

**THE PORTRAYAL OF PAEDOPHILIA IN THE MEDIA: AN  
ANALYSIS OF THEMES AND STIGMA IN SOUTH AFRICAN  
NEWSPRINT MEDIA 2013-2018**

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**Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of  
Social Science (Clinical Psychology) in the School of Applied Human Sciences, College  
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**August 2019**

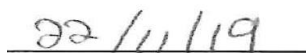
## Declaration

I, Michelle McCulloch, declare that the Dissertation/Thesis entitled, “*The portrayal of paedophilia in the media: an analysis of themes and stigma in South African newsprint media 2013-2018*” which I hereby submit for the degree, **Master of Social Science (Clinical Psychology)** at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg Campus), is my own work. I also declare that this thesis/dissertation has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution and that all the sources that have been used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank UKZN for their guidance and expertise in the field of research.

I would like to thank my parents for their continuous support and encouragement throughout the last two years. You have always believed in me, encouraged me and motivated me to pursue my passion.

*I acknowledge that all references are accurately recorded and that unless otherwise stated all work contained herein is my own.*

Michelle McCulloch

## **Abstract**

Child sexual offenders and paedophilic acts are highly controversial and widely debated topics, especially in the media. An assumption is made that paedophilic acts are among the most highly stigmatised and misunderstood behaviours. However, an examination of print media portrayals of paedophilic acts, potentially perpetuating the stigma attached to paedophiles, especially in a South African context, has yet to be conducted. This study aimed to address this issue by examining South African print media reports i) to identify themes concerning paedophilic acts, ii) to determine whether such themes portray paedophilic acts in accordance with scientific research on paedophilia and the media and iii) how this reporting might impact on the stigma attached to paedophilia. South African newsprint articles were located and analysed using thematic analysis to identify key themes that emerged from the data and juxtaposed with scientific literature on the topic of paedophilic acts, the media and stigmatisation. The study found nine dominant themes (and four sub-themes). These themes aligned with the scientific literature on the media, perpetuating stigma associated with paedophilia and paedophilic acts.

**Keywords:** *Paedophilic acts; Paedophilia; Child sexual offenders; Paedophiles; Mental illness; The media; Stigmatisation; Thematic analysis; Qualitative methods.*

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction and overview

#### 1.1 Introduction

Paedophilic acts have been a popular topic in the media, being presented in the film industry, fictional books, scholarly articles and journalistic articles. Many studies have been conducted on how the media contributes to the stigmatisation of certain population groups, such as feminists (Day, Gough, & McFadden, 2004) race (Teo, 2000), and those with mental disorders (Klin & Lemish, 2008). Most of the findings suggest that the media contributes negatively to the stigma of these groups. Various studies (Jahnke & Hoyer 2013; McCartan, 2004; McCartan, 2010a) have explored paedophilic acts in terms of the stigma attached to them, the public's perception of paedophiles and the media's constructions of and reactions to paedophilic acts. However, little research has explored how the media perceives and portrays paedophilic acts and child sexual offenders. Such portrayals may, to some extent, form the public's knowledge and attitude towards them. Although paedophiles may be perceived as criminals that are threats to the public and need to be punished, the DSM 5 regards them as individuals suffering from a mental illness that needs to be treated (American Psychiatric Association, 2013; Jahnke & Hoyer, 2013).

Society views paedophiles as criminals who should be locked away and the key thrown away. The only exposure society has of paedophiles may be those who are in contact with the law through committing the sexual offences (Araji & Finkelhor, 1985). The stigma attached to paedophilic acts increases the likelihood of these individuals not seeking treatment (Feldman & Crandall, 2007). It needs to be mentioned that not all individuals engaging in paedophilic acts (engaging in sexual contact with pre-pubescent children) may be regarded as paedophiles (Marshall, 1997; O'Donohue, Regev, & Hagstrom, 2000). Likewise, not all paedophiles (those who meet the DSM 5 criteria) end up engaging in sexual contact with pre-pubescent children (Marshall, 1997; O'Donohue, Regev, & Hagstrom, 2000). One of the contributing factors to the increasing stigma may be how the media portrays these individuals who have sexually abused children, as these platforms inform and shape the public's attitudes with regards to various societal issues. This platform of the media fails to acknowledge broader social issues, unavailability of help resources and facts about offending (Ducat, et al., 2009). Thus, the media may not always reflect accurate information to the public (Ducat, et al., 2009).

## 1.2 Research aim

The aim of this study was to explore how those engaging in paedophilic acts are portrayed in the South African media, by collecting and analysing South African newspaper articles. Furthermore, this study aimed to identify specific themes in newsprint media regarding individuals engaging in paedophilic acts. This study also aimed to explore the stigma associated with the portrayal of paedophilic acts in media reports and consider whether such media reporting was likely to perpetuate stigma.

## 1.3 Definitions of terms

Certain terms will be used throughout this study and need to be clearly defined and understood from the start. These terms and their definitions are discussed below:

**Child sexual offender** – ‘Child sexual offender’ is not a medical diagnosis and does not meet the full criteria of a paedophile. It is an individual who has performed some form of sexual act on a minor for sexual gratification, thus committing a punishable offense (Murray, 2000).

**Paedophile** – Paedophilia is a clinical diagnosis where the individual fantasises, is sexually aroused by or has sexual urges towards a prepubescent child for a period of at least 6 months (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

**Paedophilic acts** - Any sexual act performed on a pre-pubescent child by an adult for sexual gratification to the adult (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

**Media** – The media are seen as meaning producers, a complex and multi-faceted industry that has the power to change social norms, and globalization and therefore can shape and influence the public opinion (Burton, 2010; McQuil, 2010).

**Stigma** – Stigma is seen as a characteristic that is deeply discrediting, where an individual is devalued by society because they possess a deviant trait that has resulted from a social interaction where one’s identity fails to meet the standard of society’s normative expectations (Goffman, 1963).

**Thematic analysis** - Thematic analysis can be described as an interpretive form of analysis which identifies recurrent themes or patterns in the data (Clarke, Braun & Hayfield, 2015).

**Qualitative methods** - Qualitative research methods attempt to study human actions from the perspective of those being investigated. The approach is thus about describing and understanding rather than explaining human behaviour (Babbie & Mouton, 2005).

#### 1.4 Thesis structure

The structure of this study is as follows:

Chapter 1: This introduction and overview include a brief explanation of the topic of the research, the aims and objectives, and defines key terms that will be used throughout.

Chapter 2: The literature review is divided into six main sections and provides a background to the study's aims and objectives. The first section is an overview of mental illness where debates around mental illness are explored. The next section is an overview of paedophilia and paedophilic acts as constituting a mental illness and a criminal offence. Differences between paedophilic acts and child molesters, the *modus operandi* of a paedophile, as well as data on the epidemiology and aetiology of paedophilic acts are also covered. The following section presents the phenomenon of stigma and stigma related to paedophilic acts. The next section explores the availability, access and implications of treatment for paedophiles. A section on media reviews definitions of the media, the portrayal of mental illness in the media and the portrayal of child sexual abuse and paedophilic acts in the media. The last section presents a theory of stigma as related to paedophilic acts.

Chapter 3: The methodology chapter presents the research design, sampling, data collection, inclusion and exclusion criteria, instruments used, a summary of the analytic procedure, and lastly explores the reliability, validity and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4: The results chapter presents results from the thematic analysis, presenting a table, direct quotes and the themes that emerged.

Chapter 5: The discussion chapter discusses the themes that emerged in the results section, answering the research questions and comparing the results to existing literature.

Chapter 6: The final chapter, the conclusion entails a brief summary of the research conducted, the strengths, weaknesses and limitations of the research and suggestions for possible future research on this topic.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature review**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides background on the research topic and how the media portrays paedophilic acts with reference to child sexual offenders.

#### **2.2 Overview of mental illness**

##### **2.2.1 Definition and debates around mental illness/disorders**

Mental illness is often described as something people experience or suffer from, much like a physical illness. But there is a vast difference between the two. A mental illness is largely diagnosed and treated based on the patient's self-report, as there is no single test that can show mental illness exists, whereas a physical illness is something that can be seen and tested with empirically validated objective physical measures (Slade, 2009). The term mental illness refers to all of the diagnosable mental disorders. These are characterised by: abnormalities in cognition, emotion, mood, or different aspects of behaviour such as social interaction, and varies depending on age, race, gender and culture (US Department of Health and Human Services, 1999). Therefore, symptoms that are related to behaviour reflect variations or abnormalities in brain function and lie on a continuum from illness to distress (US Department of Health and Human Services, 1999). A key factor for diagnosis would therefore be how much distress or impairment the person experiences in their daily functioning.

Suffering, loss of functioning, and perceived threats are among the experiences that lead people to mental health services, which is when mental disorders are usually diagnosed, and treatment plans are proposed using the research-based Diagnostic Statistic Manual (Bolton, 2008), now in its fifth edition (APA, 2013). The DSM is probably the leading diagnostic handbook for mental health and medical professionals as it provides professionals with an evidence-based descriptive nosology of the major mental illnesses. Despite the ongoing improvements in DSM, this approach is not without debate and controversy. Criticism of the notion of mental illness and diagnosis has been around for centuries, with at least two conflicting views: some believe it is a pseudoscientific and unhelpful form of medicalisation, while other social groups still believe in its relevance (Pilgrim, 2007). Although making

sense of these opposing views is beyond the scope of this research, a brief contrast of the two opposing views is provided to illustrate the relevance and need for mental illnesses to be diagnoseable and the danger of simply discrediting their existence. Anthropologists and Sociologists have a relativist view. They argue that it is impossible to develop a general concept of mental disorder which would be valid across all social groups, alternately defining it as a culturally specific phenomenon (Horwitz, 2002). This argument is especially valid in an African context where cultural beliefs are often misconstrued as mental disorder by mainstream health professionals rather than respecting the cultural aspect of the symptoms present (Nwoye, 2015). In Africa, psychopathology may be understood as strange behavioural expressions arising from mysterious origins (Nwoye, 2015). In contrast to this view research psychiatrists, clinicians and mental health professionals mostly accept mental disorders that are listed in the DSM, without questioning how they came about and focusing on reliable measures for diagnostic criteria's (Horwitz, 2002).

Malla, Joobar and Garcia (2015) argue that vulnerability to mental illnesses may arise from underlying biological variations and is similar to any other medical illness as it has a biological basis. A further argument is made that explanatory models of mental illness based on scientific evidence exist alongside biogenetic, social and cultural models (Malla et al., 2015). By reducing mental illness to simplistic reductionism, we are not attending to the very complexity of human thinking, behaviour, memories, the idea of self and the consciousness (Malla et al., 2015). Society should be able to acknowledge the existence of mental illness, irrespective of which mental illness the individual may be suffering from and understand the effect it has on that person's life. This allows for severe conditions that cause significant distress (such as paedophilia) to be diagnosed as disorders in order for an evidence-based treatment plan to be implemented. It can also possibly prevent the person from causing further harm to themselves or others. The next section will specifically cover the diagnostic features of paedophilia and give possible explanations for why it is often understood more as a criminal offense than a mental illness.

## **2.3 Overview of paedophilia**

### **2.3.1 Paedophilic disorder**

The term paedophilia derives from the Greek word "child lover" (O'Donohue, Regev, & Hagstrom, 2000). Controversy surrounds this term as different theorists and investigators define the term in different ways. There is also controversy surrounding age and which sexual

activities should be considered under the term paedophilia (Araji & Finkelhor, 1985).

Regardless of which definition is used, the most essential part of any such definition should be a sexual orientation and erotic attraction towards prepubescent children (Berlin, 2014).

The psychological defences that paedophiles use can be summarised into 5 defence patterns: denial, minimization, justification, fabrication and attack (Lanning, 2001). These defence mechanisms, specifically minimisation and justification, would most likely make it extremely difficult for society to understand them. At a clinical level, paedophiles generally possess these characteristics: low self-esteem and self-efficacy, not feeling worthy, feeling inadequate and having a history of dysfunctional relationships (Kear-Colwell & Boer, 2000). These features, which may not be unique to paedophilia, may contribute to their disruptive and dysfunctional behaviour. The diagnostic criteria, as set out in DSM 5, are provided below.

According to the DSM-5, the diagnostic criteria and specifiers for paedophilic disorder are:

Table 2.3.1

*DSM 5 diagnostic criteria and specifiers for paedophilic disorder*

Over a period of six months, recurrent, intense sexually arousing fantasies, sexual urges, or behaviours involving sexual activity with a prepubescent child or children (generally aged 13 years or younger) (APA, 2013).	<p><b>Specify if:</b></p> <p>Sexually attracted to males</p> <p>Sexually attracted to females</p> <p>Sexually attracted to both (APA, 2013)</p>
The individual has acted on these sexual urges, or the sexual urges or fantasies caused marked distress or interpersonal difficulties (APA, 2013).	<p><b>Specify if:</b></p> <p>Limited to incest (APA, 2013).</p>
The individual is at least 16 years of age and is at least 5 years older than the child or children in criterion A (APA, 2013)	<p><b>Specify if:</b></p> <p>Exclusive type (attracted only to children)</p> <p>Non-exclusive type (APA, 2013).</p>

According to Kramer and Bowman (2011) female child sexual offenders and female paedophiles are almost non-existent in the scientific literature, with the female paedophile as a subtype of perpetrator being almost non-existent. The DSM 5 further stipulates that psychophysiological laboratory measures that are useful in diagnosing paedophilic disorder in males, have not been found useful in diagnosing this disorder in females (APA, 2013). Thus, newsprint media covered in this study are likely to only report on male perpetrators.

It should be emphasised that there are some paedophilic males who restrict their desire for sexual contact with children to fantasies only. However, there are paedophilic males that are more at risk of committing an offense because they are not satisfied by fantasies alone (Tenbergen et al., 2015). What is being highlighted here is that some males can be diagnosed with paedophilic disorder because they experience interpersonal distress without ever committing an offense whereas others will commit an offense against children with or without remorse (Tenbergen et al., 2015).

Because it is an officially listed mental disorder in DSM, paedophilia cannot just be viewed as a criminal act. Rather it is seen as a mental disorder where the paedophile experiences significant distress due to intense sexual urges and fantasies of children with or without any physical contact with the child (Houtepen, Sijtsema, & Bogaerts, 2016). This research will, in part, explore whether the subjective distress of the paedophile is mentioned in media reports and explore the implications of the findings.

### **2.3.2 When paedophiles become criminals**

As mentioned above, paedophilia is classified in the authoritative DSM as a diagnosable mental disorder. But when does a paedophile become a punishable criminal offender by law? Most jurisdictions globally have legal statutes that govern dispositional decisions concerning sex offenders. Criminal defendants are usually evaluated by psychiatrists and psychologists to assess their competence to stand trial and to determine whether they can be held criminally responsible if mental illness is suspected (Perry, Neltner, & Allen, 2013). If they cannot be held criminally responsible then they are committed to a psychiatric facility indefinitely (Perry, Neltner, & Allen, 2013). In most countries, the legal system acknowledges that some individuals cannot legally be held responsible for their criminal behaviour because they are mentally ill. In most cases, once a paedophile has committed a criminal offence it is important to evaluate the risk for recidivism and how effective and successful treatment would be in preventing recidivism (Schmucker & Losel, 2015). If the offender's risk for

recidivism is low, this could become a mitigating factor in sentencing (Schmucker & Losel, 2015). Before someone who has engaged in a paedophilic act is sentenced, the court may require that the offender undergoes a psychiatric evaluation to determine their mental status at the time of the offence and assist in treatment options (Stone et al., 2000). This psychiatric evaluation could be vital in determining their current mental stability and provide direction in terms of incarceration and appropriate treatment options. However, if it is the offender's second offence, they are not eligible for parole, probation, or suspension of sentence (Stone et al., 2000). A second offence could be due to the fact the offender was unable to receive the correct treatment the first time around, with the assumption that due to the stigma of paedophilia, treatment was never considered.

Specifically relating to the legal system in South Africa, according to the Criminal law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (32 of 2007) (Republic of South Africa, 2007, p. 13-17), a child sexual offender will be found guilty if they engage in the following acts: "statutory rape, statutory sexual assault, sexual exploitation of children, sexual grooming of children, exposing or displaying or causing the exposure or displaying of child pornography or displaying of pornography to children, using children for or benefiting from child pornography, compelling or causing children to witness sexual offences, sexual acts or self-masturbation, and exposure or causing exposure of genital organs, anus or female breasts to children". Once a child sexual offender has been found guilty and dealt with according to the act (whether they committed the act within or outside South Africa), their name will be recorded on the national register for sex offenders. Future or current employers can have access to this register, and those whose names appear on that list will not be allowed any contact with children in the form of employment, adoption or foster care (Republic of South Africa, 2007).

Although it is important for the safety of children and society as a whole to have a national register for sex offenders, this potentially also poses obstacles for the successfully treated offender. It could mean that the offender would have difficulty reintegrating into society despite having gone through the system and received the necessary treatment and/or sanctions. Severe consequences (socially, economically and psychologically) have been associated with the labelling of sex offenders via the registry (Schultz, 2014). These consequences include denied access to housing and employment and risk of further mental illness, substance abuse problems and stigma (Schultz, 2014). The offender would most likely never be able to obtain employment and would be ostracised by society even if they are



no longer a threat to children. Thus, there is a need for a national register as it provides a form of ‘warning’ that the individual could potentially re-offend and assists in the protection of children. But it also succeeds in ostracising the individual and ensuring they carry this label and stigma with them for the rest of their lives (Schultz, 2014).

### **2.3.3 Prevalence trends of Paedophilic acts in America and South Africa**

One of the major challenges in estimating the actual prevalence of paedophilic acts arises because few paedophiles voluntarily seek treatment, are never apprehended or found guilty, or never act on their urges (Abel & Osborn, 1992). Thus, prevalence trends are inferred from statistics on the victims of child sexual abuse. Although these statistics do not give a true reflection of the prevalence of paedophilia (as not all child sexual offenders are paedophiles) it allows some indication of the prevalence (Abel & Osborn, 1992). In the USA, 17%-31% of females and 7%-16% of males have experienced unwanted sexual contact before the age of 18 years (Buhi, 2005).

Specifically relating to South Africa, a study done by Meinck, Cluver, Boyes, and Loening-Voysey (2016) interviewed 3515 children aged between 10-17 years in predominantly low-income black South African communities. They reported the following statistics on child sexual abuse: “14.8% of children reported lifetime sexual harassment and 12.8% reported sexual harassment in the past year. Up to 2.4% reported lifetime forced exposure to pornography, and 2% reported forced exposure to pornography in the past year. Nine per cent of children reported lifetime contact sexual abuse, 5.9% reported past-year contact sexual abuse exposure, and 2.8% reported frequent monthly sexual abuse victimization. Up to 3.3% of children reported lifetime rape, 0.8% reported past-year rape, and 0.3% reported frequent monthly rape victimization. Past-year (2015) incidence of contact sexual abuse was 5.3%; past-year (2015) rape incidence was 2.1%” (Meinck et al., 2016, p. 912).

Lannen (2016) conducted household and school surveys in South Africa, and found these alarming trends: The youngest female and male victims of sexual abuse were four and six years old respectively (by a known abuser). The study further concluded that the age where a child is most likely to experience any form of sexual abuse (whether it be intercourse, harassment, or exposure) was 14 years for both male and female children in their South African sample (Lannen, 2016).

These statistics are alarming and concerning, not only because they give a clear picture of how vulnerable and unsafe children are, but because they suggest that those perpetrating

paedophilic acts may not be receiving appropriate or effective preventive or treatment interventions. The media often reports such alarming findings (McCartan, 2010a), which, most likely and understandably, evoke strong aversive reactions in the public. These statistics illustrate the prevalence of paedophilic acts and specifically the duration of time during which a typical child victim is abused for. The prevalence rate of paedophilic disorder according to the DSM 5 is unfortunately unknown. The highest possible prevalence for the male population is approximately 3%-5% and unknown among the female population but is likely a small fraction of the prevalence in males (APA, 2013).

### **2.3.4 Aetiology of paedophilic disorder**

The aetiology of paedophiles has been researched, with different views being expressed and various studies being conducted to support those views. These different views will be discussed and compared in order to gain a better understanding of how paedophiles develop such a strong attraction to children.

Earlier studies of the aetiology of paedophilia found that paedophiles had persistent abnormalities in brain functioning (Cohen et al., 2002). They found decreased glucose metabolism, in the temporal and frontal cortices (which are the brain areas implicated in cortical regulation of sexual arousal and erotic discrimination) (Cohen et al., 2002). These abnormalities are associated with a paedophile's sexual hyperarousal towards children (Cohen et al., 2002) Head trauma could also be a predisposing factor for paedophilic acts. This confirms the hypothesis that neurodevelopmental differences or injuries in early childhood may result in being sexually oriented to children (Blanchard et al., 2002). Thus, paedophiles do differ in their overall neurodevelopmental functioning compared to other people and sex offenders (Seto, 2004). Neurodevelopmental differences in paedophiles include: lower IQ, impairment in cognitive abilities, neuroendocrine differences and abnormalities in the brain (especially frontocortical irregularities) (Hall & Hall, 2007). Similarly, Schiffer et al (2007) also found that there was an association between frontostriatal morphometric abnormalities and paedophiles. The study found decreased grey matter volume bilaterally in the ventral striatum, insula, orbitofrontal cortex, and cerebellum of 18 paedophiles compared to 24 controls (Schiffer et al., 2007).

A more recent study (Wiebking & Northoff, 2013) was conducted using functional magnetic resonance imaging and combining emotional and sexual stimuli. The results found that paedophilia was associated with altered brain activity specifically in the frontal and temporal

lobe brain areas (Wiebking & Northoff, 2013). Other recent findings from neurobiological studies found that functional brain deficits were present which appeared to be correlated to a paedophile's sexual orientation and behaviour (Capra & Caffo, 2014). Neuroimaging research also suggests that structural and functional changes in paedophilia appear for the most part in brain regions involved in sexual functions (Capra & Caffo, 2014).

However, this does raise a question of whether some of the changes noted in paedophiles are linked to problems of brain development and maturation or whether brain changes result from life experiences (such as physical and sexual abuse) (Hall & Hall, 2007). This notion will be explored next.

A popular etiological argument in paedophiles is that they themselves had a childhood history of sexual abuse which results in the abused-abuser cycle. In an older study conducted on 151 male perpetrators, 57% of the child molesters compared to 23% of the rapists reported having a history of childhood sexual abuse (Seghorn, Prentky, & Boucher, 1987). Later, a study conducted by Freund and Kuban (1994) found 43.9% of 83 paedophiles compared to 13.4% of 134 controls were reported as being sexually abused as a child. In a large community sample, men who reported sexual contact in their own childhood were almost 40 times more likely to report adult sexual contact with children (Bagley, Wood, & Young, 1994). Ward and Siegert's (2002) model of child abuse suggested the existence of four distinct psychological mechanisms whose interaction could result in sexual offenses against children: intimacy and social skills deficits, deviant sexual patterns, emotional and cognitive distortions. More recent studies confirmed that different interacting factors such as poor parenting, inconsistent discipline, adverse childhood experiences, and physical and sexual abuse can account for paedophilic tendencies (Carpa & Caffo, 2014; Gerwinn et al., 2018).

Marshall and Marshall (2000) examined in-depth the effect of poor parent-child attachment and found that insecure attachment where parents give little support results in a child failing to develop resilience, self-confidence and becomes desperate for love (but at the same time is fearful of rejection). The child therefore responds to any form of attention from others, increasing the risk and becoming an easy target to sexual abuse (Marshall & Marshall, 2000). This creates a ripple effect whereby being sexually abused as a child leads to earlier onset of masturbation as a coping mechanism (Marshall & Marshall, 2000). The child may grow up using sex as a coping mechanism, resulting in adult sexual aggression and a desire for deviant sex (Marshall & Marshall, 2000). Furthermore, they found that child sexual abuse seemed to

be one of the etiological factors for paedophilic tendencies and behaviours as these they seem to be used as coping mechanisms for the negative effects of adverse early experiences (Marshall & Marshall, 2000). It would seem to suggest that the link between adverse early experiences and masturbatory behaviour develops into fantasies of sexual contact with children (Marshall & Marshall, 2000). The sexual fantasies are reported as a mechanism of regaining power and control lost as a consequence of child sexual abuse. By identification with the perpetrator of their own childhood sexual abuse, the individual is able to master the trauma and deal with its effects in a dynamic that reverses roles from a victim to a perpetrator (Marshall & Marshall, 2000).

