Chapter 2
Methodology

The first part of this chapter gives the rationale for the study followed by objectives and conceptual framework. The second part consists of the methodological paradigm and the research design that guided the research. This is followed by the process of data collection and a brief summary of the procedure of data analysis. Lastly, the challenges faced during the choice of methodology, the framework of data analysis and the limitations of the study are given.

The literature review guided the process of research specifically on three aspects. The first one is to establish theoretical links between the above said concepts, the second one to single out the knowledge gaps to develop rationale and objectives for this study; and the third to conceptualize the process of research. The first part of this chapter thus focuses on building up rationale and conceptualization of the study, and the second part on the methodology and the process of research.

Rationale of Study

The rationale for this study is given from two perspectives. One is based on the researcher’s exposure to the issue of child sexual abuse that lead towards the broader research question and the other based on the knowledge gaps identified during the literature review.

2.1 The Experiences That Lead To Broader Research Question

The researcher’s field exposure during Master of Philosophy (diploma) in Counseling Psychology revealed that the issue of child abuse leaves a deep imprint on the psyche
of the individual, which is carried over, into adulthood. In the process of relating the practicum experiences with the chosen theoretical knowledge and writing the integration paper namely, *Journey towards Wholeness through Intimacy: Viewing intimacy as a fruit of Psychosexual Maturity*, the researcher realized that; the abusive experiences of childhood play a major role in the development of the self concept and adult relationships of the person. (Herman, 1997); and psychosexual maturity is one of the major contributing factors in developing satisfying relationships and in facing relational crisis and in accepting and feeling comfortable with ones sexuality (Ferder and Heagle, 1994, Masters & Co. 1995). The practicum provided the initial exposure to the issue of child sexual abuse and its distressing effects upon the growth and development of an individual.

Later in 2000, working as a counselor and conducting therapies both in individual and group context, the researcher encountered several individuals who had experienced different abusive experiences as children. Reinforcing the above insights the researcher realized that: People struggle basically in experiencing and learning to express emotions in an appropriate way; Emotional experience and expression is conditioned by several factors like culture, parenting etc; Once an individual learns to help self in dealing with emotions, the person develops confidence in dealing with daily situations. The researcher observed that helping to gain this confidence in dealing with ones emotions seems to be easier, faster and effective in broader interpersonal contexts than in individual therapeutic situations.

The researcher’s experiences during the practicum and later during therapeutic work aroused curiosity around the question *How to empower women emotionally especially women victims of trauma, so that they can take control of their lives? And what type of interpersonal context provides the best opportunities for this purpose?*

Parallely in the process of helping clients’ who were primarily women, the researcher’s illusion that child sexual abuse is a western reality was removed. Literature also emphasized that: the effects of the experience of CSA are very devastating and they affect victim’s ability to accept one’s sexuality, self confidence and create lots of emotional turmoil (Ferder & Heagle, 1994); Given the cultural notions, the secrecy and taboo surrounding the issues connected to sex and sexuality,
makes the memories of the abusive experience burdensome, leading to isolation and withdrawal (Grief & Ephross, 2005, Avinger & Jones, 2007, Lindon & Nourse, 1994); once the secrecy is broken and the issue is shared, with the survivors experience of nonjudgmental acceptance, the process of growth and healing happens rapidly (Saxe 1993). In this context, the researcher observed the individuals taking help in the group context, reviving their life and feeling energetic in living life more rapidly and in lesser time compared to those who received help only individually.

From these experiences rose the question “what is the influence of group process upon the emotional experience and expression of women survivors of child sexual abuse?” Further literature review related to group work, emotional development and competence, emotional intelligence, child sexual abuse etc. helped in understanding the empirical explorations in these areas. This knowledge enabled the researcher to understand the theoretical implications of the above question and to build the rationale for the study and to sharpen the above question and finally to formulate research objectives for this study.

2.1.1 Rationale of Study Based On Literature

This rationale emphasizes the need for this study from the perspective of Encounter group & Emotional Intelligence; Emotional Intelligence & Group work; Child Sexual Abuse & Group work; Emotional Intelligence and coping strategies and Indian context based literature.

The literature highlights that during encounter group process, emotional experience and expression play a major role (Rogers, 1970; Egan, 1970). The ability, which deals with managing emotional expression and experience, is called as “Emotional Intelligence” (Salovey and Mayer, 1990). Hunt and Evans (2004) and Goleman (1995) propose that an individual’s EI can be enhanced through training. There is a strong consensus among the researchers that EI is a developable trait or competency (Goleman, 1995; Cooper, 1974; Dulewicz & Higgs, 2004). Druskat & Wolff (2001) consider that the individual’s emotional intelligence has a group analog specifying that the group context form a favorable context for developing individual’s emotional
intelligence. At the same time very few studies report EI can be developed using the group context. Given the emphasis, that encounter group process places on emotional experience and expression this study makes efforts in understanding the influence of encounter group process on emotional intelligence of the group members. This study does not aim at understanding the type of training or interventions, which influence EI, but focuses on understanding the changes seen in the EI of the survivors of CSA along with the changes in the group phenomenon during the encounter group process.

Difficulties in relationships are the most frequently reported complaints of victims of CSA (Serafin, 1996). Relational skills include accurate perception and managing of emotions in self and the other. The study of Luterek et. al (2005) shows that the perception of emotions in self and the other and emotional experiences are distorted in women who have experienced CSA. As perception and managing emotions are the domains of EI, it is evident that CSA affects the EI of the survivors. Though the findings and discussion of the studies of Feinauer, Calahan and Hilton (1996), Saxe (1993) and Cloitre et.al (1997) emphasize the importance of goal oriented structured interactions in the group in helping the victims of CSA, a few studies are available reporting affect of groups in helping women survivors (Zlotnick et.al 1997; Valerio and Lepper 2010) using groups. At the same time there are no studies available aiming at understanding the influence of group process upon the EI of the survivors.

Addressing the gap in the literature related to EI and encounter group process and encounter group process and its effect on survivors of CSA, this study aimed at understanding the influence of the encounter group process on the emotional intelligence of the women survivors of child sexual abuse. This forms the first objective of this study.

Spaccarelli (1994) reports compulsive use of emotion focused coping strategies, increased distress and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptomatology in survivors of CSA. The studies conducted by Brand & Alexander (2003); Feinuer et al. (2003) state that most of the energy of survivors of CSA is on emotion focused coping strategies paying very little attention to problem focused coping strategies. The empirical studies (Chan 2003; Rahim et.al. 2003; Bastian et.al. 2005) that explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and coping strategies reported that
individuals with higher EI use problem focused coping more effectively and those with lower EI invest their energy in emotion focused coping strategies. At the same time there are no studies understanding the changes seen in the coping strategies of the survivors of CSA with the change in the EI during the encounter group process.

For this reason, this study aims at studying the affect of changes in emotional intelligence on the coping strategies of the survivors of CSA. This is the second objective of this study.

Changes in the patterns of relationships that occur at different levels like communication, roles, power, relationships and leadership are considered as group structures (Garvin, 1987). Literature on group work (Garvin, 1987, Hartford, 1971) emphasizes that these patterns change across the sessions during the group process. Given the nature of the impact of CSA on the survivors, empirical studies report (Griffing et.al, 2005; Liem et.al, 1992; Feiauer et.al. 1996) that one of the impacts of the experience of CSA is hampering the relational abilities of the survivor. Due to the experience of CSA they are liable to isolate selves from others (Grief & Ephross 1977; Hall 1993; Lindon & Nourse 1994; Sanderson 1995; Avinger & Jones 2007). Considering this reality of the survivors, it is assumed that focusing on the changes in the patterns of relationships during the group process would give clear indication of changes which occur in the survivors in terms of their ability to communicate, relate, take lead, be flexible in playing different roles as per the demand of the situation and feeling confident and powerful from with in. However there are no studies which explore the changes in group structures with women survivors of CSA.

