

**EXPLORING GENDER BELIEFS AMONG SEXUALLY ABUSED/  
EXPLOITED BOYS THROUGH DRAMA BASED WORKSHOPS  
AND INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING**

**A Research Study**

**Presented to the Research Panel of  
Justice for Children International**

**In Partial Fulfilment of the Diploma Training Program in Aftercare**

**By**

**Taina Inkeri Gallagher**

**28<sup>th</sup> March 2007**

---

**This work is dedicated to;**

**All the boys from The Stairway Foundation (2006 -2007), you taught me so much.  
You display such bravery, love, kindness and positivity even though life has shown  
you such cruelty, you still stay so strong.**



---

## ABSTRACT

This is an exploratory research study which aimed to determine the gender beliefs of a group of seven boys who had been sexually abused and/or exploited. The research design consisted of five drama based workshops along side individual counselling sessions.

Seven boys were selected from The Stairway Foundation (a safe home for boys located in Oriental Mindoro, Philippines). All the subjects who took part in the study had a history of sexual abuse and/or exploitation, spent a long period of time living on the streets of Manila, had come from extreme poverty, broken homes, spent time in and out of institutions and had a history of drug addiction.

In order to determine the gender beliefs of the selected group of boys specific areas and themes of gender were explored. This included gender roles in society, gender awareness, stereotypes, gender characteristics, personality traits, gender expectations, sexuality, relationships, and inequality.

The main objectives that the researcher set out to answer were; To determine the overall gender beliefs of boys who have been sexually abused and/or exploited; To examine the influences that have formed the boy's beliefs of gender; The effects sexual abuse and/or exploitation have had on the boy's gender beliefs; The effectiveness of using drama based workshops in order to draw out the opinions and beliefs of gender.

Many tools were used, including, role play, improvisation, dramatized script work, creative art, presentations, and group and individual discussion. As the study used an exploratory research design each workshop was constructed specifically for this research.

By allowing the boys to experiment around different themes and issues regarding gender and gender beliefs the hope was to find answers that would inevitably help the success of aftercare and the aftercare needs of sexually abused/ exploited boys. The study hoped to answer currently unanswered questions that would help boys (in particular) express themselves in an area which has been (for the majority) untouched.

The findings gathered from the research study showed that the boys overall gender beliefs were centred around negative beliefs of men, homosexual men and women. The boys beliefs had been greatly influenced by their upbringing, family, peers, sexual abuse/exploitation, drugs, time spent on the streets, and time spent in and out of institutions. Their history of sexual abuse and/or exploitation had hugely effected their beliefs of gender and gender based issues. It was also shown from the findings that the use of drama based workshops proved effective in its approach and outcomes, allowing the group of boys to express past and present feelings and emotions, develop self belief, self expression and self confidence.

---

## Contents

<b>Dedication</b>	<b>Pg 2</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>Pg 3</b>
<b><u>Chapter One</u></b>	
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Pg 9</b>
<b>Review of Related Literature</b>	<b>Pg11</b>
- Male/Masculine Stereotypes, Roles, Expectations	<b>Pg11</b>
- Child Sexual Exploitation	<b>Pg14</b>
- The Effects of Sexual Abuse on Boys	<b>Pg18</b>
- Trauma Counselling for Victims of Sexual Abuse/ Exploitation	<b>Pg21</b>
- Sexuality Among Men and Sexually Abused Boys	<b>Pg24</b>
- The Negative Effects of the Feminist View	<b>Pg27</b>
- Changing Gender Beliefs and the Need for More Research	<b>Pg29</b>
- Drama as a Tool for Change	<b>Pg32</b>
- Studies to Change Male Gender Beliefs within the Philippines and Around the World	<b>Pg34</b>
<b>Summary of Related Literature</b>	<b>Pg37</b>
<b>Conceptual Framework</b>	<b>Pg40</b>
<b>Statement of the Problem</b>	<b>Pg41</b>
<b>Scope and Limitations</b>	<b>Pg42</b>
<b>Definition of Terms</b>	<b>Pg44</b>

---

## **Chapter Two**

<b>Method</b>	<b>Pg47</b>
<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Pg47</b>
<b>Subjects</b>	<b>Pg47</b>
<b>Setting</b>	<b>Pg48</b>
<b>Instrument and Tools</b>	<b>Pg48</b>
- <b>Workshop One</b>	<b>Pg49</b>
- <b>Workshop Two</b>	<b>Pg51</b>
- <b>Workshop Three</b>	<b>Pg53</b>
- <b>Workshop Four</b>	<b>Pg55</b>
- <b>Workshop Five</b>	<b>Pg57</b>
<b>Data Gathering Procedure</b>	<b>Pg58</b>
<b>Data Analysis</b>	<b>Pg58</b>

## **Chapter Three**

<b>Results and Discussion</b>	<b>Pg61</b>
<b>Results</b>	<b>Pg61</b>
<b>The overall gender beliefs of boys who have been sexually abused/exploited</b>	<b>Pg61</b>
- <b>Men</b>	<b>Pg62</b>
- <b>Women</b>	<b>Pg67</b>
- <b>Boys</b>	<b>Pg69</b>
- <b>Boys and Men</b>	<b>Pg71</b>

---

- Men and Women	Pg72
- Relationships	Pg74
- Heterosexual	Pg74
- Homosexual Gay	Pg76
- Homosexual Lesbian	Pg78
- Bi-sexual	Pg80
- Gender Hierarchy Tree	Pg81
<b>Influences which have formed the boys gender beliefs</b>	<b>Pg89</b>
- Child A	Pg89
- Child B	Pg92
- Child C	Pg94
- Child D	Pg97
- Child E	Pg99
- Child F	Pg102
- Child G	Pg105
<b>The effect that sexual abuse and/or exploitation has had on the boys gender beliefs</b>	<b>Pg107</b>
<b>The effectiveness of using drama based workshops in order to draw out the opinions and beliefs of gender</b>	<b>Pg109</b>
<b>Discussion of Results</b>	<b>Pg111</b>
- The overall gender beliefs of boys who have been sexually abused/exploited	Pg111
- Influences which have formed the boys gender beliefs	Pg121