More recently the aetiology of paedophilia has been understood from a biopsychosocial model. Biologically: there seems to be a common theme of a rigid cognitive style; psychologically: when ones basic core emotional needs are not met (such as insecure attachment and adverse childhood experience ); and socially: when deviant sexual behaviour is accepted based on cultures and attitudes that idealise youthful beauty and promote features of childlike bodies (Carter & Mann, 2016). This study also confirmed that dysfunctional parenting (especially where the child is exposed to violence and abuse) results in prepubescent children inadequately developing inhibitory controls over their sexual and aggressive urges (Carter & Mann, 2016). Therefore, this abuse-abuser cycle is still popular today in the explanation of the aetiology of paedophilia. Recent studies have found that parent-child abuse-abuser is representative in all religions, cultures, ethnic groups, age, gender, educational, and socioeconomic divisions in society (Artz et al., 2016; Siegel, 2016).

### **2.3.5 Differentiation between child molester/sex offender and paedophilia**

It is important to differentiate between a paedophile and a child sexual offender or child molester, as the majority of media reports use these terms interchangeably (Jahnke & Hoyer, 2013; McCartan, 2010a). They fail to acknowledge the difference that paedophilia is a mental illness. Thus, because the media have failed in correctly using these terms, it is important that the distinction is acknowledged and understood in this research. It has already been noted that a paedophile may not necessarily act on their urges or fantasies, (although most do), whereas a child sexual offender has acted on their urges or fantasies and has already engaged in sexual activities with a child. However, there is a bigger difference to be aware of between a paedophile and child molester. Child molestation is not a medical diagnosis. It can be loosely defined as occurring when any individual touches a child (who is usually 4 to 5 years younger

than the offender) for sexual gratification and who does not meet the full diagnostic criteria of a paedophile (Hall & Hall, 2007; Murray, 2000). Table 2.3.5 below presents a clearer distinction between the terms that are mistakenly used interchangeably.

Table 2.3.5:

*Differences between child sexual offender and paedophile*

<b>Child Sexual Offender</b>	<b>Paedophile</b>
Does not necessarily have a mental illness (full criteria for diagnosis may not be met) (Murray, 2000).	Is a diagnosable mental illness (Murray, 2000).
Will spontaneously sexually assault a child (Murray, 2000)	Will never spontaneously sexually assault a child, but rather act on their uncontrollable urges, after they build a relationship with the victim (Murray, 2000).
Their attraction to children is spontaneous and sudden (Murray, 2000).	Their attraction to children begins around puberty (Murray, 2000).
May engage in sexual behaviour with a child due to intoxication, other substance, mania, etc. (Murray, 2000).	They act on their urges and fantasies because they can no longer control their urges (Murray, 2000).
They are likely to be more aggressive and show no remorse (Murray, 2000).	They are most likely to respond to their victims' pain and suffering (Murray, 2000).
They do not have any covert urges or interests, but refer to overt completed acts of abuse (Murray, 2000).	They often first experience covert urges before they engage in sexual behaviours with children (Murray, 2000).
A child sexual offender has sexually abused or assaulted a child already. (Murray, 2000).	Paedophiles have sexual interests in children but not all have acted on these urges or interests and therefore have never sexually abused a child (Murray, 2000).

There needs to be a clear distinction between child sex offenders and paedophiles. Recent criminal sentencing laws that mandate treatment may not be as effective for paedophilia (which is a recognised mental disorder with significant impairment and with alternative effective treatments) as they are for child sexual offenders (which is a crime punishable through incarceration or community supervision with varying legal specifics) (Stone, Winslade, & Klugman, 2000).

Although paedophiles and child molesters share some characteristics (they are usually male and although they do have adult sex partners, they select children because of their vulnerability and availability) there are vast differences between the two, as the table above has shown (Murray, 2000). As suggested above, child sexual offenders/molesters have certain differentiating characteristics and *modus operandi* which clearly differ from paedophiles. A child sex offender is an umbrella concept including exhibitionism, sodomy, rape, and molestation. Paedophilia then may be viewed as a subset of child sexual offenders who may be distinct in the sense that they need to meet certain diagnostic criteria to be diagnosed. Furthermore, due to their psychological make-up, the *modus operandi* of paedophiles differs from other categories in that they typically take time to build a relationship with their victims (Murray, 2000).

The above table suggests that child sex offenders commit sexual offences due to poorly internalised societal rights and norms, disinhibition (most likely through intoxication), situational factors (such as misinterpreting cues from the victim), or through sadistic offending (Dicky, Nussbaum, Chevolleau, & Davidson, 2002). Sadistic offending involves inflicting physical or psychological suffering through stalking, violence, bondage, humiliation, or other types of fear-inducing behaviours (Dicky et al., 2002).

Thus, the two major differences between paedophiles and child molesters (those who engage in sexual acts with children). These differences are: 1) child molesters do not have any covert urges or interests, but refer to overt completed acts of abuse; 2) some individuals who sexually abuse children may not actually have a strong sexual interest in children (e.g. it could be due to intoxication or dementia) while on the other hand paedophiles have sexual interests in children but not all have acted on these urges or interests and may therefore have never sexually abused a child (Marshall, 1997; O'Donohue, Regev, & Hagstrom, 2000).

For the current study paedophilic acts refer to any sexual engagement with a prepubescent child by an adult. For the purpose of this study, a child sexual offender/molester would refer

to any individual/adult engaging in sexual activities with a prepubescent child, involving force, violence and aggression.

### **2.3.6 The *modus operandi* of a paedophile**

Although individuals performing paedophilic acts on prepubescent children will differ slightly in the manner, they adopt to approach their victims, most paedophiles seem to adopt a similar *modus operandi*. Previous studies (Conte, Wolf, & Smit, 1989; Elliot, Brown, & Kilcoyne, 1995) suggest that the process paedophiles use to select, recruit and maintain their abusive sexual relationship with their victims involves a special ability. This involves identifying vulnerable children and persuading them to comply with their sexual requests and systematically desensitise their victims through touch. Paedophiles most commonly either use their position or familiarity to their victim to gain access, such as being in a caretaker position (babysitter), or they use incentives such as offering bribes, promising gifts or playing games with them to ensure their compliance (Elliot et al., 1995). Those paedophiles who perform paedophilic acts are not only committing a crime but may have deeply buried conflicts stemming from childhood (Palermo, 2002). A paedophile is aroused by the innocence, trust, low self-esteem, curiosity and vulnerability that a child possesses (Palermo, 2002). When a paedophile forces a child into a sexual relationship, he does not depend on an overwhelming amount of physical or sexual skill, but rather uses verbal manipulation (Dicky et al., 2002).

A psychodynamic therapeutic approach offered by Palermo (2002) sees the sexual relationship between a paedophile and a child is characterised by the seductive behaviour of an immature adult towards an immature child. The adult relives his own frustrated childhood in his victim. A paedophile uses this technique because children are generally naïve and trusting. Thus, they pose no threat or will not pass any judgement on the paedophile's sexual performance, leaving him in control of the situation (Palermo, 2002).

Paedophiles claim that they want to show their victims love and affection, with no desire to harm them, justifying to themselves that there is nothing wrong with sexually abusing their victims (Palermo, 2002). They are seen as being devious in their interactions with others in order to achieve what they want. They do this without feeling any remorse for their wrong doings as they see the passivity of children (because of their fear and surprise) as acceptance of their offensive behaviours, justifying their actions to themselves (Palermo, 2002).

Paedophiles' *modus operandi* therefore does not typically involve being violent or aggressive, rather choosing to use love, manipulation and trust to lure their victims in.

## **2.4 Paedophilic acts and stigma**

### **2.4.1 Definition of stigma**

To understand whether, how and why paedophiles are stigmatised, an understanding of the definition of stigma is required. Stigma can be described as a characteristic that is deeply discrediting, allowing a whole and usual person to be reduced to a tainted, discounted one (Goffman, 1963). It can be differentiated in three different ways: Abominations of the body (physical deformities); Blemishes of individual characters (mental disorders, imprisonment, homosexuality, and unemployment); and Tribal stigma of race, nation, and religion (Goffman, 1963). A person or group of people who have been stigmatised are viewed as deviant, flawed, limited, spoiled and generally undesirable (Jones, 1984). Therefore, stigmatisation is a global devaluation of an individual who possess a 'flawed' characteristic which arises during a social interaction (Goffman, 1963). This happens when one's actual social identity fails to meet society's expectations of the 'normal' characteristics that one should possess (Goffman, 1963).

Most individuals studying stigma use Goffman's definition. However, there are many other definitions of stigma. There are two prominent reasons for the varying definitions. Firstly, the definitions of stigma have been applied to a very large array of circumstances (with each one being unique, leading investigators to define stigma in different ways) (Link & Phelan, 2001). Secondly, research on stigma is multidisciplinary (including psychologists, sociologist, anthropologists and political scientists) which naturally will lead to some differentiation (Link & Phelan, 2001). Even within disciplines, professionals approach the concept of stigma differently according to the theoretical orientations they follow. This will result in somewhat different visions of what should be included in stigma concepts (Link & Phelan, 2001). This study has opted to use Goffman's definition of stigma as it explains that a stigmatised group (such as paedophiles) is seen as flawed because they do not meet society's expectations. A theory of stigma will be used to understand the stigma of paedophilic acts. This theory is summarised in the section that follows.

### **2.4.2 Phenomenon of stigma**

A good starting point is to ask how the phenomenon of stigma was derived. It has been argued (Kurzban & Leary, 2001) that human minds have separate systems designed for different social settings and therefore have specific adaptations for specific situations to avoid



potential downfalls of sociality. Thus, it is argued that the phenomenon of stigma is derived from three concepts. Dyadic co-operation: an adaptation designed to avoid interaction with individuals who are seen as unworthy of being in a social setting (Kurzban & Leary, 2001). They are seen as a social liability as there is no known benefit from interacting with them. Those who fail to meet any of the criteria of a valuable social interaction partner include people with unpredictable goals and behaviour, a known history of cheating, and little capital in the form of social or economic resources (Kurzban & Leary, 2001). Coalitional exploration is an adaptation designed to exclude individuals from benefiting from being a member in one's group, exploiting the excluded individuals (Kurzban & Leary, 2001). Parasite avoidance is an adaptation designed to prevent being in long hours of contact with those individuals who are likely to carry differentially communicable pathogens (Kurzban & Leary, 2001).

From this phenomenon of stigma, a strong argument can be made that stigma towards paedophiles fits with all three: they are seen as social liabilities, they are excluded from society and they are seen as parasites to be avoided at all costs. This model of stigma highlights how a group of stigmatised individuals are viewed by society and the lengths society would go to ensure they have as little contact with them as possible.

Due to the complexity of the concept and phenomena of, variations in definitions should be expected, provided that investigators using the term are clear as to what they mean by stigma when the term is used (Link & Phelan, 2001). The broader definition of stigma will now be narrowed down to stigma related to mental illness and then specifically to stigma related to paedophilia in the sections that follow.

### **2.4.3 Stigma related to mental illness**

Psychiatric stigma is universal, though devastating for those experiencing it (as it causes social rejection, interpersonal disruption, and a fractured identity). It is seen as obstructing treatment available to mental illness (Feldman & Crandall, 2007). Strained family relationships, employment discrimination, and social rejection are all results of mental illness stigma which may cause the stigmatised individual to have further low self-esteem, low life satisfaction, and low social adjustment (Feldman & Crandall, 2007).

Various studies on the stigmatisation of mental illness, particularly schizophrenia and depression, have shown that these patients feel highly discriminated against, that the media has negatively influenced the way others perceive them, and this has impacted their

willingness to seek and engage in treatment (Botha, Koen, & Niehaus, 2016; Lee, 2000). Hayward and Night (1997) identified four factors likely contribute to stigma (particularly mental illness): how dangerous someone is perceived, their attribution of responsibility, how poor their prognosis is, and how disruptive their social interaction is. It could be argued that these four factors could have a severe effect on individuals with mental illness as it could lead to devaluation, ostracism, impaired health status, and sometimes possible murder (Lee, 2002).

Studies on the topic of the stigma of mental illness have been sparse, particularly in developing countries where stigmatisation of mental illness is believed to be severe (Kleinman & Cohen, 1997). A study pertaining specifically to Xhosa speaking schizophrenic patients' relatives, found that 675 of the relatives believed that witchcraft or possession by evil spirits was the cause of schizophrenia (Mbanga et al., 2002). They believed the proband to be dirty, unpredictable, and dangerous (Mbanga et al., 2002). A survey conducted among 667 members of the general public in South Africa, concluded that in most cases South Africans described the symptoms of mental illness being due to lack of willpower and stress related rather than an actual mental illness (Hugo, Boshoff, Traut, & Zungu-Dirwayi, 2003). They concluded that there is widespread misinformation/misunderstanding about mental illness which negatively impacts on help-seeking behaviour and treatment options (Hugo et al., 2003) In the South African context, not much is known about public perceptions towards individuals with mental illness (Botha, Koen, & Niehaus, 2016). It could be argued that there is still a large problem in South Africa as society is not acknowledging, understanding or talking about mental illness which is failing to break down the stigma of mental illness.

Therefore, it can be argued that in many South African cultures, there is a strong association between mental illness and traditional religion, and many Africans perceive their illness as a form of bewitchment needing to consult with traditional healers, which increases discrimination and stigma (Botha, Koen, & Niehaus, 2016). This is a controversial debate among South Africans as it is important to respect an individual's cultural beliefs but where does respect end when the person may be a danger to themselves or others, as is the case in paedophilic acts.

Based on the above information, it is of great importance that the public be educated on mental illness to increase their knowledge and reduce stigma. To reduce stigmatisation, Lee (2002) emphasises that an exploration of what functions psychiatric stigma serves and how these functions maintain stigma should be conducted. This will allow more inter-disciplinary

research collaboration to take place. By allowing both western and non-western cultures to have access to the knowledge on the socio-political and historical nature of psychiatric stigma, allows for a transcultural perspective (Lee, 2002). Furthermore, a coherent theoretical framework needs to be built which takes into account the diversity of perceivers, the stigmatised and contextual factors (Heatherton, Kleck, Hebel, & Hull, 2000). Quantitative and qualitative methods should be integrated to provide a thorough understanding of how large-scale forces maintain stigma and may affect the subjectivity of the mentally ill and their interpersonal experiences (Chernomas, Clarke, & Chisholm, 2000). Sayce (1998) argues that reducing stigma should involve questioning the notions of human rights, equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory laws.

By understanding the who, why, what and how of stigma and mental illness, scholars can create an action plan for how to break down stigma of mental illness and make a positive contribution towards raising awareness of mental illness. As was mentioned earlier, those that are mentally ill and are seen as the most dangerous are the ones that are the most highly stigmatised. The next section will specifically focus on stigmatisation of paedophilia.

#### **2.4.4 Stigma related to paedophilic acts**

Due to the attitudes of society and the legal process, paedophiles have become highly defensive, resulting in them having difficulty engaging in voluntary assessments or treatment and often feeling pressure from society to not disclose or engage in therapy at all (Feldman & Crandall, 2007). Paedophilic acts are almost always associated with child sexual offences, so there is a high degree of discrimination against people deemed to be paedophiles, regardless of their actual behaviour and whether they have committed a crime or not (Jahnke & Hoyer, 2013).

Several studies have examined lay theories about stigma attached to paedophilic acts. These lay theories conclude that: paedophilic acts are attributed to unusual early relationship experiences and inadequate ways of dealing with emotions, and that it is a problem that comes from within the individual (Furnham & Haraldsen, 1998). Studies conducted in the UK (McCartan (2004); McCartan (2010a) and McCartan (2010b) on criminology students and the public found that participants viewed paedophiles as having the following traits (only negatives were mentioned): sexually abusing children, not mad but evil, disgusting, criminals, and untreatable.

In terms of discrimination against paedophiles, a study done on psychology undergraduate students in the US, concluded that paedophiles were the most rejected by students compared to any other mentally ill patients (Feldman & Crandall, 2007). This illustrates how highly stigmatised paedophiles are in society and how readily they are rejected.

Online studies conducted on the consequences of public stigma of self-identified paedophiles in the US, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, and the UK reported that most participants had negative attitudes toward their condition due to public stigma. The consequence is that they had suicidal ideation or past suicide attempts. The majority would not seek professional help (probably for fear of being treated unethically, without respect, being judged and being misunderstood) (Wilson & Cox, 1983; Kramer, 2011; Wilson & Cox, 1983). Another online study on how the public perceived paedophiles found that there were considerable punitive attitudes towards individuals (Imhoff, 2015). This was based only on their sexually deviant desires, irrespective of whether or not there was any criminal action (Imhoff, 2015). Thus, the public believe there should be a punishment for any deviant sexual interest, regardless of whether sexual or non-sexual offences are mentioned (Imhoff, 2015). This is concerning as just having a thought about something but never acting on it does not warrant a fair punishment.

Similarly, in a study that examined stigma and its consequences, paedophiles were recruited online (of which 73% had never been convicted for child sexual abuse offences) to fill in a questionnaire (Jahnke, Schmidt, Geradt, & Hoyer, 2015). The findings were as follows: Individuals presenting with paedophilic disorder base the way people perceive them from a small number of people or media expressing high levels of stigmatised attitudes (Jahnke et al., 2015). They experienced deficits in their social and emotional functioning. This was due to fear of discovery, high levels of loneliness and increased stress of belonging to such a highly stigmatised group, and overall increased stress due to stigma (Jahnke et al., 2015). Paedophilic acts are among the most stigmatised human characteristics, contributing to higher risks for social, emotional, and cognitive problems as well as higher risk for further abusive behaviour (Jahnke & Hoyer, 2013). Therefore, stigmatisation against paedophiles does a disservice to the prevention of this form of violence (Jahnke & Hoyer, 2013).

Based on the above, mental illnesses, particularly paedophilic acts, are highly stigmatised causing detrimental consequences both for the paedophiles and the safety of society. Before going onto the next section where the focus will specifically be on the part the media plays in

the stigmatisation of paedophilic acts, a brief overview of the treatment options and implications that stigma has on treatment options for paedophilia will be explored because it is often argued that stigma prevents treatment-seeking.

## **2.5 Treatment options and the implications caused by stigma for paedophilia**

### **2.5.1 Current treatments available and the implications of treatment**

The prevalence of child sexual abuse mentioned (in section 2.3.3 above) suggests that there may be many undiagnosed individuals who meet the criteria for paedophilia. However, given reported public attitudes and opinions towards paedophiles (see section 2.4.4 above) and the legal process, it is unsurprising that individuals with paedophilic tendencies are defensive. They tend to deter from seeking treatment or not disclosing at all, or they do not find their sexual fantasies distressing enough to seek treatment (APA, 2013; Kear-Colwell & Boer, 2000). They do however come to medical or legal attention through committing sexual acts against a minor (APA, 2013). Current treatment options recommended for paedophiles are chemical castration, group therapy, cognitive behaviour therapy, and pharmacological therapy (Culbert-Kviring, 2016).

It is important to mention that there is no known effective treatment for paedophilic acts unless paedophiles are actively willing to engage in the treatment offered or provided (Hall & Hall, 2007). Paedophiles who are receiving active treatment such as psychotherapy, pharmacology or even castration can still offend. Treatment focus is therefore mainly on stopping further offences against children rather than altering the paedophile's sexual orientation (Culbert-Kviring, 2016). Therefore, although paedophiles' urges can attempt to be maintained through treatment and reduce their sexual fantasies, their core sexual attraction does not change and thus does not succeed in completely preventing the physical ability to offend again (Culbert-Kviring, 2016; Rösler & Witztum, 1998).

One of the main aims in treating a paedophile is to help them develop alternate sexual interests and behaviours or skills to cope and deal with their thoughts and feelings that could lead to further paedophilic behaviour (Kear-Colwell & Boer, 2000). Although this might seem contradictory, it is important to remember that there might not be a cure for paedophilia, but the evidence cited above shows there are prevention strategies available. As discussed earlier, most paedophiles come from an abusive background which results in major difficulties with interpersonal relationships, especially with adults. Therefore, paedophiles

may overcome their negative attitude towards adults through relating to children at an emotional, social and sexual level during times of stress, loneliness, or as a more permanent feature of their behaviour (Kear-Colwell & Boer, 2000).

Langevin and Lang (1985) study found that motivation to change, the egocentric, ego-syntonic and erotically gratifying nature of being a paedophile, their reported unwillingness to give up their behaviour, their tendency to rationalise their behaviour and believing that the child had given consent are all major obstacles to the success of treatment of an offending paedophile. Stigmatisation is one of the main inhibitors regarding seeking treatment for paedophiles. Furthermore, recidivism, drop-outs, and treatment non-compliance are also problems when it comes to the efficacy of treatment for paedophiles (Cohen & Galynker, 2002).

The next section will briefly explore the access and availability of treatment, especially in South Africa to gain insight into the problems South Africa currently faces in terms of treatment and further prevention.

### **2.5.2 Availability and access to treatment**

As mentioned above, there are different treatment options available for paedophiles. These should be readily available for both non-offending and offending paedophiles. Sadly, this is not the case, especially for offending paedophiles. The lack of access to treatment for paedophiles may be due to challenges finding competent and willing therapists who are adequately trained in treatment of paedophilia (Levenson, Willis, & Vicencio, 2017). More affordable, accessible as well as community outreach efforts could contribute to overcoming the lack of access to treatment (Levenson, Willis, & Vicencio, 2017).

Specifically looking at access to treatment in South African correctional services, Hesselink-Louw and Schoeman (2003) found that South African prisons were under-resourced when it comes to social and psychological services offered to offenders. Statistics showed there was approximately one psychologist for every 3 200 prisoners (Hesselink-Louw & Schoeman, 2003). Furthermore, there were no standardised and structured sexual offender programmes available in the Department of Correctional Services (Hesselink-Louw & Schoeman, 2003). There was no assessment structure available to identify the following: the needs, risk category of offender, responsivity, criminal history, personality traits, motives and causes of crime, for the effective treatment of sexual offenders (Hesselink-Louw & Schoeman, 2003). There was also no distinction made in group therapy between the various groups of sexual

offenders (paedophiles, child molesters, rapists) resulting in the offenders' individualised needs not being effectively addressed (Hesselink-Louw & Schoeman, 2003).

Due to the overcrowding of correctional centres (at the end of March 2017, South Africa's prisons only had 119 134 bed spaces available for its 161 045 inmates) coupled with the scarcity of professionals in the rehabilitation centres (only 22% of inmates were receiving psychological services) (Department of Correctional Services, 2017), individuals with paedophilic received little if any treatment. They were, however, subjected to long sentences in the hope that they would be released rehabilitated. This is ironic as incarceration without access to treatment contributes to increased pathology and does not treat the problem (Allen, 1992). It needs to be understood that "the crime is a symptom, the offence may be punished, but the condition must be treated." (Knopp, 1984, p. 16)

Therefore, the best way to protect society from paedophiles re-offending is through ensuring that those that are incarcerated have access to treatment. This could enable them to learn how to alter their behavioural patterns and cope with their sexual urges and impulses. The likelihood of treatment becoming an important part in rehabilitating paedophiles can only be achieved through the breakdown of stigma and more accurate representation by the media. Schmucker and Losel's (2015) study conducted on the effectiveness of sexual offender treatment programmes found that they can be effective. However, they are lower in prisons as treatment programmes are compulsory, resulting in involuntary and superficial participation. They further found that even though individual and group psychotherapy can be effective, sessions should focus on tailoring treatment more specifically to the offenders needs and ensuring a strong therapeutic alliance (Schmucker & Losel, 2015). The study concluded that there is still a lack of high-quality data to unambiguously demonstrate treatment effectiveness (Schmucker & Losel, 2015). This will be discussed in the next section.

## **2.6 The media**

### **2.6.1 Definition and power of the media**

The media can be described as a complex and multi-faceted industry. They are constantly adapting to modernisation, technical developments, changing social norms and globalisation, and thus can shape and influence public opinion (McQuail, 2010). "Understanding the complex and multifaceted nature of modern media are important as it affects the stories being told, the way they are told, who accesses them and the impact that these stories have"

(McCartan, 2010a, p. 251). For this study, understanding the power the media have over public opinion is important as the public have been found to be educated about paedophilia largely by the media (McCartan, 2010a). In recent years there have been a vast amount of media coverage on paedophilia where the labelling, definition and representation of paedophilia appears to be based on what the media reports (McCartan, 2010a). Determining whether the media have accurately educated the public in the past (on any matter) will give some indication of the power the media have, especially on controversial topics.

