CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1: GENERAL ORIENTATION OF THESIS

TERMINOLOGY LIST

CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL AND LITERATURE OVERVIEW: MEN AS VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES: THE IMPACT OF PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE ON THE MALE VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY, PROCEDURES AND TECHNIQUES

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER 1: GENERAL ORIENTATION OF THESIS

1.1   Introduction

Violence between family members has a historical tradition that dates back centuries and cuts across continents (Gelles & Cornell, 1986:36). As a result of this, many social scientists have proposed that within various societies the marriage license is a hitting license and most people believe that under certain circumstances, it is appropriate for partners to abuse one-another. In the late 1960's the United States of America (USA) Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, carried out a study of family violence in the USA. One of the conclusions was, that approximately one quarter of all adult men, and one in six adult women, felt that in certain instances it would be appropriate for a husband to hit his wife or for the wife to hit her husband. Fifteen years after the latter research, in the mid 1970's, Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz (in Gelles & Cornell, 1986:36) carried out the first national survey on family violence. Their questions directed at people's attitudes toward violence in the home confirmed the findings from earlier research done in the late 1960's. Approximately one in five wives, and one in three husbands thought that a couple slapping one another was at least to a certain degree, necessary, normal and good. This result indicates that violence is prominent and acceptable in many households.

Olin and Tonry (1989:88) further state that family members often hold the belief that they have the right to influence and control one-another's behaviour. In modern society the household structure insulates the family from the social constraints of other individuals and groups. Dissatisfaction with the conduct of another family member, including a partner, may be compounded by aggressive attempts to change that person's behaviour. Characteristics unique to family life increase the likelihood of abuse, that is, men and women tend to be more polite, gentle, and approving of strangers of the opposite sex than with their spouses. The authors, do not however, give a detailed explanation of what the 'conduct' is, which may cause one spouse to abuse another. Researcher aims to make a contribution to the latter by illuminating the 'conduct' which is prevalent in an abusive marriage or cohabitating relationship where the male partner is abused by his female partner (refer Chapter 5).

In light of the above, Litman (2003:772) states that the phenomenon of husband abuse or husband battering is not as uncommon as is generally perceived. He is of the opinion that it tends to be ignored, dismissed, or selectively attended to. The reasons why men do not report their victimisation and why they stay in abusive relationships are well documented according to the author. He states that their victimisation occurs because of deeply ingrained myths regarding both the potential for, and incidence of, violence in women, and the vulnerability of men to such victimisation – myths that have led to the gross underestimation of the high incidence of female perpetrators in abusive families.

Patricia Pearson (2004, http://www.batteredmen.com/abusedme.htm) reiterates upon these myths, with statements in her book, *When she was bad: Female violence and the myth of innocence:*

> Most of us believe that masculine power is the fountainhead of private, as well as public violence. Never mind, that women, commit the majority of child homicides in the United States, a greater share of severe physical child abuse, an equal rate of sibling violence and assaults on the elderly, about a quarter of child sexual abuse, and an overwhelming share of the killings of newborns. Spouse assault is what men do to women, women from all walks of life, getting punched in the face by the dark fist of patriarchy. Even if we concede that women batter their children, we cannot take it a step further and picture them battering men. We might learn that a man's nose was broken, that he lost his job, that he was emotionally devastated, but we still think, to ourselves; He's a man. He could have hit back. He could have hit harder.

Violence towards husbands, or husband abuse, has been a controversial area in the study of domestic violence. There has been considerable debate on the topic, but very little scientific data exists (Gelles & Cornell, 1986:79). Dobash and Dobash (in Pagelow, 1983:189) insist that marital violence (and/or violence within dating or cohabiting relationships) can only be understood by taking into consideration events surrounding violent episodes and the social, historical and institutional processes, as well as cultural beliefs and ideals of the environment in which they occur. Researcher aims to make a contribution in this regard by using the theoretical model (refer Figure 3.1) to explore how the violence perpetuated towards the male victims in this study impacted on their social environments and cultural beliefs.

1.2   Limitations of the study

Researcher encountered many problems during the course of this study which hindered the research process to a certain extent. Some of these problems included dated resources in terms of text books and academic articles written on male or husband battering/abuse at the hands of a female partner in an heterosexual marriage or cohabiting relationship. In the academic texts that researcher did find for literature review purposes, the information on this form of domestic violence, when discussed, was very limited and not researched extensively. In addition South African research proved to be very limited, thus researcher had to rely mostly on international research and literature for the purpose of this study.

Furthermore, researcher encountered difficulty in finding male victims of domestic violence who were willing to be interviewed for the purposes of this study and who suited the profile of respondents, namely heterosexual males who were married to, or in a cohabiting relationship with their perpetrators. The reasons for the reluctance of male victims of domestic violence to talk about their trauma are discussed extensively throughout chapter two and chapter five.

1.2.1 Relevance of the topic

In her article, the battered husband syndrome, Steinmetz (1978:504) questioned why so much attention was given to wife-abuse and so little to husband-abuse. However, the author postulates, it is partially the relative lack of empirical data on the topic, the selective inattention both by the media and researchers, the greater severity of physical damage to women making their victimisation more visible, and the reluctance of men to acknowledge abuse at the hands of women. For the purposes of this study, researcher was also unable to find any significant research on the topic within the South African context and believes that because of this, this study has particular significance.

Miller and Sharif (http://www.batteredmen.com/husbandb.htm) in 1995, were of the opinion that the public at large, are becoming increasingly aware of the existence of

domestic violence and that this could be attributed to the money that is being spent on anti-domestic violence campaigns. In their article, *Domestic violence: The way men's advocates see it*, Miller and Sharif (1995, http://www.batteredmen.com/husbandb.htm) cite the example of the United States of America (USA) spending $8 billion combating men's violence against women**,** thus making sure that there is a heightened awareness of female victims of domestic violence. They question whether a situation where focus is only on female victims of domestic violence, is not misinterpreted for political purposes. In 1994, the USA Congress not only did not invite men's advocates to participate, but also denied them the opportunity to attend when they requested to do so. Consequently, the real problem, according to the authors, of women's violence against men and children was not discussed. The myth alluded to then, that men primarily perpetrate domestic violence against women and children, was still being reinforced. The authors however state, that statistics and legitimate research clearly dispel this notion.

In 1975 and again in 1986, Strauss, Gelles and other researchers (Miller and Sharif, 1995, http://www.batteredmen.com/husbandb.htm), conducted one of the most respected studies in family violence. The researchers looked at assault rates of approximately 1 000 families and found that the results contradicted conventional beliefs on the subject. Not only are men just as likely to be the victims of domestic violence, but the study also showed that within this 10 year period, the overall rate of domestic violence by men against women decreased, whereas women's violence against men increased.

Sniechowski and Sherven (1994, http://www.batteredmen.com/abusedme.htm) state that the image of a battered wife is firmly established in the national (USA) consciousness. The media almost exclusively portrays the male as the "brutal, overpowering, must be stopped" perpetrator of domestic violence and the female as the helpless, innocent victim, deserving sympathy. The authors acknowledge that this may be an accurate portrayal in some instances and should not be tolerated, but state, "To consider the possibility of a battered husband is so far from our national image of men as to be laughable." Nevertheless, the authors also say that many studies have been done to demonstrate the reality of the husband or boyfriend who has been assaulted and emotionally abused by his wife or girlfriend to dispel any

4

remaining myths. Researcher hopes to further dispel this myth (in South Africa) with this study and stimulate further research with regards to the South African male victim of domestic violence.

Female on male abuse or husband battering must be understood in the context of the more global problem of family or domestic violence because of its influence on social perceptions and policies. Researcher does not wish to de-emphasise the importance of wife or child abuse, but rather to increase the awareness and understanding of the existence of this other form of domestic violence. Steinmetz (1978:507) states:

> When the focus remains on the battered wife, the remedies often suggested revolve around support groups, crises lines, and shelters for the woman and her children. This stance overlooks a basic condition of violence between spouses – a society which glorifies violence if done for the 'right reasons', the good of society, or that of one's own family. It is critical to shift at least some of the blame from individual family members to basic socio-cultural conditions so that more resources will become available to help families and a greater emphasis will be placed on changing the attitudes and values of society.

George (1994:137-159) argues that more research is needed to help define the similarities and differences between male and female victims of domestic violence. The author believes that the general opinion in society that women are the only "legitimate" subject of domestic violence and that the number of abused men in society is very small, is an eroneous one. The author further states, "The fact is, that taking a serious look at the phenomenon of battered men, may actually be a necessary next step to help decontaminate the study of domestic violence".

Gelles and Straus (in George, 1994:137-159), describe how the debate over the issue of abused and/or battered men helped to suppress any serious study of the subject as well as send a signal to many well-intentioned scholars to avoid the field totally. They write:

> Perhaps the most unfortunate outcome of the wrangle over battered men is that since the debate in the late 1970's, there has been virtually no additional research carried out on the topic. The furor among social scientists and in the public media has *contaminated* the entire topic. Consequently, we have refused every request for an interview or to appear on any talk

show on this topic for fear of yet again being misquoted, miscast, or misrepresented. Other social scientists who witnessed the abuse heaped on our research group – especially on Suzanne Steinmetz – have given the topic of battered men a wide berth.

While most society members only view male victims of domestic violence as the subject of disbelief or objects of humour, the fact is that some men are abused and/or battered. No matter their number, abused and/or battered men deserve better than to be seen as little more than footnotes from earlier historical periods. Cook (2004, http://www.batteredmen.com/abusedme.htm) reiterates by stating that it is necessary to believe what women themselves report in surveys – they start a quarter of the violence, men start a quarter of the incidents, and the remaining half involve mutual violence. The author states that unless this fact is recognised, women seeking help for anger management, lesbians and gay men in abusive relationships, and heterosexual men who are being abused, will continue to be discriminated against and told that their problems are not real, even though facts show otherwise. The author concludes that if we fail to put resources and effort into dealing with the total reality of domestic violence, instead of focusing on just one part of the problem, we only encourage a group-against-group conflict which is a disservice to all victims. In light of this researcher aims to stimulate further research on a much larger scale, by institutions that are able to fund such endeavours (refer Chapter 6 paragraph 6.3.2).

1.2.2 Theoretical significance

An attempt will be made to render an understanding of male battering based on existing socio-criminological theories and perspectives, namely the culture of violence perspective, the social learning theory, the social structural theory of violence, the social exchange theory/rational choice theory and systems theory.

As male battering is a multidimensional phenomenon (influences the victim's mental, emotional, physiological and spiritual state), which cannot be explained by single factors, an eclectic or integrated approach will be adopted. This can be achieved by using components of theories, which are most suited to facilitate the understanding of the topic. As a result of this, it is necessary to build a theoretical model (refer Figure 3.1) after critical evaluation of the theories, which best serves the purposes of the

6

study. The following theoretical perspectives, namely the culture of violence perspective, the social learning theory, the social structural theory of violence, the social exchange/rational choice theory and the systems theory, will be utilised for the purposes of this study. Following, is a brief introduction of the core concepts of these theoretical perspectives, which will be discussed further in detail, in chapter three and utilised in chapter five for the interpretation and analysis of data:

1.2.2.1 The culture of violence

The culture of violence theory is examined to show how society contributes to family violence. In 2003 Bowman (http://academic.udayton.edu/health/06world/africa03.htm) stated that the theoretical grounding of domestic (family) violence work, has important implications for the strategies chosen to address the problem and what is seen as an aspect of a larger struggle, that of gender equality. The author describes a number of explanations for domestic violence namely, explanations rooted in individual psychology, one's centring on sociological forces (such as family dysfunction) and the culture of violence perspective. The author goes further and emphasises the latter by stressing the importance of legal, social and economic transformation as plausible explanations for this form of violence.   Within the South African context, the result of economic difficulties experienced by the transformation from an apartheid to a democratic political system in 1994, perpetuated the cycle of violence as a result of instability during the transformation process.

Viano (1992:8) supports the culture of violence perspective as one of the explanations for the occurrence of family violence and states that within large societies, certain subcultural groups develop norms and values that emphasise and justify the use of physical force to a higher level than perceived to be acceptable in the predominant, larger culture. In researcher's opinion, the South Africa media frequently portrays how inter-racial and gang violence has permeated to many households in the lower socio-economic areas of the country, for example the Cape Flats. It also indicates that juvenile delinquency is also most prominent within these areas which further contributes to domestic violence.

Researcher will also make use of certain aspects of the social learning theory to explore violence in society and regards the following aspects as pointed out by Viano (1992:8,16) as significant to this study:

1.2.2.2 The social learning theory

The social learning theory stresses the nature versus nurture debate (Viano, 1992:8). It states that aggression and violence are learned behaviours, that can be passed on from one generation to the next. This aggression and violence manifests within particular social contexts, such as households where alcohol and/or drug abuse is prevalent. Viano's (1992:16**) Model of transgenerational abuse** demonstrates that child abuse may become transgenerational because children perpetuate the cycle of violence when they grow up. One possible reason for transgenerational child abuse is that the emotional and physical abuse experienced by the victim, becomes internalised. Viano found that verbal abuse (which is a form of emotional abuse) is the most likely, and physical abuse the least likely form of maltreatment to be transmitted from one generation to the next. He also found high correlations between how a mother was treated as a child and how she treated her husband and child.

Within the context of this theory of transgenerational abuse, researcher shall also examine the concept of chivalry, as well as gender roles and expectations, which may be learned and transmitted from one generation to the next (Viano, 1992:16), and how they play a part in the victimisation process.

Researcher will also make use of the five propositions within the social structual theory of violence, which will be placed within the context of family violence and regards the following aspects as pointed out by Gelles (1987:188), as significant to this study:

1.2.2.3 The social structural theory of violence

Gelles (1987:188) postulates that, certain patterned role relations and contextual circumstances exist that take place in families which often lead to violence. He theorises that there are five propositions for the latter:

➢ Violence is a response to particular structural and situational stimuli, in the form of stress, frustration or threats to the identity.

➢ Stress is differentially distributed in social structures, thus those with less education and lower occupational status and income, have more stressful lives. Thus, the families experiencing the most stress have the least resources available to them to cope with it.

➢ Exposure to, and the experience of violence as a child, teaches the child that violence is a response to structural and situational stimuli.

➢ Individuals in different social positions, are differentially exposed, both to learning situations of violence as a child, and to structural and situational stimuli, for which violence becomes a response in adulthood. Thus the child is socialised to use violence in certain situations.

➢ Individuals will use violence towards family members to different degrees and in different ways, as a result of their learning experiences and structural causal factors that lead to violence.

Within this study, researcher will also make use of a "cost benefit analysis". This concept is extracted from the social exchange/rational choice theory, as proposed by Viano (1992:8), the purpose of which is explained in chapter three and utilitsed in chapter five.

1.2.2.4 The social exchange theory/rational choice theory

Viano (1992:8) states that according to the social exchange theory/rational choice theory, members of a family will resort to violence to obtain their goals for as long as what is to be gained (for example power over the victim), outweighs the cost (punishment/sanctions). This theoretical perspective is based on the "cost benefit

analysis" which states that society's refusal to intervene effectively, makes it "inexpensive" and "safe" to be violent within a family, as the "benefit" is greater than the "cost" to the perpetrator of the violence.

1.2.2.5 Systems theory

In this study systems theory serves as a foundation upon which other theoretical perspectives can be grounded and thus forms the basis upon which a theoretical model is build.   According to Heylighen and Joslyn (1992, http://pespmcl.vub.ac.be/SYSTHEORY.html) broadly speaking, systems theory is the transdisciplinary study of the abstract organisation of phenomena, independent of their substance, type, or spatial or temporal scale of existence. It investigates both the principles common to all complex entities, and the models which can be used to describe them. This definition allows systems theory to be utilised in most fields of study, including domestic violence as it serves to explain the inter-relatedness of phenomena within the context of a family or relationship where violence is prevalent.

1.3   Definition of key concepts and terminology list

Certain concepts will be studied critically, and an operational definition compiled for each. These operational definitions are unique to this study as they have been created to suit the needs of this research. This is done to contextualise them and to eliminate any ambiguity in the text. The following definitions, namely physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and rape, husband battering, victim and domestic violence, will be discussed:

1.3.1 Physical abuse

Gosselin (2003:11) states that physical abuse is the use of force or threat of force that may result in bodily injury, physical pain, or impairment. The signs of physical abuse may be external, internal, or both. External signs of physical abuse include, but are not limited to, bruises, welts, marks, burns, bleeding, missing or pulled hair, ripped clothing, crying, wincing, and the appearance of a drug-induced state in the

victim. Additional signs of physical abuse may be human bites, cigarette burns, strangulation, immersion in scalding water, and poisoning. Internal signs of physical abuse include, but are not limited to, internal tissue or organ injuries, bone fractures, broken bones, bleeding, sprains, and dislocations.

Moody and McLeod-Butler (2000, http://www.abanet.org/yld/affiliate/oct00/familyviolence.html) describe how physical abuse within the domestic violence context causes physical harm or injury to the perpetrator's own household member, or an attempt to cause physical harm or injury to the perpetrator's own household member and with the ability to, under certain circumstances, create fear of imminent peril. According to the authors this definition focuses on the legal aspects of physical abuse within a domestic violence context. From the text it is not clear why this definition focuses on legal aspects, but researcher assumes that because it looks at an "attempt" to cause physical harm, this definition can be considered legalistic in nature.

Gelles and Cornell (1986:21) state that when defining physical abuse, it is a good idea to separate the so-called "normal" acts of force (for example, pushing and shoving) from the "abnormal" and harmful acts of violence (for example, life-threatening abusive acts). They state however, that, this separation of terms might be desirable, but distinguishing between acceptable and unacceptable acts proves to be very difficult - especially in the context of domestic violence. One major question is, who decides which acts constitute abuse and which do not?

Johnson (2006b, Domestic violence – Wikipedia) distinguishes between two types of physical violence, namely, direct physical violence, which includes acts of unwanted physical contact to rape and murder, and indirect physical violence, which ranges from the destruction of objects, striking or throwing objects near the victim, to harm to animals.

Gosselin's (2003) definition is useful as it describes both the external and internal signs of physical abuse, which may result in bodily injury, physical pain or impairment for the victim. Moody and McLeod-Butler (2007) emphasise that physical abuse in a domestic violence context includes, not only the physical harm or injury done by the perpetrator, but also the attempt to do so which can create fear in the victim for

further abuse. Gelles and Cornell's (1986) definition is not clear in terms of "normal" versus "abnormal" acts of violence and cannot be used operationally for the purposes of the study. However, Johnson (2006) distinguishes successfully between direct and indirect physical violence which is discussed in each case study of chapter 5 of this thesis.

Thus, for the purposes of this study physical abuse within a domestic violence context is defined as: **Acts of violence or aggression, or attempts thereof, perpetrated by a female, directly or indirectly at her intimate male partner or husband, in order to cause him physical pain, bodily injury or impairment, in order to gain control within the relationship.**

1.3.2 Emotional abuse

Many different terms for the concept of emotional abuse exists, such as, "emotional battering", "psychological abuse" and "verbal abuse". The concept of emotional abuse will be clarified for the purposes of this particular study.

According to Loring (1994:1), emotional abuse is an ongoing process in which one individual systematically diminishes and destroys the inner self (core characteristics, such as the self-confidence, assertiveness or beliefs and values) of another. The essential ideas, perceptions, and personality characteristics of the victim are constantly belittled by the attacker. Eventually the victim finds that these aspects of the self are seriously eroded or absent. Tolman and Edleson (1992:293) describe emotional abuse as "non-physical abuse", "indirect abuse", "psychological abuse", "psychological aggression, "psychological maltreatment" and "mental or psychological torture". Researcher has included this definition for the purposes of this study as it is very descriptive and comprehensive for the purposes of understanding male abuse or husband battering.

Further research by Engle (1992) and Evans (1992) (http://www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/counseling/documents.htm) finds that "abuse is any behaviour that is designed to control and subjugate another human being

through the use of fear, humiliation, and verbal or physical assaults. Emotional abuse is therefore any kind of abuse that is emotional rather than physical in nature. It can include anything from verbal abuse and constant criticism to more subtle tactics, such as intimidation, manipulation, and refusal to ever be pleased". These authors state that emotional abuse is, "like brainwashing", in that it systematically wears away at the victim's self-confidence, sense of self-worth, trust in their own perceptions, and self-concept. Whether the abuse takes the form of constant berating and belittling, by intimidation, or under the guise of guidance, teaching, or advice, the results are similar. The authors state that eventually, the recipient of the abuse "loses all sense of self and any remnants of personal value". Emotional abuse cuts to the very core of a person, creating scars that may be far deeper and more lasting than physical ones.

Stark and Flitcraft (1996:92) attempt to place emotional abuse within a cultural context by stating that cultures may vary in the degree to which women are treated in either an individualistic or collective way. According to Durkheim (in Stark & Flitcraft, 1996:92), the individual psyche is in itself a sacred object because it is an expression of one's place in the social collectivity (part of a whole). What is considered abuse at the individual level is culturally determined, and what is considered abusive in one culture may not be regarded as such in another. Therefore, emotional abuse and specifically verbal aggression must be considered in its cultural context, for example, loud verbal expressions of one's feelings is culturally acceptable in certain Latin and African cultures, and is therefore not considered abusive behaviour, as would be the case in for example, a more conservative Afrikaner household. This is a very important factor to consider when describing emotional abuse as the abuse may be experienced differently according to the victim's culture.

Loring (1994), Engle and Evans (1992) recognise that emotional abuse is behaviour designed to destroy the victim's self-confidence, self-worth or inner self in order to gain control in a relationship and thus suitable for the purposes of this study. Tolman and Edleson's (1992) definition of emotional abuse is very descriptive, as it encapsulates all the different terms that can be used for emotional abuse. This is useful when reviewing the literature on this phenomenon, but cannot be used in the operational definition of this thesis. Stark and Flitcraft (1996) offer a unique

perspective on emotional abuse as their definition incorporates the cultural context within which emotional abuse takes place and is helpful when comparing victims from different cultural backgrounds.

Although researcher is not able to incorporate many of the aspects of the above definitions, as they vary widely, for the purposes of this study, emotional abuse is defined as: **The non-physical abuse of a partner that takes place over a period of time, in which the abuser (female partner) may systematically diminish and destroy the inner self of her victim (male partner). This is done in order to gain control within the relationship and coerce the victim into subservience.**

1.3.3 Sexual abuse and rape

Johnson (2006b, Domestic violence – Wikipedia) considers physical violence and sexual violence (including incest) as two separate phenomena and places the latter in three categories:

- ➢ The use of physical force to compel a person to engage in a sexual act against their will, whether or not the act is completed.
- ➢ The attempted or completed sex act involving a person who is unable to understand the nature or condition of the act, unable to decline participation, or unable to communicate unwillingness to engage in the sexual act, for example, because of immaturity in age, illness, disability, or the influence of alcohol or other drugs, because of intimidation or pressure, or because of seduction and submission (as in female forms of sexual aggression).
- ➢ An act of abusive sexual contact.

According to an article by the National Coalition of Free Men (1990, mhtml:file://C:\Data\Sexual Abuse of Men by Women.mht) sexual abuse is the use of another person's sexuality for purposes other than mutually consented procreation or the intended mutual sexual gratification of the parties involved. According to this definition, when one degenderises the act, ignore the means of coercion, and

disregard the mechanism of perpetration, one can see that women rape men and women alike.

Davis and Snyman (2005:193) comment on men who are victimised sexually by women and state that male sexual socialisation encourages men to define any sexual experiences as desirable, however, this generally excludes homosexual involvement. This often leads to men who are sexually victimised by women, doubting their sexual orientation, as they are meant to "enjoy" any sexual advances from women. According to the authors, it is thus conflicting when the male victim finds the experience traumatic. This further highlights the view that sexual assault is about violence, anger and control over the victim, not lust or sexual attraction. Male sexual assault thus means that any man (heterosexual or homosexual) can be sexually assaulted regardless of age, size, strength, or sexual orientation (Davis & Snyman, 2005:193).

According to South African legislation rape is regarded as gender neutral. Rape has been defined in the Sexual Offences Act, Section 3(1) 2003 as follows:

> Any person who intentionally and unlawfully commits an act of sexual penetration with another person, or who intentionally and unlawfully compels, induces or causes another person to commit such an act is guilty of the offence of rape.

Johnson's (2006) definition of sexual abuse is useful as it highlights the emotional trauma of sexual abuse and the effect it has on victims who are unable to defend themselves against sexual predators. What is of particular significance to this study in this definition, are the aspects of "seduction and submission" used by female perpetrators. The National Coalition of Free Men (1990), Davis and Snyman (2005) and the Sexual Offences Act (2003), define sexual abuse in a gender neutral manner, which gives recognition to homosexual as well as heterosexual men who are victims of rape.

Thus, for the purposes of this study sexual abuse is defined as: **The attempted or completed sexual act (which involves any form of stimulation or manipulation of the male sexual organ), by a woman, against the will or consent of a**

heterosexual man, displaying violence and anger in order to cause him physical and/or emotional harm, or gain control over him through seduction and submission.

1.3.4 Husband battering

The term battering is applied to describe a form of domestic abuse – hitting, but it is also commonly used to refer to the pattern of violent and coercive behaviour used to gain control in an intimate relationship. The control may be accomplished through economic means, such as withholding or denying access to money or other basic resources, or sabotaging employment, housing or educational opportunities. Social isolation also falls under this umbrella term, which can include denying communication with friends and relatives or making communication so difficult that the victim chooses to avoid it, prohibiting access to the telephone or transportation and denying access to needed health care. Verbal or emotional forms of assault and control may include intimidation, coercion, threats or degradation. Physical and sexual assaults may occur, but Gosselin (2003:13) warns that isolated acts do not constitute battering as battering infers physical abuse over an extensive period of time. The term "husband battering" thus encompasses physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

Reid (2003:219) describes the "battered person syndrome" as a syndrome arising from a cycle of abuse by a person, often a parent or a spouse, that leads to the battered person to perceive that violence against the offender is the only way to end the abuse. In some cases the battered person murders the batterer, and in some jurisdictions evidence of the battered person syndrome constitutes a defense to the murder. This definition is broad and can be used for both male and female victims of abuse. Thus the "battered husband syndrome" as proposed by Steinmetz (1977:499) can be used according to Reid's definition, as it draws a parallel with the "battered wife syndrome".

According to Gross (http://menweb.org/throop/battery/commentary/dgross-hbat.html) husband abuse or battering should not be viewed as merely the opposite side of the

16

coin to wife abuse or battering. Both are part of the same problem, which should be described as one person abusing or battering another person. This type of domestic violence should be dealt with, not in terms of sex, but in terms of humanity.

Gosselin's definition is comprehensive as it describes all aspects of what can be considered "battering". Both Reid (2003) and Gross (2004) attempt to degenderise the term "battering" which makes it useful for the purposes of this study. Thus, for the purposes of this study husband battering is defined as follows: **Violent and coercive behaviour (physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse), over a period of time, of a female towards her intimate male partner or husband, in order to cause him harm, and to gain control within the relationship.**

1.3.5 Victim

It is the opinion of Walklate (2007:41) that the term victim evokes strong images of submissiveness, pain, loss of control and defeat. This definition focuses mainly on the emotional trauma that makes someone a victim. Schurink, Snyman and Krugel (1992:250) quotes Young-Rifai who defines the victim as a person adversely affected by any injustice. She suggests that the scope of victimisation should cover all victims of criminal, social and accidental injustices. Young-Rifai argues that people interact with others to fulfill their need for physical well-being and to create meaning in their lives. Using social exchange theory to substantiate her definition, Young-Rifai says that in order to gain fulfillment, human interaction features the maximising of rewards and the minimising of costs. She argues that people expect their relationship with their environment – social or natural – to be characterised by balanced-reciprocity (a mutually beneficial "give" and "take").

Kirkwood (1993:135) states that the word "victim" is used both in theoretical analyses of abuse against women as a social phenomenon, and in the way in which abused women individually understand themselves, and in each case the meaning can be extremely different. This author is convinced of the need for a term such as "survivor", which describes the kind of active, positive action a person takes to continue functioning within an abusive relationship, or to free them from abuse. The

word "survivor", used instead of "victim", is useful in conveying that abused people are not passive in their experience of abuse, and affirms the strength and skills people develop to survive abuse. According to Kirkwood (1993:135) the word "victim" was used to convey feelings of losing control over one's life which occurred as the abuser increased his control within the relationship. Thus, by applying the term "survivor", the victim is seen rather as someone who has been empowered and can stand up against the abuse.

Davis and Snyman (2005:8) suggest that it is difficult to define the concept "victim" as various theoretical approaches are adopted by different theorists, which in turn reflects their specific points of view. The authors note how important the paradigm (ranging from the conservative to the radical and critical victimology paradigms) on which the definition of the concept "victim" is based can be, as it influences the manner in which the victim and offender are viewed.

Young-Rifai's (in Schurink, Snyman & Krugel, 1992) definition is very broad and can thus be applied to persons suffering a wide spectrum of injustices. Although Kirkwood's definition focuses mainly on female victims of domestic violence, the author makes an important contribution with regards to viewing victims as "survivors" who are empowered to stand up against their abuse. Although it cannot be included for operational purposes in this study, it is important to highlight that many victims of domestic violence are able to "survive" abusive relationships and live happy lives once they have left the abusive relationship. Although researcher is not able to incorporate many of the aspects of the above definitions, as they vary considerably in scope, for the purposes of this study, a victim is defined as: **A man who is subjected to emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse by his female partner, whether it is direct or indirect, on a continual basis, over a period of time.**

1.3.6 Domestic violence

Davis, Lurigio and Skogan (1997:54) are of the opinion that there is an ongoing debate over the definition of domestic violence. There has been no real consensus about this definition among researchers and lawmakers. These authors contend that

understanding violence, especially domestic violence, requires attention not only to the number of physical assaults but also to other related harmful behaviours, such as psychological or emotional abuse, economic deprivation, stalking and threats toward other family members, pets and property. These non-violent, but harmful behaviours may be antecedents of physical assaults and cannot therefore be excluded from the definition.

Berns (2001:265) defines domestic violence as the physical, sexual, and/or psychological abuse that occurs between two adults in an intimate relationship regardless of marital status or sexual orientation.

Gelles (1997:12-13) states that one of the biggest problems in the field of child abuse, wife abuse and family and intimate violence has been to develop useful, clear, and acceptable definitions of violence and abuse. The author states that some researchers believe that when defining domestic violence, it is good to separate the so-called normal acts of "force" from the abnormal and harmful acts of "violence". Although such a separation might seem desirable, distinguishing between acceptable and unacceptable acts proves more difficult than one can imagine. One major question is who decides which acts of violence are legitimate and illegitimate?

Gelles (1997:14) further states that the difficulty which arises when defining what acts are violent and what acts are physical, but not violent, is due to varying cultural and sub-cultural views which determine whether certain behaviour is or is not acceptable. He states that it would be too complicated to have a definition that is dependent on the situation within which the behaviour took place, the size of the offender, the size of the victim, and the reactions of those who directly observed the act or who was told about the behaviour. Gelles views violence as "an act carried out with the intention or perceived intention of causing physical pain or injury to another person". The physical pain can range from slight pain, as the result of a slap or shove, to murder. Gelles states that to deal with the general assumption that spanking of children, should be viewed differently from using weapons against wives or children, it is useful to consider categories of the general definition of violence, namely, "normal" violence and "abusive" violence:

- ➢ **Normal violence** consists of slaps, pushes, shoves and spankings that frequently are considered a normal or acceptable part of raising children or interacting with a spouse. These are the acts many people object to calling "violence", for example, the use hidings or spankings to discipline a child.

- ➢ **Abusive violence** is a more dangerous act of violence than what is considered "normal" violence. This type of violence has the potential for seriously injuring the victim. This definition includes acts such as punches, kicks, bites, chokings, beatings, shootings, stabbings, or attempted shootings or stabbings. The controversy created by this definition is that it does not take into account what actually happened to the victim/s of the violence, thus excludes the result of the act or the victim. Gelles (1997:15) states that the reason for not including consequences in the definition is that research on assault and homicide, which has been carried out by criminologists, has consistently found that the aspects that differentiate injurious violence from violence that causes no harm are typically random phenomena such as aim or luck. The author further states that physical violence is not the only form of violence that family members and intimate relationships experience, nor is it the most harmful form of intimate victimisation. The effect and consequences of emotional or psychological violence are greater and more profound than the consequences of physical victimisation alone (refer paragraph 1.3.2).

Tshiwula (1998:81) states that, violence is the unlawful and negative exercise of physical force or the threat of such force, which includes attitudes and actions leading to emotional and/or spiritual injury. This author further states that domestic violence is a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviour which includes physical, sexual and psychological attacks as well as the economic coercion that adults exercise against their partners.

What is noteworthy in the above definitions of Gelles (1997) and Tshiwula (1998) is that they both include coercive behaviour which may be of a physical, psychological and emotional nature. In conjunction with the latter, Stark and Flitcraft (1996:129) define violence as the intentional or unintentional occurrence of an act or threat of aggression by one person or group of persons on another person or group of persons. Violent behaviours include pushing, shoving, slapping, kicking, biting,

20

hitting, hitting with a fist, hitting with an object, beating, use of a weapon, threatening any of these behaviours, or verbal assault or all of the above.

Davis, Lurigio and Skogan (1997) offer a holistic view of domestic violence and agree with Gelles that there is a problem with the definitional aspects of what constitutes domestic violence as it involves such a large range of abusive behaviours. Berns (2001) offers a more concise definition of domestic violence, but excludes marital status or sexual orientation from his definition, which is necessary and specific for the purposes of this study.   However, Tshiwula (1998) makes a valuable contribution to this study as her definition incorporates spiritual and economic coercion as components of domestic violence.