- 
- **The effect that sexual abuse and/or exploitation has had on the boys gender beliefs** Pg124
  - **The effectiveness of using drama based workshops in order to draw out the opinions and beliefs of gender** Pg126

## **Chapter Four**

**Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations** Pg129

**Summary** Pg129

**Conclusion** Pg133

**Recommendations** Pg134

**References** Pg136

**Appendix** Pg140

**A. Ethical Approaches** Pg140

**B. Results on Men** Pg142

**C. Image of a Man, Negative and Positive** Pg146

**D. Results on Women** Pg155

**E. Results on Boys** Pg157

**F. Image of a Boy** Pg158

**G. Results on Boys and Men** Pg161

**H. Results on Men and Women** Pg163

**I. Results on Heterosexuals** Pg164

---

<b>J. Results on Homosexual Gays</b>	<b>Pg166</b>
<b>K. Results on Homosexual Lesbians</b>	<b>Pg168</b>
<b>L. Results on Bi-sexual's</b>	<b>Pg169</b>
<b>M. Workshop One – Results</b>	<b>Pg170</b>
<b>N. Workshop Two – Results</b>	<b>Pg174</b>
<b>O. Workshop Three – Results</b>	<b>Pg178</b>
<b>P. Workshop Four – Results</b>	<b>Pg186</b>
<b>Q. Workshop Five – Results</b>	<b>Pg188</b>
<b>R. Script – Doctor and Mr. Moyo</b>	<b>Pg193</b>
<b>S. Counselling session form – Child A</b>	<b>Pg195</b>
<b>T. Counselling session form – Child B</b>	<b>Pg200</b>
<b>U. Counselling session form – Child C</b>	<b>Pg204</b>
<b>V. Counselling session form – Child D</b>	<b>Pg208</b>
<b>W. Counselling session form – Child E</b>	<b>Pg214</b>
<b>X. Counselling session form – Child G</b>	<b>Pg219</b>
<b>Translation Declaration</b>	<b>Pg223</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>Pg224</b>



---

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

Gender beliefs and gender issues among boys who have been sexually abused is an area of extreme importance and interest. Boys who have been sexually abused suffer some similar but many dissimilar affects of abuse then girls. Gender and issues surrounding it are, for example; gender based roles, sexuality, relationships, gender equality and inequality. They all have a huge part to play in a child's perception of themselves, society and how effectively or ineffectively they can recover and reintegrate into society as a healthy adult (man).

In doing this study the researcher hoped to get answers to currently unanswered questions which would help boys (in particular) express themselves in an area which has been for the majority untouched. By allowing the boys to experiment around different themes and issues regarding gender and gender beliefs the hope was to find answers that would inevitably help the success of aftercare and the aftercare needs of sexually abused/exploited boys.

The researcher conducted a study on a selected group of boys who had been sexually abused and/or exploited and are now residents of The Stairway Foundation (safe home for boys). Through the use of drama based workshops the researcher experimented around themes and issues of gender beliefs among the boys. Drama including role play, improvisations, short scripted sketches, art, group/individual discussion as well as other

---

forms of experimental tools were used in order to draw out group and individual opinions, ideas, perceptions of gender, gender roles, sexuality, relationships, gender stereotypes, gender inequality and so on.

The researcher gathered data with regard to the boys' gender beliefs through individual counselling based around the themes of the drama workshops.

The researcher has found there to be a prominently large gap in research done on the area of gender beliefs and gender based issues of boys who have been sexually abused. It is an area which cannot be ignored or forgotten; boys who have been abused or exploited sexually have equal rights to appropriate psychological and physical aftercare. Further research and investigation is of benefit to first and foremost the boys as well as aftercare facilities, society and communities as a whole. A lot of research has been done on gender based violence, men towards women, as well as extremist cultural and feminist view points on male roles in society. It is important to understand the reasoning behind the violence, anger and gender based pressures between the two sexes and discover positive approaches which will benefit society as a whole and nurture and care for those who have been victimized and exploited.

Through doing this study the researcher uncovered the gender beliefs of the selected group of boys and observed the effects and influences that sexual abuse/exploitation had had on their gender beliefs. It also uncovered the stereotypes and pressures they experienced within their culture and community to be masculine and how this had affected their perceptions of what being a 'man' means.

The researcher hoped that through using drama as a therapeutic tool it would allow deeper self perceptions of the individual and work through areas of unwanted guilt,

---

shame, negative self perceptions and other emotional battles they were fighting within themselves.

### **Review of Related Literature**

Within the review of related literature nine main categories will be targeted. Gender beliefs on its own encapsulates many areas. All the categories are of benefit and have relevance to the study and will set the spring board for further research to be carried out. The categories are as follows; Male/Masculine stereotypes, roles, expectations; Child Sexual Exploitation; The effects of sexual abuse on boys; Trauma Counselling for Victims of Sexual Abuse/ Exploitation; Sexuality among men and sexually abused boys; The negative effects of the feminist view; Changing gender beliefs and the need for more research; Drama as a tool for change; Studies to change male gender beliefs within the Philippines and around the world.

### **Male/Masculine stereotypes, roles, expectations**

There are many theories behind what it means to be a man in society and this of course differs between cultures, religions, generations and individuals. It is important to firstly understand the meaning of gender. Gender has been sculpted into many different terms, variations and definitions over time, the most factual and exact definition is written as follows;

---

‘The first definition of the term 'gender role' was given by *John Money* in an article on *'Hermaphroditism, gender and precocity in hyperadrenocorticism: psychological findings'* published in the *Bulletin of the John Hopkins Hospital* in 1955. Money wanted to differentiate a set of feelings, assertions, and behaviours which identified a person as being a boy or a girl, a man or a woman, from the contrasting conclusion one could have reached by considering only their gonads. The gender role in the cases described was consistent in the vast majority with their rearing. The term 'gender identity' appeared in the middle 1960's in association with the establishment of a gender identity study group at the University of California. Stoller defines it as:

**“A complex system of beliefs about oneself: a sense of one's masculinity and femininity. It implies nothing about the origins of that sense (e.g. whether the person is male or female). It has, then, psychological connotations only: one's subjective state” (di Ceglie, 1995, pg 6).**

Gender can be defined as male/female, masculine/feminine, or both, but gender roles are specific to either a male or a female. Male roles and social norms of men are systemically defined as being; built for power, strong, in control, independent, bread winners, violent, protectors etc.