Similarly, it is considered that the impulsive expressions of the group members can lead to ‘relationship conflicts’ (Jehn & Mannix 2001). The conflicts in the groups need to be allowed and the differences need to be confronted and resolved (Robey et.al 1989) in a group to achieve its goals. Thinking on similar lines and given the nature of emotional management of the survivors of CSA in the form of out bursts (Sanderson, 1990, Hall Liz 1993; Bass and Davis 1988) it is seen that conflict and it’s resolution would playa a major role in learning to manage ones feelings and to develop interpersonal sensitivity in a more effective way.
Hence, it is considered that focusing upon the ways of dealing with the conflict and changes that happen in the group structures during the group process will give a better understanding of the dynamics that occur during the group process and the influence of group process on the member’s emotional intelligence. Whilst literature on the encounter groups (Rogers, 1970, Egan, 1970) emphasizes 3 phenomena during encounter group process, namely: experiencing and expressing intense emotions, self disclosure and feedback, it does not include important aspects i.e. conflict and group structures which are an important part of the group work literature (Garvin 1987, Konopka, 1972). Hence, this study aims at understanding the changes that occur in encounter group phenomenon; conflict and group structures across the sessions. This forms the third objective for this study.

Though group process have been studied separately by social workers using group work as a method; by psychologists as a therapeutic context, in India it still remains as one of the areas not explored adequately. This study thus seeks to bridge this gap and tries to understand the process dynamics that influence emotional intelligence of the group members allowing them to manage their emotions effectively.

Further in recent years though there has been increasing attention given to CSA, very few empirical studies are available from the Indian context except a few, which assessed the prevalence of CSA. The literature available in this area is also more focused on child victims of sexual abuse than adult survivors.

There is a dearth of Indian context based literature particularly in the area of group work and specially using group process for influencing emotional intelligence of the survivors of CSA. This study is an attempt to address this need. Anchored in these rationales the following objectives are formed.
2.2 Objectives of Study

- To study the influence of the encounter group processes on the emotional intelligence of group of women survivors of child sexual abuse in terms of:
  - Self awareness
  - Managing one’s emotions / Self regulation
  - Motivating self
  - Recognizing emotions in others
  - Managing relationships / Social skills

The literature emphasizes that the experience of CSA affects the intrapersonal sensitivity of the women survivors. In the process of coping with the pain of the experience of CSA, survivors tend to alienate themselves from their own self (Herman, 1997). Thus their intra and interpersonal sensitivity gets affected and that gets reflected in their ability to become aware of self, recognize emotions in others and social skills. Similarly, the studies (Luterak et.al, 2005; Bass 1988) report that survivors of CSA have difficulty in perceiving emotions in self and the other; and difficulty in interpersonal relationships (Serafin, 1996). The abilities related to these aspects of the person are addressed largely by Goleman’s (1995) model of EI. His model consists of these abilities as 5 domains of EI. Hence, this model is considered to be appropriate for this study and adopted into this objective. Given the adverse effects of CSA on survivors’ interpersonal skills as per the earlier detailed rationale based on literature review, this objective is formulated.

- To study the influence of changes in the emotional intelligence on the coping strategies of survivors of CSA, namely:
  - Emotion Focused Coping Strategies (EFCS)
  - Problem Focused Active Coping (PFAC)
  - Appraisal focused coping strategies (AFCS)

The literature emphasizes that survivors of CSA are affected cognitively, emotionally and there by intra and interpersonally. This effect is reflected in the way they cope with the problems faced in their day to day living situations. The process of coping
involves cognitive processing. Therefore, classification of Moos and Billings (1982) which involves appraisal focused coping as one of the ways of coping is adopted for this study in understanding the changes, which occurred in the coping strategies of women survivors of CSA, along with their changing EI resulting from participating in the group process.

- To study the changes that occur in encounter group phenomenon, conflict and structural changes those happen in the group over a period of time due to encounter group process.
  i) Encounter group phenomena are:
    - Experiencing and expressing intense emotions
    - Self disclosure
    - Feedback
  ii) Conflict arousal and resolution
  iii) Group structures are:
    - Communication structure
    - Sociometric structure
    - Power structure
    - Leadership structure
    - Role structure

The changes, which occur in the group members, reflect in the group process. Hopkins (1970) defines group process as “the way people work together to release an emergent quality, called psychological climate, group morale, cooperative unity through which each discovers and develops his inner capacities, realizes better the nature of self, releases more of ones past experiences, and learns how to create this emergent quality in all life situations” (pg. 93). In understanding these dynamics, this study adopted conflict and group structures into encounter group process to help understand the changes, which occur in the survivors of CSA during the group process.
2.3 Conceptual Framework

Merriam (1998) argues that believing qualitative research has no theory is a mistake. She states that it would be difficult to imagine a study without a theoretical or conceptual framework. For Merriam, the theoretical framework is derived from the “concepts, terms, definitions, models and theories of a particular literature base and disciplinary orientation” (pg. 46). Hence, this section details the theoretical or conceptual framework formulated for the study based on concepts and definitions in the existing literature discussed in the previous Chapter.

Anfara and Mertz (2006) define conceptual framework as “any empirical or quasi-empirical theory of social and / or psychological processes, at a variety of levels (eg., grand, mid – range and explanatory) that can be applied to the understanding of the phenomenon” (pg. xxvii). The conceptual framework for this study is drawn from the empirical understanding of the impact of CSA on women survivors; the existing literature on groups, encounter groups and emotional intelligence.

The conceptualization of this study emerges from the belief that individuals have great innate potentials, of which very little is actualized and utilized. Due to different experiences, beliefs, attitudes of the significant others in one’s life some potentials are blocked or repressed. These potentials need to be contacted, actualized and expressed to live life in fullness, which implies self-actualization. Egan (1970) views that developing the skills for “total human expression” is important if a person intends to move in the direction of self-actualization. In his words, “Total human expression refers to a man’s ability to communicate himself fully – i.e. both at intellectual and emotional level” (pg. 141). Based on one’s daily experiences, one knows that the emotions are powerful influences of human perception, understanding and grasping of a situation. The ability of a person to deal with emotions in self and the other is called as emotional intelligence (Salovey and Mayer, 1990). Emotions are contagious and play a major role in social phenomenon. Hence, the favorable context to help self in emotional experiencing and expression is the social context. Considering groups as “social microcosm: (Egan 1970; Yalom 1995; Solomon and Berzon 1972, Konopka
1972) this study aims at exploring the relationship between encounter group process and emotional intelligence in the context of women survivors of child sexual abuse.

I) Encounter Group Process and Emotional Intelligence

Carl Roger’s (1961) coined encounter groups, and his theoretical approach namely, person centered approach is the theoretical base for the encounter groups. The central assumption of this approach is, if provided with three conditions; genuineness, unconditional positive regard and empathic understanding, individuals can tap their vast innate resources for self understanding, for altering their self concepts, basic attitudes and self-directed behaviours. Roger (1961) conceptualizes that when the above three conditions are provided a person feels acceptance and valued, and develops more caring attitude towards self. As persons are heard empathetically, it becomes possible for them to listen more accurately to the flow of inner experiences. As a person values and understands self, the self becomes more congruent with the experiences. Thus, a person becomes more real and genuine. These tendencies, the reciprocal of the therapist’s attitudes, enable the person to be more effective growth enhancer for self.

Having its roots in positivistic psychology person centered approach emphasizes in trusting individual’s potential to solve one’s own problems and in this process visualizes the leader as a mere facilitator. Egan (1970) another significant person in the history of encounter groups views developing the skills for “total human expression” is important if a person intends to move in the direction of self actualization. In his words “Total human expression refers to a man’s ability to communicate himself fully – i.e. both at intellectual and emotional level” (pg, 141). According to Egan this ability can be examined and enhanced in terms of 3 dimensions of dialogue; pathos, logos and poises.

Pathos refers to all the elements passive and active that constitutes a process of the experience of feeling and emotion. In the process of experiencing and expressing feelings, it is assumed that individuals can distract them selves and get disconnected from the process. Hence, it can be noted that flight from the feelings is a common phenomenon. The whole process of pathos consists of 4 phases namely; awareness, impact, reaction and expression. During awareness phase, one can get into flight
mode through 1st and 2nd level\(^1\) of defense mechanisms. Those who are able to face the defenses in awareness phase and enter into impact phase with deepened awareness can get into 3 types of syndromes that might strip one from the present reality. Those 3 types of syndromes are; engulfing\(^2\), implosion\(^3\) and petrifying\(^4\). Under the influence of these syndromes, one who enters into reactions phase might show 3rd level of defenses\(^5\) as reactions. By moving into fourth phase, the group members are moving into the second stage of total human expression and experience i.e. logos.