In this study the discussion shall be limited to abuse toward male adult intimate partners by the female adult intimate partner and in light of this domestic violence is defined as: **The repeated use of harmful and destructive behaviour including emotional, spiritual, economic, physical and/or sexual abuse perpetrated between heterosexual partners in a marital or cohabitating relationship.**

TERMINOLOGY LIST

The following terms are used throughout the study and need only a brief explanation to aid the reader, in understanding some of the key terms in a victimological study of this nature, where domestic violence is the focus.

- **Cohabitation**

Cohabitation refers to the residence of a couple in a shared household, with mutual sexual access, but without legal sanctions (not legally married), thus essentially an informal marriage (Coltrane & Collins, 2001:590).

- **Marriage**

According to the Thesaurus (Collins,1988:311) a marriage is an alliance, amalgamation, association, confederation, coupling, link, merger or union between two individuals. The marriage contract refers to the legal aspects of marriage, specifying rights and duties of the partners and especially the disposition of property in case of death or divorce (Coltrane & Collins, 2001:592).

- **Gender-roles and stereotyping**

Popenoe, Cunningham and Boult (1996:247) state that gender is the social and psychological traits associated with masculinity and femininity. As a biological trait, sex is constant for virtually all members of a population. Gender, however, is largely socially and culturally determined, and is subject to extensive variation. There are only two sexes; however there are many concepts of gender, which reflect societal opinions about masculinity and femininity that have changed throughout history. A gender role is thus, a social role associated with being male or female. In most societies men and women have traditionally played gender roles that would be familiar to most South Africans. Often these roles are very apparent, for example at night a woman acts delicately, helplessly or seductively at a party (all passive roles), even though she may have spent all day as an executive negotiating a complex business deal where she displays very different elements. Likewise, a man may be aware that he has a gentle nature, but may feel compelled to act tough or macho, in order to fulfil what he believes are society's expectations of him. These gender-role expectations shape most activities and attitudes. In general, men are expected to work hard to support their families and to be competitive, successful and aggressive, while women are still expected to some extent to play traditionally feminine roles, such as child-rearing and running the household. These roles all stress non-aggressive nurturance where a woman is a loving wife and mother not the perpetrator of violence.

- **Chivalry**

Chivalry is a term related to the medieval institution of knighthood. It is usually associated with ideals of knightly virtues, honour and love. In general terms chivalry is used to describe courteous behaviour, especially that of men towards women (mhtml:file://C:\Data\Chivalry – Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia online). The chivalry hypothesis states that there is an innate 'chivalry' which protects women from the full rigours of policing and the court system (Heidensohn, 1995:4). According to Heidensohn, law enforcement and court officials often treat and punish female perpetrators more leniently for crimes committed than they would a male perpetrator for the same or similar crime.

- **Culture**

According to Popenoe, Cunningham and Boult (1998:24) culture is the shared products of a human group or society. These products include values, language, knowledge and material objects. The authors further state that it is the interaction between people within a society that creates its culture and although culture is shared, it must be learned by each new generation and thus accumulates and changes over time.

- **Economic abuse**

Economic abuse is when the abuser has complete control over the victim's money "allowance", including the withholding of money at will and forcing the victim to beg for it until the abuser relents and gives the victim some money. Invariably, the victim will receive less money as the abuse continues. This also includes (but is not limited to) preventing the victim from finishing his/her education or obtaining employment (mhtml:file://C:\Data\Domestic violence – Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia online).

- **Stalking**

Stalking is defined by Tjaden, (in Bartol and Bartol, 1995:28-29) as a course of conduct directed at a specific person that involves repeated physical or visual proximity, nonconsensual communication, or verbal, written, or implied threats or advances sufficient to cause fear in a reasonable person. The author further states that legal definitions vary widely, but most definitions include the willful, malicious, and repeated following and harrassing of another person and some include such activities as lying-in-wait, surveillance, nonconsensual communication, telephonic harassment and vandalism.

- **Spiritual abuse**

Spiritual abuse includes, using the spouse's or intimate partner's religious or spiritual beliefs to manipulate them, preventing the partner from practicing their religious or spiritual beliefs, and ridiculing the other person's religious or spiritual beliefs (mhtml:file://C:\Data\Domestic violence – Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia online).

- **Self-esteem**

The degree to which, as a person sees him/herself as important and valuable. Self-esteem is a fundamental belief that, as individuals, people are worthy of respect, love and fair treatment from others. When a person's self-esteem is weakened, it is easy to believe that one deserves to be ill treated, that one is a failure, or that one is inherently less valuable than others (Kirkwood, 1993:68).

1.4   Aims of the study

The aims of the study are related to the societal relevance and the theoretical and methodological problem statements, as mentioned in paragraphs 1.2.1 and 1.2.2. The main aims are:

Aim 1: To construct a theoretical model according to which data can be analysed and the phenomenon of husband abuse or husband battering can be better understood.

Aim 2: To investigate the forms of emotional abuse a male partner endures from his female partner within a domestic violence context.

Aim 3: To investigate the forms of physical abuse a male partner endures from his female partner within a domestic violence context.

Aim 4: To investigate the forms of sexual abuse a male partner endures from his female partner within a domestic violence context.

Aim 5: To explore and describe why the victims in these abusive relationships remain in these relationships.

Aim 6: To explore and describe why some of these victims eventually leave their abusive partners.

Aim 7: To explore and describe characteristics and personal backgrounds of respondents, in order to gain an in-depth understanding of their tolerance of victimisation.

Aim 8: To explore and describe the effect of victimisation on the respondent, either, emotionally and/or physically.

Aim 9: To explore and describe the effect of victimisation on the victim's interpersonal relationships with his:
  ➢ Partner
  ➢ Children
  ➢ Family
  ➢ Friends

Aim 10: To explore and describe the effect of victimisation on the victim's interactions within other institutions, namely:

➢ Work

➢ Church/religion

➢ Other professional or extra-curricular associations

Aim 11: The utilisation of the findings of the study in order to assist victims in gaining a deeper understanding of their victimisation experience.

Aim 12: Recommendations for further research.

1.5 Literature survey

A critical overview of scientific and other literature is given, namely poplular media reports, scientific books, journals and internet articles:

1.5.1 Popular media reports

Popular magazines (for example, You and Rooi Rose), newspaper articles and television programmes (for example, the 3 Talk and BBC Prime) are utilised to determine the nature and extent of the problem and its relevance to society presently. These are however not utilised in the thesis as they are not scientific sources and are used mainly for preparatory reading for this study.

1.5.2 Scientific books

1.5.2.1 Methodology books

Books, which provide an overview and knowledge in this field, include, Neuman (2007), Henning, van Rensburg and Smit (2004) and De Vos, Strydom, Fouchè and Delport (2002 and 2005). These will give insight, particularly into the purpose of a literature study, field research, interviews, sampling and general aspects of qualitative research necessary for this study.

1.5.2.2   Theory books

Books, which provide knowledge in this field, include *inter alia* Viano (1992), Williams and McShane (1999), and Schurink, Snyman, Krugel and Slabbert (1992) and a general overview of the theoretical framework within which data will be analysed and interpreted.   However, researcher delves further into literature within the fields of criminology, psychology, social work and sociology for a more in-depth study of the relevant theories, before attempting to construct a model suited to the purposes of this study.

1.5.2.3 Books relevant to the study

Books on domestic violence utilised in this study, include Collins and Coltrane (2001), Davis and Snyman (2005), Gelles (1987), Gelles and Cornell (1986), Gosselin (2003), Sgarzi and McDevitt (2003), Walklate (2007), as well as the writings of Steinmetz (1977 and 1978).

1.5.3 Journals

Articles in journals, for example, Acta Criminologica and Journal of Interpersonal Violence, have relevant information written in an academic style are utilised selectively.   Some electronic journal articles from sources, such as the Electronic Journal and The Family Guardian Journal which the University of South Africa's library computer network has available, will also be consulted.

1.5.4 Internet articles

The internet is used extensively, but selectively, as a large number of articles are available with the most recent information. Researcher only focuses on articles with scientific value and appropriate search engines, such as, Google and Yahoo are used. This is done by carefully selecting articles published on university sites and on reliable encyclopedia sites (such as Wikipedia) where scientific references are made available to the reader.   Wikipedia has been cited as an accurate reference by

Terdiman (2005, http://news.cnet.com/Year-in-review) from a study done which found it as accurate as Encyclopedia Britannica. Other articles of interest and relevance to this study (such as case studies from Menweb) are also utilised where researcher found it necessary.

1.6   Demarcation of the study

1.6.1 Geographical demarcation

The research was conducted mainly in the Centurion and Pretoria areas as well as Middelburg, as these are accessible to researcher. Particular organisations, such as FAMSA, POWA and Radio Sonder Grense were approached for help with the study in terms of respondents as well as interviews with other professionals. Researcher was also required to make long distance phone calls and send e-mails to victims who are out of the geographical area of this study in order to arrange and conduct interviews.

1.6.2 Sample

An undetermined sample of respondents was planned for this study with concentration on identifying male victims of spousal abuse, both emotional and physical, irrespective of race, age and socio-economic class. Once saturation point was reached the data collection phase of the research was complete, but this point could not be stipulated in definite numbers, as information was gathered until researcher was satisfied that adequate information for the purposes of a doctoral study was found. Saturation point was determined after a six month period and when no new information was forthcoming from the cases examined.

Regarding gender and language demarcation, only men were interviewed due to the nature of the topic. Interviews were conducted in either Afrikaans or English as these are the languages in which researcher is proficient. Due to the sensitive nature of the topic the researcher prefered not to make use of an interpreter as verbatim quotations could be lost in the process as the interpretation could be open to

28

subjectivity by the interpreter which could influence the reliability of the information received.

1.7   Program for the remainder of the research

CHAPTER 2:   HISTORICAL AND LITERATURE OVERVIEW: THE IMPACT OF PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE ON THE VICTIM

The literature review is used first and foremost in the contextualisation of this study, to argue a case, and identify a niche to be occupied by this research.   It is also used in the explanation of the data, as in the discussion of the findings it is imperative that the relevance of the findings is shown in relation to the existing body of literature. Researcher uses a method suggested by Henning, van Rensburg and Smit (2004:28) which states that a literature review can be presented chronologically, dealing with the earliest research first in order to create a context for this research, and thereby pointing out the major advances in the research done on this topic.

CHAPTER 3:   THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES: THE IMPACT OF PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE ON THE VICTIM

A theoretical perspective is the basis for understanding any social phenomena. Theory stimulates, simplifies and directs research, so that information can be organised and integrated effectively.   Similarly Bailey (1982:39) adds that, without theories, it would be difficult to understand and analyse the complex and multifaceted dynamics of social reality.

The perspectives of the above theories as identified in section 1.2.2 are discussed critically and used to construct a theoretical model to serve as basis by which to interpret the findings of the current research.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY, PROCEDURES AND TECHNIQUES

This chapter will outline the methodology for this study detailing the procedures and techniques of research and data collection.

A qualitative methodology is used, as it best describes what the victims experience, how they interpreted their experiences and their social construction of the world in which they live (Bailey, 1994:62). This leads researcher to a clearer understanding of how these particular victims of abuse adapt to their circumstances and what makes this form of domestic violence and spousal abuse unique.

The informal conversation-type or in-depth interview

For the purposes of this study in-depth interviews are used, with questions constructed according to general themes with the use of an interview schedule. According to Schurink et al (1992:79) qualitative researchers prefer to use some form of informal interview that is flexible and will encourage the respondents to share some of their subjective experiences with the researcher. In-depth, qualitative interviewing means face-to-face encounters between the researcher and respondents directed toward understanding respondents' perspectives on their lives, experiences, or situations as expressed in their own words. The in-depth interview is modelled after a conversation between equals, rather than a formal question – and – answer exchange.

The respondents were assured of the confidential nature of the study and were requested to sign a letter of consent (voluntary) before any personl interviews were conducted. Due to the sensitivity of the research topic, a researcher is required to develop rapport with the respondents and be sensitive to their emotions. The letter also explains the general procedure to be followed, the purpose of the study, and informs the respondent of his rights (see Appendix B).

The respondents were dealt with tactfully and with empathy. Where a second or even third interview was requested, researcher gave the option to do so, rather than to continue an interview which the respondent wished to terminate. Voluntary adult male respondents took part in the study, thus researcher foresees no ethical problems with regard to their emotional well-being and did not act in a therapeutic manner during or after the interviews; only the minimum required debriefing was done. However, intensive debriefing or therapy was offered to respondents who felt it necessary to seek counselling on completion of an interview. It was stated clearly that information gathered will be utilised for research purposes only and destroyed on completion of the study.

More current research techniques, for example electronic mailing and registering a blog on the internet, was explored. Given the sensitive nature of this study, researcher engages in innovative ways to interview male respondents to encourage open discussion of their victimisation, whilst ensuring confidentiality and anonimity.

CHAPTER 5:   ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

In the social sciences, nothing speaks for itself and the information gathered must be interpreted. Confronted with a large number of impressions, documents, and field notes, the qualitative researcher faces the difficult and challenging task of making sense of data collected. De Vos, Strydom, Fouchè and Delport (2002:225) state that the aim of the analysis and interpretation in qualitative research is to attempt to gain insight and understanding into the phenomenon being studied. Bailey (1994:338) asserts that the latter is achieved logically through:

- Systematically ordering and reordering the information
- Continually trying to classify and categorise information according to similarities and dissimilarities in the study
- Looking for, and extracting patterns (themes)

By consolidating field notes, researcher extracted common themes in the data, which form a pattern and are relevant to the topic. This was done according to the theoretical model (see Figure 3.1).

CHAPTER 6:   CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions from the analysis and interpretation of the data obtained during this research were made, and subsequently, the relevant recommendations made for practice and further research.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL AND LITERATURE OVERVIEW: MEN AS VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The historical and literature overview deals with the literary and historical background of men as victims of domestic violence and the documentation thereof in the general press. This section commences with a look at early research done on domestic violence with particular reference to the male victim of domestic violence in this context. Special emphasis is placed upon the impact of physical and emotional abuse on male victims. The chapter also deals with social and academic issues surrounding this phenomenon and identifies which aspects of the topic needs further research.

2.1   Historical overview

Violence between family members is not a new phenomenon. The Bible, one of the oldest references known to mankind, begins with sibling violence between Cain and Abel (Cain killing his brother) in Genesis 4:8. According to Gelles (1997:19) violence amongst family members is more common today than decades or centuries ago as there has been a notable increase in reports of this type of violence and abuse worldwide. Furthermore, many social scientists and commentators propose that rising rates of family violence are yet another sign of the disintegration of both the modern family and society in general. Gelles (1997:36-37) further states that examples of family violence can also be traced historically through fairy tales, folklore, and nursery rhymes which portray violence directed especially at children. Examples of these are Hansel and Gretel, who before they were lured into the gingerbread house, had been abandoned by their parents to starve in the forest because money was scarce. Snow White was taken into the woods to be killed by the huntsman on the order of the wicked queen, who was her stepmother. Mother Goose's "Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe beat her children soundly and sent them to bed". All of these examples clearly demonstrate the capability of violence by women.

George (1994:137) reflects on the historical background of men as victims of marital violence in his article "Riding the Donkey Backwards" where in Post-Renaissance France and England, society ridiculed and humiliated husbands thought to be dominated (emotionally abused) and/ or physically abused by their wives. He states that in France, for instance, a "battered" husband was trotted around town riding a donkey backwards while holding onto its tail whilst wearing an outlandish outfit. These post Renaissance customs, were noisy demonstrations intended to shame and humiliate wayward men (the victims) in public, and were commonly referred to as the "Charivari". The husband beater was also punished and she was made to ride backwards on a donkey and forced to drink wine and wipe her mouth with the animal's tail. The fate of these men (the victims) in 18th century Paris was to kiss a large set of animal horns decorated with ribbons (Steinmetz, 1978:499). In England, abused husbands were strapped to a cart and paraded around town, whilst being subjected to the public's onslaught and contempt. According to George (1994:138) such treatment was a result of the patriarchal ethos where a husband was expected to dominate and punish his wife, should the occasion arise, not the other way around.

This historical evidence, that societies found it necessary to punish men who did not uphold the patriarchal way of life, suggests at the very least, that it was acknowledged that a husband could be physically and emotionally abused by his wife. In more recent history though, such a possibility has found little support or serious recognition. Rather, the view of a man being the victim of domestic violence was often found as a subject of cartoons, for example, "Andy Cap" who was constantly ridiculed and abused by his dominating wife (in a popular South African newspaper). Steinmetz (1978:500) comments on the subject of comic strips by stating that a common theme used is a caricature of husbands and wives in which the husband deviates from the ideal image of strong, self-assertive, intelligent and assumes the character traits which have been culturally ascribed to be feminine. The wife in these comics is justified in playing the dominant role and in chastising her erring husband, since he has not fulfilled his culturally prescribed roles.

In 1963 Saenger (in Steinmetz, 1978:500) conducted a study of 20 consecutive editions of all comic strips appearing in the nine leading New York City newspapers

34

during October 1950 which provided additional insights into the phenomenon of the dominant wife and passive husband. He found that forty eight percent of the females and only ten percent of the males in the comic strips dealing with domestic issues played the dominant role in all situations, while nineteen percent of the males but only four percent of the females were portrayed as helpless victims. He also found that while husbands were the victims of hostility and attack in sixty three percent of all conflict situations, wives were victims in only thirty nine percent of the cases. Furthermore, while ten percent of the males and seven percent of the females initiated physical aggression, only one percent of the females, compared to fourteen percent of the males were recipients of aggression. Later analysis further revealed that in seventy three percent of the domestic comic strips the wives were more aggressive, in ten percent the husband and wife were equally aggressive, and in only seventeen percent of the strips were the husbands portrayed as being more aggressive than their wives. This is evidence that the phenomenon of the woman as the aggressor in the family, instead of the man, is something that has received some attention by the media in the past, but not necessarily as a serious social problem.

In the same year Barcus (in Steinmetz, 1978:500-501) also conducted a survey of every comic strip appearing in March for the years 1943, 1953 and 1958 in three Boston Newspapers. This survey revealed that domestic situations were a theme in forty one percent of the comics examined.   These domestic situations were presented as caricatures reflecting a stereotype of husbands as fatter, balder, and less virile and of wives as taller and bigger built than their husbands. An example of one of the researcher's findings is "Bringing up Father". This domestic comic strip originated in 1913 and revolves around a newly-rich Irish immigrant (Jiggs) who prefers his old life-style of corn, beef, cabbage and billiards (a type of board game). Jiggs constantly endures the physically violent attacks of his wife (Maggie) who is unsuccessfully attempting to emulate an upper class life-style. Barcus concludes that the portrayal of family life in comics, not only reflect life styles, but is also in a position to influence or reinforce violent behaviour amongst family members. By portraying domestic violence of this nature in a comical fashion, the author's of the comic strips may influence the attitudes of abusers, victims and readers in general, with regards to husband battering.   Most importantly comics demonstrate that husband battering is not a "new" phenomenon.

Violence between family members has a historical tradition that goes back centuries and cuts across continents. The question of whether society in general is more violent now than during previous times in history is difficult to answer. Steinmetz (1978:499) reiterates this view with a plea for a more comprehensive approach to the study of family violence and not seeing it as an isolated phenomenon but rather as another manifestation of a basically violent society. According to Gelles (1997:19-20) the selective inattention to the problem of intimate violence meant that official records of family violence were not kept until fairly recently. Similarly, until the past few decades, researchers were reluctant to conduct surveys and ask questions about violence or abuse in the home. Until the 1980's there had been no research conducted that attempted to measure the changing rates of violence toward children or between spouses.

Bowman (2003, http://academic.udayton.edu/helath/06world/africa03.htm) comments on domestic violence in an African context and writes that it was only by the mid 1990's that attention was given to the widespread problem (in most African countries) of domestic violence. Informal and anecdotal (not formally documented) surveys about partner abuse and femicide appeared in Ghana, Tanzania and South Africa. Much of the informal writing was intended to document the existence of such violence and thus to construct it as a social problem on the African continent. Bowman further points out that a number of different explanations for domestic violence can be used and contrasted with the feminist one of patriarchal dominance so often used. Explanations that are rooted in individual psychology, as well as ones centering on sociological forces, such as family dysfunction and others focusing upon male and female aggression, poverty, and the culture of violence, should also be taken into consideration when studying violence of this nature.

According to George (1994:137-159), raising the issue of men as victims of domestic violence has resulted in a heated debate within academic circles. This debate has resulted in setting in opposition, those who have reported such evidence, against those who ridicule such a possibility. Most of the early research dealing with domestic violence focused only on the female victims of domestic violence and the social factors that supported the victimisation of women. As a result of this a large amount of literature now exists that portrays domestic violence as a social

36

phenomenon. According to George most of this literature views domestic violence as stemming solely from a patriarchal social order where women are portrayed as the victims and men as the perpetrators.

Given that most studies suggest that domestic violence is exclusively perpetrated by men against women and propose theoretical frameworks to prove this unilateral phenomenon, men who experience violence at the hands of and from the mouths of their wives or female partners, have been severely neglected if not completely ignored. This type of violence is usually dismissed by the argument that few men are actually the victims of domestic violence and therefore not of consequence, or that their wives or partners were in all probability women who were acting in self-defence. These factors resulted in very little academic concern for male victims of domestic violence in the past. Researcher is of the opinion that this is still the case as limited 21st century research on the topic of male victims of domestic violence has been published in South Africa.

According to Miller and Sharif (2004, 45c6js$pjh@calweb.calweb.com) the United States Congress voted to spend $8 Billion (approximately R57 Billion) to combat male violence against women in 1995, ensuring heightened awareness of this type of domestic violence. However, Miller and Sharif question whether the situation of domestic violence was not being misrepresented for political purposes. In 1994, the United States Congress not only, did not invite men's and children's advocates to participate, but also denied them the opportunity when they requested to do so. Consequently, the very real problem of female violence against men and children was not taken into consideration. The myth alluded to then, that domestic violence is primarily perpetuated by men against women and children, is still being reinforced, even though statistics and legitimate research (such as the research done by Steinmetz) clearly dispel this notion. Although researcher recognises the fact that Miller and Sharif's research is dated, they make a valid argument with regard to the way the problem of domestic violence has been dealt with in the past and should be taken into consideration when doing research on this topic.

Another feature which has prevented serious attention being given to the issue of male abuse is the belief that studies of abused women will suffice to provide a

background for understanding the abuse of men and male victims (Pagelow in George, 1994:137-159). According to Pagelow, even though many academics argue that the relatively few cases of abused men warrant little, if any, serious study, abused men have drawn the attention of numerous social agencies such as the police, counselling agencies, probation services, social agencies such as the Salvation Army, shelters for the homeless, psychiatrists and physicians, fathers' rights groups, lawyers and even those who work with abused women. The author further states that although domestic assaults against men have been reported in the literature since the 1950's, the earliest academic reference to "battered husbands" can be traced to the work of Suzanne Steinmetz in 1977. Steinmetz conducted a small scale study (see section 2.2.16 and Table 1) and came to the conclusion that the incidence of "husband battering", not wife abuse, was the largest underreported form of domestic violence. Steinmetz was greatly criticised for this claim but despite the criticisms, violence directed at husbands and male partners has also been reported by others, such as Murray Straus, Richard Gelles (Steinmetz, 1977:501-503).

2.1.1 Conclusion of historical overview

Cook (2004, http://www.batteredmen.com/abusedme.htm) concludes that historically society has been presented with only one part of the equation concerning domestic violence and more specifically spousal abuse. He states that given the legal and societal history of discrimination and oppression against women in many cases, this misrepresentation of spousal abuse was appropriate as it illuminated domestic violence as a serious social problem, but it is no longer appropriate to reflect only the female victims of domestic violence. It has, in the author's opinion, become an "us" (men) against "them" (women) battle. The reality of domestic violence is a complex one. Cook further states that some cases of abuse can be attributed to mental illness, but most are due to family upbringing, poor self-esteem, alcohol abuse, and/or uncertain employment combined with low anger management and communication skills. These characteristics are not a gender problem (exclusive to men), but a human problem, also found in women and children within a variety of social circumstances.

38

A general overview of the literature on the topic of domestic violence and more particularly of men as victims of domestic violence is now examined in order to reach a deeper understanding of this phenomenon as a contemporary topic of research.

2.2   Literature survey

2.2.1 Introduction

According to Gelles (1997:3) people are generally more likely to be killed or physically injured in their own homes by family members than anywhere else, or by anyone else, in society. The author states that we do not commonly think of the family as society's most violent social institution. Family life (and home) is supposed to be warm, intimate, stress reducing, and the place that people flee to for their safety. People's desire to idealise family life is in part responsible for a tendency either not to see domestic violence, or to condone it as being a necessary and important part of raising children, relating to spouses or partners and conducting other family transactions, such as role responsibility by spouses.

Gelles (1997:3-4) noted that in his study of the literature (he does not mention which authors) only one aspect of violence and maltreatment in the home was reflected. Child abuse, sexual abuse, wife abuse, or elder abuse (note there is no mention of husband abuse), may be discussed individually but very rarely do books and articles attempt to examine all aspects of violence in families and try to look at the whole phenomenon of family and intimate violence. Gelles continues to say that as different types of family violence are discovered and examined with time, many people find it difficult to believe the prevalence of violence in the home.

Gelles notes that in the 1990's there was a lot of publicity about family violence. Public awareness about child abuse, sexual abuse, wife abuse and elder abuse has been fuelled by a combination of campaigns designed to educate the public about the dangers and cost of family violence and by publishing high-profile cases of family violence. Such publicity tends to be accompanied by claims of an "epidemic" of family violence, a "rising tide" of family violence, and the emergence of various

"factoids" used to highlight the claim that family violence is growing, widespread and harmful (Gelles, 1997:4). To reiterate this he states that as many as one in four men and one in six women think that under certain conditions, it is appropriate for a husband to hit his wife (Gelles, 1997:13).

Gelles (1997:37) further states that there is evidence from surveys that attitudes regarding family violence are changing. Straus and Gelles (in Gelles 1997:38) repeated their National Family Violence Survey in 1985 where 1 000 families were studied. They found that approval for a husband slapping his wife and a wife slapping her husband declined from 1975. In 1985, only thirteen percent of the married couples surveyed approved of a husband slapping his wife in some situations. The level of approval of a husband slapping his wife declined to twelve percent in 1992 and further declined to ten percent in 1994. Approval for a wife slapping her husband stayed relatively unchanged between 1968 and 1994 with about one in five respondents approving of a wife slapping her husband in some situations. Gelles (1997:39) concludes his observations and findings by stating:

> It is important to keep in mind that family violence is neither new nor particularly unique to our own society. While we look for causes and solutions in individuals, in families, or even in communities, we should remember that cultural attitudes about violence as a means of self-expression and solving problems are at the root of private violence. We see that income, stress, and other social-psychological factors are related to acts and patterns of intimate violence, but we also need to consider that people have choices as to how they will respond to stress, crisis, and unhappiness. The historical and cultural legacy of violence in the home is a powerful means of influencing what choices people consider appropriate.

Although the opinion of Gelles on the matter of domestic violence is based on a number of fairly dated surveys, he clearly demonstrates that the issue of husband abuse is a neglected topic and that past research has not examined domestic violence holistically. His comment on the "historical and cultural legacy of violence in the home" is still valid in researcher's opinion, especially in the South African context with its history of violence and cultural diversities. In researcher's opinion there is a lack of research on men as victims of domestic violence within this historical and cultural context. Researcher believes that some of the reasons for the deficiency of

holistic research on domestic violence are the myths that hinder the understanding of domestic violence.

2.2.2 Myths that hinder the understanding of domestic violence

In their book "Intimate violence in families", Gelles and Cornell (1986:13-18) attempted to reveal many of the conventional myths about domestic violence and replace these with knowledge derived from scholarly research on domestic violence. They cite the following:

Myth 1: Domestic violence is rare
Until the 1960's most people considered domestic violence as a rare phenomenon. Prior to 1970, few hospitals categorised women patients they treated as either abused or non-abused and police departments kept inaccurate or incomplete records of domestic disturbance calls. The strong belief that families are places people turn to for help and the perception that city streets hold the greatest risk for women and children, help to continue the myth of the rareness of domestic violence. As different forms of family violence are researched and reported, most people find it difficult to believe how many individuals and families are involved in violence in the home.

Myth 2: Domestic violence is confined to mentally disturbed or sick people
A woman drowns her six month old twin daughters. A mother and father plunge their four year old son into a bath filled with boiling water. A woman waits for her husband to take a shower and then fires a bullet into his skull at close range with a pistol. These descriptions, and accompanying visual footage of the victims, are usually enough to convince most people that only someone who is mentally disturbed or truly psychotic would inflict such grievous harm onto a defenceless child, woman, or man. One way of maintaining the image of the nurturing family, free of domestic violence, is to combine the myth that domestic violence is rare with the myth that only "sick" people abuse family members. Combining the two myths allows a person to believe that when and if violence does take place, it is the problem of "people other than us". An example of this is the way in which family violence is portrayed in

literature, television, or the movies. In 1974 the researchers Straus and Steinmetz (in Gelles & Cornell, 1986:15) reviewed American fiction, television shows, and movies for examples of family violence. They found violence between family members infrequently portrayed realistically and when there was an incident of violence, it almost always involved a violent act committed by someone who was a criminal, foreign, or drunk. The message conveyed by the media is that "normal" people do not engage in domestic violence. In contrast to these findings, Straus (in Gelles & Cornell, 1986:15) claims that less than ten percent of all instances of domestic violence are caused by mental illness or psychiatric disorders.

Myth 3: Domestic violence is confined to the lower class

Like all myths, there is some truth behind this belief. Researchers have found more reported violence and abuse among the lower class. The psychologist George Levinger (in Gelles & Cornell, 1986:16) studied applicants for divorce and learned that forty percent of the working class applicants indicated that abuse was the reason they were seeking a divorce. Of the middle class applicants twenty three percent also mentioned violence as the motivation for wanting to end the marriage. He also found that official reports of child abuse indicate an overwhelming over-representation of lower class families being reported as abusers. Believing that abuse is confined to the lower class is yet another way people try to see acts of domestic violence of "others" as deviant and their own behaviour as normal.

Myth 4: Domestic violence occurs in all groups – social factors are not relevant

When doctors and health professionals (Gelles & Cornell, 1986:16) began to treat cases of child abuse, one of the first things they were struck by was that the children came from every type of social, racial, economic and age group. This finding shattered the myth of violence being confined to the lower class, but that myth was replaced by the belief that social factors were not related to child abuse and domestic violence. There are two problems with this observation and the belief that social factors are not relevant in explaining domestic violence. First, for a factor to be a cause of, for example, child abuse, this does not mean that it has to be perfectly associated with abuse. For poverty to be a causal factor, it is not necessary that only poor people abuse children and that wealthy people are not abusive. There are

very few perfect associations in social science. The second problem, with the observation that social factors are not related, is that they very often are. Even though abuse can be found among the wealthy and the poor, it is more likely to be found among the poor because even though most poor people do not abuse their children, there is however a greater risk of abuse among those in the lowest income groups.

Myth 5: Children who are abused will grow up to be child abusers

This is a myth with some truth to it. Virtually all studies of, for example child abuse, find that abusive adults were more likely to have been treated harshly and abused as children, than adults who were not abusive. The problem with the myth statement is that it is deterministic. People who experience abuse are more likely, but not pre-programmed to become violent adults (Gelles & Cornell, 1986:17).

Myth 6: Alcohol and drug abuse are the real causes of violence in the home

The "demon rum" explanation for abuse in the home is nearly as popular as the mental illness explanation, and perhaps more popular than the two social class myths.   Certain facts help support this myth as most studies have found a considerable correlation between drinking and violence. In many cases of spousal or intimate partner violence, both offender and victim have frequently been drinking before the violence. The question then asked is, would solving the drug and/or drinking problem eliminate domestic violence? Common sense says "yes" but research has argued against this. There is little evidence that alcohol and drugs are disinhibitors. The best evidence against the disinhibitor theory comes from cross-cultural studies of drinking and the behaviour associated with it.   These studies indicate that how people react to drinking varies from culture to culture. In some cultures people drink and become violent, in others, people drink and remain passive. It is thought that this difference is due to what people in those cultures believe about alcohol. If they believe it is a disinhibitor, people become disinhibited. If they believe that it is a depressant, people become depressed. Because most Western societies believe that alcohol and drugs release violent tendencies, people are given reprieve from the normal rules of socially acceptable behaviour when they drink or when they are drunk. The combination of the reprieve with the desire to hide or silence instances of family violence, results in the perfect excuse of "I didn't know

what I was doing, I was drunk". Or, from the victim's perspective, "My husband is a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde – when he drinks he is violent, when he is sober there is no problem". In the end, violent spouses and parents learn that if they do not want to take responsibility for their violence, they should either drink before they become violent, or at least say they were drunk (Gelles & Cornell, 1986:17).

Myth 7: Violence and love do not coexist in families

Once people believe that families are violent, they tend to think that the violence occurs all the time. Furthermore, the persistent belief is that if family members are violent toward each other they do not love one another. Violence, while common in many families, is often not the most frequent form of behaviour in the home. Although violence and abuse are typically chronic problems in families and not simply once off events, on average, abusive parents and partners are violent about once every second month. The remaining time the family functions non-violently, although the threat of physical violence and abuse tends to create constant tension. It is not only possible, but probable that abused spouses and partners still have strong feelings for their abusers and abused children love their parents in spite of their victimisation. Most victims of domestic violence are taught that they deserve their abuse, and thus they are the problem, not the abuser. That violence and love can coexist in a household is perhaps the most insidious aspect of family violence, because family members grow up learning that it is acceptable to abuse the people you love (Gelles & Cornell, 1986:18).