According to Jivka Marinova from the UN (Marinova, 2003), peer pressure, socialization processes and belief systems influence adherence gender specific stereotypes. Roles are stereotyped from a young age. Ravi Karkara from Save the Children Sweden states;

---

“What shapes children and adolescents, regardless of other circumstances, is the impact of their societies’ gender base expectations. Societies in general treat girls and boys differently and have different expectations. From an early age boys and girls become aware of their sex, and soon they learn the different gender roles and gender hierarchies in society. As they grow older girls and boys take on strict gender roles, and they may be punished if they cross the gender boundary” (Karlsson et al, 2003, pg 1).

It has been stated many times that masculinity is equal to that of power. This way of thinking may be positive for men in some respects but also equally negative. Nelleke Nicolai (a Dutch psychiatrist) says;

- “The biggest fear of women is to lose contact.
- The biggest fear of men is to lose masculinity.

Losing masculinity would mean, being dependant of the society or part of the society we live in: not being in control, needing help” (Admira, 2005, pg19).

This statement puts the effects of sexual abuse on boys (in particular) in a clearer light. If masculinity is such a huge requirement in our society then what does it mean when a man or boy is abused by another? What does this do to their maleness? Do they lose control? Do they need help? I will come back to issues of masculinity later in my review.

---

## **Child Sexual Exploitation**

Child Sexual Exploitation is not a myth or something that happens in far off lands. It is a reality and it affects every country in the world. The exploitation of children is becoming a fast growing industry which children are the victims of horrific abuse for the financial gain and sexual gratification of men and women.

Firstly it is important to determine the difference between ‘child sexual abuse’ and ‘child sexual exploitation.’ It is stated by the Second World Congress (against commercial exploitation of children) that child sexual abuse refers to;

“Anyone under 18 years old who is sexually abused when one or more older person(s) involves the child in any activity for the purpose of their own sexual arousal. This might involve intercourse, touching, exposing of sexual organs, showing of pornographic material or talking about things in an erotic way” (Warburton, 2001, pg 7).

Child sexual exploitation refers to;

“The sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

**The sale of children** is any act or transaction where a child is transferred by any person(s) to another for remuneration or any other consideration. **Child Prostitution** means the use of a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other form of consideration.

---

**Child Pornography** is any reproduction by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual part of a child for primary sexual purposes” (Warburton, 2001).

The two terms easily cross over and child sexual exploitation is of course a form of sexual abuse but there are still many differences which must be acknowledge in order to understand the child’s trauma and the type of abuse they endured.

According to Australian Human Rights and The Equal Opportunity Commission, prostitution of women and children is the third largest illegal income earner globally, following drug trafficking and arms sales (The Global Fund for Children, 2002).

Therefore the lack of public awareness on this issue must be tackled. Children who have become victim to this exploitation cannot be ignored or dismissed. The problem will not disappear, it will keep growing until the silence is broken and action is taken.

‘In South East Asia there is a deep rooted secrecy, denial and a pervasive silence which makes issues of sexual exploitation extremely complex’ (Second World Congress Against CSEC, 2001).

There are many studies and statistics on prostitution of women and girls, so much so that it leaves the issue of male prostitution hidden behind a shadow. This is positive in the sense that we are aware of female exploitation and abuses; however the prostitution of boys is a huge problem and growing daily.

The sexual exploitation of children in the Philippines grows from poverty, corruption, social injustice and crowded slum conditions. This exploitation is also

---

flourishing through the national and international sex tourism industry, targeting impoverished children.

Guardian Angel Foundation states that; 'If the home environment is seriously abusive, children flee and often end up living on the streets where pimps easily lure them into prostitution' (Guardian Angel, 2007, pg1).

It is also tempting for families to sell their children into the sex trade and children to choose to enter the sex trade due to the severe realities of poverty which also include drug addiction as a way out of their nightmare.

The sad truth is that some exploited children are choosing to become a part of the sex industry. In Thailand the Chulalongkorn survey found that many children who engaged in prostitution were boys, who attracted both male and female clients. They tended to regard the sale of sex as an easy source of income, and many were from middle-class or well-to-do homes. Paithoon Kaewthep, a procurer turned volunteer activist, acknowledged that the part-time sale of sex by boys had become fashionable among students in high schools, vocational colleges and universities, with newcomers to the practice including primary school boys. "They think guys have nothing to lose by selling sex," he said. "Some try it for the experience. But most want the money" (Thompstone, 2002 -2005, pg 104).

This survey shows that it is not only the poverty stricken populations which are exploited by the sex trade but also the middle and higher classes.

It is also seen in many communities that the issue of sexual exploitation of boys is not being acknowledged as a problem because of 'gender' and the male 'gender role'. In a study conducted by ECPAT International they found that because of the stereotyped gender constructions it has created myths about male roles and led to inadequate protection of boy



---

children in relation to sexual exploitation. (ECPAT, 2006) Mr. Raghuvanshi, Deputy Director of ECPAT International and the focal person for South Asia says;

“There is a widespread misconception about the issue of prostitution of boys as it is wrongly viewed as an issue of homosexuality. As a result, prostitution of boys is largely unreported, under-reported and misreported” (ECPAT, 2006, pg1).

By linking homosexuality with the prostitution of boys it brings shame, guilt and embarrassment upon victims of sexual abuse and exploitation. This misconception could be society trying to keep the issue hidden, not wanting to deal with the reality of what is happening to their children. Bringing shame over this subject is an easy way for people to live a comfortable, guilt free existence. But what about the boys? The shame, trauma and isolation never goes away for the victim, they have to live with it their whole lives.

It is seen from the studies researched that there are two main groups of children who are sexually exploited; children from poverty stricken backgrounds and the emerging group of children from middle to higher class backgrounds. However, as stated by ECPAT International;

“Both basic groupings comprise children who are sexually exploited, at risk of physical and psychological damage, and who experience a violation of their human rights as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child” (Thompstone, 2002-2005, pg 104).