**Logos** refers to one's ability to communicate self to others both in words and through nonverbal behaviour, and the ability to use all channels for interpersonal behaviour. By learning to articulate one's emotional experience and expression, one enters into the third stage *Poiesis*. This is the ability to be poetic in communication i.e. ability to integrate verbal, nonverbal, emotional expression in dialogue. It is here the interpersonal interactions play a visible role. These interactions may create another event repeating the cycle. This process of encounter group experience can be figuratively represented as below:

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\(^1\) 1st level defence mechanisms: denial, distortion and projection and 2nd level are fantasy, projection, somatization, passive aggression, acting out and idealization (in Vaillant George Eman, 1992, Ego Mechanisms of Defence: A guide for clinicians and Researchers, American Psychiatric Publishing, pp. 238)

\(^2\) Feeling overwhelmed with emotions (in Egan, 1970)

\(^3\) Feeling impinged (*Ibid*)

\(^4\) Being treated by others as “it” (*Ibid*)

\(^5\) 3rd level of defences are displacement, dissociation, isolation, intellectualization, reaction formation, repression, regression, rationalization etc. (*Ibid*)
Figure 1: Conceptualization of Encounter Group Process (Adopted from Egan, 1970)
From literature, it is evident that the innate ability that is related to emotional experience and expression is named as ‘emotional intelligence’. This study adopts the 5 principle features of emotional intelligence as given by Goleman (1995). They are: Self – awareness; Understanding and managing emotions in self; motivating self; understanding and managing emotions in others and social skills. These 5 domains of emotional intelligence can be seen as 3 types of capacities, namely personal efficacy; intrapersonal efficacy and interpersonal efficacy (Immanuel, 2003). Personal and intrapersonal efficacy include the domains of self – awareness, managing one’s emotions and motivating self; inter personal efficacy includes recognizing emotions in others and managing relationships. In this manner, it can be stated that of the three stages of encounter group process; pathos can be considered as having personal efficacy and intrapersonal orientation; logos and poises as interpersonal orientation. This forms the basic assumption with which this study is formulated.

Egan (1970) considers that the behaviours with which people evade emotional experience and expressions during the three phases of encounter group are defense mechanisms. Defenses are the ways of coping. Empirical data shows that people with higher emotional intelligence involve in the problem focused coping strategies and those with lower emotional intelligence use emotion focused coping strategies (Hunt and Evans, 2004; Chan David, 2003). Hence, the change in emotional intelligence of the women with the experience of CSA is visualized in the shift in the usage of coping strategies. Based on the above understanding, this study focuses on helping the CSA survivors to deal with their EFCS and learn to engage in PFAC. This is actualized through group process where the members engage with the activities in the group which will help them to become aware of the experience of CSA and it’s impact upon their cognitions, emotions, behaviours and ultimately on intra and interpersonal relationships.

Encounter group consists of normal people whose aim is growth and maturity in fullness. According to Eagan (1970), though the encounter group work started with the ‘normal’ people every time the process ended up dealing with their covert and overt emotional and behavioral problems. This observation points to two facts. The first one is that every normal person has place for growth and the other fact points to the therapeutic potential of the group process. Considering the second fact as the
foundation, this group process focuses on the here – and – now experiences of the group members in the group. The women survivors of CSA form the group for the purpose of this study.

**ii) Influence Of Group Process On Group Members**

During the group process, the members are encouraged to become aware of their covert and overt behaviours and the types of strategies they use in coping with the problems. The group members pay attention and observe the coping strategies (EFCS & PFAC) they employ in dealing with their emotions. This observation will enhance their self awareness which is expressed as self disclosure.

According to Egan (1970), a shift takes place in the self disclosure of the individuals as the group matures over a period of time i.e. from “history” mode of involvement to ‘story’ mode of involvement, in other words impersonal to personal. As the self disclosure deepens drawing the involvement of the group members, supportive behaviours like listening and feedback begin to evolve in the group (Egan, 1970).

These factors namely; experiencing and expressing intense emotions, self disclosure and feedback are considered as the phenomenon in the group process. (Rogers, 1970) The growing depth in the phenomenon reflects member’s growth as a group. These phenomena and the emotional intelligence of the members affect mutually or in other words, it can be said that they reflect each other mutually. Deepened self disclosure, listening and feedback, symbolize deepening of self awareness of the individuals in the group. This in turn influences other two domains of EI, namely managing one’s emotions and motivating self. Strengthening of these domains of EI along with learning the skills of self disclosure, listening, receiving and giving feedback, the members grow in their ability to understand and regulate others emotions and social skills which are the other two domains of EI.

Though the participants enter the group willingly, the group interactions can some times be anxiety producing and demanding. Hence, the group members might get into behaviours that will resist group process. Hence, the facilitator needs to pay attention to these behaviours to ensure effective group process. Some of those behaviours
cautioned by Egan (1970) are: analyzing and interpreting other’s sharing, controlling others, isolation, over involvement and low tolerance for conflict or strong emotions.

The above concepts can be figuratively represented in figure 2a.
Individual
With history of CSA
Age Range - 16 - 22

Encounter Group
Goes through

Experiences in the group
Deepens

Self - Awareness
Begins

Expression

Self Disclosure

Supportive Behaviours

In

Affects

Through

Emotional Intelligence

Coping Strategies

Low

EFCS

High

AFCS

PFAC

EFCS = Emotion focused coping strategies
AFCS = Appraisal focused coping strategies
PFCS = Problem focused coping strategies

Figure 2a: Conceptual Map
A closer look at figure 2a gives an overview of the key concepts of this study namely: encounter group process, emotional intelligence, coping strategies of women survivors of CSA. This also shows that group process and EI of the survivors influence each other and the changes in EI bring changes in the coping strategies of the survivors.

Rogers (1970) emphasized that experiencing and expressing intense emotions, self disclosure and feedback are important characteristics of the encounter group process. The literature on CSA emphasizes emotional impulsivity in the survivors as a result of the experience of CSA (Bass and Davis, 1988, Sanderson, 1995). Researchers (Jordon et. al, 2002) report that individuals with higher levels of EI engage in collaborative conflict resolution strategies and those with lower levels of EI engage in forceful and avoidant strategies of the conflict resolution. The group work literature (Jehn et.al, 2001; Robey et.al 1989) emphasizes that the conflict aids the ability to confront and resolve the differences in the group setting and it is an inevitable reality. Observation of the dynamics which occur in the group during the conflict arousal and resolution gives a deeper understanding of the changes happening in the individuals in the group in terms of confidence and self assertion. Therefore, conflict was seen as an important phenomenon that would capture the changes that occur in the survivor's EI. So, the phenomenon of 'dealing with the conflict' was added from the group work literature into the encounter group process.

Several authors (Griffing et.al, 2005; Liem et.al, 1992; Feiauer et.al. 1996) emphasize interpersonal or relational difficulties in the survivors of CSA. It is presumed that due to the participation in the group process the changes that occur in the EI of the women would bring changes in their relational abilities. As group work, literature (Garvin 1987; Hartford 1971) highlights that Group structures capture changes in the patterns of relationships, assuming that these patterns would encapsulate changes happening in the survivors’ relational realm, this concept too was adapted from the group work literature in to the encounter group phenomenon.

Thus, to understand the changes happening in the group, for the purpose of this study the group process was conceptualized on the five phenomenons namely: experiencing
and expressing intense emotions, self disclosure, feedback (encounter group phenomenon); managing conflict and group structure (group work literature).

Despite theoretical differences, the group theorists (Berman-Rossi 1993; Pedigo & Singer 1982) assume a process of orderly progression and growth through a series of interdependent stages or phases during the group process. Thus to provide better understand the above changes in the key concepts i.e. group phenomena, EI and coping; the three phases of group development were adopted in this study. These three phases are initial phase, middle phase and termination phases as given by Garvin (1987) and Papell & Rothman, (1966 in Rose 1989). Figure 1b gives the final conceptualization of the study after adopting the concepts namely: managing the conflict and the group structures and phases of group development from the group work literature.
*EFCS = Emotion focused coping strategies; *AFCS = Appraisal focused coping strategies; *PFCS = Problem focused coping strategies

Figure 2b: Conceptual Map after Integrating the Concepts Dealing with the Conflict and Group Structures
Figure 2b highlights that the changes in the five group phenomena and in their emotional intelligence influence each other. Emotional intelligence would affect the coping strategies of the survivors of CSA.