The media industry produces meaning. All acts of communication produce meanings. It is the power of these meanings and what society does with them that may ultimately shape relationships, generate influence, and cause behaviours of domination and feelings of subordination (Burton, 2010). This implies that the public accepts media reports uncritically and as it is, which is not always the case and is based on an assumption that the reader is passive and uncritical. Written forms of media are full of representations. These are used not only in a form of cash-material exchanges but also of cultural exchanges. These exchanges keep developing and shifting, with ideas being generated, recombining, repeated, and some being more persistent than others (stereotypes) (Burton, 2010).

There are however counterproductive aspects to contemporary media coverage. It is driven by a highly competitive environment. This requires that the media produce news at the right time and in a way that is concise and appealing to a diverse audience, even if it means compromising the accuracy of the story (Lonne & Parton, 2014). This is concerning as it shows the media's focus is partly on sales and deadlines. This may compromise accuracy.

Alongside this, Wood and Tendayi (2004) state that the media make assumptions about what the public wants in many areas which permeate our daily reading. Therefore, the media can be at fault of not disclosing all the facts of a story but rather use snippets that make for the most entertaining read. In this light, the media therefore have a great deal of power and influence in society. It can shape and influence public opinion and attitudes through stereotyping, group processes and norm reinforcement (McQuail, 2007). This power can be misused and abused just to ensure that their audience is pleased and is reading or hearing what they seem to want to hear.

The media, however, are confined to a certain degree by social norms of society and culture within which they operate. They have certain external (government and public) and internal (editors and owners) pressures which help shape the social and moral responsibility of what



they should and should not produce (McQuail, 2007). They also need to maintain a high degree of accountability and impartiality. This ensures that they always present themselves and their stories in the best light, as the public are interested in the way the media conduct themselves (McCartan, 2010a). It would then appear that the public might also hold some the power over the media regarding what needs to be produced, rather than the other way around.

Thus, newsprint media convey a meaning in the hope that they will provoke the reader to think or act in a certain way. If the media produce meaning, and meaning holds power, it is evident that the media holds a great deal of power and can perhaps direct the public opinion as they see fit.

### **2.6.2 Portrayal of mental illness in the media**

The mass media have been at fault of producing inaccurate and stereotypical representations of mental illness. Examples include: confusing psychiatric terminology, using stigmatising language in relation to the mentally ill (nutter or whacko, etc.), the deception that mental illnesses are impossible to overcome, and identifying mental illness with violence and criminality (Harper, 2005). Harper (2005) argues that while the public simply accepts and may even enjoy these inaccuracies, those that suffer from, or know of someone who suffers from, a mental illness finds them insulting and offensive. Individuals with mental illnesses are widely portrayed by western and non-western media as dangerous, unpredictable and explosive due to powerful market forces. This motivates newspaper editors to reinforce readers' preconceptions and dominate the public's portrayal of mental illness (Lee, 2002). The media, specifically news coverage, seems to focus on legal forensic cases where mental illness is involved. This increases the stigma associated with these disorders, that they are dangerous and have criminal tendencies, and to emphasise the connection between mental disorders and violence, (Angermeyer & Schulze, 2001). The present study explored whether the South African media also portrays mental illness, specifically paedophilia, in this way.

Specifically, mental illnesses that involve severe psychotic disorders were portrayed as unfavourable, inadequate, unlikeable, and dangerous (Wahl, 1992). In essence it would appear that the media have succeeded in presenting the mentally ill as harmful and dangerous (Wahl, 1992). This can have harmful effects on those individuals who suffer from a mental illness (Wahl, 1992). Dietrich, Heider, Matschinger, and Angermeyer (2006) found that students from Germany who read a negative article about mental illness expressed more negative attitudes and described the mentally ill in a negative way. This was compared with

students who read a more informative article on the mentally ill. Similarly, Klin and Lemish (2008) found that descriptions of mental illness and the mentally ill in the USA were distorted. This was due to inaccuracies, exaggerations, and misinformation, which portrayed the mentally ill as peculiar, different, and dangerous (Klin & Lemish, 2008). Thus, there is evidence (based on the three studies mentioned above), which involved a variety of different media that suggests that mental illness is a popular topic. As mental illness is becoming a topic that is more frequently spoken about, it is alarming to know that instead of helping to break down the stigma of mental illness, it appears that the media is reinforcing stigma.

The next two sections focus on the literature involving media reports on child sexual abuse.

### **2.6.3 Child sexual abuse in the media**

Based on the above sections, it can be argued that the media play a crucial role in ensuring that the problems of child sexual abuse and neglect are released into the public domain. This allows the public to be directly informed about child abuse, potentially preparing them to do something about it (Lonne & Parton, 2014). Although media coverage on child sexual abuse can sometimes be mixed and inaccurate, they have been known to report sexual abuse prevention programmes to the public (Olafson, Corwin, & Summit, 1993). Information provided by the media on prevalence and the impact of child sexual abuse may be unwelcome for governments (Olafson, Corwin, & Summit, 1993). This could be due to the critical implications and expectations it implies, such as concerns that child sexual abuse is on the increase implying that costly efforts to protect children from sexual assault will need to be put in place (Olafson, Corwin, & Summit, 1993).

Studies conducted in Australia and England on media coverage of child sexual abuse have found that it over-represents of criminal matters and the bizarre and unusual (Lonne & Parton, 2014). Abusers, particularly paedophiles, are at the top of the list for public identification (Lonne & Parton, 2014). This results in understandable public fear and anxiety about the risk of harm to children and the voice of the parents and children are mostly absent (Lonne & Parton, 2014). It is partly the media's unarguable responsibility to inform the public about the risk's children may be faced with. However, the over focus on criminal matters rather than the focus on the victims and their family may be due to the media being more preoccupied with sensationalism than accurate reporting on child abuse. This then highlights a need to shift the public's understanding of child sexual abuse and allow a more coherent engagement with professionals through the media. This could allow these

professionals the opportunity to tell factual stories about what they know about adult, adolescent, and child abusers (McCartan, Kemshall, & Tabachnick, 2015). The media are the perfect platform to allow a collaborative engagement between professionals who can shed accurate and informative knowledge on the subject.

#### **2.6.4 The portrayal of paedophilic acts in the media**

There has been much media coverage of paedophilic acts through various media formats, especially print media (tabloids and broadsheet) (Ducat, Thomas & Blood, 2009; McCartan, 2010a). The UK press were found to portray paedophilic acts in an inappropriate, generalised, fearful, and negative light (Thomas, 2005). This was especially evident with the language used to discuss paedophiles such as perverts, monsters, and beasts (Thomas, 2005). Research has indicated that child sexual abuse and paedophilic acts are among the most misunderstood crimes (McCartan, 2010a). The media never fully discusses the heterogeneous nature of paedophiles, their aetiologies, their offending behaviours, and the treatments available to them (McCartan, 2010a). This is concerning as paedophilia is already such a complicated mental illness to understand even among those professionals studying it, and the media seems to be complicating this even further by not allowing the public to get a full picture of paedophilia as an illness. McCartan (2010a) examined whether the media have been socially responsible, moral, and ethical in their coverage of paedophilic acts. He criticised the way the media has covered socially sensitive and traumatic stories about paedophiles based on the language used and discussions provided.

Thus, it can be concluded that the language used in the media to discuss paedophilic acts, as well as the approach used to understand paedophiles may have contributed to misconceptions, myths, and a lack of real insight into paedophilic acts (McCartan, 2010a). This results in an unrealistic and inappropriate understanding, and may create moral panic (McCartan, 2010a). It is important to uncover whether the media is being relevant, honest, ethical, impartial, and acting in the best interest of the public, or just reinforcing and promoting socially constructed fears of paedophilic acts (McCartan, 2010a).

### **2.7 Theoretical framework**

Stigma and paedophilia, although completely different, go in hand in that stigma is often raised when researching paedophilia. Therefore, theories on stigma and paedophilia will be discussed below.

### 2.7.1 Theory of stigma

Two theories of stigma will be discussed: social identity theory, and self-stigma theory. These two theories are based on society judging and labelling someone versus someone judging themselves based off of how society views them.

Social identity theory describes how people use social constructs to judge or label someone who is different; thus, society evaluates people to determine if they fit social norms (Overton & Medina, 2008). Social identity theory is associated with self-esteem where an individual is assigned to a particular social group or category (Brewer, 1991). Social identity theory assumes that social identity is derived primarily from group membership where people strive to achieve or maintain a positive social identity (Brown, 2000). This is relevant to understanding paedophilia as paedophiles try their best to maintain an acceptable social identity and not expose themselves to society as having an attraction to children (Feldman & Crandall, 2007). Social identity therefore comes from a conflict between human needs for validation and similarity to others (a sense of belonging) versus uniqueness and individuation (Brewer, 1991).

Goffman (1963) first introduced the term social identity which described how stigmatised people form a virtual social identity. They do this when they become disfavoured or dishonoured in the eyes of society, which results in them becoming outcasts (Goffman, 1963). This applies specifically to people with a mental illness as they are seen as having a character or moral flaw (Overton & Medina, 2008). Stigma arises when a person's actual social identity falls short from some ideal identity defined by society. Thus, a person with mental illness will likely suffer stigma if their status is disclosed to their community as their social identity is not up to the standard of the community (Crawford & Brown, 2002). Being sexually attracted to a child is most certainly not up to the standard of society and if disclosed, would lead to stigma. Another term used to derive the stigma of mental illness is spoiled collective identity which describes people who are stigmatised or whose identity is questioned. They are judged for their behaviour (even though it does not reflect their whole being) and therefore they are reduced to tainted, discounted individuals (Goffman, 1963). In no way is it justifiable to engage in sexual activity with a child. However, paedophiles are stigmatised based on their sexual urges and fantasies, which might lead to labelling them as criminals even when no criminal behaviour has taken place.

The second theory, self-stigma, is described as an internal evaluation process where individuals judge themselves based on societal norms or where the individual has created the judgment toward themselves (Overton & Medina, 2008). This judgment results in a lowered self-esteem, inferiority, self-hate, and shame as they feel they do not live up to social norms (Overton & Medina, 2008). They feel self-doubt when it comes to finding a job, a partner, or earn a livelihood (Overton & Medina, 2008). As discussed earlier (in section 2.4.4), paedophiles have low self-esteem and feel shame for their attraction to children, creating this self-stigma. A person with a mental illness may internalise mental illness stigma which could result in diminished self-esteem and self-efficacy (Watson, Corrigan, Larson, & Sells, 2007). This happens because prior to being labelled as mentally ill, individuals may already have internalised cultural stereotypes of mental illness (for example, that they are dangerous, incompetent, and to blame) (Watson et al., 2007) Once being diagnosed, these stereotypes become relevant to the self (Watson et al., 2007). The result of this self-stigma is that individuals avoid social networks and opportunities in anticipation of rejection (Wrigley, Jackson, Judd, & Komiti, 2005). This leads to isolation, unemployment, lowered income, lowered self-esteem and self-efficacy, and will be less likely to seek treatment (Wrigley et al., 2005). This self-stigma can have detrimental effects on the individual, especially if someone with a mental illness, such as paedophilia, is unlikely to seek treatment based on their own judgement of their self.

Similarly, (Corrigan & Rao, 2012) found that people who live with mental illness are vulnerable to endorsing stereotypes about themselves (self-stigma). This results in self-prejudice, and self-discrimination, leading to negative emotional reactions, self-isolation, decreased health care usage, poor health outcomes and poor quality of life (Corrigan & Rao, 2012).

Therefore, both social identity stigma and self-stigma can be related to paedophilia. Not only does society reject these individuals, but they themselves end up judging themselves harshly and negatively as unworthy of social interactions with others. This stigma can lead to consequences, such as paedophiles being unable to admit that they are mentally ill. Thus, they never receive the necessary interventions and ultimately acting on urges that some may not be able to control.

### 2.7.2 Theory of paedophilia

Most theories of paedophilia attempt to explain the following: why they find relating sexually to children to be emotionally gratifying or congruent? Why they are capable of being sexually aroused by a child? Why they are blocked from being sexually aroused or have emotional gratification from an age appropriate individual? Why such a person is not deterred by social restraints and inhibitions against sexual interaction with a child? (Araji & Finkelhor, 1985). These are labelled as: 1) emotional congruence; 2) sexual arousal; 3) blockage; and 4) disinhibition. This four-factor model developed by sociologist Finkelhor (1984) is the most comprehensive model to date (Kelly & Lusk, 2013) and will be discussed below in an attempt to better understand paedophilia as a mental illness. First, an explanation of this model will be provided, followed by current reviews of the empirical evidence of this model.

The first factor, emotional congruence, attempts to explain why paedophiles find relating sexually to children to be emotionally gratifying or congruent. This factor proposes that paedophiles are seen as being emotionally immature, they experience themselves as children and relate best to other children (Araji & Finkelhor, 1985). Paedophiles enter into a relationship with a child because it helps them overcome shame, humiliation or powerlessness that they might have experienced as a child because of their treatment as an adult (Araji & Finkelhor, 1985). A paedophile, just like a child, wants to feel loved and worthy and because they have never experienced this from adults, resorts to emotionally bonding with children.

The second factor, sexual arousal of a paedophile, is viewed as emanating from their own early sexual experiences which, through conditioning or imprinting, caused them to later find children arousing (Araji & Finkelhor, 1985). They have incorporated their early experiences of arousal into a fantasy that is repeated and becomes increasingly reinforced through such fantasies accompanying masturbation (Araji & Finkelhor, 1985). This can be understood as the paedophile learning from a young age through their own sexual abuse experience that this is the way to show love towards a child, normalising it. This may happen for the following reasons: because sexual experiences condition an arousal in children; and paedophiles learn the behaviour through early modelling of their own victimisation (Araji & Finkelhor, 1985). Further, paedophiles repeat their own victimisation in an effort to master the trauma of these early experiences; an attempt to identify with the older aggressor and attempting to take on their power (Araji & Finkelhor, 1985).

The third factor, blockage, proposes that individuals are blocked in their ability to meet their sexual and emotional needs in adult sexual relationships, instead they turn to children (Araji & Finkelhor, 1985). Psychoanalytic theorists have explained this using the oedipal dynamics. They state that male paedophiles experience intense conflicts about their mothers or experience unconscious castration anxiety that make it almost impossible to relate sexually to an adult woman (Araji & Finkelhor, 1985). Blockage theories can be a problem because they apply to deviant sexual behaviour in general, but do not specifically explain why a person blocked from adult heterosexual outlets would become a paedophile rather than, for example, a rapist with adult victims (Araji & Finkelhor, 1985). However, blockage theories are still useful in explaining one element of the process that leads to paedophilia. Thus, blockage theory suggests that paedophiles have problems relating to adult females and have high levels of anxiety and frustration in love relationships. However, it has failed in giving explanations as to why paedophiles turn to children rather than perhaps becoming homosexual.

The last factor, disinhibition explains why conventional inhibitions against having sex with children are overcome or absent in paedophiles (Araji & Finkelhor, 1985). This disinhibition is seen as a result of situational factors (such as unemployment, death of loved ones, alcohol abuse and other stress conditions) or as a result of personality disturbance (such as psychopathic tendencies, brain damage or psychosis) (Araji & Finkelhor, 1985).

Although the preconditional model developed by Finkelhor (1984) is quite out-dated, recent reviews of the model still believe in its relevance as it provides a more useful and comprehensive multifactor model (Beech & Ward, 2004; Kelly & Lusk, 2013; Ward & Beech, 2016). Beech and Ward (2004) noted that this model highlighted the important contribution that sexual motivation plays in the occurrence of child sexual abuse. They also noted how psychopathology related to history of abuse in communication with socialisation patterns and biological factors can lead to offending behaviour and has ultimately led to clear treatment goals and interventions (Beech & Ward, 2004). The disadvantages noted of this model are: the combination of theories from different traditions which can come across as contradictory; lack of understanding why some nonsexual needs (such as emotional congruence) are expressed sexually; and there is a lack of conceptual clarity and overlapping in meaning between the four factors (Beech & Ward, 2004).

Kelly and Lusk (2013) further debate that this four-factor preconditional model provides a useful framework for comparing and organising different theories, however the disadvantage

to this framework is that it can appear too broad. Kelly and Lusk (2013) suggest that more specific sub-divisions of each factor could help in narrowing this down.

Lastly, Faupel (2015) note that although the preconditional model is supported and provides motivating conditions as to why paedophiles offend, it fails to adequately address why someone would offend in the first place.

## **2.8 Research on the portrayal of paedophilia in the media**

As noted earlier in section 2.6.4, there is limited research on the portrayal and stigma of paedophilia in newsprint media internationally, and no known studies conducted within a South African context. As hopefully shown above, paedophilia is a sensitive and complicated topic and attempting to study the themes that the media creates around paedophilic acts and how this contributes to stigma can be a challenge. The main challenge would be that researchers draw their own conclusions on how the media portrays paedophiles based on either uncovering themes within the content of their articles or through critically deconstructing their language used. However, Ducat et al. (2009), McCartan's (2010), and McCartan, Kemshall, and Tabachnick, (2015) study's on the media constructs, of and reactions to paedophilia and child sexual offenders in the public yielded reliable results.

The first study (Ducat et al., 2009) examined news items ( $N=133$ ) from two major Australian newsprint publications during 2003-2007. They analysed the major discourses (using thematic and discourse analysis) surrounding issues of child sexual offenders and if the content of reportage had been affected by a new Act (Ducat et al., 2009). A limitation of the study was that people are diverse and therefore different readers may interpret, misinterpret, ignore or resist the news coverage analysed. However, the study emphasised that this is the first important step in identifying attributes of media coverage that may contribute to common misconceptions about offenders in the community (Ducat et al., 2009).

McCartan's (2010a) main finding was that the press has played a major role in the phenomenon of paedophilia, which has helped in shaping the individual attitudes, public opinion and government strategies. It was concluded that the role of the media's representation of paedophilia was problematic, and possibly socially irresponsible, which has possibly contributed greatly to the moral panic that surrounds paedophilia in the UK (McCartan, 2010a).



McCartan, Kemshall and Tabachnick, (2015) also argued that there needs to be a shift in public understandings of child sexual abuse as their actual understanding of offender's aetiology, behaviour, and treatment was limited. By engaging more with professionals through the media, a more thorough and truthful understanding of those offenders who abuse would be put forward to the public (McCartan et al., 2015).

The findings from the above-mentioned studies reached empirical conclusions on how the media portrays paedophilia, which can be compared to this research findings to see whether there are any consistencies, increasing this research's reproducibility. The current study set out to answer three research aims 1) How are paedophilic acts portrayed by the media? 2) What are the present themes in newsprint media regarding paedophilic acts? 3) Do themes in newsprint media appear to perpetuate stigma towards paedophilia, and if so, how? If this South African study yields findings similar to those studies reviewed above, it would increase this study's credibility and transferability.

## **2.9 Summary**

This chapter reviewed current literature on the following topics: overview of mental illness; overview of paedophilia and treatment; the media; stigma; and theoretical frameworks. These sections suggest that relatively few studies have looked at the role the media plays in the construction of stigma for paedophiles and child sexual offenders. Furthermore, most research has been done in Western societies and not within a South African context. There is a gap in the literature on how the South African media portrays those engaging in paedophilic acts and the themes being created by the media on this topic. It seems important that more research is conducted around the topic of paedophilia because even though it is a recognisable mental illness, there is still little understanding, factual knowledge and acceptance of this population group. It is also important to explore the role the media plays in constructing the notion of paedophilic acts. The media have a vital role in communicating this information to the public which may ultimately affect the public's opinions and behaviours towards them. This study hopes to make a South African contribution to this sensitive and controversial topic.

This study therefore set out to answer three main research questions:

- 1) How are paedophilic acts portrayed by the media?
- 2) What are the present themes in newsprint media regarding paedophilic acts?

- 3) Do themes in newsprint media appear to perpetuate stigma towards paedophilia, and if so, how?

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the research methods used in this study, including the sampling procedures, the data analytic method. Ethical issues are also considered, along with comments on the reproducibility and veracity (these are the qualitative versions of reliability and validity) of the methods used in this study.

#### **3.2 Research design**

A qualitative explorative design was used for the current study. The aim of a qualitative design is to provide a rich description of the phenomenon under investigation and this involves describing the properties of an entity (Smith, 2015). Qualitative research attempts to study human actions from the perspective of those being investigated and thus the approach is about describing and understanding rather than explaining human behaviour (Babbie & Mouton, 2005). This type of design was chosen for this study to be able to understand and describe the content of the newsprint articles through analysing themes uncovered and what they mean.

In keeping with the main aims of this study, the following were key features of this qualitative study: the articles' perspective of paedophilic acts was emphasised; the primary aim and main concern was an in-depth description of the understanding of the content of the articles in relation to the themes present; and to understand the portrayal and stigma of paedophilic acts in terms of a specific context, which in this case was the media. The main strength of using a qualitative design is the emphasis that is placed on how meanings are shaped and constructed with an attempt to understand a relatively small sample in depth instead of testing a preconceived hypothesis (Smith, 2015). This qualitative design was relevant to the current study as a rich and in-depth account of the data was sought to describe and understand the latent themes in print media reporting of paedophilia. Further, it explored how these themes might shape and construct the public's views of paedophilic acts.

The nature of inquiry was from a phenomenological tradition. A phenomenological approach tries to make sense of the data from the perspective of the participant and therefore remains neutral and non-critical (Smith & Osborn, 2007). In this study, the sample is drawn from

media reports on paedophilia. No real-life participants were directly sampled for this study. The phenomenological approach explores in detail what sense of the social world can be made from the sample (media reports) and what particular experiences, events or states are represented in the themes elicited (Smith & Osborn, 2011). By exploring the media's account of an event, through a phenomenological lens, means that a detailed account of the meanings and constructions media reports will be explored, in contrast with more objective approaches (Smith & Osborn, 2007). Thus, this study, through exploring the articles written by the media, attempted to uncover and understand the media's perception of an event, namely a paedophilic act.

A phenomenological approach involves a double hermeneutic as the participant (in this case, the print media sampled) is trying to make sense of their personal and social world and the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants' sense of their personal and social world (Smith, 2004). In terms of making this relevant to the current study, the researcher attempted to uncover and understand how the media makes sense of and reports on paedophilia.

One of the main characteristic features of the phenomenological tradition is the inductive approach. This is a technique that is flexible enough to allow an unanticipated topic or theme to emerge during analysis. Therefore, a specific hypothesis is not attempted to be verified or established on basis of extant literature (Smith, 2004). This shows another strength to using the phenomenological approach in this research, as the themes that are identified in the articles would not have been pre-established but would have emerged from the available data. This means the hypothesis was created after that data was analysed. The phenomenological approach emphasises that the richness of data comes from the importance of the experience being discussed and not from the socio-economic status of the participants (or media publication in this case) (Smith, 2004). Therefore, a phenomenological approach was best suited to this research. The researcher took a neutral stance and focused on the content of the articles. By doing this, the researcher was able to uncover common themes across the different newsprint articles which allowed the perception of the media to come through on the topic of paedophilic acts.

The techniques used in this study, such as the sampling, data collection, and inclusion and exclusion criteria were largely adopted from two previous studies (Ducat, Thomas & Blood, 2009; Kesic, Ducat & Thomas, 2011) and changed slightly to fit the present study's aims and

objectives. Both these studies set out to obtain data from online newspaper databases to uncover media reporting on mental illness and sensationalising sex offenders.

The first study (Ducat et al., 2009) was previously described in section 2.8 above. As a reminder, this study examined news items from two main Australian newsprint publications during 2003-2007 in the hope of analysing the major discourses (using thematic and discourse analysis) surrounding issues of child sexual offenders and if the content of reportage had been affected by a new Act. A limitation of the study was that people are diverse and therefore different readers may interpret, misinterpret, ignore or resist the news coverage analysed. However, the study emphasised that this is the first important step in identifying attributes of media coverage that may contribute to common misconceptions about offenders in the community (Ducat et al., 2009).

Although not specifically related to paedophilic acts, Kesic et al.'s (2011) study on how the Australian newsprint media illustrated how the police and persons experiencing mental illness interact, the findings were still compatible relating to how the media may misrepresent mental illness. This study analysed 77 articles from 2006-2007 and uncovered seven dominant themes. Both these studies had similar findings showcasing that newsprint media studies (using similar methodology techniques) are not completely unreliable and there was consistency of representations and perceptions in media reports on a particular subject.

