

## **Child Sexual Abuse: The Cause of Trauma and the Rift between Mother and Daughter with Reference to the play *Thirty Days in September***

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This paper explores the profound and devastating impact of child sexual abuse on the psychological health of survivors and the intricate relationships within families, focusing on the mother-daughter dynamic as portrayed in Mahesh Dattani's play *Thirty Days in September*. Through qualitative analysis of the narrative and characters of the play, the study investigates how trauma manifests and the various coping mechanisms employed by victims and their families. The narrative reveals a cyclical pattern of abuse wherein Shanta, the mother, was abused by her brother who later also abused her daughter, Mala. This intergenerational trauma results in Shanta becoming sexually withdrawn, while Mala reacts oppositely, developing hypersexual behaviour. The central theme of the play highlights the silence surrounding child sexual abuse and its corrosive effects on trust and communication between a mother and daughter. The analysis delves into the differing psychological impacts of abuse on Shanta and Mala, illustrating how untreated trauma can diverge in manifestation and affect familial bonds. The paper argues that the cultural context and societal norms play significant roles in shaping the responses to disclosure of abuse and discusses the implications for therapeutic interventions. The findings underscore the need for sensitive approaches that address familial relationships and communication as integral components of the healing process.

**Keywords:** Child Sexual Abuse, Trauma, Incest, mother-daughter dynamics, intergenerational trauma, PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), Patriarchy, Hegemony etc.