**iii) Operational Definitions**

The theoretical concepts that are explored in this study for subjective understanding are five domains of emotional intelligence and coping strategies. The five domains of emotional intelligence are in terms of self awareness, managing emotions, motivating self, managing emotions in others and social skills. Coping strategies are in terms of emotion focused, appraisal focused and problem focused coping strategies. The following section gives the operational definitions of these concepts.

**a) Operational Definitions Of The Key Concepts Related To EI**

The operational definitions for the key concepts related to emotional intelligence that are used for the purpose of this study are adopted from Goleman (1998). The key concepts are self awareness, managing ones emotions or self – regulation, motivating self, recognizing emotions in others and social skills. The observable behaviours that are mentioned below that are taken from Goleman (1998) are not considered exhaustive.

**Self awareness:** According to Goleman (1998) this is the ability of a person to become aware of the stimulus and its affect on one’s own thoughts, feelings and the way they influence both the overt and covert behaviours. The observable behaviours are: naming the feelings as one is feeling; realizing and articulating the links between their feelings and what they think, do, and say; becoming aware and able to acknowledge one’s strengths and weaknesses; accepting feedback and new perspectives; to voice their views even when they are unpopular and risky; recognizing healthy and unhealthy patterns in self and others.

**Managing one’s emotions or Self – Regulation:** Goleman (1998) views this as the ability to handle feelings so that they are appropriate in experience and expression. The observable behaviours are: recognizing anxiety provoking thoughts and managing them through mindful expression of feelings and thoughts; admitting ones
own mistakes and confront those in others; expressing certain amount of comfort with novel ideas and changes.

Motivating Self: “This is an ability to marshal emotions in the service of a goal and delaying gratification and impulsiveness” (Goleman, 1995, p. 47). The observable behaviours are: in line with the awareness about self - able to set goals and articulate them for ones growth or change and take calculated risks; looks for new information to reduce uncertainty and find ways to do better and to learn how to improve their performance; persistence in seeking goals despite obstacles and setbacks and operating from hope of success rather than fear of failure; converting limitations into challenges.

Recognizing emotions in others: This can be termed as empathy where one is able to understand the feelings of others (Goleman, 1998). The behaviours that can be observed for this study regarding, recognizing emotions in others are: attentiveness to others’ emotional cues and the ability to listen well; show sensitivity and understand others’ perspectives; makes effort to help others based on understanding other people’s needs and feelings; recognizing others efforts and skills and encouraging to develop those skills; identifying people’s needs for further growth, offer useful feedback; reassuring others feelings.

Social Skills: These are the social competences that make for effectiveness in dealing with others. These allow one to shape an encounter, to mobilize and inspire others, to thrive in intimate relationships, to persuade, and influence, to put others at ease (Goleman 1995, p.129). Observable behaviours for this study in this regard are: able to listen and send convincing messages; effectiveness is seen in giving and taking feedback; able to disclose about self as per the need; able to face conflicts without denying or avoiding by bringing disagreements into open; encourage debate and open discussion and orchestrate win – win solutions.

b) The Concepts Related To Coping Strategies of Women Survivors of CSA
These operational definitions for different types of coping strategies are adopted from Lazarus and Folkman (1984) and Brand and Alexander (2003).
Emotion focused coping strategy: These are the behaviours by which individuals attempt to regulate their emotions in dealing with the stressor (Brand & Alexander 2003). These coping strategies are observed in this study by focusing on the following behaviours. This list too is not considered exhaustive.

Avoid facing feelings by: easily getting distracted; sleeping off continuously in a particular context; not mixing with people; failing to be serious when the situation demands.

Denying: Refusing to accept the experience of certain feelings, thoughts and behaviours in self and to the other.

Self blame: Some of the behaviours that are considered as blaming self by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) are: using negative statements about self like “I am useless/worthless” etc. in different contexts; making one’s self responsible unnecessarily even when it is not true; indulging into constant negative criticism about self.

Problem Focused Action Coping: The individuals engage in behaviours in an attempt to manage problem situation (Brand & Alexander, 2003). The behaviours to be focused in order to identify these coping strategies during this study are:

Confrontation: Able to express one’s feelings and thoughts; able to tell others frankly when their behaviours are affecting one’s self negatively; able to express one’s opinions irrespective of others acceptance etc.

Seeking Social Support: In times of need, feeling comfortable to ask others help/advice etc.; able to express one’s feelings when one feels burdened with them; comfortably expressing ones need for acceptance and understanding; planning to actively support others when they are in need etc.

Appraisal focused coping: Moos and Billings (1982) define this type of coping where the energy of the individual is directed towards cognitive functioning in trying to understand and looking for the most appropriate ways of dealing with the situation.
According to them, there are 3 types of appraisal coping strategies and the following are their operational definitions:

Logical analysis: This includes trying to identify the cause of the problem, paying attention to one aspect of the situation at a time, drawing on relevant past experiences and mentally rehearsing possible actions and their consequences.

Cognitive Redefinition: This involves the strategies by which an individual accepts the reality of the situation, but restructures to find something favorable. For example reminding self that things could be worse, thinking of self as well off in relation to others, concentrating on something good that might develop from the situation, and altering values and priorities inline with changing realities.

Cognitive avoidance: The behaviours this category comprises are: denying fear or anxiety under stress, trying to forget the whole situation, refusing to believe that the problem really exists, and engaging in wishful fantasies instead of thinking realistically about the problem.

2.4 Research Methodology

The nature of this study emphasizes subjective understanding and meaning making in experiencing and expression of emotions. Saarni (1997); Denzin and Lincoln (2000) state that emotional responses are contextually anchored in social meaning where, social transactions, relationships, and even self definitions are learned from cultural messages. Hence, given the complexity and the subjectivity involved in understanding ones emotional world, this study employs qualitative methodology in its scientific enquiry.

Another aspect that is stressed by Denzin & Lincoln (2000) is that the qualitative research paradigm contains the researcher’s ontological, epistemological and methodological premises or an interpretive approach, a basic set of belief that guides the entire research action. The following table gives the basic assumptions on which this study is based.
Table 1: Assumptions of Research Methodology

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<tr>
<th>Ontology</th>
<th>Epistemology</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Logic Of Enquiry</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Group members encounter self and the other in interaction with each other.</td>
<td>Taking the constructivist’s stand point of view it is assumed that the group members construct their reality subjectively by attributing meaning to their experiences.</td>
<td>• Multiple methods of data collection is used in order to gather a rich picture of the reality. Interview guide, EII and SRQ -20 are used to screen the members for the group.</td>
<td>• An inductive logic is used where the enquiry proceeds from individual to the general.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• During that process, they construct and attribute meaning to their interactions, which become part of their experiences.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Audio tapes of the sessions and</td>
<td>• The subjective understanding of the group members regarding their experiences during the group process that influence their EI, which in turn affects their coping strategies, was explored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The attribution of meaning depends upon their beliefs which have roots in the past experiences.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• The field notes maintained through nonparticipant observation was the main data collection tool used to capture the reality.</td>
<td>• This later was generalized to the group context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Open-ended questionnaires were also used to collect data from the group members.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Another characteristic of qualitative research is employing a naturalistic approach where it aims at reaching the reality/field situation as close as possible. In the words of Nakkeeran (2006), “…a meticulous capturing of the reality is one of the primary aims of qualitative research” (pg. 109). The groups are considered to be microcosmic reality of the society (Egan, 1970; Yalom, 1995; Solomon and Berzon, 1972; Konopka, 1972; Brown 1993). Thus, the encounter group context provides natural setting in making sense of the phenomenon and interactions that happen in the group. For this reason in this study, the group is not considered as a unit of intervention. It is considered as a natural setting where over the sessions the members would interact with each other as in the larger society.

In qualitative research, “…the researcher studies things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, pg. 2). To meet the objectives of the study and to try to capture the reality as meticulously as possible, the natural setting this study employs is the group and interactions among the group members and observing the intra and inter personal processes by focusing on the verbal and non verbal behaviors of the group members. The phenomenon that is interpreted in this study is the group process, which extended over a period of 10 months.

Reflexivity of the researcher is another important factor in qualitative methodology, and is sometimes considered as an advantage of qualitative research. This attribute of qualitative methodology is an added advantage to this study. Reflexivity enabled the researcher to be sensitive to what is happening to her during the group process and how individuals of the group are affecting her. Given the researcher’s experience and knowledge of conducting group process, whenever she felt the need for some type of intervention and realized her pull to intervene in the process. In this juncture, reflexivity helped the researcher to keep to one’s role as a researcher, and not to take on the role of facilitator.