### **3.3 Sampling**

Sample design and execution must be aligned with the goals of the research and the resources available to carry out the research (Henry, 1998). The sample for this research was archival data that had been obtained via a database engine search. News items covering the timeframe from January 2013 – January 2018 were sourced from one electronic database: e-Newspaper, which were accessed on the UKZN library homepage<sup>1</sup> and provided access to the main newsprint publications in South Africa. All the publications on the database were considered: *Business Day*; *Business Times*; *Independent Online*; *Mail and Guardian*; *Mercury*; *News24.com*; *South African Broadcasting Cooperation (SABC)*; *Sowetan*; *Sunday Times*; *The Teacher*; and *The Witness*. However, there were a few challenges in accessing all publications. Some publications could not be accessed as a subscription was required. Due to

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<sup>1</sup> <http://library.ukzn.ac.za/Homepage.aspx>

this being an unfunded study, it was not possible to include these publications in the sample. The following newspaper websites were used in the sampling: *Business Day*, *Independent Online*, *News24.com*, and *Mail and Guardian*. These publications had the highest readership (Chigozie, 2017; News & Analysis, 2013), and yielded the most articles on paedophilic acts and child sexual abuse - which is why they were selected. Therefore, the challenges faced and potential limitations by not being able to access certain publications was easily overcome because the publications that were accessed were most likely to provide rich data in relation to the research questions. Both broadsheet and tabloid publications were searched. Day, Gough, and McFadden (2004) stated that broadsheet publications are larger in size and their target readership is aimed at educated and professional middle classes, whereas tabloid publications are read by the working and lower middle classes. For this reason, both broadsheet and tabloid publications were used to minimise bias and to make sure that the newspapers reviewed targeted all classes and education levels. Samples were not confined to written material only, and visual material was included. Blurr (1995) suggests that visual material can be regarded as text to be read for meaning.

Purposive sampling was used for the current study. This type of sampling is used when cases are selected for theoretical reasons, because they are good examples of the phenomenon being studied (Terre Blanche, Kelly, & Durrheim, 2006). Thus, the information needed to be collected to answer the research question was South African newsprint items covering the broad spectrum of paedophilic acts. The purpose was to gain knowledge about the theme's newspapers are constructing surrounding paedophilic acts.

The sample size depended on the availability of newsprint items on or around the subject of paedophilic acts and made accessible on the e-Newspaper database. The timeframe selection (2013-2018) of 5 years was based on previous newspaper reportage studies (Ducat et al., 2009; Kesic et al., 2011). Their timeframes were two and four years respectively, providing them with enough data to work with. The timeframe for this study was selected to provide relevant and current data needed for analysis. Morant (1998) argues that studies about the media should aim to collect between 15 and 40 units, depending on the nature of research, the research question and the substance of the units collected. Based on this, the current research aimed to select no more than 40 articles.

### **3.4 Data collection**

To be able to ensure valid conclusions are drawn from a research study, it is important that the researchers have sound and accurate data to analyse and interpret (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). The technique followed in collection of data was an archival search allowing for a more systematic data set. The technique followed was, again, adopted from previous newsprint media studies (Ducat et al., 2009; and Kesic et al., 2011) in the hopes that similar patterns would be found, increasing the reliability of the study. Once the researcher had logged onto the UKZN library website and accessed the e-Newspaper database, the above four mentioned South African Newspaper sites were accessible. The researcher then clicked on each link which then redirected to the specific newspaper's homepage. At each newspaper's homepage, there was an option to click on a search button. In the search bar, specific keywords or search terms were entered. These search terms or keywords were divided into three categories:

- Paedophile phrases: Paedophilia, Paedophiles, paraphilic disorder, paedophilic acts.
- Child sexual abuse phrases: child sex offenders, child sexual abuse; child molester.
- Negative phrases relating to paedophiles: child monster, child rapist, boy lover, girl lover, and cradle snatcher.

#### **3.4.1 Inclusion and exclusion criteria**

Any articles that came up after the search, were proofread to ensure that the story met the criteria of inclusion. The inclusion criteria were the time-period (2013-2018) and the relevance of the article to paedophilic acts, child sexual abuse and child sexual offenders. Articles were also selected if they reported on an incident that occurred in South Africa. Reports on local incidents were always included if they met the inclusion criteria, however articles based on international incidents were more common and relevant to the research question. Important to note is that although some of the articles reported on incidents that took place internationally, they were still included as the research focused on the South African media and their reporting style, regardless of whether they were reporting on local or international incidents. The researcher was aware that local media can buy syndicated international stories to report, which was noted as a limitation of this study, as mentioned in the limitations section 6.4 below. Once an article met the inclusion criteria, it was saved and stored for future analysis. More than the sample limit of 40 units (Morant, 1998) were collected (60 articles), a process of elimination was implemented using the exclusion criteria

(see table 3.4.1). Those articles that were least relevant were eliminated. Relevance was defined according to the research aims, namely: 1) does the article portray/report on paedophilic acts? 2) are there potential themes in the article regarding paedophilic acts that were already noted? 3) do these potential themes appear to perpetuate (or moderate) stigma towards paedophilia? Those remaining were the most content rich in terms of the subject of paedophilic acts, child sex offenders and the research aims. Further elimination was required (because the research aimed to have a final sample of up to 40 news items). In order to ensure that the data were as relevant and up-to-date as possible, articles were placed in reverse chronological order with elimination beginning from the year 2013. Upon going through the sample with inclusion and exclusion criteria (see table 3.4.1) in mind, certain articles did not meet the full inclusion criteria. An example of this would be that some articles would mention paedophilia or child sexual abuse in the heading, but the content provided minimal reporting on the actual abusive incident or mention the paedophilic acts performed. Therefore, a total of 30 articles remained after the process of elimination. These were believed to be the most relevant, content rich, current and within the selected timeframe. Each article was then saved and tabulated in a grid in the Results section below (see table 4.2) to allow easy access and efficiency for analysing the data.

Table 3.4.1:

*Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria*

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Inclusion</b>	<b>Exclusion</b>
<b>Topic</b>	Sources related to paedophilic acts and child sexual abuse	Articles not related or not as relevant to paedophilic acts and child sexual abuse
<b>Relevance</b>	Articles most relevant to paedophilia	Articles that had no relevance to paedophilia
<b>Timeframe</b>	January 2013-January 2018 (latest articles were given preference)	Any period before or after 2013- January 2018



<b>Location</b>	Preference given to articles reporting on South African incidents	No articles were excluded based on where the incident took place
<b>Language</b>	English articles	Any other language besides English

As can be seen from table 3.4.1, only English articles were considered. Although this limits the data collected, the researcher is only fluent in English. Budgetary and time constraints did not allow for translators.

### 3.5 Instruments used

As no human participants were involved, no instruments such as a survey or questionnaire needed to be designed. However, tables were made use of during the data collection and analysis. These tables, the context and the layouts were adopted from Kesic et al. (2011) and Ducat et al. (2009). These tables are available in the results section (table 4.2. and table 4.4).

Examples of the tables and how they were utilised is described below:

**Table 3.5.1:** Once all articles had been selected to meet the exclusion criteria mentioned above (i.e. the most relevant, data rich, and within the five-year timeframe), the 30 chosen articles were then stored and captured in the table below. The table included each article's name, the website it was obtained from, the date the article was published, and the results obtained from the analysis. Thus, the researcher and those reading this study can keep track of the final data that was collected and analysed. Table 3.5.1 shows all the articles that were collected.

Table 3.5.1

*Articles collected*

<b>Name of Article</b>	<b>Website obtained from</b>	<b>Date published</b>
Two life sentences for paedophile	<i>Independent online</i>	30/01/2018

<b>Name of Article</b>	<b>Website obtained from</b>	<b>Date published</b>
'Dr Nassar left scars on my psyche that may never go away	<i>Independent online</i>	25/01/2018
Sentencing proceedings in paedophile case postponed	<i>Independent online</i>	10/01/2018
This year's horror child abuse cases	<i>Independent online</i>	31/12/2017
Australia failed children, abuse a 'national tragedy' – inquiry	<i>News24</i>	15/12/2017
Paedophile stopped at Sydney Airport by anti-sex tourism law	<i>News24</i>	13/12/2017
Ex- USA gymnastics doctor jailed for 60 years	<i>News24</i>	08/12/2017
#Dontlookaway: The difference between paedophiles and sex offenders	<i>Independent online</i>	08/12/2017
Malaysian MP calls for paedophiles to be branded with hot irons	<i>Independent online</i>	29/11/2017
Think before 'outing' sexual offenders online	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	10/11/2017
Alleged German paedophiles case put on hold	<i>Independent online</i>	07/11/2017
Child pornographer sentenced to 15 years behind bars	<i>Independent online</i>	07/11/2017
Studies show connection between bestiality and human rape	<i>Independent online</i>	04/11/2017
Rapist gets life plus 115 years, 'but victims nightmare continues'	<i>Independent online</i>	21/09/2017
Teacher accused of sexually assaulting 9 learners suspended	<i>Independent online</i>	11/09/2017

<b>Name of Article</b>	<b>Website obtained from</b>	<b>Date published</b>
Bitter aftermath of sexual abuse	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	04/08/2017
US man to be first executed in Ohio in three years	<i>Business Day</i>	26/07/2017
Paedophile Sunday school teacher's reign of terror	<i>Independent online</i>	22/07/2017
Time could be up for sexual offenders who have escaped justice	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	26/05/2017
Disgraced UK coach facing eight more child abuse charges	<i>News24</i>	07/03/2017
Ex-church official gets trial date days after leaving prison	<i>News24</i>	05/08/2016
Four frightening facts about child sexual abuse in South Africa	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	05/06/2016
Vatican: Much to do to stop paedophile priests	<i>News24</i>	05/03/2016
Child sex offenders to be chemically castrated	<i>News24</i>	21/10/2015
Former Australian PM accused of being a paedophile	<i>News24</i>	21/10/2015
State to appeal molester sentence	<i>News24</i>	21/12/2013
Paedophilia, paranoia and becoming strangers to our children	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	19/09/2013
An inconvenient truth about paedophilia	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	23/08/2013
Mpuma molester sick - court hears	<i>News24</i>	17/07/2013

Name of Article	Website obtained from	Date published
Deconstructing ‘sugar daddies’	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	20/03/2013

**Table 3.5.2: Thematic analysis:** This table was used during the extraction of themes. Once the researcher had read and re-read the articles and formulated codes, potential themes were then identified and named. Once potential themes were named, the researcher kept track of which theme was present in which article. The researcher then found enough examples from the content of the articles to justify how each theme was extracted. If there were not enough examples (no less than five examples from different articles), then that theme was not used in the final analysis. Thus, the final themes present in the table were the dominant themes with the highest frequency (number of articles where the theme was present, which was displayed as a percentage) and had sufficient examples to support that theme which was extracted from the articles. Below is the format used to organise the themes extracted. Table 3.3 is discussed further in the analysis chapter.

Table 3.5.2

*Example of themes table*

Dominant themes	Frequency (%)
<b>Examples:</b>	

### 3.6 Data analysis

#### 3.6.1 Thematic analysis

The analytic approach was thematic analysis. Thematic analysis can be described as an interpretive form of analysis which identifies recurrent themes or patterns in the data (Clarke, Braun & Hayfield, 2015). Thematic analysis argues that preconceived ideas and assumptions about what the data should say are not taken into account, allowing for a more open and potentially novel consideration of what the data might be conveying (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This was the most relevant analysis to use for this study as the aim of this research was to uncover themes from different newsprint media on the portrayal of paedophilic acts. The focus was on the content of the articles instead of preconceived ideas of what the researcher believes the data might say.

The six phases that were followed using thematic analysis were as follows (Braun & Clarke, 2006): Phase 1: Becoming familiar with the data. This involved the researcher repeatedly reading the 30 articles, becoming actively engaged with the data by reading to understand, taking notes and highlighting any sections of the reports that seemed relevant to the research questions. Phase 2: Extracting initial codes. This phase involved working systematically through the data, where equal and unbiased attention was given to all the articles. Any interesting or key aspects of the data that could form the starting point of themes across the data were identified and noted as codes. Phase 3: Searching for themes. During this stage, the researcher sorted the different codes into potential themes by analysing the codes to uncover how these codes could combine to form an overarching theme. The researcher identified potential headings of potential themes. At the end of this phase a set of candidate themes remained. Phase 4: Reviewing themes. This involved the refinement of the candidate themes, to gain an idea of what the different themes were, how they fitted with each other and the research questions, and the overall story the themes might tell from the 30 articles selected. These potential themes were then roughly captured in a thematic map. The purpose of this map was to identify any overlapping themes, or any themes that did not have substantial evidence compared to other themes, which could then be deleted or combined into one theme. Phase 5: Defining and providing names of themes. This phase involved defining and further refining the themes. This ensured that each individual theme had a detailed written analysis with substantial evidence for each theme. This also ensured that each theme was relevant and yielded results which were applicable to the research topic and aims. Phase 6: The report. This involved the final analysis and write up of the results, as presented in chapter 4 of the results section. Table 3.6.1 illustrates the six stages of thematic analysis:

Table 3.6.1

*The six stages of thematic analysis*

Phase	What the phase entails
Phase 1: Becoming familiar with the data	Reading and re-reading each article. Then making notes and highlighting relevant parts in relation to the research questions.
Phase 2: Extracting initial codes	Equal and unbiased attention given to all content of the articles and noting any key

	aspects that could potentially become a theme across the data and noting them down as codes
Phase 3: Searching for themes	Analysis, re-arrangement and combing of different codes into potential over-arching themes
Phase 4: Reviewing themes.	Refinement of potential themes to uncover what the different themes are, how they fit together with each other and the research questions, and the overall story the themes tell. Displayed in a thematic map to see if there were any overlapping themes, or any themes that did not have enough substantial evidence compared to other themes, which could then be deleted or combined into one theme.
Phase 5: Defining and providing names of themes	Defining and further refining each individual theme, making a detailed written analysis to uncover where there was substantial evidence for each theme and if each theme was relevant and yielded results which were applicable to the research topic
Phase 6: The report.	The final write-up of the results.

### 3.7 Reproducibility and Veracity

#### 3.7.1 Credibility

Credible interpretations offer explanations that are consistent with the data collected and can be understood by the people (in this case, the journalists) in the study population (Ulin, Robinson, Tolley, & McNeil, 2002). The following techniques ensure credibility: 1) looking

for negative cases for emerging hypothesis, 2) testing rival explanations, 3) seeking explanations for inconsistencies arising from triangulation (Ulin et al., 2002). Displaying a movement from the initial understanding of the research question to a more in-depth perspective builds credibility (Ulin et al., 2002). Although no triangulation was possible as there were no human participants, the researcher did gain access to a variety of articles on paedophilic acts from different newspaper sites. Thus, the findings did not just come from one source (i.e. one participant) but from multiple sources, increasing the credibility of the study and the truthfulness of the findings. There was no divergence according to what the researcher was hoping to uncover, but rather welcomed any surprising and unexpected findings to ensure the perspective of the media was not lost or overshadowed by researcher bias.

### **3.7.2 Transferability**

Transferability was possible as the results were based on evidence systematically and reproducibly extracted, rather than on assumptions not supported by the available data. The results obtained from the newspaper articles and the research context of searching online newspapers from a database might be generalised or applied to a similar database with similar online newspaper sites. Lastly, similar characteristics were found across the different newspapers, and therefore the results appear to be applicable in other contexts as the data was collected in different contexts (different newspapers in different areas).

### **3.7.3 Dependability**

Dependability's main goal is to ensure that the results and processes used to obtain the results can be replicated at other times (Ulin et al., 2002). The study collected data covering a period of five years (January 2013 – January 2018). Thus, dependability was fair as the findings applied to different time periods and although they appeared to yield the same results, dependability can only be proven if a year-by-year sub analysis was done. This research process should be able to be replicated by other researchers at other times.

### **3.7.4 Confirmability**

As the researcher was critically analysing newspaper articles, confirmability posed as a potential problem as the researcher might have allowed some of her own values and beliefs to interfere with the analysis. This problem was avoided by the researcher's supervisor assisting in ensuring that the researcher stayed neutral and free from any subjective interpretations. Alongside this was the use of reflexive practice that the researcher engaged in throughout the

research process. Thus, the researcher, through reflexive practice sought not to let her personal views or expectations obstruct the analysis and results of the study, attempting to create unbiased results that allowed themes to emerge from the studied phenomenon.

Another approach used to ensure confirmability was the use of an audit trail. This involved collecting and storing the raw data and then reducing the data to that which was only used in the study, then reconstructing the data into a table, then laying out the analytic procedure into a table ensuring that examples were laid out next to the analysis along with the researcher's process notes (Ulin et al., 2002).

### **3.8 Ethical considerations**

According to Babbie and Mouton (2005) ethics, simply put, is to conform to a set standard of conduct in order to protect participants involved in the study being conducted. The researcher complied with the rules and regulations set out by UKZN's Social Science and Humanities Research Ethics Committee and ethics clearance (HSS/1612/017M) was granted before the researcher commenced the data collection. As the current study did not involve any direct contact with human participants, and all data collected was already available to the public and easily accessible, no caution needed to be taken to protect the privacy and confidentiality of participants. Thus, no informed consent was required to undergo the research. However, caution was taken with regard to the sensitivity of the nature of the topic as certain emotions, thoughts and attitudes emitted could cause harm to the reader. This was explicitly laid out in the beginning of the research, where a clear indication of the nature of the topic was given.

Where reported, names of the offenders and other named parties in the reports were omitted and replaced with generic roles (offender/victim/witness etc.) because the names themselves add no value to the analysis and potentially expose the victim(s) unnecessarily.

Another ethical consideration the researcher constantly needed to be aware of was plagiarism and making appropriate acknowledgements. As the data used for this research were articles that had already been written and were available to the public, the researcher ensured that each article used in this research was cited appropriately according to the website it was



obtained from as well as the date it was written and the author of the article (when the author was given).

Furthermore, as there was no direct contact with the publishers or journalists of the publications, the researcher ran the risk of misunderstanding or not interpreting the written context accurately. However, as the researcher is simply another reader (another member of the general public), it is very likely that how the researcher interpreted the articles was largely similar to how the public might interpret it. Therefore, if the writers of the articles believe that their work was misinterpreted, then it is likely that many other public readers would also have misinterpreted the articles.

### **3.9 Summary**

Chapter 3 set out to provide a clear description of how the data was sampled, collected and analysed. This qualitative study used a phenomenological approach to understand the data and used thematic analysis in analysing the data. Clear inclusion and exclusion criteria were implemented during the data sampling and collection. It is hoped that the reproducibility and veracity was sound and the researcher took every step to ensure the research was conducted ethically.

## Chapter 4

### Results

#### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the study. These findings are divided into the following sections: overall characteristics, and themes extracted from thematic analysis. The findings were analysed to address the three main research questions. These were:

- 1) How are paedophilic acts portrayed by the media?
- 2) What are the present themes in newsprint media regarding paedophilic acts?
- 3) Do themes in newsprint media appear to perpetuate stigma towards paedophilia, and if so, how?

#### 4.2 Overall characteristics

The name of the article, website, date published, and overview of the themes of the 30 articles in this study are displayed in table 4.2. There was a total of 30 articles. All newspaper articles were from South African publications. In descending date order, there were three articles from 2018, seventeen from 2017, three from 2016, two from 2015, and five from 2013. All of the articles covered incidents on paedophilic acts, child sex offenders, child molestation and child sexual assault.

Table 4.2  
*Summary of articles reviewed*

<b>Name of Article</b>	<b>Website obtained from</b>	<b>Date published</b>	<b>Themes/ sub-themes present</b>
Two life sentences for paedophile	<i>Independent online</i>	30/01/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• <i>Modus operandi</i> of child sexual offender (Manipulative nature of paedophile)</li> <li>• The sexual offender with a violent demeanour</li> <li>• Emphasis on punishment</li> </ul>

Name of Article	Website obtained from	Date published	Themes/ sub-themes present
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of child molesters by the media</li> </ul>
'Dr Nassar left scars on my psyche that may never go away	<i>Independent online</i>	25/01/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• <i>Modus operandi</i> of child sexual offender</li> <li>• (Manipulative nature of paedophile)</li> <li>• Emphasis on punishment</li> <li>• Perceptions of child molesters by the media</li> </ul>
Sentencing proceedings in paedophile case postponed	<i>Independent online</i>	10/01/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• Offender's rights being respected</li> <li>• Conceptualisation of paedophilic acts as a mental illness</li> </ul>
This year's horror child abuse cases	<i>Independent online</i>	31/12/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> </ul>
Australia failed children, abuse a 'national tragedy' – inquiry	<i>News24</i>	15/12/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Emphasis on punishment</li> <li>• Perceptions of child molesters by the media</li> </ul>
Paedophile stopped at Sydney Airport by anti-sex tourism law	<i>News24</i>	13/12/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on punishment</li> </ul>
Ex- USA gymnastics doctor jailed for 60 years	<i>News24</i>	08/12/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• <i>Modus operandi</i> of child sexual offender (Manipulative nature of paedophile)</li> <li>• Emphasis on punishment</li> </ul>

Name of Article	Website obtained from	Date published	Themes/ sub-themes present
#Dontlookaway: The difference between paedophiles and sex offenders	<i>Independent online</i>	08/12/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• <i>Modus operandi</i> of child sexual offender (The sexual grooming)</li> <li>• The sexual offender with a violent demeanour</li> <li>• Emphasis on punishment</li> <li>• Treatment availability and accessibility</li> <li>• Conceptualisation of paedophilic acts as a mental illness</li> </ul>
Malaysian MP calls for paedophiles to be branded with hot irons	<i>Independent online</i>	29/11/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on punishment</li> </ul>
Think before 'outing' sexual offenders online	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	10/11/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Offender's rights being respected</li> </ul>
Alleged German paedophiles case put on hold	<i>Independent online</i>	07/11/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• <i>Modus operandi</i> of child sexual offender (The sexual grooming)</li> </ul>
Child pornographer sentenced to 15 years behind bars	<i>Independent online</i>	07/11/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on punishment</li> <li>• The sexual offender with a violent demeanour</li> </ul>
Studies show connection between bestiality and human rape	<i>Independent online</i>	04/11/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of child molesters by the media</li> </ul>
Rapist gets life plus 115 years, 'but victims nightmare continues'	<i>Independent online</i>	21/09/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• <i>Modus operandi</i> of child sexual offender (Manipulative nature of paedophile; Sudden attack)</li> <li>• The sexual offender with a violent demeanour</li> </ul>

Name of Article	Website obtained from	Date published	Themes/ sub-themes present
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on punishment</li> <li>• Perceptions of child molesters by the media</li> </ul>
Teacher accused of sexually assaulting 9 learners suspended	<i>Independent online</i>	11/09/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> </ul>
Bitter aftermath of sexual abuse	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	04/08/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• <i>Modus operandi</i> of child sexual offender (Sudden attack)</li> <li>• The sexual offender with a violent demeanour</li> <li>• Offender's rights being respected</li> </ul>
US man to be first executed in Ohio in three years	<i>Business Day</i>	26/07/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• Emphasis on punishment</li> </ul>
Paedophile Sunday school teacher's reign of terror	<i>Independent online</i>	22/07/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• <i>Modus operandi</i> of child sexual offenders (Manipulative nature of paedophile)</li> </ul>
Time could be up for sexual offenders who have escaped justice	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	26/05/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• <i>Modus operandi</i> of child sexual offender (Sudden attack)</li> <li>• Perceptions of child molesters by the media</li> </ul>
Disgraced UK coach facing eight more child abuse charges	<i>News24</i>	07/03/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> </ul>

Name of Article	Website obtained from	Date published	Themes/ sub-themes present
Ex-church official gets trial date days after leaving prison	<i>News24</i>	05/08/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> </ul>
Four frightening facts about child sexual abuse in South Africa	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	05/06/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• Conceptualisation of paedophilic acts as a mental illness</li> </ul>
Vatican: Much to do to stop paedophile priests	<i>News24</i>	05/03/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> </ul>
Child sex offenders to be chemically castrated	<i>News24</i>	21/10/2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on punishment</li> <li>• Treatment availability and accessibility</li> </ul>
Former Australian PM accused of being a paedophile	<i>News24</i>	21/10/2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Offender's rights being respected</li> </ul>
State to appeal molester sentence	<i>News24</i>	21/12/2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• <i>Modus operandi</i> of child sexual offender (Manipulative nature of paedophile, The sexual grooming)</li> <li>• Emphasis on punishment</li> <li>• Offender's rights being respected</li> <li>• Treatment availability and accessibility</li> </ul>
Paedophilia, paranoia and becoming strangers to our children	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	19/09/2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Perceptions of child molesters by the media</li> </ul>

Name of Article	Website obtained from	Date published	Themes/ sub-themes present
An inconvenient truth about paedophilia	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	23/08/2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on punishment</li> <li>• Conceptualisation of paedophilic acts as a mental illness</li> <li>• Treatment availability and accessibility</li> </ul>
Mpuma molester sick - court hears	<i>News24</i>	17/07/2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity to victims</li> <li>• Betrayal of trust</li> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• <i>Modus operandi</i> of child sexual offender (The sexual grooming)</li> <li>• Offender's rights being respected</li> <li>• Conceptualisation of paedophilic acts as a mental illness</li> <li>• Treatment availability and accessibility</li> </ul>
Deconstructing 'sugar daddies'	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	20/03/2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender preference of victims</li> <li>• <i>Modus operandi</i> of child sexual offender (Manipulative nature of paedophile)</li> <li>• The sexual offender with a violent demeanour</li> <li>• Emphasis on punishment</li> <li>• Perceptions of child molesters by the media</li> </ul>

### 4.3 Themes extracted from thematic analysis

Nine dominant themes and four sub-themes emerged from the 30 articles. These are set out in table format and attached in appendix A and are discussed below. Extracts from some of the articles have been used under each theme in this section, to showcase how the researcher uncovered these themes. See table 4.3.1 for the full extracts from all the articles for each theme.

