

reinforce their position through power and violence. Gender pathologising is rooted in the psychodynamic explanation of female behaviour. This portrays behaviour as deviant, as compared to the postulated privilege position of the abuser, which is not pathologised.

### **9.8 Sharing the Story: Collaboration between the Police and Child Care Officers**

A clear understanding of, and respect for, each other's role, between the police and CCOs in investigating CSA allegations in Barbados, is central to their working relationship. However, the extent to which such an understanding of each other's role is then translated into working in an equal and meaningful partnership arrangement, to protect children from harm when it does occur, is arguably a better measure of effective collaboration than respectful understanding.

The focus group discussion between the two groups paints a picture which suggests a sound understanding of each other's role. This extends to CCOs enabling the police's work by making all the necessary referrals of CSA allegations and then following up with further expanded information as requested by the police. This picture appears to reflect an administrative-type arrangement that could be interpreted as:

Child care officers are promoting the primacy of the police investigative prosecution roles, which maintains ascendancy over the protection role of the child care officers.

However, this bureaucratic-type approach does not preclude instances of sound inter-agency collaboration, as seen in the example of the 13-year-old whose allegation of abuse led to the imprisonment of her church pastor. The CCO in this particular case spoke of collaborative decision-making between individual professionals on both sides, who worked cooperatively and consistently on the case in question.

The dominance of the police role is understandable if the main focus is on criminal investigation rather than child protection and family support. With a focus on criminal investigation, it is easy to see how this can affect and dictate the responses of CCOs and divert scarce resources away from child protection and victim support. In the absence of agreed interagency collaboration, it is also easy to conclude that concerns over the blurring of roles (Blyth & Milner, 1990) will be reduced by adherence to what is best known – traditional ways of working. The absence of such an interagency child protection protocol, and the marked difference in mandates, are not helped by the current legislative framework, which fails to acknowledge the need for a modern day approach to child protection.

The inter-professional child-centred approach to safeguarding children has a significant history in the UK (HM Government, 2010), and highlights as imperative, a committed response to protecting children. Interagency cooperation underpins this policy. The sharing of information and intelligence between the police and other organisations, where a criminal offence (such as child sexual abuse) has been, or is suspected of being, committed, is important. Having an agreed protocol on such matters as the circumstances where joint enquires are appropriate, and how enquires should be conducted, are fundamental arrangements between social workers and the police in the protection of children from harm. This level of cooperation and safeguarding is underdeveloped in Barbados, in both the legislative arrangements and professional practice. The absence of training and agreed protocol, in critical areas such as interviewing children, leaves room for discriminatory questioning and discriminatory practices, as seen below:

**Interviewer:** I want to talk a little about any perceived gender differences, uhm ...in dealing with CSA - which is mainly female children victims. Are there any gender differences you have noticed in the way male and female officers react to sexual abuse allegations? It is a bit of an unfair question, maybe?

**WmPO #4:** (*Long pause by female PO*) I am trying to think what the best way of putting it is. I am thinking what is the best way of phrasing this. I find

that personally, for me, one of the first question as the interviewer or the initial investigator is: *is this real or is it just unlawful sexual intercourse* - where the person is underage, but have given consent. They have given consent, but they don't have the right to give consent. I find that that is one of the first questions that males ask you.

**Interviewer:** Ask the victims?

**WmPO #4:** No, (ask) you the interviewer, the initial investigator. Females tend to be a bit softer in their approach. Men would ask you what has happened or what exactly happened. A female would ask you the same question, but (with) different nuances, but the same question.

### **9.9 Child Care Officers' and Police Officers' Emotional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse**

Directly connected with their roles in the management of CSA allegations are the CCOs' and POs' own emotional responses to what is heard and understood. These feelings are captured in the following quotes:

**CCO #2:** Anger, anger...well that one really had me...it causes some damage to them.

**CCO #5:** They (the allegations) are hurtful, they can be very depressing. Most often I am quite angry...But I am usually angry and quite hurt.

**WmPO #3:** Anger. I do get angry a lot - I don't show it to the person - but I does (sic) vent when it is all done, I vent (*WmPO once again passionately emphasising this feeling*) because I do get angry when I see it happen. I get angry after, because the young girls have no esteem of themselves, to me they seem to think that they are not worth anything - just letting a man come and live with you, knowing that this is wrong. What he is doing is against the law. I get vex with the parents for allowing it to happen and then saying she is lying, especially when you have a young girl come and report it and that she reported it to her mother who did nothing. When you get those types of report, you get vex, you get angry, but as I said I don't show it to them, but when they go their separate ways, I do vent. I do vent because I sometimes put myself in that child's position.

With vividness and honesty, CCOs and women POs (in particular) recounted the personal effects of repeatedly hearing allegations of child sexual abuse. Their responses speak of the emotional reaction to dealing with the problem. Recent attention has been paid to the effects on professionals of assisting others through trauma. The empathy with clients seems to increase secondary traumatic stress in workers. Traumatic stress is now recognised to extend beyond those directly affected or traumatised, to those secondarily or indirectly traumatized (Figley, 1999; Saakvitne & Pearlman, 1996).

Figley (1999) describes the hazardous nature of secondary traumatic stress faced by these professionals, and defines this as “the natural consequent behaviours and emotions resulting from knowledge about a traumatising event experienced by a significant other” (p. 10). The literature further reveals parallel symptoms in clinicians, approximating those of clients’ traumatic disclosures. The symptoms have been described as: distressing emotions (Courtois, 1988, 1996); functional impairment and physiological arousal (Dutton & Rubinstein, 1995; Figley, 1995; McCann & Pearlman, 1990), and avoidant responses (Courtois, 1988, 1996).

Although my study has not directly explored the effects of child sexual abuse on children, the literature shows that post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can be one of the conditions associated with children’s sexually abusive experiences as demonstrated by Kiser et al. (1988); McLeer, Callaghan, Henry, & Wallen (1994); Pfefferbaum (1997) and Cohen, Deblinger, Mannarino, & Steer (2004).

The relevance of this situation is that, in secondary trauma as an accumulative transformative situation (Saakvitne & Pearlman, 1996), clinicians like CCOs and POs are shown to experience PTSD-like symptoms. These mirror those of some sexually abused children with whom they are working. The potential for this development, even some time after exposure to the source of the primary stress, coupled also with related long-term consequences such as reduced productivity and chronic ill health (Yehuda, 2009), are important considerations for the health and welfare of professionals

working with children who are sexually abused. It is now understood that repeatedly hearing traumatic stories, witnessing the sadness in children's eyes and seeing other distressing emotions, can leave caring professionals with a visually intrusive imagery long after their involvement ends (Courtois, 1996; Herman, 1997). Working with sexually abused children can therefore result in a high risk of workers showing some secondary traumatic stress symptoms, with others experiencing PTSD. The emotional indicators of this include anger, frustration and being upset (Bride, 2007). These mirror the expressed emotions of the CCOs and POs in Barbados, as seen from the foregoing emotions expressed by both police and CCO.

Emotional responses to the delays within the judicial system in Barbados also emerged as an important issue and were similar to the emotional impact of listening to sexual abuse stories. The emotional tones used highlight the inescapable potential for secondary traumatic stress as a consequence of structural ineffectiveness and delay. Often the CCOs find themselves with the child, reliving the disclosure moment all over again, some five years or so later as the case finally makes its way to court. Furthermore, unresolved or delayed court hearings are likely to confirm, for many children, the futility of disclosure.

### **9.10 Contribution to Knowledge**

Organisations and professionals are not separate from, but are embedded within, the cultural environment, values and hierarchies of power in which CSA occurs. This means that the present legislative framework, policies, professional training and current *reactive modes of responding, particularly from a non-interdisciplinary perspective*, need to be critically assessed for the ways in which they are contributing to the perpetuation of CSA risk in Barbados. Of themselves and from their current structural states, they cannot sufficiently address this present crime of sexual offending. This is especially the case when working in parallel or in isolation to each other, rather than working co-operatively, using a knowledge-building and learning development approach such as a CoP model, a collaborative practice presented in this study.

Within the Barbadian context, the existence of patriarchal power, gender inequality and certain behavioural sexual values, such as sexual entitlement and sexual prowess can become markers of dominant masculinity, with sexual desirability and submission, markers of femininity. These can contribute to the perpetuation of child sexual abuse, becoming normative among some groups. These situations are often considered inevitable, thereby leaving privileged positions unchallenged and therefore unexamined.

The action-oriented constructions within this study speak to gendered norms which start in childhood. Intergenerational perpetuation of CSA is fuelled by such socialised norms, one translation of which can be seen through a Marxist/feminist lens as women's economic dependence on men. An assumption could be that such economic dependence is inevitable and attributable to who has more economic power. In fact, this is not solely the case; from this study it is more attributable to intersecting factors such as age (of child and of perpetrator), gender and class, and systemic structural deficiencies within the legislative and organisational practices.

...are we going to put the father in prison and then there is a child there to be supported? That is the dilemma here. Nobody is going to prosecute the guy because he is supporting the child and we are left with a pseudo acceptance of abuse (– *Station sergeant reporting*).

In fact, I contend that it is *not a pseudo acceptance of abuse*, but *a mistaken pseudo attempt at protection, which accrues to the benefit of the accused, rather than the victim, through the delay, abandonment or non-prosecution of cases*. Acceptance of CSA springs from systems of power residing in positional status, class and gender, which intersect and help to construct what is normal and what is deviant, criminalising the behaviours of some (Daly & Stephens, 1995) and, by implication, helping to excuse the behaviours of others. For example, rather than the State acting judiciously and insisting that perpetrators are held accountable for their criminal acts, child victims often have to wait until they are young adults before their case is finally adjudicated. Wherever the failure for this lack of accountability occurs, be it a lack of reporting in the first instance, deficiencies in the child protection

services, the criminal, legal or judicial services, or a combination thereof, it contributes to perpetuating CSA in Barbados. The victims' short-term and long-term positions are therefore undermined, not least by the wait and possible psychological harm. The perpetrator's position is potentially privileged, not least by the freedom to perpetuate harm to other children (for those with the predilection to so do) during the long wait for adjudication, or through the dissolution of the case for reasons other than the crime itself.

The crime of CSA is not the child victim's consent, or the parents' recalcitrance in supporting or not agreeing to prosecution, but the actions of the State, which has a duty to ensure the protection of children from harm, in a manner which overcomes, or at least decreases to a minimum, the aforementioned factors contributing to reduced accountability. Where this State duty is concerned, a conundrum currently exists in responding to child sexual abuse. Present professional, administrative, criminal, legal and judicial delays in the investigative and prosecutorial system, as well as the gendered aspects of the legislation which privilege the criminal act over protection, and the ability of some parents to subvert the sexual abuse allegations of their child, are all permissible through the State's failure to ensure and enable a child-protective environment. Ironically, these present 'permitted' shortcomings can result in a case being weakened in the eyes of the same presiding State, when such a case does not meet the criteria for prosecution. Examples of this contention can be seen where there is lack of good medical corroboration; where victims are considered culpable; where a child is emotionally unable to continue her testimony in court, facing her abuser, or where outcomes (e.g., pregnancy) change the agenda from prosecution to a focus on the perpetrator's fathering potential, as argued above. From the current modes of responding to CSA in Barbados, the pursuance of fair and equitable dispensation of justice, and acknowledgement of the harmful impact on the victim, all fail to be addressed. The crime of CSA ceases to be treated as an important criminal act and as a contributor to compromised health and well-being. Individual professionals may feel that things should be otherwise but, as individuals, they cannot change this current state of indolence.

These three theoretical positions, i.e., individual professionals' reactive rather than proactive responses to CSA allegations; victims' 'disadvantaged' position versus the perpetrator's 'privileged' position, and systemic structural inertia, are underpinned by gender inequality and gendered power relations. Therefore, unless professional practice and training engage the police and CCOs in reflection and change in relation to the issues raised by the study, the default position is sustained at the operational micro and meso levels of the structural system. Policy and legislation must, of necessity, provide the principles and regulations, but of themselves are insufficient, as is currently evident. What is needed is an understanding of, and engagement at a deeper level with, the reasons why certain aspects of CSA cases are reified and others minimized. A critical examination of key factors is needed. This includes knowledge of CSA embeddedness as part of a system of sub-cultural violence, gendered norms, personal and professional power and some individuals' predilection for sexually abusing children. Such an understanding is likely to be better achieved within a CoP framework, where there is interdisciplinary collaboration and where decisions can be informed by knowledge and learning pertaining to the domain of child sexual abuse, its contributing causes and its effects at the individual and societal levels.

## **10 Summation, Conclusion and Recommendations: Professional Responses to CSA**

### **10.1 Summary of This Study's Approach**

Chapter Two of this study utilises an ecological framework to explore various ways in which violence experienced by children, the family and society are perpetuated; I refer to this as a culture of maintenance. The failure of political and policy actions targeted towards interventions that might radically change patterns of social learning and the (re)-enactment of violence, appears to be a key part of this perpetuating pattern. This often results in children becoming cogs in a wheel of violence while at the meso and macro levels, the professionals themselves may also become part of this 'maintenance' culture- despite ascribing to a professional culture of service and empowerment. The absence of a political and institutional vision and mission for sustained change to deal with some of the key causes and effects of CSA can be understood through the CoP lens as discussed in Chapter Seven.

Chapter Three expanded understanding of histories of learning and meaning associated with what it meant to be a child in Barbados during enslavement and the colonial period. The international and regional literature is discussed to provide more insight into the complexity of CSA and the ways in which it continues to be perpetuated in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

In Chapters Four to Six I have shown how utilizing an interpretative approach to the research, eventually led to the development of theory through the various GT analytical processes. These processes and the research methods described in Chapter Five, unearthed the meanings I applied to the data, which in turn gave rise to the findings discussed in Chapter Six. Processes and meanings both point the way to the study's theory development.

In Chapter Seven, I use the CoP social-cultural learning theory lens to examine the ways that the professionals in the study behaved and responded to CSA. Professional participation and non-participation- e.g., how they engage with CSA, help shape learning and the meanings ascribed to CSA

situations. The reification of CSA, or indeed any artefacts associated with its management, further determine professional action, that is, what is done, how it is done and hence what may contribute to the perpetuation of CSA. For example, the law influences how professionals respond to CSA allegations; however when criminal law is reified to the exclusion of other considerations, professional action is often reduced to a function of the law (e.g. producing evidence for the judicial process) rather than protecting the rights of the child.

The use of the feminist lens in Chapter Eight explored how professional responses to CSA can be influenced by systemic factors such as the legislation and other structural, gendered and power positions. Not least of these positions is the professionals' own use of discourse and knowledge as seen from a Foucaultian perspective.

In Chapter Nine, I have drawn on the literature as secondary data to further support the theory of the perpetuation of risk of CSA. This approach resonates with the secondary CSA statistical data presented in Chapter Two, demonstrating the consistency and endurance of CSA allegations in Barbados and indeed how some responses (low prosecutions rates compared to numbers reported) also appear consistent over the years.

## **10.2 Reflection: the 'I' in Constructing Meaning from Grounded Theory Methods**

As I analysed these data and constructed meaning from them, consistent with the grounded theory methodology, I was cognisant that the experiences of the interviewees are the data. The Glaserian and Charmazian schools of grounded theory support the view that the construction of meaning by the researcher i.e., myself, has to be based on what is said (i.e., the interviewees' own construction of things) and in turn my own construction of what I heard.

In using open-ended questions as a technique for hearing about human activities and their socially constructed realities (Harris, 2006), I allowed useful information to emerge.

My study speaks to the specific enquiry area of child sexual abuse and professional responses to allegations. Because it is of a social justice nature,

my preliminary literature review in Chapter Three helped lead me to adopt a grounded constructionist position, since this seemed to be the most appropriate way of making meaning out of participants' constructions: their "created realities" (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). I explored these realities, acknowledging that they:

...do not exist outside of the persons who create and hold them; they are not part of some "objective" world that exists apart from their constructors. They consist of certain available information configured into some integrated, systematic, "sense-making"...through the interaction of a constructor with information, contexts, settings, situations, and other constructors (not all of whom may agree), using a process that is rooted in the previous experience, belief systems, values, fears, prejudices, hopes, disappointments, and achievements of the constructor....mal-constructions are possible, may be incomplete...uniformed, internally inconsistent.

(Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 143)

Glaser's (2001) contention that "all is data", explained below, is reassuring because it challenged me to realise that reality is not only constructed, but that it is also not necessarily transparent to the human eye and ears. Reality occurs in myriad forms and in a study such as this, it is what is said, not said and cannot be said. This then led me, the researcher, to be alert to all these possibilities, because:

...all is data...It means exactly what is going on in the research scene is the data, whatever the source, whether interview, observations, documents, in whatever combination. It is not only what is being told, how it is being told and the conditions of its being told, but also all the data surrounding what is being told. It means what is going on must be figured out exactly what it is to be used for, that is, conceptualisation, not for accurate description. Data is always as good as far as it goes, and there is always more data to keep correcting the categories with more relevant properties.

(Glaser, 2001, p. 145)

The narratives of the professionals telling their stories and my narration in this study, being co-constructed, are accounts that are all specific, situated and

partial as argued by Mishler (1991) and Silverman (2006). As Glaser (2001) argues above, "...there is always more data..." Equally, there is always more interpretation to be done. An interpretative approach, to assist my analysis of what is represented within the data, was useful. In so doing I was aware that what I saw and heard was influenced by my own biography, interest and indeed the very questions asked. As:

...no qualitative method rests on pure induction...the questions we ask of the empirical world frame what we know of it...we share in constructing what we define as data.

(Charmaz, 2005, p. 509)

This allows me to reflect on the fact that what I have written is equally from a particular perspective of how I also see the world. For example, what constructions of child sexual abuse exist, how are these manifested and why might this be the case? These are questions I am interested in, and the way I write and give account in my analysis is part of me, the researcher. This is where my analysis, assisted through the lens of CoPs and feminism, also throws more light on this study, as explored in Chapters, 7 and 8. In all this, as researcher, I give voice to the data through my own voice. I *speak out for*, rather than *speak for* what emerges, remembering, as stressed above, that research narratives are always co-constructed.

### **10.3 Conclusion and Recommendations**

The guiding aims of this research were to explore:

- How is CSA defined and how do such definitions impact on police officers' and child care officers' responses to CSA in Barbados?
- What organizational and other factors impact on, and promote/inhibit, responding in the best interest of the child within the social and cultural context of Barbados?

The conclusions and recommendations stemming from the study are presented below.

### **10.3.1 Macro level factors**

By adopting a grounded theory approach, this study arrived at the theoretical position that CSA becomes normalized through the ways in which it is defined and redefined according to legislative and socio-cultural factors sustained by gendered power relationships. This position arises from particular historical specificities and is influenced by multilevel systems which contribute in explicit and implicit ways to the processes of normalization; the synergizing effect of which is the perpetuation of child sexual abuse.

Responses to child sexual abuse are impacted by criminal law which is not harmonized with other family law matters to promote the best interests of the child. The reification of the Sexual Offences Act (1992) and its use as policy guidance by professionals, unsupported by guiding principles specific to child protection and the child's best interest, influence how the nature of CSA is defined, thought about and responded to in Barbados.

The prolonged nature of court adjournments and adjudications have a professionally disempowering and emotionally (negative) charged influence on police officers and child care officers who have to work on a day to day basis with new cases of CSA and with ongoing cases that have been 'before the courts' for up to five years or more in many instances.

Whilst police officers and child care officers communicate regularly, sometimes daily on CSA matters, bureaucratic status quo systems remain in place, and respectful distances are maintained with little meaningful collaboration to jointly respond to and manage allegations, assessments and prosecutions in order to reduce opportunities for ongoing sexual victimization of children. These status quo positions are derived from and perpetuated by hierarchies of power and status in which gender plays a major part.

### **10.3.2 Exo, meso and micro level factors**

There are proximal and distal factors impacting the normalization of CSA and its perpetuation. Some of the distal factors have been mentioned above. There is also a need for respective professional training, complemented by

joint training, in the complexities of CSA, to assist its better management, to create new professional and child protection cultural values and identities; and to critically engage with the subject in more creative and responsive ways.

Parental responsibility and professional support as proximal factors in protecting and safeguarding every child from CSA is lacking. Where a lack of parental responsibility exists, it is embedded within a culture of the acceptance of CSA which contributes to its normalization and perceptions of inevitability.

It is within this environment that police officers and child care officers in Barbados currently operate and make decisions on what is child sexual abuse, who is a sexually abused child, under what circumstances does CSA occur and what are the most appropriate responses within the present socio-familial and socio-political environments.

These are all matters which impact the definition and response to CSA and they are now recommended for consideration in the fight against CSA in Barbados.

### **10.3.3 Further research**

The information obtained through this study has provided important insights into factors which can affect police officers' and child care officers' professional responses to CSA in Barbados. Additionally, the study can stimulate further research into each of the two professions' views on, and management of CSA. Particular areas for further research include:

- police and child care officers' beliefs about, and attitudes to children alleging child sexual abuse in Barbados;
- police and child care officers' beliefs and attitudes about sexually abusive behaviours;
- The impact of child sexual abuse on the mothers of sexually abused children;
- police's perceptions, attitudes and opinions about men who commit CSA;

- prevalence rates of CSA in Barbados;
- attrition rates of CSA allegations referred to the RBPF and the CCB: at points of entry into the system, after prosecution and leading up to and during arbitration.

Derived from my data, I have presented a theory about the factors that perpetuate risk and also argue that in relation to girls who become pregnant as a consequence of sexual victimisation, societal and family pressures around motherhood minimise the act of abuse and in reframing the offender as 'putative father' promotes the girls' dependence on the men who abused them. Both of these positions need to be explored through further research; for instance it is important to find out whether men who escape legal penalty go on to abuse other children. Furthermore, it is critically important to investigate whether the high preponderance of single-female headed households in Barbados (almost half of all families are headed by women) whose first experience of motherhood was the consequence of sexual abuse, has led to the establishment of a pattern of economic relationships with the fathers of their children. This socio-economic position is one which, though presented by several feminist scholars as an adaptive strategy for economic hardship, is in fact predicated on early CSA victimhood rather than choice. Further to this, there is need to examine the extent to which the children of these households go on to replicate behaviours which I have argued become normative through socialization, with girls becoming victims of sexual exploitation and young mothers, and boys becoming future putative fathers of children born out of sexual abuse. With regard to fathers, I have questioned the implicit assumption embedded within social processes that gaining the offender's support of the pregnant child leads to the exercise of paternal responsibility in the long term. This too warrants further research.

#### **10.4 Limitations of the Research**

This research included a representation of voices of child care officers with substantial experience of working within child abuse services (child protection) within the CCB's services to children and families. The experienced voices of police officers from three stations (identified as the busiest in terms of CSA

referrals) are also reflected in this study's data. The emerged findings from these voices, whilst representative of the professionals within the study cannot be said to be more widely reflective of professionals' views and indeed as is the nature of qualitative research, no claim is made about the generalisability of the findings. How professionals say they respond to CSA at a particular point must also be seen within their contextual and time bound nature. That is, the interviews took place at specific points in time with socio-economic and organizational/ political conditions unique to that time. These prevailing conditions are subject to changes which may also affect the ways in which the professionals respond to CSA.

The research was not designed to include other voices such as those of children, parents or other professionals who are part of the CSA management network and are thus impacted by abuse. This could be seen to be a limitation in terms of these missing perspectives, but they nonetheless also represent an opportunity for additional research. Despite these limitations, the study makes a distinct and unique contribution to knowledge in that it gives rise to important theoretical positions which help to explain the perpetuation of abuse within a Caribbean socio-cultural context. The study offers new insights into a problem that is endemic, persistent and pervasive and thus provides new opportunities for policy formulation and interagency collaboration. New approaches are needed which enable professionals to critically engage with the processes and decision-making factors that implicitly contribute to the perpetuation of abuse. This would break down some of the barriers to change, sustained through entrenched professional identities, behaviours and hierarchies of power reified within their specific communities of practice.

### **10.5 Final comments**

The information contained in this study is an important step towards the further development of professional ways of dealing with CSA in Barbados. These ways impact the quality of life for the victim both in the short and long-term. By extension these ways of responding to CSA also affect the quality of life of the society in which sexually abusive behaviours occur.

## Glossary

### Description of Terms Used

**Agency:** an individual or social group's will to be self-defining and self-determining.

**Axial coding:** the process of relating categories to sub-categories based on their "properties and dimensions" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 123).

**Categorising:** the analytic step in grounded theory of selecting certain codes as having overriding significance, or abstracting common themes and patterns in several codes into an analytic concept (Charmaz, 2006).

**Category/Property:** a theme reflective of what informants say and interpreted in relation to the topic.

**Chattel slavery:** system of slavery whereby an individual and their offspring are recognised by the law as being the property of another person for life. This system was established by Europeans and formed the basis of transatlantic slavery (National Archives, 2012)

**Coding:** taking a sentence at a time, or a meaningful small chunk of data, and giving it a code – reflective of words used in the text; the process of determining and defining what the data are all about.

**Commodification:** This term can be ascribed to different forms of exchanges and to actions associated with power and subjugation e.g., the commodification of transactional sex and of poverty.

**Constant comparison:** data are collected and simultaneously analysed: coding second interview with the first in mind, and subsequent ones with the preceding one(s) and with the emerging theory.

**Constructivism:** a social scientific perspective that addresses how realities are made. This perspective assumes that people, including researchers, construct the realities in which they participate (Charmaz, 2006).

**Core category:** a frequently found theme, connected to other emerging categories.

**Epistemology:** standards used to assess knowledge or why we believe what we believe to be true.

**Essentialism:** belief that individuals or groups have inherent, unchanging characteristics rooted in biology or a self-contained culture that explains their status.

When linked to oppressions of race, gender, and sexuality, binary thinking constructs “essential” group differences.

**Grounded theory method:** that which is used to arrive at Grounded Theory.

**Grounded theory:** one that is grounded in the data generated from following principles and procedures of Glaser and Strauss (1967); Glaser (1987, 1992); Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998).

**Intersectionality:** analysis claiming that systems of race, social class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, and age form mutually constructing features of social organisation (Collins, 2000).

**Matrix of domination:** the overall organisation of hierarchical power relations for any society. Any specific matrix of domination has a particular arrangement of intersecting systems of oppression, e.g., race, social class, gender, sexuality, citizenship status, ethnicity and age; and a particular organisation of its domains of power, e.g., structural, disciplinary, hegemonic and interpersonal (Collins, 2000).

**Memo-writing:** an analytical process in grounded theory research that involves the recording of processes, thoughts, feelings, analytical insights and ideas in relation to the research; pivotal intermediate step in grounded theory between data collection and writing drafts of papers (Birks & Mills, 2011).

**Paradigm:** an interpretive framework used to explain social phenomena.

**Postmodern:** can be described as “a set of critical, strategic and rhetorical practices employing concepts such as difference, repetition.... to destabilize other concepts such as presence, identity, historical progress, epistemic certainty, and the univocity of meaning... first entered the philosophical lexicon in 1979...” [online]. Available at: < <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/postmodernism/> > [1st February 2012].

**Primary data:** data collected by the researcher for the new study in hand.

**Saturation:** a point reached when the data add nothing new to what is already known about a category and relationship to a core category.

**Secondary data:** data collected by others and reused by a researcher.

**Social constructionism:** a theoretical perspective that assumes that people create social reality (ies) through individual and collective actions. Rather than seeing the world as given, constructionists ask, how is it accomplished? (Charmaz, 2006).

**Subjugated knowledge:** the secret knowledges generated by oppressed groups; subjugated knowledges aiming to resist oppression constitute oppositional knowledges.

**Substantive theory:** a theoretical interpretation or explanation of a studied phenomenon within a particular area (Birks & Mills, 2011).

**Theoretical sampling:** data collection decisions on what is to be collected next is governed by the theory being generated (Glaser, 1978, 1992; Strauss and Corbin 1990, 1998).

**Theoretical saturation:** refers to the point at which gathering more data about a theoretical category reveals no new properties nor yields any further theoretical insights about the emerging grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006).

**Theory:** an explanatory scheme comprising a set of concepts related to each other through logical patterns of connectivity (Birks & Mills, 2011).