When examining these myths Gelles and Cornell (1986) discuss in their book, it becomes clear to researcher that a very narrow view of domestic violence, its causes and consequences exists. This could distort the perceptions of researchers and the general public, thus limiting the study of domestic violence to stereotypical contexts. For example, in the next section the argument that women only become abusive in self-defence, is in researcher's opinion possibly another stereotypical myth that needs to be examined.

2.2.3 When women use violence: Abuse or self-defence?

One of the main criticisms (refer paragraph 2.2.16) made against Steinmetz's claim of "battered husbands" was that she failed to address the context or situation that would have prompted a women to act violently against her male partner. These critics claimed that in the rare cases where a woman attacked her partner it could probably be justified in terms of self-defence, stemming from either his previous assaults on her or the danger of a pending assault (George, 1994:137-159).

Contrary to this, in 1993 (in George, 1994:137-159), Straus presented findings from a national data survey that indicated the reported rates at which women admitted to a violent act against their male partners and the rate that men reported an attack upon them, seemed to suggest that all female-to-male violence could not be exclusively explained as only women retaliating in self-defence. The responses of women themselves concerning unprovoked assaults on their male partners also proved that self-defence was not the only reason for female-to-male violence. Straus (in George, 1994:137-159) further pointed out that every study that had investigated who initiates violence, has found that female partners instigate violence in a large proportion of cases. Critics of Straus's thesis point out that such evidence against assaults by female partners fails to take into account the occurrence of abuse that took place before the survey year. This suggested that assaults by women may be as a result of a reaction towards the abuse perpetrated by the husbands or male partners in previous years and not just random acts of violence by the women. In reply to such criticism, Straus stated that he considers at least some writers to misrepresent his published work in respect to the victimisation of both women and men. Mann (in George, 1994:137-159) similarly proposes that she doubts that all attacks by women are as a result of "delayed" self-defence by commenting that not one woman, in her study of women imprisoned for murdering husbands or lovers, had been battered.

Saunders (1986:47) comments that controversy exists regarding the nature of violence committed by women against their intimate partners. He states that when battered women are violent, it is not known if the violence should be labelled "mutual

combat", "husband abuse" or "self-defence". The discussion surrounding battered women's use of violence has been poorly understood. While there are studies (Ewing, 1987:61) that indicate that some battered women use violence, very little research has focused on the motives and consequences of this violence, which leads to implications which effect the social response to the problem of domestic violence. If a battered woman's violence is motivated by self-defence, and thus legally justifiable, the violence can be interpreted as another sign of a battered woman's entrapment in a violent relationship and her need for help. On the other hand, if a battered woman's violence has consequences as severe as her partner's violence or is not in response to previous attacks by her husband, then the violence might be labelled "mutual combat" or "husband abuse", in which case less sympathy and fewer services will be offered to her as she is then labelled the perpetrator.

McCormick (in Saunders, 1986:50) reported that forty percent of a sample of 132 inmates of the women jailed for spousal killing in her study had been victims of severe physical abuse in their marriages and that this abuse was a dominant factor in the murders. She does not however, comment on the motivation for murder by the other sixty percent of the female murderers in her study. Saunders concludes that some reports of battered women's violence contain questionable assumptions such as the assumption that retaliation or fighting back and self-defence are mutually exclusive concepts, or that extreme violence in response to minor violence cannot be labelled as self-defence.

Lafave and Scott (in Saunders, 1986:51) defines self-defence as an act by, "one who is not the aggressor in an encounter, and who is thus justified in using a reasonable amount of force against his adversary when he reasonably believes that he is in immediate danger of unlawful bodily harm from his adversary and that the use of such force is necessary to avoid this danger". With this in mind the author states that women's size (generally physically smaller and weaker than men) and social conditioning (to be subservient in their roles as wives and mothers) have come to be recognised as important factors for juries to consider in determining self-defence in cases of domestic violence. Saunders (1986:58) warns that (although he encourages more rigorous research in this area of domestic violence) great care must be taken when stating assumptions about retaliation, self-defence and other

motives for violent behaviour and in assigning labels to various forms of domestic violence.

Researcher does not contest that there are incidences when women use violence in self-defence against their male partners' abuse, but each individual case must be examined in detail before drawing conclusions about who is the victim and who is the perpetrator of domestic violence. When generalisations are made (such as women only use violence in self-defence) it could lead to a false representation of the problem of domestic violence by the media. The next section looks at the role of the media and the male victim of domestic violence.

2.2.4 The media and male victims of domestic violence

In 1982 Tierney (in Lucal, 1994:104), stated that domestic violence was a good subject for the media to focus on because it was a relatively "new" problem for the public, it was controversial, mixing violence and social relevance, and it provided a focal point for the discussion of issues such as feminism, inequality, and family life in the United States. This focused attention on the various aspects of domestic violence which had been neglected historically because it was viewed as a problem that should be kept "behind closed doors". According to Pagelow in 1984 (in Lucal, 1994:105), battered husbands also received some attention from the mass media as it seemed to become a subject of interest but after an initial flurry of attention to the issue, it virtually disappeared from the mass media. Between 1977 and 1992, *Reader's Guide* lists only three magazine articles on husband abuse in the United States. Lucal (1994:106) states that the popular press rarely makes claims about male victims of domestic violence and academics among themselves are in disagreement about their very existence. This lack of media attention (professional and mass) has hindered "battered husbands" in their attempt to receive a deviant label and be constructed as a social problem.

Sniechowski and Sherven (http://www.batteredmen.com/abusedme.htm) reiterate this by stating that:

The image of a battered wife is firmly established in the national consciousness...the national media almost exclusively portrayed the male as the brutal, overpowering, must-be-stopped perpetrator of domestic violence and the female as the helpless, innocent victim, deserving our collective sympathies. That situation may be accurate in some instances and should not be tolerated. However, to consider the possibility of a battered husband is so far from our national image of men as to be laughable.

Berns (2001:263-264) emphasises that analysing the popular media representation of social issues is necessary and important because individuals draw on these sources when constructing their perceptions of issues such as domestic violence. The media are often the most dominant and frequently used sources of understanding social issues. According to the author, "The media culture helps shape everyday life, influencing how people think and behave, how they see themselves and other people, and how they construct their identities". She continues to say that newspapers, magazines, films, television reports, movies and talk shows are all public arenas where images of domestic violence are constructed, debated and reproduced. From these resources, individuals construct their own conceptions of what is normal and acceptable. Cicourel (in Berns, 2001:263-264) names these conceptions "background expectancies" which govern all social interaction. The background expectancies allow individuals to search for valid explanations of what happened and justify decisions. Berns states that many studies illustrate how media representations and popular culture distort images of social issues such as crime and violence. Taking this into account, researcher is of the opinion that this is one of the many reasons why sporadic and relatively little attention has been paid to men as domestic violence victims in South Africa. Very little media attention has been paid to this form of domestic violence and therefore the South African public has had few "images" of abused men from which to construct their own "conceptions" on whether this form of abuse is a social problem that warrants attention and support from the public, health care professionals and social organisations.

Gough (1998:35) suggests that the distribution of media resources has favoured women at the expense of men in the past. He states that the predominance of women's magazines is said to aid women in having a larger audience to whom they

could voice their opinions. Furthermore, the content of women's magazines is overly critical of men, which, influences impressionable female readers to present various complaints to their partners. A sense of male oppression is conveyed which put men under pressure to reform and perform. Consequently, with more men's magazines appearing, men now have the resources and opportunities to voice their concerns and opinions on various issues as well. The author states, that, perhaps the message for women in his article is that equality is not a bed of roses – the post-feminist assertive male will not be afraid to retaliate with valid arguments when criticised and judged unfairly by women and/or other men.

2.2.5 Battered husbands as a social problem and stereotyping

In 1986 Straus and Gelles (in George 1994:137-159) state, "Violence by wives has not been an object of public concern. There has been no publicity, and no funds have been invested in ameliorating this problem because it has not been defined as a problem". It can be argued that by defining wife battering as the problem, and husband battering as a non-problem, realistic estimates of husband-battering, be they large or small, are nearly impossible to obtain. According to Straus and Gelles, it is easy to argue that battered husbands occur only as rare and isolated cases. Nearly all male victims are isolated individuals owing to the relatively small number of groups willing to acknowledge their victim status. The fact is that a large proportion of the social agencies that deal with family violence target only female victims. Thus one should not be surprised if these groups do not find evidence of male victims of domestic violence. Further, the political nature (emphasis placed on female victims of domestic violence, especially by The Feminist Movement) of domestic violence reduces the chances of finding any evidence of male victims. Consequently, some professionals, like mental health professionals, may be insensitive or even hostile to a man describing himself in victim terms. In addition to this, the traditional stereotypes give credibility to a woman to be seen as a victim. The stereotypes associated with men, however, lead people such as mental health professionals and politicians, to deny such a possibility or to ridicule the notion of a male as a victim of domestic violence. This clearly deters men from making such an admission. In 1994 Harris and Cook (in George 1994:137-159) suggested that male

victims of domestic violence may be aware, that to proclaim victim status, especially to law enforcement officers, may lead to unfavourable or unequal treatment compared to female victims. The authors state, "If a man is attacked by his wife and decides to call the police, he is the one who is likely to be arrested".

In 1980 Steinmetz (in George 1994:137-159) suggested that some men following the traditional social norms of chivalry consider it unmanly to attack or even retaliate against an assault by a woman. In addition, when men and women rate violent male-to-female interactions, they perceive this type of aggression as more negative than female-to-male aggression. By implication, female-to-male violence has a type of social acceptance not accorded to male-to-female violence (George 1994:137-159). Thus the authors suggest that society appears to condone the use of violence by a woman against a man. Wolff (in George 1994:137-159) demonstrates this with quotes from his interviews with male victims:

> She was knocking the shit out of me; no one would believe me.

> When you are talking to your mates, it's hard to admit you're being bullied by a woman.

> If they knew how she knocks me about, and the fact that every time it happens she manages to take me by surprise, catching me off guard, can you imagine how they'd (his friends) take the piss out of me?

George (1994:137-159) suggests that the whole issue of male victimisation receives little attention because of the threat it poses to masculine self-images and patriarchal authority, as much as for any threat it poses towards efforts to counter female victimisation. Men are socialised not to show their weaknesses and to be the stronger sex, especially in a heterosexual relationship. Admitting to victimisation by the weaker sex (females) would be a direct threat to the masculine self-image and patriarchal authority of men.

Fry and Gabriel (in George 1994:137-159) state that the lack of attention to female aggression, as opposed to male aggression, has been rooted in academic debates on nature, culture and gender in which "sameness" or "differences" are key issues, but actually result from a reluctance to consider similarities between men and

women, as opposed to differences. It is a socially accepted norm that men are less emotional than women and behave differently in situations of conflict and violence. Men are not perceived as weak and vulnerable, but rather as strong and resilient and should therefore not be affected (especially emotionally) by an abusive female partner. According to the authors it is thus not surprising that domestic violence against women, as opposed to men, is a socially acceptable concern and receives study and support. This reinforces two social stereotypes, female vulnerability and male authority, dominance and protectiveness. The authors, however, concede that the equality between the sexes has been resisted historically, especially by men.

Following this, it can be argued that the social values, for example patriarchy, that form the foundation for male violence against women, also underpin the lack of acceptance of the battered husband. One of the reasons why the "battered husband syndrome" suggested by Steinmetz (1977:499-509) is so belittled and not considered a social problem can be found in the patriarchal ethos that reinforces female victimisation. By rooting the domestic violence debate only in matters such as gender and physical size or strength, rather than the inherent attitudes and propensity of individuals to use violence and abuse as an inter-relational strategy, female victimisation will continue as will the unseen victimisation of some men both inside and outside the home. The fact that so many people in general, including some academics, are so unwilling to accept the unilateral abuse of men by women stems from the deep-rooted stereotypes which are accepted by society (George 1994:137-159).

Lucal (1994:95) also states that the biggest problem with "battered husbands" is that it has not been successfully constructed as a social problem. She continues to say that no subject in the sociological study of domestic violence has been more controversial in recent years than that of husband abuse. She sympathises with Steinmetz who she states, "Entered an emotionally charged and hotly contested debate". According to the author it has been a classic debate, filled with claims and counterclaims. Much of the debate has been centred on the question of whether there really are many abused husbands, and the question of whether this phenomenon deserves support or should be defined as a social problem, has rested on the issue of rates of male victimisation. Reid (2003:219) suggests the term

"battered person syndrome" be used in cases of domestic violence and defines it as a syndrome arising from a cycle of abuse by a significant other, often a parent or a spouse, that leads the battered person to perceive that violence against the offender is the only way to end the abuse. In some cases the battered person murders the batterer, and in some countries, such as the United States of America, evidence of the battered person syndrome constitutes a defence to the murder.

Lucal (1994:96-97) looks at the problem of husband abuse from a deviant behaviour perspective. She comments that the process of "deviant-making", the events that lead to a phenomenon being identified as deviant, the reactions to deviance and the form and types of responses to attempts at deviance-making, are the issues that should be looked at by researchers. In her article, the author compares the successful construction of the deviant label "battered wives", to the failed construction of the label "battered husbands", by describing the process involved in the construction of those issues as social problems. She states that, perhaps the most important reason that "battered husbands" have not been labelled successfully is traditional gender images that most modern civilisations have of women and men.

According to Lucal, social problems for most people are relatively subjective, and whether the condition exists objectively is of no concern, as social problems are a collective behaviour. For example, if it is common belief that only women can be victims of domestic violence. The fact that there are male victims of domestic violence in a social group will not be a concern. It is the general consensus (collective behaviour) that shapes that social group's views on the matter.

Lucal (1994:97-98) further claims that the social constructionist framework provides a basis for assessing claims about battered husbands and for providing evidence as to why they have not become a social problem. The constructionist perspectives views social problems as collective behaviour. From this perspective, social problems (such as husband battering) are "claims-making activities" rather than conditions. The main task is to explain the development, character and continuation of claims-making and responding endeavours. Whether the condition exists objectively is of no concern because social problems are what people think they are. It is the definitional process that needs to be analysed, with the focus being on the

viability rather than the validity of claims and the responses to those claims. Using this perspective also presents a challenge as the easiest way to dismiss battered husbands as a potential social problem is to argue that there are not enough of them (male victims of domestic violence). However, from a strict social constructionist perspective, such numbers do not matter for the purposes of constructing husband battering as a social problem. The actual existence of wives and husbands who are abused by their spouses is what is relevant.

In her research, Lucal (1994:99) compares battered wives and battered husbands for two reasons, namely, they occur in similar types of relationships (marital or cohabiting) and among people with similar status (spouses or peer intimates). She asks the question: given these two similarities between issues, what led to one becoming a social problem and not the other? To answer this question, the author looked at many sources on these topics and found the following factors which influenced the process of successfully constructing a social problem:

- Firstly, the success of battered wives becoming a social problem can be attributed to the fact that there were organisational influences in the form of the feminist movement and the battered women's movement in particular;
- Secondly, the increase in social science research on the topic and the resulting amount of literature which was produced as a result, as well as continued popular media attention;
- Finally, the establishment of a stereotypical image of women which led to their identification as appropriate and/or acceptable victims.

These same factors have worked against the construction of battered husbands as a social problem. According to Lucal there has been no social movement, and no organised response of any kind on behalf of battered husbands. Social science responses, largely, have been contradictory and there has been very little sustained media attention to this matter. Finally she states, "If gender images make the identification and definition of battered wives easier, they make similar perceptions of battered husband all the more difficult". The gender image of a man is one of dominance, strength and independence which does not coincide with the general perception of what constitutes a victim of spousal abuse.

According to Lucal (1994:102) the men's movement of the late 1980's and 1990's has provided neither a voice nor resources for advocates of battered husbands. Its attention was focused on issues of child custody and the constraints of the traditional male role, but not on male victims of spouse abuse. Men involved in domestic violence activism have rather focused their energies on supporting the battered women's movement and on working with men who batter.

Lucal (1994:102) further states that an additional social movement factor is the lack of feasibility of claims about battered husbands, as activists questioned whether battered husbands even exist. Because of fears about losing funding for shelters and of taking attention away from their clients, activists from the battered women's movement have been at the forefront of denials of the existence of battered husbands. They argue that since wife battering is a severe and widespread problem, it deserves all the attention. Battered husbands, on the other hand, given their dubious status, should not be allowed to take attention and funding away from battered wives. In researcher's view attention (governmental, research, and/or media) should not be taken away from any form of domestic violence and funding should be allocated proportionally where needed. This shift in focus should not be done at the expense of some (for example, battered men), whilst others (for example, battered women) receive all the attention.

Lucal also looked at the level of professional attention in the form of research and publications given to these two forms of domestic violence. She surveyed approximately 380 articles on battered wives, which were indexed in Sociological Abstracts between 1974 and 1994, in comparison to just three articles on husband battering for the same period (Lucal, 1994:103). Lucal (1994:104-105), further states that like professional attention, popular media attention given to battered wives has been helpful in establishing and maintaining it as a social problem.

Lucal comments on the issue of gender images and stereotyping as hindrances to the establishment of "husband battering" as a social problem. She states (Lucal, 1994:106) that if women are seen as passive, dependent, and weak, then it is easy to accept their identification as potential victims of strong, assertive men, but difficult to identify them as batterers. By the same token, if men are accepted as being

aggressive and sometimes out of control, and likely to use violence to assert their dominance and to get what they want, then it is difficult to imagine husbands as victims. Lucal (1994:106-107) states that to reverse these traditional scenarios contradicts gender norms. In this way, stereotypical images of women and men influence what kind of claims can be made about them and what types of labels can be applied to them. By general social standards to be violent is not "un-masculine" but to be physically violent is "un-feminine". Violence by men is supported in many contexts by societal norms. There is a long tradition of husbands being permitted to beat their wives to make them obedient and keep them "in line". There is no similar tradition of wives abusing their husbands.

Lucal (1994:106-107) continues to argue that while it is easy for society to see men as potential victims of violent acts committed by other men, it is difficult to imagine them being victimised by women. The term "victim" implies a weak, passive person – an image opposite to that of masculinity. The author (Lucal, 1994:106-107) states that we as a society are not inclined to see men as victims and similarly men would be reluctant about assigning themselves a "victim" label at the hands of a woman's violence. Lucal continues to say that, dependency has traditionally been the key in identifying victims of domestic violence. Children, the elderly, and women fit more easily into this category than adult men do. Our image of what it means to be a man goes directly against our image of what it means to be a husband in a position of dependency (physically, economically and emotionally) that can lead to victimisation by a wife. Thus, since the "dependent husband" is an exceptional image, efforts to establish husband battering as a social problem and to apply a deviant label to it, have failed.

Lucal (1994:102,104) concludes that all of these social movement factors worked to influence the process of deviance-making and social problem construction, or lack thereof, for male victims of domestic violence. Even though there has not always been a uniform response to women abuse, the responses have been sustained and persistent. Attention to male victims of domestic violence, on the other hand, has been sporadic and often negative. The lack of literature on battered husbands suggests that they did not catch the attention of professionals the way battered wives did, making their chances of being promoted as a social problem, slim.

The issue of male victimisation is not such an emotionally contested and politically charged debate in all industrialised countries. In Sweden, for instance, refuges have been established for male victims of domestic violence (in George 1994:137-159). In another example by Kirsta (in George 1994:137-159) of the difference in attitudes toward male victims, Detective Inspector Sylvia Aston of the West Midlands Police Force in the United Kingdom reported:

> We've made absolutely sure through our training that no officer will ever dismiss a male domestic violence victim just because he's a man. We don't take the attitude that a man can leave – many can't and it's invariably the nice sensitive ones who get battered. I think we risk going down a very dangerous path by discriminating between the sexes in these offenses. Some of the most violent people I've dealt with as an officer are women, and if you don't judge a woman by her crime, but by her gender, then not only do you perpetuate the old, misleading stereotypes but you risk such offenses recurring, perhaps in another relationship. Domestic violence as we see it is not a women's issue – it's a social issue.

Brott (1994, armin@parentsplace.com) reiterates the above sentiments and comments:

> Continuing to portray spousal violence solely as a women's issue is not only wrong – it's also counterproductive. Encouraging such unnecessary fragmentation and divisiveness will ultimately do more harm than good. No one has (or should have) a monopoly on pain and suffering. But until society as a whole confronts its deeply ingrained stereotypes and recognises all the victims of domestic violence, we will never be able to solve the problem. Domestic violence is neither a male nor female issue – it's simply a human issue.

In the following section the literature deals with the different circumstances within which, and the conditions under which, male victims of domestic violence experience abuse at the hands of their female partners.

2.2.6 The context of domestic violence for male victims

Frazer (1986:1409, 1417) looks at the issue of domestic violence from a medico-legal perspective. This looks at the consequences domestic violence has on the physical and mental health of the victims and the legal steps taken against perpetrators of domestic violence as well as defence strategies for victims. Frazer

states that in his paper, focus does rest on violence directed towards women, but that the problems of abused husbands are no less important. Frazer says that domestic violence should not be viewed as merely something men do to women, but rather as something both men and women do to each other that can have adverse effects on society as it often causes the disintegration of a healthy family life.

Frazer (1986:1407) initially comments on general considerations of domestic violence and estimates that the incidence of domestic violence in the United States of America ranges from 1.5 million cases per year to fifty percent of all family relationships. When looking at these statistics, although somewhat dated, they do provide a clear indication that the marriage license may very well be viewed as a "hitting license". Gelles and Strauss (in Frazer, 1986:410) reiterate the latter view by stating that the family is the primary training ground for violence and that a person is more likely to observe, commit, and to be the victim of violence within the family than in any other setting. The author further comments that family violence, although ignored, is perceived as more "normal" than violence between strangers and that spouse abuse occurs in all classes. Thus, socialisation for violence within the family setting, transmits the legitimacy of such behaviour, whether destructive or not (Frazer, 1986:410).

Frazer (1986:1407) further notes that violence between family members usually takes place in the kitchen of the family home, but that the "deadliest" room is the bedroom. Physical violence usually occurs in the evening between dinner and bedtime. Violence also appears to be more frequent on weekends, when both partners are home all day. There is also an increase in violent incidences during the holidays, mostly between Christmas and New Year's Day.

Saunders (1986:50) offers a controversial opinion of domestic violence in the context of the battered women's use of violence. Saunders states that if battered women use violence, it is more likely to be against a violent partner than a non-violent one. Walker (in Saunders, 1986:50) compared the relationships of 203 women with abusive partners to their relationships with non-abusive partners. Twenty three percent of these women used physical force occasionally and one percent frequently towards an abusive partner. With a non-abusive partner, only four percent used

physical force occasionally and none used it frequently. According to Saunders, this difference suggests that a battered woman's physical aggression is a function of the type of relationship she is in, and not necessarily a general characteristic of the woman. This would suggest that women only become violent towards their partners when they are subjected to abuse themselves and would not react violently when in a relationship with a non-violent partner.

Bowman (2003, http://academic.udayton.edu/health/06world/africa03.htm) also comments on domestic violence in the African context and states that it is important to look at the problem from a cultural point of view. Bowman states that researchers should also consider explanations rooted in the transition to a more urbanised and individualistic society and explanations based upon a so-called "culture of violence" which exists in many African countries including South Africa. A society in transition often resorts to violence as an accepted way to resolve disputes which in turn can affect family relations negatively. In researcher's opinion this is particularly apparent in South Africa with its dramatic past marked by violence as a result of the apartheid legacy followed by the transition to a democracy in 1994.

Having looked at the context within which domestic violence takes place generally the next section focuses on the different forms in which abuse towards a male partner by a female partner can occur.

2.2.7 The nature of abuse

The various aspects of husband abuse or male partners discussed in this section deal with the severity of injuries sustained by male victims of domestic violence, emotional abuse endured by such victims, and self-defence of female perpetrators.

One of the reasons for the dismissal of violence by wives against husbands or male partners is derived from the assumption that female violence is not as injurious or is less injurious than violence perpetrated by men. When reviewing data obtained in hospitals, both Goldberg and Tomianovich in 1984 and Smith in 1992 found that male victims of spousal abuse received injuries that required medical attention

58

George (1994: 137-159). Smith (1992) also reported that males tend to receive more severe injuries and lost consciousness more often than women who were victims of spousal abuse. Smith points out that the upper body strength of an average woman is less than the average man and so it is possible to argue that they have a lesser ability to injure. However, the difference in strength need not be large when using for example, a household implement as a weapon. The Journal of Men's Studies quotes a few case studies to demonstrate this:

> A man was admitted to St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London after his wife had split his head with a meat knife. He was lucky to escape with his life (Harrison, 1986:34).

> I've sewn up men who have had crockery thrown at them and bottles smashed over their heads. I once saw a man who looked as if he'd walked into a steamroller...he was covered in bruises and cuts (Harrison, 1986:35).

> Mrs D...C..., ripped off one of her husband's testicles. Surgeons failed to save it and the judge ordered the woman to pay £480 in court costs but did not make a compensation order (Wolff, 1992:22).

Seeking to determine whether females sustained greater injury than males, McLeod (in George, 1994:137-159) reported on an analysis of 6 200 cases of domestic violence reported to either law enforcement officers or the National Crime Survey interviewers. She found that women, who attacked men, were more likely to use weapons (seventy five percent of females used weapons while twenty five percent of males did so). Although the number of women attacked in the sample was larger, the extent of the injuries suffered by the male victims tended to be more serious. Thus women made up for their lack of physical strength by using a weapon, usually a household object.

Hoff (2004, http://www.batteredmen.com/brithor.htm) cites the British Crime Survey of 1996 which found that in most cases the domestic violence incidents involved pushing and grabbing, but in forty seven percent of incidents the victim was also kicked, slapped or punched. The same study showed that about half the attacks resulted in injury, most commonly bruising, but one in 10 involved cuts and a small minority broken bones.

In one in five cases the spouses would throw things at each other, and in about a third of the cases children in the home either witnessed the attack or were aware of it or even injured as they tried to intervene. These results were equal for both men and women. Furthermore only half of the victims of domestic violence divulged any information about their victimisation. This was normally to a friend, neighbour or relative. The police were only approached in approximately twelve percent of the incidents. In a survey done in 2001 by Hoff (http://www.batteredmen.com/batrcan.htm) in Canada, results showed that women report abuse more often than men do, but men report more serious offenses. Reportedly men are victims in thirty percent more serious crimes like murder in the second degree, aggravated assault and extortion. The same survey revealed that eighty two percent of cases of domestic violence against men are not reported to the police. Of those incidents that are reported to the police, fifty percent were reported by someone else. In contrast seventy eight percent of reported domestic violence against women was reported by the victim.

Straus (in George, 1994:137-159) pointed out in 1989 and again in 1993 that dismissing male victimisation on the basis of less or lack of injury has implications for the whole consideration of domestic violence. By taking the same approach towards female victimisation, he pointed out that the number of women victimised would be drastically reduced when taking the level of, or lack of injury into account, even though they had still been technically assaulted in the home, or severely emotionally traumatised and potentially left fearful. Thus it would also be unfair to dismiss non-injurious attacks against men on this basis and assume that non-injurious attacks on a man are not psychologically harmful or traumatic, a view that assumes a stereotypical attitude towards men. Psychological trauma and emotional abuse of men as a result of domestic violence or stressful life events is established by literature from both physiological and psychological studies, and the social sciences (George, 1994:137-159). Pagelow (1983:188) argues that husband abuse is mainly psychological (emotional abuse) rather than physical, because physical abuse by wives is less likely to be rewarding for the abuser, given the differences in the physical abilities of women, plus the cultural approval of male violence, which females do not share.

Makepeace (in George 1994:137-159) states that little attention has been paid, within the debate over battered husbands, as to the reasons why women might attack their male partners other than for reasons of self-defence. The dominant rationalisation underlying why men attack their female partners rests upon the view that men need to control women. In contrast, female violence against male partners is discussed mostly with reference to either self-defence or "slap the cad" (the idiot who deserves it) scenarios that imply an element of justification. Shupe, Stacey and Hazlewood (in George 1994:137-159) argue that violence perpetrated by women cannot be dismissed as sheer rationalisation. Women can act aggressively for reasons other than self-defence. They argue that when looking at aggression found among some lesbian couples, including amongst some heterosexual couples a high level of sexual coercion, for instance, aggression cannot be attributed to self-defence alone. The authors state emphatically that women are capable of performing instrumental acts of aggression against their partners.

George (1994:137-159) reports that two thirds of the male victims surveyed in his study in 1992, identified bullying or control as the major reason why they felt their wives used violence in their relationship. Similar findings have also been reported in studies of abused husbands in Australia (Thurston, 1993), Canada (Gregorash, 1993) and the United Kingdom (Bates, 1981), thus indicating that at least in some cases, violence directed at men by their wives has very similar motivation and content to that reported in cases of male aggression towards their wives. The author further states that certain researchers (Harrison, 1986; Kusta, 1991; Straus, 1993 & Pagelow, 1985) have suggested that battered husbands may precipitate their wives' violence by being emotionally unresponsive, inattentive, or being physically weak or disabled. He responds by arguing that a man's "emotional passivity" or "inattentiveness" may be seen to be the cause for some women's assaultive behaviour, but can hardly be used to justify such behaviour.

It has been suggested by certain researchers (Gondolf, Mulvey & Lidz in George, 1994:137-159) that family violence is highly prevalent among individuals with certain mental health problems. They also found a positive correlation between certain personality disorders, alcohol abuse, and violence against either a spouse or children in both male and female aggressors. The authors also suggest that further

research is needed to understand the underlying neurochemical abnormalities which lead to impulsivity, heightened aggressiveness, and violent behaviours in some individuals. Furthermore, medical studies (Sommers, Barnes & Murray, 1992) indicate that some women, as well as some men, are found to have conditions such as a mental illness or lack of impulse control that might predispose an individual towards violence and abuse of a partner. These factors may include being young and achieving high scores on Eysenck's Psychoticism Scale (indicating a measure of psychosis) and the Neuroticism Index (indicating a measure of neuroses).

Erin Pizzey (2004, http://www.batteredmen.com/pizzey.htm) also comments on various forms of abuse the male victim of domestic violence suffers at the hands of his female partner. Pizzey postulates that the female abuser (which she named the family terrorist) who is "hell-bent" on revenge will take such measures as:

- Stalking a spouse or ex-spouse
- Physically assaulting the spouse or the spouse's new partner/s
- Telephoning all mutual friends and business associates of the spouse in an effort to ruin his reputation
- Pressing fabricated criminal charges against the spouse (including alleged battery and child molestation)
- Staging intentionally unsuccessful suicide attempts for the purpose of manipulation
- Snatching children from the spouse's care and custody
- Vandalising the spouse's property
- Murdering the spouse and/or the children as an act of revenge

This behaviour pertains to individuals in varying degrees. Many people may lapse into periods of irrational or violent behaviour, but what characterises the "family terrorist", is that the vindictive and destructive behaviours are consistent, even if there are moments of calm and periods of lucidity, which temporarily lulls the storm of domestic violence.

Pizzey concludes that in her experience both men and women are equally guilty of the above behaviour, but on the whole, because it is men's violence towards women

that is studied and reported on the most, many people do not realise that to the same extent women are equally guilty of this type of violent behaviour. It is in response to the latter comment, amongst others, that the researcher has embarked on this study in order to gain insight into male abuse within the South African context.

In the existing literature the nature of male abuse by a female partner has for the most part focused on the male partner of domestic violence within a marriage or cohabiting relationship. However, researcher found it relevant to discuss this form of abuse from where it often originates, namely, at the courtship level of the relationship.

2.2.8 Courtship violence

Lucal (2004, http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=ED359483&db=eric) states that similar rates of violence have been found for males and females in premarital relationships. In a study done by Henton, Cate, Koval, Lloyd and Christopher in 1983 on courtship violence (in Lucal, http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=ED359483&db=eric) it was discovered that 78 out of 644 high school students had experienced violence during courtship. A closer examination of 70 students revealed that 50 (seventy one percent) students reported that at some time during the relationship, each partner had assumed the role of both victim and aggressor. Of the remaining twenty nine percent, the relationships were described as follows:

  ➢ One percent male abuser only
  ➢ Six percent female abuser only
  ➢ Nine percent abused male only
  ➢ Thirteen percent abused female only

Furthermore Cote (in Lucal, http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=ED359483&db=eric) conducted an earlier study amongst 355 university students in 1982 and found that 79 students had experienced premarital violence. Similarly in this study seventy percent of the students also reported being involved in a relationship where the

abuse was mutual. Of the remaining students, ten percent were in relationships where the male was the only abuser, while twenty two percent said that in their relationship, the female was the only abuser. These studies indicate that most courtship violence is mutual, but when it is not, the female partner is just as likely to be the abuser as the male.

In summary Flynn (2004, http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=960229143&db=aph) states that studies support the notion that women in premarital relationships engage in violent acts as often as men do. In approximately half of the relationships the violence is mutual and when there is a sole perpetrator, it is just as likely to be a female as a male. In researcher's view, courtship violence where females are the perpetrators of violence, should be seen as a precipitator to husband battering, and unless treated can have serious consequences for the victim within a marriage or cohabiting relationship.

In the following section researcher looks at the literature on sexual victimisation of men by female partners as this is also a form of abuse found in some domestic violence cases even though many believe that this form of violence can only be experienced by women.

2.2.9 Sexual victimisation of men

Macchietto (1992:381-383) notes that most researchers who study the victimisation of males through sexual assault, rape, and molestation by female perpetrators start their arguments stating that professional attention is given almost exclusively to female victims and male perpetrators. He continues to say that most mental health counsellors may accept evidence of male childhood molestation, but find it hard to accept the evidence indicating the sexual assault of adult males by women. According to the Macchietto, this area of research is considerably smaller than research on the sexual abuse of male children, indicating that male adult victims of sexual abuse receive little attention by researchers. Sarrel and Masters (in Macchietto, 1992:381-383) note the widespread stereotype and belief that it would be almost impossible for a man to achieve or maintain an erection when threatened

or attacked by a woman. Sarrel and Masters (in Macchietto, 1992:381-383) also state that the general acceptance of this myth has had negative implications for medicine, psychology and law, because men are not afforded victim status and therefore do not receive the treatment they deserve. The authors further indicate that males sexually respond in assaultive situations even though their emotional states have been overwhelmingly negative, just as most women lubricate, and some even respond at orgasmic levels while they are being sexually abused. Thus, men and women may be more alike in their sexual response to the fear associated with being raped, than they are different.