#### 4.3.1 Theme: Familiarity to victim ( $n=21$ , 70%)

Some articles emphasised that paedophiles or child sexual offenders are often those that are in high powered positions where children are easily accessible. These articles stated exactly what profession the offender was in, portraying that due to their position and being familiar with children, they had access to and were trusted with children.

*“The man, (offender), was a security guard at the Sandton complex... (offender) had taken advantage of the fact that, as a security guard, he was meant to be the family’s protector.” (Germaner, 30/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“The commission was contacted by more than 15 000 survivors who had detailed claims of child abuse involving churches, orphanages, sporting clubs, youth groups, and schools... abuse occurred in almost every place where children resided or attended for educational, recreational, sporting or religious or cultural activities.” (15/12/2017, News24).*

*“He was a Sunday school teacher, a soccer coach and cycling club manager. And these were the perfect jobs for now-convicted paedophile (offender) to position himself around children at all times.” (Germaner, 22/07/2017, Independent online).*

*“The move to hold church and institutional leaders responsible for protecting paedophiles... He went to the secret archive and found the names of 35 priests who had abused children.” (Associated press, 05/08/2016, News24).*

Other articles emphasised that offenders or paedophiles were either family members or family friends that were familiar to the victim and would be least expected to offend.

*“Sexually assaulting his five-year-old daughter and using the girl to create illicit material...” (Wolhuter, 10/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“...The high number of cases involving child abuse and murder where those in the dock are the very people supposed to care for and nurture the little ones...A Pretoria father is on the run after being found guilty of child pornography charges. The victims include his own children...” (Venter, 31/12/2017, Independent online).*

*“Fact: one in 10 children who have experienced sexual abuse by a known adult, had this experience four or more times... (Green, 05/06/2016, Mail & Guardian).*

*“(Offender), 44, was found guilty of sexually abusing his friends two daughters between 2006 and 2009.” (21/12/2013, News24).*

*“The Nelspruit Regional Court heard on Wednesday that a convicted child molester who sexually abused his friend’s daughters should be declared a paedophile.” (17/07/2013, News24).*

From the above articles it would seem that most of the reported cases of child sexual abuse were committed by a perpetrator who was familiar to the victim. This familiarity concept as portrayed by the media insinuates that children were most vulnerable in the presence of those



very adults with whom they were familiar. Some of the mentioned perpetrators included priests, teachers, soccer or sport coaches, family members and friends.

#### 4.3.1.1 Sub theme: Betrayal of trust (n=21, 70%)

Betrayal of trust came up often as a theme highlighting the impact of the abuse on the victim and the complexity of the paedophilic acts. Some of the perpetrators appeared to occupy a position of trust in relation to the victim. Familiarity seemed to be a prerequisite of trust and opened an opportunity for betrayal by the perpetrator being known to the victim.

*“Sexually assaulting his five-year-old daughter and using the girl to create illicit material...” (Wolhuter, 10/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“...The high number of cases involving child abuse and murder where those in the dock are the very people supposed to care for and nurture the little ones...A Pretoria father is on the run after being found guilty of child pornography charges. The victims include his own children...” (Venter, 31/12/2017, Independent online)*

*“One of the worst paedophiles was sentenced to 32 life sentences and a further 170 years for, among other things sexually abusing his girlfriend’s two-year-old daughter.” (Monama, 08/12/2017, Independent online).*

*“He was convicted of raping and killing three-year-old (victim), his then-girlfriend’s daughter.” (Monama, 08/12/2017, Independent online).*

*“The Nelspruit Regional Court heard on Wednesday that a convicted child molester who sexually abused his friend’s daughters should be declared a paedophile.” (17/07/2013, News24).*

It would seem that from the previous extracts, trust was necessary for the maintaining of some of the reported paedophilic acts. The sexual offender may have developed a relationship first with the victim ensuring trust was established before molesting the child. Of note were the positions or occupations that these sexual offenders held, as reported by many articles. The following extracts highlight this:

*“In the past few months, disturbing allegations of sexual assault have been levelled against several men in powerful position, both locally and internationally.” (Ampofo, 10/11/20017, Mail & Guardian).*

*“The man, (offender), was a security guard at the Sandton complex... (offender) had taken advantage of the fact that, as a security guard, he was meant to be the family’s protector... and as a friendly acquaintance to the family...” (Germaner, 30/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“(Offender), the former gymnastic doctor...worked at Michigan State University and USA Gymnastics...pleaded guilty to assaulting seven people...The almighty and trusted gymnastics doctor...a family friend who was someone we completely trusted.” (The associated press, 25/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“The commission was contacted by more than 15 000 survivors who detailed claims of child abuse involving churches, orphanages, sporting clubs, youth groups, and schools... abuse occurred in almost every place where children resided or attended for educational, recreational, sporting or religious or cultural activities.” (15/12/2017, News24).*

*“(Offender) has been accused of molesting more than 100 female athletes during the three decades he worked with USA Gymnastics and at Michigan State.” (08/12/2017, News24).*

*“The teacher accused of sexually assaulting at least nine pupils... It is disgusting to learn about these disturbing allegations, as educators have a responsibility to be role models, and our children cannot be afraid to go to school in fear of sexual assault/s by an educator... The most likely offenders are fellow pupils or teachers.” (Reporter, 11/09/2017, Independent online).*

*“She says her 11-year-old is a victim of sexual harassment at the hands of a man who is a worker at the school... she believes the man is a paedophile who needs to be removed from an environment involving children.” (Macupe, 04/08/2017, Mail & Guardian).*

*“He was a Sunday school teacher, a soccer coach and cycling club manager. And these were the perfect jobs for now-convicted paedophile (offender) to position himself around children at all times.” (Germaner, 22/07/2017, Independent online).*

*“A former youth coach at the heart of a child-sex scandal, roiling English football has been charged with eight more counts of historical abuse...” (English Premiership, 07/03/2017, News24).*

A substantial number of cases seemed to highlight ministers of the word of God as sexual predators. The below extracts were narrated this way:

*“For years, he was sexually abused by the priest – a ‘trusted family friend’ – in the Cape Flats township of Bonteheuwel... (Pilane, 26/05/2017, Mail & Guardian).*

*“The move to hold church and institutional leaders responsible for protecting paedophiles... He went to the secret archive and found the names of 35 priests who had abused children.” (Associated press, 05/08/2016, News24).*

*“Much to do to stop paedophile priests... The Vatican defended the powerful finance minister, despite accusations by victims of sex abuse that he protected paedophile priests...” (05/03/2016, News24).*

*“Former Australian prime minister is among 28 prominent people on a list of alleged paedophiles... It has so far heard harrowing claims of abuse involving places of worship, orphanages, community groups and schools.” (21/10/2015, News24).*

This reported betrayal of trust by those in power and familiar to victims seemed to make it difficult for those genuine caring individuals to genuinely care for children, in fear that their actions may be misunderstood and perceived as paedophilic acts. The below extracts shared these sentiments:

*“I have experienced such paranoia when it comes to dealing with children, I have no more male teachers in my school... In the flesh. Ah, therein lies the paedophile-paranoia rub. Men have left the teaching profession in New Zealand in droves for fear of touching a child by mistake... One man even muttered that my speaking to children at bus stops is weird... An adult playing with a child must be regarded with deep suspicion. There is a paedophile under every rock... We are becoming strangers to our children.” (Mackenzie, 19/09/2013, Mail & Guardian).*

The familiarity and proximity of the relationship between the sexual offender and the victim seem to highlight betrayal not only on the victim but also of the parents who had put trust in the offender.

#### **4.3.2 Theme: Gender preference of victims (n=18, 60%)**

Although not all articles mentioned the gender of the victims, the majority of the articles specified whether the victim was a boy or a girl or both. It would seem that girls were more prevalent victims than boys in the selected articles:

*“...A man raped and throttled the two-year-old (girl) he was babysitting.” (Germaner, 30/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“(Offender), the former gymnastic doctor...worked at Michigan State University and USA Gymnastics... he pleaded guilty to assaulting seven people (girls). (The associated press, 25/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“Sexually assaulting his five-year-old daughter and using the girl to create illicit material...” (Wolhuter, 10/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“A Pretoria father is on the run after being found guilty of child pornography charges. The victims include his own children, a girl of 4 and boy of 3...”* (Venter, 31/12/2017, Independent online).

*“(Offender) has been accused of molesting more than 100 girls in his care.”* (08/12/2017, News24).

*“One of the worst paedophiles... sexually abusing his girlfriend’s two-year-old daughter.”* (Monama, 08/12/2017, Independent online).

*“He stands accused of... raping an 11-year-old boy...The accused allegedly groomed young boys...”* ((English Premiership, 07/03/2017, News24).

*“...He pleaded guilty to a range of charges which included five counts of rape, one count of attempted rape... The youngest victim was just 13-years-old when she was attacked.”* (Rice, 21/09/2017, Independent online).

*“She says her 11-year-old (daughter) is a victim of sexual harassment at the hands of a man who is a worker at the school. (Macupe, 04/08/2017, Mail 7 Guardian).*

*“(Offender) was 19 in 1993 when he was convicted of raping and killing three-year-old (victim) his then-girlfriend’s daughter.”* (Staff, 26/07/2017, Business Day).

*“The boys, aged eight and nine... he would rape each of them... he invited two more children (boys) into his home ... another 13-year-old was raped.”* (Germaner, 22/07/2017, Independent online).

*“Fact: Boys are equally as vulnerable as girls – if not more. Proof: Boys reported higher lifetime prevalence rates of sexual abuse (36.8%) than girls (33.9%) ... The nature of abuse is often different. Girls are more likely to experience contact sexual abuse, where they are physically touched, and boys are more likely to experience exposure abuse, where the child is forced to see sexual images or incidents. Males are twice as likely as females to be ‘forced to look at someone’s private parts, forced to watch them masturbate or to view nude pictures or pornographic videos.’”* (Green, 05/06/2016, Mail & Guardian).

Of the total number of articles that mentioned the gender of the victims, five of the articles’ victims were male, eleven of the articles reported female victims and two articles reported victims of both genders. All articles mentioned that the child sexual offender was male. Therefore, the majority of the male offenders that were reported appeared to be sexually attracted to female children, notwithstanding some cases of those attracted to male children. The extracts highlight that both genders of children are vulnerable to paedophilic acts.

### 4.3.3 Theme: *Modus operandi* of child sexual offenders (n=18, 60%)

#### 4.3.3.1 Sub-theme: Sexual grooming (n=4 (out of 18), 22%)

A recurring theme throughout the articles was how the journalists would, in detail, describe the method that the child sexual offenders used to lure their victims and how they would then offend them. Some articles described that the offenders groomed the victims first:

*“One of the worst paedophiles... Other than raping her, he used a toy dinosaur, thermometer and a sex toy to penetrate the child... He is accused of grooming the child.” (Monama, 08/12/2012, Independent online).*

*“He stands accused of... raping an 11-year-old boy... The accused allegedly groomed young boys so that he could assault them at his Somerset West home. (Offender) also coaxed the boys into masturbating and performing oral sex on him... he groomed the 11-year-old boy to lure other children to his home where he would molest them. (Booyesen, 07/11/2017, Independent online).*

*... the children were groomed in a manner that they established a closer relationship with him.” (21/12/2013, News24).*

*“The court heard that the two girls used to visit him on numerous occasions at his home... he built trust with the girls, aged seven and nine. She said he touched their private parts and made them touch his own genitalia in return... he made the girls believe what they were doing is acceptable. The children were groomed in a manner that they established a close relationship with him, visiting him at his house.” (17/07/2013, News24).*

These extracts showcased how the offenders groomed victims by first building trust and making the children feel comfortable before sexually abusing them.

#### 4.3.3.2 Sub-theme: The sudden attack (n= 4 (out of 18), 22%)

However, some articles described how the offenders would attack suddenly without any prior grooming, using violence and aggression:

*“...He visited the room yet again, while (victim) and babysitter were home alone... he began undressing her...” (Germaner, 30/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“I remember he took me into the training room, close the door and closed the blinds... then he started touching me in places I really didn't think he should. He didn't have gloves on and he didn't tell me what he was doing... I accepted what*

*he was doing because I was told by adults, he was the best doctor... ” (The associated press, 25/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“The accused took her to the other side off the railway line and forced her to lie down and undressed her... he threatened to kill her if she refused. He then proceeded to rape her... Given the modus operandi utilised by the accused, choosing a quiet area located near an open field or bushes, approaching his victims from behind, starting with small chatter and then pouncing, he could be described as a serial rapist or sexual predator.” (Rice, 21/09/2017, Independent online).*

The above extracts make a distinction between the paedophilic acts (which are not usually violent and enduring (Dicky et al., 2002) to those that are violent and opportunistic.

*“The family member looked after them while their aunt was at work. One afternoon, while the two girls were playing hide-and-seek, he took (victim) into one of the rooms and, she says, he raped her.” (Pilane, 26/05/2017, Mail & Guardian).*

Whether the offender’s tactic was to first build trust and a relationship with their victim, or attacked suddenly and without warning, this theme illustrated different *modus operandi* of each offender.

#### 4.3.3.3 *Sub-theme: Manipulative nature of child sexual offender (n=10 (out of 18), 56%)*

This theme highlights the manipulative behaviour of a paedophile and how they used this to lure their victims into doing what they want, be it through threatening the victim or by persuading the victim with incentives:

*“The boys were lured into his home... the boys were made to sit on his couch and play PlayStation games, while he would take them one at a time into his room...Once again, he used the promise of a bicycle to lure the boy to his new residence.” (Germaner, 22/07/2017, Independent online).*

*“He arouses sexual urges from children... he built trust with the girls... he made the girls believe what they were doing is acceptable... the children were groomed in a manner that they established a closer relationship with him.” (21/12/2013, News24).*

*“They know that teenagers crave to feel they are part of the world of glamour and beauty and parties... all she has to do is open her legs.” (20/03/2013, Schutte, Mail & Guardian).*

Some offenders used their profession to persuade the victims into thinking that what they were doing was “normal”.

*“How many of us are there? Do you even know? You preyed on me, on us. You saw a way to take advantage of your position – the almighty and trusted doctor. Shame on you’ ... ‘He was the doctor. I was the child. I had no idea what to think.’” (The associated press, 25/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“(Offender) has been accused of molesting more than 100 girls in his care... admitting that he abused young athletes under the guise of offering medical treatment.” (08/12/2017, News24).*

These extracts suggested that the media showcases the manipulative nature of child sexual offenders which aimed to get potential victims to listen to and do whatever the offender was telling/requesting them to do.

Another concept highlighted was the need to control and overpower the victim either through the use of power or threats. The following extracts illustrated this:

*“What I am going to do now, if you say this to anyone, I will kill you’... he came back to the room and told her if she alerted anyone to what had happened, he would kill her.” (Germaner, 30/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“He asked if she knew how many minutes it took to kill someone. He told her two minutes and she begged him not to kill her. He threatened to kill her if she refused. He then proceeded to rape her.” (Rice, 21/09/2017, Independent online).*

#### **4.3.4 Theme: Emphasis on punishment (n=14, 47%)**

Most articles emphasised the sentence imposed by the law on the sexual offender. These articles portrayed that sexual offenders were deserving of punishment, without any mention of treatment options nor the benefits of treatment options.

*“This was the heart-breaking testimony that ultimately sealed (offenders) fate, after he was sentenced to two life sentences for the rape and murder of (victim, two years old) ... The accused is not a suitable candidate for rehabilitation.” (Germaner, 30/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“(offender) who was sentenced to 40- 175 years in prison for molesting people under the guise of medical treatment.” (The associated press, 25/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“One of the worst paedophiles was sentenced to 32 life sentences and a further 170 years for, among other things, sexually abusing his girlfriend’s two-year-old daughter.” (Monama, 08/12/2017, Independent online).*

*“The Western High Court on Thursday sentenced Cape Town serial rapist (offender), 31, to life behind bars and 115 years ... (offender) will be added to the national sex offenders register... The National Prosecuting Authority welcomed the sentence and hoped it sent the message that crimes against women and children were being taken seriously.” (Rice, 21/09/2017, Independent online).*

*“It is unarguable that any act involving the sexual exploitation of children including the possession of child pornography is criminal and deserving of punishment.” (Young, 23/08/2013, Mail & Guardian).*

It would appear that the more severe the sentence imposed on the offender, the more positively it was appraised by the media.

Two articles reported on new forms of punishment for sexual offenders, besides incarceration.

*“Child rights activists on Wednesday welcomed the Indonesian government’s plans to use chemical castration as additional punishment for child sex offenders ... the president supported castration as a form of punishment in addition to jail terms for child sex offenders... child sex offenders are punishable up to 15 years in prison and a maximum fine of about \$21 800.” (21/10/2015, News24).*

*“A Malaysian lawmaker called Wednesday for child sex attackers to be branded with hot iron... ‘For the men who do this, we should heat up a hot iron and poke them with it’ ... The maximum punishment for child rape in Malaysia is 20 years in jail and caning.” (Reporter, 29/11/2017, Independent online).*

Furthermore, one article reported that past trauma of the offender was ignored as a potential mitigating factor in a trial of a sex offender, focusing solely on the fact that the sex offender deserves maximum punishment.

*“The US state of Ohio planned to execute its first prisoner in more than three years on Wednesday, putting to death a man convicted of raping and murdering a child ... (Offender) was 19 in 1993 when he was convicted of raping and killing three-year-old (victim). He admitted to his crimes but said his own sexual and physical abuse at the hands of his father were mitigating circumstances not considered at trial ... the constitution does not guarantee a pain free execution.” (Staff, 26/07/2017, Business Day).*



The media seemed to portray that all sex offenders are deserving of the harshest punishment, without any consideration that the offender could have a mental disorder and be in need of treatment in addition to incarceration.

#### **4.3.5 Theme: Perception of child molesters by the media (n=11, 37%)**

Some articles used negative phrases pertaining to child molesters indicating a subjective prejudice against those engaged in paedophilic acts. Anti-social traits were reported in the following extracts

*“The paedophile murderer that had committed a despicable crime, a selfish and cruel act ... Human life is of no value to people like the accused, his crimes are as fearsome as they are loathsome and despicable, the judge said.” (Germaner, 30/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“We were still shocked to our core by some of the appalling details of the crimes that were captured in these images – babies subjected to spine-chilling torture, bondage, and rape.” (Charles, 07/11/2017, Independent online).*

*“The report also suggests that 40% of sex offender who victimised children admitted to engaging in sex with animals ... ‘It is a fact that bestiality is merely a stepping stone to sex crimes where the victims could be other vulnerable beings, like children or young woman.’” (Germaner, 04/11/2017, Independent online).*

*“The problems have been so widespread, and the nature of abuse so heinous, that it is difficult to comprehend.” (15/12/2017, News24).*

Some extracts revealed that some of the sexual offenders did not engage in paedophilic acts with children as highlighted in the following extract:

*“I can imagine the anger and the shock, the lock him up and throw away the key, gut reaction which is inevitable and understandable, even if his crime was limited to accessing and keeping child porn and he never harmed any child directly under his care.” (Young, 21/08/2017, Mail & Guardian).*

The media seemed to use these negative terms to emphasise not only how horrific the offenses were, but also to portray how horrific the offenders were. Even though the authors themselves did not write the words, they selected specific quotes for the articles and portrayed the offenders in a negative light.

*“You have become a man ruled by selfish and perverted desires, a man defined by his daily choices over and over again to feed that selfishness and perversion. You chose to pursue your wickedness no matter what it cost others ... A repulsive*

*liar... you are a disaster ... sexual predators ... the evil that resides in you ... Only a monster would harm innocent children the way (offender) did. I will never understand the evil that motivates an adult to abuse an innocent child ... There's not a day that passes that I don't think about that monster.'"* (The associated press, 25/01/2018, Independent online).

*"(offender) was not a doctor, he in fact is, was, and forever shall be, a child molester, and a monster of a human being.'" (08/12/2014, News24).*

Some articles also showed how in various contexts paedophilic acts could be construed differently and glamourized in the form of "sugar daddies"

*"They used her like a child sex slave ... it occurs to me just how problematic the term sugar daddy is. It conjures up glamorised, old style movie images. It has a sweet ring to it. What we are talking about is paedophiles. We are talking about statutory rape. We are talking about child sex rings and sexual perverts ... Townships cannot continue to be used by sugar daddy paedophiles as bargain supermarkets for young flesh."* (Schutte, 20/03/2013, Mail & Guardian).

#### **4.3.6 Theme: The sexual offender with a violent demeanour (n=6, 20%)**

Another theme uncovered was how the media highlighted the violent nature of paedophiles, where the offender not only used sexual violence, but also used physical violence and at times committed murder:

*"...A man raped and throttled the two-year-old she was babysitting ... if you say this to anyone, I will kill you... Between the strangulation and the rape ... paedophile murderer."* (Germaner, 30/01/2018, Independent online).

*"One of the worst paedophiles... Other than raping her, he used a toy dinosaur, thermometer and a sex toy to penetrate the child."* (Monama, 08/12/2012, Independent online).

*"... Babies subjected to spine-chilling torture, bondage, and rape."* (Charles, 07/11/2017, Independent online).

*"...He pleaded guilty to a range of charges which included five counts of rape, one count of attempted rape, two accounts of kidnapping, three counts of sexual assault, three counts of robbery with aggravating circumstances, one count of attempted robbery and count of compelling children to witness sexual offences... She was medically examined and found to be pregnant... He also threatened he would stab her if she made a noise."* (Rice, 21/09/2017, Independent online).

*"(Offender) was 19 in 1993 when he was convicted of raping and killing three-year-old (victim)." (Staff, 26/07/2017, Business Day).*

*“Some sugar daddies will slap and punch young girls who challenge them... They used her like a child sex slave.” (20/03/2013, Schutte, Mail & Guardian).*

These extracts suggested that paedophilic acts may be committed in various ways. The articles sampled defined subtypes of sexual offenders as: the aggressive type as well as the manipulative and loving type who grooms his victims before sexually abusing them. Notably, the grooming type seemed to be a long-term form of abuse while the sudden attack type was marked by a need for control and power as well as gratuitous violence.

#### **4.3.7 Theme: Offender’s rights being respected (n=6, 20%)**

Of the 30 articles, only six reported incidents where the offender’s rights were taken into consideration, suggesting that child sexual offenders remain human beings that have human rights and deserve a fair trial.

*“A spokesperson for the Gauteng education department, (spokesperson), said an investigation by the department found no evidence to support the allegation. ‘Though the complainant alleged that other learners were also sexually assaulted, she subsequently failed to submit names of other victims for necessary intervention,’ he said. ‘The preliminary investigation did not provide any grounds for a precautionary suspension; hence the said employee was not placed on such.’” (Macupe, 04/08/2017, Mail & Guardian).*

*“‘Just because someone’s name appears on a list doesn’t make them guilty, and if there are serious allegations, they should be put in the hands of the police,’ he said.” (21/10/2015, News24).*

*“‘He kept his trousers and zip tight until he finished the sentence. I believe that this time he’ll also be able to comply with this condition ... ’(judge) also noted that (offender) suffered public humiliation and lost his job. He decided not to fine (offender) ...” (21/12/2013, News24).*

*“(Defence lawyer) told the court the defence intended to present the evidence of a clinical psychologist and had instructed her to compile a report.” (Wolhuter, 10/01/2018, Independent online).*

*“Once a specific person has been formally charged with a sexual offence, the Criminal Procedure Act bans the publication of any information relating to the offence at any stage before the accused has both appeared in court and pleaded to the charge.” (Ampofo, 10/11/2017, Mail & Guardian).*

*“(Offender) pleaded guilty but the court again postponed the sentencing. ... He said his client also showed remorse by pleading guilty and has been to therapy.” (17/07/2013, News24).*

Although the topic of child sexual offenses is sensitive and ignites negative journalistic judgements, some articles highlighted the importance of noting that offenders still have fundamental human rights. Thus, whether the accused were found guilty or innocent of the crimes committed, they are still entitled to their rights to be treated fairly and ethically within the justice system.