---

No matter what the circumstances may be, if they are forced, tortured, or do it by choice, these are children. The perpetrators of this world are exploiting children for their own personal gain, be it for money, power, sexual fantasy, sexual pleasure or gratification.

### **The Effects of Sexual abuse on boys**

Firstly it is important to be aware of the consequences of living in a highly masculine culture and how that contributes and impacts the growth of sexual abuse of all men, women and children. A report done on the UN peace keeping mission (an area which is ripe with masculinity and sexual abuse) states, "...a hyper-masculine culture encourages sexual exploitation and abuse and a tradition of silence has evolved..." (Martin, 2005, pg 2)

Research on the effects of sexual abuse on boys is few and far between compared to the amount done on girls and women, it is important to understand that because society and gender are different, the affects are not the same. David Lisak wrote a paper which contained many powerful quotations from interviews of male survivors of sexual abuse, he grouped the quotations into themes, and they are as follows:

- Anger
- Fear
- Homosexuality issues
- Helplessness
- Isolation and alienation
- Legitimacy

- 
- Loss
  - Masculinity issues
  - Negative childhood peer relations
  - Negative schemes about people
  - Negative schemes about the self
  - Problems with sexuality
  - Self blame/guilt
  - Shame/humiliation

(Hopper, 2006)

From further research done into the effects and themes which develop in males when sexually abused, many professionals have come up with a standardized measurement of symptoms, they are as follows:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Dissociation
- Hostility and anger
- Impaired relationships
- Low self-esteem
- Sexual dysfunction
- Sleep disturbance
- Suicidal ideas and behaviour

(Hopper, 2006)

---

Some of the above categories are also effects of abuse for women but these are the most common themes and symptom for men and boys. However due to the male effects being different it too brings with it different approaches that males take on in order to combat their past abuse, for example inappropriate attempts to reassert masculinity and victimization of others (Watkins and Bentovim, 1992).

A good example of a significant effect of sexual abuse on boys is the image taken from 'A Good Boy', a story animation written by Monica Ray a cofounder of the Stairway Foundation. Below is the picture of a sexually abused street boy looking at himself in the mirror shortly after the abuse had taken place.



---

The story of 'A Good Boy' in itself depicts the powerful crime of paedophilia. It is a tale about how a young street kid named Jason, is entrapped by Bob, a paedophile. He befriends Jason and his family with money and gifts. He gains their trust and invites Jason on a little "business trip" where he abuses him. Out of deep obligation to provide for his family, Jason keeps the abuse a secret until one day, Raffy, a street educator, helps him.

The image of Jason looking into the mirror and seeing a girl is a powerful insight into the mind of a sexually abused boy and the consequences and affects which come directly from the abuse. Questions need to be asked into the effects of abuse on boys rather than accepting and complaining that male machismo is destroying our societies. Issues around gender and sexuality must be addressed in order to allow boys and men to develop healthy self identities, gender roles and self expression so that they do not become the aggressors and victimizers.

### **Trauma Counselling for Victims of Sexual Abuse/ Exploitation**

There can be no doubt in one's mind that the effects of sexual abuse and/or exploitation causes psychological and physical trauma to a victim. There are both short term and long term effects connected to trauma of sexual abuse. The most commonly experienced effect of sexual abuse is post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Posttraumatic stress disorder is a clinical syndrome, the symptoms fall into three areas: re-enactment of the traumatic event; avoidance of clues associated with the event or general withdrawal; and physiological hyper-reactivity. It is also seen that children who have been sexually

---

abused engage in more sexualized behaviour when compared to children who are not victims of sexual abuse.

Trauma does not disappear, it can be hidden and manifest itself into a person's being but without psychological intervention a child or adult can never truly move on from the event/events.

For therapists dealing with clients who have suffered sexual abuse they must be aware of the following;

- Dilemmas as to if, when and what ways abuse was experienced which need to be discussed in detail.
- Clients' feelings of betrayal, guilt and responsibility require uncovering of the process by which the client was 'groomed' to secure their compliance and silence.
- Emotional and sexual arousal within the context of fear and powerlessness
- Context of disclosure and experiences of being disbelieved.

(Lefevre, 2004)

Counselling as a therapeutic approach can be extremely helpful for a victim in order for them to begin the healing process and to move on in their lives. However it can also be extremely damaging if the person taking on the role of the counsellor is unqualified or of an unhealthy mind. Thus causing more trauma to the client. In saying that, if counselling is approached well, by a trained individual then it should;

“Meet the individual's needs for safety, recognition, and reconnection with their self and others, creating a safer environment in which abusive

---

experiences can emerge and be processed with associated affect, so that the memories eventually lose the capacity to elicit arousal and discomfort” (Lefevre, 2004, pg 139).

Within counselling, art, drama, movement, music and sand play can all be great aids in helping a client express inner feelings and emotions. It can help the recovery process because it takes the pressure off the client and they can become free to express without necessarily exposing themselves fully.

However recovery isn't always so simple and some victims of sexual abuse and/or exploitation sometimes never recover even with the aid of counselling and other forms of therapy. ECPAT International wrote;

“There is increasing global recognition that children who suffer trauma during childhood require an elaborate process of rehabilitation if they are to take their rightful place within wider society. The trauma experienced in such situations is often so severe that only specifically adapted programs of rehabilitation and reintegration will enable the full recovery of victims” (Thompstone, 2002 -2005, pg 104).

It is of great importance that each child is treated by individual case and if one way of rehabilitation is unsuccessful then other avenues must be explored. It has also been noted that earlier trauma is treated the higher success rate there is of recovery.

---

## **Sexuality among Men and Sexually Abused Boys**

People define sexuality in many different ways but it is important to understand sexuality for what it actually is, meaning you do not have to be sexually active to have sexuality, you have sexuality whether you are having sex or not. And it would seem that it is most often adults who are the culprits of imposing their own perceptions, experiences and sometimes misconceptions around sexuality onto the younger generation.