Struckman-Johnson (in Macchietto, 1992:381-383) asked 268 male university students and 355 female students the same questions pertaining to sexual assault in a premarital relationship. She found that twenty two percent of the women reported they had been forced to engage in sexual intercourse at least once during their lifetime. Sixteen percent of the men reported at least one episode of forced sex during their lifetime. Of the latter twenty two percent women and sixteen percent of the men who experienced forced sex during their lifetime, thirteen percent of the women and nine percent of the men reported that this sexual abuse had happened while attending university.

Another study by Stets and Pirog-Good (in Macchietto, 1992:383-384) looked at both the physical and sexual abuse of both sexes in premarital relationships. These researchers found that twelve percent of the males and nearly eight percent of the females in the study had been hit by hand. This study proves that in some cases the rates of female perpetrators of violence outweighs that of male perpetrators in courting relationships and disproves the stereotypical belief that male perpetrators outnumber female perpetrators in heterosexual relationships. Furthermore twenty two percent of the men and thirty six percent of the women were sexually abused by one or more partners. These figures highlight the fact that many women are sexually abusive and require the same education as men about their inappropriate behaviour.

Macchietto (1992: 384) concludes that, according to the research cited above, the frequency of sexual coercion and assault by females against males is substantial,

which would indicate that this phenomenon needs professional intervention. The author states, that, greater insight into sexual coercion between men and women may be found by examining this phenomenon in more detail. This would require a closer, more detailed exploration of the various dimensions of this form of abuse. Whether or not men underreport sexual violence and whether or not women are more sexually aggressive than is perceived by society, has strong implications for how these clients are treated by mental health professionals. In researcher's opinion if the sexual abuse (such as grabbing and kicking of the victim's testicles or rape) of male partners by their female partners is not recognised and acknowledged as a legitimate form of abuse for male victims, these victims will not receive the appropriate care and counselling they deserve.

George (1994:10) also acknowledges that men can be victims of sexual abuse and that this can be very devastating for male victims particularly for their self-esteem. The following section therefore examines the effect of abuse by a female partner on the self-esteem of the male victim of domestic violence.

2.2.10 Victimisation and self-esteem

Mills (1984:254-256) looked at various studies of husbands and wives who are victimised by their spouses. She attempted to determine their self-esteem levels in order to determine whether the problems of "battered husbands" can be equated with those of "battered wives". Mills examined studies done by Walker, Dobash and Dobash and Hilberman that documented some of the effects that violence has on abused wives. These authors argue that battered wives become passive and unable to act on their own behalf. They became fearful, felt shame and became more and more isolated from other people over time. In 1980 Hilberman described a stress-response syndrome that he noted amongst his female respondents that was marked by passivity, guilt, fear, depression and learned helplessness. All the abovementioned characteristics are related to self-esteem. Mills (1984:256) postulates that, even though these studies focused on battered women, husbands who are abused by their wives experience similar problems. In contrast to this, Mills (1984:256) states that there are many reasons to believe that a female victim of

domestic violence is more affected by the abuse than a male victim. In her opinion some psychological theories suggest that violence would affect women more than men because of psychological differences between men and women.

Mills (1984:254-257) further states that it is possible to expect different reactions to violence among couples, without assuming that there are different psychological processes (for example, different thoughts and attitudes) for men and women. Even if the meaning of violence to both husbands and wives is similar, such as a sign of disapproval or punishment, wives may be more likely than husbands to internalise the negative view of the "self" and take the blame for a violent incident. The author does not explain in detail how the "self" is formed, but one can conclude that she is referring to the woman's self-image and the way she perceives her role as wife and mother (nurturer and care-giver). Thus, violence directed towards a wife by a husband may be experienced as a greater threat to the "self" than violence by a wife toward a husband as she is not perceived as an aggressor but rather as a nurturer. Any negative interpretation by the woman of her inadequacies as a wife, are likely to be central to her view of her "self".

Mills (1984:254-257) also argues that men are expected to be less affected than women by violence directed at them because of differences the in psychological identity of their role as spouse. Mills states that certain theories of attribution, suggest that men are more likely than women to attribute failure to external factors. When looking at the impact of violence on self-esteem in her research, Mills found that violence directed by the husband against the wife appears to be much more problematic than violence directed by the wife against the husband. The author does however concede that before these assumptions can be made, the issue of causality must be addressed. A multi-variable analysis would also have to be made to address this complex phenomenon to determine the different effects on both men and women on a variety of levels by looking at different aspects of the male and female psyche and how these are influenced by genetic as well as social factors.

Mills (1984:257) argues that women with a lower self-esteem are more likely than those with a higher self-esteem to become victims of violence. On the other hand, it can be argued that it is the abusive relationship itself that results in lower self-

esteem. However, both arguments can be made, and in such cases a cycle of abuse is formed where low self-esteem predisposes one to abuse, and the abuse, subsequently, damages the person's self-esteem, which could be the case for both men and women. The author warns that when interpreting research designed to quantify the amount of domestic violence in a particular study or country, researchers must be cautious because the quantification of violent behaviours does not disclose what the meaning of the violence is to the victim. In researcher's opinion this is a valid point which forms part of the rationale for this exploratory study. Thus, one needs to understand the victimisation process and impact thereof, before quantifying the male victims of domestic violence in South Africa (refer Chapter 6 for recommendations for further research) or attempting to explain the cycle of abuse or the effects on a male victim of domestic violence's self-esteem.

Steinmetz (in Mills, 1984:260) acknowledges that a slap by a man may cause more physical damage than a slap by a woman, but her argument is that the social and psychological problems experienced by the victims are similar. Mills warns, however, that it is misleading to borrow terms from the literature on wife abuse and apply these directly to husband abuse as Steinmetz did with the "battered husband syndrome", as such terms can be misinterpreted if their true meaning is not explained fully. In conclusion Mills (1984:260) states that it is inaccurate to refer to violence directed against husbands as a phenomenon similar to wife abuse without the research to support such a claim.

In researcher's opinion, husband abuse should therefore be studied as a separate phenomenon of domestic violence, before comparisons on issues such as self-esteem, amongst men and women who are abused can be made. This could be done by examining case studies and/or interviewing both men and women (focusing on issues surrounding self-esteem) who have been victims of domestic violence and then drawing comparisons.

To aid the understanding of the different aspects of husband abuse one must understand the nature of, and motivating factors for abusive behaviour, of the female partner towards her male partner. The following section therefore examines some of

the literature which describes certain commonalities of the female perpetrator of domestic violence.

2.2.11 Profile of female offenders of domestic violence

Von Wormer (2001:193), comments on our cultural notions concerning women as nurturers. He states, "This may be off the mark. Women need greater incentive than men to express violence, but the social changes over the years – especially the movement toward gender equality – have provided several" (incentives to express violence). He goes further to comment on female offenders and states, "The 'bad girl' of cultural stereotypes is masculine, tough spoken, of low socio-economic status, aggressive and male looking, her characteristics enduring for all generations". However, this may simply not be a realistic picture of the female offender of domestic violence as the statistics show that the so called "nurturers" were as capable of violence as the "bad girl" stereotype offender. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (Von Wormer, 2001:193), for instance, the victim-offender relationship differed substantially between female and male murderers. An estimated one in fourteen murders by a female offender, and one in four murders by a male offender were committed against a stranger. Over one third of the victims of female offenders were spouses or male partners. Mothers and stepmothers killed about half of all children murdered, these being predominantly infants. Steinmetz (1980:339) states that mothers were predominantly the perpetrators of violence against children. Her research showed a sixty two percent greater rate of violence toward a child by mothers than by fathers. Sixty eight percent of the mothers compared to fifty eight percent of the fathers reported at least one incident of violence toward their child, and seven percent of the mothers, and only one percent of the fathers, reportedly "beat up" their child. Finally, her study revealed that four percent of the mothers versus nearly three percent of the fathers kicked, bit, punched, threatened or used a gun or knife on their child. This data indicates that women are often perpetrators of violence in the home.

Gelles (1975:659) reports that the female offenders in his research were insecure, dissatisfied with themselves, had a low self-esteem, and were mostly uncomfortable

with low positions in the workplace and earned smaller salaries than their husbands. They wanted successful careers and to be the economically dominant partners in the relationship. Even though this data dates back to 1975, researcher is of the opinion that many of these views expressed by female offenders are relevant to modern society and to this study.

Erin Pizzey was the founder of a women's shelter in Chiswick, England, the first modern battered women's shelter in the world. In 1997 in an article she revealed some interesting views on violent women (http://www.batteredmen.com/pizzey.htm). She states:

> In my work with family violence, I have come to recognise that there are women involved in emotionally and/or physically violent relationships, who, express and enact disturbance beyond the expected (and acceptable) scope of distress. Such individuals, spurred on by deep feelings of vengefulness, vindictiveness, and animosity, behave in a manner that is singularly destructive; destructive to themselves as well as to some or all of the family members, making an already bad family situation worse. These women I have found it useful to describe as "family terrorists".

Pizzey (1997) further states that men are also capable of behaving like "family terrorists". However, male violence tends to be more physical and explosive, and this "terrorism" seems to be a tactic largely used by female perpetrators of domestic violence. The potential for "terrorism" may lie dormant for many years, emerging only under certain conditions. In many cases it is the dissolution, or threatened dissolution of the family, that brings to the fore the "terrorist's" destructiveness. The author emphasises that it is important to realise that prior to dissolution, the potential terrorist does not play a passive role in the family. The "terrorist" is the family member whose moods reign supreme in the family, whose whims and actions determine the emotional climate of the household. She could be described as the family tyrant, for within the family, this individual maintains the control and power over the other members' emotions.

Pizzey (1997) further states that the family my be characterised as violent, incestuous, dysfunctional, and unhappy, but it is the terrorist or tyrant who is primarily responsible for starting conflict, having unnecessary outbursts, or subtly

and quietly manipulating other family members into aggressive behaviour through guilt, cunning taunts, and barely noticeable provocations. The quiet, manipulative terrorist usually is the most undetected terrorist, and through the subtle creation of perpetual turmoil, may drive other family members to alcoholism, drug addiction, explosive behaviour and even to suicide. The other family members are often misperceived as the "problem" and the hidden terrorist as the saintly woman who "puts up with it all". While the family remains together, the terrorist is able to maintain her power, however, when family dissolution threatens, she is fearful, and thus most dangerous.

Pizzey (1997) hypothesises that in this position of fear, the family terrorist sets out to achieve a specific goal. This goal may be to reunite the family, or ensuring that the children (if there are children in the relationship) remain under her control, or actively destroying her spouse or partner, emotionally, physically, and financially. Pizzey makes the analogy with Hitler – when winning the war was an absolute impossibility, he ordered his remaining troops to destroy Berlin. If he could no longer rule, then he felt it best for his empire to share in his own personal destruction. Similarly, the family terrorist, losing or having lost supremacy, may try to bring about the ruin (and, in some extreme cases, the death), of other family members.

The family terrorist, like the political terrorist, is motivated by the pursuit of a goal, which may spring from some legitimate grievance. This may be a justified feeling of outrage in response to an actual injustice or injury, or it may exist solely in the mind of the terrorist. Whether real or imagined, the grievance starts as the driving force for the terrorist's motivation, and tends to become an obsession. Pizzey (1997) believes that in many cases the terrorist's grievance against her spouse or partner actually has very little to do with him. Although the terrorist may be consciously aware only of the spouse's alleged offence, the pain of this offence (real or imagined) is often an echo of the past, a mirrored recreation of some painful childhood memory. Invariably the terrorist's childhood, once understood, can be seen as violent (emotionally and/or physically) and the terrorists can be regarded as a violence prone individual.

Pizzey (1997, http://www.batteredmen.com/pizzey.htm) goes further to define a violence prone woman as a woman who, "While complaining that she is the innocent victim of the malice and aggression of all other relationships in her life, is in fact a victim of her own violence and aggression." She postulates that a violent and painful childhood tends to create in the child an addiction to violence and to pain. An addiction on all levels: the emotional, the physical, the intellectual and the neurochemical. This addiction then compels the individual to recreate situations and relationships characterised by further violence, danger, suffering and pain to her spouse. Thus, the residual pain from childhood serves as the terrorist's motivational driving force for aggressive behaviour. Pizzey (1997) states that there is something pathological about the terrorist's motivation, for it is not necessarily based on reality, but rather on a twisted or distorted reality that the terrorist has tried to reshape. With the dissolution of the relationship, the terrorist is aware only of her own pain and outrage and feels no empathy for other family members. She will proceed single-mindedly in pursuit of her goal, whether that goal is reunion, ruin, or revenge. The terrorist is incapable of objectivity and lives in a self-contained world of purely subjective pain and anger. She believes herself to be unstoppable in the pursuit of her goal and is unbound by any constraints, conscience or empathy - she believes that no cost is too great to pay toward the achievement of that goal.

Having examined the various aspects which describe the female perpetrator of domestic violence, researcher finds it necessary to examine the commonalities that describe the typical male victim of domestic violence. This is done in order to gain an understanding of the possible reasons why men submit to abuse by their female partners.

2.2.12 Profile of male victims of domestic violence

Gelles (1975:659) asks the question, "Why do abused men not protect themselves?" He states several reasons based on his research. The first reason stems from chivalry, which considers any man who abuses (physically, emotionally and/or sexually) a woman to be a bully. The second reason, which is usually based on experience, is the recognition of the severe damage which a man could inflict upon a

woman. Several men in his study expressed the fear that if they ever lost control, they could easily kill their wives. One husband in the study noted that he only hit his wife once in retaliation to her attack on him. When he hit her she flew across the room and hit her head against a chest of drawers. After realising how badly he could have hurt her, he continued to endure the physical abuse without further retaliation. He noted, with hindsight, that she probably continued her abuse after the incident because she knew she could get away with it and that he would not hit her again. Gelles (1975), reports that a final reason expressed by these abused men, is perhaps a self-serving one.   The combination of the husband both crying out in pain during the beating and having the wife see his injuries, which often take several weeks to heal, raises the wife's levels of guilt. The husband may believe that this guilt is a form of punishment for his wife.

Pagelow (1983:196) states that vulnerable men are usually elderly, frail, physically handicapped, or physically weaker than their wives. If these men are unfortunate enough to have violent wives, they may be unable to defend themselves or prevent the violence directed at them.   In contrast to this Hoff (2004, http://www.batteredmen.com/brithor.htm) cites data gathered from a survey of domestic violence victims conducted in Britain in 1998 which found that approximately the same number of men and women were assaulted by their partners. The male victims were likely to be 25 years old or younger, working part-time and in households where there were financial difficulties. In many cases they had suffered from a long-term illness or disability. According to Hoff the survey indicated that the risk of domestic violence was increasing and one explanation for this might be that young people entered into more relationships, living with different partners, which would automatically put more male partners at risk of abuse.

Litman (2003:772) explains that emotional dependency on a partner has been documented as a risk factor for becoming a victim of spousal abuse and can thus be used in support of the "battered husband syndrome". He states that this emotional dependency in a partner is understandable, given the characteristic features of Dependent Personality Disorder, namely, submission and over-compliance to the wishes of others (hyper-compliance), to maintain an overwhelming need for support and security and to avoid abandonment. There are also associated characteristics

that are found with this disorder which are, for example, general anxiety and depression, low self-esteem and a weak and fragile self-image. All of these characteristics, according to the author, can render an individual vulnerable to psychological pressure and coercion to such an extent that the individual will even confess to a crime they have not committed when pressured by police interrogators. Emotional dependency of the male victim of domestic violence on his female partner is one of the aspects which will be examined in this study's respondents. This will be done in order to obtain a better understanding of the respondents' victimisation experience in order to satisfy some of the aims of this study (refer to Chapter 1 paragraph 1.4).

According to Sniechowski and Sherven (1994, http://www.batteredmen.com/abusedme.htm) some common patterns of behaviour in victims and abusers have emerged of which the most striking is the similarity between female and male victims and their abusers, for example emotional dependency, such as the fear of living alone, on a partner. However, among the greatest differences, the largest one is of public and personal perception, that females are the victims and males are the aggressors of domestic violence. According to the authors, in most cases, male victims are stuck in a time warp because they find themselves in the same position women were in thirty years ago where their abuse was not recognised or acknowledged as legitimate. Despite the large numbers of male victims of domestic violence, their problem is viewed as of little consequence, or they are seen as blameworthy.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the male victim of domestic violence it is imperative that one looks at some examples of his victimisation experience. This would bring to light the various forms of abuse the male victim is subjected to by his female partner.

2.2.13 Examples of male victims of domestic violence

Steinmetz (1977:505) cites a newspaper article describing the beating that a physically weaker husband had received from his wife. This article read that a wealthy, elderly New York banker had obtained a separation order from his second

wife who was 31 years younger than him. According to the judge, during their 14 year marriage the husband had been "bullied" by, "Hysteria, screaming tantrums, and... various forms of physical violence practiced on a man...ill-equipped for fist-fights with a shrieking woman". The judge noted that the husband had scars and was constantly bruised. During one incident his wife shredded his ear with her teeth, on another occasion she blackened both his eyes. She also injured one of his eyes so badly that he almost lost it. Although this is a fairly dated example, it is important to note that a case of male battering had been heard in a court of law and publicised at a time when feminist advocates received most of the media attention, fighting for the rights of women and children who were abused at the hands of men. This demonstrates how inaccurate it was, and still is, to genderise the issue of domestic violence.

Pagelow (1983:187) cites the case of a battered husband who described his victimisation in the following terms:

> She was the first woman I ever loved, and I did love her! There were many nice things about her: she was smart, she was fun to be with, and she was a wonderful mother to our two little girls. But she could be mean as hell, and she'd hit me with anything she got her hands on. I just tried to protect myself – I never could really let her have it – no matter what. But finally, I had enough, and I just took a walk and never went back, except to see my girls. ("Weren't you afraid she would hurt them? Is that why you stayed?") No, I knew she'd never touch them, she was always good to them; I didn't have to worry about them. But then she got married again, and they were both into drugs, and one night she killed him. I tell you, she was mean!

Pizzey (2004, http://www.batteredmen.com/pizzey.htm) interviewed a respondent who described to her that, during his marriage, he and his children faced a daily onslaught of verbal abuse from his wife. His wife was also physically violent towards the children. When he asked her for a divorce, she made use of "every weapon in her arsenal" (used any means she could to prevent this). In the children's presence, she used drugs and drank alcohol to the point of extreme intoxication. She staged several unsuccessful suicide attempts in front of the children, telephonically threatened to "do something stupid", promised to kill the respondent's new partner, and assured him that when she was finished with him he would "not have a penny to

his name". To the respondent this behaviour seemed perfectly "normal". He testified that he had witnessed this sort of behaviour for thirteen years of their marriage.

Cook (2004, http://www.batteredmen.com/abusedme.htm) interviewed a male victim of domestic violence who stated:

> "The cops show up, and they think it's a big joke", Tim explained after his live-in girlfriend hit him on the head with a frying pan, which resulted in severe bleeding and a deep cut. "I never did tell anyone (of my family and friends) about all this while it was going on, because they would assume that I had done something to her, or that I deserved it. If there had been a crises line for men in this situation I would have called it, to find out what to do, what the options were, how to stop it".

Cook (2004) states that these abused men had no resources to turn to for help with regards to their abuse, no victim's advocates, no crises lines, no support groups, no media recognition and no shelters. A pervasive macho attitude of, "I can handle it...I must be the strong and responsible one", generally inhibits a man from leaving an abusive relationship, or even acknowledging it (refer paragraph 2.2.12). The author further states, that, even if a man seeks out a therapist for help, he is unlikely to find one that specialises in male victims of domestic violence, as most therapists are still resistant to seeing certain types of female behaviour as abusive.

In an article by Cohen (2007, http://web.ebscohost.com), "The violent wife" the author cites the case study of a Canadian couple, Kevin and Linda Kinsella. The couple went public with their story in order to force government and media to look at the parallel issue (yet largely unacknowledged), of women's abuse of men. Linda, 30 years old, did the battering. Besides punching, kicking and scratching her husband, she would also tip Kevin, a 36 year old cerebral palsy victim, out of his wheelchair. Mrs Kinsella admits that the abuse was severe. She states that it could be compared to an able-bodied person being hit on the knees with a hammer. Thrown from his wheelchair, she would trap him completely and render him helpless to fight back.

Linda Kinsella testified that when she realised that she had a serious problem she found it nearly impossible to find anyone who would take her seriously. Her

counsellor did not validate her behaviour immediately, but insisted that Linda tell her what Kevin had done to provoke her. She states, "This confused and frustrated me. Here I am being told because I am a woman my problem didn't exist. I was not even offered anger-management courses or any other type of assistance". Kevin also found that he had nowhere to go for help, even when he was told by a friend that he should leave Linda. He discovered that there were no shelters or resources available for men fleeing domestic violence.

In light of the above examples of abuse that some male victims are subjected to at the hands of their female partners, one would speculate as to why these victims stay in such abusive relationships. In the following section literature by Gelles, Pagelow and Pizzey shed some light on this.

2.2.14 Reasons why victims stay with their abusers

Gelles (in Steinmetz 1977:506), asks the question, "Why would a woman who has been physically abused by her husband remain with him?" The author suggests that there are three main reasons why wives being abused by their husbands remain in the marriage:

> ➢ The severity and frequency of the violence;
> ➢ Whether the woman experienced violence as a child;
> ➢ The amount of resources and power the wife has.

Gelles (1977), states that these three factors were ironically also found in his own research, which influenced the husbands' decision to stay. Lower levels of violence were not likely to be considered a major concern. Only when the violence appeared to be affecting the children, rather than the husband's physical safety, did the husband consider leaving the relationship. In addition Gelles found that the background of violent wives in his study was often characterised by violence and trauma in their childhood. He cites one respondent, who as a child, witnessed her own father force her mother, who was in the last stages of pregnancy, to walk home in the snow carrying bags of groceries. The father drove behind his wife in the car,

bumping her with the car to keep her moving and beating her when she stopped and stumbled. Gelles further states that the perceived availability of resources also affects the man's decision to leave the abusive woman. According to the renowned study of battered women by Lenore Walker (in Steinmetz, 1977:506), women remain in the relationship because they feel that their children will be worse off if they leave. Gelles is of the opinion that, not only does the wife often lack the economic resources to provide for her children on her own, but she feels that separation will have a more harmful effect on the children than if they remained a family unit. It is commonly assumed that the husband's greater economic resources could allow him to leave an abusive marital situation more easily. Not only do men tend to have jobs which provide them with an adequate income, but they have greater access to credit and are not tied to the home because of the children. This perspective, according to Gelles (1975:659) rests on erroneous sexist assumptions. Although males, as a group, generally have considerably more economic security, if they leave the family, they are still responsible for a certain amount of economic support for the family, in addition to the cost of a separate residence. Thus the reduction in the standard of living (especially if both spouses were earning a salary) affects a husband should he decide to leave. Furthermore, it is assumed that because wives are "tied to their homes", they would be the ones who would most likely regret it if they moved. In addition, custody is almost always awarded to the children's mother. She often remained in the family home while the father was forced to find a new residence and leave the comfort and familiarity of the family home.

According to Gelles (1975:659), the most erroneous assumption is that these abused husbands' decisions to leave would not be influenced by concerns for the well-being of their children. Often the husband becomes the victim when he steps in to protect the children and thus becomes the target of abuse by his wife. These men are afraid to leave the relationship for fear that their children would be subjected to further violence in their absence. Recognising that men are not likely to receive custody of the children, even in times where their ability to look after the children is pertinent to other family or community members, they feel that staying in the relationship would offer some form of protection for the children. These men also express the idea that keeping the family together at all costs is best for the children.

78

Pagelow (1983:86-87) states that there may be many reasons why a man stays after one violent episode, but few reasons that can adequately explain why a man would stay after he was subjected to repeated episodes of escalating violence. Some men, according to Pagelow, remain for the same reasons most women do after the first assault, namely:

➢ The spouse is truly sorry and loving afterwards;
➢ The victim's love for the abuser;
➢ The behaviour is excused by circumstances for example, stress and alcohol amongst others;
➢ The abuser has many other positive features;
➢ Unwillingness to expose private embarrassment of victimisation to family and friends;
➢ The investment made in the relationship;
➢ The children.

Pagelow further states that among men who remain with an abusive partner after the initial attack (primary battering), and stay after the violence has been repeated (secondary battering), their reasons for staying often revolve around issues such as material and economic concerns, psychological dependency (cannot imagine life without his partner or fear of being alone), and fear for the safety of the children.

Pizzey (2004, http://www.batteredmen.com/pizzey.htm), postulates that women who having suffered feelings of acute disappointment and misery during childhood appear more self-destructive than destructive to anyone else, when their relationships fail. However, for the partner contemplating leaving this kind of individual, the thought of leaving such a person is made difficult by protests like, "I cannot live without you", and "Without you, I might as well be dead", which amounts to severe feelings of guilt and emotional abuse. These women are extremely dependent within their relationships, because they probably suffered severe emotional betrayal during their childhood. They genuinely feel that their life outside a relationship would be so lonely that it would not be worth living. Pizzey states that it is difficult to leave such a woman, and the man trying to divorce such an individual, may feel that by leaving he would be further responsible for delivering a mortal blow

to an already pathetic woman. The author also adds that men also stay in their relationships, like in personal concentration camps, because they feel genuine chivalry towards their partners and do not want to be responsible for their suffering. Pizzey links this kind of entrapment by the female partner to emotional terrorism, as the male partner is expected to suffer for the greater good of his family's well-being, even though he experiences little personal satisfaction within the marriage or cohabitating relationship.

In researcher's opinion children who are subjected to violence in the home and who witness abusive relationships between parents could be influenced irrevocably to their own detriment. The following section looks at some literature on the intergenerational transmission of domestic violence and its consequences.

2.2.15 Intergenerational transmission of domestic violence

Sniechowski and Sherven (1994, http://www.batteredmen.com/abusedme.htm) state that women initiate violence, at about the same rate as men do and that only half of all incidents of violence are one-sided, the rest are regarded as mutual combat between male and female partner. In light of this, the authors further comment on intergenerational aspects of domestic violence, by stating that the sons of violent parents have a rate of wife-beating one hundred percent greater than those sons of non-violent parents. By the same token, daughters of violent parents have a husband-beating rate sixty percent greater, than daughters of non-violent parents. Only about ten percent of the violent couples had a family history that was non-violent.

Owens and Straus (in Gelles, 1997:39) found that experience with violence as a child is one of the most powerful contributors to attitudes that approve of interpersonal violence. Researcher aims to bring to light any incidences of intergenerational abuse experienced by both the perpetrators and victims of domestic violence in this study as this could shed important light on the reasons why this form of abuse took place in some or all cases investigated.

Having considered the contributions of many authors with regard to domestic violence, specifically where the male partner within a heterosexual relationship is the victim, researcher regards certain studies in this regard of utmost importance for this research. Many of the previous authors (for example, George, 1994; Saunders, 1986; Lucal; 1994) cited in this literature review have relied heavily on the work of pioneers in the field of male abuse by a female partner or "male battering", as very little intensive research has been done with regards to male victims of domestic violence. For this reason, even though some of the data is fairly dated, certain research (refer to Table 1 and the following section) will be cited in more detail for the purposes of this study, as it will provide a good basis for the information generated in this study to be grounded on.

2.2.16 Suzanne Steinmetz's research

Suzanne Steinmetz is regarded as the pioneer in the research of "husband battering" and men as victims of domestic violence in general. Her work in this regard will therefore be discussed in detail. Steinmetz (1977:501) examined empirical data on wives' use of physical violence, perpetrated against their husbands, and concluded that husband-beating constitutes a significant proportion of marital violence (refer Table 1).

Initially she comments on a study done by Levinger in 1966 where 600 husbands were interviewed to determine reasons for their divorce action. More than three percent of these men listed physical abuse by their wife as a reason for seeking a divorce. While this is far lower than the nearly thirty seven percent of wives who mentioned physical abuse, several factors should be noted from this study.

Firstly, Levinger's (1966) study showed that women had nearly twice the number of complaints as men. Therefore, unless one assumes that it is always the husband's fault when a marriage fails, it appears that women might be more comfortable voicing their complaints.

Secondly, the traditional role of husbands in a divorce action is to take most of the blame for the failed marriage. The time in which the study took place should be taken into consideration when reading this information. Levinger (1966) postulates that during the late sixties, even if the husband wanted the divorce, chivalry or etiquette demanded that he allow his wife to initiate the legal action. During a conciliatory interview it is reasonable then to expect the husband to be less ready to expose his wife's faults. Steinmetz (1977:501), comments that some support was given for this claim, by examining the types of complaints commonly made by husbands (sexual incompatibility and problems with in-laws, both traditionally accepted male-orientated complaints).

Finally, Levinger's study in 1966 concludes that the male in Western society is under pressure to maintain a dominant position over a female. Thus, given the psychological stress of recognising his wife's physical dominance, it is unlikely that a man would be willing to admit his physical weakness to a third party.

Steinmetz (1977:501) went on to look at police records and a random sample of families. It was estimated that seven percent of the wives and six percent of the husbands would be victims of severe physical abuse by their spouse. Further evidence for the existence of battered husbands was provided by a comparative study of physical violence used by husbands and wives to resolve marital conflicts in five studies (refer Table 1).

Additional studies in New Castle and Canada were done by Steinmetz in 1977 using three samples (a non-representative group, a random sample of the population and a sample of university students). She only found small differences in the percentage of husbands and wives who resorted to throwing things, pushing or shoving, hitting with the hand or hitting with an object. Thus the total violence scores for these three studies were very similar.

Steinmetz conducted another study with Straus and Gelles (Steinmetz, 1977:503) which looked at data from a nationally representative sample based on reports of violence that occurred during 1975. The study found wives to be slightly higher in many categories of violent behaviour than husbands. The total violence scores,

however, were identical for both wives and husbands. These findings indicate that wives are equally capable of violent acts towards their husbands as husbands are towards their wives. Based on these findings it is hard to grasp why husband abuse was, and in researcher's opinion, still is not taken as seriously as wife abuse. If studies, as early as the 1970's indicated that husband abuse should be considered a legitimate form of domestic violence, then it is difficult to understand why there is still so little research on this topic in comparison to wife abuse.

Steinmetz (1977:503) found only one study done by Gelles in 1974 that showed that husbands exceeded wives in the use of all types of violence except "hitting with something", a method which de-emphasised physical strength. As mentioned in section 2.2.7 when a female uses an object to inflict harm she can do as much, if not more harm than a male could with his own physical strength. In this study forty seven percent of husbands had used physical violence on their wives, while thirty three percent of the wives had used violence on their husbands. It must be mentioned that half of the respondents in this study were selected from police records which reported only domestic violence or by the social service agency which selected families because it was suspected that violence might be occurring. This may explain why more wives than husbands were victims of physical violence in Gelles' 1974 study, since it is wives who report domestic violence to the police and seek help from social services.

Steinmetz (1977:503-504) goes on to investigate the reasons why this area of research received so little attention by academics and the media. She states that there is a stigma attached to this topic, which is embarrassing for abused wives, and more so for abused husbands. The patriarchal concept of the husband's right to chastise his wife with a whip or cane no bigger than his thumb is embedded in ancient law. This idea has provided some legal and social understanding for the woman who has suffered because her husband has gone beyond permissible boundaries of the rule of thumb. Since there is no recognition of the woman's right to chastise her husband, there is little likelihood that society will recognise that the wife may go beyond that which is "permissible". The fear of stigma for the male victim also affects the official statistics collected on spousal violence.

Steinmetz (1977:504) further states, that helping to camouflage the existence of husband abuse, is the terminology used to describe it. This can be illustrated by referring to Gelles' writings in "The violent home" (in Steinmetz, 1977:504). An examination of the entries listed in the index shows that, while there is one page devoted to "wife-to-husband" and "husband-to-wife" violence, several pages under the headings "wife-beating" and one to "battered wife", no corresponding listing could be found for "husband beating", even though Gelles' data provides sufficient evidence that many wives do beat their husbands. Even though Gelles reports that one respondent, a retired cook, was often verbally and physically attacked by his jealous wife, and quotes another respondent as saying, "My wife is very violent. It's a miracle that I didn't go out because she really put a hell of a dent in my head", these are not labelled as husband-beatings. Thus, although Gelles does acknowledge that men are victimised by their wives, he does not provide a discussion of this as a parallel to wife-beating.

Steinmetz (1977:504) reiterates the reason why so little attention is given to male victimisation by a female partner or wife, is partly due to the relative lack of empirical data on the topic, the relative selective inattention both by the media and researchers, the greater severity of physical damage to women when attacked by men, making their victimisation more visible, and the reluctance of men to acknowledge abuse at the hand of women.

Steinmetz further discusses why there is a difference in the degree of physical damage done by men as opposed to women who resort to physical violence. She states that popular culture has provided three different explanations for this. Firstly, because of socialisation, women are taught better impulse control and they stop aggressive behaviour before any danger occurs. Secondly, women are more verbal than men, and therefore men resort more readily to physical violence in certain situations. A third explanation focuses on the superior physical strength of men and their greater capability of causing serious damage to their wives or partners than women are capable of to their male counterparts.