## Appendices

## **Appendix two**

**Appendix 2.1 Demographical and training information on child care officers**

**Appendix 2.2 Child Care Board Organisational Chart (Source: CCB 2010)**

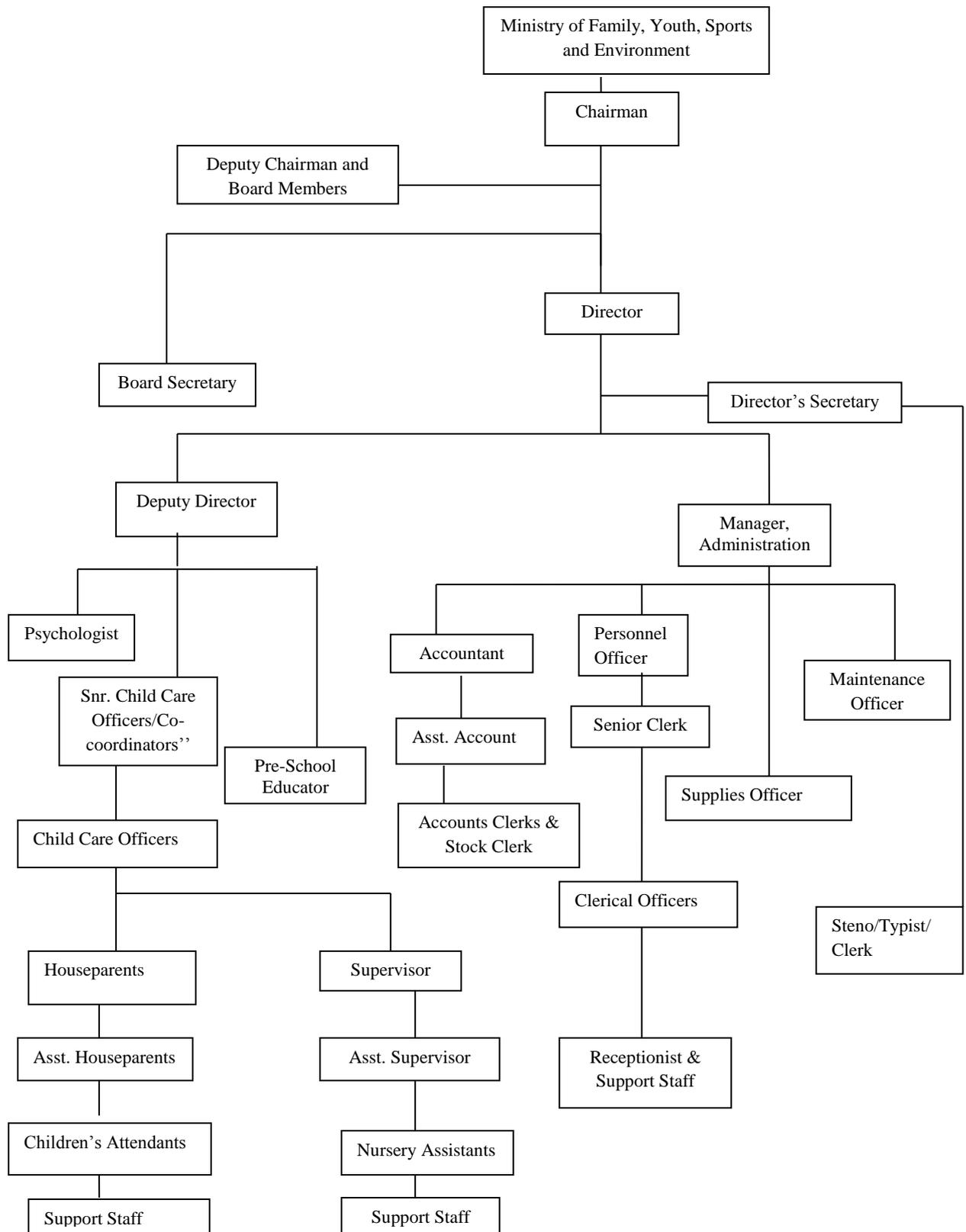
**Appendix 2.3 Demographical and training information on police officers**

**Appendix 2.4 Extracted principles: IFSW & IASSW**

**Appendix 2.5 Royal Barbados Police Force Code of Ethics**

### Appendix 2.1 Demographical and training information on child care officers

Age range	Gender		Grade Child Care Officer	Yrs. experience in child care & protection	Further education/ professional qualifications/ examples of other training
	M	F			
20-30		1	CCO	5	BSc Social Work; MSc Counselling Psychology
		1	CCO	17 months	BSc Social Work; Ass. degree Sociology
		1	CCO	6	BSc Social Work
		1	CCO	7	Master of Social Work
31-40		1	CCO	9	BSc Social Work
41-50		1	Senior CCO	14	Master Educational Psychology
		1	Senior CCO	13	MA International Child Welfare Cert; Early Childhood Education Cert; Supervisory Management
	1		Senior CCO	20 yrs.	BSc Social Sciences MA International Child Welfare Diploma – Management Certificate Social Work
Sub-total	1	7			
Total	8				



## Appendix 2.3 Demographical and training information on police officers

Age range	Gender		Police Force Division		Yrs. service in Police Force	Further education/ professional qualifications/ other training
	M	F	Uniform/ rank	CID /rank		
20-30	1			Constable	6½;	Police training CID course Sexual offences course (3 wks.)
	1			Constable	4	Police training CID course Sexual offences course (3 wks.)
31-40		1		Constable	13	Police training Undergraduate in Psychology
		1	Constable		12	Police training
		1	Constable		10	Police training Sexual offences course (3 wks.) Degree - Computer Science
		1	Constable		> 5 yrs	Not obtained
41-50	1		Station Sergeant		32	Police Training; Crime Prevention training Senior Management training Disaster Management training Money Laundering training Computer software training
	1		Sergeant		14	Police training; Sexual offences course (3 wks.)
51-60	1		Detective Inspector		34 yrs.	Senior Investigative Management Course; Major Crime Investigative Technique Course; Crisis Intervention & Hostage Negotiation; Mediation Prosecutor Training
	1		Station Sergeant		31 yrs.	Stress Management and Disaster Management; Prosecutor Training; Human Resource Management
Sub-total	6	4				
Total	10					

## Appendix 2.4 Extracted principles: IFSW & IASSW

Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles (International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and International Association of Schools of Social Work (IFSW & IASSW))

### 4. Principles

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#### 4.1. Human Rights and Human Dignity

Social work is based on respect for the inherent worth and dignity of all people, and the rights that follow from this. Social workers should uphold and defend each person's physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual integrity and well-being. This means:

1. Respecting the right to self-determination - Social workers should respect and promote people's right to make their own choices and decisions, irrespective of their values and life choices, provided this does not threaten the rights and legitimate interests of others.
2. Promoting the right to participation - Social workers should promote the full involvement and participation of people using their services in ways that enable them to be empowered in all aspects of decisions and actions affecting their lives.
3. Treating each person as a whole - Social workers should be concerned with the whole person, within the family, community, societal and natural environments, and should seek to recognise all aspects of a person's life.
4. Identifying and developing strengths - Social workers should focus on the strengths of all individuals, groups and communities and thus promote their empowerment.

#### 4.2. Social Justice

Social workers have a responsibility to promote social justice, in relation to society generally, and in relation to the people with whom they work. This means:

1. Challenging negative discrimination\* - Social workers have a responsibility to challenge negative discrimination on the basis of characteristics such as ability, age, culture, gender or sex, marital status, socio-economic status, political opinions, skin colour, racial or other physical characteristics, sexual orientation, or spiritual beliefs.

*\*In some countries the term "discrimination" would be used instead of "negative discrimination". The word negative is used here because in some countries the term "positive discrimination" is also used. Positive discrimination is also known as "affirmative action". Positive discrimination or affirmative action means positive steps taken to redress the effects of historical discrimination against the groups named in clause 4.2.1 above.*

2. Recognizing diversity - Social workers should recognise and respect the ethnic and cultural diversity of the societies in which they practise, taking account of individual, family, group and community differences.
3. Distributing resources equitably - Social workers should ensure that resources at their disposal are distributed fairly, according to need.
4. Challenging unjust policies and practices - Social workers have a duty to bring to the attention of their employers, policy makers, politicians and the general public situations where resources are inadequate or where distribution of resources, policies and practices are oppressive, unfair or harmful.
5. Working in solidarity - Social workers have an obligation to challenge social conditions that contribute to social exclusion, stigmatisation or subjugation, and to work towards an inclusive society.

## 5. Professional conduct

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It is the responsibility of the national organisations in membership of IFSW and IASSW to develop and regularly update their own codes of ethics or ethical guidelines, to be consistent with the IFSW/ IASSW statement. It is also the responsibility of national organisations to inform social workers and schools of social work about these codes or guidelines. Social workers should act in accordance with the ethical code or guidelines current in their country. These will generally include more detailed guidance in ethical practice specific to the national context. The following general guidelines on professional conduct apply:

1. Social workers are expected to develop and maintain the required skills and competence to do their job.
2. Social workers should not allow their skills to be used for inhumane purposes, such as torture or terrorism.
3. Social workers should act with integrity. This includes not abusing the relationship of trust with the people using their services, recognising the boundaries between personal and professional life, and not abusing their position for personal benefit or gain.
4. Social workers should act in relation to the people using their services with compassion, empathy and care.
5. Social workers should not subordinate the needs or interests of people who use their services to their own needs or interests.
6. Social workers should not subordinate the needs or interests of people who use their services to their own needs or interests.
7. Social workers have a duty to take necessary steps to care for themselves professionally and personally in the workplace and in society, in order to ensure that they are able to provide appropriate services.
8. Social workers should maintain confidentiality regarding information about people who use their services. Exceptions to this may only be justified on the basis of a greater ethical requirement (such as the preservation of life).
9. Social workers should be willing to collaborate with the schools of social work in order to support social work students to get practical training of good quality and up to date practical knowledge.
10. Social workers should foster and engage in ethical debate with their colleagues and employers and take responsibility for making ethically informed decisions.
11. Social workers should be prepared to state the reasons for their decisions based on ethical considerations, and be accountable for their choices and actions.

12. Social workers should work to create conditions in employing agencies and in their countries where the principles of this statement and those of their own national code (if applicable) are discussed, evaluated and upheld.

The document "Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles" was approved at the General Meetings of the International Federation of Social Workers and the International Association of Schools of Social Work in Adelaide, Australia, October 2004

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PO Box 6875, CH-3001 Bern, Switzerland

## **Appendix 2.5      Royal Barbados Police Force Code of Ethics**

As a member of the Royal Barbados Police Force, my fundamental duty is to serve mankind; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception; the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to respect the Constitutional rights of all men to liberty, equality and justice.

I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all; maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn or ridicule; develop self-restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in thought and deed in both my personal and official life. I will be exemplary in obeying the laws of the land and the regulations of the Force. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature that is confided to me in my official capacity will be kept ever secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty.

I will never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, animosities or friendships to influence my decisions. With no compromise for crime and with relentless prosecution of criminals, I will enforce the law courteously and appropriately without unnecessary force or violence and never accepting gratuities.

I recognise the calling of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public truth to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of the police service. I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself before God and to my chosen profession 'Law Enforcement' (Police, 2005).

## **Appendix 3**

**Appendix 3.1      A snapshot of CSA reports in the media: Barbadian newspaper (online).**

**High Level of Abuse “In Family”**

Last year, 77 out of 220 children affected by sexual abuse were assaulted by a stepfather or family member. It is this alarming statistic, said the Court of Appeal that means the island's courts must do everything to discourage sexual activity by people of a young age. "We are concerned by the fact that the evidence, statistical and anecdotal suggests that there is an unacceptably high incidence of sexual abuse of children by stepfathers and other family members," said Justice of Appeal Sandra Mason... "From statistics provided by the Child Care Board it is revealed that of the 220 children affected by sexual abuse during the period January to December 2009, 77 of the reported perpetrators were family members," Justice of Appeal Mason said... "The courts must do everything possible to discourage sexual activity of persons of a very young age,".... (Nation, 2007, April 28).

**Ill-treatment of Young Girls**

Statistics often enable us to note trends...One such statistic is the number of cases of sexual intercourse with minors down for prosecution in the 2008 Calendar...There are ten cases with girls under 14 years old; two with girls under 16 years old; and one case each of incest and indecent assault in that age group. That has nothing to do with the number of indecent assaults and rapes involving underage children as only the offence is recorded and the age of the victim is not stated... Yesterday's sentencing of a 49-year-old man to five years in jail for troubling a then nine-year-old girl for more than a year is one such case in point. The child is the daughter of his then girlfriend... During the trial, the girl, now 17, said the incidents started when she was nine, and continued until she was 11 before she got the courage to tell her mother (Nation, 2007, April 28).

**Harper: No Let-up in Child Abuse**

More than 250 children have been abused in some form in the four months between November last year and February 2007, according to Child Care Board (CCB) reports.

Chairman David "Joey" Harper cited the statistics to illustrate the high risk Barbadian children are facing... According to Harper, 58 children were physically abused, 85 were sexually abused and 113 neglected. "The Child Care Board is facing serious challenges for this expanding phenomenon placing innocent children at serious risk of exploitation. Violence is now creeping into the lives of our children; abuse cases are still cause for concern," he said (Nation, 2007, April 28).

## **Appendix 5**

### **Research submission documentation**

<b>Appendix 5.1.1</b>	<b>Research proposal to Research Ethics Panel</b>
<b>Appendix 5.1.2</b>	<b>Letter of authorisation from main supervisor</b>
<b>Appendix 5.1.3</b>	<b>Letter to the Commissioner of Police</b>
<b>Appendix 5.1.4</b>	<b>Letter to Child Care Board's Director</b>
<b>Appendix 5.1.5</b>	<b>Information for research participants</b>
<b>Appendix 5.1.6</b>	<b>Consent form to participate in research</b>
<b>Appendix 5.1.7</b>	<b>Employee Information</b>
<b>Appendix 5.1.8</b>	<b>Letter to consultant psychiatrist concerning support to participants</b>
<b>Appendix 5.1.9</b>	<b>Letter to psychologist concerning support to participants</b>
<b>Appendix 5.1.10</b>	<b>The University of Huddersfield: risk analysis &amp; management</b>
<b>Appendix 5.1.11</b>	<b>Interview guide to research areas</b>

## Appendix 5.1.1 Research proposal to Research Ethics Panel

The University of Huddersfield

School of Human and Health Sciences – School Research Ethics Panel

### OUTLINE OF PROPOSAL

Please complete and return via email to:

**Kirsty Thomson SREP Administrator:** [hhs\\_srep@hud.ac.uk](mailto:hhs_srep@hud.ac.uk)

**Name of applicant:** Ena Trotman Jemmott

**Title of study:** An Exploratory Study of Decision Making by Two Professional Groups - Social Workers and the Police - Working with Child Sexual Abuse Cases in Barbados, West Indies.

Department: School of Human and Health Sciences  
2009

Date sent: 15<sup>th</sup> June

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Please provide sufficient detail for SREP to assess strategies used to address ethical issues in the research proposal:</b> This is reflected in the attached forms and this application
<b>Researcher(s) details</b>	I am Ena Trotman Jemmott a first year PhD international student. My academic qualifications are BSc (Hons) Psychology and MSc Occupational and Organisational Psychology. My most recent and current experience in the subject area of child sexual abuse is as second principle investigator to Professor Adele Jones in the six Caribbean country study of "Perceptions of, Attitudes to and Opinions on Child Sexual Abuse." My other most recent experience, during the last six years, is working within the Caribbean assisting governments in the development of child protection services and related legislation.
<b>Supervisor details</b>	My supervisors are Professor Adele Jones PhD (main supervisor), Director of the Centre for Applied Childhood Studies, School of Human and Health Sciences, Email: <a href="mailto:a.d.jones@hud.ac.uk">a.d.jones@hud.ac.uk</a> and Dr Jane Tobbell, Senior Lecturer, Behavioural and Social Sciences, Division of Psychology and Counselling. Email: <a href="mailto:J.Tobbell@hud.ac">J.Tobbell@hud.ac</a> . The University of Huddersfield.
<b>Aim / objectives</b>	The research aims are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Professionals' definition of child sexual abuse</li><li>• Professionals' role in the management of child sexual abuse cases. To understand the processes of decision making from allegation to intervention; and adherence to policies and guidelines</li><li>• Identification of the professionals' sources of knowledge, how it is acquired and the impact on practice</li><li>• Organisational factors which promote/inhibit "good" decision making in the best interest of the child</li></ul>
<b>Brief overview of research methodology</b>	I will observe (wherever possible) some of the daily activities within the two professionals' work environments to contextualise the research and to assist in the data gathering of the organisational environment. Individual interviews and focus groups methods will be used with the two groups to gather data on the decision making processes. Documentary analysis, (policy and practice data) and the relevant

	legislation will also be part of this research process.
<b>Permissions for study</b>	<p><i>Formal permission will be obtained in writing from respective agencies and government departments, contingent upon the required ethical approval from the University. I have made initial contact with the respective senior personnel in the police and social work professions to explain my study and gain their support. Face to face interviews [for written approval] with senior and middle management have also been requested and will be finalised after final SREP approval.</i></p> <p>The aims and objectives of the research will also be clearly explained to all participants and informed consent will be sought from each.</p>
<b>Access to participants</b>	Access to participants will be gained through management approval from the respective agencies and with the direct agreement of the individual.
<b>Confidentiality</b>	I will ensure that all information gained from participants is treated with total respect and in a confidential manner. I will seek to maintain the privacy of interviews in an environment conducive to talking about such a sensitive subject. I will also secure all information gathered from all participants (e.g. my written transcripts and any recordings) in a secure room, in a locked cabinet, with access only by me. Information held electronically will be accessed by a password which only I will have and all such data will be backed up regularly and kept in a separate secure location.
<b>Anonymity</b>	The real name of each participant will not be written on any information supplied to me. Pseudonyms or other anonymous identifiers will be used and these will be kept separate, in another locked cabinet, to the data gathered.
<b>Psychological support for participants</b>	Because the sensitive and potentially emotional provoking topic might result in some distress for participants, I will put in place the services of a professional counsellor who will be available to anyone should this need arise. This counsellor will be fully briefed on the research.
<b>Researcher safety / support</b> <b>(attach complete University Risk Analysis and Management form)</b>	Please see attached information
<b>Identify any potential conflicts of interest</b>	There are no assessed potential conflict of interest between this research and others or with any known circumstances
<b>Please supply copies of all relevant supporting documentation electronically. If this is not available electronically, please provide explanation and supply hard copy</b>	
<b>Information sheet</b>	Please see attached information
<b>Consent form</b>	Please see attached information
<b>Letters</b>	Please see attached information
<b>Questionnaire</b>	The main methods will be through interviews and focus groups sessions
<b>Interview schedule</b>	Copy is attached of interview guide with information on case study and

	focus groups
<b>Dissemination of results</b>	The research findings will be my thesis which will be presented to the University of Huddersfield. A copy of the report's final recommendations will also be made available to the respective participating organisations in Barbados for the participants' access. Additionally some of the findings could be presented at conferences, appear in academic journals, online and or as part of a book. I will also endeavour to feedback to participants for validation purposes of the data gathering, any preliminary data which they would like to see and / or any information which needs further clarification.
<b>Other issues</b>	This research will be kept under constant review for any unforeseen developments which could affect its integrity.
<b>Where application is to be made to NHS Research Ethics Committee</b>	Specify NHS REC documents submitted: This is not relevant to my study
<b>All documentation has been read by supervisor (where applicable)</b>	Please confirm. This proposal will not be considered unless the supervisor has submitted a report confirming that (s)he has read all documents and supports their submission to SREP

**All documentation must be submitted to the SREP administrator. All proposals will be reviewed by two members of SREP. If it is considered necessary to discuss the proposal with the full SREP, the applicant (and their supervisor if the applicant is a student) will be invited to attend the next SREP meeting.**

**If you have any queries relating to the completion of this form or any other queries relating to SREP's consideration of this proposal, please do not hesitate to contact either of the co-chairs of SREP: Professor Eric Blyth [e.d.blyth@hud.ac.uk](mailto:e.d.blyth@hud.ac.uk); ☎ [47] 2457 or Professor Nigel King [n.king@hud.ac.uk](mailto:n.king@hud.ac.uk) ; ☎ [47] 2812**



**The Centre for Applied Childhood Studies**

**LETTER OF AUTHORISATION**

August 25<sup>th</sup> 2009

To whom it may concern:

**Re: Ena Trotman Jemmott - PhD Candidate**

**Project Title: An Exploratory Study of Decision Making by Two Professional Groups - Social Workers and the Police - working with Child Sexual Abuse Cases in Barbados, West Indies.**

Ena Trotman Jemmot, the holder of this letter is a registered student at the University of Huddersfield where she is pursuing a doctorate on the above topic within the Centre for Applied Childhood Studies. Ena Trotman Jemmot is authorised by the University of Huddersfield to carry out research pertaining to her PhD programme and I should be grateful for any assistance you may be able to offer her.

Mrs. Trotman Jemmott is a highly competent student and is also a professionally qualified occupational psychologist and an experienced researcher with extensive experience of conducting research within the Caribbean. Her research will be carried out with the utmost regard for confidentiality and in accordance with strict ethical principles as required by the University of Huddersfield. I am confident that you will want to support this important study which seeks to explore the decision-making processes involved in child abuse cases. It is anticipated that this work will provide valuable information to inform the development of effective multi-disciplinary approaches to child protection in Barbados and in the wider Caribbean.

If you require any further information in relation to this authorisation letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

*Adele Jones*

Adele Jones PhD, Professor of Childhood Studies  
Director, Centre for Applied Childhood Studies

**School of Human and Health Sciences, Queensgate, Huddersfield  
HD13DH, UK**

**Telephone +44 1484 422288 Ext. 3213**

Vice-Chancellor: Professor Bob Cryan BSc MBA PhD DSc

### Appendix 5.1.3 Letter to the Commissioner of Police

27 Wanstead Gardens  
St. Michael  
Barbados  
Tel: 425 3849; Cell: 243 9026  
Fax 425 3813  
[Ena.Trotman@gmail.com](mailto:Ena.Trotman@gmail.com)

1 September 2009

Mr Darwin Dottin  
The Commissioner of Police  
Police Headquarters  
Roebuck Street  
St. Michael

Dear Mr Dottin

**Re: Research study on: An Exploratory Study of Decision Making by Two Professional Groups - Social Workers and the Police - working with Child Sexual Abuse Cases in Barbados, West Indies.**

I am Ena Trotman Jemmott a researcher and Occupational Psychologist registered as a postgraduate student at the University of Huddersfield (UK) where I am pursuing a PhD in the above study area, within the Centre for Applied Childhood Studies, School of Human and Health Sciences. The purpose of this letter is to formally request your permission to interview Police Officers who would be willing to be involved in this landmark research.

The purpose of the study is to explore (with Police Officers who are directly involved) definitions of child sexual abuse, roles in its management, the processes from allegation to intervention and organisational factors which influence practice. My study is being supervised by Dr. Jane Tobbell and Professor Adele Jones (my main Supervisor) at the University of Huddersfield. Professor Jones can be contacted at +44 1484 422288 ext. 3237 ([a.d.jones@hud.ac.uk](mailto:a.d.jones@hud.ac.uk)).

The study will be carried out in strict compliance with the University of Huddersfield's Ethical Procedures and those required by the Royal Barbados Police Force and other institutional/ Ministerial requirements. The privacy and anonymity of participants will be protected and information treated in strictest confidence. I will not use any participant's names in any written or recorded material. All information gathered will be held in a secure room, in a locked cabinet, with access only by me. Information held electronically will be accessed by a password which only I will have and all such data will be backed up regularly and kept in a separate secure location.

Only persons who have also given their own consent will be included and they will be free to leave the study at any time without giving a reason if they so choose. Each participant will also be given further information within a "Participants information sheet". The landmark nature of this study will contribute to new knowledge thereby benefiting professionals working with children and families. I will therefore be very happy to share the results of this study with those participating police officers and the wider law enforcing fraternity.

I look forward to your kind permission to approach Police Officers to ascertain their agreement to participate.

Yours sincerely

**Ena Trotman Jemmott** (PhD Candidate)  
Centre for Applied Childhood Studies  
School of Human and Health Sciences  
University of Huddersfield  
Huddersfield HD1 3DH  
U.K

**Appendix 5.1.3.1 Letter to the Assistant Commissioner of Police**

**27 Wanstead Gardens  
St. Michael  
Barbados  
Tel: 425 3849; Cell: 243 9026; Fax 425 3813  
[Ena.Trotman@gmail.com](mailto:Ena.Trotman@gmail.com)**

24th September 2009

Mr Oral Williams  
Assistant Commissioner of Police  
Office of the Commissioner  
The Royal Barbados Police Force  
St. Michael

Dear Mr Williams

**Research study on: An Exploratory Study of Decision Making by Two Professional Groups - Social Workers and the Police - working with Child Sexual Abuse Cases in Barbados, West Indies.**

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking you most sincerely for the permission which you have given in your letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> September 2009 on behalf of the Commissioner of Police to interview members of the Royal Barbados Police Force in connection with the above study.

As you did suggest when we spoke on the telephone subsequent to this approval, I have made contact with Senior Superintendent Bynoe and Station Sergeant Depeiza to discuss the matter further and to expedite contact with the respective police officers.

Yours respectfully

Ena Trotman Jemmott

## Appendix 5.1.4 Letter to Child Care Board's Director

27 Wanstead Gardens  
St. Michael  
Barbados  
Tel: 425 3849; Cell: 243 9026; Fax 425 3813  
[Ena.Trotman@gmail.com](mailto:Ena.Trotman@gmail.com)

1<sup>st</sup> September 2009

Ms Joan Crawford  
Director of the Child Care Board  
Ministry of Families and Community Services  
Fred Edghill Building, Cheapside  
St. Michael

Dear Ms Crawford

**Re: Research study on: An Exploratory Study of Decision Making by Two Professional Groups - Social Workers and the Police - working with Child Sexual Abuse Cases in Barbados, West Indies.**

I am currently registered as a postgraduate student at the University of Huddersfield (UK) where I am pursuing a PhD in the above study area, within the Centre for Applied Childhood Studies, School of Human and Health Sciences. The purpose of this letter is to formally request your permission to interview Social Workers who would be willing to be involved in this landmark research.

The purpose of the study is to explore with Social Workers, definitions of child sexual abuse, roles in its management, the processes from allegation to intervention and organisational factors which influence practice. My study is being supervised by Dr. Jane Tobbell and Professor Adele Jones (my main Supervisor) at the University of Huddersfield. Professor Jones can be contacted at +44 1484 422288 ext 3237 ([a.d.jones@hud.ac.uk](mailto:a.d.jones@hud.ac.uk)). The study will be carried out in strict compliance with the University of Huddersfield's Ethical Procedures and those required by the Child Care Board and other institutional/ Ministerial requirements. The privacy and anonymity of participants will be protected and information treated in strictest confidence.

I will not use any participant's names in any written or recorded material. All information gathered will be held in a secure room, in a locked cabinet, with access only by me. Information held electronically will be accessed by a password which only I will have and all such data will be backed up regularly and kept in a separate secure location. Only persons who have also given their own consent will be included and they will be free to leave the study at any time without giving a reason if they so choose. Each participant will also be given further information within a "Participants information sheet".

The landmark nature of this study will contribute to new knowledge thereby benefiting professionals working with children and families. I will therefore be very happy to share the results of this study with those participating Social Workers and the wider Social work profession.

I look forward to your kind permission to approach Social Workers to ascertain their agreement to participate.

Yours sincerely

**Ena Trotman Jemmott** (PhD Candidate)  
Centre for Applied Childhood Studies  
School of Human and Health Sciences  
University of Huddersfield  
Huddersfield HD1 3DH  
U.K

#### **Appendix 5.1.4.1 Letter to Child Care Board's Director**

**27 Wanstead Gardens  
St. Michael  
Tel: 425 3849; Cell: 243 9026; Fax 425 3813  
[Ena.Trotman@gmail.com](mailto:Ena.Trotman@gmail.com)**

14th June 2010

Ms Joan Crawford  
Director of the Child Care Board  
Fred Edgehill Building  
Cheapside St.Michael

Dear Ms Crawford

**Re: Research study on: An Exploratory Study of Decision Making by Two Professional Groups - Social Workers and the Police - working with Child Sexual Abuse Cases in Barbados, West Indies.**

#### **Focus group meeting with Police Officers**

Further to my letters of 1<sup>st</sup> September and 13<sup>th</sup> November 2009 (attached for reference), I am now writing to ask your kind permission to allow those social workers who are willing and available to meet with me to conduct a focus group session on the above with police officers as soon as can be arranged.