Pressure for boys in particular to start having sex early is inbred into many cultures and societies. It would seem that this pressure alongside sexual abuse would further confuse and alienate boys about their gender role and identity. If we look back at the image of Jason looking in the mirror to find a reflection of a girl we can see a clear image that he is displaying some confusion already with his own sexuality (or masculinity). There is not much research based on the effects on male sexuality after abuse so it is hard to draw from other opinions. However there is much on the pressures and expectations on male sexuality within society. This is when gender inequality and gender expectations come into play. Anna Runeborg of SIDA states that with regard to young males;

“The older generation too often encourages sexual experiences and conquests as a way to manhood, whether the young man wishes to or not. Young boys are expected to get the experience of sexual intercourse from an early age, whether with a prostitute, older women or any women or girl” (Runeborg, 2004, pg 54).



---

When sexuality is taken out of the heterosexual context dynamics within society change, even though homosexuality is ripe within abusive and non abusive relationships. Homosexuality is also a part of childhood and adolescents. Anna Runeborg's opinion is that homosexual games and practices are common during the first phases of adolescents and do not necessarily mean that people are homosexual. She goes on to state that the reactions of adults are an aggressive homophobic approach which can be harmful to adolescents. She believes that such punishments and attitudes in early years are not conducive in forming young people's sexual identities. This could be one of the main reasons that boys who are sexually abused (for the majority) go unreported and are ridiculed with shame, guilt, confusion and embarrassment.

For young men the teenage years are an age of denial of weaknesses which is connected to what is considered feminine. "In the man's world there are also certain things you do not talk about: mistakes, love, hesitations, social failures, weaknesses, they are often associated with femininity" (Marinova, 2003, pg 6).

In Brazil the NGO ECOS made videos of discussions on boys and found that there was pressure on boys 'to act like real men', including pressure from their fathers to become sexually active. Boys were also confused about their role in society – How to be strong, brave and in control and at the same time be caring and sensitive (Attawell et al, 2001).

Monica Ray from The Stairway Foundation has also written an innovative play called 'Cemetery' based around a young boy's battle with homosexuality, sexual abuse, drugs and suicide. It is great to raise awareness and highlight the battle that boys face

---

even if they have not been sexually abused. The ‘Cemetery’ is one of few tools that highlight the issue of boy sexuality and abuse. Thus meaning that this is a strong spring board for other researchers to work from.

When looking into sexuality and sexual abuse of boys the term ‘paedophile’ is commonly used. Within a journal written by Save the Children they state:

“The inclination to associate commercial sexual exploitation of children with “paedophilia” in the media and in public debate is counterproductive in this regard since it often fails to recognize ordinary men as abusers and tends to shift the attention from the centrality of power and control to notions of sexual deviance” (Karlsson, 2003, pg 5).

It goes onto say that; ‘Paedophiles have sometimes been stereotyped as men with a fixed interest in boys, and homophobic individuals and groups have asserted a relationship between homosexuality and child abuse.’ In reality statistical evidence on child sexual exploitation points only to the conclusion that there is a relationship between gender and abuse in the sense that,

- a) Girl children are far more likely to be victims of sexual exploitation than are boy children.
- b) Males are far more likely than females to commit sexually exploitative acts for personal pleasure.

(Karlsson, 2003)

---

Debates on paedophilia and gender orientated abuse is one that will carry on because people have strict beliefs of what is correct and what is not. However this attitude of non shifting, non compromising beliefs will not help society to evolve and change for the better.

Within the next section the researcher will discuss the effects of sexual abuse on male sexuality from the point of view of a feminist.

### **The Negative Effect of the Feminist View**

"I detest the masculine point of view. I am bored by his heroism, virtue, and honour. I think the best these men can do is not to talk about themselves anymore"

~Virginia Woolf. (Dworkin, 1981, chap 2).

"Be the mother--do the housework--or be the father--carry a big stick. Be the mother--be fucked--or be the father--do the fucking. The boy has a choice. The boy chooses to become a man because it is better to be a man than a woman" (Dworkin, 1981, chap 2).

Both of the above statements are extremist views on men within society, they are generalistic and negative in their approach. These kinds of views and statements leave little to understanding men, understanding boys and understanding why men have been given or have taken such an extreme, powerful role in society and certainly gives no room for understanding 'gender beliefs among boys who have been sexually abused'. The statement 'the boy has a choice... he chooses to become a man' shows little understanding of culture, community or society. In many societies boys and girls equally have no choice

---

within their expected roles of gender, even if the boy fights against the role he will be shunned, he will be torn apart and dismissed from family and community.

*Andrea Dworkin* states that,

"Men who have been molested as children and who as adults have a clearly defined homosexual orientation, sometimes express confusion as to whether they did or did not like the experience. Part of the reason for this confusion is that they longed for sexual contact with boys or men but were afraid of discovery or harm. Generally, boys and girls who have active sexual longings do not imagine the hit-and-run sexuality of the adult male"  
(Dworkin, 1981, chap 2).

The above statement would seem like a possible feeling or confusion within a boy who has been sexually abused but again where is the research? Statements such as this may have truth within them but how can we generalize a child's feelings or emotions? How can we put homosexual adults in such a box?

UNIFEM a UN trust for women, produced a gender fact sheet on gender based violence and masculinity, it began with a poem harshly attacking men and masculinity through perceiving man as equal to violence in its entirety. However they go on to challenge the stereotypes and consider the path for change, changing the stereotypes and changing the violence. They pose the question 'Can men change?', and the answer was as follows:

"Yes and No, suggests Care International in Vietnam. When men are

---

equipped with the right kind of knowledge and skills they will improve their behaviour. However the deeper-rooted gender inequalities that shape sexual encounters are more difficult to transform" (UNIFEM, 2006, pg 1).

The option of change, education and knowledge being provided within communities with regard to gender, gender based abuse, gender based violence and equality of both genders is a positive step to change and breaking the silence and traditional negative attitudes.

### **Changing Gender Beliefs and the Need for More Research**

The World health organization wrote a literature review on the health and development of adolescent boys. Within this review they highlight and acknowledge important aspects that need to be targeted for change to happen. They wrote:

"Keeping in mind the cultural variations in the concept of adolescence, emerging research on boys' psychological development concludes that boys have different potential crisis points during their psychological development and their own specific vulnerabilities, even though they sometimes appear and are assumed to be less psychologically vulnerable than girls in adolescence. New more targeted research on adolescent boys finds that once we get beyond boys' customary silence, their 'clowning' and their feigned indifferences, boys face their fair share of challenges in adolescence that have often been ignored or sometimes misdiagnosed" (Mikulencal, 2000).