Steinmetz (1977:504-505) counters these explanations by stating that in reality, the perception that women are socialised to have greater impulse control appears to

have little support, at least as far as marital conflict situations are concerned. The data provided by studies, plus insights gained from in-depth interviews, suggest that women are as likely to use physical violence to resolve marital conflicts as men. Furthermore, she states that child abusers are more likely to be women, and that women throughout history have been the prime perpetrators of infanticide. While it is recognised that women spend more time with children and are usually the primary care giver in single parent homes (which makes them prone to stress and strain resulting in child abuse) and that fathers in similar situations might abuse their children more severely, these findings show that women have the potential to commit acts of violence and that given the right circumstances, can and do carry out these acts of violence. Steinmetz continues to argue that although the myth of the verbally abusing, nagging woman is perpetuated in the media, the data from her studies does not support this. She found that there appeared to be small random differences in the use of verbal abuse in the families studied, and that men and women were equally likely to use verbal abuse in conflict situations.

The data Steinmetz (1977:505) reported on, suggests that the intention of both men and women to use physical violence in marital conflicts is equal, as identical percentages of men and women reported hitting with or without an object. Furthermore, data on murder rates between spouses suggests that almost equal numbers of wives kill their husbands as husbands kill their wives. From this she concludes that it appears than men and women might have equal potential towards violence in domestic situations; initiate similar acts of violence; and when using weapons, commit similar amounts of spousal murder. She concedes that the major difference in the use of violence appears to be the male's ability to do more physical damage during non-homicidal conflict situations. When the wife slaps her husband, her lack of physical strength (assuming she is weaker than he is) plus his ability to restrain her, reduces the damage that she can do to a minimum. However, when the husband slaps his wife, his strength, plus her inability to restrain him, results in considerably more damage to the woman.

Steinmetz received much criticism for her work on husband abuse or husband battering due its controversial nature at the time. Some of this criticism will be examined in paragraph 2.2.17 and 2.2.18.

2.2.17   Critique on Steinmetz's research

Pleck, Pleck, Grossman and Bart (1978:680) have numerous concerns about the data presented and the interpretation thereof, which Steinmetz gives in Table 1:

Firstly, Pleck et al (1978:680) state, that there is a misleading summary of the data presented in the table. According to them, Steinmetz stated, that the data suggests the percentage of wives having used physical violence often exceeds that of husbands in the study, but the authors disagree with this statement and conclude that in none of the five studies included in Table 1 do wives exceed husbands in the total percentage having used violence. In one study husbands and wives are equal and in the remaining four husbands are higher.

Secondly, Steinmetz stated that data from the Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz's national survey found wives to be represented slightly higher in almost all categories except pushing and shoving. Pleck et al, disagree and state that the data from this study in Table 1 actually shows that wives are lower than their husbands in three categories, namely, "pushing and shoving", "hitting and slapping" (they are equal), and "using a gun or a knife".

Thirdly, the critics proclaim that other data in Table 1 contradicts Steinmetz's thesis. Before presenting her own surveys and national survey data, Steinmetz cites Levinger's findings that in divorce complaints, thirty seven percent of wives compared to three percent of husbands listed physical abuse by their spouse as a reason for the divorce action.

Fourth, Steinmetz claims that males are under considerable psychological pressure to maintain a masculine image and therefore husbands are more ready to accept the blame for failure within a marriage. Pleck et al (1978:680) state, that men may have an economic incentive to report being victims of violence, which cancels out or even overcomes their reasons for not reporting such violence.

Fifth, critics Pleck et al (1978:680), argue that Steinmetz's thesis is also contradicted by Gelles' finding in 1974 of substantially greater levels of wife than husband abuse. She speculates that, this finding, results from the fact that half of Gelles' sample was derived from police and social agency referrals, which, she argues, over-represents wife abuse. According to Pleck et al, Steinmetz thus offers a speculative argument to explain away results contradicting her thesis when the data needed to test (and disprove) the argument is easily available from further studies done by Gelles.

These critics (Pleck et al 1978:680) go on to argue against further minor discrepancies found in Steinmetz's 1977 research but conclude that the question of whether wives commit a considerable number of violent acts within the marriage must remain unresolved until more accurate data is produced.

2.2.18 Comments and reply by Steinmetz

Steinmetz (1978:683) argues against her critics by stating that the purpose of her studies on this issue of Victimology was to focus attention on the existence of another group of victims of domestic violence, namely men (more specific to her research – husbands). She states that among intact families the percentage of wives having used physical violence often (she considers one third to be adequate for the use of this adverb) exceeded that of husbands. Further she states that the average violence scores, which her critics chose to ignore, consistently indicated that the wives who resorted to violence, as compared to husbands, did so with much greater frequency. However she does concede, within the study, that a greater number of wives are more seriously injured than are husbands.

Steinmetz (1978:683) goes on to defend herself against the criticisms directed at her, by citing figures to support her claims, but stated that she was very disturbed by the great extent to which her critics went to discredit her findings and locate errors, as all of these comments were, "uncomfortably similar to the responses which greeted those reporting on wife abuse only a few years ago". She further stated that any discussion of unpopular topics or unexpected findings always increases the

likelihood of controversy and usually attempts to discredit such findings (Fields & Kirchner, 1978:222).

After the publication of her book, *The Battered Husband Syndrome,* in 1978, Steinmetz received verbal threats and anonymous phone calls from radical women's groups. They even threatened to harm her children. She said, "I find it ironic that the same people who claim that women-initiated violence is purely self-defence are so quick to threaten violence against people who do nothing more than publish a scientific study" (http://web.ebscoholst.com).

2.2.19 Conclusion to Steinmetz's research

Suzanne Steinmetz (1980:348) summarises her thoughts on domestic violence and the woman's role in this form of violence, by stating the following:

> Throughout history women have been both perpetrators and victims of violence. Women, however, have been placed in the role of victim to a far greater extent than the role of perpetrator. Although women are portrayed as considerably more violent than men in comic strips, in real life women commit a very small proportion of street crimes and, except for rape, are victims in only one-fourth to half of these crimes. When we examine the data on domestic violence, we find that female children are at greater risk of sexual abuse than are male children, but in other areas of family violence males and females are about equal. However, the effects of violence, both sexual abuse of children and spousal violence, have a greater impact on females, therefore, we must recognise that although males and females may commit similar acts of domestic violence, we must take into consideration the severity of physical injury and emotional trauma suffered in order to assess victimisation.

This statement demonstrates that Steinmetz has looked at both sides of the proverbial coin concerning domestic violence, despite the criticisms levelled at her work in this area. Although Steinmetz's research is considered in more detail for the purposes of this study it is equally important to look at other studies done within a similar time frame as Steinmetz's work, as this period (late 1970's to mid 1990's) seems to have delivered significant research findings with regards to male victims of domestic violence.

2.2.20   Additional significant research findings

In 1980 researchers Strauss, Gelles and Steinmetz estimated that about one in eight men in the United States acted violently during marital conflict. However, they estimated similar figures of women acting violently during marital conflict. They also noted that in most of these cases, violence was a mutual or bilateral activity, with only twenty seven percent of cases finding that husbands were the sole perpetrators of violence and twenty four percent of cases finding only wives acting violently. With reference to serious violence, these authors found five percent of men were beaten by their wives (according to the Conflict Tactics Scales used on their research sample); a figure that indicated "over 2 million very violent wives". While forty seven percent of those husbands who beat their wives did so severely (three or more times a year), fifty three percent of women who beat their husbands severely did so three or more times a year (George, 1994:137-159).

The Conflict Tactics Scale, devised by Murray Straus and several co-researchers in 1978 (in George, 1994:137-159) at the University of Minnesota, consists of several scales designed to assess the various ways in which family members try to deal with conflict in the home. The Conflict Tactics Scales is divided in three parts, with one part asking a series of questions about escalating levels of threatened or actual physical assault between adult partners. Starting with "Threatened to hit or throw something at the other", it concludes with "used a knife or gun on the other" (George, 1994:137-159). The eight point scale is often analysed by researchers in terms of less serious and more serious violence (acts most likely to cause injury).

In 1986, Strauss and Gelles compared their findings to other studies in the United States and reported somewhat equivalent assault rates for both male-to-female and female-to-male assault rates. In their 1975 survey, Strauss, Gelles and Steinmetz (George, 1994:137-159) estimated that approximately 38 out of every 1 000 families experienced severe husband-to-wife violence while 46 out of every 1000 families experienced severe wife-to-husband violence. Ten years later (from 1975 to 1985), Straus and Gelles reported that the rates had dropped from 38 to 30 and 46 to 44 per 1 000 couples, respectively.

Although Straus and Gelles (1986) did not comment extensively on these comparisons, they did make a statement that seemed to oppose the prevailing academic and public perception of the time (1986), namely, that "an important and distressing finding about violence in American families is that in marked contrast to the behaviour of women outside the family, women are about as violent within the family as men". The small change in the wife-to-husband rate of violence, as opposed to some change in the husband-to-wife violence, was suggested to result from a lack of attention or concern about male victimisation (George, 1994:137-159).

In conclusion, Straus and Gelles (1986) summarised the results of the data as indicating that women engage in minor assault against their male partners at a slightly higher rate than that of attacks upon women by men. In situations in which both partners are violent, men and women were also almost equally responsible for the first act of violence, but in only one quarter of these relationships the man was the sole victim. Where more serious levels of assault occur, men were considered to exceed women in their aggressive behaviour. The research figures suggested that a relative rate estimated at six or seven to one (male versus female) was evident for the perpetration of serious assaults that resulted in injury.

Returning to the controversial research concerning violence against husbands, Straus in 1993 and Straus and Kaufman-Kantor in 1994 (in George, 1994:137-159), extended such observations and reiterated the importance of giving the issue the necessary consideration. Straus (1993) pointed out that some studies focusing on domestic violence fail to report findings of female-to-male violence. For example, Straus noted that in a study done on battered wives in Kentucky (USA) (in George, 1994:137-159), the researcher failed to report a thirty eight percent rate of unilateral female-to-male violence. Straus (1993) further noted that in reviewing over thirty studies, every study that used random samples had found roughly equivalent rates of assault for both women and men. Some of the variations in other research findings of violence directed against husbands or male partners could be attributed to the difference in whether the studies surveyed the general population or were based upon samples of reported victims as found in police records or agencies dealing with domestic violence. However this would not be a true representative

sample of domestic violence *per se* as there is usually a large dark figure (unreported cases) in domestic violence cases.

Several American studies have indicated levels of female violence against husbands or male partners as more than just an anomaly or a small percentage of isolated individual cases. For instance Nisonoff and Bitman (in George, 1994:137-159) reported that fifteen percent of men and eleven percent of women reported having hit their spouse, while nineteen percent of men and thirteen percent of women reported having been hit by their spouse. Studies done by Arias and Johnson (George, 1994:137-159) of both dating and married or cohabiting couples also found that women admitted to committing unilateral acts of violence against their male partners at levels fairly similar to those committed by men. Similarly in a survey of 884 American university students done by Breen in 1985, both male and female students reported being the victim of an act of violence by a romantic partner in approximately equal proportions (eighteen percent of the men and fourteen percent of the women). Breen also found that among married students, twenty three percent reported being slapped, punched, or kicked, while nine percent reported being the victim of an assault involving a weapon and a similar percentage reported suffering injuries that required them to seek medical treatment. In a study conducted by Goldberg and Tomianovich in 1984 of particular interest, was the fact that among surveyed patients treated at an emergency room, it was found that men were the victims in thirty eight percent of the cases of spousal violence.

In 1986 a Canadian study was conducted by Bland and Orn (in George, 1994:137-159), on the relationship between family violence, psychiatric disorders and alcohol abuse. They found that men and women were equally responsible for committing acts of violence against their partners. In a 1988 study of 562 married and co-habiting couples in Calgary, Canada, researchers Brinkerhoff and Lupri (in George, 1994:137-159) found nearly twice as much wife-to-husband, as husband-to-wife severe violence. Using data derived from using the Conflict Tactics Scale (in George, 1994:137-159), these researchers reported a five percent rate of severe violence in husband-to-wife relationships while a 10 percent rate was found for wife-to-husband severe violence. These researchers also suggested that male violence decreased with level of education of the perpetrator but female violence increased.

91

Looking at the popular media in the United Kingdom, Moller did a survey in 1991 of 2 075 people reporting on family life in the press. He reported that three times as many women as men admitted hitting their spouse or partner. Individual case histories of battered men have also been reported in various popular presses as well as details of an unpublished British study, using the Conflict Tactics Scales, where similar results were found (George, 1994: 137-159).

In 1980 Oswald (in George, 1994:137-159) did a study in Scotland, in which psychiatrists reported on 299 women involved in violent relationships. Forty six percent of these women reported being both victims of violence by a spouse, partner or near relative and perpetrators of violence towards their spouse, partner or near relative. Another twelve percent stated they had been violent towards a spouse, partner or near relative, but had no violence perpetrated against them in return. In another United Kingdom study done in 1992, Smith, Baker, Buchan and Bodiwala (in George, 1994:137-159) reported on the results of their "gender-blind" study of victims of domestic assaults reporting to Leicester Royal Infirmary casualty department. The study looked retrospectively at the department's records of assault victims of both genders who identified their injury as arising from "domestic incidents" and found evidence that males were also victims of spousal assault. Although not many incidents of male victimisation were reported, the study did reveal an important feature. Of the 142 male and 155 female identified victims, fifty nine percent of males and twenty five percent of females did not identify their assailant, which either indicates that the male victims remained chivalrous towards their female attackers or that they were ashamed to admit to victimisation at the hands of their wives or female partners.

Fiebert and Gonzalez (http://www.batteredmen.com/fiebertg.htm) made a valuable contribution in 1997, by doing a survey amongst female university students at California State University in the United States of America. They studied the women who initiated assaults on their male partners and the reasons offered for such behaviour. In the responses from 978 female university students it was shown that within a five year period, twenty nine percent admitted to physical aggression against their male partners. The study indicated that younger women in their twenties were significantly more likely to resort to physical abuse than women who were 30 years

old and above. There were no significant differences in initiation of violence towards a husband or male partner, between married or unmarried women, however white women reported less frequent aggression against their male partners than women of colour.

In the study done by Fiebert and Gonzalez (2004, http://www.batteredmen.com/fiebertg.htm) the respondents were asked why they initiated the abuse of their male partners. Several underlying reasons were given, namely:

> My partner wasn't sensitive to my needs (46%)
> I wished to gain my partner's attention (44%)
> My partner was not listening to me (43%)
> My partner was being verbally abusive towards me (38%)
> I did not believe my actions would hurt my partner (38%)
> My partner is emotionally abusive (10%)

The authors (Fiebert & Gonzalez, 2004) conclude that for a man, it is less risky to be verbally abusive than it is to be insensitive to his partner's needs, or not paying enough attention to her. From the same survey (Fiebert & Gonzalez, 2004) more common responses were:

> I believe that men can readily protect themselves so I don't worry when I become physically aggressive (24%)
> I have found that most men have been socialised not to hit a woman, and therefore I am not fearful of retaliation from my partner (19%)
> I believe if women truly are equal to men then women should be able to physically express their anger at men (13%)
> I feel personally empowered when I behave aggressively towards my partner (12%)

Hoff (2004, http://www.batteredmen.com/fiebertg.htm) criticises the study by stating that the "deeper" reasons focused on social views, rather than the respondents' personal life experiences, such as feelings of powerlessness and frustration. Sixty five percent of the respondents preferred to write out their own reasons for the

abuse. Researcher will take Hoff's criticism under advice for purposes of this study and avoid restricting responses by participants to certain choices by allowing them freedom to express their victimisation experiences in their own manner.

2.3   Conclusion of literature overview

Lucal (1994:108) makes the claim that because men do not make "good" victims it has been difficult to present them as abused or battered, especially when compared to women, the elderly and children. Thus, according to Lucal (1994), it has been difficult to construct and apply a label of "battered husbands" because of factors such as social movements, media attention, and gender images. Given these obstacles to the construction of abused husbands or partners as a social problem, it is possible that even a resolution of the debate about the rates at which this victimisation occurs, will not lead to agreement about the existence of the problem. The author states that in the end, it may be beliefs that husband and wife battering are qualitatively different, that will determine the fate of this phenomenon. Lucal (1994) reiterates by saying:

> As sociological attention to family violence increases, the lack of attention to a battered husbands' problem becomes all the more obvious. Although numerous books and articles have been written about wife battering, child abuse and neglect, and elder abuse and neglect, hardly any work has been done on the husband battering issue.

Gelles (1997:92) concludes with "A note on men as victims" that violence toward men, or husband abuse, has been a controversial area in the study of domestic violence and that there has been considerable debate on this topic, but little scientific research and data.

Upon study of academic literature of domestic violence from several countries it is evident that an incidence of male victimisation takes place from zero to slightly higher than the incidence of female victimisation. However, in most cases the data is not complete regarding the rates of male victimisation. What is clear, however, is that assaults by women against their husbands or male partners do occur (Gelles, 1997:5).

The latter is even acknowledged by some of the critics of the concept "battered men" (Walker, 1990). Whatever the incidence of female assaults on male partners may be, Pagelow's (1985) view that male victimisation hardly ever occurs is being challenged by numerous researchers coming from a variety of disciplines and research areas. Further the debate about husband abuse or battered men is becoming more heated, as more men come forth and publicly describe their status as victims of domestic violence (George, 1994:137-159).

Upon reflection of the literature review presented in this chapter, researcher is in agreement with several statements made by the authors throughout this chapter. Many of these views served as motivation for research exploring the experiences of the South African male victim of domestic violence. Cook (2004) is of the opinion that historically society has been presented with only one part of the equation concerning spousal abuse (see 2.1.1) which in researcher's opinion is the case when reflecting on the South African literature on family violence where there is very little information on the male victim.

George (1994) found that many people, including academics, are unwilling to accept the unilateral abuse of men by women, which stems from deep rooted stereotypical views of men (see 2.2.5). In researcher's opinion these stereotypical views of men as the abusers and women as the victims of domestic violence is prevalent in South Africa as patriarchy is still a dominant ideology in the country. According to Lucal (1994) the debate on whether there is such a thing as an abused or battered husband or intimate partner is testament to this stereotypical view of what constitutes a victim of domestic and served as motivation for the exploration of this phenomenon through this research.

Lucal (1994) claims, that, social problems are relatively subjective for many people and are for the most part a collective behaviour in a society. Thus it is the general consensus that shapes a society's views on a matter such as spousal abuse. In light of this researcher aims to raise the South African male victim of domestic violence into the collective conscience of at least some academics, mental health care professionals and criminal justice officials so that this form of domestic violence can

receive the attention it deserves or at the very least an awareness is raised about the consequences for battered men in South Africa.

Researcher is in agreement with Aston and Brott (1994) who state that men should be treated fairly (the same as female victims of abuse) by police, courts and the media as domestic violence is not a gender issue but a human issue. Frazer (1986) reiterates by stating that is not just something that men do to women, but something men and women do to each other (see 2.2.6). Thus far men's issues within a heterosexual domestic violence context has dealt mainly with issues of child custody and men who are advocates for women abuse (men helping men who abuse). In researchers view very little media attention or support services exist for men who are victims of abuse in South Africa. With an explorative study such as this researcher hopes to bring awareness to these short-comings.

In agreement with Macchietto (1992) researcher is of the opinion that sexual abuse endured by men in heterosexual relationships deserves closer attention (see 2.2.9). In researcher's view this requires more detailed exploration as the stigma attached to this form of spousal abuse is large, which is why this form of abuse formed part of the interview process. Once again this aims to contradict the stereotypical view of women as meek victims of sexual abuse and illuminate the fact that women can be sexual aggressors when motivated.

Mills (1984) examined the guilt, fear, depression, passivity and learned helplessness which gives rise to low self-esteem of both female and male victims of battering (see 2.2.10). Mills used a multi-variable analysis to address this complex phenomenon to determine the different effects on both men and women on a variety of levels. Researcher uses a similar approach to explore the South African male victim of domestic violence by using an **integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence** (see Figure 3.1) to explore and analyse the various social and psychological factors which influence the "self" (see 2.2.10) of the respondents who were interviewed for the purposes of this study.

In agreement with Sniechowski and Sherven (1994) researcher is of the opinion that the South African male victim of domestic violence is "stuck in a time warp" as they

96

find themselves in a similar position battered women were in before their abuse was brought to light and recognised as legitimate as a result of media attention and various lobbyists (see 2.2.14). The selective attention by academics and media and the lack of empirical data in South Africa serves as the main motivation behind this explorative research. Similar to Steinmetz (1977) researcher also aims shed a light on the stigma attached to this form of domestic violence (see 2.2.15).

In summary the controversy surrounding violence by female partners towards intimate male partners has been reviewed from a diverse range of literature sources. This evidence is explored against the background of social representations, and stereotypical images of males and females, to show that the male victim of domestic violence is a reality which needs to be investigated in more detail.

In the following chapter researcher will examine and utilise various theories which focus on domestic violence as a social phenomenon in order to construct a theoretical model on which to base the research embarked on for purposes of this study.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES: THE IMPACT OF PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE ON THE MALE VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

3.1 Introduction

"Research without theory is blind, and theory without research is empty"
(Bourdieu and Wacquant in Ritzer, 1996:62)

A theoretical perspective is the basis for understanding social phenomena. Theory stimulates, simplifies and directs research, so that information can be organised and integrated effectively. Bailey (1994:39) adds that, without theory, it would be difficult to explain and analyse the complex and multi-faceted dynamics of social reality.

Theory forms an integral part of scientific research as it guides and explains how research will be done and in so doing provides an understanding of the topic being researched. The aims and research expectations of the study are the links between the theory and the interview schedule. These "links" aid the researcher in formulating a relatively clear foundation for the direction and purpose of the research. As Bourdieu and Wacquant (in Ritzer, 1996:162) aptly state: "Research without theory is blind, in other words it does not know where to look for what; and theory without research is empty, in other words, it is nothing more but a mere speculation without any substance or knowledge to support it".

For the purposes of this study researcher will not only make use of established theories within the realm of the social sciences but will also include popular perspectives and models upon which certain research is based, for example, the culture of violence perspective and the model of transgenerational abuse.

The theories and perspectives which will be utilised for this research will include a general systems theory with specific insights into family systems where domestic violence takes place within a broader social environment. This will further be explored by looking at the models of Gelles and Straus and later Siegel which

investigates the unique characteristics of the family as a social group that contribute to making it a violence-prone institution, and how spousal abuse can be predicted. The culture of violence perspective will also be discussed with reference to Wolfgang and Ferracuti's subculture of violence theory, and in addition, how the "American dream", which advocates the Westernised goals of individualism and materialism, has influenced the rise in domestic violence.

Further the social structural theory of violence will be utilised as a starting point for the theoretical conceptualisation of family violence, and the social learning theory will explain how violent behaviour is learned within the family system. This will be demonstrated even further with the use of Viano's (1992:16) model of transgenerational abuse. Remaining under the umbrella of social learning theory, issues such as gender roles and expectations and stereotyping, will also be discussed. Researcher will then make use of some of the concepts within social exchange theory (Viano, 1992:8), and those issues of exchange theory which closely link with rational choice theory, to render an understanding of certain aspects of domestic violence or spousal abuse.

Because various theories, perspectives and models have been used to form a theoretical basis for the purposes of constructing a model specific to the needs of this study, it is also necessary to discuss the use of integrated theory. Because crime is such a complex phenomenon more criminologists and theorists are considering the adoption of integrated and/or interdisciplinary frameworks for new research. According to Barak (1998), integration involves linking and synthesising the different models and theories into formulations that are more comprehensive. In light of this researcher will introduce and explain **an integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence** with the use of a schematic representation thereof (refer Figure 3.1) in this chapter.

This model is the result of theory integration, by researcher, for the purposes of exploring the victimisation of the men in this study. The motivation behind the construction of a theoretical model using interdisciplinary theories is that researcher was unsuccessful in finding a specific criminological or victimological theory which was based on the victimisation of men in a domestic violence context. Researcher

found no existing theories which could assist in holistically exploring the male victim of physical and emotional abuse, within a heterosexual marriage or cohabitating relationship, and thus integrated several theories and perspectives in an attempt to achieve this goal.

3.2 General systems theory

Systems theory was proposed in the 1940's by the biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy and furthered by Ross Ashby in his book *Introduction to Cybernetics* in 1956. Von Bertalanffy proposed that systems are open to, and interact with, their environments, and that they can acquire new properties through emergence, resulting in continual evolution or change. Rather than reducing an entity (for example, a family unit) to the properties of its parts or elements (for example, father, mother and siblings), systems theory focuses on the arrangement of and relations between the parts which connect them into a whole, referred to as holism (2008, http://pespmcl.vub.ac.be/SYSTHEOR.html).

A system can be said to consist of four components:
- ➢ Objects – These are the parts, elements or variables within the system. They may be physical or abstract or both, depending on the nature of the system.
- ➢ Attributes – These are the qualities or properties of the system and its objects.
- ➢ A system has internal relationships amongst its objects.
- ➢ Systems exist in an environment.

A system, therefore, is a set of organisms or objects that affect one another within an environment and forms a larger pattern that is different from any of the parts. The fundamental systems-interactive paradigm of organisational analysis features the continual stages of input, throughput (processing), and output, which demonstrates the concept of openness or closedness. A closed system does not interact with its environment. It does not take in information and therefore is likely to disappear (atrophy). An open system on the other hand, receives information, which it uses to interact dynamically with its environment. This openness increases its likelihood to survive and prosper (2008, http://www.tcw.utwente.nl/theorieenoverzicht).

Systems theory is closely connected to cybernetics and the terms "systems theory" and "cybernetics" have been widely used as synonyms (2008, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Systems-theory). Cybernetics is however, a proper subset of the class of general systems, namely those systems that include feedback loops. Cybernetics is therefore, the study of feedback and derived concepts such as communication and control in living organisms, machines and organisations. Its focus is how anything (digital, mechanical or biological) processes information, reacts to information and changes or can be changed to better accomplish the first two tasks. The goal of cybernetics is, to explain complex systems that consist of a large number of mutually interacting and interrelated parts, in terms of those interactions.

In accordance with cybernetic principles an individual is continually interacting with the environment, which in turn influences the individual, thus the individual as a system changes as the environment changes. The family is also viewed as an integrated whole or a system, or as a subsystem, where its members belong to other systems (for example, agencies or organisations). Other subsystems such as the spousal, parental and sibling subsystems can also be differentiated (Umbager, 1983:21).

In simple cybernetics rules distinguish one system from another and thus form the boundary of such a system. Boundaries imply that there is a hierarchy of systems which means a system can exist within a system, for instance, a sibling subsystem can exist within a parental subsystem. The boundary of a system acts as a screen for information permeating in and out of the system. There is a continuum between openness and closedness of a system. The more information that is allowed in or out, the more open the system is. A balance needs to be maintained for the system to be healthy as the system must not be too open or closed. The system, however, is always open to a certain extent, and has invisible boundaries which are defined by rules. Differences occur within the system according to the rules of the system (Levant, 1984:141). These rules may be certain disciplinary measures used within the family system to regulate the behaviour of its members.

The boundaries protect the differentiation of the system. Therefore, the clearer the boundaries, the easier it is to differentiate the system. There are three categories of boundaries, namely clear, rigid and diffuse boundaries. Clear boundaries are firm, yet flexible, and are considered ideal for a stable family system as opposed to rigid boundaries where family members are isolated from one another as well as from systems within the community of which the system is a part of. Family members within a system of clear boundaries support and nurture each other and yet allow each other a degree of freedom to act autonomously. There is a clear balance between support, nurturing and freedom. Diffuse boundaries are the polar opposite of rigid boundaries where everybody's personal space is invaded even when it is not necessary. From different kinds of boundaries it is clear that certain pathologies are likely to occur in family systems with either rigid or diffuse boundaries (Becvar & Becvar, 1996:192).

3.2.1 Systems theory and the communication perspective

Violence is considered to be a mutual problem of couples, and that the violence has a specific function within the relationship, for example, it is used to regulate closeness and distance between the couple (Schurink, Snyman & Krugel, 1992:247). These researchers postulate that such a relationship continues because the interpersonal interactions obtain an explosive momentum but remains stable, which keeps the relationship intact. Loring (1994:63) states that according to systemic theorists, the initial abusive incident is rooted in a pattern learned in the past where the abuse is maintained and made predictable by a system of developing family rules. The pattern develops and continues because it serves a function, such as maintaining the system. Another application by Loring (1994:64) of the systems perspective explains abuse in terms of the abuser's sense of inadequacy and the victim's need to feel that his partner is dependent on him. Feeling inferior to her partner (who is described as behaving in an "over adequate" manner), the abuser uses violence to bring the relationship back into equilibrium. The victim accepts the abuse and his powerlessness is accepted by both parties and serves as a security bond between them.

Stark and Flitcraft (1996:67) state that the family may be viewed as a system of interacting individuals and relationships. It is part of larger systems or supra-systems, and it encompasses individuals and multiple interdependent relationships or sub-systems, for example, marital or sibling subsystems. Individuals and internal subsystems are locked together by the complex interdependency of mutual needs, communication patterns, commitments and loyalties. Thus, the family is more than the sum of its parts, and any action by one person or sub-system could affect all other members of the system. In addition, family members rely on each other to balance the tasks of maintaining the family structure (*status quo*) while adapting to internal (developmental) and external (societal) changes.

Communication is inherent to the understanding of family systems theory. Messages are continually being conveyed verbally and nonverbally in an organised process of feedback loops. Negative feedback loops serve to maintain the previously known state or homeostasis. Each communicated action serves to maintain the familiar and thus the predictability of future events and equilibrium is preserved. This view interprets the abusive action as important in maintaining the family's patterns of interaction. Family boundaries with regards to who is "in", and who is "out" of the system, act as barriers to regulate the flow (input and output) of information and resources into and out of the family system or subsystems. In abusive families, boundaries are thought to be overly fluid or overly rigid (too few or too stringent restrictions). Stark and Flitcraft (1996:68) mention that Rosenblatt, argues that societal views and expectations provide a context for permeability, for example, because of generally sexist societal views, women may be granted less privacy in the home than men, resulting in greater frustration and anger. The expectation that the family is a "haven from a heartless world" (Stark & Flitcraft, 1996:68) reinforces the sanctity of the nuclear family unit. In a dysfunctional family, the strong boundary may protect the family as a prison would, and not as a haven would.

Stark and Flitcraft (1996:69) explain family violence from a communicative perspective and researcher found it useful for this study in order to illustrate how interpersonal communication patterns can influence levels of emotional and physical abuse, in a relationship, especially in the context of domestic violence.

Communication, whether verbal or non-verbal can cause a variety of behaviours ranging from mild intimidations to overt violence. These authors explain the latter dynamics in a relationship effectively and successfully link this to the systems theory to further illustrate these dynamics of communication in an intimate relationship context.

3.2.2 A Systems theory perspective on relationships

A system may be described generally as a complex of elements or components directly or indirectly related in a causal network. Each component is related to at least some others in a more or less stable way within any particular period of time. The components may be relatively simple and stable, or complex and changing. They may vary in only one or two properties or take on many different states. The interrelations between them may be mutual or unidirectional, linear, non-linear or intermittent, and varying in degrees of causal priority. The particular kinds of stable interrelationships of components that become established at any time constitute the particular structure of the system at that time, thus achieving a kind of "whole" with some degree of continuity and boundary (Giles-Sims, 1986:7).

3.2.3 An abusive relationship as a system

Conceptualising the abusive relationship as a system means that one can look at the process of actions and reactions as a continuous causal chain, each reaction becoming in turn a precipitant. A system can also be looked at to find the periods of stability and change, and identify the processes that took place during different times to produce stability or change. Giles-Sims (1986:9) further explains that systems have boundaries that define where the system begins and ends, and what information or behaviour is an acceptable part of that system. Any behaviour that deviates from the ongoing pattern of behaviour or that challenges the boundaries of the system triggers a response. The nature of the response is governed by how the new behaviour fits the goals of the particular system, or the particular components of the system.

3.2.4 Positive and negative feedback

Giles-Sims (1986:10) postulates that responses to new behaviour are called feedback because the response conveys information to the first member of the system about how the preceding acts, fractions of information, gestures, or other communications are received. New input into a system represents deviation from the stabilised, ongoing pattern. Because the new input is different, it can trigger a response that may discourage or encourage new behaviour. Negative feedback tends to reduce the likelihood that new behaviour will occur again.

Positive feedback tends to support new behaviour. The information conveyed, whether intentionally or not, is that the new behaviour is acceptable or effective within the system.   Positive feedback to new behaviour allows new behaviour into the system and thus promotes change in other parts of the system (Giles-Sims, 1986:10).

3.2.5 Open versus closed systems

Systems that have the same characteristics and the same boundaries over a long period of time remain in static equilibrium. These systems can be called closed because they do not adapt to changes in the outside environment. Boundaries exist between the system and the outside social environment.   Sometimes these boundaries are natural phenomena, such as a river between two tribes and at other times the boundaries may be created by system rules. For example, a wife forbids her husband to have contact with certain family members, or friends, that she does not approve of.

No social systems are completely closed. All systems exist on a continuum, from open to, closed. At the one end, the system is entirely open to input from the outside. Most social systems are adaptive, and there can be a gradual change and development over a period of time. The degree of openness or closedness is related to the amount of change in a social system. In general, the more open the system, the more change, and the more closed the system, the more stable the pattern of behaviour and the less the system changes. This concept may help to explain the

patterns of abuse in a relationship. In a relatively closed system highly repetitive patterns of behaviour can be expected and a high degree of negative feedback to new behaviour. If the system is relatively open to input from the outside social system, then the impact of social norms that discourage abuse may be felt sooner, and change may occur in that pattern (Giles-Sims, 1986:11).