As this study is issue based and there is a liability that the outcome of this study can result in benefiting the participants. Along with this usage of the encounter group to understand the changes in the EI of the survivors, giving it as a group goal by the
researcher, there is a possibility of a question “why this study is not considered as action research?”

Action research is defined as “the study of a social situation carried out by those involved in that situation in order to improve both their practice and the quality of their understanding” (Winter and Munn – Giddings, 2001). Though the involved were benefited by this study, there are basic distinctions in this study as compared to the action research. Table 2 gives these distinctions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No</th>
<th>The Action Research</th>
<th>Present Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Action research aims at addressing a problem and tries to build up gap between the theory and the practice.</td>
<td>This study aims at exploring and understanding the changes, which occur in the EI of the survivors due to encounter group process. In other words this study tries to explore and understand the theoretical links between the above two concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Bringing change in some aspects of the respondents is the primary focus of the action research.</td>
<td>In this study, change is a byproduct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>The research process includes the steps: Planning, Action, Observation, Reflection and Replanning.</td>
<td>The process of this study involves the steps of academic research and does not involve these steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Participants are involved in data gathering and analysis process.</td>
<td>The participants were not involved in data gathering and analysis process. The data was gathered by the researcher from the interaction of the women in the group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hence, this study is not considered as Action research. Its emphasis on understanding the respondent’s process of making meaning of their experiences, group as a natural setting, and focus on changes in group phenomenon emphasizes the need for the qualitative methodology for this study.

2.4.1 Research Design

Ahuja (2001) states, “Research design is planning a strategy of conducting research. It plans as to: what is to be observed, how it is to be observed, when/where it is to be observed, why it is to be observed, how to record observations, how to analyze / interpret observations, and how to generalize” (pg. 120). For the purpose of this study,
the questions on what to be observed and how it is to be observed were discussed in the above section in terms of research question and the experiences lead to answer what is to be observed; conceptual framework and concept clarification enumerated how it is observed. This section focuses on narrating answers to the remaining questions namely: when / where why and how it is to be observed i.e. the research setting and the reasons for the choice of the setting; how the data was collected, analyzed and interpreted.

Based on the logical conclusions existing in the literature regarding the development of the EI, and given the emphasis on the emotional experience and expression during the encounter group process; this study aims at understanding the influence of encounter group process on the EI of the survivors of CSA. In addition, the rationale for this study highlights the fact that there is dearth of empirical information regarding the influence of encounter group process on emotional intelligence of the women survivors of CSA. Hence, this study is exploratory in nature. It does not look for the explanations or reasons for the influence of group process on EI as in “explanatory investigation”. Neither is this study aiming at establishing ‘cause and effect’ relationship between EI and group process nor testing the direction of their relationship. Hence, experimental design does not hold good for this study.

i) Research Setting

The site of the study is Tenali, in Andhra Pradesh (A.P). One of the reasons for the choice of A.P is the findings of the latest survey commissioned by Indian government reports A.P as the second largest state with incidences of CSA (Times of India, April 10, 2007). The other reason is, it is one of the places selected by central government to run its schemes for women empowerment, as incidents of domestic violence and trafficking are recorded high in this area. Further, the researcher’s familiarity with the language, place and people was another reason.
2.4.2 Formation of the Group

Prior to the formation of the group, after selecting the research setting, then the NGO's with potential group members is looked for. The inclusion criteria, which was already formed for this study aided in this process.

i) The Criterion That Is Observed In Selecting Members for the Group

For the purpose of this study definition given by Luterek, Orsillo & Mars (2005) in defining CSA is considered. They define CSA as sexual contact that ranged from fondling to intercourse occurring before the age of 13 years without consent or was unwanted and perpetrated by a person who is at least 10 years older than the victim. This definition is chosen as it gives a range of behaviours that could be considered as abusive and specifies that apart from the issues of consent, it consider traces of unwillingness in the child as refusal. The age difference between the victim and perpetrator given in this definition was not considered for this study.

At the same time while formulating criteria for inclusion the debates prevailing in defining a sexual experience as abuse were also considered. Mac Leod and Saraaga (1988) put forward two arguments that are predominant in defining an experience as CSA. The first thing they point out is the upper age limit of the child. Developmental psychologists like Erikson (1968) considers 13 years as upper age limit for childhood. Hence, some researchers argue that forced sexual experience on a girl above 13 years needs to be considered as rape and not CSA.

Regarding the age gap between perpetrator and victim, Mac Leod and Saraaga (1988) state that some researchers consider the experience as abusive only if the abuser is five years older than the child. O'Donohue, Elliott, Nickerson, and Valentine (1992) examined factors that contribute to the credibility ratings of child sexual abuse allegations and stated that the researchers varied in their opinion about the age gap between victim and perpetrator from 5, 10, 15 years old.

In line with the above arguments, in the process of deciding the criteria for inclusion the researcher had encountered the complexity of the issue of CSA. The confusion was regarding the upper age limit of the child. At one level the developmental
psychologists (Erikson, 1968, Richardson, 2000; Hurlock, 2008) consider 12 or 13 years as upper age limit of the childhood and any forced sexual experience beyond this age is considered as ‘rape’. At another level, the legal marriageable age for a woman in India is 18 years considering that it is after 18 a woman can legally engage in sexual activity with consent. Considering these issues, the following are decided as criteria were framed for inclusion of members in the group for the purpose of this study.

**ii) Inclusion Criteria for This Study:**

*a) Women who had gone through CSA and remember the experience:* The women, who are aware of and remember the experience of CSA, and had already gone through the stages of shock and denial were included for this study. This would help to focus the interactions in the group process upon those that will help the victims to see linkages between their coping strategies and their daily experiences and to empower self to deal with these coping strategies.

Literature on traumatic experiences and its effects on the individuals state that, the initial 2 years immediately after the experience of trauma are mourning and distress period (Herman, 1997) and usually it is after that period, the long standing effects of the trauma will manifest themselves. With this understanding, care was taken in selecting the members for the group, to ensure that there is a gap of at least two to three years after the experience of CSA.

*b) Women who had gone through the experience of CSA when they were below 13 years:* The women who had the experience of sexual abuse when they were below 13 years were included for this study. This age limit is considered for this study in keeping with the literature cited above. Considering that women who had gone through the experience of CSA even at the age of 13 and had 2 to 3 years of time gap for the long term effects of the trauma to be manifested; 13 (abused at 13 or below) years was decided as upper age limit for this study.

*c) Women, whose perpetrator was 5 or more years elder:* Russell (1986) and Nelson ((1987) consider that inequality of power and betrayal of trust are the considering
factors in defining an experience as an abuse. At the same time Herman (1997), states that abuse is not defined by what happened but by how it is experienced. Thinking along with them, considering that a person 5 years older than the victim can be in a position to either use power as force or coerce or exercise both in using the child for sexual gratification, the age difference between the victim and perpetrator was considered as 5 and above years for the purpose of this study.

\[ d) \text{ Unmarried women with the history of CSA:} \] The problems of married women with CSA would pose problems that have more intimate concerns, which the participants might feel difficult to address in the group. If the women were married, the problems also might get intertwined with the issues of the spouse and might need occasional inclusion of the intimate partner. To avoid these concerns unmarried women are included in the session.

\[ e) \text{ Literate:} \] As the members of the group need to answer the EI inventory, SRQ -20 and open ended questionnaires; women who have fluency in reading and writing were included.

\[ f) \text{ Women whose scores fall in the needed range on Emotional Intelligence Inventory (EII) and SRQ – 20:} \] Women whose scores on EII show below average are selected. SRQ – 20 is a self report questionnaire developed by WHO (1994) as an instrument designed to screen for psychiatric disturbances especially in developing countries. Women whose scores showed no mental health issues were selected.

\[ iii) \text{ The Group and Its Formation} \]

To form the group several places were explored. One NGO was not considered since it is working with women victims of domestic violence. Their focus was to give legal help to the couple in reuniting or in the process of taking divorce. Second one works with street children and they have children only below 15 years. Since the age group does not meet the age criteria for the group members for this study, this NGO was not selected. Third NGO was housing children who were affected with HIV/AIDS. Due to the involvement of multiple factors, even these inmates did not meet the criteria for this study. So this organization too was not selected. Later an organization in Tenali,
(Name withheld for the reasons of confidentiality) which is a central government project was identified for this study. This NGO shelters many young adults who were deserted by the families for various reasons. Majority of the women were residents of the area learning vocational courses. This would enable researcher to access the group members over a period of time for group process. Through the counselors working in NGO, the researcher learned that there are good numbers of young adults with the history of CSA. Lastly, it was at an accessible distance for both the researcher and the facilitator. Added to this researcher’s prior association with this organization as programme advisor and counselor facilitated the process of access to the organization.