#### **4.3.8 Theme: Treatment availability and accessibility (n=5, 17%)**

Only a few articles highlighted the treatment options available for child sexual offenders and that they should be given the opportunity to enter into a treatment programme, which also highlighted the disruption that paedophilic urges can cause to the paedophiliac's life trajectory.

*“He said (offender) should continue attending sex therapy classes.” (21/12/2013, News24).*

*“Based on my interview with him, the victims as well as the parents and looking at the case docket, I recommended a sexual offender's programme for him.” (17/07/2013, News24).*

*Although earlier chemical castration was mentioned as punishment, this procedure could also be used as an effective treatment option in lowering the offender's sex drive:*

*“Attorney General (name) said chemical castration could involve injecting a female hormone to reduce the sex drive of the offender.” (21/10/2015, News24).*

Negative reporting on treatment options implied that treatment was not a justifiable or viable option as well as casting doubt on mental health professions as a reliable and effective option for child sexual offenders:

*“Medical treatment for pedophilia, from psychotherapy to medication, even chemical castration, has been tried with very few positive results. Paedophilic acts appears to be a psychiatric condition of disordered sexual identity for which there is no known cure and minimal likelihood of rehabilitation.” (Young, 23/08/2013, Mail & Guardian).*

Quoting a reliable source from the mental health profession provided resourceful information on the importance and benefits of treatment and strengthens the public's belief in the mental health system as being an effective intervention:

*“People are scared of coming forward because they never receive good treatment. We want people to come forward. If you know from a young age that*

*you are attracted to children, you must come forward. We want to make the world a safer place without the stigma,' she said. (doctor) stressed: 'Coming forward is about managing their behaviour before they act out. Sometimes it can be rehabilitation and (we) teach them skills to live in a world where they cannot sexually act out.' She said arresting paedophiles didn't assist in removing the stigma from the condition and it did not help them to live normal lives. Therapy, (doctor) said, helped such people to go through life without acting out sexually."* (Monama, 08/12/2017, Independent online).

Providing reliable professional information on treatment availability and effectiveness of treatment options, could highlight treatment as a viable and essential option for child sexual offenders, rather than focusing solely on the most just and effective punishment.

#### **4.3.9 Theme: conceptualisation of paedophilic acts as a mental illness (n=5, 17%)**

Psychological terminology was seldom used as an explanation for the aetiology of an offender, failing to acknowledge that paedophilic acts can constitute a mental illness. This would seem to suggest that mental health professionals are seldom reported on in relation to paedophilic acts reported by the media.

*"A self-confessed paedophile ... he said he suffered from at least four recognisable mental disorders ... these included an antisocial personality disorder, a substance abuse disorder, paedophilic acts and a dependent personality disorder."* (Wolhuter, 10/01/2018, Independent online).

*The Nelspruit Regional Court heard on Wednesday that a convicted child molester who sexually abused his friend's daughters should be declared a paedophile. The psychological crime expert said in court after interviewing the children that (offender) was psychologically unfit to be around children. 'He arouses sexual urges from children ... such offenders go for treatment after the first offence and later as it lapses or with no therapy the risks of their sexual urges become a much greater risk.'*" (17/07/2013, News24).

When professional opinions from mental health professionals are requested, a more thorough understanding of paedophilia is provided which provides information on their aetiology, behaviour and informs the public that it is a mental illness.

*"To act as a civilised society in response I think it is worth taking a closer look at paedophilia, lest we overreact, and what we find is an inconvenient truth indeed. Paedophiles cannot help their attraction to children. Being a paedophile, however, is not a crime. Having a sexual attraction to children is in itself not a criminal act, any more than wishing someone dead makes one a murderer. Acting on those impulses however most definitely is. A paedophile, according to*

*scientific studies summarised conveniently here, has no choice in what turns him or her on. There is good evidence that the brains of paedophiles have a wiring fault that deflects the objects of sexual arousal from the normal path of adults onto children, that the triggers pertaining to kids – big head, big eyes and round face that define cuteness – lead to the sexual arousal centre, rather than to the protective nurturing centre and the activities one would expect of an adult relating to a child. Paedophiles literally can't help themselves. Their search for love takes them to love objects that are unobtainable in normal civilised society ... The vast majority of paedophiles never hurt any children ... That a human being can be born with a defect that causes him or her to look for love in the wrong places is tragic. We cannot as a society afford to let paedophiles practice their sexual orientation, that is definite, but perhaps accepting that they themselves are victims of biological accident will lead us to a solution that is fair to us, them and to all the children everywhere.” (Young, 23/08/2013).*

*“Despite numerous reports on paedophiles and sexual grooming of children, clinical sexologist says there's still confusion on what the difference between a paedophile and a child sex offender is(Doctor) says ‘One needs to make a clinical assessment to be able to tell the difference between a paedophile and someone who is sexually violent. Child abusers or violators are much more prolific than paedophiles.’ (doctor) said the majority of child abusers who went through the justice system were not paedophiles. She said paedophilia was a sexual orientation and those with paedophilia have a mental disorder in which they can't control their urges to have sexual relations with minors. The disorder usually manifests during adolescence and the children they are attracted to have to be at least five years younger. ‘Paedophiles are a specific group of people who have a sexual attraction to children that is only about sexual orientation in terms of their love and lust.’ (doctor) said. Paedophilia occurs in people who recognise they have an attraction to children and can't control acting out on it. It is not about them being violent. She said child molesters were those who opportunistically preyed on children and they were unlikely to be paedophiles. (Doctor) said the stigma around paedophilia is what stops those who have the disorder from coming forward, so they can be taught ways to manage their condition.” (Monama, 08/12/2017, Independent online).*

More detailed reporting on mental health professionals' views on paedophilic acts allows the public to not only be informed of their criminal behaviours, but to also gain an understanding that their behaviours are symptoms of a mental illness with varying treatment options.

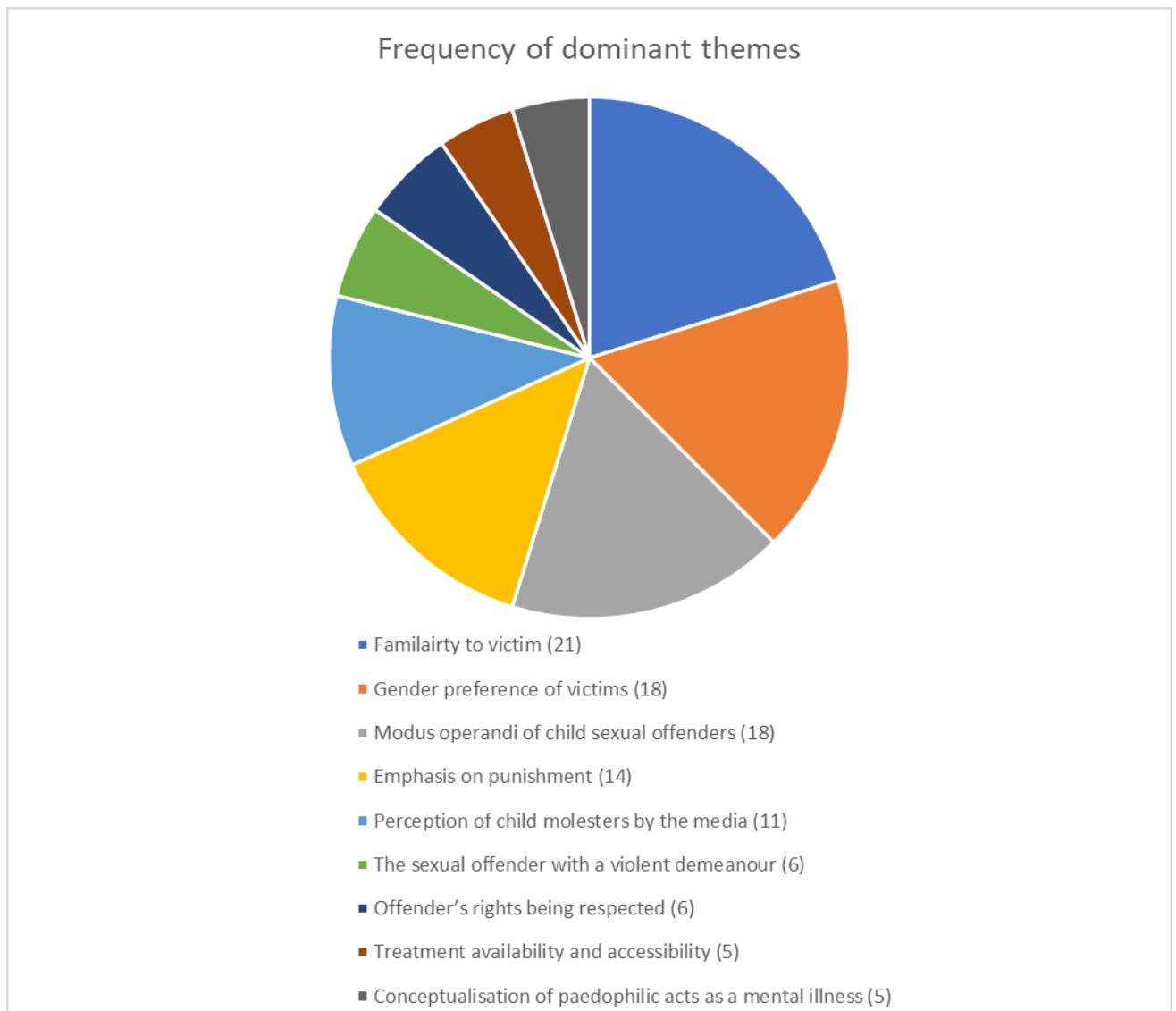
#### **4.4 Summary of thematic analysis**

Overall, nine themes and four sub-themes were identified using thematic analysis, they were (in order of dominance):

- Theme: Familiarity to victim ( $n=21$ , 70%) (Sub-theme: Betrayal of trust)
- Theme: Gender preference of victims ( $n=18$ , 60%)
- Theme: *Modus operandi* of child sexual offenders ( $n=18$ , 60%) (Sub-theme: Sexual grooming; The sudden attack; manipulative nature of child sexual offender)
- Theme: Emphasis on punishment ( $n=14$ , 47%)
- Theme: Perception of child molesters by the media ( $n=11$ , 37%)
- Theme: The sexual offender with a violent demeanour ( $n=6$ , 20%)
- Theme: Offender's rights being respected ( $n=6$ , 20%)
- Theme: Treatment availability and accessibility ( $n=5$ , 17%)
- Theme: conceptualisation of paedophilic acts as a mental illness ( $n=5$ , 17%)

The themes of familiarity, lack of trust, gender preference and *modus operandi* of the offender with the victim were highlighted as crucial factors exacerbating paedophilic acts. The *modus operandi* theme and sub-themes discussed in this chapter suggest that there may be differences in the kinds of sexual offenders who perform paedophilic acts on children. Some sexual offenders will take time to build trust and sexually groom their victims. These types of sexual offenders are likely to confess or show remorse when they are caught having acted on their impulses. Other types of sexual offenders might have a manipulative nature or they might attack suddenly and impulsively. Emphasis on punishment and the perception of child molesters by the media, although not the most dominant themes, appear to emphasise the criminal and horrific behaviour of paedophiles and child sex offenders. Another theme, the violent demeanour of a child sexual offender, showcased how, for some offenders, it was not only about the sexual act, but also about being violent. It would seem that the sexual grooming type may meet some of the criteria for paedophilia while the violent sexual offender may be classified as sexual molesters. Be that as it may the impact of these traumatic events may not be minimised in the lives of their vulnerable victims. Although the offender's rights being respected, treatment availability and accessibility and the conceptualisation of paedophilic acts as a mental illness were identified as themes, they were the least frequent. The majority of themes revealed a negative tone portrayed by the media in their perception of these sexual offenders and paedophilic acts.

Figure 4.4.2  
*Graphic representation of results from Thematic Analysis displayed*



#### 4.5 Summary

This chapter set out to present the results and analysis of this study. Tables were used to illustrate each theme that was uncovered along with extracts from the newspaper articles themselves to showcase how the researcher identified each theme and sub-theme. In total, nine dominant themes and four sub-themes emerged from the 30 articles. The results from this study assisted in answering the three main research questions. In light of the above results,



1) Paedophilic acts were portrayed in a negative, derogatory light. Emphasis was on paedophiles engaging in severe and disturbing acts of sexual violence, failing to highlight the fact that paedophilia is also a mental illness.

2) In terms of research question two, nine dominant themes and four sub-themes were identified using thematic analysis. The dominant themes were (in order of most to least common): Familiarity to victim; Gender preference of victims; Modus operandi of child sexual offenders; Emphasis on punishment; Perceptions of child molesters by the media, The sexual offender with a violent demeanour; Offenders' rights being respected; Treatment availability and accessibility; and Conceptualisation of paedophilic acts as a mental illness. The sub-themes were: Betrayal of trust; The sexual grooming; The sudden attack; Manipulative nature of child sexual offender. These themes and sub-themes showcased exactly what the media focuses on and highlights when reporting on paedophilic acts.

3) Lastly, from the results it can be concluded that it is likely that the media perpetuate stigma towards paedophilia. They seem to report only on those severe and horrific cases, re-emphasising to the public how dangerous and evil paedophiles are. The media seems to focus largely on the modus operandi and criminal aspects when reporting on a case. Mental health perspectives were notably absent from most reports. Therefore, they appear to fail to provide a psychological explanation of paedophilic acts, reinforcing the stigma that paedophiles are dangerous, in-human and deserve to receive the harshest punishment. The next section will go into further detail and discuss the results of the three research questions.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the results obtained, answer the research questions and incorporate and compare the literature that was reviewed to the findings. This chapter therefore concludes the results and findings of the research conducted, what these findings mean in relation to the research questions.

#### **5.2 Discussion of research aims and objectives**

This study reviewed how a sample of South African newspapers portrayed paedophiles and child sex offenders during the timeframe of January 2013–January 2018. Thirty relevant articles met the inclusion criteria and were reviewed from different newspaper sites and different journalists. Despite differences among the articles, the themes appeared to be similar across the articles. The aims of this study were 1) to find out how paedophilic acts are portrayed by the media?) 2) to identify the present themes in newsprint media regarding paedophilic acts) 3) to uncover whether the themes in newsprint media appear to perpetuate stigma towards paedophilia, and if so, how? These are each discussed more fully below.

##### **5.2.1 How are paedophilic acts portrayed by the media?**

Most of the findings were consistent with the existing literature but also allow further insights on the topic. With a few exceptions, the results from thematic analysis present paedophiles in a negative light in newsprint media. The majority of the articles used derogatory terms to describe the sexual offenders for instance some used the words “sexual predator”, “child monster” to name just a few. These descriptions seem to portray a negative perception towards those engaging in paedophilic acts and highlight prejudicial attitudes towards the perpetrators of these gruesome crimes. Some referred to sexual offenders as monsters who need to be locked away and the key thrown away. These citations seem to echo findings of previous research conducted where paedophiles were viewed as evil, disgusting, untreatable, mostly rejected by society, and should be punished for any deviant action or even just a deviant thought (Feldman & Crandall, 2007; Imhoff, 2015; McCartan, 2010a). Similarly, various studies (Dietrich et al., 2006; Harper, 2005; Klin & Lemish, 2008; Lee, 2008; Wahl,

1992) have revealed that people who suffer from mental illnesses are presented in the media as violent, criminal, dangerous, unpredictable, explosive, negative, inadequate, and unfavourable. McCartan (2010a) reported that the UK press portrayed paedophiles as monsters or beasts that need to be punished. Interestingly, most newspaper articles in this study failed to mention that paedophilic acts are also symptoms of mental illnesses with treatment options available, rather choosing to focus on the actual crime committed and the punishment received. Only one of 30 articles directly quoted a professional clinical sexologist explaining the psychological make up of a paedophile as a “sexual orientation” and a “mental disorder in which they can’t control their urges”. This gap in reporting may deprive the public of information about predisposing factors to paedophilic acts, and may reinforce stigma-related attitudes towards those with a mental illness that includes paedophilic acts. McCartan et al., (2015) highlighted the need to shift the public’s understanding of child sexual abuse and allow for more factual statements to be realised by the media through engaging more with mental health professionals on this topic. The present results suggest that South African media have also failed to provide more factual mental health-related statements from professionals which would allow the public to gain a better understanding of paedophilic acts. As McCartan (2010a) pointed out, it appears that the media’s focus is not on providing relevant, honest, ethical and impartial news coverage, but rather appears to reinforce and promote the stigma that those performing paedophilic acts are criminals, deserving of nothing but punishment.

Similarly, those engaging in paedophilic acts seem to be portrayed by the media as cunning and manipulative. These perspectives were evident in some of the extracts from the articles. Most of them highlighted that the perpetrator or sexual offender was familiar to and known by their victims. This finding highlighted the betrayal of trust that the victim had on the perpetrator who was perceived as ‘safe’ for the victim.

The articles described those who perform paedophilic acts as monsters who are calculating and manipulative in their ways, further supporting previous research citing them as perceived monsters. The main themes emerging from this study were consistent with findings from other studies (Lonne & Parton, 2014; McCartan, 2010a; McCartan, 2010b; and Thomas, 2005) where paedophiles and those engaging in paedophilic acts are portrayed using derogatory words that emphasize paedophilic acts as a crime without mentioning the mental health dimensions of these destructive and injurious behaviours.

Furthermore, the current findings revealed that paedophilic acts are only brought to the media when a crime has been committed. Interestingly, the media has not only focused on the details of the crime (including the modus operandi used by the offender and the potential risk factors for the victims) but has also allowed for the voices of the victim and their families as well as the justice system involved in the criminal case to be heard. This is contrary to the findings of Lonne and Parton (2014) where they found that the voices of the victims and their parents were always absent. Two important voices which seem absent in the South African media, are those of the child sexual offenders themselves as well as the mental health professionals who would be able to provide factual understanding of paedophilic acts and available treatment outcomes to complement the criminal and moral perspectives predominantly offered. In line with Kesic et al. (2011), these themes surrounding paedophilic acts reported by the media are largely the perspectives of people in power (journalists, editors and the justice system) who fail to include the child sexual offenders themselves in the discussions, making them the object of the discourses, and not participants.

Such reporting tendencies suggest that the media use selective reporting, deciding what is most newsworthy and what will help increase sales, contributing to the perpetuation of stigma due to lack of information on other complementary perspectives (Kesic et al., 2011). Such selective reporting may leave the public with partial knowledge and limited understanding of paedophilic acts and paedophilia as a mental illness. Instead, such reporting could inflame fear, anger and hatred towards those who have performed paedophilic acts; reinforcing the belief that paedophiles and child sex offenders are one and the same, deserving of the harshest punishment with no or little information of treatment availability and its benefits.

Overall those engaging in paedophilic acts were portrayed in a negative light by the media. This was evident in the themes uncovered during analysis. The focus on familiarity and proximity of the sex offender to the victim seem to play on the public emotions in such a way that lures the public's interest to the story without any redeeming educative or compassionate message, other than, deservedly, for the victim. The familiarity of offender to the victim seems to also provide an educative message to the public that parents and children need to constantly be aware of risk, even in situations they deem as safe. This could ultimately lead to more prevention of child sexual abuse.

There appears not to be a false distinction between individuals who performed paedophilic acts due to a mental condition (paedophiles) and those who are child molesters with a violent

demeanour. The media does not seem to have knowledge of this aspect and thus use the two interchangeably. The loose use of these concepts may have legal implications. Though there is a distinction between the two concepts, the media seem to selectively use these words interchangeably to catch the public's attention. Furthermore, the media appear to report on male paedophiles or child sex offenders more than females (which is only true for this sample), mostly mentioning the sex of the victims, portraying the paedophile as either homosexual or heterosexual. From the findings, it appears the media tend to focus more on the high profile and violent cases of child sexual abuse, focusing the criminal aspect of paedophilic acts and omitting a mental health or psychological conceptualisation of these acts. The selective reporting highlighting the criminal element may be effective in promoting vigilance and possibly in deterring future incidents, however it downplays the complex aspect of some paedophilic acts which may emanate from uncontrollable urges and distress which are a result of the presence of a mental disorder (paedophilia).

In contrast a minority of the articles and only a section of each of these articles contained a different perspective on paedophilic acts. These few articles mentioned paedophilic acts as symptoms of paedophilia as a mental illness. Scientific mental health professional perspectives were shared with regard to the psychological criteria and nature of a paedophilic disorder. These extracts cited predispositional and exacerbating factors of the paedophilic disorder, highlighting the compulsive and uncontrollable nature of the sexual urges and the distress experienced from such urges.

Overall most reports sampled suggest that the media portray those engaging in paedophilic acts as evil, manipulative criminals, who are usually those in society we trust the most and who need to be punished through incarceration in order to protect society. Mental health aspects were seldom reported.

### **5.2.2 What are the present themes in newsprint media regarding paedophilic acts?**

The current themes around those engaging in paedophilic acts seems to be centred on safety of the vulnerable societal groups, namely children. Most of the articles shared their concerns on the failure of the justice system in defending and processing cases. Some alluded to the fact that some of the professionals who were reported as sexual offenders were neither prosecuted nor held accountable due to insufficient evidence. The notion of offender familiarity seemed to highlight the danger and vulnerability children could be faced with in the least expected places and with the least expected people. This supports literature (Lannen,

2016; Meinck, Cluver, Boyes & Loening-Voysey, 2016) which showed that in most cases the victim was familiar to the offender, increasing their vulnerability. Some of the extracts revealed that the public, especially men or fathers, seem uneasy talking to children in public in fear of being perceived as predators. The way the media portrays those who performed sexual offences on children, seems to suggest the betrayal of trust of men in general and incites fear of any male figure who seems interested in a child. This supports the literature which states that those engaging in paedophilic acts are usually male and select children based on their vulnerability and availability (Murray, 2000). The language used or words that describe those who have sexually abused children communicates a strong message that they are unwanted and condemned by the public. Similarly, these messages communicate pain and disappointment in those individuals who were once trusted by the families of the victims and the victims themselves.

South African newsprint media seem to have focused on reporting the familiarity and betrayal of the victim's own family, friends or professionals in high-powered positions, which highlights the vulnerability of children and appears to foreground a message of warning and awareness. This was done using captivating headlines, such as 'Paedophile Sunday school teacher's reign of terror' or 'Vatican: Much to do to stop paedophile priests' or 'Disgraced UK coach facing eight more child abuse charges' and creates this perception that the child sexual offenders reported on are most likely guilty of a criminal act, without reading the contents of the article. This supports McQuail's (2007) findings that the media produce news at the right time, which will be appealing to their audience, influencing the public's opinions and attitudes through stereotyping and norm reinforcement. Through using captivating headlines, where the offender's familiarity, betrayal of trust to the victim, and the possible punishment or legal repercussions for the offender has already been highlighted, creates an assumption of the offender in the headline being guilty of an horrific criminal act, reinforcing the stereotype that all paedophilic acts are criminal.

One of the emerging themes emphasised the dissatisfaction of the public with the processes involved when prosecuting child sexual offenders. Some highlighted the questioning of the integrity of the law in prosecuting the cases. The notion that most of the perpetrators held positions of power and authority has a subtle tendency to trivialize their offences leading to justice not being served for the vulnerable victims. The teachers, priests, coaches, and fathers mentioned in the reports sampled were all individuals that are esteemed higher in relation to the protection of the children's rights, yet the findings suggest that they are the high-risk

predators of child sexual abuse or paedophilic acts. These findings appear to insinuate that children are not safe anywhere. The general theme that there “lies a paedophile under every rock” seems to support and create a sense of anxiety that children are never safe and precautionary measures always need to be in place. These findings are in line with various studies (Lannen, 2016; Seto, 2004) stating that all men are sexually curious about children, yet paedophiles stay fixated on the pre-pubertal stage. Taking into account the high prevalence of child sexual abuse in South Africa (Meinck et al., 2016), this reinforces the notion of how unsafe and vulnerable children are to sexual abuse. Alongside these, the justice system in particular was perceived as not doing enough to protect society, as some of the reported child sexual offenders were still able to gain easy access to their victims and have not been incarcerated to protect society. This can be seen as socially responsible reporting as the high prevalence of child sexual abuse clearly shows the need for better interventions to ensure the safety of children. Some articles revealed a sense of betrayal by the justice system in ensuring that those engaging in paedophilic acts were allowed fair trials, or the presenting of mitigating factors being brought forward in the form of psychological reports. This sense of betrayal can be understood because it appears the public have been given minimal theoretical understanding of paedophilic behaviours.