3.2.6 The threshold of viability

Systems are interrelated networks which tend to maintain themselves by regulating the amount of stability and change. This regulation takes place through the process of positive and negative feedback. Generally individual systems maintain consistent levels of stability and change over long periods of time. When a crisis occurs, or when there is change in the environment in which the system exists, the internal regulation of the system may be disrupted. To remain viable, systems require some stability and some adaptation. Individual systems may have patterns of behaviour that have become stabilised, and even though patterns of behaviour may be destructive to individuals, for example, patterns of emotional and physical abuse, the system has adapted to those behaviours and is still a viable one. To change behaviour patterns that have become stabilised within the system requires some new input. For example, when abuse has occurred over time on a routine basis, the man may adapt to the abuse by withdrawal, suppression of feelings, or possibly displacement of his anger onto his children. The system that includes this stable pattern of interaction is unlikely to change without input from another source that presents some new information. This new information could be some intervention program, a new opportunity, a new supportive friend within the system, or the openness of one member to a new perspective. This could assist the man in reaching a threshold of viability and cause him to leave the relationship as the system is no longer a viable one (Giles-Sims, 1986:11).

3.2.7 Systems in a social environment

Families exist as systems within the large socio-cultural system. The family is influenced by social conditions and influences that are larger than that of their social system. Impact from the larger social system can involve immediate changes, for

106

example, the loss of employment, or it can involve more constant and pervasive elements, for example, socially established sex roles and power relations within the socio-cultural system. Family behaviour can also influence the larger social system, for example, when families keep violent behaviour strictly private and do not reveal it to friends, physicians or the police then the larger social system will be ignorant of the problem and unequipped to deal with it effectively when it is revealed. If the behaviour is not revealed, the tendency of the larger social system will be to regard it as personal disturbances, such as, delusions or attention seeking. Macro level social conditions are also related to patterns of abuse, for example, living in a violent country or cultural group. The social environment can produce stress for the family, but alternatively the social environment can also provide support. According to Giles-Sims (1986:12) a good social support system is associated with lower rates of violence.

3.2.8 Systems in transition

Because systems are relatively stable over a period of time, transitions require adaptation to many changes. These include the transition to married life, to having a first child, to a divorce, to the "empty-nest" stage of life, to aging and finally to death. These critical periods of transition or adjustments indicate that when people are going through transitions they are particularly vulnerable to physical and emotional problems. Factors such as social support and prior histories of coping with problems affect how people deal with major life transitions. Loss of a relationship is often experienced as loss of a part of oneself, and the greater the interdependence of the two people in the relationship the greater the feelings of loss. The transition from a relationship with an abusive woman may result in the man facing many new problems. For example, it may be that leaving an abusive wife raises issues that a man has not faced before, for example, being a single parent or being restricted with regards to access to or visitation with his children (Giles-Sims, 1986:14).

3.2.9 Hierarchies of feedback and control

Giles-Sims (1986:15) list **three** different hierarchies, which describe the rules of system transformation, namely:

➢ **Strata hierarchies** which refer to the level of system analysis. For example, within a family, each member has his or her own intra-psychic system which may include patterns of response learned earlier in the primary family background. In addition, there is an interpersonal system including all members of that system. The number of members may change over time producing changes in that system. The most classic examples of such changes are when a child is born, a family member dies, or a couple divorces. The family system is affected by each member as part of other systems such as extended family systems or employment systems.

➢ **Temporal/logical hierarchies** refer to the sequence of steps that occur to produce output. If members of the system follow the social norms and expectations that are provided in the system of rules, they can be relatively certain of the output and the response of other members of the system.

➢ **Hierarchies of feedback and control** refer to the levels at which the feedback operates to monitor the system's progress toward a goal.

- **Level 1** is simple feedback, a circular process by which output is subsequently processed as an input. In family systems, this would be reflected in simple communications and actions that take place accordingly.

- **Level 2** can be compared with the thermostat that controls a heating unit. There is a monitoring unit at this level which processes all input to discern if the input is consistent with the goals of the system. In family systems, the goals of the system include rules for appropriate behaviours established boundaries of interaction and patterns that have been dominant over time. If new input challenges the goals of the system, corrective action usually occurs. Different systems have different degrees of openness or closeness to new input, but even if the system appears to be very open, corrective action would take place if a member of that system acted in a way that is inconsistent with the family rules. The rules of the system are not always set by consensus within the system. If one member of the system is more

powerful, his or her own personal goals prevail over the goals of the total system. This raises the question of how rules could be changed over time. The first step in that process is the realisation that occurs when corrective action at the second level does not work.

- **Level 3** of the feedback control is referred to as morphogenesis. At this level the corrective action has not succeeded at reestablishing equilibrium, and each member of the system may try alternative responses. In the case of a violent couple, this is an important part of establishing a violent pattern. For example, either partner may become more violent, to establish or maintain his or her position of power, and in turn a higher level of violence becomes a part of the family system.

- **Level 4** focuses on the failure of efforts to re-establish control in the home may lead to changes in the structure of the system as a whole. At lower levels, the structure and basic goals of the system have not been challenged. At this level, however, there is the potential for a different kind of morphogenesis. This level is very important in the histories of abused men.

Once patterns have been established and have been operating for long periods of time, they are extremely resistant to change. The type of change that is possible in more flexible systems that are open to small changes in input, are not usually possible after abuse has occurred for long periods of time.

There are several theoretical implications for the understanding of abuse. The first is that different processes may govern change after one incident, than after several incidents. Second, minor corrective mechanisms may not be adequate to stop abuse after it has been established. Minor corrective mechanisms on the part of the abuser may not be enough to re-establish the family system once a victim has sought outside help. For the family system to continue, more fundamental restructuring must occur. This is a difficult task in any established system of behaviour (Giles-Sims, 1986:16).

3.2.10 A systems theory approach to conflict

Conflict may be inevitable in a couple or a family's relationships (Giles-Sims, 1986:21). According to this view, harmony is both the exception and may be more problematic than normal. When two or more people are in close proximity and share common goals and resources, as people do in families, conflict can result from the discrepancy between idealised expectations and the reality of scarce resources and different personal goals. Couples that are married or cohabitating tend to reciprocate conflict, and rejection tends to elicit either emotional appeals or coercive tactics. This suggests that conflict escalates because of the behavioural reciprocity couples display. When one person is rejecting his or her partner, the other person within the system acts in a way to constrain the partner from leaving, in order to maintain the system despite the conflict. Giles-Sims (1986:22) further postulates that, couples that have more conflict tend to let conflict accumulate over time and to use tactics that are person, rather than issue orientated. Couples with less conflict have shorter conflicts and tend to be more issue oriented. The couples who experience more conflict were inclined to argue about their relationship more, which indicates how strong the tendency is to try to maintain an on-going family system. From a systems theory perspective, the maintenance of the system becomes more important over time than specific conflicts. Marriages that have long-enduring patterns of conflict can also be stable marriages as specific patterns of communication have become part of the system of interaction and they are relatively resistant to change.

The conflict process typically proceeds through several definable stages and the system processes of feedback, controls the nature of the conflict process itself:

➢ **Stage 1 – Pre-competition**

At this stage, the parties have a cooperative relationship or are relatively independent.

➢ **Stage 2 – Competition**

The system changes, due to internal historical dynamics or to events in its environment, so that the parties are in a competitive relationship.

➢ **Stage 3 – Conflict**

The parties verbally abuse each other. What has occurred as competition and conflict has intensified as escalation. Escalation involves not only an increase in mutual punishment but also, in most systems, polarisation (emotional distance). Escalation is a "positive feedback" process in which each event intensifies its own precursors. Besides these reactions, there are other changes in the system brought about by the conflict which intensifies the specific conflict. Positive relationships between the parties are destroyed, the damage of verbal abuse becomes grounds for further arguments, the most conflict-orientated sub-elements become dominant in each party and polarisation occurs where couples lose the ability to communicate effectively and no longer share a close bond.

➢ **Stage 4 – Crisis**

In many conflicts there appears to be a special period when a turning point is reached. It is distinguished by a new, intense, and different level of interaction, and it is at this stage that violence is most likely to occur.

➢ **Stage 5 – Resolution/Revolution**

The turning point or period usually means a resolution or a revolution. The resolution can be immediate, or it can be a gradual de-escalation, but in either case, it involves a return to cooperation, or, at least competition. Another possibility is revolution in the sense that the system is drastically restructured.

This model focuses on the processes that shape the natural histories of revolutions, but a similar analysis could be made of the natural histories of conflict between members of a family system. Conflict within a family is a system process that is controlled by the negative and positive feedback mechanisms. Over time, the

natural history of the system can be analysed using the same principles of systems theory (Giles-Sims, 1986:24).

Giles-Sims (1986:143) states that a systems theory approach that focuses primarily on internal family processes does not emphasise the social conditions, such as the status of abused men in society, the patterns of economic distribution of resources, the acceptance of violence in society, and the norms for the use of violence in the family, which are also important factors to consider.

Feminists criticise systems theory because it is sometimes used to blame the victim without taking into account the power dynamics of the family. They also argue that it ignores the gendered nature of much of the violence that occurs and that it is seen as a systematic explanation to hide individual responsibility and accountability for violent actions (Stark & Flitcraft, 1996:69).

A systems theory explanation is not a unicausal explanation. Individual characteristics represent input into the system. Systems theory explains violence as the product of interdependent causal processes including the pre-existing behaviour patterns of system members and the system processes that lead to stability or change in patterns of behaviour over time. This does not, however, remove any individual from responsibility for his or her own behaviour. What it does is to provide new and important insights into how to deal with the problem of family violence (Giles-Sims, 1986:144).

Researcher found the models provided by Gelles (1997), Straus (in Gelles, 1997) and Siegel (2008), concerning family violence and the individual characteristics of violence prone individuals, helpful in providing explanations for violence within a family system in addition to providing insight into how certain patterns of violence prevail.

In an attempt to answer the question of why the family is sometimes such a violent institution, Gelles (1997:123) suggests that the answer can be found by looking at some of the unique characteristics of the family as a social group. He states that the family is society's most violent institution, excepting only the military in times of war.

Gelles and Straus (in Gelles, 1997:124) identify the unique characteristics of the family as a social group that contribute to making it a violence-prone institution. These factors are the following:

> **Time at risk** refers to the amount of time spent interacting with family members and intimates which far exceeds the amount of time spent with others, although this can vary depending on different stages in the family life cycle. For example, the birth of a child could compel an abused husband to spend significantly more time with his abuser for the sake of the child.

> **Range of activities and interests** refer to family members and intimates who spend a lot of time with one another with activities ranging over a wider spectrum than non-familial interaction. For example, married couples with children take part in many leisure activities as well as household tasks that would not be done with work colleagues or one's employer. A wide range of activities shared by intimates and family members could lead to many different situations for potential conflict.

> **Intensity of involvement** refers to the quality of family and intimate interaction, which is unique, and that the degree of commitment to family interaction is greater. An abusive remark made by a family member or an intimate partner is likely to have a much greater impact than the same remark in another setting or by someone else.

> **Impinging activities** mean that many interactions in the family and within intimate relationships are inherently conflict structured, whether it involves deciding what television programme to watch or what car to buy, there will be both winners and losers in these intimate relationships. In an abusive relationship the abuser will use such interactions to enforce his or her power over the victim or as a precursor to more violence.

> **Right to influence** is being part of a family, or a partner in an intimate relationship, which carries with it the implicit right to influence the values, attitudes, and behaviours of other family members or an intimate partner. A

113

victim of domestic violence may accept the abuser's attitudes or values concerning a particular issue, just to avoid further victimisation, even though he or she may not agree with them.

- ➤ **Age and sex differences** refer to the family's uniqueness in that it is made up of different ages and sexes, which gives the potential for conflict between these generations and sexes. For example, rebellious teenage children often cause conflict within a household, which invariably leads to conflict between parents when the spousal relationship is not a mutually supportive one.

- ➤ **Ascribed roles** mean that in addition to the problem of age and sex differences, is the fact that family is probably the only institution that assigns roles and responsibilities based on age and sex rather than on individual interest or competence. For example, an older sibling is often expected to supervise younger siblings, taking on a parental role, when parents are not able to do so themselves. This may often lead to frustration for such a child and subsequent guilt on the part of the parents. Once again, a situation is created which is ripe with potential for conflict.

- ➤ **Privacy** implies that the modern family is a relatively private institution, insulated from the eyes, ears and often rules of the wider society within which it functions. Thus, where privacy is high, social control is usually low and vice versa. This means that domestic violence, especially in a relatively closed family system, can often go undetected by neighbours, friends and family and thus continue for generations.

- ➤ **Involuntary membership** refers to families which are largely exclusive organisations. Birth relationships are involuntary and cannot be terminated, except by death. There can be ex-wives and ex-husbands, but never ex-children or ex-parents. Being in a family involves personal, social, material, and legal commitment and also a degree of entrapment. When conflict arises, it is not easy to break it off simply by fleeing the scene or resigning from the institution. For example, for an abused husband and father, it is not always possible to escape his abusive wife, as he may feel that if he leaves the family

home, her abusive behaviours will be directed at the children. Thus, he feels that he must remain in the relationship (involuntarily) to protect his children.

➢ Families are prone to **stress**. This is due in part to the theoretical notion that dyadic relationships, in which two people are linked as a pair, are unstable. Furthermore, families are constantly undergoing changes and transitions, for example, maturation of children, aging of parents, retirement and death. In addition, stress felt by one family member (such as unemployment, illness or bad academic performance) is transmitted to other family members. Such stress can often lead to conflict among family members who are unable to control their emotions in difficult times. A wife may become abusive towards her husband due to stress, when he has been retrenched by his employer resulting from economic difficulties.

➢ **Extensive knowledge of social biographies** means the intimacy and emotional involvement of family and intimate relations reveal a large range of identities to members of a family. Strengths and vulnerabilities, likes and dislikes, loves and fears are all known to family members and even though this can help support a relationship, the information can also be used to attack intimates and ultimately lead to conflict. Abusive partners can use very personal information to belittle a spouse in the company of others or use a physical weakness to overpower the victim leaving the victim feeling powerless and violated.

Gelles (1997:125) goes further to say that the way a family is organised sometimes makes it a conflict-prone institution, or social group. However, the characteristics listed above do not supply the total explanation for this. He states, "The key additional consideration is…the fact that the social organisation of the family…exists within a cultural context where violence is tolerated, accepted, and even mandated is a critical factor that helps us understand why the family, as currently structured, can be, loving, supportive, **and** violent". To demonstrate this point Gelles suggests that the general acceptability of physical punishment in raising children creates a situation where a conflict-prone institution serves as a training ground to teach children that it is acceptable to hit people you love, for powerful people to hit less

powerful people, to use hitting to achieve some end or goal, and, to hit as an end in itself (Strauss, 1994 in Gelles, 1997:126).

Within a social group, such as a family, Siegel (2008:243) states that there are factors that can predict spousal abuse. Various social and psychological issues are taken into account which can further provide insight into why and how violence occurs within these groups.

Siegel (2008:243) postulates that excessive alcohol use may turn otherwise docile wives into abusers. In addition, access to a weapon and previous threat with a weapon may lead to abuse given a conflict situation. Having a stepchild living in the home may provoke abuse, because the step-parent may have a weaker bond with the child. Jealousy may also be experienced when his/her partner pays attention to the child which could otherwise have been directed at him or her.

Siegel (2008:243) further states, that estrangement, alienation or separation from a controlling partner and subsequent involvement with another partner are contributing factors in abuse, primarily due to jealousy of the controlling partner. Furthermore, some husbands or wives who appear docile and passive may resent their dependence on their wives or husbands and react with rage and violence as a result of their own inadequacies. This reaction has also been linked to sexual inadequacy. The author adds that excessive brooding and obsession with a husband or wife's behaviour, however trivial, can result in violent assaults. Coupled with flashes of anger after a verbal dispute and the unpredictability of abusers, these factors can often lead to violent episodes between spouses. In conclusion Siegel (2008:243) also found that husbands and wives who assault their spouses were generally battered as children thus perpetuating the cycle of violence from one generation to the next.

In the following section researcher explores how, not only the family environment influences domestic violence, but also how the socio-cultural environment within which a family is entrenched can influence its behaviour in general. The culture of violence perspective examines how this in turn feeds back into the family system causing it to be violence prone.

116

3.3 The culture of violence perspective

As early as 1967, in their text *The subculture of violence,* Wolfgang and Ferracuti (in Cote, 2002:88) give an explanation of crimes of violence. They attempt to explain why certain groups have higher rates of violence than others. They postulate that homicide in particular, results most frequently from a cultural system of values and beliefs that views violence as a more appropriate, or even required, response to a wide variety of provocations and insults.

Wolfgang and Ferracuti (in Cote, 2002:88) use Sutherland's differential association theory when they claim that violence is learned in interaction with others, and it involves a process of differential learning, association or identification with the values of a particular subculture. Differential association theory postulates that the violence that is learned occurs during interaction with others (differential associations) in a process of communication and occurs mainly within intimate personal groups. Learning violent or criminal behaviour from differential associations may vary in frequency, duration, priority and intensity, making each individual's experience unique to his or her own circumstances and particular culture (Brown, Esbensen & Geis, 1996:286). Wolfgang and Ferracuti conclude that culture is a central component of their theory of violence based on the findings of Sutherland's theory. What their subculture of violence theory suggests is that there is a predominant theme of violence present in the cluster of values that make up the life-style, the socialisation process and the interpersonal relationships of individuals living in similar conditions. While the individual may be unique as a composite, he/she and his/her values can be clustered with other individuals and values (Cote, 2002:89). Thus, if one is socialised in a violent context, especially from a young age, the chances that one will learn and internalise such values is greater than if one does not have exposure to such violence. This exposure may render certain adults prone to violent expressions of frustrations and anger within a family context than adults who were taught to deal with frustration and anger in a non-violent manner, for example, through negotiation.

According to Cote (2002:91), like all human behaviour, violent crimes must be viewed in terms of the cultural context from which they spring. Certain cultures view certain behaviours differently in terms of whether they are viewed as "legitimate" or criminally intended violence. For example, in some cultures (certain African cultures), corporal punishment for children who misbehave is deemed normal and even necessary, whereas in others (some European and American cultures) it is viewed as inappropriate, violent parenting and even considered as criminal in intent. Furthermore, deviant conduct is not evenly distributed throughout the social structure in society. According to Cote, class position, ethnicity, occupational status and other social variables are effective indicators for predicting rates of different kinds of deviance. Sutherland's theory of differential association, suggests that the more thoroughly integrated the individual is into a culture, the more intensely he or she embraces its prescriptions of behaviour, its conduct norms, and integrates them into his or her personality structure. The degree of integration may be measured partly by public records of contact with the law, high arrest rates (particularly high rates of assault crimes) and rates of recidivism for assault crimes among groups which ultimately form the culture of violence predominant in certain societies (Cote, 2002:93).

According to Siegel (2008:227) some nations, for example the United States of America (USA), have relatively high rates of violence, while others, for example, China and Japan, are much more peaceful. The author states that a number of national characteristics are predictive of those countries with high rates of violence. These include a high level of social disorganisation, economic stressors, high child abuse rates, approval of violence by the government, political corruption and an inefficient justice system. Firearms are common in these nations because lacking an efficient justice system, people arm themselves or hire private security agencies for protection. Because police and other agencies of formal social control are viewed as weak and devalued, under staffed, and/or corrupt, people are willing to take matters into their own hands and commit what the author calls "cultural retaliatory homicide". This often spreads quickly and easily amongst deviant subcultures and leads to a general culture of violence within a nation. If one considers that South Africa has gone through a similar level of social disorganisation, as discussed by Siegel, since the abolishment of the apartheid government, it is not surprising that South Africa

118

has all the associated problems, especially within the criminal justice system. Without an efficient justice system and formal social control agencies, organised crime and corruption, as well as violent crimes, have resulted in a violent nation which has adopted violent means to solve problems. These violent problem solving techniques are learned by younger generations and ultimately influence every aspect of life, including family life and intimate relationships. Eventually this creates South Africa's unique "culture of violence" which shapes, not only, part of our national identity, but ultimately who we are as individuals and the manner in which we relate to one another.

In contrast to the latter examples of violent societies, nations such as Japan have relatively low rates of violence because of cultural and economic strengths. Japan boasts a system of exceptionally effective informal social controls, such as a high regard for authority by its citizens, effective parental control of children and general national pride that help reduce crime. It also has a robust economy that may alleviate the stresses that produce violence (Siegel, 2008:228). In contrast looking at South Africa, with its struggling economy within a world-wide recession and high level of unemployment, it becomes evident that such stresses can undermine informal social control and contribute to the "culture of violence".

Siegel (2008:228) further states that national values, as well as each of the factors discussed above (a high level of social disorganisation, economic stresses, high child abuse rates, approval of violence by the government, political corruption and an inefficient justice system), influence violent crimes. These violent crimes include both traditional common-law crimes, such as rape, murder, assault, and robbery, and recently recognised problems such as; work-place violence, family related violence, hate crimes and political violence. Cote (2002:94) adds that it is not "far-fetched" to suggest that a whole culture may accept a value system based upon violent problem solving techniques and as a result demand or encourage adherence to violence in certain situations, for example, in gangs or vigilante groups. The author explains that the overt use of force or violence, either in interpersonal relationships or in group interaction, is generally viewed as a reflection of basic values of a particular culture or sub-cultural group.

Randall (2008, http://academic.udayton.edu/health/06world/Africa03a.thm) states that cultural explanations of domestic violence in African literature emphasises the power of tradition and norms within African culture as an explanation for the widespread incidence of domestic violence. These cultural explanations point directly to the uneven distribution of power within traditional African marriages, the impact of polygamy, the acceptance of male promiscuity and the power of the extended family over a married couple. Having said this, arguments concerning domestic violence are problematic in the African context for a number of reasons. Culture in Africa varies widely among groups and regions it changes over time (especially with regards to Western influences) and may be contested even within the same group. Multiple interpretations of tradition exist, yet it is invariably those of dominant males within the society that have been taken as authoritative, and which women may very well rebel against as they learn more about women's rights. This may give rise to, or increase the incidences of domestic violence.

Another explanation for domestic violence within the African context may be the fact that many African societies are in transition from traditional cultures to a modern, urbanised society. Beneath the surface, many of the violent arguments arising in traditional African households may be as a result of social change and men's sense of threat in the face of it. For example, arguments occur because of men's inability in the modern economy to support multiple wives or extended families, women's growing independence as they take "second" jobs and interact with other professionals, and the difficulty for women to perform household work in traditionally expected ways when they also work in the cash economy. All of these are situations that might not have arisen if African society had remained untouched by the modern world, but they seem almost inevitable in the economic distress and social dislocation typical in most of Africa today (2008, http://academic.udayton.edu/health/06world/Africa03a.thm).

According to Randall (2008, http://academic.udayton.edu/health/06world/Africa03a.thm) part of the blame for domestic violence and violence in general in Africa can be attributed to an alleged "culture of violence" in modern Africa, within which violence is accepted as a way to resolve disputes, and link this to the colonial heritage, when Africans were treated coercively and violently by their colonisers. Lengthy civil wars

and the repressive practices of many post-colonial regimes continue this culture of violence. This is particularly apparent in South Africa, where there has been a dramatic post-apartheid increase in violence, including domestic violence.

Widespread poverty in Africa can also be a causative explanation for the "culture of violence". Though it cannot be blamed directly for domestic violence it nonetheless is an important background condition, given the dire situation of most African economies as a result of the fall in prices of primary products, structural adjustment programmes imposed by the World Bank and often the funnelling of profits into the hands of corrupt government officials. Randall (2008, http://academic.udayton.edu/health/06world/Africa03a.thm) states that widespread poverty has an impact not only on family relations and the stresses felt by family members but also on governmental capacity to deal effectively with domestic violence. Randall further states that even if domestic violence laws and social services were in effect, many African states simply do not have the administrative and law enforcement capacity to implement them.

Furthermore, it cannot be denied that globalisation and the pursuit of Western goals (such as individualism and materialism) which are emphasised in the proverbial "American Dream" as a cultural ethos, has a large impact on developing nations, such as South Africa with its serious crime problem. In their text "Crime and the American Dream", Messner and Rosenfeld (in Cote, 2002:104) attempt to address why the USA has such a high crime rate by utilising a component of Merton's theory of Social Structure and Anomie. The theory addresses the issue of anomie at a societal level. They accomplish this goal by pointing to the "American Dream" which asserts that the high rate of crime in the USA stems partly from the fact that society encourages everyone to pursue the goal of monetary success but places little value on the legitimate means for achieving that success. The authors state that the USA's obsession with crime is rooted in fears that crime threatens their security, their values, their rights, and their livelihoods and the competitive prospects of their children (Cote, 2002:109). Criminality causes the legitimate culturally accepted norms to be sacrificed for the goal itself (monetary gain and material wealth), which becomes "larger than life". This goal eventually influences all areas of life, especially the way in which individual and family goals are set and achieved.

121

Messner and Rosenfeld (in Cote, 2002:104) state that the "American Dream" itself and the normal social conditions engendered by it are deeply implicated in the problem of crime. In the above mentioned text, the authors use the term, the "American Dream" to refer to a broad cultural ethos that entails a commitment to the goal of material success, to be pursued by everyone in society, under conditions of open, individual competition. People are socialised to accept the desirability of pursuing the goal of material success, and they are encouraged to believe that the chances of realising the "Dream" are sufficiently high to justify a continued commitment to this cultural goal. These beliefs and commitments in many respects define what it means to be an encultured member of society.

The "American Dream" is a powerful force in society because it embodies the basic value commitments of the culture it originates from. These values emphasise achievement, individualism, universalism and a peculiar form of materialism that has been described as the "fetishism of money" by Taylor, Walton and Young in 1973. In addition, cultural prescriptions and mandates are filtered through the prevailing gender roles of that particular society, as the interpretation of the "American Dream" differs to some extent for men and women (Cote, 2002:105). It is the homeowner (in traditional patriarchal households, this is the male "breadwinner"), rather than the homemaker (thus the female who tends to the household and children and is not economically active) who is widely admired and envied – and whose image is reflected in the "American Dream" (Cote, 2002:108). This may lead to conflict situations between spouses as a result of pent-up frustration, especially on the part of the female partner who may feel trapped and oppressed in a patriarchal marriage. This may cause her to react to her situation in an abusive manner, either lashing out at her partner emotionally and/or physically to express her frustration.

Following the examination of social and cultural factors that may influence domestic violence Gelles looks at propositions found in the social structural theory of violence which, serve as a starting point for the theoretical conceptualisation of family violence.

3.4   Social structural theory of violence

The propositions of the social structural theory of violence which serve as the starting point to understanding why violence within a family structure occurs are examined for purposes of this study. The propositions of particular significance are as follows:

> ➢ **Violence is a response to particular and situational stimuli**

Few cases of violence are irrational attacks. Generally, violence is a response to stress and frustration or to threats to identity. There are particular family structures, such as, where a husband has less education and occupational prestige than his wife or when the husband and wife come from different religious traditions. In addition, particularly stressful situations, such as unemployment, unwanted or undesirable pregnancy, can also lead to violence.

> ➢ **Stress is differentially distributed in social structures**

Families that have less education, occupational status and income are more likely to encounter stressful events and have stressful family relations than families with higher education, occupational status and income. In addition, the ability to cope with the stress is unevenly distributed amongst disadvantaged family members and communities. Consequently, families that encounter the most stress have the fewest resources (income, support systems and social services) to cope with it.

> ➢ **Exposure to and experience with violence as a child teaches the child that violence is a response to structural and situational stimuli**

The role models for violence presented to an individual in his childhood provide a learning situation where the use, rationale, and approval of violence are learned. Having a role model of violence can create a preference for violent responses to the stimuli as opposed to other responses, such as withdrawal, suicide or psychological violence (emotional abuse).

- **Individuals in different social positions are differentially exposed both to learning situations of violence as a child and to structural and situational stimuli for which violence is a response as an adult**

This proposition draws from propositions 2 and 3. It asserts that certain individuals, as a result of their social position, will have been socialised to the use of violence in certain situations. As a result, individuals are also more likely to be exposed to these situations where violence is an appropriate reaction. This is a result of the differential distribution of norms that approve of violence and the causes of violence in social structures.

- **Individuals will use violence towards family members differently as a result of learning experience and structural causal factors that lead to violence**

Family violence generally is explained by examining the factors in society, and in the family, that lead to violence and whether or not an individual learns to use violent behaviour in these situations. Norms and values that approve of violence and lead to a "subculture of violence" (which in this case is the family) arise from the underlying social structure (Gelles, 1987:187-191). Such a social structure in the South African context may be the "culture of violence" which was discussed in the previous section.

In addition Siegel (2008:226) states that children who are constantly exposed to violence at home, at school, or in the environment in which they live may adopt violent methods themselves. People living in areas marked by extreme violence may eventually become desensitised to the persistent neighbourhood brutality and conflict they witness, eventually succumbing to violent behaviours themselves. Those children who are exposed to violence in the home and also live in neighbourhoods with high rates of violence are the ones most likely to engage in violent crime themselves, which may or may not include domestic violence.

In the following section social learning theory will be discussed with reference to violent behaviour and in particular domestic violence. Henry and Einstadter (1998: 239) state that culture and cultural elements are important in social learning theory.

They argue that social learning theory proposes that the significance of primary groups (for example, the family) comes not only from their role in exposing the individual to culturally transmitted and individually formed definitions, but also from providing behavioural models to imitate the primary group's behaviour. These cultural definitions and models relate to how people may behave in violation of the norms and values of their culture or even their personal convictions. For example, a child raised in a community that advocates non-violent values and living in a family that expresses non-violent attitudes, may nonetheless still engage in and justify violence as a result of witnessing abusive behaviour in the home or being abused themselves (Henry & Einstadter, 1998: 241).

3.5   Social learning theory

Edwin Sutherland formulated a social learning theory in 1949 which basically assumes that humans commit crime as a result of learning and socialisation experiences with significant others (such as parents, siblings and other family members) in primary groups. Sutherland called his theory "differential association" to describe how groups that have criminal knowledge, skills and practices could have an impact on others who enter the group. This impact (whether large or small) would be directly proportionate to the extent to which they associate with the group. Sutherland theorised that in these primary groups people develop specific sets of norms and codes of conduct that they apply to themselves and in turn translate in their activities (Henry & Einstadter, 1998: 215).

In 1985 Ronald Akers (in Henry & Einstadter, 1998: 215) formulated another social learning theory which takes the view that social interaction in the social environment is a major source of behavioural reinforcement. Akers draws on and expands Sutherland's differential association theory. He also takes into account psychological ideas about behavioural learning. This approach assumes that humans are rational responders to stimuli, avoiding pain and pursuing pleasure. As a result of this, they are said to be considerably affected by the consequences of their behaviour. Akers states that humans can be conditioned through the manipulation of rewards and punishments which reinforce conventional action and

punish antisocial or deviant behaviour. This approach recognises the differences in people's reinforcement history and the different meanings stimuli have for them (Henry & Einstadter, 1998: 216).

Social learning theory proposes that there are variations in the extent to which people internalise deviant and social definitions of behaviour and that there are variations in the extent to which these beliefs and behaviour are reinforced. These variations can develop within any socially accepted or cultural system. They do not require the existence or participation in an organised deviant subculture in direct conflict with the larger society.   Social learning theory further proposes that the deviant and social definitions of behaviour themselves are learned through reinforcement within the socialisation process and that they function as cues which signal that certain behaviour is appropriate and likely to be rewarded, or inappropriate and likely to be punished. It is this anticipated reinforcement or punishment (based on direct or vicarious reinforcement in the past) that provides motivation for the behaviour. One may be willing to commit a crime if one holds a favourable definition of the behaviour, but one is less likely to act unless the situation also allows for the expectation of a "payoff" or reward and low risk of punishment (Henry & Einstadter, 1998: 236-237). In a domestic violence situation the abuser may be willing to initiate and continue with abusive behaviour if he or she believes that the abusive behaviour will get the desired results. For example, the abuser tries to gain power over his or her partner through degradation in order to manipulate the partner's behaviour to the abusers advantage. Degradation in the form of insults and name-calling leaves the victim feeling powerless and insignificant, giving the abuser the so-called "upper hand" (the payoff) in a conflict situation.

Social learning theory proposes that reward and punishment shape both one's attitudes and behaviour over time and provides the motivation to engage or refrain from action at a given time and place. In relation to the latter, one may violate group norms because of failure of or improper socialisation (insufficient learning through the use of punishment or rewards) of the group's norms. Embedded in these norms may be both the prohibition of an act as well as definitions that justify the act. Parents or primary care-givers may fail as effective role models, or other deviant

126

models may be available outside the family, for example in the media or amongst peers (Henry & Einstadter, 1998: 237).

Social learning theory posits that, in addition to or contrary to a favourable attitude toward criminal behaviour one is motivated to engage in the behaviour by the reward expected to be gained from it and will likewise refrain from it if one expects negative consequences. Furthermore, if the act is congruent with or allows one to adhere to a certain set of values or norms, that may provide enough positive motivation to do it. If it is congruent with one's beliefs, the guilt or self-reproach will often be sufficient to deter action. But positive or negative attitudes are only part of the motivation which could induce or inhibit behaviour. Social learning theory proposes that the relative reinforcement from other known or anticipated rewards and costs motivates commission of the act even in the face of unwilling or negative attitudes. People may believe that it is wrong to lie, but lie anyway if it will get them "off the hook" when accused of something they did wrong (Henry & Einstadter, 1998: 238). Similarly a woman may be aware of the fact that violence towards her husband is unlawful and reprehensible in the eyes of other family and community members, but engages in violent tactics anyway to obtain her goal (whether that may be control over her partner or material gain) as previous violent behaviour achieved that without any repercussions.