I would have raised this next stage with each Child Care officer when I conducted the face to face interviews with them earlier this year. I am in the process of organising this with the police and you can appreciate the challenges of this with two very busy groups of professionals.

#### **Tentative date of Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2010**

Today I spoke with several ranks in the police about organising the focus group with police officers and social workers. The above date was suggested as one which could be convenient for the police.

I would appreciate knowing if this would be convenient to you in order that I may go back to the police and firm up arrangements. You had said earlier that your conference room might be available as venue. Your confirmation on this would also be appreciated.

Thanking you in anticipation.

**Ena Trotman Jemmott** (PhD Candidate)  
Centre for Applied Childhood Studies  
School of Human and Health Sciences  
University of Huddersfield  
Huddersfield HD1 3DH  
U.K

## Appendix 5.1.5 Information for research participants



Information for participants in research

**Topic:** An Exploratory Study of

Decision Making by Two Professional Groups - Social Workers and the Police - working with Child Sexual Abuse Cases in Barbados, West Indies.

### **Introduction of study and its objectives**

My name is Ena Trotman Jemmott. I am a PhD student currently undertaking research in Barbados in child sexual abuse decision making among social workers and police- working with children who have been sexually abused. The aim of the study is to find out the following:

- Professionals' definition of child sexual abuse
- Professionals' role in the management of child sexual abuse cases. To understand the processes of decision making from allegation to intervention; and adherence to policies and guidelines
- Identification of the professionals' sources of knowledge, how it is acquired and the impact on practice
- Organisational factors which promote/ inhibit "good" decision making in the best interest of the child

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main reason for this study is to fulfil the thesis requirement of my PhD at the University of Huddersfield, UK. Nevertheless I have selected a subject area about which professionals and parents are increasingly concerned. The general public also now appear to be more open and honest about the existence of child sexual abuse and agencies such as UNICEF and UNIFEM are working with governments to assist them in meeting their international Human Rights obligations such as reformed legislation. Therefore I believe that this study will help to inform policy and assist practice development for the key professionals working in the field and hear directly from parents/ guardians who are involved in the system.

### **Confidentiality**

It is my responsibility and I will ensure that all information gained from you will be treated with total respect and in a confidential manner. I will seek to maintain the privacy of interviews in an environment conducive to talking about such a sensitive subject. I will also secure all information gathered from all participants (e.g. written materials including transcripts and any recordings) are kept in a secure room, in a locked cabinet, with access only by me. Information held electronically will be accessed by a password which only I will have and all such information will be regularly backed up and kept in another secured location.

### **Anonymity**

Your real name and that of the other participants will not be written on any information you supply to me. Pseudonyms or other anonymous identifiers will be used and these will be kept separate to the data gathered, in another locked cabinet.

## **Participation**

Should you agree to participate in this study it will be on a voluntary basis which, we will both agree (verbally and in writing). You will therefore be free to withdraw from the study at any point without giving a reason if you so choose.

## **Psychological support**

*If as a result of your participation in this study, you need emotional/ psychological support related to the subject, you will be able to access up to two support sessions with a trained counsellor, put in place specifically for this research, who will also be able to make recommendations on any further counselling you may need. The contact details will be given to you at our first meeting.*

## **Benefits and Risk assessment**

Given the landmark nature of this study, it is anticipated that there will be the benefit of new knowledge to the professionals working with children and families and to the wider society.

In keeping with this research protocol I have carried out a risk assessment to ensure that no participant is exposed to harm as a result of participation in this study. Part of my approach is to also hear from you of any potential risks from your perspective.

## **Support for Participants**

The sensitive and potential emotional provoking nature of the topic might result in some distress for participants. I have therefore put in place the services of a professional counsellor who will be available to you should this need arise. The details of this person will be made available upon participation.

## **Dissemination of results**

I will endeavour to feedback to you information for validation purposes, any data you would like to see and / or any information which needs further clarification. Main final recommendations will also be made available to your organisation. You will also be able to contact me for a copy. The research findings will be in the form of a thesis which will be presented to the University of Huddersfield and also appear in their library. Additionally some of the findings could be presented at conferences, appear in academic journals, online and or as part of a book.

## **Thanking you in anticipation**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for considering to be part of this study and look forward to your valuable participation.

## **Researcher Contact**

**Ena Trotman Jemmott** ([Ena.Trotman@gmail.com](mailto:Ena.Trotman@gmail.com))

PhD Candidate  
Centre for Applied Childhood Studies  
School of Human and Health Sciences  
University of Huddersfield  
Huddersfield HD1 3DH  
U.K

27 Wanstead Gardens  
St.Michael BB23034  
Barbados  
425 3849  
February 2010

Appendix 5.1.6 Consent form to participate in research



University of  
**HUDDERSFIELD**

**The Centre for Applied Childhood Studies**

**CONSENT FORM**

**Police Officers/Social Workers agreement to participate in interviews and focus groups in a study on decision making in the management of child sexual abuse cases in Barbados**

Kindly indicate your agreement by ticking

<p>I have been asked to take part in a study on decision making in the management of child sexual abuse cases. I have read the participants' information leaflet, been fully informed of the nature and aims of this research and consent to taking part in it.</p>	
<p><b>I understand</b> that I have the right to withdraw from the interview and focus group discussion at any time without giving any reason, and a right to withdraw my data if I wish.</p>	
<p><b>I understand</b> that the interview could take up to 1 hour; and I will also be asked to take part in a focus group discussion on another day which could take between 1- 1½ hours.</p>	
<p><b>I have been told</b> the discussion and interview will be recorded (with participants' permission) and once the research report has been written the recording will be deleted.</p>	
<p><b>I understand</b> that the data from the study will only be seen by the researcher Ena Trotman Jemmott, her two supervisors and will be kept in a locked cabinet in a secure location.</p>	
<p><b>I give</b> my permission/do not give my permission for my interview to be tape recorded <b>(please delete what does not apply.)</b></p>	
<p><b>I understand</b> that I can refuse to answer any questions without having to give reasons why I am declining. If I am uncomfortable with the session being recorded, I can also ask for the recording to be stopped at any time.</p>	
<p><b>I understand</b> that the written transcripts will be anonymised to maintain confidentiality and my real name will not be used at any stage. I give permission to be quoted (by use of pseudonym).</p>	

<p><b>I understand</b> that my identity will be protected by the use of pseudonym in the research report and that no information that could lead to my being identified will be included in any report or publication resulting from this research.</p>	
<p><b>I understand</b> that if I am distressed as a result of taking part in the study, I will be given help to access counselling or support from an appropriate agency.</p>	
<p><b>I understand</b> that the information I give will be used as a PhD thesis and a copy of its final recommendations will be given to my organisation for my access, or I may contact the researcher to access these recommendations.</p>	

Signature of participant (or other indication- discretionary)

.....Date.....

Please print name also (discretionary)

.....

Please state job

title.....

**CONFIRMATION OF CONSENT** (to be completed by researcher)

I have confirmed with this participant that s/he has no further questions and wishes the interview/focus group to proceed

Signed..... Date.. ..

**Researcher's Contact details:**

**Ena Trotman Jemmott** ([Ena.Trotman@gmail.com](mailto:Ena.Trotman@gmail.com))

Centre for Applied Childhood Studies  
 School of Human and Health Sciences  
 University of Huddersfield  
 Huddersfield HD1 3DH  
 U.K

27 Wanstead Gardens  
 St.Michael  
 Barbados

## Appendix 5.1.7 Employee Information

### Employee Information – Child Care Officer

The following information on your personal details and training experience is intended to complement the face to face interviews and the focus group sessions on decision making within child sexual abuse allegations (CSA) in Barbados. Please note that your name is not required and the information you give will be treated in the strictest confidence.

#### PERSONAL DETAILS

Kindly share with me the following:

1. Your gender: Female  Male
2. Age OR Age range: 20-30  31-40  41-50  51-60  61-65
3. Your current Designation
  
4. Length of time in the Social Work profession
5. Length of working in present role /unit
6. (a) Further Educational qualifications (post-secondary school)  
(b) Professional qualifications

#### TRAINING AND POLICIES

7. What training have you received in dealing with child protection matters? Please state  
(a) Do you consider this to be adequate? YES  NO   
Kindly give reasons for your answer
8. What training have you received in dealing with child sexual abuse matters in particular? Please state  
(a). Do you consider this to be adequate? YES  NO   
Kindly give reasons for your answer
9. Does the Child Care Board have any policies and procedures specially related to child protection management and CSA in particular? YES  NO
10. If yes would you briefly state what these are and how adequate you consider them to be?
11. What do you consider to be the main source of your decision making knowledge in the management of CSA?
12. How is information shared and transmitted within the CCB between the longer serving Social Workers and the newer staff in the management of CSA?
13. Any further comments and observations you would like to share on the above or any other matters would be highly valued. Please state below.

Thank you for your co-operation in completing this questionnaire.

March 2010 ETJ

**Appendix 5.1.8 Letter to consultant psychiatrist concerning support to participants**

***Ena Trotman Jemmott***  
27 Wanstead Gardens  
St. Michael, Barbados  
Tel: 425 3849; Cell: 243 9026; Fax 425 3813  
Email: [Ena.Trotman@gmail.com](mailto:Ena.Trotman@gmail.com)

15th November 2009

Dr. Sharon C. Harvey  
Consultant Psychiatrist  
35 Kingston Terrace  
Welches, St. Michael

Dear Dr. Harvey

**Re: Research study on: An Exploratory Study of Decision Making by Two Professional Groups - Social Workers and the Police - working with Child Sexual Abuse Cases in Barbados, West Indies.**

Further to our telephone conversation yesterday, I would like to thank you for agreeing to offer an initial counselling session to any person from the Police or Child Care Board staff who as a result of my interviews with them on the above topic, feel the need for counselling.

The above study is in fulfillment of my PhD thesis at the University of Huddersfield UK. In keeping with the research protocol and ethics I am required to put in place some counselling support due to the sensitive and potential emotional provoking nature of the subject under investigation.

It obviously cannot be determined who, if anyone will have such a need, but everyone interviewed – estimated 10-15 persons- will be given your contact details. As agreed the cost of the initial consultation will be met by the researcher. Should this prove inadequate I would welcome a discussion (obviously without wanting to know the identity of the person) on how more support might be put in place for any individual(s).

Yours respectfully

*Ena Trotman Jemmott*

Ena Trotman Jemmott

**Appendix 5.1.9 Letter to psychologist concerning support to participants**

***Ena Trotman Jemmott***  
**27 Wanstead Gardens**  
**St.Michael, Barbados**  
**Tel: 425 3849; Cell: 243 9026; Fax 425 3813**  
**Email: [Ena.Trotman@gmail.com](mailto:Ena.Trotman@gmail.com)**

15th November 2009

Dr. Anne Hill  
Clinical Psychologist  
Black Rock Psychiatric Hospital  
St.Michael

Dear Dr. Hill

**Re: Research study on: An Exploratory Study of Decision Making by Two Professional Groups - Social Workers and the Police - working with Child Sexual Abuse Cases in Barbados, West Indies.**

Further to our telephone conversation on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2009, I would like to thank you for agreeing to offer an initial counselling session to any person from the Police or Child Care Board staff who as a result of my interviews with them on the above topic, feel the need for counselling.

The above study is in fulfilment of my PhD thesis at the University of Huddersfield UK. In keeping with the research protocol and ethics I am required to put in place some counselling support due to the sensitive and potential emotional provoking nature of the subject under investigation.

It obviously cannot be determined who, if anyone will have such a need, but everyone interviewed – estimated 10-15 persons- will be given your contact details. As agreed the cost of the initial consultation will be met by the researcher. Should this prove inadequate I would welcome a discussion (obviously without wanting to know the identity of the person) on how more support might be put in place for any individual(s).

Yours respectfully

*Ena Trotman Jemmott*

Ena Trotman Jemmott

**Appendix 5.1.10 The University of Huddersfield: risk analysis & management**

			Name: Ena Trotman Jemmott	
LOCATION: Barbados, west Indies			Date: 15 <sup>th</sup> June 2009	Review Date:
	Details of Risk(s)	People at Risk	Risk management measures	Other comments/ Action
1. Interview sites  Social workers Police	<p>Social worker: Possibility of limited available private space for interviewing</p> <p>Police: Possibility of limited available private space for interviewing</p>	The researcher	<p>Flexible time management of self and interview schedules without compromise of the data gathering</p> <p>Remaining mindful to the possibilities of unexpected interruptions because of the nature of each professional's role</p> <p>Agreeing "contract" of time, place, interview schedules and availability of suitable room for interviewing with each person with alternatives inbuilt.</p> <p>Ensuring time is built into the research timetable for such an eventuality</p>	<p>Ongoing assessment of potential hazards and being mindful of the possibility of the unexpected.</p> <p><u>Personal safety</u></p> <p><i>I do not at this stage anticipate any threat to my personal safety given my local knowledge of the open occupational environments and the expected "duty of care" within the two professional groups. However I will at all times be mindful of unexpected developments, for example, which might come about due to the emotive nature of my research topic e.g., open hostility from interviewee(s). Under such circumstances, the interview will be terminated (if necessary) or my skills in defusing such tensions will be drawn upon. I will also gain prior information on the prevailing climate within the two</i></p>
2. Unavailability of staff	<p>Delay to the research timetable:</p> <p>Unavailability of staff due to unexpected developments because of the nature of their job in having to</p>	The researcher	<p>Putting a professional counsellor in place for participants and fully briefing this support.</p> <p>Ensuring the viability of study numbers in the first place</p> <p>Adequate spacing of</p>	

<p>3. Adverse effects on participants due to the emotional nature of the topic being researched</p>	<p>respond to emergencies or cover for unavailable colleagues Participant(s) withdrawal from study</p> <p>Reduction in participant numbers</p> <p>Fatigue from attentive listening to participants</p> <p>Eye strain from computer-glare</p> <p>Repetitive strain to fingers from typing</p>	<p>The researcher</p>	<p>interviews to enable proper reflection and recovery</p> <p>Regular breaks from computer and anti-glare measures</p>	<p><i>occupational settings before visits, through reading the local newspaper and through other appropriate means.</i></p> <p><i>At all times a schedule of my appointments will be given to a supportive adult who will be briefed on same.</i></p> <p><u>Psychological support</u></p> <p><u>( self and participants)</u></p> <p><i>Initial contact made with counsellors who indicate a willingness to assist participants on a voluntary basis- if required.</i></p> <p><i>I am able to access psychological support for myself from a clinical psychologist, if needed.</i></p>
<p>4. The researcher</p>		<p>The researcher</p>		

## **Appendix 5.1.11 Interview guide to research areas**

### **Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) interview guide for study on professionals' responses to CSA in Barbados**

I would like to thank you in advance for agreeing to talk with me about your direct involvement with child sexual abuse management within Social Work / the Police Force.

The information is intended to complement the information gathered on the individual cases of CSA and the focus groups. The information you give will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Is there anything you would like to share before we start?

#### **Defining CSA**

1. Definition and description of CSA.
2. Main types of CSA dealt with within the last three years (2006-2009).
3. Number(s) of child sexual abuse involved with within the last three years (2006-2009)
4. Does the Child Care Board (CCB)/Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF) have a Unit or group of persons whose job it is to investigate all allegations of CSA in Barbados? If not how care cases assigned?
5. Most challenging and demanding aspects of CSA investigations.
  
6. How does the referral get to your desk/ to you?
7. Actions taken on receipt of a referral of a CSA allegation.
8. What is the usual response time in dealing with a CSA report?
9. What guide the actions taken from the first contact with
  - a. alleged victim
  - b. the child's parent or other main guardian
  - c. the alleged abuser
  
10. Experience of children's competence in telling you about the alleged abuse. In the < 5yrs: 6-10 yrs and 11-16 yrs
11. What normally might convince that a child is telling the truth about child sexual abuse against her/him?
  
12. Experience of some main difficulties (if any) with getting evidence from children (for the charging/prosecution and for social work intervention.
13. Are some complaints of CSA dealt with without any investigative actions and if so what might be the reasons for this?
14. What resources does the CCB/RBPF have for the investigation of CSA? How adequate are these?
15. What convinces that the crime of sexual abuse has taken place?
16. Conversely what leaves less convinced that a crime has taken place?

## **INTERVENTION**

**Explore key response steps that are made by the CCB/RBPF from referral to the need to act to safeguard the child in some way, to prosecution/therapeutic intervention.**

17. Can you share anonymised case(s) of children who were sexually abused with which you were involved and which you particularly remember?
  - (a) What were some of the key decisions you took?
  - (b) Why did you make them rather than others?
  - (c) In retrospect would you have made different decisions and if so why?
18. What legislation guides your action and decision making in CSA cases?
19. How do you think CSA work impact on the social worker personally?
20. Can you share with me some of the emotions you feel when dealing with CSA cases?

## **Multidisciplinary Approach**

21. Does the CCB/RBPF have collaborative and multidisciplinary meetings with each other and other agencies in its investigation and management of CSA cases?
22. What is the main agency with whom collaborated in decision making in CSA matters- How effective is communication between agencies?
23. What other agencies do you collaborate with in CSA cases and how effective is the collaboration and communication with these agencies?
24. How are case conferences on an CSA alleged case organized and managed?
25. How effective is your department's interagency collaboration with police officers/child care officers?
26. What in your opinion would enhance multidisciplinary working?

## **Prioritisation**

1. In your opinion what priority does the CCB/Police department currently give to CSA as compared to other crimes such as robbery, rape, serious assault and murder? [for social workers...as compared to other work with children and families?]
2. What in your opinion should be the goal(s) of the police / CCB in their management of CSA?
3. Is there any information you would like to share with me?

## **Appendix six**

### **Individual interviews and focus group transcripts, data analysis & Sexual Offences Act 1996**

**Appendix 6.1** Interview transcript, Child care officer

**Appendix 6.2** Interview transcript, Station sergeant

**Appendix 6.3** Focus group case study

**Appendix 6.4** Transcript of focus group discussion

#### **Data analysis:**

**Appendix 6.5** Codings - core categories from child care officers' data

**Appendix 6.6** Codings - core categories from police data

**Appendix 6.7** Focus group analysis - joint police officers' and child care officers' data:

Themes which emerged from the focus group discussion.

**Appendix 6.7** Focus group analysis - joint police officers' and child care officers' data:

Themes which emerged from the focus group discussion.

#### **Sexual Offences Act:**

**Appendix 6.8** Sexual Offences Act 1992

**Appendix 6.1 Interview transcript, Child care officer**

Interview date: December 2009		
Venue: Child Care Board		
Interviewer/ Interviewee	Transcript of Child care officer:	Comments
INT  CCO #5	I want to thank you once again for agreeing to come and talk to me. You said that you are an Intake Officer and that you have been doing that for 17 months?  Yes that's right.	
INT  CCO #5	I want you to tell me about the intake process, what it is and how it is organized and how it fits into the overall management of CSA cases in particular.  OK.	
INT  CCO #5	The coordinator for the intake programme sets up a roster each month whereby you have 2 child care officer on duty every single day. These officers will deal with calls coming into the agency regarding to any type of child abuse matters, any matters relating to parents and children. We also deal with walk-in matters on those days. When the CSA allegation comes in through call or the person coming to the agency is either a referral from to police department, the hospital, the school or the parent themselves. After speaking to the child. The intake officer's responsibility is to then document that information on an Intake Form stating the specifics of the circumstances of the abuse. This goes to the Intake Supervisor who then assigns it to the Child abuse officers. When the Officer is assigned that case they then get in touch with the relevant parties, the parent and child to interview them to get more information on the circumstances, the length of time the abuse has been going on. If it has been a long time, if the perpetrator is known to them, how the abuse came about, that kind of thing and if there are signs that the child will need counselling from a psychologist, the child/family is referred to the psychologist. Thereafter, once is proven that the allegation are true, the officer's responsibility is to refer the matter to the police department for them to conduct a criminal investigation into the matter, to bring charges ( <i>sic</i> ) against the perpetrator.	

<p>INT</p> <p>CCO #5</p>	<p>Where does that interview with you take place?</p> <p>That is conducted within one of the interview rooms we have here at the agency.</p>	
<p>INT</p> <p>CCO #5</p>	<p>It is interesting that they (referrals) can come from many sources, the hospital, the police or they can come of their own volition. When they come from the police or the hospital or somewhere else, they bring themselves here. Is there any way of knowing about cases that don't turn up?</p> <p>Do you mean if there is a child that has been abused and it is not known to any of the agencies?</p>	
<p>INT</p> <p>CCO #5</p>	<p>Well if they are on their way from the police, but half way they think, I can't face another interview, so I am not going... I am trying to find out what communication is there between you and the referring agency, as to whether that child/parents did ever come to see you?</p> <p>Well, usually the hospital, I will deal with that first, will either call and back that up with a paper correspondence. They usually do send a written correspondence. With the police department, if the parent decides not to come to the CCB, there is no way of us knowing. We have never had calls from the police to say that a parent is supposed to come or anything like that. So if the parent decides after leaving to police department and between here, we would not know that there has been a case of child abuse unless somebody in the neighbourhood knows and they will then call in anonymously and they will then call in and say "I know such and such going on, I know they went to the police and I don't know if they have come to you or what". But outside of someone else calling in from the community who knows, if they go to the police we wouldn't know unless they come in.</p>	
<p>INT</p> <p>CCO #5</p>	<p>OK. So the police don't send you any written correspondence. Do they contact you by phone to say somebody is on their way or the parent is /guardian is just told to come and see you?</p> <p>They are told to come here.</p>	

INT  CCO #5	Ok. So they will come and say the police told me to come and see you?  Yes.	
INT  CCO #5	But there is no communication between you and the police?  No. Not unless we then get the information and we then send off the referral to them.	
INT  CCO #5	Right. Right, I can see that because other people have talked about it. But in terms of "Sandra" (fictitious person and story) turning up with her mother at the police to say that the neighbour abused her and the police say well you have to go to the CCB, you don't know they have gone to the police unless they then come to you?  Yes.	
INT  CCO #5	That is quite different to what happens at the hospital?  Yes.	
INT  CCO #5	What do you think about that?  I think it is quite inefficient, because what I find is that although we expect more...(clarifier by CCB officer follows)... let me say though, that more often than not the parent do come, but by way of the police not contacting us, there is no, it is not a, it is a matter of, a lack of accountability; I think because yes they are adults and we expect them to, I think they (the police) should still have the responsibility to contact us as the agency who deals with child abuse, to contact us and let us know that such and such have visited the police department and they should be on their way or whatever, send us correspondence with the relevant information, so that we can conduct investigations or bring criminal charges against the perpetrator (sic).	
INT  CCO #5	In the 17 months that you have been working in intake, have you ever had a call from a police officer to say this case has presented to them and they are on their way? Or any kind of referral?  No.	

INT CCO #5	It is interesting isn't it? Yes it is.	
INT CCO #5	Tell me a little bit more about your role. The child comes with an adult, are there times when the child comes on their own?  If that child is in their late teens, yes you will get that, but usually if it is, say, a child who is between, from baby stage to 12 or 13 (sic) they will be accompanied by an adult. Or it may come through the school. Usually with a person 14-16 year old, it may come through the hospital, because the child may be presenting with a pregnancy. You do get calls, but they are very rare - of children calling to say I have been abused. You will get a few, far in between.	
INT CCO #5	And a child turning up on its own at the CCB, has that ever happened?  Not whilst I have been on duty.	
INT CCO #5	Ok. So you talked about completing a form and sending it into the Supervisor.  Yes, of the intake programme.	
INT CCO #5	Yes, all right. This is about 6 months into the year - nearly 2 month, how many cases of CSA allegations have you had so far this year?  I can't specifically say off the top of my head, like specific numbers, but roughly 10, whilst I have been on duty.	
INT CCO #5	10 allegations approximately?  Yes, approximately.	
INT CCO #5	Let's narrow it down then. How many have you had last week?  Uhm, none. I was on duty one day last week but I didn't have any, on that one day.	
INT CCO #5	OK, and so far this month (date 22/2/10)?  Well, because I am going on leave (pregnancy) I am not duty often, so I can't really recall to say how much.	

INT	But you have had 10 approximately so far this year? Would you say that is a lot?	
CCO #5	No, because what I find sometimes is - I do remember one last week - but that is something which happened late last year and the person is now reporting it. You were asking if 10 is a lot for the year?	
INT	Yes, in your experience?	
CCO #5	No. I wouldn't say so because they are times when there are a lot more, I wouldn't consider that a lot.	
INT	Ok. How do these allegations affect you as a social worker, having to conduct the interview and listen to the stories?	
CCO #5	They are hurtful, they can be very depressing? Most often I am quite angry because, sometimes you find that usually the situations are such that the child does not need to be placed in that position. Because the perpetrator have other means, they have girlfriends, they have wives, so there is no – it baffles me - it is hard for me to fathom why they would try to interfere with a minor child, child who is trusting of them, who is looking to them for protection, food and guidance. So most often I am quite angry (sight) but I try to look at the aspect that the child is here now and we can do something to stop it from going any further. But I am usually angry and quite hurt.	
INT	What helps you to deal with that?	
CCO #5	The anger and the hurt?	
INT	Yes.	
CCO #5	Well as I said, I try not to internalize it and personalize it too much. Being human, you are going to feel it, but I try not to have it playing on my mind too often and I take comfort in the fact that we are here now to help and prevent it from occurring again. So try to as best we can to provide an alternative accommodation if the adult is not willing to remove themselves from the home.	
INT	Within the CCB itself, are there any specific things for persons like yourself with to deal these cases that impact on you, obviously, in a very dramatic way....?	
CCO #5	Do you mean with the interview?	

<p>INT</p> <p>CCO #5</p>	<p>No, to assist you as a professional working, in either debriefing you, or supporting you as you do this job?</p> <p>Not as far as I am aware. Not as far as I am aware (sic). The one thing - the only thing I can think of - is that we usually have supervision with our Supervisor at least once a month or once every 2 month depending - where you discuss cases that would be difficult or problematic, or just to discuss general cases that you have and if there are any that you need assistance with and things like that. But outside of that, no.</p>	
<p>INT</p> <p>CCO #5</p>	<p>I have to be careful here, because I don't want to be seen to be making a judgement as I certainly am not, but do you think that supervision as it is set up meets your needs as someone dealing with difficult cases, front of house as I would call it? You are the first port of call, yes?</p> <p>Yes. Uhm, the frequency on which they occur, no. The content of them again, no. What I think may help because then it is not a one and one with the Child Care Officer and the Supervisor, what I think would help is more of a team discussion where you would get feedback from other child care officers how they would deal with a difficult case, how they deal with a specific case that maybe similar to what the child care officer is going through. But the single supervisory session of itself, no.</p>	
<p>INT</p> <p>CCO #5</p>	<p>You said there are two of you rostered?</p> <p>Yes.</p>	
<p>INT</p> <p>CCO #5</p>	<p>What about the two of you supporting each other? Does that happen in any formal way or informally?</p> <p>Well you see because of how the roster is, any two officers on any day is not necessarily within the same programme. You may have a child abuse officer with an intake officer or you may have a residential and a foster care officer on or you may have an intake and foster care officer on, so on any given day, it is not necessarily that the two officers who are on duty are from the same programme. And there is communication between those two officers on a particular day with regards to how many cases are coming in, if they are handling it ok and that kind of thing. But after that no. What does happen often is that you would find that officers would sometimes, in their day to day, they would probably walk up to another officer's desk and they would communicate regarding a case, or during lunch time they would probably talk about a particular case</p>	

	that is being problematic. But generally within the office.....	
INT CCO #5	So that happens informally? Yes.	
INT CCO #5	<p>I want you now to think about a particular case that stands out in your mind, as an intake officer; from the first time you knew that this child was going to appear at your door; just think of a case, because I want you to keep that case in your mind, I want you to talk to me about it. It might be repeating some of the things you have said already, but I now want to personalize it, if you could share with me. So the totality of it, where it came from, how old was the child, right through until you ceased to be involved.</p> <p>Ok (significant pause and thinking). There was one little girl, she was between six and nine year. She lived with her mother and visited the father on weekends. The incident occurred at her mother's house, where the mother's brother, who had recently been released from prison, had touched her on her vagina, and asked her to, I think play with his penis or his balls, I can't remember which one, and her reaction was I think well this is just another thing that we do with uncle. I don't think that she recognized at the time that it was something improper. The problem with that, well not a problem, a greater concern arose with that case because there was also an incident between an older brother and an older sister, of interfering with one another, so the concern was that it may have been perpetuated, among the siblings, because the home was also very cramped and sleeping conditions were quite shared. So the matter did go to court regarding care and control of the minor child, who was then, by the court, given permission to reside with the father and still have some visits with the mother on occasions. With regard to the incident itself, that specific case, somehow it had belonged to another officer, so that officer may then have referred it to the police department. I am not sure if that specific case had gone through court with regards to charges, but what I can say I believe, I stand corrected, but I believe at the time the uncle was asked to leave the home.</p>	
INT	How long ago was that? That was about 1-2 years ago, between the first 3 months I	

CCO #5	was here.	
INT  CCO #5	<p>Can you remember how you were with that child? Can you go back to the interview with the child and parents and talk me through that? The general flavour of how it impacted on you, how the child presented itself, how the mother presented herself?</p> <p>Well the mother was really concerned and she did believe her daughter. So that assisted a great deal. The child herself was pretty willing to talk about the matter and she didn't present as the usual withdrawn, scared, hesitant; and I took that at the time to mean that she probably felt that this is another activity that it is OK for uncle and her to do. At the time, again I was quite saddened by it, because as I said, because of the fact that there was an incident between an older brother and an older sister, I was seriously concerned that it might have become a culture within the family where it is OK for siblings to touch each other...or to engage in any inappropriate sexual behaviour. So my main concern at that time was to ensure... because she was of the age to understand that well you know, this is not right.</p>	
INT  CCO #5	<p>How old was she?</p> <p>Between six and nine, I can't remember specifically, between seven and nine (sic). Uhm, to ensure that she knows well, these are your body parts, this is your body, you have a right to say no if you are not comfortable with the touch and persons are not supposed to touch you that way and they are not supposed to ask you to engage in such activities, basically.</p>	
INT  CCO #5	<p>OK. In your role as intake officer do you automatically refer all cases, all allegations that come in to you, through the process, or are there some that you don't?</p> <p><i>(Do you mean)</i> Are they all referred to the police department?</p>	
INT  CCO #5	<p>No, passed on to the supervisor?</p> <p>Yes, they are all sent there.</p>	
INT	So your role is to ensure that they all go to the next stage?	