---

It is clear that there must be a change. Boys themselves have stated that there is a lack of space where they can discuss - in a non judgmental manner - questions about masculinity, personal issues or health related matters.

It has also been reported that teachers and other social service staff may not recognize signs and symptoms of boys' needs for such attention.

"When staff are adequately sensitive and sensitized to boys' ways of expressing stress, trauma and psychological pain, and staff approach boys in ways that respect their silences, results have shown that boys will make use of mental health and counselling services in greater numbers" (Mikulencak, 2000, pg 50).

Boys have also stated that they appreciate having the chance to discuss their concerns in boy only groups (Mikulencak, 2000).

For change to happen it is important to listen to the younger generation. Again in the research done by SIDA they highlight a survey they did that showed many boys and young men are willing to discuss relations and gender equality with a view to have a more respectful and gender-balanced relation with girls and young women (Runeborg, 2004).

In a paper produced by the United Nations they state that;

"Men wish for a change and dislike the perceived view on masculinity.

The reason for this may be because of the negative impact on men's life

---

and health of the 'breadwinner' model. Men have more and more difficulties in meeting the expectations and this impact's negatively on their self confidence and the family climate" (Marinova, 2003, pg 5).

However change is not easy because many people do not like young people talking about issues of gender and sex. Reasons behind this view include:

-Talking about sex promotes promiscuity and encourages young people to become sexually active.

-Sex and sexuality is only for married couples.

- Young people do not have the knowledge or experience to deal with these things.

-Young people are not sexually active.

These kinds of opinions are naive and closed minded, if we are not aware that sex and sexuality is part of young people's lives then things may never change. This kind of perception gives no hope to children that have been involved with sexual activity through no choice of their own (sexual abuse). The attitude that sex should not be talked about increases guilt and shame among abused children and unreported cases will increase.

In the journal of 'Adolescence on sexual abuse and adolescent maladjustment: Differences between male and female victims,' they call for further research to be investigated on gender differences in response to sexual abuse. It goes on to say that more research must be focused on the correlations and consequences of male sexual abuse.

---

This is not the only study that highlights the need for more research to be done. Throughout this review I have been confronted with the large gap in research done specifically on boys who have been sexually abused (Garnefski, 1998).

An 18 year old boy from the Philippines says:

".....men and women indeed do different things sometimes, but society should treat both sexes the same, they should be treated on the same level, for two basic reasons; firstly, they are both humans and secondly they are both part of society- both can create change, both can contribute to the society, and one CANNOT exist without the other" (Voices of Youth, 2002).

If we just focus on female issues and female victims of sexual abuse we would then be cutting out half of the world population, equality of females has been highlighted many times, but the question is what about male equality? Masculine violence and abuse also effects and victimizes males as well as females.

### **Drama as a tool for change**

Drama and drama therapy allows children (and adults) to focus greatly on self expression. Drama in many forms has long been used by therapists to help children come to terms with their abuse and begin the recovery process.

Therapy using creative drama has been channelled into two fields; psychodrama and drama therapy. Both work with clients in groups. Both allow members to act out



---

situations that can lead to a clarification of the way life and people have treated them. Psychodrama focuses on the journey and realization of one member of the group, whereas in drama therapy, the focus moves around the group. Both illustrate the values of group drama activities. The purpose here is not to embarrass members into 'confessing' their trauma to strangers, but rather to:

- 1) Allow them to become comfortable acting in front of others
- 2) Allow them to express their feeling indirectly (i.e. in the role of another character).

(Cotterill, 2006)

When using drama within a therapeutic basis or just on its own it is important to realize that there is no one method. However six points are core parameters around which drama therapy processes tend to constellate, and they seem to hold most of the elements encompassed by dramatic reality;

- 1) An ability to transport one self to and from ordinary reality
- 2) A particular quality
- 3) Roles and characters
- 4) Patterns; plot, themes and conflicts
- 5) A response to it

---

6) A subtext

Although dramatic reality is always a *gestalt*, breaking it down into core issues may assist drama therapists to identify areas of difficulty, select parameters to work, evaluate progress, and in general evaluate it in a fairly systematic way.

Smithkamp (1996, pg 93) talks about drama therapy having anchor points. This image can be expanded as a description of the sea;

*"A constantly shifting pattern of tides and waves, where psychological and aesthetic considerations converge and mingle, like rivers. Navigating this sea is the art and craft of the drama therapists, who need to guide both themselves and their clients through this sea-journey:"*

Thus the need to have anchor points (Pendzik, 2003).

**Studies to Change Male Gender Beliefs within the Philippines and Around the World.**

There have been some studies and projects which have been carried out specifically in the Philippines to combat negative gender beliefs and roles. To give some examples of peer education work with men, a 1998 project on reproductive health in the Philippines worked together with a federation of tricycle drivers outside Manila. Male peer educators ran workshops among the drivers, and the drivers then disseminated health

---

messages through their vehicles and at passenger terminals (Bacudo, 2001: 33-34) (Flood, 2005).

In 2002 there was a Gender Seminar for Men developed in the Philippines, there was an emphasis on balancing cognitive awareness with affective commitment, based on the recognition that we have to touch personal lives and inspire personal engagement (Cruz 2002: 3).

In the Philippines the Kauswagan Community Social Centre held the Southeast Asian Regional Workshop on Men's Role in Violence against Women in 2001. It attracted participants from Singapore, Vietnam, Philippines, Cambodia, Thailand, and Indonesia. In Cambodia, the Cambodian Men's Network is 'an alliance of men from all walks of life, religions and ethnicities who are committed to the eradication of violence against women for a fairer and more just society'. The Cambodian Men's Network has run the White Ribbon Campaign, an international campaign to encourage men to wear a white ribbon to show their support for stopping violence against women.

All the above show positive examples of the Philippines' perception for the need to change gender roles. They are ahead in their thinking compared to many other countries. However when researching programs or studies done on specifically boys' gender beliefs, especially sexually abused boys, it becomes quite a struggle.