Siegel (2008:110) states that although social learning theorists agree that mental or physical traits may predispose a person toward violence, they believe a person's violent tendencies are activated by factors in the environment. The specific form of aggressive behaviour, the frequency with which it is expressed, the situations in which it is displayed, and the specific targets selected for attack are largely determined by social learning. However, people are also self-aware (they have personal preferences and attitudes towards certain types of behaviour or situations) and engage in purposeful learning. Their interpretations of outcomes of behaviour and situations influence the way they learn from experiences. Social learning theorists view violence as a trait learned through a process called behaviour modelling. In modern society, aggressive acts are usually modelled after three principle sources, which are applicable in most situations where violence occurs, these are:

> **Family interactions**

Studies (refer to Viano's model of transgenerational abuse paragraph 3.5.2) of family life show that aggressive children have parents who use similar tactics when dealing with others. For example, the children of wife or husband batterers are more likely to use aggressive tactics themselves than children who are not exposed to violence in the home. This occurs especially if the victims (their mothers or fathers) suffer psychological distress from the abuse, as the abuse often results in inconsistent parenting due to the stress endured by these parents.

> **Environmental experiences**

People who reside in areas where violence occurs daily are more likely to act violently than those who dwell in low-crime areas whose norms stress conventional behaviour. The constant exposure to violence desensitises one to aggressive tactics and often becomes an acceptable form of problem solving in difficult circumstances. This violent behaviour can spill over into domestic situations and becomes an acceptable way in which family matters are dealt with.

> **Mass media**

Films, video games and television shows commonly depict violence graphically. Moreover, violence is often portrayed as acceptable, especially for heroes who never have to face the legal consequences for their actions. This is especially true for children who are easily influenced during their formative years and where there is little or no parental control over their exposure to such violent media depictions.

3.5.1 Locus of control

Theodore (in Viano, 1992:37-39) addresses the issue of locus of control, a construct found within social learning theory. The locus of control is said to be a personality variable that can be expressed as an internal orientation or an external orientation depending on the style learned as a child. An example of external locus of control (or belief in external causality) was exemplified when women entering into a shelter

were measured for locus of control. It was found that these women blamed their husbands for their life circumstances, thus they expressed an external orientation. In correlation to this, Theodore found that when questioning men during counselling who were abusers, that these men externalise responsibility. He also found victims to have a significantly more external locus of control than non-victims. In addition he found abusers were not significantly different from non-abusers with regard to their locus of control. Therefore, it appears that the dynamic of external locus of control may be operating in hostile marriages.

Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz (1980 in Viano, 1992:37-39) report that people in abusive marriages, perform the same abusive behaviours as their parents. According to social learning theory there is a high correlation between marital violence and external locus of control (which is learned from the family of origin).

3.5.2 Model of transgenerational abuse

Viano (1992:16-18) uses the model of transgenerational abuse to examine the phenomenon of child abuse. Viano postulates that child abuse may become transgenerational because children seek revenge for their own abuse when they grow up. He states that one possible reason for transgenerational child abuse is that the conflicts engendered by abuse and neglect become internalised. According to the author a child victim of abuse internalises his/her conflict with parents in preference to being alienated from them, possibly because that meant he/she might be neglected and abused further and not survive. The victim sought to be punished in order to end his/her parents' anger, which inclined them to reject or avoid him. The abused child was not only hurt by adults, but the victim continued to hurt him/herself in ways similar to that in which he/she was hurt. They do this by continually getting involved in relationships that are unhealthy and affect them in a negative way or by becoming bullies themselves. Viano found that as adults these victims tended to become punishers of those dependent on them, especially when their children made demands.

Viano further states that verbal abuse is the most likely, and physical abuse the least likely, form of maltreatment to be transmitted from one generation to the next. He also found high correlations between how a mother was treated as a child and how she treated her children in turn. The author states that even when parents were determined to avoid perpetuating their experience of abuse, under conditions of stress many reverted to treating their children as they had been treated as children.

Rapp-Paglicci, Roberts and Wodarski (2002:14-15), state that the transmission of violence from one generation to the next is a component of learned behaviour and cultural aspects such as norms and values adhered to by certain cultures (for example, physically punishing children is an acceptable and necessary practice in child-rearing). The authors postulate, that among adults who were abused as children, more than one-fifth will later abuse their own children. A child's perceptions of family members and their interactions with each other are important factors in a child's development. Essentially, early life attachments (also referred to as bonding) often translate into a "map" of how the child will perceive situations outside the family. A positive attachment based on warmth, affection, caring, protective behaviours and accountability leads to basic trust, and trust is at the core of building a social human being. A child who does not have a caretaker's protection experiences anxiety is overwhelmed and may survive through dissociating him/herself from the trauma. Such dissociation inhibits a sense of feeling connected to the outside world. In the earliest manifestations of this "numbing", children are cruel to animals, siblings, friends and even parents and grandparents. These children lack sensitivity to the pain of others and may develop a distorted association of pain (they cannot gage the severity or the effect of pain on others) and some children become isolated and disconnected from others (Rapp-Paglicci, Roberts & Wodarski, 2002:16).

Rapp-Paglicci, Roberts and Wodarski (2002:17) further state that the lack of positive attachment or bonding with a caretaker could lead to severe depression in adolescence and adulthood which may make an individual more prone to violence. The authors state that abusive mothers often show signs of depression which may cause them to abuse other family members in return. However, they do concede that the depression may also result from being labelled abusive and therefore

becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy as a symptom of the depression. The latter aspects may have particular significance to this study and will be delved into wherever researcher deems necessary and valuable in the context of this research.

In the following section researcher looks at gender roles and the expectations embedded in cultural values, beliefs and practices which shape the behaviours and attitudes of and towards the different sexes. This is explored in the context of family life, taking into account whether a marriage is traditional or egalitarian, and how this could influence domestic violence.

3.5.3 Gender roles and expectations

A gender role is defined as a set of perceived behavioural norms associated particularly with males and females, in a given social group or system. It can be a form of division of labour by gender and refers to the attitudes and behaviours that class a person's stereotypical identity. The behaviour of individuals in their particular gender roles, is a consequence of both socially enforced rules and values, and individual disposition, whether genetic, unconscious, or conscious (2008, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender-roles).

Gender role attitudes adopted by individuals or groups take into account the various roles men and women play within families and how these roles make marriage and childbearing more or less attractive to men and women. Fenstermaker, West and Zimmerman (1991 in Chibucos & Leite, 2005:225) argue that men and women "do gender" (act in stereotypical ways related to a specific gender) daily through their productive activities. Different situations produce variations in normative gender behaviour because of the production of particular gender roles. The authors suggest that wives and husbands share more gendered roles than unwed couples, for example, husbands are considered the "head of the household" because they may be the "breadwinners" while wives are considered the caretakers of the home and bare most of the responsibility for child-rearing.

Recent decades have seen marked changes in gender role attitudes however. Men and women are increasingly apt to approve of wives and mothers working and to think that men should help with housework. Changes in beliefs about appropriate behaviour for women and men at work and home are bound to affect family dynamics. Attitudes matter because they signify the internalisation of role responsibility, which goes beyond acting out a role. Complementary roles, such as men that work to support the family whilst the wife stays at home to take care of the children and household in marriage, continue to decline as parallel roles emerge. This is not always advantages to the family as non-traditional women do not need marriage and family for success or rewards. The feminist movement encouraged women's liberation from restrictive roles by rejecting the belief that women's roles should centre on motherhood. However, these changes may benefit the family because egalitarian roles and perceptions of a fair division of household labour are important for marital happiness. Egalitarian husbands do more in the form of housework, support of their wives, and practice more egalitarian decision making which involves their children. Blaisure and Allen (1995 in Chibucos & Leite, 2005:226) argue that improving marriage for women requires men to believe in equality, as well as to actively support and practice equality.

Behaviour may also influence attitudes towards gender roles. For instance, divorced women have more non-traditional attitudes than married women, but these attitudes may have become less traditional following divorce. Likewise parenthood can change one's attitudes.

Marriage is a traditional institution and therefore one might expect gender role attitudes to influence the probability of marrying. Becker (1991 in Chibucos & Leite, 2005:226) suggests that traditional roles encourage marriage. He argues that spouses who trade services by implementing a traditional division of labour benefit most from marriage. On the other hand, men and women who are orientated toward a less specialised division of labour or one in which gender roles are reversed benefit less from marriage. These women and men also find it more difficult to find a compatible partner, and thus most either do not wed or they marry and divorce.

Goldscheider and Goldscheider (1992 in Chibucos & Leite, 2005:226) suggest that egalitarian responses to questions about the household division of labour may mean something qualitatively different for young men and women. Whereas egalitarian women might see their responses as indicating a desire to reduce their responsibility for home and family tasks, egalitarian men appear willing to share in activities centred on children and family. Thus, egalitarian attitudes can be seen as pro-family views for both men and women.

Unlike marriage, cohabitation is not considered a traditional institution but a more contemporary living arrangement, so one might not expect those with traditional attitudes to cohabit. This would suggest that egalitarian men and women are more likely to enter a cohabiting union than traditional men and women.

The question whether gender role attitudes affect union (marriage or cohabitating) dissolution, is considered by Becker (1991 in Chibucos & Leite, 2005:226). The author argues that specialisation, or trading of services, within a union is necessary for its stability. A traditional gender-based division of labour contributes to marital stability because each partner contributes something to the marriage that the other spouse relies on. Changing the traditional balance of activities may thus disturb spouses' mutual dependence on one another and their need to exchange services within marriage. Women with traditional views are less likely to divorce or separate, whereas non-traditional attitudes may create stress in a marriage, pushing egalitarian women to consider or anticipate divorce.

Oppenheimer and Lew (1995 in Chibucos & Leite, 2005:227) argue that specialisation in marriage may actually be a disadvantage as it puts family welfare at risk and places the burden to provide for the family's needs on the husband. Instead, a more collaborative marriage with similar roles and activities may better sustain companionate marriages. Under these conditions, the greater flexibility of egalitarian couples may ease adjustments to disruptions affecting the family. The authors state that men often find that their gender role attitudes are important in determining marital stability, and that, traditional, rather than egalitarian attitudes are more harmful for marital relationships. Perry-Jenkins and Crouter (1990 in Chibucos & Leite, 2005:227) find that traditional husbands of working wives report less marital satisfaction. Traditional men may feel competition with successful wives, which can

strain marital relationships and lead to divorce. By contrast, egalitarian men have higher marital satisfaction, less marital conflict, and are happier in marriage.

Becker (1991 in Chibucos & Leite, 2005:227) argues that when it comes to having children that a less specialised division of labour reduces women's desire for children. Nock (1987 in Chibucos & Leite, 2005:227) suggests that childbearing is a "core symbolic experience" with different meanings for egalitarian versus traditional women. To him, fertility decisions "reflects a woman's views about the role of women in society". Traditional women see motherhood as central to their lives and identity. Egalitarian women's decisions about having children are based on their own needs or desires – motherhood is only one part of their lives and identity. Men, too, shape their ideas about parenthood based on their gender role orientations. Traditional men lump the goals of a successful career, marriage, and children together, and having wives who care for their children makes parenthood easier and establishes and confirms their masculine identity. Most literature has evidence that traditional men and women are more likely to have children. Young women and couples who have children are more traditional than those who do not and these differences precede the first birth. Traditional couples are more likely to plan for and have a child soon after marriage. By contrast, egalitarian wives and married couples have lower fertility intentions than their traditional counterparts and plan to start their families at a later stage or not at all.

Oppenheimer (1994 in Chibucos & Leite, 2005:228) argues that a traditional division of labour causes stress for women and excludes men from full participation in childrearing. A more traditional view is likely to place most of the hardships and joys of raising children on women's shoulders. Conversely, a more equal division of labour may reduce stress on women and increase men's enjoyment in their children's lives.

3.5.4 Stereotyping

According to Viano (1992:337-39) foundational research into spouse abuse was limited to wife battering in part because the women's movement provided motivation for further investigation, the accessibility of battered women in shelters, and the fact

that traditional male roles did not encourage men to admit to being victims or abusers. As a result, men as victims of abuse or mutual abuse between partners, is rarely addressed by researchers or the media. Literature continues to focus on what has become accepted as the "typical" situation in which the husband abuses the wife.

Cote (2002:93) states that physical aggression is often seen as a demonstration of masculinity and toughness. We might argue that this emphasis on showing masculinity through aggression is not always supported by data. If homicide is any index at all of physical aggression, one must remember that in a study done in Philadelphia, non-white females have homicide rates two to four times higher than the rates of white males. Violent behaviour appears more dependent on cultural differences than on sex differences, traditionally considered of paramount importance in the expression of aggression.

Hagan, Simpson and Gillis (in Cote, 2002:151) combines control theory and conflict theory to highlight the fact that both macro forces in society and micro forces in individuals' existing environments are important in determining both criminality and victimisation. The initial formulation of power-control theory was centred on a class analysis of heads of households. However, it was clear to the theorists that power in the family also derives from the positions in the workplace. Thus, if a man occupies a position of authority (managerial position) in the workplace, it is likely that he would be in a similar position of authority in the home. The authors also state that in patriarchal families, wives have little power relative to husbands, daughters have little freedom relative to sons, and daughters are less delinquent than sons. These differences, according to the authors, are diminished in egalitarian families (Cote, 2002:151).

Hagan, Simpson and Gillis (in Cote, 2002:151) contend that a predominantly male pattern of delinquency results from the class structure of modern patriarchal families. In these families, an instrument-object relationship takes the form of fathers' and, mainly, mothers' controlling their daughters more than their sons. This relationship plays a central role in the reproduction of gender division between family and work. Patriarchal families will prepare daughters for a "cult of domesticity" that makes their

involvement in delinquency unlikely. This instrument-object relationship will be less acute (or non-existent) in egalitarian family structures, which tend to have more balanced positions of authority where sons and daughters are treated more or less equally. In egalitarian families, daughters gain a sense of freedom and increased openness to risk-taking behaviours (Cote, 2002:152). Thus, in patriarchal families, daughters are taught by their parents to avoid risk. Alternatively, in egalitarian families, daughters and sons alike are encouraged to be more open to risk taking behaviour.

Cote (2002:154) states that the instrument-object relationship is a key part of the way in which patriarchal families socially reproduce a gender division in the areas of consumption and production. Alternatively, it is through the diminishing of this relationship that egalitarian families can generationally reproduce an overlap of the areas of production and consumption. This does not necessarily mean that fathers will become as involved as mothers in the parental control of children. What it does result in, is that parents in egalitarian families will redistribute their control efforts so that daughters are subjected to controls more like those imposed on sons. Thus, in egalitarian families, as mothers gain power relative to husbands, daughters gain freedom relative to sons. Therefore, in terms of social reproduction, the presence of the imbalanced instrument-object relationship helps perpetuate patriarchy and its absence facilitates equality.

The following section 3.6 deals with the combination of social exchange and rational choice theory in the context of family relationships with reference to domestic violence within this context. The key assumption being, that people stay in relationships (even abusive ones), and adopt certain behaviours within these relationships, because the benefits exceed the costs of being in the particular partnership.

3.6   The social exchange theory/rational choice theory

Early social exchange theory arose out of the work of sociologists Blau, Homans, Thibaut and Kelly during the early 1960's (Chibucos & Leite, 2005:137).   These theorists focused on the rational assessment of self-interest in human relationships. In its most basic form, social exchange theory may be viewed as providing an economic metaphor to social relationships.   The theory's fundamental principle is that humans in social relationships choose behaviours that maximise their likelihood of meeting self-interests in those situations.

Social exchange theory includes a number of key assumptions:

➢ Social exchange theory operates on the assumption that individuals are generally rational and engage in calculations of costs and benefits in social exchanges.   In this respect, individuals exist as both rational actors and reactors in social exchanges which involve issues of decision making.   This applies to most interactions within a family context, whether abusive or not.

➢ Social exchange theory builds on the assumption that those engaged in interactions are rationally seeking ways to maximise the profits or benefits to be gained from these situations, especially in terms of meeting basic individual needs.   In this respect, social exchange theory assumes social exchanges between or among two or more individuals are efforts by participants to fulfil basic needs.   These basic needs may be as simple as food, housing and clothing to emotional and psychological needs, especially where one spouse is entirely dependent on the other for all his or her basic requirements.

➢ Exchange processes that produce payoffs or rewards for individuals lead to patterning of social interactions.   These patterns of social interaction not only serve individuals' needs but also constrain individuals in the way in which they may ultimately seek to meet those needs.   Individuals may seek relationships and interactions that promote their needs, but are also the recipients of

behaviours from others, that are motivated by their desires to meet their own needs. An individual with a dominating and controlling personality type may seek a more timid partner who lacks confidence in order that his or her need to control a relationship is met.

- ➤ Social exchange theory further assumes that individuals are goal-orientated in a freely competitive social system. Because of the competitive nature of social systems, exchange processes lead to the differentiation of power and privilege in social groups. As in any competitive situation, the power in social exchange lies with those individuals who posses greater resources, that provide an advantage in the social exchange. As a result, exchange processes lead to differentiation of power and privilege in social groups. Thus, individuals with more resources (usually material and financial) hold more power and ultimately are in a better position to benefit from the exchange. This is often also be the case within an abusive marriage or partnership where one partner does not have resources (an income or independent wealth) and the other does, making the balance of power unequal. This ultimately gives the partner who has such resources, a distinct advantage over the other partner who has none.

Tied into this concept of power in a social exchange is the principle of "least interest". Those with less to gain in terms of meeting their basic needs through a social exchange tend to hold more power in that exchange. This means that power comes from less basic dependence on a social exchange. This can be seen in patterns of power that exist within family relationships. For example, children are dependent on parents, or an unemployed spouse is dependent on the employed spouse.

From a social exchange perspective, human behaviour may be viewed as motivated by desire to seek rewards and avoid potential costs in social situations. Humans are viewed as rationally choosing more beneficial social behaviours as a result of rational views of all available information. Because all behaviour is costly in that it requires an expenditure of energy on the part of the actor, only those behaviours that are rewarded or that produce the least cost tend to be repeated. Thus, social exchanges take on an air of consistency in that patterns of rewards often remain

138

stable in social relationships. In an abusive relationship, patterns of abuse are often repeated when the abusive partner benefits by gaining power over and obtaining desired behaviour from his or her victim. Patterns of abuse are perpetuated especially if the victim offers little or no resistance. As a result, the abuse repeatedly brings desired rewards to the abuser.

Social exchange theory embraces the concepts of equity and reciprocity. This would assume that individuals are most comfortable when they perceive that they are receiving benefits from a relationship approximately equal to what they are putting into the relationship. The reality, however, is that family life is replete with relationships that promote perceptions of inequality. Relationships between siblings of different ages, parent and child relationships, and spousal relationships are seldom truly equal in all situations. This inequality may cause conflict within the family and between partners.

Social exchanges characterised by perceptions of equality imply the presence of reciprocity. All social life requires a degree of reciprocity on the part of actors in social situations. Thus, when individuals perceive relatively balanced levels of reciprocity in a social exchange, they are more likely to be satisfied in that exchange. Social exchange theory suggests that individuals who perceive the presence of reciprocity in their social relationships are more likely to feel satisfied with and maintain those relationships. When there is a lack of reciprocity within a relationship one or both partners feel unsatisfied and very often the situation results in conflict.

Social exchange theory also includes the concepts of rewards and costs. Rewards are described as any benefits exchanged in personal relationships. They may be concrete or symbolic and particular to one individual or more universal. However, in most cases, the status of something as a reward is perceived as rewarding by an individual's needs in a social exchange. For example, receiving praise from a spouse may be a strong reward for one individual although it might mean relatively little to someone else. Generally, social exchange theory proposes that individuals are motivated to gain rewards in social exchanges. In the absence of rewards, individuals involved in social exchanges may be primarily motivated to avoid costs in

those exchanges. Costs are either punishments or forfeited rewards that result from social exchanges.

Social exchanges carry three potential costs. First is investment costs which represent the energy and personal cognitive or emotional investment put into an exchange by the actors involved. Direct costs, which include time, financial resources or other structural resources, that are dedicated to the exchange. Finally, opportunity costs represent possible rewards that may be lost as a result of the relationship or social exchange. For example, a parent sacrifices considerable possible rewards or benefits in order to raise children in a responsible manner.

To understand a person's behaviour in social exchanges, it is important to understand the comparison level the person brings to the exchange. The comparison level is the threshold at which an outcome seems attractive to a person. The evaluation of social exchanges also includes a comparison level of alternatives. It is proposed that individuals assess the outcomes of their social exchanges in relation to other possible relationships or exchanges. As outcomes of relationships fall below the perceived outcomes from other relationship alternatives, individuals may choose to leave present relationships or social exchanges. For example, a husband may seek to end his marriage if he perceives being divorced from his wife as more advantageous than remaining married.

In families, a social exchange perception argues that family relationships become interdependent or interactional. In this respect, power becomes characteristic of the relationship dyad and understanding family relationships includes assessing the power that is held among the actors in those relationships. Family research from a social exchange perspective attends to norms of fairness and reciprocity, dynamics of attraction and dependence in relationships, distribution of power within families, and definitions of the rewards and costs associated with social exchanges in families (Chibucos & Leite, 2005:137-139).

3.6.1 Concepts of rational choice theory which closely link to social exchange theory

According to rational choice theory, unlawful behaviour is the product of careful thought and planning. Offenders choose crime after considering both personal factors such as, monetary gain, revenge, thrills, entertainment and situational factors such as target availability, security measures, and possibility of apprehension by the police. Violent perpetrators select suitable targets by picking people who are vulnerable and lack adequate defences. Before deciding to commit a crime, the reasoning or rational thinking perpetrator evaluates the risks and the potential value or benefit to be gained. The decision to commit a specific type of crime, then, is a matter of personal choice made after weighing and evaluating available information. Conversely, the decision not to commit a crime may be based on the perpetrator's perception that the potential rewards of the unlawful act are not worth the risk of apprehension (Siegel, 2008:73, 77).

Rational choice theory postulates that a perpetrator's choices may be affected by various personal traits and experiences. Criminals or violent individuals appear to be more impulsive and have less self-control than other people and they seem unaffected by fear of punishment. They are typically under stress or facing some serious personal problems or condition that drives them to choose risky or violent behaviour (Siegel, 2008:74). Researcher believes that this aspect in particular, can often be related to domestic violence cases, where the male is the victim of abuse by a female partner, who has little self-control and faces personal problems and or severe stress.

Following from the above theories discussed from section 3.2 to 3.6, researcher aims to integrate all the theories, perspectives and ideologies in order to build a model for the purposes of understanding the phenomenon of victimisation of the male partner by his female partner within the domestic violence context. An in-depth discussion of integrated theory must however precede this endeavour.

3.7 Integrated theory

For the purposes of this study researcher has integrated components of different theories, perspectives and ideologies to demonstrate the process of victimisation in an abusive relationship. These components have been used interactively to rationalise the underlying causes and different stages of the emotionally and physically abusive relationship. This serves as a basis for understanding the dynamics of a partnership, either cohabiting or marital, where emotional and physical abuse takes place, by the female partner against her male counterpart.

Brown, Esbensen and Geis (2001) state that during the past two decades of the twentieth century in criminology theory, the design of integrated theories and models have developed and grown in popularity. Cote (2002) explains that this development is due to criminologists becoming aware of the many limitations of traditional theories to explain crime. The criticism directed at traditional theories is that human behaviour, which includes crime, is far more complex than is implied by reducing explanations to a single factor or a limited number of factors.

Messner (1989) states that it is not adequate to have theories that for example only focus on socialisation, genetic factors, culture, or family disorganisation, as the causes of crime. Shoemaker (1996) reiterates this view by stating that if crime is to be better understood, it is necessary to make use of a multi-disciplinary approach by integrating various theories and perspectives into one specific model. The assumption of such an integrated perspective is that the theories and/or perspectives that are utilised are:

- ➢ not mutually exclusive;
- ➢ compatible with the type of representation made; and
- ➢ the representation of a logical and comprehensive combination of interrelated occurrences and consequences.

Integrated theories can provide an overall view or a more detailed explanation of criminal behaviour. Human behaviour is complex and varied and not easy to explain

because a large number of factors can have an influence on their behaviour. An integrated perspective on crime could offer a more comprehensive and "complete" explanation of behaviour. Brown et al, (2001) postulate that in the process of doing research, based on an integrated perspective, a model is usually designed that relates to a specific form of criminal behaviour.

The assumptions of researchers who design such a model are that a unique combination of elements of theories, or causative factors, can contribute to explaining a specific crime or category of crimes. **For the purposes of this study researcher has compiled an integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence which aims to assist in the understanding of the emotional and physical abuse of the male partner, within a heterosexual marriage or cohabitating relationship, by his female partner.**

Huitt (2003, http://chiron.valdosta.edu/whuitt/materials/sysmdlo.html) cited that a model is a critical component of one's vision as it defines the important variables to consider and the relationship among those variables. According to Huitt there are a number of different philosophical positions that provide a foundation for organisation and interpretation of empirical data into models. One of those positions is that everything can be reduced to a simple entity and if we want to know about multiple entities we can study the entities one at a time and then aggregate our knowledge for an understanding of the whole.

Huitt further states that, on the opposite end of the spectrum, is the view that one must not only understand the entities in isolation, but must understand the relationships between or among entities. According to this view, it is not enough to first study the development of thinking and then the development of emotion or to identify separate factors, rather these must be studied together in order to understand the relationships among the factors.

Patton (2002:560) similarly proposes that the "triangulation" of theories, which comprises the application of multiple perspectives to view the same data, is useful in the conceptual interpretation of lived experiences (in this study, the victimisation of men in a domestic violence context). Patton emphasises that in a qualitative study,

more than one theoretical explanation may emerge from the data. The usefulness and power of these emerging theories are investigated by cycling between data collection and analysis until a conclusion is reached (see Chapter 5, 5.34 – 5.40)

3.8 An integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence - Figure 3.1

Researcher has illustrated the rationalisation behind the integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence in the form of a schematic representation of the connection between systems and the use of theories which form the foundation of this research. At the core of the model is the individual, which is the male victim of domestic violence in this study, which examines the major aspects of human beings, namely mind, body and spirit. The assumption is that human beings do not develop in isolation, but in a variety of contexts or systems (refer 3.2). These contexts or micro-systems (2008, http://chiron.valdosta.edu/whuitt/materials/sysmdlo.html) are the environments which surround the individual and which he is in constant interaction with. They play a major role in his development and behaviour. The individual's most immediate influences are his family, along with the local community, institutions such as work, sports, school and religious institutions, as well as the specific culture with which the family identifies. In this context researcher will explore the effects of abuse on the victim's thoughts and emotions (mind), the physiological effects of abuse (body) and the effect the abuse has on his spirituality or belief system and religion (spirit). This will be examined with the use of the social structural theory of violence (refer 3.4), the social learning theory (refer 3.5) and the exchange/rational choice theory (refer 3.6).

In addition, researcher will also examine the structure of the victim's family and the effects of the abuse on his various relationships. These will include his relationship with his partner/spouse (the abuser), his children (should there be any), his other family members, friends, work colleagues and other associations and peers. These influences occur at the second level or meso-level (but overlap with the micro-level) which also has an immediate level of influences. Included at this level are social organisations, for example the media and entertainment agencies, and the general society with its political and economic influences within which the individual lives.

The influence of these systems and institutions interacts with, and is filtered through the micro-system and its institutions. At this level researcher will make use of the culture of violence perspective (refer 3.3) to examine and explain the various influences the South African socio-political and economic system may have on the family system and ultimately contribute to domestic violence and the victim's unique circumstances.

The integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence (refer Figure 3.1) also examines the third level of influence (the macro-system) on the family where domestic violence has occurred. At this level international and global influences are taken into account as well as more abstract aspects of culture. For example, the movement from the agriculture and industrial economies to an information-age and global economy, which has a widespread influence on the ways societies, communities and families operate (2008, http://chiron.valdosta.edu/whuitt/materials/sysmdlo.html). Researcher specifically examines the influence of Westernised goals of materialism and individualism on family life. While we sometimes tend to focus only on family or peer influences on human development we should remember that there are other important factors that influence thought and behaviour. According to Huitt (2008, http://chiron.valdosta.edu/whuitt/materials/sysmdlo.html), an African, as well as Native American tradition, state that, it takes a whole community to raise a child. The important principle of a complex systems approach is that there are competing factors between the individual and the context within which the individual exists which shape that person's unique circumstances.

3.9 Conclusion of theoretical perspectives

Williams and Mc Shane (1999:274) state that theories do not necessarily have to compete with each other, but can be utilised in various combinations to address various levels of explanation. Thus, as long as assumptions are compatible, there is no need to discard one theory to accept another.

In this chapter a number of theories and perceptions were discussed to lay the theoretical foundation for this research and the building of a model, namely, an integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence. These theoretical contributions assist researcher in the endeavour to understand the way in which emotional and physical abuse develops and manifests in a heterosexual relationship where the male partner is victimised by his female partner.

A detailed analysis of the **integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence** is done in chapter five to illustrate its application and contribution with regards to the exploration and understanding the male victim of domestic violence in a holistic manner. This model should also assist practitioners and researchers in developing treatment applications as well as examining the true nature and extent of this phenomenon in South Africa.

Chapter four follows with a detailed explanation of the research methodology used to gather the empirical data from the respondents in this study. These research methods will be used in conjunction with the theoretical model constructed in this chapter in order to compile a comprehensive interview schedule which will be utilised to guide researcher during the information gathering process.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY, PROCEDURES AND TECHNIQUES

4.1   Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology for this study detailing the procedures and techniques of research, data collection and analysis.   A qualitative methodology is used as this type of research involves the scrutiny of social phenomena.   Using a qualitative methodology researchers try to understand social processes in context, while investigating the subjective nature of human life (victims' personal experiences) to enhance their understanding thereof (Esterberg, 2002:2).   In this chapter, a profile of research participants was also drawn up.   Although some of the reference books are fairly dated researcher found these sources of theoretical texts to be most relevant for the purposes of this study as the fundamental research on husband battering/ male abuse was done prior to 1990 (refer Table 1 – Gelles, 1974; Steinmetz, 1977 & 1978; Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz, 1975).

4.2   Methodological approach

Brown et al (1996:11), states that methodology refers to the techniques or methods that researchers use to learn facts as they attempt to answer the "whys" of crime.

For the purposes of this research a qualitative study of a sample of seven male victims who suffered physical and emotional abuse within a marriage or cohabiting relationship is applied.   As the study is explorative in nature, qualitative research methods are used, with the aim of describing and understanding the impact of victimisation on the research participants. According to Patton (1990:22) qualitative data consists of detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviours and also uses direct quotations from people about their experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and thoughts.   Researchers that use these methods of qualitative measurement, use raw data from the empirical world. The data is collected as open-ended narrative without attempting to fit

program activities or peoples' experiences into predetermined, standardised categories such as the response choices that comprise typical questionnaires or tests. Qualitative data provides depth and detail which emerges through direct quotations and careful description. Aligning himself with the above Bailey (1994:244) states, "the primary nature of the relationship between the observer and the subjects allows an in-depth study of the whole individual". In-depth interviews were conducted with men who were prior to or during the interview process, victims of physical and emotional abuse within marital or cohabitating relationships to achieve the above successfully.

Packer (http://www.mathcs.duq.edu/~packer/IR/IRmain.html) states that qualitative research is also described as interpretive research, which separates it from traditional research which is more quantitative ("the number-crunching research") in nature. Essentially interpretive research is an approach in the human sciences that recognises the paradigmatic character of all research. Packer further postulates that any approach into the systematic investigation of phenomena, rests upon epistemological and ontological assumptions. These are assumptions are about the nature of knowledge and about the kinds of entity (whether they be people or things) that exist. Packer further states that these assumptions typically go unnoticed because they are taken for granted (sometimes referred to as "normal" science).

Interpretive research is hermeneutic in character which according to Packer (http://www.mathcs.duq.edu/~packer/IR/IRmain.html) is the reading (literature review in this study) and the interpretation of messages and texts (interviews, e-mails and blog correspondence in this study). Packer states that hermeneutics rests on basic important points, which are: "A text must be read to make sense (one must know the language in which it is written), any text is open to more than one reading and texts must be read in context".

Packer further states that interpretative research begins with the ordinary that is an "everyday human understanding we have of one another". This everyday grasp of people, actions and events comes from being a participant (in this

148

study the researcher interacting with respondents). From this flows a willingness to be reflective, self-critical, thorough, and assumes that what other people do and say is sensible, not "crazy" and therefore authentic and reliable. Packer says that this type of inquiry (research) is relevant to both researchers and practitioners. Flowing from this paradigm of "everydayness" is depth or critical hermeneutics which asserts that "things are not what they seem" because of things such as censorship, repression, ideologies, oppression, systematic distortion, silencing and coercion. A depth hermeneutics therefore seeks to uncover what has been hidden (in this study the victimisation and trauma of the South African male victim of domestic violence), covered and disguised. Packer says that the hermeneutics of "everydayness" is always needed first, but that depth hermeneutics enables the discovery of some very interesting and powerful phenomena.

4.3   Research procedures

Research procedures refer to the different steps and phases in a research project. Because descriptive studies require a representative sample, this method could not be used for the purposes of this study. An explorative study is, therefore, more relevant in the study of unknown phenomena because, like the descriptive study, it focuses on the, who, how, what, and why, yet it is not as structured and does not require a representative sample.

Babbie (2007:88-90) states that much social research is conducted to explore a topic, that is, to start to familiarise the researcher with a specific topic. This approach usually occurs when the researcher examines a new interest or when the subject of study itself is relatively new. Researcher found that very little research has been done on the male victim of domestic violence in South Africa, and as it is still, in researcher's opinion a predominantly patriarchal society with its relative stigmas, men are reluctant to speak about their trauma and victimisation at the hands of their female partners. Exploratory studies are done typically to satisfy the researcher's curiosity and desire for better understanding of a certain social phenomenon and to test the feasibility of undertaking a more extensive study of such a social phenomenon, both of

which held true for this study (Babbie, 2007:88-90). Babbie further emphasises that exploratory studies are quite valuable in the social sciences, especially when a researcher is breaking new ground, as they almost always yield new insights into a topic for further research. In light of this, in researcher's opinion, it is vital for criminologists (more specifically victimologists) and other social scientists to understand the physical and emotional suffering and trauma of the male victim of domestic violence, before embarking on further research - hence the motivation for this study.