CCO #5	Yes.	
INT CCO #5	In conducting the interview with the guardian or parent, what helps you in that process?  In terms of getting the information?	
INT CCO #5	Yes in terms of collecting the information, do you have a structure (for example)?  Yes, we employ general, I guess basic interview strategies where you get the person to be comfortable, you talk about general stuff. With an older child, you talk about school, family and things, you know, to help them to be able to talk to you more comfortably. Uhm, then you would ask them about family members, if there is anything that happened recently that they are not comfortable with, or anything that would have made them sad, that kind of thing. If it is a younger child, who may not be able to verbalise adequately what... the information you need to get, we have the anatomically correct dolls that we use to assist us. We would have the child play with the dolls and ask them to demonstrate what might have happened between them and the individual who would have touched them inappropriately or done something to them. If they are not comfortable talking, this is for the older children again, they can write the information down and then we will discuss the information with them, once they are comfortable with that.	
INT CCO #5	Have you used the dolls yourself?  Yes.	
INT CCO #5	How do you find them as an aid in helping the process?  They are pretty helpful, because as I said, sometimes you will find that if a child says uncle touched me on my vagina, they may use touch repeatedly. So if you give them the doll they might have a finger touching the vagina, but then they might then proceed to have the finger inserted into the vagina, so it helps you to specifically gather exactly what happened as opposed to a general idea basically, because sometimes, as I said, the child may say touch, and they may see it as a (pause) they may not know how to go and say a person had placed the finger in, as opposed to saying finger..... it could be that the child (pause)..... it helps to get a specific idea as to the exact circumstances for what happened at that specific time. Since	

	the dolls have the whole body structure.	
INT CCO #5	So do you think they are an essential part of your job? Yes, specifically when interviewing younger children.	
INT CCO #5	So, if a decision was made that they are not going to be used any more, how would you feel about that?  Well, I guess management would have to know why they would not want them to be used.  What we would then have to do is to probably try to extend the length of the interview and try to be as specific as possible. (I find) personally what I would do, would ask the child to identify the body parts, and once I am clear that they are clear what the body parts are, then what I would know is that whatever they are saying, it corresponds to their knowledge of their own body.	
INT CCO #5	Ok. You talk about writing, does this also include drawing?  Yes they can draw as well.	
INT CCO #5	Thank you, that is very helpful. I want to ask you how you would describe CSA?  How I would describe it?	
INT CCO #5	Yes.  Generally or specifically?	
INT CCO #5	Generally, CSA.  In terms of what it is?	
INT CCO #5	Yes.  <i>(Very thoughtful pause)</i>	
INT CCO #5	...and from your workings here.  Well any act against a child that exposes them to inappropriate sexual behaviour, be it pornography or by way of videos and talking to them in a sexual manner, touching them inappropriately, that type of thing, or coercing them to be involved with sexual acts, not necessarily with that person themselves, but maybe a friend or another relative or	

	something like that.	
INT  CCO #5	And how many types have presented themselves to you in the past 17 months would you say?  Probably all types.	
INT  CCO #5	All types? Ok.  Yes. I currently have a case where the mother was concerned about the child's behaviour, but in speaking with the child, it was also revealed that he has access to pornographic video so you have those cases, you have cases where there an actual sexual act committed against the child, whether it vaginal or anal, and sometimes you even have, unfortunately where it is becoming common now, cases within primary schools where children, between the age of 4 yrs to 7yrs experimenting with each other. So it has been all types.	
INT  CCO #5	Going back to that boy who had the pornographic material, let's talk a little about him. How old was he, roughly?  Uhm, between 6 and 7.	
INT  CCO #5	And he had a pornographic video?  Not his specifically, it was accessible within the home, it belonged to an adult.	
INT  CCO #5	And he watched it?  Yes, he usually sneaks out of bed at night and watches it. That is also a form of sexual abuse and neglect, because the adults have neglected to place the videos in a secure place where the child cannot access them.	
INT  CCO #5	So what was he doing that was concerning to the mother, you said?  Initially it was that he was lighting fires, well he did it on 2 occasions. He has this preoccupation with fires apparently. He lit a bed at his mother's house as well as his father's house, and he plays with matches. That was the initial concern, but further down, we have been seeing that he has other preoccupations I should say.	
INT	Such as?	

CCO #5	The pornographic video. Recently the mother has also said that she found him masturbating while he was bathing. So it would all stem from the fact that he watching these videos and enacting what he is seeing on the video.	
INT CCO #5	Was that your assessment having interviewed him? Yes.	
INT CCO #5	Yes, OK. You said you deal with all types. What are the main types of CSA? Mainly among the adult on child you will find it (to be) vaginal or the child performing oral sex on the adult, or basically the general touching on the child's genitalia. Among the child, on child on child, with the toddler ages you will find it is basically they are just gyrating on each other, or they are touching as well.	
INT CCO #5	It is mainly girl victims you have? Mainly yes, I would say so, but it is becoming - rapidly so, it is going towards a balance on both (genders). What you will find with the age groups again, between the 14-16, you will find it is mostly presented as a pregnancy where they are involved with an older partner. So that age groups, yes it is mainly girls, but you will find with the younger age groups it is mostly girls again, but there are some boys, because, although you will find that the act is committed against the male, if the case is were to be looked at in its entirety, there is a possibility that the male who has committed the act against the female, he may have been abused himself or he may be exposed again to pornographic materials, so that as well would be child abuse against him. So usually, although there may be focused on the abuse being done on the female, when the male is looked at, in some cases, not all, where that child might have been victims themselves.	
INT CCO #5	Have you had a situation like that, where in your role as intake officer, you were able to make an assessment that the boy was also a victim? No, not specifically, because I will just take the basic information and the officer who then investigates, they will then be the one to have found that out, in their investigations.	
INT	But if you had suspicion would that form part of your report or	

CCO #5	<p>not?</p> <p>Yes, it would. The presenting problem would be that of abuse against the individual who is being reported on. Once it is found that the abuser is also being abused, that would go into the secondary problem.</p>	
INT	Is there anything you want to say in addition to what we have discussed so far?	
CCO #5	I don't think so, but if I were, I would say I would like to see greater collaboration between the department (CCB) and the police department, as well as a speedier process within the court system once a charge has been brought against the abuser (sic). I am not sure what can be done to the cases, the conclusion any speedier, but I think there are a bit too long, they take a bit too long.	
INT	You said at the beginning of the interview that you have been involved with CSA cases outside of your intake role? Did you hint at that?	
CCO #5	Yes, I had a couple, not too many.	
INT	In what capacity were you?	
CCO #5	Same, intake. What would happen is that when you come into the intake programme you get a mixture of cases, all except foster care and residential case. You get a mixture of the general cases which are assigned to the intake officers, as well as some which will be assigned to child abuse officers.	
INT	So do you have a mixture at the moment or was that at the beginning?	
CCO #5	That was at the beginning. It would have been weaned off after it was confirmed that I would be within the intake programme.	
INT	How many of you are they that only work with the intake programme?	
CCO #5	Currently 4 officers within the intake programme, yes.	
INT	Four officers who only do that, but they are joined by others to form the roster to make sure there are 2 people on duty each	

CCO #5	day? Yes, yes (sic).	
INT CCO #5	Now, the four people who make up the intake team have a supervisor, yes? And is that your next management reporting line? Yes.	
INT CCO #5	Does that supervisor supervise other things, as far as you know? She supervises the officers within the intake programme; in addition to the staff, we also have university students who she supervises as well. They will assist on occasions with the intake work.	
INT CCO #5	So there is core of you? Yes.	
INT CCO #5	Is there rotation between intake and other programmes? Do you stay x number of years in intake and then move on to something else, or is intake more or less continuous? You work within intake for number of years and then you are rotated. All the officers are rotated. So you will find that, say for 3 years, an officer works within the residential programme, and then they come into they would work in intake and then go over to foster care. So there is always change around, within, between programmes (sic).	
INT CCO #5	So you would form part of that rotation? Yes.	
INT CCO #5	You are coming up to 2 years soon, and if you weren't pregnant it is likely that you would be rotated elsewhere? When there is time for rotation, yes.	
INT CCO #5	How does that rotation help in the management of workloads? Do you see it as a positive thing or something that just happens? Or a negative thing? I believe it is a positive thing, because it allows the officers to be quite equipped to function within any programme within the agency and to ensure that the agency continues to run, and	

	<p>thereby becoming more knowledgeable of all, if not most (sic), of the agency's procedures and guidance as it relates to various programmes. It also assist with the officers in terms of, well I don't know this specifically, but it has been hinted that the caseload for intake officers and child abuse officers are more than that of the other 2 programmes; but that being said, each programme has its own extent of stressors and stresses. It does help in terms of helping the officer more aware of the agency's running in total and gives the officer an opportunity not to be, you know, become bored o being comfortable within one programme. You are always on your toes if you are rotated.</p>	
<p>INT  CCO #5</p>	<p>Your workload and the workload of your colleagues within the intake, which you said might be higher than elsewhere, but then you qualified that by saying there might be other stressors. What is your workload, how would you describe your workload?</p> <p>In any given month an officer can be assigned anywhere between 5 to 15 new cases each month.</p>	
<p>INT  CCO #5</p>	<p>You?</p> <p>Any officer within intake or child abuse within any given month.</p>	
<p>INT  CCO #5</p>	<p>What do you mean by assigned?</p> <p>New cases coming into the agency. Because every day there are cases coming into the agency. They maybe repeat cases, they maybe cases which were closed, there may be cases that may have been in one category last year, say care and control, and closed, and then when it is reported, this month and year, it may come in as sexual abuse. So the workload is always increasing. What officers try to do is to manage the cases in such a way, so that if there are referrals to be done, there are done and as practical as they are able, they will manage the cases to the point where the family no longer needs the assistance of the board and thereby closing the cases.</p>	
<p>INT  CCO #5</p>	<p>So, in addition to your intake duties you also have cases?</p> <p>Yes, we manage cases.</p>	

INT CCO #5	Tell me a little about that. Within the intake programme?	
INT CCO #5	No you tell me about yours. I know that you are on your way - to having your baby.  The intake is basically another duty in the agency within the programme. The cases which are involved in those would be care and control matters, access, behavioural problems. Miscellaneous cases which do not necessarily fall into any of those categories. We are also expected to prepare court report for the courts in matters of access or custody. Sometimes we would also find that child care agencies outside of Barbados would ask us to conduct a home visit for persons living in Barbados who may be receiving a child from one of those agencies or a home out there, to ensure that the home here in Barbados is child friendly, and that the guardians or parents here are capable of caring for that child.	
INT CCO #5	So there is that international work that you may also have to carry out on behalf of the international agency?  Yes.	
INT CCO #5	So that I have it clear in my mind, you work according to your roster in doing this important, what I call ambassadorial role, by seeing people as they come into the department for the first time, but in addition to that you might be preparing court report, dealing with maintenance matters as well?  In addition to home visits.	
INT CCO #5	In addition to home visits. So it is not purely seeing people who are coming to the department for the first time?  No.	
INT CCO #5	So you might be going off on a home visit now?  Yes, if it is necessary. The officers also do school visits. We liaise quite often with the schools in cases where there are behavioural problems, where the child has presented with behavioural problems and even with the same child abuse, because we then see if, as a result of the child being abused, if it is also affecting the school work.	
INT	I am glad we discussed that for my own clarification, because when we talked earlier about you being in intake for 17	

CCO #5	<p>months, and there are 4 of you, it is not only intake that the 4 of you do... it is primarily? Or not necessarily?</p> <p>When you say primarily, they go together basically, because the cases that come in we would document them to be assigned, but we are also assigned some of the same cases that we prepare on intake.</p>	
INT CCO #5	<p>So you would then follow-up and follow through?</p> <p>Yes, and do the necessary investigations.</p>	
INT CCO #5	<p>So everyone in the department work generically apart from the child abuse unit?</p> <p>I am not sure I follow.</p>	
INT CCO #5	<p>Tell me about the different types of programmes you have.</p> <p>We have intake, child abuse, foster care and residential care.</p>	
INT CCO #5	<p>Foster care and adoption?</p> <p>Yes.</p>	
INT CCO #5	<p>Now these people here (foster care and adoption and residential care pointed out on paper) do only that, or are they assigned other cases like you have just described?</p> <p>Only those, but they will sometimes assist with intake duties.</p>	
INT CCO #5	<p>Now the child abuse, do you call it child abuse or child protection?</p> <p>They are assigned cases from the intake programme and they are also on the roster. Cases that come through intake.</p>	
INT CCO #5	<p>Now, other people have talked to me about this (the child abuse programme) becoming a dedicated unit 2 years ago.</p> <p>Yes.</p>	
INT CCO #5	<p>But it is not dedicated to the exclusion of other things from what you have just said, because they still appear on the intake roster?</p> <p>Yes.</p>	
INT	<p>So does that dedicated unit means then?</p> <p>They specifically handle and get all the cases related to child</p>	

CCO #5	abuse.	
INT  CCO #5	Ok, I see.  All the cases related to physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, abandonment. Everything that falls under child abuse would go to the child abuse officers.	
INT  CCO #5	So are you also part of the child abuse team, because you mentioned earlier that you have been assigned one of the cases?  That was previously.	
INT  CCO #5	Ok. That is very helpful. Is there anything else?  No.	
INT	Thank you, this is very useful information. Thank you for your time.	
INT  CCO #5	There is one other question I want to ask you linked to the rotation and the workload, which is very demanding. You indicated that rotation helps in being an all-rounder and helps with keeping you up to date etc. Does serve any other purpose? I will tell you why I am asking this. People have talked to me about not only the demands of the job, but also the deficiencies within the system of a child having to wait many years for the dispensation of justice or the case to be heard. Does rotation in some way help with that climate of, that burden of, the system not being speedy enough?  I am not sure that it does, because, although you are in another programme, sometimes you may wonder or you may ask a question, well what has happened. Because if the case has been reassigned to an officer who is now in your previous position you may still enquire from that officer if the case has gone to court, if there has been a conclusion; so it may not be heavily on you as it is not now your responsibility, but by nature of it having been your case and having dealt with the case you may still think of it now and again, so you might still enquire, or if the case comes up you might say "Wait, what's happening with that case?" So yes and no.	

INT  CCO #5	I did just wonder. Thank you very much indeed. You have been very helpful.  You are welcome.  THE END	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview transcript, Child care officer  Interview date: January 2010  Venue: Child Care Board		
Interviewer/  Interviewee	Transcript of Child care officer	
INTER  CCO #6	I would like to thank you once again. From what you have said you have been in the child abuse team coming up to 11 months, almost a year. So you are directly involved in the management of child sexual abuse. It is only child sexual abuse that I am interesting in. So can you think to a child that springs to mind that you want to share with me, that typifies your involvement in its totality - its management?  Of child abuse?	
INTER  CCO #6	Of child sexual abuse.  There isn't one that comes to mind since there are so many, unfortunately,	
INTER  CCO #6	Do you want to talk generally then?  It probably would be easier because as I said there are several that would be going through my mind.	
INTER  CCO #6	All right and obviously what you can do is used some as examples. So I want you then to take me through from the time you become involved. What are the processes?  Well, depending on the age of the child and the nature of the allegation, the referral, once they are assigned to an officer,	

	<p>you would either invite them into the Board or you would go to them and see them on a more urgent basis. The age of the child and the nature of it, as I said, for example teen pregnancies tend to be more... although the legal age of consent is 16 years, and it is by law statutory rape, because it is consensual, there is not a rush to deal with that. So you can send out an interview letter and have them come in the following week ... versus a five-year-old child who is being (pause)...or another child under a different set of circumstances who is being allegedly sexually abused, then we would see them more urgently.</p>	
INTER	More urgently as in....?	
CCO #6	Quicker.	
INTER	Is there a specified time within the CCB that you what to respond to?	
CCO #6	No specified time, no. Usually what happens is, I guess it is up to your discretion and based on what you as the officer read, and you would run it by the supervisor as well. But there are some cases if you get it now, you would leave today and deal with that.	
INTER	So there is nothing that says all cases of child sexual abuse have got to be responded to within 48 hours for example?	
CCO #6	No not as far as I know.	
INTER	OK. All right. So that is how it comes to you via intake. So tell me what happens after you have got to the point of making a decision to meet with the child, what happens after that?	
CCO #6	The child and the parents are invited to the Board if the alleged perpetrator is for example the father of the child, he is not invited to the Board, so it would be the child and the mother or whichever guardian is in place at that time. The allegations are explained to the guardian or the parent as well as the child; and then first you get the feedback from the parents on whether or not they are aware of the situation, what their thoughts are on the matter and following that initial contact, then we would interview the children separately, based specifically on the	

	allegations.	
INTER  CCO #6	What kind of systems do you use for your interviewing? Are they any particular things?  In terms of?	
INTER  CCO #6	The age of the child, what guides that process?  Dealing with the younger children, especially like for instance 5 years and under, that sort of age range, they are not necessarily going to necessarily have a comprehensive...(pause) they are some children who are very articulate mind you, and then there are some who would not sit down and have a dialogue with you, so then there is the use of the anatomical dolls . There are here in the building so we would use those in the interviewing process as well. The purpose for that is while child may not be able to express verbally what has happened or what their concerns are, during the course of play they may be able to show or demonstrate something that they may otherwise be uncomfortable saying. So that is something that is used as well.	
INTER  CCO #6	So in writing up your report, I am presuming you have to write a report, which might go to the court....?  The referral goes to the police.	
INTER  CCO #6	Right. You are not involved in writing court reports on the child?  Only if the court requests a report. So from our end we would do the interview, do the counselling, refer the matter to the police for their investigation. If the matter goes to court and the court requests a report from us, then we would be presenting one; but if one is not requested, one is not done.	
INTER  CCO #6	So in your experience here have you had to write a court report?  Dealing with child abuse, no. I got one yesterday actually that I am supposed to write.	



INTER	The court mandated that?	
CCO #6	That was the court order agreement, yes.	
INTER	And then the court changed that to supervised ...?	
CCO #6	The Court is now looking to do that, so they are looking to us as it relates to supervised access.	
INTER	Right.	
CCO #6	But I don't know if the court is aware of what the allegation is or not, because...	
INTER	What would they be basing their decision on then?	
CCO #6	...they are going through a divorce, so it gets very complex, 'cause if it is that the divorce is being handled in one court, the CSA matter is held in another court. So they are currently in court as far as I understand from the mother, as it relates to the divorce. So I don't know if this request comes out of that, and that is what it sounds like, versus the CSA matter before the Court.	
INTER	So two courts might be involved. The high court...	
CCO #6	..and then the magistrate court.	
INTER	And have you interviewed the child?	
CCO #6	Yes.	
INTER	And the mother?	
CCO #6	Yes.	

<p>INTER</p> <p>CCO #6</p>	<p>So at this stage have the police done their investigation on the allegation?</p> <p>The police have started, as far as I know. How far it has gotten, I am not aware. When they receive the referral they will send us correspondence indicating that they are investigating. When the police makes contact with the parent - in this case she called and let me know, well the police have ...(pause)...I am not sure if they had made contact with him or if they had contacted her alone, but had started their investigation. But she was working on the end of the access as it relates to the court.</p>	
<p>INTER</p> <p>CCO #6</p>	<p>OK.</p> <p>So I am not sure how far it has gotten so far.</p>	
<p>INTER</p> <p>CCO #6</p>	<p>Let's stick with that one for the moment, because I think it represents so many aspects of the skills required under the circumstances. What was the nature of the sexual allegation?</p> <p>The child had said that the father was fingering her and also it was oral sex involved as well. And I think it used to occur mostly when he bathed her.</p>	
<p>INTER</p> <p>CCO #6</p>	<p>Right.</p> <p>So how the mother would have become aware of it is when the child eventually did not want to go by the father at weekends, and as time went on, even after I had spoken to the child, the mother would call with new bits of information the child would have shared over time about the problem.</p>	
<p>INTER</p> <p>CCO #6</p>	<p>And did the allegation surfaced here within the department, whilst the divorce proceedings were going on?</p> <p>Yes, when she came to us they were already in court for the divorce; that is how their every-other-weekend access arrangement was in place, meaning the mother and father. That is how that had come about, because they were already in court for the divorce situation.</p>	
<p>INTER</p>	<p>And then she said "Furthermore, now I have this information to share with you, what my child recently told me"?</p> <p>Yes, that is how she came to us first with the allegation. So</p>	

CCO #6	after she has been here, then you would realize that she is going through a divorce, and that sort of thing would come up after the fact; but the initial referral was from her stating the child is being sexually abused, as far as the child would have told her, by the father.	
INTER  CCO #6	Ok. Can I ask you whether you believed the child?  I do, because she is very specific about what she is saying. Although she is...I think she is five...she is articulate and she is able to give details as it relates to what would have happened. She was able to show... (pause),...uhm, she actually sat down in here and she lied down on the chair and that is not something she was prompted to do. She just showed what would have happened. I think we used the dolls as well, because that would have come up. So she was able to share what had been going on and then, too, her reaction to talking about the incident in terms of covering her ears and not wanting to hear about her father and things like that are not typical responses for a child if it was not necessarily the case. So in my opinion I do believe what she is saying. But there have been cases before where the child was also very specific, very articulate etc.; I don't know how the police go about their investigations, but that case nothing came about.	
INTER  CCO #6	They were specific with you and then the case was thrown out?  Yes. It is possible also that when they get to the police they are not able to give a statement. Then, I don't know, they would have had to share with the officers as well.	
INTER  CCO #6	Tell me what's your view about that situation where you have taken quite detailed statement, you have made your assessment. Is that ever passed onto the police - your assessment?  No.	
INTER  CCO #6	So that information is never ever shared - what you have found?  No. The referral is very basic, except that it would have in the child would have been interviewed at the Board, the referral was made and the child stated that there was something, for example licked her vagina. Our role as far as I have been told is not to make a determination on whether or not the allegation	

	is true, it is just to refer it to the police to investigate, because that is what they are supposed to do?	
INTER	So on that referral - is it a form or a report?	
CCO #6	It is a letter.	
INTER	So you never go into what the child has said to you?	
CCO #6	No, not in detail. So it is not a report like if you are presenting to the court, which would have in conversations. No. It is just a standard letter.	
INTER	What do you feel about that only basic information is shared with the police?	
CCO #6	At some points it seems pointless ...as I see it, for someone receiving the same basic letter, which doesn't convey much information. I don't think it translates the urgency of the situation or the magnitude of it, based on what little is conveyed, as much as you are saying, generally what has happened, who has done it or who is alleged to have done it; and then it is left up to their investigation, which is what they are supposed to do, but still...	
INTER	I also want your opinion on what you feel as the child and the guardian, whoever that may be, coming to you and giving presumably quite a detailed interview, undergoing an interview process, and then they have to go to the police, I don't know how soon after your interview that happens.....	
CCO #6		
INTER	'Cause the referrals are made by letter, so after the interview the referral is usually done during the same week and they are posted out. We usually receive correspondence from the police, soon thereafter, but then it is up to them when they get to...	
CCO #6		
INTER	So what do you feel about the child and the family member having to go to the police and then go through the same process again?	
CCO #6	Depending on how difficult it was for the child to convey the, information in the first place; if it was very difficult for example,	

	<p>it would be even more so going to the police. I guess, too, because of how police are perceived, they see people in uniform and it is a bit more difficult to speak to them, but in the end that's what the process is. In the case I would have mentioned, she was advised that she can take the matter to the police herself, given that it would have been faster; given we would be sending a letter which would take... it usually takes about three days in the post, so instead of waiting those few days for them to get the letter and then respond. etc., if she left and went – she chose to go the following day directly to the station - that was something she could do. At least it would be lodged there, so by the time they get correspondence, it would not be they are now initiating an investigation, but they would have received before, so they would have started. So from our end it would just be an official letter from us stating that they had been here. They would have heard that the child alleged certain things and thus we are asking or requesting that they investigate.</p>	
<p>INTER</p> <p>CCO #6</p>	<p>All right, so when they have to go to the police for the interview, do you accompany them?</p> <p>Usually we don't know when that happens. That's the thing. Unless the parent calls and lets us know, we won't be aware of that.</p>	
<p>INTER</p> <p>CCO #6</p>	<p>So the accompaniment is initiated by the family?</p> <p>Yes, it is up to the parent.</p>	
<p>INTER</p> <p>CCO #6</p>	<p>The police acknowledges your letter; do they then tell you the outcome of the investigation?</p> <p>Yes, they would send another letter. The time frame again depends on the station, the police, whatever, but they would send back a letter stating ...(pause) they would go over everything, that they had received correspondence from us etc and that the matter had received their attention, that it had been investigated, and the alleged perpetrator was either charged... or the ones that you generally get back are the ones that don't go forward, meaning that the parents have opted not to press charges and that they would rather have the</p>	

	alleged perpetrator spoken to, and things like that.	
INTER  CCO #6	<p>So the police tell you the reason why charges are not brought against the alleged perpetrator?</p> <p>They would mention ... (pause)... for example, there was child... (pause)...the allegation was that somebody had come into the house and felt-up her breasts. The parents at the time of the interview would have said they don't necessarily want the perpetrator charged, but they wanted someone to speak to him. But as I was telling them, we still have to send referrals to the police regardless, and then when they come to you, you make that determination how you wish to proceed. So we send the referral and you would have received the letter shortly thereafter, to say they had gone, they spoke to the parent and the child and the family had wished that the party only be spoken to; that was done and the matter was closed from their end.</p> <p>So they would send us something. But it usually those types of cases that don't go forward that you tend to get back sooner and in writing.</p>	
INTER  CCO #6	<p>Those cases where there are charges laid and which I understand can to take .....</p> <p>A while, a while.</p>	
INTER  CCO #6	<p>...up to seven years in some cases, what is the communication, to your knowledge, between this department and the police in that intervening period?</p> <p>Well, uhm ... I have one as well where the police had written to say that the person had been charged, but they were awaiting something, or it was to go to another level, or whatever the case is. As far as I know, the police in terms of monitoring throughout ...(pause)...not monitoring, but communication between them and us throughout that process, I am not aware of... I think that would mostly be at the end of the of the family (sic), whether or not they let us know, well, we went to court, or there is a court date coming up, or the police has said whatever. But as it relates to their direct relation with us, I am not aware of that entire process. They would just send a letter</p>	

	at some point.	
INTER  CCO #6	<p>Moving on now to what happens after the child has gone to the police, what is your continuing involvement?</p> <p>Depending on the child's ... (pause)... their response to what has happened, who they have been dealing with it, coping with it etc., referrals can be made, well are made, to the psychologist for counselling. However there is one psychologist and the waiting period is very long. So we let clients know that, too, we can refer the child to the psychologist, but the reality is it is going to take some time. I can suggest to you some private counselling; a psychologist,...is one we that tend to say, or let parents know they can go to, because they will get through faster. So parents opt sometimes to go the private route, others will wait until counselling becomes available.</p>	
INTER  CCO #6	<p>What about resources within the CCB itself for ongoing counselling, outside of the psychologist - what is the nature of the counselling and support?</p> <p>Well outside of the psychologist - she used to be based here, but now she is based at Nightingale Home - outside of that, again it is up to the officer, depending on the child and what is required. But the reality is that it is very difficult to do, especially dealing within that particular department. That is an everyday occurrence. So every day you see children with similar problems.</p>	
INTER  CCO #6	<p>What is an everyday occurrence?</p> <p>Sexual abuse. So following up with them can be difficult, in terms of remembering, "Oh yes, I was supposed to make another appointment with Jane (fictitious) for follow-up", or whatever the case is. So you tend to call, check with the parents to see how they are doing, but again it depends on the type of sexual abuse and how the child is dealing with it. Because some will require.... (pause)....and some you can't forget, so you will definitely do the visits and go out and see them and make sure, continue check on them, talk to them and stuff. And then there are others, as I said, depending on what it is that ... (pause) ... You tend to forget, to be honest.</p>	
INTER	So your intervention is based on your assessment of need when the child presents...?	