Another dominant theme pertaining to those engaging in paedophilic acts was violence. Most of the articles strongly emphasised the violent nature and behaviour of the crimes committed by those engaging in paedophilic acts. The media often used sensationalism to provoke public interest and strong negative reactions towards those engaging in paedophilic acts, as the more horrific the crime the more interest and negative responses will be provoked. From this discourse, the public may simplistically associate violence with all child sexual offenders and paedophiles (as both names are used interchangeably throughout the articles), which is not entirely accurate and is contrary to the literature (Murray, 2000) which indicates that not all child sexual offenders can be diagnosed with paedophilia and likewise not all paedophiles sexually abuse children using violence. This kind of theme highlights the need for greater awareness and information on paedophilia as a type of mental illness.

Danger and alarm were two themes pertaining to those engaging in paedophilic acts, used to warn the public against the sexual offenders through graphic reporting of the horrific events that had taken place. The portrayal of all sexual offenders as cunning, dangerous and devious may incite fear, anger and hatred in the public towards the offenders. These themes may make the public regard paedophiles and those engaging in paedophilic acts as dangerous and

who should be avoided through incarceration, rather than those who should seek treatment, ideally before they commit a legal offence.

Contrary to the above themes was a minority one that attempted to view paedophilic acts in an empathic/supportive manner for the offender. A few newspaper articles reported the views of health professionals who attempted to give an account of the predispositional and maintaining factors of paedophilic acts especially paedophilia as a mental illness. Though this was a different dynamic to the other themes, it was further diluted by the reporting on the prognosis of paedophilia which accurately portrayed a sense of suspicion towards the rehabilitation of sexual offenders especially in South Africa. This supports the literature (Department of Correctional Services, 2017; Hesselink-Louw & Schoeman, 2003) where statistics have shown that there is only one psychologist for every 3 200 prisoners and only 22% will therefore receive psychological services, clearly highlighting the lack of services provided for child sexual offenders. Although the majority of articles (83%) did not report on any available treatment for paedophiles, the minority (17%) that reported on treatment questioned its efficacy in rehabilitating sexual offenders. The literature further stipulates that there are insufficient mental health treatment resources within correctional services for mentally ill offenders (Department of Correctional Services, 2017), resulting in offending paedophiles being subjected to long sentences receiving little to no treatment which can cause increased pathology and result in the disorder being untreated (Allen, 1992). Thus, although a minority of the findings mentioned and validated treatment options, in line with the above literature, these treatment options were understandably questioned and doubted.

Overall, the dominant themes regarding those engaging in paedophilic acts and paedophiles were negative, where the media attempted to showcase these individuals as violent and dangerous (which arguably, they are, and the public should be notified about). The media, through the above-mentioned themes, also emphasised how the systems that are meant to protect society have failed, which seems to have created this alarm and crisis (again, rightly so) where children should not blindly be assumed to be safe in any institution nor around family and friends. However, this can be seen as socially responsible reporting which could in stimulate better government action on better prevention messaging and better rehabilitative facilities.



### **5.2.3 Do themes in newsprint media appear to perpetuate stigma towards paedophilia, and if so, how?**

As already reviewed, stigmatised persons are seen as deviant, flawed, undesirable and deeply discredited (Goffman, 1963; Jones, 1984). Although most articles did not use derogatory phrases, a subtle message was present, possibly perpetuating stigma by associating those who engaged in paedophilic acts with violent criminals, monsters and murderers. The use of the terms such as “wickedness, disaster, sexual predator, evil and monster” were used to describe paedophiles or those engaging in paedophilic acts. Although some of these phrases were quotes from the public statements, the fact that the media chose to include these quotes suggests an intention to perpetuate stigma around paedophilic acts. The powerful opinions and voices of the victims themselves were quoted to evoke strong reactions (such as disgust, fear, anger and hatred) from the public. The negative terms used contributed to the belief that paedophiles and those engaging in paedophilic acts are all violent and dangerous which the public should be alerted to. The results from this study support the literature which states that paedophiles are discriminated against regardless of their behaviour; that they should be punished for any deviant sexual interest whether there was criminal action or not; and that they are stigmatised as being evil, disgusting, criminals who are untreatable (Jahnke & Hoyer, 2013; McCartan, 2010a; Imhoff, 2015).

Articles themed by an emphasis on punishment, portrayed that all who engaged in paedophilic acts as only deserving of punishment in the form of incarceration or a more severe punishment, without any mention of the importance of treatment for their mental health condition. These findings align with previous studies which asserted that paedophiles are likely not to seek help based on this public stigma and their fear of being treated unethically, without respect, and being misunderstood (Kramer, 2011; Wilson & Cox, 1983). Media reporting solely on the punishment of the offenders seemingly perpetuates the stigma that paedophiles cannot seek treatment and should not be treated ethically or respectfully, regardless of the crime being committed.

This perpetuation of stigma against paedophiles as being undeserving of fair and ethical treatment which could contribute to the potential offender’s (those who experience sexual urges but have not molested children) inability to seek help or failure to receive treatment that is needed.

It may appear then that the themes these samples of South African media reports are likely to be contributing to and aggravating the public's hatred, anger and fear towards paedophiles, and the belief that they are evil monsters deserving only of the harshest punishment. Ideally the media should be a platform of public knowledge and should rather be creating additional themes emphasising prevention, education, and treatment, destigmatizing the behaviour in such a way that it creates awareness and promotes tolerance while simultaneously condemning the behaviour. The anticipated outcome is that if paedophilia is acknowledged as a mental illness, the individuals suffering from these urges might seek treatment without fear of being ostracised or harmed by society.

This study supports previous studies that have been conducted on the stigma of paedophiles, citing that there is a high degree of discrimination amongst those perceived as paedophiles who are always associated with child sexual offences (regardless of whether they have committed a crime or not); being evil disgusting criminals who are untreatable, are rejected by society, and should be punished even if no crime has been committed yet (Feldman & Crandall, 2007; Imhoff, 2015; Jahnke & Hoyer, 2013; McCartan, 2010a).

### **5.3 Summary**

This study has attempted to answer the following research questions as stated in section 2.9 above:

1. How are paedophilic acts portrayed by the media?

Overall, those engaging in paedophilic acts have been portrayed in a derogatory light where the themes have been predominantly negative, highlighting paedophilic acts as a criminal offense deserving of the harshest punishment. Furthermore, the media have failed to report on the conceptualisation of paedophilic acts as a mental condition in need of psychiatric treatment.

2. What are the present themes in newsprint media regarding paedophilic acts?

There were nine themes and four sub-themes identified altogether. These themes surrounding paedophilic acts were: familiarity to the victim, betrayal of trust and gender preference. The theme of gender preference reflects both males and females as being at risk of becoming victims of sexual abuse. Modus operandi, the sexual grooming, the sudden attack, and the manipulative nature of sexual offenders' themes, highlighted how those engaging in

paedophilic acts used manipulative or violent methods to lure victims into a situation where they were vulnerable to fall victim to sexual abuse. Emphasis on punishment and perceptions of child molesters by the media, were less dominant. The sexual offender with a violent demeanour, offenders' rights, treatment availability and accessibility, and conceptualisation of paedophilic acts as a mental illness were the least frequent themes. These themes portrayed paedophiles and those engaging in paedophilic acts in a factual, fair dispassionate and informative light. Although the last three themes seemed to be more positive in terms of reporting on paedophiles and those engaging in paedophilic acts, they are the least frequently reported on in the articles that were reviewed.

3. Do themes in newsprint media appear to perpetuate stigma towards paedophilia, and if so, how?

These themes appear to have succeeded in perpetuating an already highly stigmatised group of individuals, potentially reinforcing, to the public, that paedophilic acts committed by child sexual offenders need to be punished with no psychological intervention as paedophilic acts are not understood as a symptom of paedophilia. The findings from this study concur with the literature that found that few media reports made no distinction between child sexual offenders and paedophiles, providing minimal psychological conceptualisation of the paedophilic acts of the child sexual offenders.

Although there was some reporting on the psychological make-up of paedophilic acts, further improvement is needed in the reporting of the South African media, where the distinction between the paedophilic acts of a child sexual offender and those of a paedophile is provided, therefore providing the public with a more accurate and psychological understanding of these acts and suitable intervention options that could be accessed to prevent further offending. If the media succeeds in reporting on paedophilic acts as a symptom of mental illness in need of a psychological intervention, positive changes could take place. These changes could be: reduced stigma, more knowledge and different approaches that could be provided to the different systems to allow more efficiency in dealing with paedophilic acts as a mental illness. Further, more opportunities for treatment could become available. Through the reduction of stigma, it may be anticipated that an indirect impact on the escalating incidence of child sexual abuse could be noticed in terms of decreasing numbers as more unreported paedophiles would be encouraged to seek treatment voluntarily before acting on their harmful psychosexual urges.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide concluding remarks on the findings of the study based on the three research aims and to briefly summarise the entire study. This chapter will also discuss strengths and weaknesses of the study, including some unanticipated difficulties and limitations of the study. A final remark will be given on how further research can be done on this particular topic.

#### **6.2 Summary of main findings**

This study set out to explore the portrayal of paedophilia in the media, the present themes in newsprint media regarding paedophilic acts, and whether and how these themes might perpetuate stigma towards paedophilia. A brief summary of the main findings for each research question is provided below.

##### **6.2.1 How are paedophilic acts portrayed by the media?**

The results from this study suggest that the South African media sampled here portrayed those engaging in paedophilic acts largely as criminals deserving of incarceration. Furthermore, they did not portray the difference between a non-offending paedophile and a child sexual offender. The media appeared to underemphasise information on paedophilic acts as possible symptoms of mental illness with varying treatment options available. More accurate reporting on child sexual offenders might play a role in reducing public stigma of paedophilic acts (and mental illnesses in general), but this cannot be proved by the present study.

##### **6.2.2 What are the themes in newsprint media regarding paedophilic acts?**

The most dominant themes and sub-themes were: Familiarity to the victim, betrayal of trust and gender preference. The first two themes go hand in hand as they highlight how (according to the media) most paedophiles or those engaging in paedophilic acts either know the victim personally or are in a trusted position/profession where they interacted with children on a regular basis. These offenders are easily trusted and not likely to be suspected of committing sexual deviant acts on children. The media therefore reiterates to the public that children may be in danger in the institutions or with the people that are meant to provide

a place of safety and security. Furthermore, the more familiar the person is, the more interest is sparked in the public. The theme of gender preference reflects both males and females as being at risk of becoming victims of sexual abuse. The reports emphasised that children of both genders are vulnerable to sexual abuse. In essence the findings highlight the need for families to be alert at all times when it comes to the protection of their children.

Modus operandi, the sexual grooming, the sudden attack, and the manipulative nature of sexual offenders' themes, highlighted how those engaging in paedophilic acts used manipulative or violent methods to lure victims into a situation where they were vulnerable to fall victim to sexual abuse. The media, through these themes, portrayed sexual offenders as being cunning and manipulating individuals, who knew which techniques would ensure the completion of their assault. their attack was successful.

Emphasis on punishment and perceptions of child molesters by the media, were less dominant. Emphasis on punishment and perceptions of child molesters largely had a negative connotation, without very little mention of professional mental health treatment. This could reinforce some of the public's perception of child sexual offenders as deserving only to be punished, without any treatment.

The sexual offender with a violent demeanour, offenders' rights, treatment availability and accessibility, and conceptualisation of paedophilic acts as a mental illness were the least frequent themes. These themes portrayed paedophiles and those engaging in paedophilic acts in a factual, fair dispassionate and informative light. Although the last three themes seemed to be more positive in terms of reporting on paedophiles and those engaging in paedophilic acts, they are the least frequently reported on the subject.

### **6.2.3 Do themes in newsprint media appear to perpetuate stigma towards paedophilia, and if so, how?**

By using largely derogatory terms to describe those engaging in paedophilic acts, the results suggest that media reports analysed may reinforce negative perceptions (stigma) towards those engaging in paedophilic acts. The public is thus likely to perceive paedophiles as evil monsters rather than as mentally ill. This in turn may perpetuate the stigma towards paedophiles as being evil criminals who deserve only punishment. This may be enhanced by reporting on severe and disturbing cases to reinforce the stigma that all paedophiles are criminals in need of incarceration. The failure to mention paedophilia as a mental illness

perpetuates the stigma regarding paedophilia, which has been showcased by the themes uncovered and mentioned above.

Therefore, data from this study suggest that the media, through negative, judgemental rather than scientific clinical terms, may have portrayed paedophilic acts in a negative and derogatory manner, perpetuating stigma towards an already highly stigmatised population. It can be speculated that this could discourage help-seeking by current or prospective perpetrators, thus exposing the public to unmitigated risk of further offences.

### **6.3 Strengths**

A strength of this study was hopefully that the research conducted provided empirical findings to contribute to the literature on how South African print media portray those engaging in paedophilic acts and perpetuates the stigmatisation resulting from this portrayal. The methodology used in this study may be deemed as reproducible and veracious. Objectivity was hopefully also maintained as the researcher used information that was already in the public domain to eliminate any bias in reporting. Thus, the perspective of the media was not lost throughout the study. The research can be replicated by others, and through reflexive practice it is hoped that the results were as free as possible from bias. Lastly, as there were no participants in the study, the risks involved in this study were minimal. Further, there were no concerns that participants might be dishonest or misleading, therefore increasing the value of the findings as truthful.

### **6.4 Weaknesses**

Due to the sensitive nature of the topic, which focused on the perpetrators of crime rather than victims, this study has the potential to be perceived as condoning paedophilia or child sexual abuse. Rather, the study sought to explore the phenomenon in an attempt to increase awareness and reduce stigma. Due to the selective nature of the articles and the fact that no real participants were involved, the findings cannot be viewed as representing the opinions of the public but of those of the reporters.

### **6.5 Limitations**

One of the major limitations of this study was that participant triangulation was not possible. This could undermine the veracity of the study as the researcher did not have the opportunity

to gain feedback or confirmation from the journalists or the public themselves on whether they agreed with the findings. This could be an opportunity for further research.

Media in South Africa constitute a large industry, with numerous newsprint websites and many journalists working for each newspaper site. Therefore, it could be argued that the sample size may not be a true representation of the South African media. More studies need to be conducted with bigger samples to improve veracity.

A noted limitation to this study was that some local media may also buy syndicated international stories to report, which would mean that the reporters were not South African and did not represent how South African media portray paedophilia. This limitation could be minimised in future studies by checking for syndicated referencing or by seeking direct confirmation from the journalists who wrote the sampled articles.

Another potential limitation was that the researcher had the power to selectively choose which articles would be included into the sample, and which were excluded, introducing selection bias. However, this potential limitation was hopefully overcome because the researcher followed a strict process of elimination by specified criteria to ensure that the included samples were within the time frame and most relevant to the topic, thus minimising any potential selection bias.

Because this study sampled only South African media, it is unknown whether any of the findings are generalizable to other countries or settings. However, studies in Australia (Ducat et al., 2009) and the UK (McCartan, 2010a) on how the media portrays paedophilic acts yielded similar results to this study, suggesting that the findings from this research may be relevant internationally.

## **6.6 Unanticipated difficulties**

The only unanticipated difficulty was that some of the newspaper websites were inaccessible because they required a subscription or membership. This was not a major concern as there was sufficient data from other newspaper websites, and these accessible websites were listed as the most popular newspaper websites in South Africa. It is not known whether the inaccessible newspapers would have reported paedophilic acts with more or less negative bias.

## **6.7 Further research**

As mentioned above, possible further research could involve including participants, either from the public or the journalists from the South African print media, to enable triangulation to verify the main results. Thematic findings could be sent to such participants for their feedback on whether those emotions and reactions were actually elicited when they read the same articles. Interviewing the journalists as participants would involve asking them questions such as: why did you chose to use certain terms? How did you choose which sources to quote? What was the key message of your article? Who was your target population? These questions would help uncover whether the media are knowingly or unknowingly portraying paedophilic acts in a negative way, contributing to stigmatisation.

Further, ethically sensitive research could also involve interviewing paedophiles and child sexual offenders. Researchers could either interview them about their opinion on how the media portrays them and how they feel the public perceives them. Alternatively, researchers could interview them about the implications of being such a stigmatised group of people and how this affects their functioning, help-seeking, treatment compliance and self-perceived prospects of further offending. Further research could also be conducted on this topic using different analytic methods and different sample groups to find out if similar findings would be uncovered yet still be relevant to the topic.



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## Appendix A

*Results from Thematic Analysis displayed in table format*

<b>Dominant theme: Familiarity to the victim</b>	<b>Frequency (%): 21 (70%)</b>
<b>EXAMPLES:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “The man, (offender), was a security guard at the Sandton complex... (offender) had taken advantage of the fact that, as a security guard, he was meant to be the family’s protector... and as a friendly acquaintance to the family...” (Germaner, 30/01/2018, <i>Independent online</i>).</li> <li>- “(Offender), the former gymnastic doctor...worked at Michigan State University and USA Gymnastics...pleaded guilty to assaulting seven people...The almighty and trusted gymnastics doctor...a family friend who was someone we completely trusted.” (The associated press, 25/01/2018, <i>Independent online</i>).</li> <li>- “Sexually assaulting his five-year-old daughter and using the girl to create illicit material...” (Wolhuter, 10/01/2018, <i>Independent online</i>).</li> <li>- “...The high number of cases involving child abuse and murder where those in the dock are the very people supposed to care for and nurture the little ones...A Pretoria father is on the run after being found guilty of child pornography charges. The victims include his own children...” (Venter, 31/12/2017, <i>Independent online</i>).</li> <li>- “The commission was contacted by more than 15 000 survivors who detailed claims of child abuse involving churches, orphanages, sporting clubs, youth groups, and schools... abuse occurred in almost every place where children resided or attended for educational, recreational, sporting or religious or cultural activities.” (15/12/2017, <i>News24</i>).</li> <li>- “One of the worst paedophiles was sentenced to 32 life sentences and a further 170 years for, among other things sexually abusing his girlfriend’s two-year-old daughter.” (Monama, 08/12/2017, <i>Independent online</i>).</li> <li>- “(Offender) has been accused of molesting more than 100 female athletes during the three decades he worked with USA Gymnastics and at Michigan State.” (08/12/2017, <i>News24</i>).</li> <li>- “In the past few months, disturbing allegations of sexual assault have been levelled against several men in powerful position, both locally and internationally.” (Ampofo, 10/11/2017, <i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>).</li> <li>- “The teacher accused of sexually assaulting at least nine pupils... It is disgusting to learn about these disturbing allegations, as educators have a responsibility to be role models, and our children cannot be afraid to go to school in fear of sexual assault/s by an educator... The most likely offenders are fellow pupils or teachers.” (Reporter, 11/09/2017, <i>Independent online</i>).</li> </ul>	

- “She says her 11-year-old is a victim of sexual harassment at the hands of a man who is a worker at the school... she believes the man is a paedophile who needs to be removed from an environment involving children.” (Macupe, 04/08/2017, *Mail & Guardian*).
- “He was convicted of raping and killing three-year-old (victim), his then- girlfriend’s daughter.” (Staff, 26/07/2017).
- “He was a Sunday school teacher, a soccer coach and cycling club manager. And these were the perfect jobs for now-convicted paedophile Kelvin Thompson to position himself around children at all times.” (Germaner, 22/07/2017, *Independent online*).
- “For years, he was sexually abused by the priest – a ‘trusted family friend’ – in the Cape Flats township of Bonteheuwel... civil lawsuits in 2013 against billionaire businessman and socialite (offender). The group has accused him of sexually abusing them when they were children.” (Pilane, 26/05/2017, *Mail & Guardian*).
- “A former youth coach at the heart of a child-sex scandal, roiling English football has been charged with eight more counts of historical abuse...” (English Premiership, 07/03/2017, *News24*).
- “The move to hold church and institutional leaders responsible for protecting paedophiles... He went to the secret archive and found the names of 35 priests who had abused children.” (Associated press, 05/08/2016, *News24*).
- “Fact: one in 10 children who have experienced sexual abuse by a known adult, had this experience four or more times... A child may, for instance, experience sexual touching by an uncle at the age of five, sexual harassment at the age of 12 by peers, made to engage in sexual touching with a boyfriend at the age of 15, and being forced to have sex with someone older than her at the age of 17.” (Green, 05/06/2016, *Mail & Guardian*).
- “Much to do to stop paedophile priests... The Vatican defended the powerful finance minister, despite accusations by victims of sex abuse that he protected paedophile priests...” (05/03/2016, *News24*).
- “Former Australian prime minister is among 28 prominent people on a list of alleged paedophiles... It has so far heard harrowing claims of abuse involving places of worship, orphanages, community groups and schools.” (21/10/2015, *News24*).
- “(Offender), 44, was found guilty of sexually abusing his friends two daughters between 2006 and 2009.” (21/12/2013, *News24*).
- “I have experienced such paranoia when it comes to dealing with children, I have no more male teachers in my school... In the flesh. Ah, therein lies the paedophile-paranoia rub. Men have left the teaching profession in New Zealand in droves for fear of touching a child by mistake... One man even muttered that my speaking to children at bus stops is weird... An adult playing with a child must be regarded with deep suspicion. There is a paedophile under every rock... We are becoming strangers to our children.” (Mackenzie, 19/09/2013, *Mail & Guardian*).

- “The Nelspruit Regional Court heard on Wednesday that a convicted child molester who sexually abused his friend’s daughters should be declared a paedophile.” (17/07/2013, *News24*).

**Sub- theme: Betrayal of trust (n=21, 70%)**

**EXAMPLES:**

- “The man, (offender), was a security guard at the Sandton complex... (offender) had taken advantage of the fact that, as a security guard, he was meant to be the family’s protector... and as a friendly acquaintance to the family...” (Germaner, 30/01/2018, Independent online).
- “(Offender), the former gymnastic doctor... worked at Michigan State University and USA Gymnastics...pleaded guilty to assaulting seven people...The almighty and trusted gymnastics doctor...a family friend who was someone we completely trusted.” (The associated press, 25/01/2018, Independent online).
- “Sexually assaulting his five-year-old daughter and using the girl to create illicit material...” (Wolhuter, 10/01/2018, Independent online).
- “...The high number of cases involving child abuse and murder where those in the dock are the very people supposed to care for and nurture the little ones...A Pretoria father is on the run after being found guilty of child pornography charges. The victims include his own children...” (Venter, 31/12/2017, Independent online).
- “The commission was contacted by more than 15 000 survivors who detailed claims of child abuse involving churches, orphanages, sporting clubs, youth groups, and schools... abuse occurred in almost every place where children resided or attended for educational, recreational, sporting or religious or cultural activities.” (15/12/2017, *News24*).
- “One of the worst paedophiles was sentenced to 32 life sentences and a further 170 years for, among other things sexually abusing his girlfriend’s two-year-old daughter.” (Monama, 08/12/2017, Independent online).
- “(Offender) has been accused of molesting more than 100 female athletes during the three decades he worked with USA Gymnastics and at Michigan State.” (08/12/2017, *News24*).
- “In the past few months, disturbing allegations of sexual assault have been levelled against several men in powerful position, both locally and internationally.” (Ampfofo, 10/11/2017, *Mail & Guardian*).
- “The teacher accused of sexually assaulting at least nine pupils... It is disgusting to learn about these disturbing allegations, as educators have a responsibility to be role models, and our children cannot be afraid to go to school in fear of sexual assault/s by an educator... The most likely offenders are fellow pupils or teachers.” (Reporter, 11/09/2017, Independent online).
- “She says her 11-year-old is a victim of sexual harassment at the hands of a man who is a worker at the school... she believes the man is a paedophile who needs to be removed from an environment involving children.” (Macupe, 04/08/2017, *Mail 7 Guardian*).