Initially contact was made with the organization officials. They were informed about the purpose of the research, mode of operations involved and the expected outcomes of the research. Since this is a group process where the participants would be benefited, they readily gave their consent to the study. In the process of forming the group with the inmates of this organization, the following is observed as inclusion criteria.

**iv) Process of Selection of Members to the Group**

The researcher addressed initially 27 young women in the organization who could read and write. The researcher gave them a basic idea about the purpose and process of research and the benefits one obtains by participating in the group process. All the women willing to participate in the group they were asked to answer EI Inventory developed by Thomas I & Susamma (2003) to know their current EI before participating in the group. They were also screened for possible mental health issues by using SRQ – 20. Then the researcher conducted an interview using interview guide to get their personal details and selected as per the inclusion criteria twelve members from the group out of nineteen who came forward to participate in the research.

The 12 members selected were within the age group of 19 to 22. All of them showed lower levels of EI as per the EII. Eight of them had completed their intermediate studies and three of them discontinued under graduation. They were from lower middle class families. Among them five were learning embroidery and tailoring, four only embroidery and three were under going medical lab training in the vocational
centre of the organization. They were from near by villages and stayed in the organization’s rehabilitation centre. Being women and given the sensitivity of the issue of CSA the following ethical concerns were taken care in the process of selection and conducting research.

v) Ethical Issues

Ethical issues in social science research are an important concern since persons are their respondents. Therefore, they need necessary attention. Sha (2005) states, “…. therefore social science researches have to be guided by code of ethics to protect the interests of those whom social scientists are studying” (p. 26). In qualitative research where the focus is exploring inner world of the people, keeping to the code of ethics is very important because the way both participants and the data collected from them are dealt with will have a direct impact upon the lives of the participants.

Margaret (2003) recommends 4 criteria in selecting the respondents for Social Science research. The first one is Autonomy / self determination. This involves issues such as respect for people and their right to decide whether or not, will be involved in the research. The second one is confidentiality and the third one storage of data. And the last one is non- malfeasance, which stresses that researchers are required not to harm their subjects in any way and, on the other hand do some good, or to be of benefit to the people who are being researched.

The nature of this study requires sharing of personal experiences of the respondents, which involved some risk. Added to that these experiences are related to the trauma faced in the realm of sexuality, which is considered very sensitive area due to cultural implications. More over the respondents were women who are a vulnerable group given to their secondary status in the society. Hence, ethical issues need to be considered with utmost care. Considering all the sensitivities involved in this study, Margaret (2003) criteria is adopted in selecting the respondents for this study.

a. Autonomy / Self Determination: This involves issues such as respect for people and their right to decide whether or not, will be involved in the research. In this regard, the following aspects were paid attention during research: prior to the selection of members to the group, the purpose of the
research was explained and informed consent was taken; the possible risks (e.g. self-disclosure) and benefits (new ideas and new relationships that might help them to learn and grow) were made clear. The participants were told that they were free to choose to participate or not to participate; the fact that, as a group, the participants would evolve the group norms and that once the group norms were agreed upon they are bound to keep to them was explained to the participants.

b. Confidentiality: The area of research focuses on the issue of sexuality that too including women, a vulnerable gender, and the aspect of confidentiality need to be paid attention with utmost care. Sexuality provokes shame and guilt easily, and it is tied in with social and cultural priorities. Therefore, it is essential to ensure that confidentiality is maintained.

c. During this study, the aspect of confidentiality was taken care by adopting the following: the importance of confidentiality was explained to the members of the group and some formal procedure like public promise of confidentiality was followed to emphasize it. The nature of this formal procedure was decided in consultation with the group. In this regard it was made clear to the participants that: the process issues will be kept confidential and the material will never be used for any other purpose except for academic purposes; even in academic records, the names and the identity of the persons will not be revealed; and the data would be stored with pseudo names.

d. Storage of the data: The data collected was very personal and related to a sensitive issue. So the collected data through field notes and audio recording were stored in a way (coding) that identities of the individuals are not be revealed.

e. Non-Maleficence: Researchers are required not to harm their subjects in any way and, on the other hand do some good, or to be of benefit to the people who are being researched. During the group process as there was a problem of people becoming aware of deeper emotional problems, details of the relevant service organizations where the members can be referred to were made
available. During the group work as the familiarity grows among the members there was a possibility of forming cliques, attention was paid to see that these types of behaviours may not come on the way of group process.

After identifying the potential group members, researcher explained to them the purpose of the Research and the process of the research. In this regard, the members were informed that once the group is formed the frequency, duration, venue, and the time of the group sessions would be decided in consultation with the group members. The process consists of structured interactions (structured because the interactions are directed by the focus of the session for that day. However, the group members were free to share something else too, if they felt the urgent need for the attention of the group) with a focus on the here - and - now experiences in the group. It was made clear to them that the norms of the group would evolve during the first session of the group and the date and time of the first session would be decided after the five input sessions. It was explained to them that they would be given some input in the matters connected to group process for three to five days and after that they need to sign on the consent form declaring their interest to participate in the group and to abide by the group norms and ground rules which will be evolved by the group members during the first group session.

The possible benefits of participating in the group were explained as: Possible enhancement of the capacity to manage emotions; Certain amount of relief and freedom from the influence of the painful experience they had gone through.; A possibility of developing new supportive relationships based on their understanding of each other since there might be deeper sharing of self during the group sessions.

The possible risks that were assumed and explained to the group members were; need for honest self disclosure; need to confront each other for the benefit of each other; need to commit to attend the sessions regularly; need to go through certain amount of emotional pain; need to face challenges from other members of the group to realize and break the unhealthy patterns and finally the possibility of members encountering deeper emotional issues which might interfere with participating in the group and needs immediate attention. To attend this emergency situation they were provided with the information regarding the personnel whom they can approach if needed any
further psychological help. These facilities will be availed by the group members in consultation with the facilitator and the researcher.

As part of ensuring the confidentiality only the director of the organization and the counselors in the organization knew that, the group is formed with the women who were sexually abused as children. To the rest it was told that the group consists of women with traumatic experiences. The group members were assured that there will not be any force to reveal anything about their experience of CSA unless they feel free to share.

2.4.3 The Encounter Group Process

Before starting the proper group sessions, as participating in the group was the first experience for all the women, they were prepared for the group process. This phase is called as pre – group phase. The purpose of the pre group phase was to prepare the women for the encounter group process. Encounter group process includes giving the members some amount of needed information either at the beginning or in the middle depending on the need (Egan, 1970, Diamond and Shapiro, 1975). The potential group members met for five input sessions and they were planned in consultation with the group members on the following dates; 12th, 17th, 21st, 25th of January and 12th of February. Each of the above days the session lasted for two to 3 hours i.e. from 8.30 am to 10.30 / 11.30 am. They were also informed that after these sessions, the group will be formally formed and the group process would be continued.

Purpose of the above decided sessions were explained to the group members as: To give basic information regarding feelings, thoughts and behaviours so that the members see the linkages between them and feel motivated to make efforts to become aware of them; To give information regarding different types of abuses a person goes through as child and to understand the influence of these experiences upon the present behaviours of the persons; To help them understand and see the overt and covert behaviours. To give information about the emotional intelligence and its importance in living life so that the members feel motivated to enhance it by participating in the group. To build rapport among members, between members and the facilitator and
facilitator, researcher and the members so that members find easier to evolve group norms.

After the 5 sessions on different days, again the participants were asked that they were free to join the group or to drop off. Of the 12, one member could not attend the session because her mother passed away and they were sent to her aunt’s house. The remaining eleven women said that they want to continue in to group process. Then the researcher collected baseline information using interview schedule. Selected members were asked to fill up the SRQ 20 questionnaire. And informed consent was taken from the group members. Then the group members were left with the facilitator and the researcher remained as non participant observer collecting the data during the group process.