CCO #6	Yes.	
INTER	....And presumably the contact with the family, whether they contact you subsequently?	
CCO #6	Yes, because we also let them know that the child might be fine now, but if you notice....(pause)....and there are some children who also might not want to talk now; so if you notice a change or anything like that you can contact us and then we can make provisions for you to come in so we can talk to the child. The child is also told, depending on the age of the child, that you can call or come; and then there are some, like teenagers, who for example might turn up and that is fine.	
INTER	What else do you do apart from child abuse?	
CCO #6	All cases as they relate to child abuse and neglect we would deal with. Coming out of that would be school projects, which is going into three primary schools typically, every term, to sensitise the children on sexual abuse and different forms of abuse, good touches, bad touches, things like that.	
INTER	You also have to do that as well?	
CCO #6	Yes, there is also a survivors group that comes up at some point, and that we also deal with. Survivors of sexual abuse.	
INTER	OK. Do you have to be part of the roster for the intake?	
CCO #6	Sometimes, yes. But not as often as would intake (be); like for instance I have two days a month on it. Others would get one.	
INTER	You said earlier that the allegation of CSA is an everyday occurrence. I think those were your words?	
CCO #6	Yes.	
INTER	Specifically child sexual abuse? How does that impact on you?	
CCO #6	Uhm ... Initially it was more difficult than it is now, to be honest. Because, as I used to tell everybody when I was working at the hospital, when something sexually abused related came up there, we would call here (the CCB). So an officer would come	

	<p>up - that's another thing, too, any referrals that come from the hospital, depending on what it is, the officer goes up the same time - so we would call down and get an officer to come up; and I used to ask them how do you deal with CSA every single day; and then they would be like " You get used to it." I am not saying that it is no longer impactful, but you get used to it: and now I am here. I really did not think I would be doing child abuse, that's the truth. But it is something that you get used to.</p>	
INTER	<p>What helps you to get used to it?</p>	
CCO #6	<p>I guess because you hear similar things, pretty often, unless again it is something really traumatic or that stands out more than something else, it is pretty, for lack of a better word, normal.</p>	
INTER	<p>What helps you to cope?</p>	
CCO #6	<p>I find that the team we have is pretty good and we tend to talk a lot, dialogue a lot about stuff, and it helps to get things off your chest. It helps, I think, just to talk about it and then when you leave work, I find like for me, when I leave work, I try not to take anything past the door.</p>	
INTER	<p>OK, all right. Is there anything else you want to share with me about your whole involvement with CSA? Anything at all?</p>	
CCO #6	<p>Not necessarily; before I came over - as I told them too - I thought that more was done as it relates to that (CSA) and abuse in general. From the CCB end vs. merely referring to the police, because in some cases it is almost like what is the point in coming - depending on what it is - what is the point in coming here when you can just go to them (the police) and go through the same process? Basically the only difference is that they would not necessarily do the counselling, they would just be taking information. So again it depends on the situation. But there are some that they can just go there and done with that.</p>	
INTER	<p>Well I presume that they are some that just go straight to the police. Are they not?</p>	
CCO #6	<p>There are some that ...(pause)...do you mean that the family takes straight there?</p>	

	Yes, they have that option; and some of them do that and then the police will send them here after that.	
INTER  CCO #6	<p>When it is like reversed, like that you continue normally as you would your counselling? As needed?</p> <p>Yes, but when the police refer it becomes more urgent 'because usually, sometimes they would bring them here or they would send them here after the fact. The... then there are times when, like recently an officer (Police) accompanied the child and the family (I think it was the grandmother) because she (the police) wasn't successful in getting the information from the child at the station, so she came here with the child, which is not the norm. If anything, they might bring the child here and then leave the child or send them here or whatever. But it has happened, as I said, where the officer (Police) would come, well, and we would talk with the child. She actually sat in on the session that time.</p>	
INTER  CCO #6	<p>And how did that session go?</p> <p>That was fine, because the child would have met her. The child met her the day before; I think the family had taken him the day before and then she accompanied them here the morning, so he was familiar with her. She just basically observed the interview itself.</p>	
INTER  CCO #6	<p>What ideally would you like to see in place here at the CCB where the management of CSA is concerned, apart from what you currently do?</p> <p>Because CSA is not all you deal with, I think it would help if there was obviously more people to spread the work around. I think it would improve the efficiency of the whole system as it relates to following up, especially. Because the reality is that case loads are heavy and as I said, sexual abuse is one thing, then there are other things as well and there are some things that can slip you, that the truth. So if you had more staff that would mean lighter case loads, which would give you more time to do more things.</p> <p>Also, too, uhm... the actual referral to the police; I had been told that the reason for not giving too much detail would be that sometimes the police would want you to come in and give a</p>	

	<p>statement, or whatever the case is. My thing is my statement is all I was told. I am not giving anything other than that, so it is not necessarily a problem per se to me, I don't see how it really is, except for it being time-consuming. But giving more detail I think would be a fairer representation of what would have happened here. So it is different to read a letter stating that the child said that somebody had sex with her versus going into a report ...going into a report on what the child had said. Then it comes over differently to the reader to my mind. Think it would help. It might also help in how expediently the police deal with the matter. I don't know what their processes are, but I would think that if something come across more urgent you would deal wit... may see as a problem that others may not see as a problem. So if there are more details it might be easier in terms of their initial assessment and how they choose to proceed from there.</p>	
<p>INTER  CCO #6</p>	<p>Right, right. All right, thanks for that; that is very useful. A lot to think about when I listen. The referral process is key isn't it and the whole management of that appears to be critical. Would you say?</p> <p>The referral process to the police or to us?</p>	
<p>INTER  CCO #6</p>	<p>Between you and the police, that kind of collaboration between you at that particular point?</p> <p>Yes, and then too, because it is posted as well it would really take some time for them to get to it because everything goes to Central (police station), and then it is dissemination to the station where the incident is alleged to have taken place. So it takes a while, that is why, depending on the seriousness of it, and you can get the parent to go or depending on what it is, you can call the station and let them know that somebody is coming because of whatever, or if you go to a school, again depending on the allegation, you may go directly to the school and talk to the child first, and then in case like that you would get someone to escort the child from the school to the station and then they would give a statement from there. So again it depends on the nature of the allegation.</p>	
<p>INTER</p>	<p>All right. Thank you very much for sharing with me.</p>	

CCO #6	(CCO now completes biographical and training details)	
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<b>Appendix 6.2 Interview transcript, Station sergeant</b>		
Interview date: 31 March 2010		
Venue: police station		
	Transcript of police officer's interview:	Comments
INT	...So, as you were saying, you have been a police officer for 30 years. I really want to thank you for giving up your time to talk to me.	
STN SRG	Doesn't matter. Anytime my experience in dealing with a matter can cause change and to let people to know there is a problem existing in society in a particular area, I am here to help.	
INT	I have some specific questions I would like to ask, but the way you were talking just now, I would like you to continue in that vein, because it may be that the questions I want to ask might automatically be answered.	
STN SRG	What I was saying to us is that we have a number of things that happen naturally within our station district area, that are reported at District A. When they happen it goes to show you the mentality of most of all some parents and some agencies, in dealing with the whole question. We as police officers suffer.	
INT	We are talking specifically of child sexual abuse?	
STN SRG	Yes. We as police officers suffer sometimes, because sometimes there are not a lot of places available to put children when there is a report of child sexual abuse. Right? There is one safe house that we know about, but there are so many sexual abuse cases that there isn't enough places that mother and child can be, away from the environment when these things have occurred.	
INT	Would you say the numbers are increasing?	
STN SRG	Yes, or being recognized. Because sometimes a lot of things happen and are never reported to the police. We get a lot of	377

	referrals from the CCB, where sexual activity among minors is rampant, right...	
INT	Under 16 yrs of age?	
STN SRG	Yes, this is under 16 and they are so rampant, that even the girls are challenging men "to live with them"/ to have intercourse with them. Two weeks ago, we had a 13 yr old student, while the police was patrolling, recognized that she was in an area, somewhere in the area of the CBC, took her up and brought her here. She was almost naked; brought her and another gentleman here and whilst interviewing the gentleman, the gentleman said that she approached him and said "I hear that you have a big penis, I want to sample that." She was 13; and having dealt with that matter the whole day here with the parents and everything, the next day, she still did not go to school. She was seen on a bus going somewhere in Kingsland and she went into ( <i>area named</i> ) the whole day and then turn back up at home, at the time that she should be getting home from school.	
INT	Can I ask you about that example specifically, because it is an interesting one? In your experience have you found that girls who appear to be promiscuous like that might have been sexualized early? They have been abused and they might have learnt?	
STN SRG	Yes, obviously. Anytime - and you would know as a woman, once you have started sexual activity you don't turn off....	
INT	Right.	
STN SRG	...it don't ever turn off (sic). It is now for some guidance system in terms of parenting that must take control and explain the dangers, what to and what not, and the reasons why; other than that once the sexual activity has started in any young adult, it will not stop. You understand me? Whilst it might seem OK for the young adult who was willing to participate in this, it is abuse; and the adult, the senior person will abuse this young adult because it is a willing participant in an illegal activity, that is not brought to bear (sic), although some of them might not know that it is illegal for a girl of 13 to be having sex. About 5 years	

	ago we had a 12-year-old who celebrated her birthday with 12 men that she handpicked herself.	
INT	What was the outcome of that case?	
STN SRG	We charged one or two persons, but in the end, once they reach 16 years and that case has not started in court, nobody comes to court and gives evidence - you understand me, and the cases are thrown out for want of a prosecution.	
INT	So are you saying that we have a lot of - uhm...it is almost becoming....	
STN SRG	The norm.	
INT	...the norm?	
STN SRG	The norm ( <i>emphasizing norm</i> ), because these are child care matters, watch, ( <i>sergeant is now referring to a letter on his desk which he had immediately drawn to my attention, as soon as I had started to explain about the research and even before we had stated the interview</i> ) this is where a child of 16 has given birth to a child, obviously she would have been having sex prior to this, and she is 16 now, she can give consent, so basically no offence is being committed here. But what is being committed is that before she was 16 she was having sex. We will be sending somebody off to have her brought in and whatever, but having taken the statement and all of that kind of thing, will she be willing to go to court and give evidence against the supposed father, NO, she is going to do that, especially when the guy might have the presence of mind to be taking care of this child.....	
INT	Sure.	
STN SRG	... So we have a problem. Are we going to put this father in prison and then there is a child there to be supported? That is the dilemma here. And frequently now, we have children who leave school for a term to have a child and then go back to school. So down the road you are finding that there is almost an acceptance within that set-up, you understand me, with this abuse, because the child is allowed to have the child and then go back to school, because you still want the child, that girl, to get the education. Nobody is going to prosecute the guy	

	because he is supporting the child and we are left with a pseudo acceptance of abuse.	
INT	Is a distinction made by your officers between teenagers who can't give consent under the law but have a boyfriend and who get pregnant, is there a difference between those kinds of cases like you have there and other cases where the child might be younger....?	
STN SRG	Of course there is a difference, there is a difference. Because there are two offences in law. There is unlawful sexual intercourse and this is where a girl under 16 has given consent. Right? Which is unlawful sexual intercourse (sic). You understand me? And we will pursue that because we don't allow a parent to make a decision whether they want to pursue the matter or not, we will pursue the matter, you understand me? But the problem is having it completed, because down at the court a date and hearing is set and nobody comes to court. The girl doesn't come to court. The accused is coming to court all the time and after a time a fella will have rights. He is coming all the time and the complainant isn't coming, so the case is thrown out.	
INT	Does that happen often?	
STN SRG	It happens, of course it happens, of course it happens (sic).	
INT	I understand that parents, or mothers primarily, in these cases can elect not to bring a case; help me to understand that, when a crime has allegedly taken place and somebody can decide that they are not.....	
STN SRG	But they will say that, but the final decision rests with us and with the DPP.	
INT	Right.	
STN SRG	You understand me? The circumstance always plays a role in the decision that is made. As I explained to you just now, a girl at 15 yrs old, and we must understand who is determining the abuse here (phone interruption), depends on who reports the	

	abuse. In cases like these the CCB is reporting the abuse, the parent is not. Sometimes these cases come to the CCB from the Queen Elizabeth hospital.	
INT	Yeah, yeah.	
STN SRG	You know, you are pregnant, you go there, you are a child, the hospital will send correspondence to the CCB, who will now formalize something on the matter, right?	
INT	OK.	
STN SRG	But sometimes you will see things as abuse, the immediate parent doesn't.	
INT	What happens in those cases?	
STN SRG	We charge, because we do what we have to do as a police force. But bringing it to a completion will rest strictly in the hands of the complainant, who you would have charged on behalf of.	
INT	Ok.	
STN SRG	So you got parents (pause) ... I remember being here and we had a guy, I think he was about 27 years old, who was in the cell to be charged with unlawful sexual intercourse, and the mother came through that door and she said ( <i>Sergeant acts out the voice of the mother</i> ) "Wait, but wuh they put he in de cell fuh? Dah's she man." Now there is that acceptance in this new millennium where you have younger parents, younger mothers and younger grandparents, an acceptance of certain activities that the law will deem abuse, but the immediate parent isn't seeing that at all.	
INT	So therefore they may not turn up at court, as you said?	
STN SRG	Right. So there is immediate conflict with the law, and parenting. There is conflict between the law and parenting. "What parents are accepting as the norm and do not bring to the notice of the criminal justice system." It is only brought to the notice of the criminal justice system when something goes wrong. A 13-year-old gets pregnant, a 14 yr old gets pregnant, and through another social agency - the hospital or something, brings it to the notice of the CCB. Then we proceed. In real abuse cases where the parents come to the police and brings	

	<p>the child, is where we are able to get those matters before the court and started; where the parents themselves say now “ Hey you interfere with my daughter”.... you understand?.....”My daughter came to me the parent and report this matter” (sic); so they come here and we proceed and pursue those matters in a very positive way as we do all the others, but these are the ones that go into the system really and we are able to prosecute somebody. But then there are areas where the abuse occurs but there is acceptance. There is acceptance for one reason or another. Financial gains - I remember working in narcotics and going to a house in Holders Hill and there was this lovely suite, you know these big lovely suites cost a lot of money- it was probably that the lady was probably selling drugs and thing, because we went there to search for drugs and I said, “Mistress, you got a real lovely suite there man”; she said “Yea man, it belongs to Susan.” I said “Susan, who is Susan?’ Susan was her 14-year-old daughter!! Brought a 6,000.00 suite in she mother house. And police officers will tell you of going places and seeing children with lots of money...<i>(interruption by a police officer who came to see the sergeant)</i>.</p>	
INT	... You were talking about the K6 suite.	
STN SRG	You understand me, and it belonged to a 14-year-old.	
INT	And the mother was telling you it was not hers, but her daughter's?	
STN SRG	<p>Yea. There are many stories on this <i>(Sergeant lowers his voice here and becomes almost introspective)</i>. Only a couple weeks ago, we had a discussion where we were saying, society in general needs to revisit certain aspects of the law and probably reduce the age of consent. Maybe look internationally and find out what is happening. Morality - because morals from one era will be different from morals of the next, and maybe we need to relieve ourselves of the <b>panic</b> <i>(stressed by police)</i>.</p> <p>Because of the age group we may come along in, and say “Let’s do a survey of some kind, let’s find out from our doctors, from our social workers, what would be an appropriate age of consent to bring back to the statute book.”</p>	
INT	And are you saying that because of the sheer numbers that are	

<p>STN SRG</p>	<p>coming before you at the moment?</p> <p>I believe you need to really revisit it to really think and find out if that is really what you want, because there is acceptance in society, and society pushes sexual activity or romantic activity in its entire set-up. You are advertising a car, soap, a bottle of wine; there is this connotation of sexuality that is put in place to sell a product, every single product (<i>Sergeant emphasizes, "every single product"</i>) You understand me?</p>	
<p>INT</p> <p>STN SRG</p>	<p>You were making a distinction, station sergeant, I think, between unlawful sexual intercourse and ...was there another category?</p> <p>...Yes....and rape, right? Unlawful sexual intercourse has to do with when the girl gives permission, but she is underage. That speaks for itself. Rape is something different. This is where somebody grabs you and tears off your clothes and has sex with you.</p>	
<p>INT</p> <p>STN SRG</p>	<p>Right. So... and do you think those cases are probably handled differently?</p> <p>Yea, they do (<i>do I, the researcher - detect some ambivalence here? As PO begins to explain? Not sure</i>) The trauma associated with one is not the trauma associated with the next. Rape has a trauma; rape is a violation of a woman without her mental and physical consent to the whole act of the sexual intercourse. Unlawful sexual intercourse is just a violation of the law, so the person has given consent to everything; so it is a mental and physical giving of whatever it takes to complete that activity.</p>	
<p>INT</p> <p>STN SRG</p>	<p>Given what you have said, therefore, what about those cases where a child is in a situation within a home and is groomed and is coerced and gives in because he or she has no choice, because they are the child, and the father, or the stepfather or the boyfriend ... what would that be deemed....?</p> <p>Well that would be abuse....</p>	



	<p>member, and then they will have legal custody placed in the appropriate person's hand. But from the time we are aware and we start to put this investigation into place, certainly that child is not going to be left in that house - that is straightforward.</p>	
<p>INT</p> <p>STN SRG</p>	<p>Do you refer all cases that come to you to the CCB?</p> <p>Once it is a minor, yes</p>	
<p>INT</p> <p>STN SRG</p>	<p>Under the age of 16?</p> <p>Yes, under the age of 16. Even if we are going to charge a minor with a criminal offence they must be informed - them and the probation office.</p>	
<p>INT</p> <p>STN SRG</p>	<p>So between you and the social workers, you get to know all cases that come before the agencies?</p> <p>Yes, once it is a judicial case that is pending or that may be pending. We are the chief investigative body in the country; so all government agencies, once something is reported and it is not civil in nature or civil and criminal together, we are the government's chief investigating body and it must be referred to us.</p>	
<p>INT</p> <p>STN SRG</p>	<p>I want to ask you a little on the organisational set up.</p> <p>The police force?</p>	
<p>INT</p> <p>STN SRG</p>	<p>Yes and how it impacts. How does your police organizational structure impact on the handling of CSA cases?</p> <p>We have within the organization many specialist trained individuals. When it comes to children we have the Juvenile Liaison department, where we have trained counsellors, police officers trained in child care, they work in that department. There is, let's say, an automatic reference to the department, who will liaise with the CCB or whatever; they work together sometimes on matters to resolve these challenging situations or any situation involving abuse of a child, whether it is sexual or jus physical abuse by parent or parents or (in) the</p>	

	<p>circumstances in which they live, you understand me? Once it is brought to our notice, because we provide counselling for that child, or a child who misbehaves themselves in school or children you go under these kinds of stress (sic). We also have a counselling department, where people are referred there for counselling, children, adults, whatever, you understand? That department is called the Victim Support; and also as a police force, to show that we care, and we want to be able to assist in normalizing the psyche of these people once they have been affected by any kind of abuse, so that they can filter themselves back into society without having too much longstanding damage after the abuse. We ourselves have put in place, and our commissioners in the past have sat and discussed; we recognize that as a Force we have changed, our concept of force, which is the Royal Barbados Police Force, we recognize we provide a service also, and that within that set up we have changed our whole concept of dealing with matters. There are times when these departments did not exist, but because of the way we are trained now, and where standards that we intend to uphold, that we intend to help society in its challenges. We are not going to throw our hands up in the air and say "That is the CCB's or the probation's, let them deal with it." You understand me? Where people can also be counselled and receive counselling and monitoring of behaviour patterns, can also be dealt with (sic).</p>	
<p>INT  STN SRG</p>	<p>So the Juvenile Liaison Scheme and the Victims Support you refer to, but are they involved in the actual investigations?</p> <p>No; that is the social aspect of dealing with these matters, because sometimes you find that abused children have behaviours that cause them to be aggressive, probably at school, deviant behaviours; a lot of these things can fall of the abuse. In order to do our part, in order to normalize the mentality of these individuals, we also provide an area of counselling, not only for them but all victims of any kind of abuse; especially when it comes to women, there is counselling for them and the family. Because sometimes abuse is not only within the family, sometimes you can send your child to lessons and the teacher abuses the child. One of these files I looked at yesterday was speaking about something like that. You understand me? You can send your child to the stadium to something, to a function, and somebody, because you know these days girls are well built, but they are very young, and somebody might approach them and do something, or a family</p>	

	<p>member that you believe you have a lot of confidence in, sexually abuse your child. The abuse comes from all factors and facets of life. You understand me? So with that in mind, sometimes families are so traumatized, especially if the abuse comes from within, that sometimes you need to provide certain support up front for these people. We don't even charge for it.</p>	
INT	<p>How does a case get to you here at this station? What is the process; take for example that letter from the CCB. What process has it gone through before it lands on your desk?</p>	
STN SRG	<p>All correspondence sent to the Police force will be sent to the Commissioner of Police. His department will direct it to the station district in which the incident occurs. In this incidence this happened in Parkinson Fields, which is my station area. So it will come to me, and having read it I will assign an investigator to go and contact the parents in this matter. They will come with the child and we will interview them and have the details of the statement recorded of the occurrences of this matter, right? And we will then look at the statement, because the statement determines the course of our action, what we are going to do ....</p>	
INT	<p>The statement is important?</p>	
STN SRG	<p>The statement is the first thing; we have that statement and ...we have that statement and in the case of a sexual abuse, it must be the doctor who has to examine that person. The public medical officer will examine that female. That gives you an idea of what that person life might be; for instance, some parents are shocked when the doctor writes hymen not intact, which says she is not a virgin - you understand me - and it was not this particular incidence that caused that not to be so, it was so for a little while – you understand me - and they are parents who are virtually in awe, because there is belief that they would have been saying, my daughter's hymen is OK, blah de blah, but here now the doctor is saying no it is not. And that sometimes let the cat out of the bag - you understand me? So it is the statement, it is the doctor, you understand me, then the doctor would have take certain things that have to be sent off to the forensic lab, and then we will have to see where this thing would have happened</p>	

	and have it photographed. We begin to collect evidence, and after that there is the accused and it is his side of the story which we have to hear. Then that person is charged, appears before the court, then we deal with the evidence at the court and everything that happens after that.	
INT	I understand that of necessity the social workers obviously have to hear the story of a child that goes to them. Then that child has to tell you the same thing (pause). Then they have to go to court and say the same thing.	
STN SRG	And that is one of the things they are trying to do now, especially where trauma and where the repeating of the matter brings back memories, that kind of trauma. They, the court, is making itself ready to change that, to ensure that certain people can give evidence over the monitoring system, CCTV, so that the court can see them giving evidence and so they will not have to face a set of people. They can be in a little room in the same building or something and the questioning and everything can go on. That will be a future thing that will be occurring in cases of these real abuse cases, where the painter comes in and sees the little girl and “play with her”, even fathers who interfere with their daughters, you understand me, and this situation (sic).	
INT	So are those plans in place, or being discussed at the moment?	
STN SRG	The initiation of them will depend mainly on the DPP, who would know that with this person we need to proceed in this kind of way, because of the trauma of this person facing people in court sitting down and that type of thing.	
INT	Are the courts equipped with the technology?	
STN SRG	Yes, the Supreme Court is.  In the Bridgetown court, when these matters are heard, the court is cleared. The only body that will have access to the court is the police officer. The press and people who sit in the court listening to cases - the court is cleared. It is only the judicial officers who are in the court.	