- “He was convicted of raping and killing three-year-old (victim), his then- girlfriend’s daughter.” (Staff, 26/07/2017).
- “He was a Sunday school teacher, a soccer coach and cycling club manager. And these were the perfect jobs for now-convicted paedophile to position himself around children at all times.” (Germaner, 22/07/2017, Independent online).
- “For years, he was sexually abused by the priest – a ‘trusted family friend’ – in the Cape Flats township of Bonteheuwel... civil lawsuits in 2013 against billionaire businessman and socialite (offender). The group has accused him of sexually abusing them when they were children.” (Pilane, 26/05/2017, Mail & Guardian).
- “A former youth coach at the heart of a child-sex scandal, roiling English football has been charged with eight more counts of historical abuse...” (English Premiership, 07/03/2017, News24).
- “The move to hold church and institutional leaders responsible for protecting paedophiles... He went to the secret archive and found the names of 35 priests who had abused children.” (Associated press, 05/08/2016, News24).
- “Fact: one in 10 children who have experienced sexual abuse by a known adult, had this experience four or more times... A child may, for instance, experience sexual touching by an uncle at the age of five, sexual harassment at the age of 12 by peers, made to engage in sexual touching with a boyfriend at the age of 15, and being forced to have sex with someone older than her at the age of 17.” (Green, 05/06/2016, Mail & Guardian).
- “Much to do to stop paedophile priests... The Vatican defended the powerful finance minister, despite accusations by victims of sex abuse that he protected paedophile priests...” (05/03/2016, News24).
- “Former Australian prime minister is among 28 prominent people on a list of alleged paedophiles... It has so far heard harrowing claims of abuse involving places of worship, orphanages, community groups and schools.” (21/10/2015, News24).
- “(Offender), 44, was found guilty of sexually abusing his friends two daughters between 2006 and 2009.” (21/12/2013, News24).
- “I have experienced such paranoia when it comes to dealing with children, I have no more male teachers in my school... In the flesh. Ah, therein lies the paedophile-paranoia rub. Men have left the teaching profession in New Zealand in droves for fear of touching a child by mistake... One man even muttered that my speaking to children at bus stops is weird... An adult playing with a child must be regarded with deep suspicion. There is a paedophile under every rock... We are becoming strangers to our children.” (Mackenzie, 19/09/2013, Mail & Guardian).
- “The Nelspruit Regional Court heard on Wednesday that a convicted child molester who sexually abused his friend’s daughters should be declared a paedophile.” (17/07/2013, News24).

Dominant theme: Gender preference of victims	Frequency (%): 18 (60%)
<p><b>EXAMPLES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "...A man raped and throttled the two-year-old (girl) she was babysitting." (Germaner, 30/01/2018, <i>Independent online</i>).  <p style="margin-left: 20px;">“(Offender), the former gymnastic doctor...worked at Michigan State University and USA Gymnastics... he pleaded guilty to assaulting seven people (girls). (The associated press, 25/01/2018, <i>Independent online</i>).</p> </li> <li>- “Sexually assaulting his five-year-old daughter and using the girl to create illicit material...” (Wolhuter, 10/01/2018, <i>Independent online</i>).</li> <li>- “A Pretoria father is on the run after being found guilty of child pornography chargers. The victims include his own children, a girl of 4 and boy of 3...” (Venter, 31/12/2017, <i>Independent online</i>).</li> <li>- “(Offender) has been accused of molesting more than 100 girls in his care.” (08/12/2017, <i>News24</i>).</li> <li>- “One of the worst paedophiles... sexually abusing his girlfriend’s two-year-old daughter.” (Monama, 08/12/2012, <i>Independent online</i>).</li> <li>- “He stands accused of... raping an 11-year-old boy...The accused allegedly groomed young boys... (Booyesen, 07/11/2017, <i>Independent online</i>).</li> <li>- “...He pleaded guilty to a range of charges which included five counts of rape, one count of attempted rape... The youngest victim was just 13-years-old when she was attacked.” (Rice, 21/09/2017, <i>Independent online</i>).</li> <li>- “She says her 11-year-old (daughter) is a victim of sexual harassment at the hands of a man who is a worker at the school. (Macupe, 04/08/2017, <i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>).</li> <li>- “(Offender) was 19 in 1993 when he was convicted of raping and killing three-year-old (victim) his then-girlfriend’s daughter.” (Staff, 26/07/2017, <i>Business Day</i>).</li> <li>- “The boys, aged eight and nine... he would rape each of them... he invited two more children (boys) into his home ... another 13-year-old was raped.” (Germaner, 22/04/2017, <i>Independent online</i>).</li> <li>- “For years, he was sexually abused by the priest – a ‘trusted family friend’ The group (five female and 3 male) has accused him of sexually abusing them when they were children.” (Pilane, 26/05/2017, <i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>).</li> <li>- “A convicted serial abuser... has been charged with five counts of buggery with a boy under 16, two counts of indecent assault on a boy under 14 and one of indecent assault on a boy under 16. (English Premiership, 07/03/2017, <i>News24</i>).</li> <li>- “... Charged with endangering a single boy abused by a problem priest.” (Associated press, 05/08/2016, <i>News24</i>).</li> <li>- “Fact: Boys are equally as vulnerable as girls – if not more. Proof: Boys reported higher lifetime prevalence rates of sexual abuse (36.8%) than girls (33.9%)... The nature</li> </ul>	

of abuse is often different. Girls are more likely to experience contact sexual abuse, where they are physically touched, and boys are more likely to experience exposure abuse, where the child is forced to see sexual images or incidents. Males are twice as likely as females to be ‘forced to look at someone’s private parts, forced to watch them masturbate or to view nude pictures or pornographic videos.’” (Green, 05/06/2016, *Mail & Guardian*).

- “(Offender), 44, was found guilty of sexually abusing his friends two daughters between 2006 and 2009.” (21/12/2013, *News24*).
- “The Nelspruit Regional Court heard on Wednesday that a convicted child molester who sexually abused his friend’s daughters should be declared a paedophile.” (17/07/2013, *News24*).
- “Even girls... take on sugar daddies... all she has to do is open her legs... she can be anything from 13-16 years old and sometimes even below 13... they cruise the streets looking for young girls... That so many young girls are vulnerable to sexual exploitation...” (20/03/2013, Schutte, *Mail & Guardian*).

**Dominant theme: *Modus operandi* of child sexual offenders**

**Frequency (%): 18 (60%)**

**Sub-theme: The sexual grooming ( $n=4$  (out of 18), 22%)**

**EXAMPLES:**

- “One of the worst paedophiles... Other than raping her, he used a toy dinosaur, thermometer and a sex toy to penetrate the child... He is accused of grooming the child.” (Monama, 08/12/2012, Independent online).
- “He stands accused of... raping an 11-year-old boy... The accused allegedly groomed young boys so that he could assault them at his Somerset West home. (Offender) also coaxed the boys into masturbating and performing oral sex on him... he groomed the 11-year-old boy to lure other children to his home where he would molest them. (Booyesen, 07/11/2017, Independent online).
- “He arouses sexual urges from children... he built trust with the girls... he made the girls believe what they were doing is acceptable... the children were groomed in a manner that they established a closer relationship with him.” (21/12/2013, *News24*).
- “The court heard that the two girls used to visit him on numerous occasions at his home... he built trust with the girls, aged seven and nine. She said he touched their private parts and made them touch his own genitalia in return... he made the girls believe what they were doing is acceptable. The children were groomed in a manner that they established a close relationship with him, visiting him at his house.” (17/07/2013, *News24*).

**Sub-theme: The sudden attack ( $n=4$  (out of 18), 22%)**

**EXAMPLES:**

- "...He visited the room yet again, while (victim) and babysitter were home alone... he began undressing her..." (Germaner, 30/01/2018, Independent online).
- "I remember he took me into the training room, close the door and closed the blinds... then he started touching me in places I really didn't think he should. He didn't have gloves on and he didn't tell me what he was doing... I accepted what he was doing because I was told by adults, he was the best doctor..." (The associated press, 25/01/2018, Independent online).
- "The accused took her to the other side off the railway line and forced her to lie down and undressed her... he threatened to kill her if she refused. He then proceeded to rape her... Given the *modus operandi* utilised by the accused, choosing a quiet area located near an open field or bushes, approaching his victims from behind, starting with small chatter and then pouncing, he could be described as a serial rapist or sexual predator." (Rice, 21/09/2017, Independent online).
- "The family member looked after them while their aunt was at work. One afternoon, while the two girls were playing hide-and-seek, he took (victim) into one of the rooms and, she says, he raped her." (Pilane, 26/05/2017, Mail & Guardian).

**Sub-theme: Manipulative nature of offender ( $n=10$ , 56%)**

**EXAMPLES:**

- "What I am going to do now, if you say this to anyone, I will kill you'... he came back to the room and told her if she alerted anyone to what had happened, he would kill her." (Germaner, 30/01/2018, Independent online).
- "How many of us are there? Do you even know? You preyed on me, on us. You saw a way to take advantage of your position – the almighty and trusted doctor. Shame on you'... 'He was the doctor. I was the child. I had no idea what to think.'" (The associated press, 25/01/2018, Independent online).
- "(Offender) has been accused of molesting more than 100 girls in his care... admitting that he abused young athletes under the guise of offering medical treatment." (08/12/2017, News24).
- "One of the worst paedophiles... sexually abusing his girlfriend's two-year-old daughter... is accused of grooming the child." (Monama, 08/12/2012, Independent online).
- "He stands accused of... raping an 11-year-old boy...The accused allegedly groomed young boys... had groomed the 11-year-old to lure other children to his home where he would molest them." (Booyesen, 07/11/2017, Independent online).
- "He asked if she knew how many minutes it took to kill someone. He told her two minutes and she begged him not to kill her. He threatened to kill her if she refused. He then proceeded to rape her." (Rice, 21/09/2017, Independent online).



- “He walked in and grabbed her from behind and squeezed her left boob.” (Macupe, 04/08/2017, Mail & Guardian).
- “The boys were lured to (offenders) home on the promise that he would give them a bicycle... the boys were made to sit on his couch and play Playstation games, while he would take them one at a time into his room. It was during this time that he would rape them either with this penis or an object... He told the children this was to check if they were fit to ride a bicycle... he pulled out his gun and forced him into a stretch of veld... after he was raped (offender) gave him pieces of a shirt to clean himself ... Judge (name) acknowledged (offenders) modus operandi was similar throughout each of the cases, and the similar facts between the cases.” (Germaner, 22/07/2017, Independent online).
- “He arouses sexual urges from children... he built trust with the girls... he made the girls believe what they were doing is acceptable... the children were groomed in a manner that they established a closer relationship with him.” (21/12/2013, News24).
- ““They cruise the streets looking for young girls. They call us over to their cars and flash their money at us. They offer us drinks and call us sweeties. They give us lifts, buy us KFC – then they want a kiss. From there it just gets more and more – sex for cell phones and clothes and lip gloss and hair weaves...They know that teenagers crave to feel they are part of the world of glamour and beauty and parties... all she has to do is open her legs.” (20/03/2013, Schutte, Mail & Guardian).

**Dominant theme: Emphasis on punishment**

**Frequency (%): 14 (47%)**

**EXAMPLES:**

- “This was the heart-breaking testimony that ultimately sealed (offenders) fate, after he was sentenced to two life sentences for the rape and murder of (victim, two years old) ... The accused is not a suitable candidate for rehabilitation.” (Germaner, 30/01/2018, Independent online).
- “(offender) who was sentenced to 40- 175 years in prison for molesting people under the guise of medical treatment.” (The associated press, 25/01/2018, Independent online).
- “... making hundreds of recommendations to improve children’s safety and make it harder for paedophiles to operate unpunished.” (15/12/2017, News24).
- “Laws that took effect on Wednesday prevent 20 000 convicted paedophiles listed on the Australian child sex offender register from leaving the country except for specific purposes approved by law... It’s a federal crime punishable by up to five years in prison for registered child molesters to leave the country... the register contains 3200 serious offenders who will be banned from travel for life.” (13/12/2017, News24).
- “He was given the maximum 20 years in prison on each count by US District Judge at a federal court hearing in Grand, Rapids, Michigan ... He could face life in prison when he is sentenced on those charges next month.” (08/12/2017, News24).

- “One of the worst paedophiles was sentenced to 32 life sentences and a further 170 years for, among other things, sexually abusing his girlfriend’s two-year-old daughter.” (Monama, 08/12/2017, Independent online).
- “A Malaysian lawmaker called Wednesday for child sex attackers to be branded with hot irons ... ‘For the men who do this, we should heat up a hot iron and poke them with it’ ... The maximum punishment for child rape in Malaysia is 20 years in jail and caning.” (Reporter, 29/11/2017, Independent online).
- “(Offender), the man convicted on 18 644 charges of possession of child pornography, has been sentenced to 15 years behind bars.” (Charles, 07/11/2017, Independent online).
- “The US state of Ohio planned to execute its first prisoner in more than three years on Wednesday, putting to death a man convicted of raping and murdering a child ... (Offender) was 19 in 1993 when he was convicted of raping and killing three-year-old (victim). He admitted to his crimes, but said his own sexual and physical abuse at the hands of his father were mitigating circumstances not considered at trial ... the constitution does not guarantee a pain free execution.” (Staff, 26/07/2017, Business Day).
- “The Western High Court on Thursday sentenced Cape Town serial rapist (offender), 31, to life behind bars and 115 years ... (offender) will be added to the national sex offenders register ... The National Prosecuting Authority welcomed the sentence and hoped it sent the message that crimes against women and children were being taken seriously.” (Rice, 21/09/2017, Independent online).
- “Child rights activists on Wednesday welcomed the Indonesian government’s plans to use chemical castration as additional punishment for child sex offenders ... the president supported castration as a form of punishment in addition to jail terms for child sex offenders... child sex offenders are punishable up to 15 years in prison and a maximum fine of about \$21 800.” (21/10/2015, News24).
- “The state will appeal against what it regards as a lenient sentence given to a repeat child molester.” (21/12/2013, News24).
- “It is unarguable that any act involving the sexual exploitation of children including the possession of child pornography is criminal and deserving of punishment.” (Young, 23/08/2013, Mail & Guardian).
- “If the minister of health is serious about stopping the sugar daddies preying on our children then he must call it what it is and these men must be jailed for sleeping with underage girls.” (Schutte, 20/03/2013, Mail & Guardian).

<b>Dominant theme: Perceptions of child molesters by the media</b>	<b>Frequency (%): 11 (37%)</b>
<p><b>EXAMPLES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “The paedophile murderer that had committed a despicable crime, a selfish and cruel act ... Human life is of no value to people like the accused, his crimes are as fearsome as they are loathsome and despicable, the judge said.” (Germaner, 30/01/2018, Independent online).</li> <li>- ““You have become a man ruled by selfish and perverted desires, a man defined by his daily choices over and over again to feed that selfishness and perversion. You chose to pursue your wickedness no matter what it cost others ... A repulsive liar... you are a disaster ... sexual predators ... the evil that resides in you ... Only a monster would harm innocent children the way (offender) did. I will never understand the evil that motivates an adult to abuse an innocent child ... There’s not a day that passes that I don’t think about that monster.” (The associated press, 25/01/2018, Independent online).</li> <li>- “The problems have been so widespread, and the nature of abuse so heinous, that it is difficult to comprehend.” (15/12/2017, News24).</li> <li>- ““(offender) was not a doctor, he in fact is, was, and forever shall be, a child molester, and a monster of a human being.” (08/12/2014, News24).</li> <li>- ““We were still shocked to our core by some of the appalling details of the crimes that were captured in these images – babies subjected to spine-chilling torture, bondage, and rape.” (Charles, 07/11/2017, Independent online).</li> <li>- “The report also suggests that 40% of sex offender who victimised children admitted to engaging in sex with animals ... ‘It is a fact that bestiality is merely a stepping stone to sex crimes where the victims could be other vulnerable beings, like children or young woman.’” (Germaner, 04/11/2017, Independent online).</li> <li>- ““I hope this little f#*ker is not doing to other little boys what he did to me.” (Pilane, 26/05/2017, Mail &amp; Guardian).</li> <li>- ““Given the modus operandi utilised by the accused, choosing a quiet area located near an open field or bushes, approaching his victims from behind, starting with small chatter and then pouncing, he could be described as a serial rapist or sexual predator.” (Rice, 21/09/2017, Independent online).</li> <li>- “So, I no longer talk to children as I may be deemed to be sick.” (Mackenzie, 19/09/2013, Mail &amp; Guardian).</li> <li>- “I can imagine the anger and the shock, the lock him up and throw away the key, gut reaction which is inevitable and understandable, even if his crime was limited to accessing and keeping child porn and he never harmed any child directly under his care.” (Young, 21/08/2017, Mail &amp; Guardian).</li> </ul>	

- “They used her like a child sex slave ... it occurs to me just how problematic the term sugar daddy is. It conjures up glamorised, old style movie images. It has a sweet ring to it. What we are talking about is paedophiles. We are talking about statutory rape. We are talking about child sex rings and sexual perverts ... Townships cannot continue to be used by sugar daddy paedophiles as bargain supermarkets for young flesh.” (Schutte, 20/03/2013, Mail & Guardian).

**Dominant theme: The sexual offender with a violent demeanour**

**Frequency (%): 6 (20%)**

**EXAMPLES:**

- “...A man raped and throttled the two-year-old she was babysitting ... if you say this to anyone, I will kill you... Between the strangulation and the rape ... paedophile murderer.” (Germaner, 30/01/2018, Independent online).
- “One of the worst paedophiles... Other than raping her, he used a toy dinosaur, thermometer and a sex toy to penetrate the child.” (Monama, 08/12/2012, Independent online).
- “... Babies subjected to spine-chilling torture, bondage, and rape.” (Charles, 07/11/2017, Independent online).
- “...He pleaded guilty to a range of charges which included five counts of rape, one count of attempted rape, two accounts of kidnapping, three counts of sexual assault, three counts of robbery with aggravating circumstances, one count of attempted robbery and count of compelling children to witness sexual offences... She was medically examined and found to be pregnant... He also threatened he would stab her if she made a noise.” (Rice, 21/09/2017, Independent online).
- “(Offender) was 19 in 1993 when he was convicted of raping and killing three-year-old (victim).” (Staff, 26/07/2017, Business Day).
- “Some sugar daddies will slap and punch young girls who challenge them... They used her like a child sex slave.” (20/03/2013, Schutte, Mail & Guardian).

**Dominant theme: Offender’s rights being respected**

**Frequency (%): 6 (20%)**

**EXAMPLES:**

- “(Defence lawyer) told the court the defence intended to present the evidence of a clinical psychologist and had instructed her to compile a report.” (Wolhuter, 10/01/2018, Independent online).
- “Once a specific person has been formally charged with a sexual offence, the Criminal Procedure Act bans the publication of any information relating to the offence at any stage before the accused has both appeared in court and pleaded to the charge.” (Ampfo, 10/11/2017, Mail & Guardian).

- “A spokesperson for the Gauteng education department, (spokesperson), said an investigation by the department found no evidence to support the allegation. ‘Though the complainant alleged that other learners were also sexually assaulted, she subsequently failed to submit names of other victims for necessary intervention,’ he said. ‘The preliminary investigation did not provide any grounds for a precautionary suspension; hence the said employee was not placed on such.’” (Macupe, 04/08/2017, Mail & Guardian).
- “‘Just because someone’s name appears on a list doesn’t make them guilty, and if there are serious allegations, they should be put in the hands of the police,’ he said.”
- “‘He kept his trousers and zip tight until he finished the sentence. I believe that this time he’ll also be able to comply with this condition ...’(judge) also noted that (offender) suffered public humiliation and lost his job. He decided not to fine (offender) ...” (21/12/2013, News24).
- “(Offender) pleaded guilty but the court again postponed the sentencing. ... He said his client also showed remorse by pleading guilty and has been to therapy.” (17/07/2013, News24).

<b>Dominant theme: Treatment availability and accessibility</b>	<b>Frequency (%): 5 (17%)</b>
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**EXAMPLES:**

- “‘People are scared of coming forward because they never receive good treatment. We want people to come forward. If you know from a young age that you are attracted to children, you must come forward. We want to make the world a safer place without the stigma,’ she said. Doctor stressed: ‘Coming forward is about managing their behaviour before they act out. Sometimes it can be rehabilitation and (we) teach them skills to live in a world where they cannot sexually act out.’ She said arresting paedophiles didn’t assist in removing the stigma from the condition and it did not help them to live normal lives. Therapy, Doctor said, helped such people to go through life without acting out sexually.” (Monama, 08/12/2017, Independent online).
- “‘Attorney (name) said chemical castration could involve injecting a female hormone to reduce the sex drive of the offender.’” (21/10/2015, News24).
- “‘He said (offender) should continue attending sex therapy classes.’” (21/12/2013, News24).
- “‘Medical treatment foe pedophilia, from psychotherapy to medication, even chemical castration, has been tried with very few positive results. Paedophilic acts appear to be a psychiatric condition of disordered sexual identity for which there is no known cure and minimal likelihood of rehabilitation.’” (Young, 23/08/2013, Mail & Guardian).
- “‘Based on my interview with him, the victims as well as the parents and looking at the case docket, I recommended a sexual offender’s programme for him.’” (17/07/2013, News24).

<b>Dominant theme: Conceptualisation of paedophilia as a mental illness</b>	<b>Frequency (%): 5 (17%)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="193 398 1398 539">- “A self-confessed paedophile... he said he suffered from at least four recognisable mental disorders ... these included an antisocial personality disorder, a substance abuse disorder, paedophilic acts and a dependent personality disorder.” (Wolhuter, 10/01/2018, Independent online).</li> <li data-bbox="193 568 1398 1227">- “Despite numerous reports on paedophiles and sexual grooming of children, clinical sexologist Doctor says there’s still confusion on what the difference between a paedophile and a child sex offender is. Doctor says ‘One needs to make a clinical assessment to be able to tell the difference between a paedophile and someone who is sexually violent. Child abusers or violators are much more prolific than paedophiles.’ Doctor said the majority of child abusers who went through the justice system were not paedophiles. She said paedophilic acts was a sexual orientation and those with paedophilic disorders have a mental disorder in which they can’t control their urges to have sexual relations with minors. The disorder usually manifests during adolescence and the children they are attracted to have to be at least five years younger. ‘Paedophiles are a specific group of people who have a sexual attraction to children that is only about sexual orientation in terms of their love and lust.’ Doctor said. Paedophilic disorder occurs in people who recognise they have an attraction to children and can’t control acting out on it. It is not about them being violent. She said child molesters were those who opportunistically preyed on children and they were unlikely to be paedophiles. Doctor said the stigma around paedophilic acts is what stops those who have the disorder from coming forward so they can be taught ways to manage their condition.” (Monama, 08/12/2017, Independent online).</li> <li data-bbox="193 1256 1398 1328">- “Boys are more likely to externalise this abuse by victimising others – and this is not restricted to sexual offending.” (Green, 05/06/2016, Mail &amp; Guardian).</li> <li data-bbox="193 1357 1398 1973">- “To act as a civilised society in response I think it is worth taking a closer look at pedophilia, lest we overreact, and what we find is an inconvenient truth indeed. Paedophiles cannot help their attraction to children. Being a paedophile, however, is not a crime. Having a sexual attraction to children is in itself not a criminal act, any more than wishing someone dead makes one a murderer. Acting on those impulses however most definitely is. A paedophile, according to scientific studies summarised conveniently here, has no choice in what turns him or her on. There is good evidence that the brains of paedophiles have a wiring fault that deflects the objects of sexual arousal from the normal path of adults onto children, that the triggers pertaining to kids – big head, big eyes and round face that define cuteness – lead to the sexual arousal centre, rather than to the protective nurturing centre and the activities one would expect of an adult relating to a child. Paedophiles literally can’t help themselves. Their search for love takes them to love objects that are unobtainable in normal civilised society ... The vast majority of paedophiles never hurt any children ... That a human being can be born with a defect that causes him or her to look for love in the wrong places is tragic. We cannot as a society afford to let paedophiles practice their sexual orientation, that is definite, but perhaps accepting that they themselves are victims of biological accident</li> </ul>	

will lead us to a solution that is fair to us, them and to all the children everywhere.”  
(Young, 23/08/2013).

- The Nelspruit Regional Court heard on Wednesday that a convicted child molester who sexually abused his friend’s daughters should be declared a paedophile. The psychological crime expert Colonel said in court after interviewing the children that (offender) was psychologically unfit to be around children. ‘He arouses sexual urges from children ... such offenders go for treatment after the first offence and later as it lapses or with no therapy the risks of their sexual urges become a much greater risk.’”  
(17/07/2013, News24).