A study done on sexual abuse of adolescents focused on the difference between male and female affects showed that both girls and boys reported, emotional problems, behavioural problems and suicidal thoughts and attempts. However the results indicated that the experience of sexual abuse carried far more consequences for boys than for girls

---

regarding the use of alcohol, aggressive/abusive behaviour, use of drugs and the amount of truancy, as well as regarding suicidal thoughts and behaviour. Within this same report Finkelhor reported that community prevalence estimates range from 6 to 62% in females and 3 to 16% in males. The ratio of female: male victims on average approaches 2:5:1 (Garnefski, 1998).

There is another research study done on college students conducted by David Lisak (1996). This work yielded prevalence rates of:

- Approximately 17% for child sexual abuse from males involving physical contact.
- Over 25% when non-contact forms of abuse were included.

Non-contact experiences (e.g., a relative exposing her or his genitals to a child) were investigated because such acts are sexually exploitive and can have negative long-term psychological and interpersonal effects. However, this definition also includes experiences, like a single "flashing" episode involving a stranger that many would argue are not abusive because the subject suffered no significant or lasting harm, if any at all. Lisak and his colleagues (1994 - 1996) deliberately chose to weight their definition of sexual abuse in terms of the power differential accompanying significant age differences and the older person's presumed deliberate sexual use and exploitation of the younger subject. So long as significant differences in age and power existed, Lisak and his colleagues defined incidents as abusive, regardless of subjects' emotional appraisal or lasting effects (the latter were not measured) (Hopper, 2006).

---

This research highlights statistics and definitions of what sexual abuse is but as it says the lasting affects were not measured. The lasting effects are highly important in order for us to give children and adults the correct aftercare that will be successful in their recovery. Without knowing the effects and the best practices of moving forward the study does not hold much weight, but maybe it just gives the initial information so that research can then be carried forward.

### **Summary of Related Literature**

All the literature, reviews and studies give a clear definition of the scope of the problem as it stands; that there is not enough research done specifically on gender beliefs of ‘boys’ who have been sexually abused/ exploited. The literature gives good background knowledge of the related areas of gender, gender beliefs, gender roles and expectations.

The review on male/masculine stereotypes, roles and expectations highlights that children are stereotyped from a young age, what shapes children and adolescents, regardless of their circumstance, is the impact of their society’s gender based expectations (Karkara, 2003). Therefore the interference and trauma from sexual abuse and/or exploitation can severely impact their view of themselves and the community’s perceptions of them.

The defined areas of sexual exploitation and the increasingly rapid growth of child sexual exploitation within the sex industry is frightening. It is of extreme importance that a victim of sexual exploitation is taken out of the situation of danger and placed within a safe environment and home. It is also important to define their abuses so

---

that specific treatment can be decided upon for the type of aftercare they receive. There can be no doubt that a child's experience of sexual exploitation will have altered their view on both men and women, influencing their gender beliefs within society.

The area on the effects of sexual abuse on boys show the importance to differentiate between the affects on boys to those of girls, even though some are similar, there are many differences. The example of 'A Good Boy' shows the extreme confusion that boys face after abuse with regard to their sexuality, self identity, masculinity and place in society.

Trauma counselling shows that it can be of great benefit to victims of sexual abuse/ exploitation. However aftercare workers must be aware that each child and their traumatic experiences are all different and individual. Therefore trauma counselling may work for one but not the other. The counsellor must be of healthy mind and heart in order to help the recovery of a child. In saying that we cannot ignore the extreme benefits that counselling can have in allowing a victim to process their abuses and begin to rebuild their lives in order to recover from their past.

Sexuality among men and abused boys is an area of extreme importance. The effects of abuse have immediate correlation and disturbance with male sexuality. Sexual orientation, confusion, violence and the transference from victim to victimizer can be seen within boys and men who have been sexually abused.

The feminist view point disrupts the opportunity for positive change within society. The feminist view offers no compassion for boys or men, because boys eventually turn into men and men are equal to violence, hate, power and control. It is important to raise awareness to this view because it effects society's perceptions and

---

stands in the way of tackling the issues and improving aftercare for boys who have been sexually abused.

The need for change is of great importance, boys and men need to be heard, they need to be understood and without judgment. Even The World Health Organization highlights the importance of research on boy's psychological development (Mikulencal, 2000). And boys themselves are now expressing the need to be heard and wanting gender roles and expectations to change.

The use of therapeutically based drama shows positively in its approach. Drama therapy is a non threatening, non direct approach in which children and adolescents can express themselves, their thoughts, their feelings, as well as unreported, undiscovered pain. Through using drama to explore beliefs and opinions it leaves the door wide open for answers to questions which have not yet been answered.

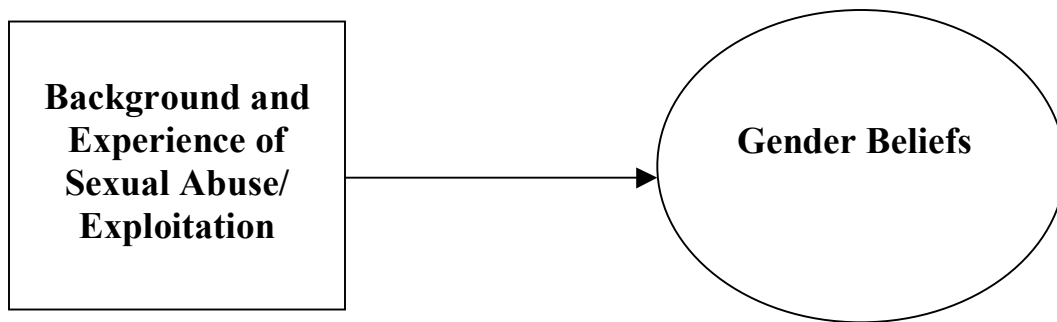
The studies which have been done in the Philippines are not specifically related to sexually abused boys, but are relevant because it shows that the Philippines is working towards change within gender beliefs, roles and systems. It is targeting men who have the power to make these changes which will in turn positively effect boys and girls.