<p>STN SRG</p>	<p>This was where a young girl had gone and left a baby in the house and when I saw the child, the child was like not breathing, well, the nose was blocked, and in lieu of them not coming, I asked some questions and got hold of the number for the child's grandmother, the child's mother, who came and took possession of the child and said she would take care of the child. All is well that ends well, but they should have responded.</p> <p>What is necessary is that there needs to be stronger laws against parents for these abuse matters, because we can proceed criminally, but at these times in the development of our country we should be law-specific when it comes to dealing with people; there are some parents who need to be in prison. Some parents that need to be in prison.</p>	
<p>INT  STN SRG</p>	<p>I want to ask just a few more questions, because I hope I get the opportunity to talk to you again.</p> <p>You can call me at any time.</p>	
<p>INT  STN SRG</p>	<p>At the moment there is a move afoot by the CCB to have mandatory reporting of cases of child abuse, so it is abuse in its entirety which would include CSA as well. So there are discussions taking place... I don't know if you are aware of it?</p> <p>I am aware.</p>	
<p>INT  STN SRG</p>	<p>..where it is hoped that it will eventually lead to mandatory reporting, so people have to report if they know of a case. What is your view on that?</p> <p>Well you have to speak to mandatory in terms of saying who you are saying it should be mandated by whom. It can't be a general mandating because, if I live in a house and I look next door and I see something and I don't feel like saying something about it, that is a man's constitutional right.</p>	
<p>INT</p>	<p>I think it is the professional capacity.</p> <p>What we need to do is speak to the reporting by agencies, of certain things, and there is nothing wrong with that, but what</p>	

STN SRG	has to happen is that it is the response to the reporting that has to be also unified, because it is easy to say I call you and say this is station sergeant at district A, we have a case of abuse of a minor so and so - <i>blah de blah de blah</i> - and then you come two days later. If you are going to deal with that mandatory reporting stuff, then you have to make childcare officers available to the police department, in which case, the mandatory reporting has a direct response mechanism in place, that there is somebody that you call and tell, "Look at District A, there is case of abuse" and that person activates the wheel to deal with that abuse, to deal with that reporting to you. <i>(Phone interrupts and station sergeant talks. Recording paused)</i> .	
INT    STN SRG	<i>(Resumes after phone call)</i> I would really like to thank you; I won't take up anymore of your time.....  That is no problem.	
INT   STN SRG	Because I would like to come back to you, but what I would like is to find out if you would give permission for me to speak to any of your officers who are willing...  They can speak to you, I have no problem with that.....	
INT   STN SRG	...the ones who actually go out there take the statements, because I can really get into how it impacts on them, how they see the whole process...  What I would say to you is that when there is abuse, it is strictly a female matter, whether it is a boy or girl, because it is abuse of boys too, huh.....	
INT   STN SRG	Absolutely.  Right? We assign a female. This is a procedure we put in place, when there is abuse of a child, a female (sic), we get her out of her uniform and into plain clothes, because we don't want a high profile kind of thing because we try to protect the child even down to that. So during the investigation you don't have a	

	uniform officer going to the house, you have an unmarked vehicle which goes to the house to see what is happening there. So that you don't technically alert the neighbours, because children still have to live in certain environments and you must protect them.	
INT	Thank you very much for your time. I appreciate this very much.	
STN SRG		

**Appendix 6.2 cont: 2<sup>nd</sup> example of interview transcript with police officer**

Interview date: April 2010		
Venue: police station		
	<b>Interview with woman police officer (WPO)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
INTER WPO #3	I want to thank you once again for agreeing to talk to me. You were saying that you have experience with CSA cases? Yes. In the force normally, normally the female deals with any and all sexual offences, whether it is an adult or a child. We do the recording, we take them to the doctor, we set up the counselling; if it is traumatic we have in house what we call Victim Support so we normally do all of that.	
INTER WPO #3	How many cases of CSA have you been involved in, in the last say 3 years? Too many.	
INTER WPO #3	Were you based here or elsewhere?  This is 12 years I am doing. Last year alone I had about 4 cases. All school age and different schools. *This year alone I have one and that is dealing with a little boy who is about to sit exams this year. Let me point out that all sexual aspects that we deal with are not just physical; we also deem indecent assault as a sexual offence. Meaning touching someone on their penis, vagina, buttocks, fondling - all of that comes under our heading as sexual, so we deal with all of that. So far then last year I had four cases and so far this year, one, as I have just come back from	*April 2010

	vacation.	
INTER	It would be helpful if you could think of one of those cases that really stand out in your mind and just give me the story from the time it landed on your desk to the conclusion.	
WPO #3	I had one in 2007/8. The child was about 12, and we had the report that a young girl was in a house with a group of men, about 6-8 men. She had sex with about 4 or 5 of them. They were charged and went to court. When that landed our aim was to get her to the station, first thing to contact her parents; the next step for us is to take her to the doctor. Now recently if a child is under 12 from the time she is taken to the doctor, before we can do any interview or anything like that, then she is turned over to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for a series of treatment. She is seen by the Child Care Board, she goes through a series of medication (sic) for pregnancy, AIDS, that sort of stuff, then she comes back to us on release from the doctor and then we do our investigation, as long as she is under the age of 12 yrs. It also goes for bigger persons. If they are traumatic (sic) by it we do not start our investigations right away. We seek counselling for that person until they can deal with it, but sometimes it our main aim to get the facts there and then, as it is fresh in that person's mind. But if the person cannot deal with it there and then we halt our investigations and we seek counselling for them. To tell you the truth, I am so accustomed to children and people; when it first started, I used to think if these people thinking about what they are doing, you know, but right now, it doesn't faze me any more ( nervous laughter).	
INTER WPO #3	That 12 yr old, what was her story when you interviewed her?  Yes. They do not talk. A lot of them do not talk. When we interview them they do not talk. We do not force them to; we don't put them under pressure to talk. When they are ready, they will open up to us when they are ready. We try very hard not to put them in a place where they clam up and then we can't any information from them. But we try to find out as much information on their history, they background, what leads them to allowing - because some do allow, although they are under the age of consent that is the law, they do allow certain things	

	<p>to happen to them. So we always try to find out, what drives these children to this point. Sometimes it is poverty, they have 6 or seven children, they don't have any male support, and basically a lot of it comes down to attention, the attention that they are not getting from their parents. So basically that is about it, but as I said before, I have done a lot. It doesn't faze me now; I try to deal with each child on their own merit.</p>	
INTER	Did you ever get the story from the 12-year-old?	
WPO #3	No.	
INTER	So what was the final outcome?	
WPO #3	<p>They went to court, but to tell you the truth I don't know what was the outcome, because recently, as I heard about her, she has left school and is back doing the same thing, she is back doing the same thing, right; she constantly use to run away from home, they bring her back, but her mother, this much I can remember, she is not a Barbadian, she is a (<i>country of origin stated</i>) and I guess they have their own ways of living, of doing things; we can't force it on them to change if they can change. If they listen to us and take certain advice, if they want to change, raise their heads above the water so to speak, they will change, but as far as know the young girl is back doing the same thing. She is probably now in her 20s.</p>	
INTER	Do you remember what was the mother or father's reaction was?	
WPO #3	<p>Yes I remember very good what the mother's reaction was (sic). The first thing the mother said was, she thought she was at school, and it wasn't as though she came in vexed, angry, disappointed, nothing. When you question the little girl about why she do it, if she had any satisfaction from it, if there was money or anything given...but when you talked to the little girl, she had no remorse about what she was doing and her mother had four others. She had no remorse. She just did what she felt like doing. But as I said, they are from a different culture. That is another thing I find we don't take time to understand, how somebody from a different culture, how their culture operates, how these people deal with things in their own country. Barbadians tend to deal with things differently and other cultures...although it</p>	

	might be a basic line that drives both countries, we still have to look at their culture, their religion; we have to take a lot of things into consideration and the situation doesn't always give us the time to do that.	
INTER	The men that were.....	
WPO #3	Young boys between the age of 17 years and ... I think the oldest was 25, but young boys.	
INTER	And some were charged, you said?	
WPO #3	They all were charged. The ones that were involved were charged and it was a court case, but as I can tell you this much, I cannot remember what became of the court case, because as I said as much, we go to court, and that young girl cares not to open her mouth or say anything, there is nothing ... I can't say there is nothing we can do, but as I say you can't suppress (sic) into saying something that she doesn't want to say.	
INTER	So she never gave you a statement?	
WPO #3	Yes, she gave me statement, but as I said that happen a good long time and I can't remember all the details, because there is work turning over and turning over....	
INTER	Surely. That is an interesting case though.	
WPO #3	And you move onto other things; but as I told you, as lately as last year I found out she was back doing the same thing. But she has finished school, but she is back doing the same thing.	
INTER	The case that you are currently involved with now this year.....	
WPO #3	This is a young boy where after school there is a gentleman who goes to the compound and gives them money and what's not. He will lift up some of the children and gyrate on them. No clothes are off, they are fully clothed, but this is whilst the children are playing on the compound. Sometimes he comes on it, but sometimes he has access by a wall. He will gyrate on the children; give them money, that sort of things. Those are the sorts of things we deal with. I can say the young boy has an attention deficit problem and he is also dyslexic I think.	
INTER	How old is he?	
WPO #3	He is 11 yrs and should be doing the exam this year.	

INTER	And the man?	
WPO #3	And the gentleman?	
INTER	Yes.	
WPO #3	It is still an ongoing investigation. The child hasn't said what age group he is in. It is an ongoing investigation where he doesn't do it at one school.	
INTER	You haven't found him yet?	
WPO #3	No, apparently he travels between schools, but they are systems in place where we are trying to locate him. The children don't know who he is, they don't know his name, they just know him by him coming on the compound after school, it seems just as the children are waiting for their parents to pick them up. He just wanders onto the school premises.	
INTER	How did it come to your attention?	
WPO #3	Because ... it came to our attention because a parent of another child, a little girl ... He came in at first and reported the matter to another officer, so then the other one, when the parent found out that this also happened to this child. I happened to be at work. So I dealt with that report. So this is how they come to us because the first one, and apparently the one I am dealing with and the one that was previously reported, the 2 boys are friends, but apparently the first one was done to a little girl and it happened on the same day. He dealt with the little girl and then he moved on to the little boy. But it was reported at different times. That is how we get involved, as soon as it is reported,	
INTER	You mentioned at the beginning that CSA is comprehensive, it is not only penetrative.	
WPO #3	It is touching of the breasts, fondling of the person's parts, it doesn't have to be penis/vagina, that sort of thing. We get a lot of that and mostly with secondary school children. We hardly ... I wouldn't even say 1%; a lot of it has to do with children at secondary level that we deal with, a lot. (sic)	
INTER	So what are the main types of CSA that you deal with?	
WPO #3	Fondling and actual sex. Those are the main two we get a lot, with children of secondary age, between	

	<p>the age of about 11 and 16. Those are mostly the age group that we come in contact with. I cannot tell you that I ever dealt with a 17-year-old or an 18-year-old, but I can tell you that I have dealt with older women where it is like in the heat of the moment, they just clam up, they are not going through with it anymore and that's that. So as I said, we normally deal with children and when we do we get their parents involved, we always try to find out who is the first person they told this to and who had the knowledge and if they had an idea. Normally we always find that if it is not a relative, it is a friend of the family or someone who is dealing with a family member. Those cases are still going on. Last year I dealt with 2 cases, one for here and one for (area named), but the 2 children are friends and whatever happens to the first girl she tells her friend. One is actually an indecent assault case; the other is a rape case. Both of them go to secondary school, but they are connected. This one that I am dealing with from here and the one that I am dealing with from (area named) is actually the boyfriend of the aunt. So we find it is always someone who is close to the family that we have problems with. So it is not hard to find them.</p>	
INTER	How would you describe CSA then?	
WPO #3	What do you mean?	
INTER	What is your definition of it?	
WPO #3	<p>I can't tell you what is my definition of it. Parents need to listen. Instead of shouting, condemning and crucifying their children they need to listen. It is getting way out of hand, a lot of it is not being reported and also schools have to make a safe haven, so that when these children can't go to their parents and even if it is parents of themselves using them to bring in, that they can go to somebody. That is a problem that we have in general, not only as a police officer, because sometimes we deal with children and we find it very difficult to get through to the parents.</p>	
INTER	What sort of problems do you have with the parents?	
WPO #3	<p>Oh some parents don't want to hear. "Oh she telling a lot of lies; he telling a lot of lies", this and that; they are too hard ears. As I said, as I had a discussion earlier this week, the days are gone where you as</p>	

	<p>someone come and tell my mother I did this and that and the first thing my mother do before finding out for herself is beating. Those days are gone. You have to listen to your children, you have to make sure your children trust you, you can't let your child feel that what somebody else is coming to tell them, what that person is telling them is the truth and is more important to you than what your child has to say. And we as parents, because a lot us does it, we do not put our children first.</p>	
<p>INTER  WPO #3</p>	<p>Who do they put first?</p> <p>They put themselves and the needs of other people before their children. You can't take away your children's rights to give to some person else. That is how our system is; that is how our culture is. I grew up hearing my mother that me that somebody would come and tell her mother "She did this and do that" and before could get home she would get licks, but her mother never stopped and said "Well somebody come and tell me you did this, is it true, is it not?" instead of asking, you beat first, instead of asking, you beat first. Instead of finding out what you hear is true or not you are quick to condemn the child before finding out. I had a situation like that only this week, where a young lady run and came to this station. She is only 12 years old, but she is this short (WmPO #3 indicates the short stature with her hand) could come to me and tell me; she did not come into the station, she called me. This little girl was so frightened, where her father slapped her in her face, because 3 other persons come and tell him that she was at Oistins doing as she likes and begging a Jamaican man for money. He did not stop to ask his daughter if what he heard was true, but he slapped her in her face. Slapping in the face for me is wrong. I am not saying - slapping in the face is wrong - I am not against him punishing his child if she is out there begging a man for money; but before you up and punish your child, find out what these young children or other young people is telling you is true. The point is, if you know the Jamaican they are talking about, go to him; find out if what he is hearing is true. Then you are still left with doubt, if he tells you no and your daughter tells you no and you still have doubt that part of it isn't right, "My man, I am telling you plain and straight, stand away from my daughter" and I will warn my daughter to stand away from him because if I hear that you go to him next time, this time I will</p>	

	lash you; but you don't fly off the handle and slap the young girl in she face.	
INTER  WPO #3	<p>And this is because an adult brought the allegation?</p> <p>Not another adult, 3 other young children bring allegations. I brought in both parents to talk to them; that bring me to the point that a lot of people, **Bajans, I talking about parents, we as police officers, social workers, I am finding that a lot of people do not know the Rights of a Child. I personally went to UNICEF to get a pamphlet on them. I received those pamphlets as of yesterday; Yes we are going to operate within the law, but we as police officers who don't know need to also read those legislation that was signed. It was a convention that was signed stating the Rights of the Child. Children have rights and that is why I am saying "I am not taking away my child rights. You come and tell me XYZ and before you come and find out you licking." To me that is taking my child's rights to give to somebody else.</p>	**Colloquial name for Barbadians
INTER  WPO #3	<p>How do we begin to change the behaviour of.....? (question unfinished)</p> <p>Education. There is the radio, television and literature. Instead of printing it and giving it to certain bodies, we need to make it very accessible to the public in general. We go to the clinic and the hospital when the child is born, when the nurses giving you the green card, also give them a pamphlet on the Rights of the Child. The clinic, the same thing, the schools the same thing, workplaces the same thing. Yes, it is going to cost money, but I think it is important to get literature out on both parent's rights and children rights. Another thing is that it is easy to say that, but a lot of Bajans don't read, they don't read, so that is why we need to use the media and we need to use the radio. I find that when people are printing videos and DVDs a lot of parents and children watch, you will get all the notice and warnings about what is legal and what not. When you put in that, also put in a little on the rights of the child. Put in the rights of parents. Put in agencies, where if something happens there are contact numbers. Parents don't know how to talk to their children about sex, they don't make it comfortable that if something happens to their child, the can come and say "Mummy XYZ thing happened to me." Instead of talking, we do a lot of shouting.</p>	

<p>INTER WPO #3</p>	<p>Before we started properly you said that we as a race of people seem to want to deny the fact that sexual abuse of our children is taking place?</p> <p>Some; a lot of us, they don't want to admit it, or they are ashamed. It is a lot of things, it is not just one thing; some know, they are ashamed or they don't know how to deal with it. Or they probably do not know who to go to. Not only that, I find a lot of people are coming to the police for every single help (sic). But there are agencies such as the Child Care Board. A lot of people don't go to the Child Care Board; the first person they are going to go to is the police. We cannot deal with every single thing that happens out there. There are agencies. The same way, you are going to hold a health fair in Queens Park, let the CCB come out; or open a Child Care Board activity day where there is literature, and in the centre of town, people pass there. I am saying that we tend to only put information in certain parts. We need to distribute it to everybody; everybody needs to know what is going on.</p>	
<p>INTER WPO #3</p>	<p>From the cases you have dealt with, the allegations of CSA, would you say that you believed the story of the children?</p> <p>Not all.</p>	
<p>INTER WPO #3</p>	<p>What makes a story believable?</p> <p>Consistency in what they are saying, and then from the report of the doctor and bringing in and interviewing that child, you can tell certain things. I don't know how to really put it ...really put it to you in how to believe a child (sic), but consistency in creation things that they are saying, in that you yourself know that a child won't; some children are very timid, and you can tell a child that really don't get out there, don't really know what is going on and is really new to certain things, you can tell. Some, as I said, do it for attention, some doing it because they want to get back at the parent, the father...</p>	
<p>INTER WPO #3</p>	<p>Is that when they are lying, or when they go and have sex that they are trying to get back?</p> <p>They don't have the sex, but they come and report that they did get rape or this person sexually assaulted them, because it is something they couldn't get from that person or that somebody does something to them and they are willing to get back to</p>	

	this person first, or it could be jealousy too.	
INTER  WPO #3	<p>How common is that?</p> <p>That is not very common, it is not very common - it is not 1%. I can tell you that much, it is not very common, but when we are doing sexual cases, these are all things that we look into. The history of that child. The relationship that child has with that person or with their parent. Is that child being alienated from their parent, in that they want somebody's else's attention, in that they will do anything to get that person's attention, even sleep with that person, and when it is found out, that is when it is reported? Let me tell you something, some of these children out there are having sex, where they are not telling anything (sic) and you know when it is found out? When they get caught. The parents catch them and then the parent brings them. They want this body charged, they want the third body charged. The next thing that gives way is when that child gets pregnant. But there are a lot of children out there who are underage, who are having sex with persons who are older, that the parents don't know (about). It is only us they find, if they find out, and that is when the can is opened (sic).</p>	
INTER  WPO #3	<p>Where do you think it all starts, the early sexualisation of our children?</p> <p>Peer pressure; that is where it starts, because as I said before, a lot of parents don't sit and talk to their children. We hide a lot, we don't know how to sit down and talk to our children about sex. They go to school and they hear from their friends, whether their friends are telling the truth, or exaggerating or just making up a story, and to be part of that group they jump head first, head first they jump. That is where the whole thing gets blown out of proportion.</p>	
INTER  WPO #3	<p>How does a referral get on your desk?</p> <p>A referral can come from the CCB. Normally, as I said, the females deal with the cases. As our systems are set up, a female officer is normally on each shift. A station can have four to five shifts and each shift will have one to two women. When a sexual assault comes in, the female normally deals with it. I am not saying that man doesn't, but if the person is an older person, she can say I want the male to deal with it, that is her choice, but normally the female deals with all sexual assaults. If I am at work and a sexual assault comes in, I deal with it.</p>	

	<p>The female deal with the juveniles. We deal with that. But we deal with them also in the presence of their parents. So that is who we get our cases, when a report comes in. You make the first report at the desk and we take it over from there and we do what is necessary. We are the person who takes them to the doctor, the person who takes them to the victim support; we are the persons who interview them; that is how it gets on our desk. A matter from the CCB now (sic), that matter arises if parents take their children to the CCB. It doesn't come through us; if the school of themselves, the guidance counsellors, if they report a matter to the CCB, and if in that interview that child admits to the child care officer that she had sex with someone and she is under-age - that is referred back to the police department. It comes to the area where that child lives, because each station is set out in districts, so if something happens in the area, it comes here and the female deals with it. That is who we get our cases.</p>	
<p>INTER WPO #3</p>	<p>Does it go through central to the commissioner first and then comes to you? Yes it goes to the commissioner, it books out (sic) and then it goes to the station in the district, OR the victim of themself visits for someone to deal with it. When it gets here it goes to the station sergeant or inspector. They can delegate a female officer to deal with. As I said, we go through our training: we do training ...we do what we call sexual abuse training and it sometimes runs from 4 months to 2 months (sic) and it is done with police officers from different stations. And there is a training every year.</p>	
<p>INTER WPO #3</p>	<p>What is the collaboration between the police and the CCB like where CSA is concerned? It is good. Any report of CSA that goes to them is always referred to us. It is always referred to us. Any report to the CCB of a sexual nature is referred back to the police force for investigation. That person that is mentioned in the report where the full name is given is brought in. We can only charge that person if that young person gives a statement. If she doesn't give a statement or her parent or guardian doesn't allow them to do it, it is referred back to the CCB, where they will handle it. We will write our report and let them know about the investigation; and we exhaust all avenues in getting the information, and if</p>	

	their parent doesn't allow them to do it we don't have anything to go on.	
INTER	What do you think about that?	
WPO #3	What do you mean? Where the child refuses to give...	
INTER	Sorry, let me rephrase that. They may have given the CCB a full statement and then they are referred to you because.....	
WPO #3	It may not be a full statement because when we come in they do our full investigation.	
INTER	What happens if they don't talk to you after that, would you use the information from the CCB?	
WPO #3	Yes, and then we refer to someone higher who will give directives as what to do in this matter.	
INTER	Who is that higher person?	
WPO #3	We will go like to our divisional commander, who runs the whole, and they will sit down with (sic) ... because there are persons in each department, an inspector of crime, because it is a crime, a senior superintendent of crime, so the person who deals with crime at the higher level, that information goes to them and they will make decision whether this person must be picked up and charged on that sufficient evidence that is given. If we do not have sufficient evidence on which to charge that person, we cannot, because the police force is liable to wrongdoing.	
INTER	I am curious about those things when a child gives the same story repeatedly to several people, and by the time they get to the police somebody may have got to them and they may not be willing to talk to you. I was just wondering whether ...	
WPO #3	Then we will take statements from those persons and we will write a report. As I said, after we have taken a statement from those persons that she has given a story repeatedly to, and we write our report, it then goes to someone higher who then makes the decision; well, based on this can these people go to court, and they can give evidence that she has told them, XYZ, on such and a day.	
INTER	What is the usual response time in dealing with these matters after you get the initial report?	
WPO #3	Do you mean from the minute it comes in?	

INTER	Yes.	
WPO #3	It is dealt with there and then. You come in and make a report and the first thing we do is to carry you to the doctor.	
INTER	Under 12 yrs you said?	
WPO #3	With everybody, the first thing we do is to carry you to the doctor.	
INTER	To your own police doctor?	
WPO #3	Yes, and it is documented. So the first thing we do is to call him and he will tell us when to bring the person, but it does not go over to the next day. Our next step is to collect that clothing, because that clothing might hold trace of evidence of the person who had sexual intercourse with you or who raped you or whatever. As I said, our sexual offences that we have reported here are varied. From molesting to sex, to you name it, we deal with it. As I said, we call him, our aim is to get you to the doctor, get the victim support person on hand and collect our evidence. Then if you are willing and you are in a position to give us a statement as to what occurred and what happened, we go from there. If it is a tourist of a young age, we go through the consulate officer; if it is a child of a tourist, we go through the same procedures but we inform the consulate.	
INTER	I want to talk to you about where a crime has been committed and the person is under 16, but the girl regards it as her boyfriend. It comes to you because the mother might have found her out.	
WPO #3	But she is not at the legal age of consent?	
INTER	That what I said, a crime has been committed, so how easy or difficult is it to deal with those cases?	
WPO #3	I can tell you the honest truth, I never had any of those, where the person is the boyfriend, especially if the person is of the same age. There is law pertaining to that.	
INTER	The girl might be under 16 but the boy might be over 16.	
WPO #3	Yes, then he can be charged with rape, but when she is stating that the boy is her boyfriend we don't deal with that part, we do our part, you go to court and you can tell the court he is my boyfriend (sic). If that is all you tell the court and there is nothing more,	

	that's it. But if we do get cases like that, some of them refuse to give statement against that person. So as I said, it is hard, so it goes to someone who will direct us, well, we have to charge them and the court then deal with that (sic).	
INTER	I would like to talk about the alleged perpetrators now; you indicated earlier that it is usually someone that the child knows. Who are usually the perpetrators?	
WPO #3	Boyfriends of the parents or of a family member, because as I said, the cases I normally get are females. The only male is this one I am dealing with at the moment ...is the one earlier this year and that is just fondling; Still a sexual assault, an indecent assault on the person. But it is normally the boyfriend of the mother, the stepfather if the persons are married, or boyfriends of cousin or aunt or some person like that. Those are the main perpetrators we normally get. Hardly do we ever - I cannot say that I ever got a case involving a father, but it is always someone who is not an immediate member of the family but a friend of the family.	
INTER	How many cases have dealt with over the 12 years?	
WPO #3	A lot. ( Wm PO laughs apologetically) A lot, because I have worked at different stations.	
INTER WPO #3	You seem to be suggesting that there is a general acceptance or denial by society. Do you think CSA is getting more obvious...? Yes it is. It is. A lot of it is not reported, but that doesn't mean it is not happening, a lot of it is happening every day out there. Women are not working, there are letting things happen to their children. They are ignoring it, they are denying it because money is coming in. You can see young girls going to school with the latest and what not and when you check the background a lot of their parents are not working, so where are they getting the money from? But it is something that is going on; the parents are accepting it, knowing full well it is wrong. These children are underage and they are not doing anything about it, so it being accepted in a lot of households, but because of the money and what they are getting from it, it is coming in (sic); and mothers and fathers need to get up and work and stop using their children as a means of support.	
INTER	Do you think that really happens?	
WPO	It does. It does (sic). We have to stop hiding and	

#3	pretending that it doesn't happen. Because it is not reported, doesn't mean it is not happening out there. It is happening.	
INTER WPO #3	You said earlier, you seem to be suggesting earlier that you are almost immune to it now, but what are some of the emotions you feel sometimes?	
INTER WPO #3	Anger. I do get angry a lot - I don't show it to the person - but I does vent when it is all done, I vent (Wm PO emphasising this) because I do get angry when I see it happen. I get angry after, because the young girl has no esteem of themselves; to me they seem to think that they are not worth anything - just letting a man come and live with you, knowing that this is wrong, that what he is doing is against the law. I get vex with the parents for allowing it to happen and then saying she is lying, especially when you have a young girl come and report it and that she reported it to her mother who did nothing. When you get those types of report, you get vex, you get angry, but as I said, I don't show it to them, but when they go their separate ways, I do vent. I do vent because I sometimes put myself in that child's position.	
INTER WPO #3	If the parents are not protecting the children, if the child therefore then doesn't feel they can give you sufficient information to lead to a case.....  Do you mean if the child themselves don't know the information? The child will know the information.	
INTER WPO #3	No, what I am trying to say is how do we protect our children, if the parents don't believe them, if then as a result of their circumstances they don't want to proceed with the case, or they give you very little information to go on...?  Do you mean because of what their parents are doing?	
INTER WPO #3	Yes.  Honestly, I believe, I do not know about it, I will have to check on it, but I believe that those parents need to be held responsible and be charged also.	
INTER WPO #3	Is there anything in the law?  I can't say; I will need to dig a little deeper, especially if the parents have knowledge that this is going on, and there is evidence of the parents knowing this is going on, that parents should be charged too. That is how I strongly believe it should be.	

<p>INTER</p> <p>WPO #3</p>	<p>I am trying to see how children remain sane. People are saying children are being abused left right and centre. Sometimes when the case gets as far as the courts, then the child might have to wait about 5 years before the case is heard.....</p> <p>Yes because I have a case now going on where the girl was ...is that indecent assault or rape? (WmPO recalls which charge it is) It is rape; and she is a big woman now and the case is back and forth, back and forth. And it is done by someone in authority, who should know better. Understand? And she is now of adult age. When she gets at that age she is of a legal age that she can say: "Look, I have been going through this from the time of XYZ, I tired, I done." But are we really giving her justice because the system takes long in dealing with the matters?</p>	
<p>INTER</p> <p>WPO #3</p>	<p>What leads to these delays?</p> <p>Personally, the person who is charged also holds up a lot of the delays in court (sic); they don't have their lawyer, their lawyer is here, their lawyer is out, their lawyer doing something else (sic); back and forth, people not coming forward anymore to give evidence and that sort of thing. It is not normally the court system; the process starts, but when you have people involved - who don't come in or when they come they are not giving sufficient ...they are not offering more evidence in this matter (it is) a long drawn out process. I find that when it comes to sexual matters with children, the court always tend to deal with it when the children are not in school. Instead of bringing them out of school and back and forth, they tend to deal with them when they are on vacation, which I understand, which I respect, that's the honest truth. But then when it comes to court now, the person who is charged, the accused, they either don't turn up, you have send out and look for them, they have changed addresses, they have not let the court know - all of this is what leads to the majority of delays. When it does start then "This person can't remember this or that", because there are lots of put-backs. Too many breaks in the system. That is mostly the frustration; and the victim themselves get frustrated with the back and forth, because the accused hasn't come to court today, the lawyer is not at court today, this body isn't at court today. So a lot of them drop it. Some parents will not pursue the matter because of the same thing.</p>	

	<p>Going to court, the embarrassment, making their children live through it – all of these excuses (sic). But in order to get that person justice, your child your justice, and that person pay, you have to show your child that you can't sit back and accept that this is what is going to happen. Somebody has to pay for what happen to you and whether you are going through it or not, I am going to make sure we go through it to the end, because you have to get justice for what has happened.</p> <p>That is basically it, people get frustrated and they don't want to go through it any more but you have got to be determined; this can't be going on, because once he gets away with it - and let me tell me another thing, a lot of these people who sexually abuse children realize that this is what is going on and if they don't do it here, they will do it somewhere else, and eventually someone will end up dead. Because we know that some do rape and kill their victims or whatever; it is only a matter of time before (it happens). It doesn't happen here like in the States, but what we have to understand is there is a lot of returning nationals that have served time, that have lived out there and they are coming back with a lot of criminal activity (experience) and they are introducing them here. So it is only a matter of time. Parents have to get behind their children and sit and explain to them that they are going to go through it to the end, and when you get there you can decide if you are at the stage whether you can go through with this. If you to the court and say to the magistrate you are not coming back here, that you can't deal with it, let them know that because you are not coming back, because you do not want to face that person. You have to be able to speak for your child who can't speak. You can't say that because your child is traumatized — mind you I respect that parent's wishes, but we also have to give justice to our children.</p>	
<p>INTER</p> <p>WPO #3</p>	<p>How do these delays and the general system affect you as an officer, of the delay and the way you carry out your work?</p> <p>I am accustomed to so much court delays because this person has not come to court, but basically it doesn't always affect us because, when we give our evidence, we don't have to go back to court</p>	
<p>INTER</p>	<p>Not until 5 years later when the case is heard?</p>	

WPO #3	No, we go to court when the case is called, and as soon as they are ready for the officer they let us know, OK we are ready for you, you can come to court and give your evidence. You don't have to go to court and sit down every time the case is called. No, we don't do that; if we have the time and we choose to go to court and listen to the case whenever it is called, that is not a problem, but we don't do that. We are summoned to court when they want us to come. The magistrate will summons us, we will give our evidence and then that is it.	
INTER  WPO #3	What do you think about a child having to stand and face their alleged perpetrator in open court?  As I said, the public is not in the court.	
INTER  WPO #3	But the child facing the alleged perpetrator, the two together in court; in your experience what is the effect of this?  To me it is good and bad. The child can clam up, but I think in a way it is good because that child must learn to face their accuser and say "Look you can't do this to me again." It can build confidence in the child; you can't protect them all the time.	
INTER  WPO #3	Is there anything else you want to say to me?  Literature needs to get out there on the rights of the child; as I have said before, in the clinic, at the child's birth etc.	
INTER	Session brought to an end with expressions of thanks and WM PO also expressing her pleasure to be able to assist.  END	

## Appendix 6.3 Focus group case study

### Case study Child Care Board - Child Care Officers

#### 14-year-old Kim (fictitious name)

##### Part 1

Kim is a 14-year-old who came to the Child Care Board June (2010) alleging rape by a 24-year-old man she describes as a recent friend: a man she had met three months ago at a friend's house. She tells you that she never had sex with him and did not consent this time either. She has arrived at the Child Care Board with a friend about her age.