The actual group process began on February 15th 2008 and continued till 10th November 2008. Initially the sessions were conducted with 3 days interval. Once the interactions in the session became spontaneous and self disclosure was deepened, the sessions were made once a week. This extension of gap was to give time for the group members to practice what evolved in the group and to be able to notice change that is happening in self and in other members of the group. This was decided during the group process. Later towards the time of termination for the last three sessions, the interval between the sessions was increased to 15 days in order to help members to prepare for termination of the group.

*Evolution of sub goals:* The main purpose or goal of the group was given by the researcher as “Understanding the influence of group process on the ability of the women in the group to manage their emotions (EI)”’. The five workshops conducted during the pre group phase helped the women to see the importance of this purpose in their lives too. Then every session usually began with a briefing by the group members called as ‘reporting’. During this, the group members shared with each other their experiences of putting into practice the decisions and the learning during the group process. Based on this sharing the group members discussed among themselves the sub goal for that day’s session, which would help them to reach the goal. Then they begin to interact and share with each other as per the sub goal. The sub goals that were formulated by the group members for each day’s session are given in the table 3.
Overall goal of the encounter group process: Enhancing Emotional Intelligence of the group members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sub Goal Of The Sessions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>15.02.08</td>
<td>Evolving the group norms to participate in the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>18.02.08</td>
<td>To focus on and become aware of the feelings in the here and now context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>21.02.08</td>
<td>Deepening awareness of feelings and interacting freely among group members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>24.02.08</td>
<td>To become aware of thoughts feelings and behaviours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>27.02.08</td>
<td>Deepening the awareness of thoughts and feelings and improving interaction in the group while sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>01.03.08</td>
<td>To observe both covert and overt behaviours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>04.03.08</td>
<td>To become aware of thoughts, feelings and behaviours and to observe if there are any defenses in those behaviours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>07.03.08</td>
<td>Exploring the experience of lethargy of that day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>12.03.08</td>
<td>To identify one intense feeling in self and to explore the thoughts and behaviours to understand self.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>17.03.08</td>
<td>To identify one intense feeling in self and to explore the thoughts and behaviours to understand self.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>22.03.08</td>
<td>To identify one intense feeling in self and to explore the thoughts and behaviours to understand self.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>27.03.08</td>
<td>To identify one intense feeling in self and to explore the thoughts and behaviours to understand self.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>31.03.08</td>
<td>To identify one intense feeling in self and to explore the thoughts and behaviours to understand self.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>05.04.08</td>
<td>To explore and understand what is happening to self right now as sitting in the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.04.09</td>
<td>To learn to motivate self towards appropriate expression of feelings when emotionally upset.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>15.04.08</td>
<td>To learn to motivate self towards appropriate expression of feelings with a focus on here and now experience of feelings and thoughts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>20.04.08</td>
<td>To learn to motivate self by sharing the emotions and experiences with which one is struggling to deal with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>25.04.08</td>
<td>To learn to motivate self by sharing the emotions and experiences with which one is struggling to deal with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>30.04.08</td>
<td>To learn to motivate self by sharing the emotions and experiences with which one is struggling to deal with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>05.05.0</td>
<td>To learn to motivate self by sharing the emotions and experiences with which one is struggling to deal with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>10.05.0</td>
<td>Differentiating and understanding the role of realization and motivation in changing one’s own behaviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>14.05.0</td>
<td>To look at self and the other evaluatively in relation to the group sessions and share with each other their experience of participating in the group sessions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 enumerates the sub goals selected by the women in the group for each session to help them focus their interactions in the group. The above list of sub goals shows that some sub goals were continued for few sessions as the members felt the need for spending more time in discussing and sharing issues connected to that sub goal. Members spent 5 sessions i.e. from 9th to 13th session in identifying the intense feelings with which one struggles and the related thoughts and behaviours. 4 sessions (17 to 20 sessions) were spent in learning to motivate self and to bring change consciously in ones behaviour. Three consecutive sessions (23 to 25 sessions) were spent in helping themselves in understanding the consequences of their behaviours on others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>24.05.08  Understanding the consequences of ones behaviours upon the other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>31.05.08  Understanding the consequences of ones behaviours upon the other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>07.06.08  Understanding the consequences of ones behaviours upon the other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>21.08.08  Recalling how the emotional situations were managed during past 2 months and reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>28.08.08  Recalling how the emotional situations were managed during past 2 months and reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>04.09.08  Helping self to motivate one self and to change undesirable behaviours. (Not decided, but that’s what is done during the session.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>11.09.08  Understanding the consequences of ones behaviours upon others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>18.09.08  Deepening the understanding of the consequences of ones behaviours upon others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>25.09.08  Understanding others while struggling with anger in self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>01.10.08  Understanding the reasons for one’s own anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>08.10.08  To understand the self and the other about the fears in expressing oneself freely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>15.10.08  To deal with one’s fears and to confront others or to express freely even when it differs from others, irrespective of the consequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>22.10.08  To deal with one’s fears and to confront others or to express freely even when it differs from others, irrespective of the consequences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>29.10.08  Planning for the termination of the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>08.11.08  Evaluation and sharing of the changes noticed in self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>20.11.08  Evaluation and sharing with each other their plans for continuing to help self.</td>
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</table>
A closer look at the sub goals reveals that each one is a step to reach the goal of the group process i.e. to enhance emotional intelligence of women in the group. Of these steps, some of the sub goals served as turning points in the group process. The first one among them is “To identify one’s intense feeling in self and to explore the thoughts and behaviours to understand self.” This sub goal ran into five sessions. As per this sub goal when women were sharing about the intense feelings they struggled with, they began to share their experience of CSA as almost all of their experience of intense feelings were related to this experience. This sharing about the experience of CSA brought a major shift during the group process where the women began to feel closer to each other realizing that all had the same experiences. With this, self disclosure became more personal and the women began to share the issues of their concern more freely due to increased trust and belonging in the group.

Another sub goal that brought shift during group process was “To learn to motivate self by sharing the emotions and experiences with which one is struggling to deal with.” This sub goal ran into four sessions. As the women were sharing in line with this sub goal, they realized the interpersonal importance in experiencing and expressing feelings and began to show interest in developing interpersonal skills. This raising of interpersonal interest led them to choose “Understanding the consequences of ones behaviours upon the other.” as a sub goal for three consecutive sessions and to develop their sensitivity towards the other. Development of intra and interpersonal sensitivity is an important development for survivors of CSA because the literature emphasizes that due to the impact of the experience of CSA they tend to withdraw into oneself.

The group process continued for 38 sessions. Due to unavailability of the facilitator the group process was suspended for almost two months after the 25th session. Once the sessions began after two months they continued till termination without any interruption. As the sessions proceeded involvement of the group members was seen to be less intense, women expressed satisfaction regarding changes they noticed in self, and no new issues rose during the group process. Considering these indications, it was noted that time for termination had arrived. The process of termination was planned along with the group members and the group was terminated with the 38th session.
As part of the process of termination, a visit to another NGO in Mangalagiri, sheltering adolescent street girls was planned. The women in the group took the responsibility of organizing a programme, which is both informative and recreative for the street children. With the help of a role play and group discussion they conducted a two hour session informing the street children of different ways of dealing with fear and anger. After this, the women’s group was terminated.

During these 38 sessions, the data was collected in three phases. The following section gives the details of data collection and the tools used.

### 2.4.4 Data Collection

One of the advantages of qualitative methodology is triangulation, which means provision of using a combination of different methods, study groups, local and temporal settings and different theoretical perspectives in dealing with a phenomenon (Flick, 1998). For the purpose of this study Data Triangulation is used which is defined by Denzin (2000) as use of different data sources. The sources of data collection for this study were group members, researcher, group interactions and facilitator. The reason for collecting data from multiple sources is to assure reliability, validity and objectivity of the collected data. The data was collected in three phases as given below.

#### i) Phase One

This is pre group phase and the purpose of phase one was to select the members for the group as per the inclusion criteria and to collect personal details about the group members. The following were the different types of tools used in the process of selecting the group members.