All the related literature is helpful in developing the specific research proposed. It highlights the related issues and in doing so it highlights the gap in research with specific reference to the gender beliefs among sexually abused/ exploited boys. It shows the extreme need for this research to be performed and results which will benefit (most importantly) the boys, as well as aftercare facilities, communities, and society.

---

## **Conceptual Framework**

The study set out to determine the selected boy's gender beliefs. The group's gender beliefs were formed and influenced by their background, including family upbringing, community, sexual abuse / exploitation, life on the street and time within institutions (government welfare, rehabilitation programs and prison settings).



It has been stated that 'Roles are stereotypes from a young age' (Marinova, 2003). Ravi Karkara from Save the Children Sweden believes that; 'From an early age boys and girls become aware of their sex, and soon they learn the different gender roles and gender hierarchies in society'. Thus shaping their beliefs around gender and what is expected of society by being male or female. For the boys who took part in this study their history of sexual abuse/exploitation has hugely influenced their beliefs of gender and issues surrounding gender.

Previous research done on the effects of sexual abuse on boys' showed that they developed problems with 'homosexuality, masculinity, negative schemes about people, negative schemes about self, problems with their own sexuality and impaired relationships' (Hopper, 2006). Thus meaning that sexual abuse interferes and manipulates



---

certain beliefs which a non abused child may not have. The boys' upbringing alongside their experiences with sexual abuse/exploitation and time spent within institutions has formed their belief systems of what gender means and gender related issues.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The main purpose of the research was to explore and find out the gender beliefs of a selected group of boys from The Stairway Foundation who have been sexually abused and/or exploited. The exploration was geared around specific areas of gender belief such as gender roles in society, gender awareness, stereotypes, gender characteristics, personality traits, gender expectations, sexuality, relationships, and gender inequality.

Through this study the researcher's aim was to fulfil the following objectives:

- 1) To determine the overall gender beliefs of boys who have been sexually abused and/or exploited, including:
  - a) Roles/ Positions
  - b) Personality Traits/ Characteristics
  - c) Expectations
- 2) To examine the influences that have formed the boys' beliefs of gender, such as family, peer group, community, society, sexual abuse/ exploitation etc.
- 3) The effect that sexual abuse and/or exploitation has had on the boy's gender beliefs.

- 
- 4) The effectiveness of using drama based workshops in order to draw out the opinions and beliefs of gender.

Through the above objectives the researcher uncovered answers to the following questions using drama and other creative exploratory methods.

The research specifically aimed to answer the following questions:

- 1) What does gender mean and what are the gender beliefs of the subjects?
  - a. What are the gender roles, expectations and pressures from society as perceived by the subjects?
  - b. What does sexuality mean to the subjects?
- 2) What are the differences between sexuality and gender as perceived by the subjects?
- 3) How do the subjects react to using a drama based approach within workshops?

### **Scope and Limitations**

This study only focused on a group of seven boys of adolescent age (14 – 19 years old) who were living at the Stairway Foundation as full time, short term residence. The

---

coverage of this study was based only on boys who had been sexually abused and/or exploited and were of Filipino nationality.

This study does not cover a wide range of subjects due to the limitations of The Stairway Foundation and the nature of the placement. This is an exploratory research using drama based workshops and individual counselling, therefore the subjects were limited to a total of seven, with the hope that this number could be increased within future research.

This research did not seek to include boys who were under the age of 14 and over the age of 19 due to the limited amount of boys available at Stairway.

The Researcher conducted a total number of five workshops within the time placed at Stairway. The workshops were limited to five due to the time constraints of the placement. Due to limited time and Stairways scheduling the workshops were not one after other, per week. Sometimes there was a two week gap in between workshops.

Another limitation within this study was the language barrier, the researcher was English speaking and the subjects spoke Tagalog (only knowing a little English). However this did not hinder the outcome of the research as the researcher worked with the aid of a translator therefore was able to communicate to a good level and understand group and individual responses.

A prospective limitation was that one child opted out of the workshops in workshop Two; he was replaced immediately by another child and this did not affect the study dramatically. However the research results had to include seven boys rather than six.

---

## **Definition of Terms**

The following terms are conceptual and operational in their definition and approach. The definitions are defined as follows for clarity and understanding:

The conceptual meaning of *gender beliefs* can either be referred to as feeling of certainty that something exists or is true regarding the physical and/or social condition of being male or female, sexual (Cambridge dictionary)

Operationally *Gender Beliefs* refers to the boys response to the questions asked regarding gender roles, awareness, stereotypes, expectations, sexuality, relationships and inequality.

*Gender roles* refers to specific male/female placements within society, this can mean father/mother, breadwinner/housekeeper etc.

*Gender awareness* refers to the time in which a child becomes aware of their own sex, boy or girl; this awareness carries on into adulthood.

*Gender Stereotypes* refers to the conventional image of a male or female, as thought of by family, community, and society.

*Gender expectations* refers to the pressures put on a male or female to fulfil their role in society.

---

*Sexuality* refers to the sexual orientation of a male or female. Every human has sexuality but having sexuality does not necessarily mean a person is sexually active, a person has sexuality whether they are sexually active or not.

*Relationship* within this study refers to an intimate connection between two people.

*Gender Inequality* refers to the unequal distribution of power between genders, making one gender (male or female) lesser than the other.

The conceptual meaning of *Sexual abuse* refers to the use of a child or young person by an older, bigger or more powerful person for sexual gratification. This is to the detriment of the child's physical and mental health, and or moral or social/emotional development. (Velazco, 2006 & World Health Organization [WHO], 1997)

The conceptual meaning of *Sexual exploitation* refers to; the use of children in sexual activities for the benefit in cash or in kind of the exploiter/s. (Velazco, 2006).

Operationally *Drama based workshops* refer to the use of drama as a tool for self expression and exploration through the use of creativity, improvisation, role plays, and imagination. Drama was used with strong reference to drama as therapy and set in a safe and secure environment. The workshops were group based which allowed for group discussions, activities, exploration and improvisation.

---

Operationally *counselling* refers to individual counselling sessions with each child through cognitive, affective, behavioural or systematic intervention strategies. For the benefit of the research study and in order to allow each child to process individually issues discussed, the counselling sessions will be strongly based on the themes of the drama workshops.