You find that Kim appears to be extremely shaken and "traumatized" when telling you about this alleged rape. During your interview you find out that she has not told her mother or anyone else but her friend who is with her. When her mother arrives at the Child Care Board to be with her, there is little eye contact between the two, a noticeable coldness and no effort on the part of the mother to support her daughter. Following your interview with Kim, you assessed that you need to treat this as a reported sexual offense.

How does the Child Care Board Officer(s) respond to this allegation? **To explore the what, when, how and the why of actions/decisions.**

1. What are some of the key actions you now have to take and why?
2. Who do you communicate with on this matter and what form does that communication take?

**Kim, aged 14 years plus**

**Past history known to Child Care Board (CCB)**

Part 2

November 2007 brought to CCB by mother- aged 11 yrs

Your records show that Kim was seen by you before. The first time was in November 2007 when she was 11 years old, when she kept leaving her mother's house to go and stay by her grandmother who lives quite a distance away. She was adamant each time that she wanted to stay with her grandmother. Her mother had brought her to the CCB to discuss the situation, to find out "what was the matter with her".

December 2009 referred by the teacher directly to the CCB - aged 13 yrs

In December 2009, Kim had told her teacher that her mother's boyfriend - a man named Tony (who did not live in the house, but who visited regularly), had been sexually molesting her for two years (her mother works night at the hospital). The abuse had occurred the previous night again and Kim knew she just had to tell someone about what was happening to her. She had not told her mother during the three years because she said her mother would not have believed her.

She had told her teacher who rang you, the CCB.

Her teacher had said she was very worried and had therefore contacted you, the Child Care Board. She also stated that Kim was very afraid and anxious about what might come out at the interview and the effects it would have on her mother. The teacher also said that she was increasingly concerned about Kim's aggressive behaviour one minute, being withdrawn the next, and also her failing academic performance over the last year.

In 2009, when the CCB made arrangement to interview Kim and her mother, Kim had said to the child care officer that that she was sorry about the whole thing, which was a bad misunderstanding, and she was withdrawing her allegation against Tony. She had also said sorry to her mother for the trouble she had caused. The mother was anxious at that time that the matter did not go any further, i.e., being reported to the police - so that they "could go home and get back to their normal lives".

1. What would have been the likely outcome of these past referrals?
2. Would any discussion have taken place with the police on these? – Reasons for yes or no answer.
3. Does the past incident(s) have an impact on the present allegation (2010)? If so, in what ways and why?

Case study - Police

14-year-old Kim (fictitious name)

Part 1

Kim is a 14-year-old who came to the police station (June 2010), alleging rape by a 24-year-old man she describes as a recent friend: a man she had met three months ago at a friend's house. She tells you that she never had sex with him and did not consent this time. She had arrived at the police station with a friend about her age. You find that Kim appears to be extremely shaken and "traumatized" when telling you about this alleged rape. During your interview you find out that she has not told her mother or anyone else but her friend who is with her.

When her mother arrives at the police station to be with her, there is little eye contact between the two, a noticeable coldness and no effort on the part of the mother to support her daughter. Following your interview with Kim, you have assessed that you need to treat this as a reported sexual offense.

How do the POLICE respond to this allegation?

What are some of the key actions you now have to take and why? **To explore the what, when, how and the why of actions/decisions.**

1. What are some of the key actions you now have to take and why?
2. Who do you communicate with on this matter and what form does that communication take?

**Kim aged 14 years plus**

**Past history known to police**

**Part 2**

August 2008 – aged 12 yrs

Your records show that Kim was seen by you before. In August 2008 a neighbour reported to the police that Kim appears to be on her own a lot at nights. Her mother works some nights and Kim's 16-year-old brother always leaves the house when his mother leaves for work. The mother's boyfriend visits some of these nights, always, it seems, with another male friend.

December 2009 referred by the teacher directly to the police - aged 13 yrs

In December 2009, Kim told her teacher that her mother's boyfriend - a man named Tony (who did not live in the house, but visited regularly), had been sexually molesting her for three years (her mother works night at the hospital). The abuse had occurred the previous night again and Kim knew she just had to tell someone about what was happening to her. She had not told her mother during the three years because she said her mother would not have believed her.

She had told her teacher who rang you, the police.

Her teacher had said she was very worried and had therefore contacted you, the police, seeking guidance. She also stated that Kim was afraid to go to the CCB, because she was very anxious about what might come out at the interview and the effects it would have on her mother. The teacher also said that she was increasingly concerned about Kim's increasingly aggressive behaviour and failing academic performance over the year.

That same evening (the day the teacher rang), Kim and her mother came to the police station. Both were very upset. The mother started by saying "My daughter has just told me a story about being sexually abused and I want to get to the bottom of it in front of the police." Kim had told you (back in 2008) that she had told her teacher earlier in the day about being abused by Tony, and her teacher had persuaded her she must tell her mother, which she did.

Kim then said, however, that she was sorry about the whole thing, which was a bad misunderstanding and she was withdrawing her allegation against Tony. She had also said sorry to her mother. The mother was anxious at that time that the matter did not go any further with the police so that they "could go home and get back to their normal lives."

1. What would have been the likely outcome of these past referrals?
2. What would have been the likely outcome of these past referrals?
3. What would have been the likely outcome of these past referrals?
4. Would any discussion have taken place with the CCB on these? – Reasons for yes or no answer.
5. Does the past incident(s) have an impact on the present allegation (2010)? If so, in what ways and why?

## Appendix 6.4 Transcript of focus group discussion

	<i>Welcome, introductions and scene setting, with some basic rules on conduct agreed by everyone</i>
	<p>This focus group interview discussion centres around one client – KIM - whose case history is divided into 2 parts.</p> <p><b>Part I</b> is the current 2010 complaint, investigated by both CCB and Police.</p> <p><b>Part 2</b> consists of past histories (of concern) which are only known by one or other agency. This section also presents with an identical historical complaint, with which each agency is ask to deal from their respective mandate.</p> <p>(Introductions etc. excluded from this transcript)</p>
INT	I want you to tell each other some of the things you do. I am going to be listening; some of the things you do, from your mandated position with Kim's case. Who will be brave enough to start?
SENIOR PO #1	I will start.
INT	And your colleagues will come in and support you?
SENIOR PO #1	Normally, when persons arrive at the station with this matter - they are 2 minors ( <i>in this case</i> ) - we still have to contact their parents, mother or father. In the absence of someone we will contact the CCB, but if the mother arrives we will interview both parties separately. This is normally done by a WMPO, because we realize she is traumatized and she may not want to see a male figure in front of her. So most of the cases, when they are reported at the station, a WMPO will interview that person in the presence of a guardian, mother, father, whoever comes, and that is done privately. After the interview with the consent of the mum, we will take that person to the doctor, where an exam will be done to confirm the allegation and then we will look to interview the complaint in the matter; written statement; location as where it happened; name of the person that would have committed the offence. Then we would take the clothing for evidential purposes, and after all of that have been done, we will visit the scene with the complaint; this is where the CID will get involved, well not mostly the CID, but the WMPO that is currently interviewing the complainant, will visit the scene and get to know as much information as possible whereby that this matter can go before the court. We will then have to notify our supervisors, because it is a rape, a serious matter, so all

	<p>cases as these, we will have to notify our supervisor for direction, guidance, as to what we should do. It all depends on what is said and done in respect of what is said at the interview between the female PO, the mother and the complainant in this matter; because sometimes as you interview them, there is a tendency that some of them might be lying, and then as a result of what is said and done at the interview, then we will know which way we should go.</p>
INT	<p>Thank you. Can I ask the CCOs, do you want to say anything before the PO continues, ask for clarification or to offer a comment, anything? Ok. Let me ask you then - Kim has come to you, tell us what you do from your point of view, and let us link it with what the police is also doing.</p>
CCO #1	<p>When she comes in to us, what we would do is that she would be seen by an officer, regardless of who she comes with, she will be seen by an initial officer and, based on the information that she provides in terms that it is a rape, we will take information as it pertains to when, general things, and when the mother comes we would speak to the mother as regards what she would have reported to us. We would speak to her separately and generally that is it, up until that point.</p>
INT	<p>So both of you have interviewed the client. You have seen a traumatized person. Can I ask, knowing that this person has now got to go to the police (the police might have referred them to you), do you at any point speak to each other about a case like this?</p>
SENIOR PO #2	<p>Yes.</p> <p>We do have a victim support group in the force and basically the officer there, she is trained to go through the procedure from the interview, calming the person down and then, if it is going to court, they will accompany that person to the court and that is a form of counselling; so the parent also will get counselling from the victim support officer. Along with speaking with the CCB or the officer that is responsible for that case. Of course the commissioner of police would have been written to formally. A memo would come out stating X is the case, and the officer that is assigned to will come and speak to the CCB, because this child might have a previous 2 or 3 encounters with men or women and that is noteworthy, because when the matter goes before the court you would realize that this child is a victim on 2 or 3 other occasions. So it is important that we liaise with each other for information purposes and try and bring it to an end; not that I am reading more into it, but it is possible that other things possibly happened.</p>

WMPO	Can I say something?
INT	Sure.
WMPO	The only time we would really speak to the CCB is when we need guardianship, say for instance in the case reported and that person is living within the household, we would speak in that case, or if the CCB send a memo to us, relative to a sexual offence, but if there is none, case like this we would not speak to the CCB, not unless it comes right down to the end and it comes to court, whereby to inform them as to the fact that she is a minor and what happened.
INT	I am getting the impression that sometimes you speak, sometimes you don't, depending on the case.
CCO #2	There have been times when I have had to give statements to the PO in cases like this because I was the CCO taking the information, or I was working with the case. A PO would call and say "Can I receive a statement from you." And more than once, I have been to the police station and given a word by word statement based on what I did, or the PO would come here and I would give a pretty extensive statement.  <b>[NOTE: Here the CCO seems to be saying that communication can be good, there is comprehensive sharing (on her part), which is very much needed]</b>
INT	And how did that feel, giving this statement to the PO?
CCO#2	I understood it was part of the whole procedure that needed to be done, and that it would possibly shed light on some possible grey areas.
CCO #3	Sometimes officers would call to get clarification if it is a case that has been known to us before. So some would call, depending on the situation.
INT	When it does happen, that communication, how is it, does it go well? How does it feel?
CCO #3	It is beneficial, because sometimes they have information that we want, so it is vice versa.
INT	So what I hear you say is that the sharing of the information for those missing pieces is one of the reasons why you communicate. Any other reasons why you communicate?
SENIOR PO #1	The communication factor is, during our investigation, the complainant would like have a history, maybe reported to the CCB, so we have to tie up all those loose ends; so if there was a history of the complainant

	<p>being molested and it was registered here at the CCB, normally we would have to speak to some one - the officer that that would have been responsible, so that is the reason she (<i>referring to CCO 2</i>) would have given a statement, because when we go to court we like to present everything that is said and done relative to the statement taking, because the taking of the complainant statement is history that we have to go through first, from small if it happened, and if the CCB was mentioned during the time that this thing happened; and once it is mentioned in the statement, we have to go and check back, so that is the reason why we would call the CCB, to find out certain information relative to the file. So we don't really get any problems, getting like statement or the statement file for the court.</p>
WMPO	<p>Another reason why we contact the CCB, sometimes we are set in a mould (sic) and the person, we try to find them and they don't respond, or they avoid for some reason, so we would rather go to the CCB who they might have seen first, and we would know then what is happening, their state of mind, whether they are coming back to us or they are not coming back to us for some reason.</p> <p><b>[NOTE: Police approach appears to be very cut and dried - based on the fact it seems that a mother can withhold consent to take the case to court, and so the police do not want their time wasted if this is the case.]</b></p>
INT	<p>My understanding is that the CCB and the police have their own mandate under the law. So you have the child in the middle, like this MP3 player (<i>indicating object in the middle of the table</i>) and you have two august professional groups bringing their own mandate to bear on the protection of the child. So I am trying to get an idea of the kind of communication that goes on between yourselves and why that communication takes place to better protect that child; and one of the things I hear you say is that sharing of information is important so that you have as complete a picture as possible about the child. So that when you go to prosecution you are not ambushed. From the CCB point of view, is there anything else you want to say before we move on?</p>
SMCCO	<p>In this particular case what sometimes happen, because the mother came to the CCB and once she is co-operative, we would maybe make a call to the police station right away and inform them that we have this person at the CCB saying that they have been raped. So we would let them go directly to the police station to go and make a statement. Sometimes we would call ahead and let the PO know that the mother and child are coming to them or sometimes we give a hand written referral to give to the parent to give to the police also. In a case like this we always do a formal written referral to the commissioner of police, outlining that the officer would have seen the child on such a</p>

	date and that the child would have indicated that XYZ would have happened, and then we would ask the police to carry out their investigation. So we back it up with a formal written referral in all cases.
INT	So is that a standard referral letter?
SMCCO	Not really, it varies.
INT	So you can convey a lot of information or the bare minimum?
SMCCO	It contains what is relevant so that the police can start their own investigation. If the person presents and say they were raped by John Brown who is 25 years old, and he lives at Long Gap, we would provide the police with that information so that they would do their own investigation.
CCO #2	It is also necessary to refer the child to have a medical examination.
INT	I want to go back to that referral, which is a key stage isn't it? It is a time when you pass information to each other, as 2 professional groups who are not mandated to have cases conferences as yet, as other countries have, how comfortable do you feel with sharing information that you have with each other? You have quite a lot of information that has come your way, this person has told you quite a bit of information; you have to exercise your judgment as to what you share. Are there times when you feel that you can't share certain things? Or you are unsure? Because you tell me what you write varies.
CCO #3	We share what is necessary; the referral is not as detailed, is not everything that would have taken place in the interview. It is what is required for the police to do their investigation.
INT	What do the police feel about that? You share what is necessary also?
SENIOR PO #1	Yes, there are certain things that the complainant would have told us. There isn't everything that you need to highlight unless it is necessary, because a person might tell you something in confidence; however, before we can divulge that information, well you know our job is to put people before the court. Even though we put persons before the court, we still have to be sensitive in certain regards. There are certain things that we might just stick to the point for that case matter, because we might have enough information to prosecute that person, but there might be other information that might not necessarily be for that case, but just by the way, that person might have told us, so we would keep that as confidential as far as possible. But for us, when it

	<p>goes to court, we would make sure that we have enough evidence to prove the point that such and such a body raped such and such a person at that point in time. So we don't hold everything per se and put into the statement, because there are other statements that would be prejudicial to the case so we would not – but we take out what we need for the matter and the court</p>
INT	<p>Thank you. Did you want to say something just now?</p>
WMPO/ (CID)	<p>I wanted to say there is no formal method in the police sharing information with outside organizations. The only thing that would happen when we are sent a memo from the CCB, correspondence is sent back, but there is no detailed sharing of information. Correct me if I am wrong, there is none.</p>
INT	<p>So that lack of detail sometimes, which is not prejudicial, is that something that you could have more of on both sides? Would you like more information sometimes?</p>
SENIOR PO #1	<p>If we need more information we would request it from the officer, that is why the statement; we would come in and speak to the officer that was assigned to the case, we would come in and like have face to face discussion about the matter.</p>
INT	<p>From the CID point of view are you seeing things in the same way?</p>
WPO/ (CID)	<p>Uhm, (pause) maybe not. When we are sent memos, yes we are supposed to carry out investigations, but sometimes these individuals that you all interview, they might not want prosecution in the matter, but the letter would come and say that John Brown raped so and so on this day, and you have information that you know that these people do not want to prosecute, but you mandate is to protect. It would be helpful to know, so that we know what we are dealing with when we first get it, so that we can either try to influence or try and find another solution to the problem. Because the guardian can say they do not want to pursue this matter anymore. So if we know that we are dealing with this up front, we would attack it in another way, without wanting to go through the whole thing and arrest the man and then the case doesn't go anywhere because the person does not want it.</p>
INT	<p>So from what you just said, they have no intentions of standing up in court and saying anything. So are you saying that it would be good to know this?</p>
CCO# 2	<p>But we don't always know it.</p>
WMPO/ (CID)	<p>That is not true, sometimes you all know it.</p>

CCO#2	I think it is rare that we would know at that point, because it is later down, well for me it used to be later down into the discussion. Months later perhaps, when it is found out that they are not interested in pursuing. It is hardly ever up front that they would say we are not interested.
INT	So you see why these discussions are important?
WMPO/(CID)	Sometimes I have persons calling me - and saying ...I say to them that I receive this information from the CCB and they might say "Wait, I told that woman that ages ago and I am now not interested in that."
INT	Do some people change their stories as time goes on?
SENIOR PO #2	That is why it is always good to liaise with each other, because of this same scenario now, the case in point. Let's say that this girl came to you 6 months ago with her mum and call the same man name, and money paid (out), and you went out in the district - because you have to go out and talk to the people in the district - to find out how this mother treats this child, what goes on in the house, and you have this information, and let say you have to report, you will be able to say to the officer - last year Kim and her mother made 2 reports against this same man and he pay money. He wrote a cheque or he gave them cash as the case may be. So now we would...
WMPO/(CID)	<i>(Interjects)</i> ...bring a charge against the mother or attack it in another way.
INT	So it is good to talk?
POs	Yes, it is good to talk.
INT	Is there anything else, before we move on to part 2?
INT	It is now heating up isn't it, and unfortunately we have to move on.
CCOs	I hope you don't mean that literally.
	<b>PART 2 is now shared out: Risks and vulnerabilities to KIM are in some evidence as seen from the 2007 and 2008 case history.</b>
INT	This is a past history that is known to yourselves and some of it is different to both of you.  <i>[PO and CCO invited to read out to the others the past history of 2008 which is known only to the Police, and the CCB to read the 2007 history known only to the CCB, respectively. Clarification is given on</i>

	<i>the common history of 2009 which is known to both groups. They are then invited to say how they would deal with it]</i>
INT	So is this information that is known to the police, will this be shared with the CCB at any point?
SENIOR PO #2	Yes, seeing that it is an ongoing investigation with this young lady and her mum, we would want to share certain information, as I was saying before, even before this was handed to us, from going out there, we learnt this information from a neighbour. So this is something that would have to be investigated. So you would have to find out about, because in 2007 she came to the CCB too.
INT	But you don't know that she came to the CCB in 2007- from the information in hand.
SENIOR PO #2	No, I didn't know that, but let's say now that from speaking with - let's say a memo came down to us to investigate this situation.. <i>(unclear)</i> When I go out there I would have to write a report. Of course, then I would have to liaise with the CCB to see if anything was reported to them also.
INT	Would the CCB share the 2007 information with the police? And the 2009?
CCO #3	No, not the 2007; the CCB would investigate this on their own because there is no allegation of anything happening
WMPO/ (CID)	Given the 2008 information by itself, we would give them (the CCB) this information because there is no element of law that has been broken. There is something going on but not to that stage where we would handle it.
SENIOR PO #1	But in this scenario also ( referring to the police 2008 history), normally what should happen is that the police would have visited this house on one of these nights to find out if these allegations are true, and if it is found out that when the police visits and she is home on her own, that is a charge. Because the age is 14 (when you can be left alone). So if the police carries out investigations and she is left alone at age 12 without supervision, then they would have to call in the parents to find out, to put a stop to it. So normally if a police gets a case like this we would – somebody should go and confirm it. Then we would either refer it to the CCB, because they would have to know about it. Normally the police would investigate these matters,

	especially these night ones, because sometimes I know that if someone from the CCB receive information such as this they would come to the station for a spot-check visit.
INT	For a joint visit?
MCCO	Sometimes, depending on what is happening. Sometimes if you receive information, especially if it is somewhere out in the country, you would call one of the stations.
	<i>(General questioning as to whether this call is for security reasons.)</i>
MSCCO	Not necessarily, because sometimes they call us to go and check it, sometimes they check it by themselves; because if you go on your own and the child is there you still can't remove the child, you still need the police officer to remove the child, so if we go - if it is nearby - we go by ourselves.
WMPO/ (CID)	Are you saying you can't remove the child at that age?
MSCCO	No, we can't enter the house.
POs	But you can remove them. <i>(Back and forth discussion about whether the CCB can remove a child from its home.)</i>
WMPO/ (CID)	Because when we remove them, where are we going to put them?
SENIOR PO #1	When we visit, sometimes we ask the children to contact their parents at work, and then we would talk to them and then inform the CCB.
SENIOR PO #2	So you would inform the CCO at 2.00am in the morning and let them come?
INT	So you talk to each other on these types of occasions? Anything else before we move onto the 2009 case scenario? I want to move on then...  <b>[Referencing of the 2009 case history as a refresher of what was clarified earlier]</b>
INT	From the CCB point of view - these are real life cases, right? From the CCB point of view, what sort of decision would you make and why?

CCO #2	Because she has said she is not going forward, it doesn't mean that it ends there, based on the other information that we have. A medical examination would be requested of the mother on behalf of the child, so if you are saying then that there is nothing then, there should not be anything to hide, so we want to see what the medical says; and based on the information we have, we will still speak to her, mother and child, about the allegation, although she is saying that she is withdrawing her allegation.
INT	So are you saying you would not leave it there? And why would you not leave it there?
CCO #2	It would still go on to the police because if the teacher is saying - you also have to weigh the evidence of what Kim has said to the teacher; so you know that something has occurred, so you still have to refer it to the police.
INT	So what do you say to the police?
CCO #4	You would inform them of what has been disclosed to us and the teacher, and we would ask them to interview Kim.
INT	So you would send what she said and what the teacher said to you?
CCO#4	Yes, what the teacher reported to us.
CCO# 3	I think it would be useful as well to invite the teacher down whilst Kim is here, and get them in the room together, so that Kim can verify or not whether she said this so that we get enough information; because if Kim is confronted with the teacher that she spoke to with this kind of information, she will then be compelled to open up
INT	And this is with her mother there as well?
CCO#3	I think that Kim needs to be interviewed on her own and to be reassured that the CCB is working in her best interest, and that we have a duty to protect her and that we want to do that, but that she has a responsibility also to speak to us, so that we can. But then she has to return back to this house where this thing has been happening afterwards, so this is of concern to us.
INT	Is there anything else anyone wants to say?
CCO# 4	I would also want to ascertain from Kim whether she has been threatened or in any way coerced to say it was all a bad mistake.
INT	So you carry out a full investigation?
CCO4	I would speak to her privately.

INT	Is there anything else from the CCB?
MSCCO	Yes, this does not happen very often, but once we believe Kim is at risk, although she has retracted her statement, we can take the necessary steps to have her made a ward of court and placed in a different environment. So although there might not a criminal allegation any more, we will still pass on the information to the police to do their investigation, because once it has been reported by the teacher that Kim has stated A or B, the police will do their own investigation to see if there are criminal charges to be brought; but in terms of the social aspect, we would look at what has been happening to Kim, to determine what is the best environment for her, so if the mother does not cooperate then we will have to take another step in terms of making Kim a ward of court, and let the court determine the best determination as relates the care and protection of Kim.
INT	Now can I turn to my right, to the police? So this is now a referral that came to you first. It has not gone to the CCB, it has come to you first.
SENIOR PO #1	The same procedure will be followed ( <i>meaning the police's</i> ). Now this is our problem: consent. Kim is saying that she is sorry, the mother is saying that she finish with the matter. She is a minor and consent must be given from the parent. So even though the female ( <i>police officer</i> ) carry her to the doctor, there should be permission for her to be examined. So if the mother tells the police now that, well she finish with that, well if we now truly believe that listen, and we check with the CCB and said well, something definitely happening or is wrong with this child here, then like the CCB will have to act on behalf of (i.e., instead of) the mother, which means that she (Kim) will have to be made a ward of court; so if now the mother says, "Well officer , you are not interviewing my child, don't carry my child to the doctor" - done.
INT	So this is where your role (meaning the CCB) is now being very critical?
SENIOR PO #2	Right, the CCB will now take over.
SENIOR PO #1	The CCB will now give us permission; if the child is now a ward of court and they proceed now, so that when she goes to the doctor now she must be examined, the child has moved now to a different environment, because you would not want to put her back in the same environment where she is being molested all the time. So once we can prove that something happened, what we would do, we would normally take the statement etc., carry out the investigations, and look to bring Tony before the court. However, now the mother would not

	<p>be the complainant, the CCB would be.</p> <p><i>(PO1 turns to other colleague and says "Have I left out anything?")</i></p>
SENIOR PO #2	<p><i>(PO2 says in return)</i> "There is more than one way to skin a cat," so that first way we have a lot of problem with that one because the mother is saying no and there might be reasons why she is saying no, because the man might be contributing to the house and other aspects, right? So she don't want the man lock up.</p>
WMPO/ (CID)	<p>But if we have history like that, we would know that something is happening, it is not just a one-off thing. We would be more propelled, you know.</p>
INT	<p>Thank you very much, that is very helpful.</p>
INT	<p>Does it feel OK talking about it?</p>
CCOs/P Os	<p><i>(Laughter and saying this is something we do almost every day,)</i></p>
INT	<p>I know, I know you do it with your eyes closed, but what I mean is you don't get an opportunity to sit down and talk about it because your feet don't touch the ground normally, because you are so busy.....<i>(general agreement in the room).</i></p> <p><b>The focus group now moves into the final exercise as a warm down, but also to collect further information on the following:</b></p> <p>The exercise which consists of participants stating 2-3 things which they think of when faced with the following situations:</p> <p>Dealing with the victim</p> <p>Dealing with the accused</p> <p>The family</p> <p>The crime of CSA itself</p>
MSCCO	<p>We are not talking at cross purposes here, but I want us to clarify one or two points when the tape is turned off. <i>(Male CCO indicating to police that he wants to talk with them at the end of the session.)</i></p>
INT	<p><i>Thanks group for their time and participation in the session.</i></p>

INT = Interviewer (Researcher)

SENIOR POs = Police Officers (Both are Sergeants)

CCO = Child Care Officer (Social Worker)

WMPO/= Woman Police Officer (CID Branch)

(CID) = Criminal Investigative Department

MSCCO= Male Senior Child Care Officer (Social Worker)

Minute taker in attendance as back-up to Mp3 recorder

## **Data analysis**

## Appendix 6.5 Codings - core categories from child care officers' data

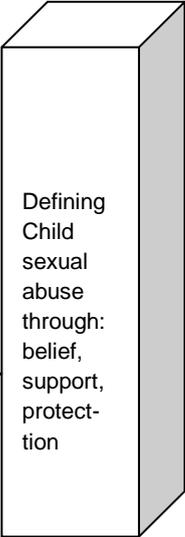
Data excerpts from which themes, concepts and categories emerged. These are reflective of the other interview data that appear in the findings chapter. Selective coding as the final coding gave rise to the core phenomenon, also in the findings chapter.