**Questionnaires:** At the beginning of the group sessions a questionnaire developed by Immanuel (2003) to measure EI was filled in by participants to understand their emotional intelligence status before entering the group. SRQ – 20 (WHO, 2002) was used to assess the mental health status of the women selected for the group.
Interview schedule: These were used primarily to initiate rapport building with the women and to assess the severity of the abuse. During these interviews, the goals of the group process was explained and informed to the women and consent was taken from the selected members who were willing to participate in the group. To ensure the validity of the respondents sharing an interview guide was answered by a person, who was either a family member or some one in the organization with whom the woman with history of CSA had trust. This was done with the consent of the potential group member.

ii) Phase Two
During this phase, the members entered the group process. The main focus of this phase was to collect data by observation of the interactions in the group and through open ended questionnaires from the group participants and the facilitator. All the sessions were audio taped with the permission of the group members, which were later transcribed verbatim and then translated into English.

Field Notes: This is another source of data that was maintained by the researcher. Field notes containing detailed descriptions of the group sessions, including nonverbal and verbal behaviours and structural changes in the group was maintained. These narrations were later used for analysis.

Interview guide: An interview guide was answered by the members of the group after every fifth session to give the information about their experience in the group and suggestions.

iii) Phase Three
The purpose of this phase was to collect data that showed cumulated change in the group members in their EI and coping strategies due to the influence of group process. Another purpose was to get the feedback from the group members and facilitator about the group process.

Interview schedule: An interview guide was answered by the individual members of the group and the facilitator where the information regarding their over all impression about the group process and its effectiveness is gathered along with their suggestions for conducting groups in future.
The data collected using the above tools across the 38 sessions was transcribed, translated and analyzed for the results. The following section gives the summary of the process of data analysis adopted for this study.
2.4.5 Data Analysis

Each session of the group was audio taped. The audio tapes were transcribed and then translated into English as the sessions were conducted in local language - Telugu. Later few of the translated sessions were given for cross checking to ensure that the subjective meaning was not lost during the translation. Cross check was done by a psychologist, who is proficient both in Telugu and in English. The translated verbatim were converted to case narratives or session narratives integrating verbatim with the field notes of the researcher. The accuracy of the narratives was checked by the research guide. After session narratives were completed, the data was analyzed using both theoretical coding and the qualitative content analysis.

As the data collected was from the interactions during the group session, the opinion or understanding of a single experience was spread across the session. If summarizing and generalizing (first steps in qualitative content analysis) of the data was done at that level, then there was a possibility of loosing some data. Hence, the steps in coding are adopted from ‘Theoretical coding’, a procedure introduced by Glaser and Strauss (1967). This procedure consists of three steps as given in the following section.

The process of data analysis started session wise, where line by line or sentence wise coding was done which is called as “open coding” (Flick, 1998). Accordingly the data was classified by their units of meanings line by line or few lines together.

This was followed by axial coding where the codes were refined and differentiated as categories which are called as sub themes. For example, the codes like awareness of anger, awareness of fear, awareness of jealousy etc are conceptualized as “awareness of feeling” which forms a sub theme.

The final stage in coding is called as selective coding. This refers to “…process of selecting the central or core categories, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development” (Corbin and Strauss, 1990, pg.116). Following this, the sub themes like awareness of feeling, awareness of thought, awareness of expression of thought
and feeling through behaviour etc. were grouped together and named as “awareness of covert and overt behaviours.” These selective codes are called as themes.

This procedure was followed using group as unit of analysis and individual as unit of analysis separately. The themes and sub themes were categorized inline with the theoretical definitions of the concepts related to encounter group process, group structures, stages of group development and emotional intelligence using the qualitative content analysis.

Hsieh and Shannon, (2005) defines qualitative content analysis as “A research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (pg, 1278). The objectives of this study aims at understanding the influence of group process on emotional intelligence of women survivors of CSA. This demands the comparison of the themes evolved from the data with the theoretical definitions of the concepts like encounter group process, emotional intelligence, group structures etc. Content analysis provides opportunity for this comparison as it is stated in content analysis “… categories are brought to empirical material and not necessarily developed from it” (Flick, 1983, pg. 193). One of the objectives of this study was to understand the phenomenon of group process. Downe-Wamboldt (1992) states that content analysis provides knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study. This is another reason for considering qualitative content analysis for this study.

Flick (1998) considers one of the essential features of content analysis as use of categories derived from theoretical model. Accordingly five domains of emotional intelligence were defined as per Goleman (1998); the phenomenon in encounter group process was conceptualized using the Rogers’ (1970) conceptualization; stages of group development were defined adopting from Corey and Corey’s understanding of characteristics of phases of group development and group structures were defined inline with Garvin (1987).

Mayring (2004) states that summarizing content analysis seeks to reduce the material into a manageable short text and preserving the essential contents. This technique is chosen as the objectives of the study aims at understanding the content of the
interactions of the women in the group. Finally, the framework of analysis was conceptualized in the following way.

**Figure 4: Conceptualization of Framework of Data Analysis**

![Diagram](image)

The above figure 4, shows that raw data was categorized into codes through open coding; codes into sub themes through axial coding and sub themes into themes through selective coding. These themes were categorized in the background of the theoretical definitions given in the literature. These themes are explained in detail in the coming chapters.
2.5 Methodological Challenges

Given the complexity of the human nature and the processes that are adopted in this study to understand this complexity aroused some dilemmas. There were two types of dilemmas that were faced in the process of conducting this study. One was regarding conceptualizing the constituents of group process and the other one was while conceptualizing the frame work for data analysis. These dilemmas and the efforts taken to resolve them are detailed below.

i) Conceptualizing The Group Process

The encounter groups literature high lights lack of structure as one of the strength of encounter groups where the members can grow in freedom and responsibility. Due to this adopting, a framework for observing the changes became difficult. On similar lines Bates and Goodman (196) states, “Some changes may remain undetected, since the change involved could rest upon the creation of different frameworks or schemata in which aspects of oneself are perceived, rather than increase or decrease on a fixed measurement scale” (pg. 240). Hence, evolving a framework for observation of the group phenomena was a dilemma. The group work literature aided in clarifying this dilemma.

As explained in conceptual framework, adoption of the concepts ‘dealing with the conflict’ helped in observation and understanding of the dynamics, which happened in management of emotions, and dealing with the conflicts. Likewise adoption of the concept ‘group structures’ helped in understanding the changes which occurred in the survivors in terms of self confidence, relational abilities etc. Adoption of the 3 stages of development (Initial middle and termination phases) enabled in observing and understanding the changes very closely.

ii) Conceptualizing The Frame Work For Data Analysis

Initially there was confusion in evolving framework for analysis of the data. The data in hand was not sequential as in interviews. Though the conversations in the group were directed by the sub goal of that session, the data was gathered over conversations in the group where each one spoke at their own level expressing their understanding and opinions at different points of time during the group session.
Thereby opinions and understanding of the experiences of each person were scattered across the session narrative since the data was evolved through free and spontaneous conversations. In a single session layers of understanding of the same person was spread across the session narratives about the same experience. Contrasting this data with the data collected through interviews where the information related to one thing comes more or less together, the data collected for this study appeared scattered. Hence, the process of coding at the first level i.e. open coding appeared to be cluttered and chaotic.

Added to the above confusion the dilemma existing in group work literature regarding conceptualizing and operationalizing the phenomenon during the group process was another issue of concern. This issue was addressed to some extent by adopting content analysis where theoretical models guide the process of analysis. This and the above noted concern were sorted out by using qualitative content analysis as frame work of analysis with some adaptations from theoretical coding used in grounded theory approach. This process is detailed in the data analysis section.

Another complexity was, given the objectives of the study the same data needed to be looked at from different perspectives like: changes which occurred across the sessions in encounter group phenomenon; conflict; group structures and 5 domains of emotional intelligence. From this, another concern arose about representing the data while detailing the findings. This was sorted out by careful observation and scrutinizing.

However, though the dilemmas, which were thrown up, clearly were sorted out in one or other way, there remained some issues, which could not be altered due to the complexities involved. These are considered as limitations of this study and listed below.
2.6 Limitations of the Study

- The background of women in the group from the perspective of education, economic conditions, the class in the society and psychological knowledge is homogenous to some extent. Thus, generalizability, of the findings might be limited.
- Due to the concerns of time and money, the results were drawn from a single group. This reality too restricts the generalizability of the findings.
- Given to the complexity of the human nature and subjective understanding involved in understanding the data the replicability of the study is limited.
- Concept clarification especially concepts concerned with group processes are difficult. As most of them are loaded with subjective meaning, drawing inferences by observing the behaviours was difficult. Hence, there is a possibility of missing the data.