

Child Sexual Abuse on Adolescent Females' Sense of Self-Worth: A South African Study

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ABSTRACT This study reports on fifteen adolescent females aged between 15 and 19 years old, from Alice, Eastern Cape, South Africa, who experienced child sexual abuse. Guided by Antonovsky's work of sense of coherence which entails how people manage stress, literature documented that adolescent females who experienced child sexual abuse perform poorly academically and have multiple sexual partners owing to low self-esteem. The aim of the study being to determine their challenges, snowball technique was employed to recruit the participants to share their experiences in a qualitative study which lasted for approximately one hour. The parents and school principal were approached for ethical purposes while the adolescent females agreed to participate voluntarily. Findings revealed that participants experienced some form of impaired self-worth, intimate partner violence, emotional and psychological effects. Given the results, collaborative approach amongst social workers, educators and community is vital to curb sexual abuse.