### From storying to categories: hearing the story and defining it

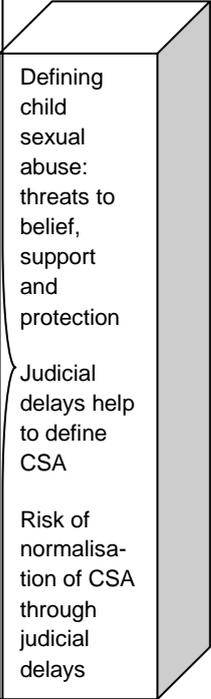
Open coding			
(Excerpt as examples)	Level 1: Themes – Opening up the data	Level 2: Concepts	Level 3: Examples of categorising
<p>INT: So how many CSA allegations would you have had to deal with?</p> <p>CCO #1: I would say more than 15 a year.....Also included are teen pregnancies. You get a lot of those.....The hospital also refers to us termination of pregnancy to children under 16 yrs.</p> <p>INT: Out of the approximate 15 cases a year.....What are the main types of CSA?</p> <p>CCO #1: Teen pregnancies, and rapes.</p> <p>INT: And is that consistently so....2 main categories?</p> <p>CCO #1: Yes...It is an everyday occurrence.</p> <p>CCO #6: Uhm. Initially it was more difficult than it is now, to be honest .....and I used to ask them how do you deal with CSA every single day; and then they would be like "you get used to it" I am not saying that it is no longer impactful but you get used to it. Telling the story for it to be actioned.</p> <p>CCO #3: The children gave evidence beautifully – they did their part.</p>	<p><b>Defining the act:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainly female CSA cases</li> <li>• Types are inclusive of penetrative and non-penetrative acts</li> <li>• High numbers of cases- 'CSA is an everyday occurrence'</li> <li>• Significant numbers result in teenage pregnancy</li> </ul> <p><b>Storying patterns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credible and trustworthy</li> <li>• Quiet and reserved</li> <li>• Hesitant then becoming confident</li> <li>• Consistent in story telling</li> </ul> <p>Pregnant teenagers reluctant disclosure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSA is a very significant part of the CCOs workload</li> <li>• Mostly female victims</li> <li>• Significant pregnancy levels</li> <li>• Pregnant teenagers and their specific needs</li> </ul> <p>Telling the story to be believed</p> <p>Sexual abuse leading to pregnancy</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; width: fit-content;"> <p>Defining child sexual abuse:</p> <p>Significantly high levels of rapes and teen pregnancies</p> <p>CSA - a very common occurrence</p> <p>Victim stories told in a trustworthy manner</p> </div>

## From storying to categories: telling the story and taking care of the story cont'd

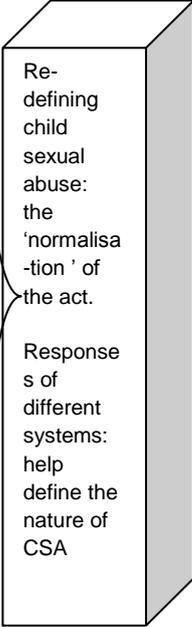
Open coding			
(Excerpts as example)	Level 1: Themes – Opening up the data	Level 2: Concepts	Categories
<p>CCO #1: She was very quiet and reserved, I would say a little hesitant to speak. Eventually she became more confident and was able to disclose. .....</p> <p>CCO #6: ...But there have been cases before where the child was also very specific, very articulate etc.</p> <p>....but that case nothing came about...it is possible also that when they get to the police they are not able to give statement.</p> <p>CCO #1: .....with teenage pregnancy, usually when parents go to the police, they will say we don't really want to go forward with the matter. So those will not go any further. And as I said you usually have the adjournments, and different tactics that delay the process.</p> <p><b>Taking care of the story: intervention</b></p> <p>CCO #2: Well my knowledge base is in terms of social work and the fact that ok in social work we always look at systems, so we can say ok if something has happened here with this child, it has to have an effect....if the sexual abuse is not dealt with the behaviour in the school, in the home, outward, outward signs of disruptive behaviour, (<i>interviewee pauses ohm</i>), the child can become promiscuous ....you are preventing that from happening...So you have to move then fairly swiftly....Another thing we go by as well is the doctor's report, a medical report, which would say in the child (sic) whether any signs of sexual assault were seen. So we go by the medical reports as well.</p>	<p>Time interval affects disclosure</p> <p>Actions of parents and teenage pregnancy</p> <p>Telling the story – no action wanted</p> <p>Taking care of the story</p> <p>Efforts aimed at future prevention</p> <p>Fixing the problem – focusing on the victim</p>	<p>Outcome impacted by time and other people.</p> <p>Relabelling of CSA through non-action</p> <p>Systems approach to intervention</p> <p>Prevention has a feminine face</p>	<p>Defining child sexual abuse:</p> <p>CSA outcome influenced by time, family and accused</p> <p>Pregnancy can affect prosecution</p> <p>Prevention has a gendered face</p>

<b>Open coding</b>			
<b>(Excerpts as examples during constant comparison phase)</b>	<b>Level one: Themes – Opening up the data</b>	<b>Level two: Concepts</b>	<b>Level 3: Core categories</b>
<p><b>Assessment and therapeutic intervention in ‘high’ rates of referrals</b></p> <p>CCO #5: Well the mother was really concerned and she did believe her daughter. So that assisted a great deal.....Yes we employ....interview strategies where you get the person to be comfortable. .....</p> <p>Dealing with the younger children especially like for instance 5 years and under, that sort of age range.....they are some children who are very articulate mind you and then there are some who would not sit down and have a dialogue with you, so then there is the use of the anatomical dolls....</p> <p>INT: So not all cases are referred to the psychologist?</p> <p>SCCO: No. But the point I am making that even that has its limitations. If you have a deficit in your resources as it relates to manpower it is obvious that you are going to have a deficit in terms of what this manpower is able to give and that includes counselling, the long-term counselling.</p> <p>CCO #6: Yes there is also a survivors group. .....</p> <p>My job is to illicit the information from the client as best as possible,...the goal is also to educate, and I like to let children know, even when things like this happen it is never your fault....and it is my goal to move them from that stage – that point, to move them pass it. That is why we refer them to the psychologist, because when incidents happen at this age it is best to deal with it on the ball, deal with it readily so the child as best (sic) can move on, because you don’t want the child to be 14 or 15 and the issue not dealt with.</p>	<p>Dealing with mother’s emotional reactions</p> <p>Different patterns to telling the story</p> <p>Preventative intervention has its resource limitations</p> <p>Preventive support with rapes and pregnancies</p> <p>Preventive support compounded by judicial inaction</p>	<p>Parents’/mothers’ critical role in defining the sexual abuse</p> <p>CCOs preventive role has limits</p>	 <p>Defining Child sexual abuse through: belief, support, protection</p>

**Systems impacting the story: different systems' responses**

<b>Open coding</b>			
<b>(Excerpts as examples during constant comparison phase)</b>	<b>Level one: Themes – Opening up the data</b>	<b>Level two: Concepts</b>	<b>Level 3: Core categories</b>
<p>CCO #2: Because it is sad but that case like these might be adjourned until she is 15. (a big long sigh by officer of resignation). We don't have any control over that part of it.</p> <p><b>Ongoing support to child and family influenced by the need to protect; prosecution status and judicial postponements</b></p> <p>.....CCO #4: The system is not child friendly. Something needs to be done. They are victimized all over again...I am really upset when some some parents say they want help for their children but they don't want to put them through the court system especially when the children are young..."I have been here six years and none of the CSA cases I have had have reached the high court as yet.....</p> <p><b>Collaborative links with the police.</b></p> <p>CCO #4: I don't think so, but if I were (sic), I would say I would like to see greater collaboration between the department (CCB) and the police department as well as a speedier process within the court system once a charge has been brought against the abuser (sic). I am not sure what can be done to the cases, the conclusion any speedier, but I think they are a bit too long, they take a bit too long...</p> <p><b>Interagency collaboration with hospital</b></p> <p>CCO #4: A lot of our cases too, I forgot to mention come from the hospital, so whenever a child is raped, or has to be admitted to the hospital because of a sexual incident, the hospital always refer to us and automatically a case conference is called and the child is not released or discharged until the CCB intervenes...</p>	<p>Lengthy adjournments affect prosecution outcomes</p> <p>CCOs' lack of control over outcomes for child</p> <p>The parents' dilemma concerning prosecution</p> <p>CCOs help parents overcome challenges</p> <p>Individual CSA Communities of Practice (CoPs) can fragment responses</p> <p>Lengthy adjournments increase CCOs' workloads</p> <p>Collaborative treatment intervention as a coherent CoP</p>	<p>Masking of real CSA numbers by: lack of parental support and judicial delays</p>	 <p>Defining child sexual abuse: threats to belief, support and protection</p> <p>Judicial delays help to define CSA</p> <p>Risk of normalisation of CSA through judicial delays</p>

**Systems impacting the story: different systems' responses**

Open coding			
(Excerpts as examples during constant comparison phase)	Level one: Themes – Opening up the data	Level two: Concepts	Level 3: Core categories
<p><b>Impact of Judicial process</b></p> <p>INT: What was the final outcome?</p> <p>CCO #1: I don't consider there to be a final outcome, because it went on from the Magistrate's court to the high court, but up to this point in time, I don't know of her being called to give her evidence at the high court. I don't know if there is really a conclusion.....</p> <p>INT: How do you feel about that?</p> <p>CCO #1: That upsets me. It is very frustrating.....on reflection with another case – the girl was 13. I was not working with her initially and the case finally came to court when she was 20 years. Seven years later.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>SCCO: Usually if a parent is going to drop a case, he or she can drop it. In this case I think because of the nature of the case and because of all the things that were surrounding it; all the psychological pressures and so on that the mother was under and I was able to show her that ok I am not judging you – as you rightly said – because you took the money, but I have spoken to.....and now our QC is going to be there for you, so that you have additional help.</p> <p>CCO #2: So a sense of uselessness sometimes, frustration at the system, uhm because these things take years and it is not fair that it happened at 7 and then at 15 yrs you have to be dealing with that.</p> <p>Uhhh....because sometimes early sexual introduction, sometimes might lead to children being promiscuous.</p>	<p>CO's emotional responses to two tiered court system</p> <p>Working with parents</p> <p>Emotional support to mothers</p> <p>CCO support to mothers/parents makes a difference</p> <p>Mother taking money from accused</p> <p>CCOs' emotional response to judicial delays</p> <p>CCOs' feelings of disempowerment</p>	<p>Systems impact CCOs emotional responses</p> <p>Mothers' silence over allegation being bought</p> <p>Parental action helps redefine CSA</p> <p>Long judicial delays negatively impact victim and professional</p>	 <p>Re-defining child sexual abuse: the 'normalisation' of the act.</p> <p>Responses of different systems: help define the nature of CSA</p>

Open coding			
(Excerpts as examples during constant comparison phase)	Level one: Themes-Opening up the data	Level two: Concepts	Level 3: Core categories
<p>CCO #2: If they are not the perpetrator, I think my job is basically to help the parent cope and the child itself will be going through the many challenges associated with being the victim of CSA. The parents themselves will be going through their own challenges, self blaming, denial, and some parents will go as far as not believing the child, if it is a case of the step parent who is the alleged perpetrator....</p> <p>INT: Blaming, denial, you mentioned...not believing?</p> <p>CCO #2: Yes especially if the person is their husband, boyfriend and their provider. I haven't had many cases of that though. But I know that that it has happened to other officers who experienced that where parents come out straight and say it is not true.</p> <p><b>Effects of child sexual abuse allegations on CCOs</b></p> <p>INT: Ok, share with me some of the emotions you feel, on a personal level.</p> <p>CCO #2: Anger, anger, especially with this 7-year-old. When I looked at her I just...well that one really had me, umhh (<i>interviewee reflective pause</i>) you feel angry. How to put it, as if things are not being done. Sometimes you feel useless, ok, sometimes you do your report, you do all of this and then in the end, it is like nothing might come out of it and then the mother might say she is not doing anything about it, if the police takes five years and the court takes ten years; ok, sometimes you feel -ok, why am I referring this to the police, I feel that way sometimes, why am I doing this, just formality?</p>	<p>Dealing with mothers' mixed emotional reactions</p> <p>The mothers' denial response to allegations</p> <p>CCOs help parents overcome challenges</p> <p>CCO's vicarious emotional response to allegations</p> <p>Masking of real CSA numbers by parents' actions</p> <p>CCO's vicarious experience of mothers' emotion</p>	<p>Parents'/mothers reaction influence outcome of allegation</p> <p>Pivotal re-defining role of mothers</p>	<p>Re-defining child sexual abuse:</p> <p>Risk of perpetuation through e.g., non-prosecution</p>

## Appendix 6.6 Codings - core categories from police data

Data excerpts from which themes, concepts and categories emerged. These are reflective of the other interview data that appear in the findings chapter. Selective coding as the final coding gave rise to the core phenomenon, also in the findings chapter.

### From storying to categories: hearing the Story:

Open coding			
Data excerpt examples	Level one: Themes-Opening up the data	Level two: Concepts	Level 3: Categories
<p>St. Srg....Whilst it might seem ok for the young adult who was willing to participate in this, it is abuse; and the adult, the senior person will abuse this young adult because it (sic) is a willing participant in an illegal activity... although some of them might not know that it is illegal for a girl of 13 to be having sex. About 5 years ago we had a 12-year-old who celebrated her birthday with 12 men that she handpicked herself.</p> <p>Interviewer: What was the outcome of that case?</p> <p>St. Srg:...We charged one or two persons, but in the end once they reach 16 yrs and that case has not started in court, nobody comes to court and gives evidence- you understand me, and the cases, are thrown out for want of a prosecution</p> <p>Interviewer: So are you saying...it is almost becoming....</p> <p>St. Srg: The norm</p> <p>Interviewer: The norm?</p> <p>St. Srg: The norm</p> <p>St.Srg: The norm(<i>emphasizing norm</i>),</p>	<p><b>Rape (non-consensual sex) &amp; unlawful sex (consensual)</b></p> <p><b>Rape</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Something different to consensual sex</li> <li>▪ Child does not agree</li> <li>▪ Traumatic experience</li> <li>▪ Violation of mind and body</li> <li>▪ Violence and trauma</li> </ul> <p><b>Consensual sex</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Of own free will</li> <li>▪ Girl gives permission</li> <li>▪ Mental and emotional giving</li> </ul> <p>Just a violation of the law</p> <p><b>Early sexualisation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increasing number of referrals from Child Care Board</li> <li>▪ Girls' promiscuity</li> <li>▪ Early sexualisation</li> <li>▪ Willing participants</li> <li>▪ Alleged ignorance (of victims' age) of abusers</li> <li>▪ Rape ('real' CSA)</li> <li>▪ An illegal activity</li> </ul> <p><b>Willing participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We agree girl is 'wotless'- (not of good character/ promiscuous)</li> <li>▪ Know right from wrong (esp.; teenagers)</li> <li>▪ 'Putting themselves out there' (i.e., willingly having consensual sex)</li> <li>▪ Entrapment by 'crafty' 13 &amp;14-year-olds</li> </ul>	<p>The "norm" of rape &amp; frequency of</p> <p>"Consensual" Sex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violation of the law</li> <li>• The trauma of rape</li> <li>• The culpability in consensual sex</li> </ul> <p><b>Early sexualisation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consensual sex</li> <li>• Unlawful sex</li> <li>• Illegal activity</li> <li>• Ignorance of some abusers</li> <li>• Willing participants</li> </ul>	<p>Defining Child sexual abuse:</p> <p>More than a violation of the law;</p> <p>Routes to normalisation of sex</p> <p>Defining Child sexual abuse: More than a violation of the law</p>

## From storying to categories: telling the story: (cont'd)

Open coding			
Text (Excerpts as examples)	Level one: Themes- Opening up the data	Level two: Concepts	Level 3: Categories
<p>WmPO #4 I find that the most of children I have interviewed I tend to believe what they tell me because they are very vivid in the details. They are so many things they would like to say, but because the parent is there.... It makes that person very believable?</p> <p>St.Srg....where a child of 16 has given birth....Obviously she would have been having sex prior to this, and she is 16 now, she can give consent...no offence is being committed here. But what is being committed is that before she was 16 she was having sex...will she be willing to go to court and give evidence against the supposed father?</p> <p>NO (<i>PO raises voice most empathically</i>).She is not going to do that especially when the guy might have the presence of mind to be taking care of this child...So we have a problem. Are we going to put this father in prison and then there is a child there to be supported? Nobody is going to prosecute the guy because he is supporting the child and we are left with a pseudo acceptance of abuse PO #</p>	<p><b><u>In rape (the 'authentic')</u></b> Candid - Just spit it out; Relief – at last I can tell.</p> <p><b><u>In incest</u></b> Very aggressive, sad, emotional, crying, confused.</p> <p><b><u>Consensual sex</u></b> Apprehensive (at telling story in front of adult) Missing links in story; telling lies; trying to hide it.</p> <p><b><u>Adolescent pregnancy</u></b></p> <p><b><u>As witness in court</u></b> Child unable to testify Scared to the point of incoherence; not talking; difficulty in answering questions; having to face accused. Alleged perpetrator's status in/with family can influence. Victim's pregnancy. Alleged perpetrator's agreement to support child. Victim's vulnerability – age and socio-economic situation.</p>	<p>Storying pattern with PO's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Want to tell</li> <li>• Constraints to telling</li> </ul> <p>Storying &amp; other patterns in court:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Want to tell</li> <li>• Unable to tell</li> <li>• Lack of witness</li> <li>• Long court del</li> </ul> <p>Storying influence in family</p> <p>Acceptance of abuse in some families</p> <p>Child's vulnerability in pregnancy</p> <p>Family's acquiescence</p>	<p>Disclosure: Routes to normalisation of CSA</p> <p>Child's vulnerability in disclosure</p> <p>Adolescent Pregnancy</p>

Examples of open coding leading to concepts and categories. These are reflective of the interview data, not mentioned here in the interest of economy but appear throughout the findings chapter. Selective coding as the final coding gave rise to the core phenomenon also in the findings chapter.

Taking care of the story... Cont'd

Level 2: Codes -Concepts	Level 3: Categories	Category
<p><b>Rape &amp; Consensual sex</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Violation of the law</li> <li>▪ The trauma of rape</li> <li>▪ Culpability in “consensual” sex - whose?</li> </ul> <p><b>Culpability in “consensual” sex - whose?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unlawful sex</li> <li>▪ Illegal activity</li> <li>▪ Ignorance (of child’s age) of some abusers</li> <li>▪ Child willingly participating/ promiscuous</li> <li>▪ Entrapment by ‘crafty’ 13 &amp;14-year-olds</li> </ul> <p><b>Distinguishing patterns in storying of sexual abuse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In consensual sex</li> <li>• In rape (the ‘authentic’)</li> <li>• In incest</li> <li>• In court</li> </ul> <p><b>Contributing factors to child sexual abuse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Acceptance of abuse in some families</li> <li>▪ Child’s vulnerability</li> <li>▪ Family’s acquiescence</li> <li>▪ Sub-culture of the normalisation of abuse</li> </ul> <p><b>Searching for proof of sexual abuse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Forensic evidence</li> <li>▪ Statementing</li> <li>▪ Parental role in prosecution</li> <li>▪ Quest for strong evidence and prosecutorial case</li> <li>▪ Interview of and statementing by child</li> <li>▪ Investigatory process follow dictates of policy and law</li> <li>▪ Effect of parental support /non-support</li> <li>▪ Judicial delays for many years</li> </ul>	<p><b>Defining child sexual abuse</b></p> <p><b>Defining influenced by child’s characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early sexual initiation</li> </ul> <p>Telling the story for it to be defined Storying (disclosure) patterns</p> <p>Sub-culture factors in defining child sexual abuse</p> <p>The normalisation of CSA Mothers’ pivotal role</p> <p>Searching for proof of sexual abuse: Quest for a strong evidentiary case</p> <p>The interview and statement play critical roles</p> <p>Mothers’ role in defining CSA by support and non-support</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 20px;"> <p>Defining CSA:</p> <p>Routes to normalisation;</p> <p>If the evidence fits it is CSA</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Defining CSA:</p> <p>Judicial delays Parents/ Mothers influence</p> </div>

## **Appendix 6.7          Focus group analysis - joint police officers' and child care officers' data**

### **Themes which emerged from the focus group discussion.**

#### **Theme One: How Child Sexual Abuse is Defined**

##### **Definition of abuse occurs at three (3) levels:**

1. What is articulated in the descriptive sense of what it means, e.g., what the law says and what the international definition says.
2. Defining child sexual abuse is also not only in terms of whether it has occurred or not, but whether there is sound proof to support what is alleged. For example, if there is no forensic proof, and if the child's credibility is in question, then the identity of the child sexual abuse definition is under serious threat. This is seen in the statement:

P.O    ...after the interview with the consent of the mum, we will take that person to the doctor where an examination will be done to confirm the allegation and then we will look to interview the complainant.....

The definition is embedded within the supporting scaffold of the criminal investigatory procedures, e.g., the written statement, visiting the scene of the crime, obtaining physical evidence, e.g., the child's clothes.

3. The court-worthiness of it; whether there is enough credible information to bring before the court. Court-worthiness is in turn influenced by:
  - The credibility of the victim and
  - The parent's (most often the mother's) support of the case going forward to be investigated and prosecuted.

The CCO's assessment appears absent from this equation.

##### **Sub theme:**

Protection is contingent on the following:

- Child's cooperation
- Mother's cooperation
- CCB and Police working jointly and cooperatively in removing child from home as in a ward-ship situation.

## **Theme Two : Rape**

Rape is a serious matter so lying is looked for at the interview.

- Children lie in some cases.
- Some girls might lie where the serious allegation of rape is concerned.
- Some women lie about being raped; it is likely that girls will do the same.

## **Theme Three (3): Knowing Child's Previous History**

A child's previous history as victim, or particularly as a willing participant to their 'sexual abuse', needs to be investigated by police before the court hearing, especially as the defence might use some aspects of this information to discredit the child victim.

Researching the child's history as victim of rape or "consensual" is therefore important. The police communicate with the CCO(s) on this matter and also find out what's going on in the neighbourhood as part of their preparation for taking the matter before the courts.

## **Theme Four (4): Collaboration Facilitates the Police's Mandate**

The criminal investigatory role of the police is facilitated and complemented by the Child Care Board's authority. Sharing factual information, and/or seeking factual information from the Child Care Board, is the goal of the criminal investigation. This is primarily to expedite criminal charges. Collaborating/communicating between POs and CCOs is done on a 'need-to-know basis'. This is reflected in the referral practices and POs' statements. The purpose of the referral system is to give sufficient information to the police for them to carry out their investigation.

## Appendix 6.8

## Sexual Offences Act 1992

ACT	OFFENCE	SANCTION	COMMENTS
<b>I. CRIMINAL LAW:</b>			
(1) <b>Sexual Offences Act (1992)</b>  An act to revise the law relating to sexual crimes	Rape:  s.3:  -Person who has sexual intercourse with another person without the consent of the other person  -knows that the other person does not consent  -is reckless as to whether the other person consents	Imprisonment for life	Person under age of 14 cannot commit rape (s.(3)  A person under the age of 12 cannot commit any crime under this act. (s. 21)  -any penetration of -penis to vagina -penis to mouth -penis to anus -inanimate object to vagina or anus
s.4	“Statutory” rape: under age 14  -sexual intercourse with person under age 14 years  -not a spouse  -consent of child does not matter  -mistaken belief that child is over 14 years does not matter	Imprisonment for life	
s.5	“Statutory” rape ages 14-16  -sexual intercourse with a person between 14 and 16 years	10 years	-person honestly believed that the other person was 16 years old or more  -had reasonable grounds for that belief AND  -is not older than 24 years and has not been previously charged with the same or similar offence.
s.6	Incest  -sexual intercourse with a person knowing that person to be  -parent ,child, brother, sister, grandparent, uncle, niece, aunt, nephew  -consent immaterial	Imprisonment  -Adult with person under 14: life imprisonment  -adult with person over 14 years :10 years  -minors 14 years or more: 2 years	Defence: that the person committed the offence under duress, fear or intimidation of any kind.

s.7	Sexual intercourse with step-children  -An adult who has sexual intercourse with  -his or her adopted child, step-child, foster child, ward or dependant  -in the adult's custody	Imprisonment  -Adult with minor under 14 years-life imprisonment  -minor 14 years or more, 10 years	
s.9	Buggery	Life imprisonment	
s. 11	Indecent assault  -assault accompanied by words or circumstances indicating an indecent intention	Imprisonment for 5 years	Child under the age of 16 cannot give consent which would prevent an act being an assault for the purposes of the section.
s.12	Serious Indecency under 16  -An act whether natural or unnatural by a person involving the use of the genital organs for the purposes of arousing or gratifying sexual desire  -committed on or towards a child under 16 person or  -incited child under 16 to commit with the accused or another person	Imprisonment for 15 years	
s. 13	Procuration:  -Procurement of a minor under 16 years to have intercourse with any person either in B'dos or elsewhere-	Imprisonment for 10 years	
Miscellaneous  s. 30  s. 31	In camera hearings    Oaths by minors		-Where complainant (victim) is a minor, evidence shall be heard in camera  -Where a minor is a witness but cannot in the opinion of the court understand the nature of an oath, evidence may be given not on oath  -no person convicted on the uncorroborated evidence of a child under 16

<p><b>OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSON ACT</b></p>	<p>Generally:</p> <p>Murder</p> <p>Manslaughter</p> <p>Inflicting bodily injury</p> <p>Endangering life or safety, unlawfully maliciously, recklessly</p> <p>Assaults</p>	<p>Death</p> <p>Life imprisonment</p>	
<p>s. 14</p>	<p>Infanticide</p> <p>-a woman by any willful act or omission</p> <p>-causes the death of her child under the age of 12 months</p> <p>-while the balance of her mind was disturbed</p> <p>-by reason of not having been fully recovered from the effect of giving birth</p>	<p>Imprisonment for life</p>	
<p><b>PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN ACT 1981</b> s.5</p>	<p>Cruelty to children</p> <p>Any person over the age of 16 years</p> <p>-having custody of a child under 16</p> <p>- assaults, ill-treats, neglects, abandons or exposes such a child</p> <p>-in a manner likely to cause unnecessary suffering or injury to its health</p>	<p>Fine of \$120 AND/OR Imprisonment for 1 year (indictably)</p> <p>Fine of \$24 AND/OR imprisonment for 3 months (summarily)</p>	<p>Police Constable has power to arrest, without a warrant, any person he suspects or who has committed such an offence.</p> <p><b>Place of safety(s. 7)</b></p> <p>- constable may take child to a place of safety, after which child may be brought before magistrate within 28 days for magistrate</p> <p>-magistrate may make an order as the circumstances require for the care and detention of the child until a reasonable time has elapsed for a charge to be made against some person for having committed an offence under the Act</p> <p>-Child Care Board to provide for a place of safety</p> <p><b>Warrants to search for and remove child (s 10):</b></p>

			<p>-where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child under 16 has been assaulted, ill treated or neglected or that any scheduled offence eg: exposing children whereby life is endangered contrary to s.21 OAPA;</p> <p>-magistrate may authorize the Child Care Board or any other person to search for the child and take it and detain it in a place of safety until it can be brought before the magistrate.</p>
<p><b>DOMESTIC PROTECTION ORDERS ACT(1992-4)</b></p>	<p>Domestic violence not defined</p> <p>Domestic protection order may be applied for by: (inter alia)</p> <p>-Spouse, former spouse of the person against whom the order is sought in relation to offence committed or harassment conducted against spouse or child of the household</p> <p>-A Child Care or Welfare Officer on behalf of a child</p> <p>where a person has:</p> <p>-engaged in or has threatened to engage in conduct that is capable of constituting a criminal offence or an attempt to commit a criminal offence against a child of the household (inter alia)</p> <p>-engaged in conduct that may reasonably be regarded as harassment of a child of the household (inter alia)</p> <p>“Harassment” intimidation of a person by</p> <p>-persistent verbal abuse</p> <p>-threats of physical</p>	<p>-Protection order for one year restraining the respondent from engaging in such conduct</p> <p>-order of exclusion from the premises</p> <p>Power of arrest attached if court is satisfied that respondent has caused or is likely to cause actual bodily harm to the child</p> <p>Breach of order</p> <p>-fine of \$5000 or imprisonment for a term of 12 months or both.</p>	<p>In making order, court to consider the following:</p> <p>-need to ensure that persons are protected from violence and harassment</p> <p>-the welfare of the child, who is a member of the respondent’s household</p> <p>-need to protect the institution of marriage or a union other than marriage and to give protection to the family as a natural and fundamental group unit of society.</p>

	violence -malicious damage of property of a person -any other means persistent following from place to place - hiding of clothes and property - watching and besetting house, school etc.		
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