Exploratory studies usually lead to insight and comprehension rather than the collection of accurate and replicable data and frequently involve the use of in-depth interviews, the analysis of case studies, and the use of informants (Mouton & Marais, 1993:43). According to Bailey (1994:40), exploratory studies are undertaken primarily for four reasons:

➢ To satisfy the researcher's interest and desire for a better understanding of a phenomenon.

➢ To test the feasibility of undertaking a more comprehensive study.

➢ To develop methods to be used in a more comprehensive study.

➢ To formulate a problem for more precise investigation, or for developing hypotheses (which is not applicable for this study).

Babbie (2007:91) warns that the main shortcoming of an exploratory study of this nature is that it seldom provides satisfactory answers to all research questions which pertain to the phenomenon being researched. It can merely hint at the answers and can suggest which research methods could provide more definitive ones. Babbie further states that the reason exploratory studies are seldom definitive in themselves, have to do with representativeness. The people you study in your exploratory research may not be typical of the larger population which is of interest to the researcher or his/her peers. Babbie argues that once you understand representativeness, you'll know whether a

particular exploratory study actually answered its research problem or only pointed the way toward an answer.

The purpose of this study is an exploratory one, as researcher aims to gain insight and understanding into the phenomena of victimisation by a female partner through the use of physical and emotional abuse directed at her male partner, within a marital or cohabiting relationship. Researcher therefore used the procedures stipulated for an exploratory study, namely, a literature study, consultation with experts, focused in-depth interviews, as well as observation of body language and social settings. In order to attract respondents to the study, researcher also made use of the internet by registering a blog (refer paragraph 4.3.5), therefore trying to make contact with as many victims as possible for interview purposes. The information gathered during this process was useful in that it provided a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. This became especially evident where correspondents were not willing to take part in a personal interview and preferred to remain completely anonymous and communicate their victimisation experiences solely via the blog or per electronic mail (e-mail).

4.3.1 Literature review

De Vos, Strydom, Fouchè and Delport (1998:64) state that a literature review is aimed at contributing towards a clearer understanding of the nature and meaning of the problem that has been identified. These authors stipulate the following functions of a literature review:

➢ It may reveal that someone has already performed essentially the same research. In this way researcher could determine whether the study is too similar or simply a duplication of previous research.

➢ It provides a much deeper insight into the dimensions and complexity of the problem being studied.

➢ A literature study equips the researcher with a comprehensive justification for the steps to follow, as well as with a sense of the importance of the undertaking.

Researcher applied the literature review as a means of gaining insight into, not only domestic violence in general, but more specifically into the victimisation of the male victim of domestic violence as a social problem.

4.3.2 Sampling techniques

Bailey (1994:83) postulates that sampling involves the designation of a population of interest, such as all registered voters in South Africa, subsequent thereto, an attempt should be made to select a subset of some predetermined size out of this, which should represent the entire population. In this way, sampling usually takes place after a research problem has been identified and the most appropriate type of methodology has been formulated. For this study researcher used non-probability sampling methods as these are not based on probability theory, but are limited. De Vos, Strydom, Fouchè and Delport (2005:201) state that in non-probability sampling the chance of a researcher selecting a certain individual is unknown because the researcher does not know the population size or the members of the population. According to Neuman (2007:204) a researcher uses non-probability sampling methods either out of ignorance, a lack of time, or in special situations, which is the case with this qualitative research. Two forms of non-probability sampling was used, namely, snowball and purposive sampling.

4.3.2.1   Snowball sampling technique

According to Neuman (2007:206) snowball sampling, also referred to as "network", "chain referral" or "reputational" sampling, uses a crucial feature in that each person or unit is connected with another through direct or indirect linkage. This does not mean that each person directly knows, interacts with, or is influenced by every other person in the network. Rather, it means that, taken as a whole, with direct and indirect links, most people are within a

connected web of linkages. This sampling method uses the snowball analogy – the snowball begins small, but becomes larger as it is rolls down a mountain. It is a multi-stage technique as it begins with one or a few people or cases and spreads out on a basis of links to the initial cases.

4.3.2.2   Purposive or judgemental sampling technique

Neuman (2007:206) states that purposive sampling is an acceptable kind of sampling for special situations. It uses the judgement of an expert in selecting cases or the researcher selects cases with a specific purpose in mind. It is used in exploratory research or in field research and is appropriate in three situations:

➢ A researcher uses it to select unique cases that are especially informative.

➢ A researcher may use it to select members of a difficult – to – reach, specialised population.

➢ A researcher wants to identify particular types of cases for in-depth investigation.

This type of sampling is based on the judgement of the researcher, in that a sample is composed of respondents that have the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes necessary for the purposes of a specific area of research (De Vos et al, 2005:202).

In this study the purpose of these sampling techniques is not to generalise to a larger population but to gain a deeper understanding of different cases of the male victim of domestic violence. Wellington and Szczerbinski (2007:27) argue that the choice of quantitative versus qualitative research methods should be dictated by the nature of the problem. When a researcher's main concern is with explaining and predicting, then a choice of quantitatively orientated methods may follow. If the researcher wants to understand the

experiences of an individual from a first-person perspective, a qualitative approach should be taken.

4.3.2.3   Composition of sample

The sample of this study consisted of seven men who were victims of serious physical and emotional abuse by a female within a heterosexual marriage or cohabiting partnership. Researcher selected these cases upon referral (using the snowball sampling technique) and because they matched the criteria for this study (using the purposive sampling technique) and would therefore yield the type of information that would lead researcher to reaching as many of the aims of this study as possible. In addition researcher was satisfied (because of the nature and depth of the interviews), that the sample reached saturation point for exploratory purposes, after corresponding with the seven respondents that took part in this study.

4.3.3 Interview schedule

According to Bailey (1994:188) an interview schedule is a data collection method in which one person asks questions to another from a list of topics and/or subtopics within an area of enquiry. These serve to focus the interview within a specific field of interest for the purposes of a particular project.

Patton (1990:197) states that the informal conversational interview relies entirely on the spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of interaction, typically an interview that occurs as part of ongoing participant observation field work. Researcher employed this method during the initial phases of research and with the use of the literature survey in order to gain a general frame of reference to formulate more focused research questions.

The general interview guide approach (Patton, 1990:198) involves outlining a set of issues that are to be explored with each respondent before interviewing begins. These issues in the outline need not be dealt with in any particular order, and the actual wording of questions to elicit responses about those issues, is not determined in advance. The interview guide simply serves as a

basic checklist during the interview to make sure that all relevant topics are covered. The interview guide presumes that there is common information that should be obtained from each person interviewed, but no set of standardised questions are written in advance as with a questionnaire. The interviewer is thus required to adapt both the wording and sequence of questions to specific respondents in the context of the actual interview. Patton (1990:201) further states that the interview guideline provides a framework within which the interviewer would develop questions, sequence those questions, and make decisions about which information to pursue in greater depth.

Building on the informal interview schedule (after conducting the first/pilot interview) researcher proceeded to construct a more structured interview schedule (see Annexure A), comprising of short closed (ordinal) questions initially for biographical information of the respondent being interviewed, followed by less formal, open-ended questions which were conducted informally in a conversational manner, but were never-the-less focused on the aims of the study. This is referred to by Barbour (2009:119-121) as the semi-structured interview which refers to, "the capacity of interviews to elicit data on perspectives of salience to respondents". Wellington and Szczerbinski (2007:83) are of the opinion that the semi-structured interview schedule is the most valuable measuring instrument for qualitative researchers, but warns that the degree of structure will vary amongst interviewers and respondents.

4.3.4 Composition of the interview schedule

The interview schedule (see Annexure A) was structured according to the **integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence** in the following manner (see Figure 3.1):

➢ The effects of emotional and physical abuse on the individual in terms of mind, body and spirit.

➢ The effects of emotional and physical abuse on the victim's relationships with his partner, children, other family members, friends

155

and colleagues and acquaintances, as well as the effect on his daily functioning, for example work and other activities.

➢ The victim's family dynamics in terms of social structure, cultural influences and communication patterns with his partner and children.

➢ The effects of a violent society on family and other relationships.

➢ The effects of global perspectives that influence modern family life, especially Westernised goals such as materialism and individualism.

➢ To obtain an overall perspective and understanding of the male victim of domestic violence in the South African context.

4.3.5 A Blog

According to the search engine Google (http://www.blogger.com) a blog can be compared to a personal diary, a daily pulpit, a collaborative space, a political soapbox, a breaking news outlet and a collection of links and memos to the world. Google states that, "Your blog is whatever you want it to be" making it a very useful tool for research purposes. In simple terms, a blog is a web site, where you comment on an ongoing basis. New information is easily recognisable, so that your visitors can read what the latest topic of conversation is. For the purposes of this study this would be, for example, a research question. Your visitors (respondents) can then comment on it, link to it or email you. According to Google, a blog can give millions of people a voice which enables them to connect with others. Blogging is not only about putting your thoughts on the web, it enables one to connect with and hear from anyone who reads your work and cares to respond. However, with a blog, one can control who can read and write to your blog.

Blogger comments lets anyone, anywhere, offer feedback on ones postings, but allows one to delete any comments that are irrelevant or that one might

156

find offensive, therefore eliminating respondents who are not serious about the topic under discussion.

Access controls allows one to decide who can read and who can write to your blog. You can use a group blog with multiple authors as an excellent communication tool for small teams (researcher would include her study supervisors where necessary), families and other groups. As a single author, one can create a private online space for collecting news, links and ideas to keep private or share with as many readers as one deems fit.

Blogger profiles allow researchers to find people (for purposes of this study respondents and other academics or interest groups), that share an interest in your particular subject. "The blogger profile, where one can list one's blogs (can be more than one), your interests, and more, allows people to find you, but only if you want to be found" (http://www.blogger.com).

4.3.6 Interviews

Esterberg (2002:83) has the following opinion regarding interviews, "Interviewing is rather like marriage: everybody knows what it is, an awful lot of people do it, and yet behind each closed front door there is a world of secrets". Interviews are often said to "reach the parts which other methods cannot reach". Interviewing allows a researcher to investigate and prompt issues that cannot be merely observed or quantified.

According to Neuman (2007:253) the advantages to face-to-face interviews is that they have the highest response rates and permit the longest interview schedules. In this regard researchers can have "a conversation with a purpose" that is focused on issues which speak to the aims of their specific research, as opposed to informal conversations about general issues (Wellington & Szczerbinski, 2007:81). Interviewers can also observe the participant and the surroundings within which the interview takes place, for example, when a participant is interviewed in his own home. The interviewer can also use non-verbal communication, such as facial expressions and

gestures, which encourage the participant to continue speaking or show empathy for his traumatic experience. It also allows interviewers to ask all types of complex questions, and extensive probes can be used. The disadvantages of face-to-face interviews are however that they require training, sometimes extensive travelling, often supervision is needed and costs can be high. Interviewer bias can also influence face-to-face interviews. The appearance, tone of voice, question wording and general attitude of the interviewer may affect the respondent.

Patton (1990:28) adds:

> The purpose of gathering responses to open-ended questions is to enable the researcher to understand and capture the points of view of other people without predetermining those points of view through prior selection of questionnaire categories. Direct quotations are a basic source of raw data in qualitative measurement, revealing respondents' level of emotion, the way in which they have organised their world, their thoughts about what is happening, their experiences, and their basic perceptions. The task for the qualitative methodologist is to provide a framework within which people can respond in a way that represents accurately and thoroughly their points of view about that part of the world about which they are talking.

Upon recommendation by Wellington and Szczerbinski (2007:86-87) researcher used notes and tape-recordings when permitted by the respondent being interviewed, to improve upon the accuracy and quality of the data obtained during the interview process. The authors warn that the use of visual aids (such as cameras and video recorders) and tape recorders should always be negotiated with a special eye on the privacy and anonymity of the participants.

4.3.6.1   Probing

According to Neuman (2007:257) a probe is a neutral request to clarify an ambiguous answer, to complete an incomplete answer, or to obtain a relevant response. Bailey (1994:189) identifies several functions and characteristics of

158

probing in qualitative research when open-ended questions in an unstructured or semi-structured interview schedule are used. These are:

➢ To get the respondent to answer more fully and accurately, or at least to provide a minimally acceptable answer. Probing can thus be used whenever the respondent hesitates in answering, or gives an unclear or incomplete answer, and this does not form part of the interview schedule as each interview will be unique.

➢ A second function is to structure the respondent's answers and to make sure that all the topics of the research problem are covered and that irrelevant information is reduced.

➢ Probing questions may be written on the interview schedule in advance in the pre-test phase if it becomes evident that respondents' incomplete answers fall into several predictable categories.

➢ A specific probe may be written for each category, thus probes are essentially contingency questions to be used only if the respondent answers earlier questions in a certain way.

During the interviews with the male victims of domestic violence, researcher was required to probe extensively, as many of the respondents in this study were embarrassed by the abuse they had suffered at the hands of their female partners. Many were reluctant to describe their victimisation in detail during the initial interview process. Some of the respondents answered certain questions in short sentences, or with one word answers, which were not adequately descriptive and required researcher to delve further by means of probing questions in order to gain full insight into the victims' abuse.

4.3.6.2   Pilot study (interview)

An important principle of ensuring reliability is to use a pre-test or pilot version of a measure first. Neuman (2007:141) suggests that the researcher

develops one or more draft or preliminary versions of a measure (an interview schedule) and try them before applying the final version in a research situation. To establish validity or "soundness" as it is referred to by De Vos et al (2005:345), all research must be measured against criteria which should reflect the trustworthiness of a research project. To assist with this Lincoln and Guba (in De Vos et al, 2005:346) propose, that the "credibility" of qualitative research is the alternative measurement to internal validity, in which the goal is to demonstrate that the research was conducted in such a manner as to ensure that the subject was accurately identified and described. The authors continue to say:

> The strength of the qualitative study that aims to explore a problem or describe a setting, a process, a social group or a pattern of interaction will be its validity. An in-depth description showing the complexities of variables and interactions will be so embedded with data derived from the setting that it cannot help but be valid. Within the parameters of that setting, population and theoretical framework, the research will be valid.

In order to test whether the above reliability and validity would be achieved, researcher used one respondent for the purposes of a pilot study in which the various themes of the interview schedule were discussed in an informal manner to identify potential problems before finalising the semi-structured interview schedule. The interview was conducted very successfully and thus researcher decided to include this one in the main sample, as the information obtained was in-depth and entirely appropriate for the study. The reason why only one respondent was pre-tested is that researcher had a difficult task in finding suitable respondents that suffered both serious physical and emotional abuse to suit the profile required for this study. Even though a pilot interview was not necessary with this type of qualitative research, researcher found it very helpful in attempting to establish "credibility". According to De Vos et al (2005:353) establishing this type of "credibility" in qualitative research speaks to the degree to which findings, and by implication the methods that are used to generate the findings, can be trusted.

4.3.6.3   Ethical considerations

Ethical research requires balancing the advancement of knowledge against the non-interference in the lives of others. If social research is not done in an ethical manner, it can cause harm to a respondent, psychologically, legally, professionally and even in some instances physically. Thus, an ethical researcher needs to be aware of the potential harm to respondents and minimise them at all times (Neuman, 2007: 445-446). To reach this goal researcher conducted a short debriefing upon completion of interviews and offered referral in some instances for further counselling with a professional mental health practitioner.

As a criminologist, researcher is bound by a code of conduct prescribed by The Criminological and Victimological Society of Southern Africa (CRIMSA) which ensures that professionals doing research in the field of criminology and victimology adhere to the ethical guidelines as set out by the organisation (http://www.crimsa.ac.za).   In summary this code of conduct stipulates that criminologists respect the rights, dignity and worthiness of all people (in this study, crime victims). This obligates researchers to ensure that the data collected from interviews remains confidential (refer 4.3.6.4) and that research is conducted with integrity.

The ethical guidelines of CRIMSA also state that criminologists should not mislead respondents involved in a research project as to the purpose of their research. To reach this objective researcher stated clearly in the Informed Consent form (refer Appendix B) and in the initial stages of contact with the respondents, what the purpose of the study was, and discussed (verbally or in writing) concerns about anonymity and confidentiality openly with the respondents. In line with the code of conduct, researcher did not coerce any of the respondents into taking part in this research, thus encountered no ethical dilemmas as all respondent (adult males) took part voluntarily, fully aware of what the interviews would entail. Respondents were also given the option to terminate an interview at any stage if they felt uncomfortable with the questions being asked or for any other reason.

4.3.6.4   Anonymity and confidentiality

Researchers protect privacy by not disclosing a respondent's identity after information is gathered, this means that they remain nameless and therefore the respondent is unknown or anonymous (Neuman, 2007:452).   For the purposes of this study researcher allocated each respondent a pseudo name to ensure anonymity.

Confidentiality means that the researcher knows who he or she is interviewing but the researcher holds it in confidence or keeps it secret from the public. The information is not released in a way that permits linking specific individuals to specific responses and is publicly presented only in an aggregate form.

4.3.7   Debriefing of respondents

According to Ovens (2006:127-136) the researcher has an obligation to the respondent (the victim) during the research process to represent the impact of the victimisation process on him objectively, and to ensure that he leaves the interview feeling emotionally stable, by debriefing him and referring him for counselling if it is believed that he has been re-traumatised or has not resolved his emotions fully.   Ovens states that, "Debriefing victims of crime and violence to enable them to come to terms with what has happened to them is critical.   A competent debriefer can immediately deal with the trauma and limits the necessity of the victim having to undergo extensive trauma counselling".   For the purposes of this study Fowler's Model (Fowler, 1996:123-127) for the Treatment of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, will be used by researcher or an appointed psychologist, if researcher feels that this is necessary, to debrief respondents after each interview.   This model has several stages, namely:

➢ **The introduction stage**
According to Fowler (1996:123-127) it is helpful for a traumatised person if the helping professional uses the phrase 'debriefing', which does not have the

negative connotations to the person's self concept that the words 'counselling' or 'therapy' might conjure up. Comfort might be derived for the victim from knowing that the debriefing technique has been used with people who have been similarly traumatised previously, thereby indicating that other people have suffered what they are experiencing, and thus that their suffering is not unique or abnormal.

It can also be helpful to inform the victim that there is no time limit for the session and that the process will be followed until conclusion, and that he will not be stopped abruptly while he is emotionally vulnerable. He will be granted a time of silence if he needs to process his emotions before continuing.

➢ **The story stage**

During this stage researcher will invite the victim to describe the most traumatic events of his victimisation process. Many people who suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder present a history of having coped well with adversity, and often they may try to block out the feelings which might be overwhelming them. Initially, a traumatised person is likely to produce a very short and factual account of the traumatic event, devoid of any emotional content.

➢ **The background stage**

For the purposes of this study researcher will not focus on this stage as debriefing will take place after a thorough in-depth interview with the victim has taken place which will provide all the background information that will be needed.

➢ **The retelling stage**

During this stage researcher will take the victim through the story they have already provided, but ask them to describe their thoughts and feelings during the time of the trauma. The normality of their thoughts and feelings would be pointed out by the debriefer at this stage. Sometimes the traumatised person will, realising what is expected of them, provide a more detailed account of the traumatic event than the one originally present, but most are likely to try to

gloss over the actual emotions experienced at the time, which may be very frightening to the victim. The debriefer often has to try to slow the person down, and ask specific questions about the thoughts and feelings (often anger and guilt) at what he might consider to be 'traumatic highlights' noted either during the initial interview, or else during this stage.

➤ The 'going beyond' stage

During this stage researcher must ask the victim to continue to narrate the sequence of events which followed the point at which they ended their initial account of the story. This might flow on naturally from the above stage. This can provide more information which the victim might originally have tried to forget, which may include reactions from others, for example, relatives or colleagues. This may have reinforced existing feelings of guilt.

Before moving on to the closing stage, the debriefer will ask the victim if there are any points which he feels might have been left out by the debriefing session. This may enable victims who feel that they have to comply with the structure imposed on them by the debriefer, to reveal new relevant information.

➤ The termination stage

Having worked through the above stages, at a pace which has allowed the victim to meaningfully re-evaluate his emotions and thoughts, researcher will ask questions such as, "If you were back in the traumatic situation, but knowing what you know now, what would you have done differently?" This may help the person to further clarify how he might have acted differently if more knowledge or skills had been available to him at the time. It might also help the victim to realise that he would not actually have done much differently, which can be used to point out the appropriateness of his actions, even if he thought they might have been inadequate at the time.

A similar question would be, "What type of help would you have found most useful during the victimisation process?" This may help to identify assistance which the victim felt he needed during the time, but which was not available or

forthcoming. This may also assist to reassure him that he coped well considering the circumstances and lack of help he received.

Researcher will ask the victim how he feels after the intensive interview procedure, and to help him to 'de-role' back to the present day. Researcher will ask for feedback from the victim and invite him to ask questions. The interview would then be drawn to a close in a conventional manner and refer the victim to support services, such as Inter Trauma Nexus or Life Line, if deemed necessary.

➢ **The 'debriefing the debriefer' stage**

Such interview and debriefing sessions, of unpredictable length, and involving intense concentration and empathy with raw emotion to deal with can be stressful and draining for the researcher. It is very important for researcher to arrange for personal debriefing as soon as possible after the interview has been conducted, if he or she finds it necessary.

4.4 Case analysis

For the generation and dissemination of information in this study, a case study approach is used where researcher is faced with a large amount of information. This information gives the researcher an intimate familiarity with people's lives and culture. Researcher looks for patterns in the lives, actions, words and body language of people in the context of the complete case (Neuman, 2007:331). This type of approach is referred to as field research which strives to discover, describe and understand the ways in which participants in some form of social life, construct and give meaning to their particular world. Researcher attempts to gain insight into the world of the respondents in order to gather richly detailed data by observing, listening, enquiring and systematically making field notes. According to field researchers (Schurink et al., 1992:79), unstructured data-collection methods such as participant observation, in-depth interviews and personal documents can be employed to obtain clarity about a participant's life world.

Neuman (2007:29) states that case study research examines many features of a few cases in-depth over a specific period. Cases can be individuals (which was the case for this study), groups, organisations, movements, events, or geographic units. The data is more detailed, varied, and extensive and most involve qualitative data about a few cases. Neuman (2007:351) further states that a case is a social relationship or activity that can be extended beyond the boundaries of the site and have links to other social settings. This can be linked to field research in which a researcher wants to study a small group of people interacting in the present. It is valuable for micro-level or small-group face-to-face interaction (Neuman, 2007:377). For the purposes of this study researcher delved into the backgrounds and situations of a selected number of cases that met the criteria of a serious pattern of abuse, to get an in-depth understanding of each one.

4.5   Observation

According to Bailey (1994:242), observation is the primary technique for collecting data on non-verbal behaviour. Neuman (2007:361) adds to this by saying that a significant part of what researchers do in the field is to pay attention, watch, and listen carefully. They use all their senses and become instruments that absorb all sources of information, for example, they scrutinise the physical setting of the respondent to capture its atmosphere. In addition to physical surroundings, the researcher observes the respondents and their actions, noting non-verbal observable physical characteristics, such as neatness, dress, and hairstyle because they express messages that can affect social interactions. What respondents do is also significant. The researcher notices where people sit, or stand, the pace at which they walk, and their non-verbal communication, including, gestures, facial expressions, and how they sit or stand. According to Neuman (2007:362) this is how people express social information, feelings, and attitudes which they do not necessarily verbalise. Researcher observed and recorded many of the latter non-verbal expressions before and during the face-to-face interviews with respondents (refer chapter 5). These non-verbal observations assisted researcher in understanding the effect of the victims' experiences on them.

166

4.6   Scientific validity and reliability of the study

The epistemological dimension of research (or science) and how knowledge is obtained, is closely linked with the researcher's (or scientist's) striving to make realistic statements and obtain valid ("true") knowledge. Babbie (2007:310-314) states, that part of obtaining this "truth", involves "being there" in person, as it is a powerful technique for gaining insights into the nature of human affairs in all its rich complexity. In relation to this, it is important to look at the validity and reliability as measurement criteria for the knowledge or "truth" obtained in this study (Silverman, 2008:210).

Although the concepts of validity and reliability are not the same, the two terms are often used in the same context as requirements that scientific knowledge has to satisfy. Mouton and Marais (1993:79) are of the opinion that the main consideration whether data is valid concerning the process of data collection, is that of reliability. Essentially, this is the requirement, that a valid measuring instrument, thus, one that captures the meaning of the construct the researcher is interested in, can be applied to different respondents, under different circumstances, and ultimately lead to the same observations. They ask, "Will the same methods used by different researchers and/or at different times produce the same results?" From these definitions it is clear that the reliability of observations or data is influenced by four variables:

> ➢ the researcher;

> ➢ the respondent;

> ➢ the measuring instrument (interview schedule); and

> ➢ the circumstances under which the research is conducted.

According to De Vos et al (2005:163) reliability generally refers to the extent to which independent administration of the same instrument (in this study, the interview schedule) consistently yields similar results under comparable

conditions. The authors reiterate that reliability is mainly concerned with how well something is being measured and not necessarily with what is being measured. However, Neuman (2007:138) warns that reliability and validity are salient in social research because constructs in social theory are often ambiguous, diffuse, and not directly observable. Perfect reliability and validity are virtually impossible to achieve. Rather, they are ideals researchers should strive for.

4.7   Techniques used to analyse data

In the social sciences, nothing speaks for itself and the information gathered must be interpreted. Confronted with a large number of impressions, documents, and field notes, the qualitative researcher faces the difficult and challenging task of making sense of data collected. De Vos et al (2002:225) state that the aim of the analysis and interpretation in qualitative research is to attempt to gain insight and understanding into the phenomenon being studied.

Patton (1990:295) is of the opinion that the focus in analysing qualitative data collected from in-depth interviewing and fieldwork comes from the evaluation questions generated at the beginning of the evaluation process (during the conceptual, question-focusing phase of the evaluation).

Inductive analysis means that the patterns, themes and categories of analysis come from the data. They emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on the data prior to data collection and analysis. The analyst looks for natural variation in the data. Patton (1990:306) proposes two ways of representing the patterns emerging from the analysis of the data:

➢ the analyst can use the categories developed and articulated in the research done, to organise presentation of particular themes; and/or

➢ the analyst may also become aware of categories or patterns for which the respondents did not have labels or terms, and the analyst develops terms to describe these inductively generated categories. Thus, new terms or

168

categories can be derived or deduced from the information generated during the research process.

Neuman (2007:421) reiterates this view by stating that a qualitative researcher analyses data by organising it into categories on the basis of themes, concepts, or similar features. The researcher examines the relationships among concepts and endeavours to link concepts to each other in terms of a sequence, as oppositional sets, or as sets of similar categories that he or she interweaves into theoretical statements. In this study, this was done by means of the theoretical model (refer Figure 3.1), which guided the formulation and categorisation of the interview schedule's questions. This was done in order that a cohesive and comprehensive set of responses could be analysed and interpreted upon completion of the interview process.

4.8 Profile of the victim respondents

The respondents' biographical profiles for this study are as follows:

➢ **Age**

The ages of the seven respondents ranged from 41 years to 57 years, with five being in their mid 50's.

➢ **Marital status**

Six out of the seven respondents were married during the course of the abusive relationship, and one respondent was in a cohabitating relationship. Of the seven respondents, three were divorced and two separated and in the process of divorce. The one respondent who was in a cohabitating relationship had ended the relationship and one of the respondent's abusers committed suicide before the divorce could be finalised.

Of the seven respondents, four married or cohabitated under the age of 25, with two of the marriages being unplanned (as a result of pregnancy). For four of the respondents the abusive relationships were their first marriages or cohabitations.

➢ **Length of relationships**

The length of the emotionally and physically abusive relationships ranged from 10 years to 23 years with the majority of the relationships being more than 14 years in duration.

➢ **Children**

In six of the relationships children were conceived, the remaining one being childless.

➢ **Educational qualifications of the victim respondents**

Six of the respondents had tertiary academic qualifications and were professionals in their specific fields. Blogger did not provide this information.

➢ **Employment status of the victim respondents**

Seven of the respondents were employed, two being self-employed and the remaining five working in other organisations in a professional capacity.

4.9 Conclusion of methodology

The research procedures, which were employed to collect the data for this study, as well as the profile of the respondents, were discussed in this chapter to give the reader a clear understanding of how the research was conducted. Following this in Chapter 5, the analysis and interpretation of the data which was collected according to the stipulated procedures and techniques, is discussed in detail. The data collected through interviews is analysed and interpreted with the use of the theoretical perspectives and theories found in researcher's **integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence** (see Figure 3.1).

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the data obtained from personal interviews, researcher's blog and electronic mail correspondence (e-mail) is analysed and interpreted. The **integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence** (refer Figure 3.1) is used as a theoretical basis for this purpose.

5.2 Case analysis

Researcher investigated the victims' experiences within the different systems within which they were socialised as family members and lived in during their abuse/victimisation. This is done in order to understand how these systems influenced their private, as well as their, public lives. The purpose of this is to assist researcher and the reader in understanding the victims' experiences in a holistic way, whilst describing the abuse in sufficient detail to gain insight into this form of domestic violence.

For purposes of this study, researcher conducted in-depth personal interviews (see 4.3.6) with four respondents who were each given a 'voice' (under the pseudonyms Tom, Dick, Harry and Paul) with which each respondent's 'story' is told, analysed and interpreted through this research.

Included in Chapter 5, is the correspondence researcher collected from an anonymous victim via the blog registered for research purposes (visit www.malebattering@blogspot.com for full dialogue). Although his correspondence was brief and lacked the detail of the interviewed respondents, he made valid contributions to the research process and thus the information obtained is included as part of this thesis. His voice will be referred to as Blogger in the text and his correspondence quoted verbatim.

In addition researcher also conducted a telephonic interview with a respondent who lives in too far away to interview in person. The last respondent was given a written

interview via e-mail, as he did not wish to communicate with researcher in person or telephonically.

5.3 The voice of Tom

Tom is a tall, attractive, impeccably mannered and well-spoken 56 year old man, whom researcher interviewed at his home for purposes of this study. Tom lives in a house, which he built himself, for his family, during the time of his abusive marriage. At the time of the interview Tom was happily re-married, living with his wife, two step-daughters and his son from his previous (abusive) marriage. He has a very successful, stable career and is by-all-accounts an achiever.

He married his abusive partner at the age of 29, three months after they discovered that she (aged 25) was pregnant with their first child, a daughter. Twenty one months later their son was born and shortly after that Tom's victimisation began. Tom was married to his ex-wife who was an alcoholic for 16 years, approximately 15 of which he was victim to her emotional and physical abuse.

5.3.1 Individual: Effects of abuse on Tom's mind (cognitive processes and emotions)

Tom was often criticised in general by his abusive partner but was especially affected by her comments about his weight and the shape of his face. She would criticise his face by saying, "Hoekom het jy so 'n plat gesig?". These comments left Tom feeling unattractive, eroded his self-confidence and had a negative effect on his self-image. As a result he spent most of his adult life he is of the opinion that he was not attractive to others.

She would also make fun of him and humiliate him, especially in social circles and on a more personal level would comment on the size of his penis. Tom said she would do this to get the "psychological upper-hand – give a downer to get an upper" even if it was said in jest. These comments left emotional scars as they affected his manhood and feelings of self-worth.

Tom's abuser would very often shout and curse, especially when she was heavily intoxicated. He recalls a period when they were living in Cape Town where she would shout and scream whilst smashing empty bottles on the floor in a manner which he described as "really unacceptable behaviour". In Tom's mind mature adults did not behave in such a manner, no matter how angry they became.

Tom states that for a long period of time he did have the "urge to rescue her from herself" and would ask people not to drink around her (especially her parents). He would remove all traces of alcohol from their home on a regular basis to demonstrate to her how much he wanted her to stop drinking. Her influence on the children was a big concern for Tom, he reiterates, "She was not a good mother and role model. Her drinking has had a lasting influence on the children – as adults, neither of them can drink alcohol socially. They saw what it did to their mother, how it destroyed our family and did not want to repeat that in their own lives".

On several occasions Tom went to counselling with his wife, but she misinterpreted the therapist's attempts at helping them as "picking on her". She would also accuse Tom of having an affair with the therapist. She also refused to attend Alcoholics Anonymous as she was in total denial about her alcohol problem. After many failed attempts to help her, Tom was left feeling hopeless that he would be able to improve the situation.

Sometimes he would have to make excuses for his wife's bad behaviour at social events when she had been drinking excessively by saying, "...just excuse my wife please, she's had too much to drink". This caused him tremendous humiliation, especially if she misbehaved in the company of colleagues or friends whose respect he valued.

Tom would also receive the "silent-treatment" for up to three days when his abuser, as he states, couldn't get "her own way". This form of punishment got worse as the abusive relationship progressed. Tom states that he constantly felt that he was "walking on egg-shells – quail eggs for that matter", in order to keep her happy. He tells that he "walked on a straight line, in the middle of the road" (proverbially) for fear of making his wife angry, or giving her evidence to use against him in court to gain

full custody of the children. For most of his marriage, he knew that theirs would end in divorce.

Tom was often called a "bastard" by his abuser and she always believed that he was having an affair. He even went as far as to record one of her verbal onslaughts to present to the family advocate to use as evidence of his abuse in court. He did this in order to try and gain custody of his children and to get a divorce. Tom describes that her "insane jealousy" was a part of their marriage from the beginning. The abuse became especially bad when he was away from home for periods of time due to work commitments. His absence would exacerbate her extensive verbal abuse. Her "insane jealousy" made him very angry because her jealousy was unfounded.

Tom states that he had to plan his travelling for work purposes very carefully. Tom had to ensure that all his family's basic necessities were taken care of, for example, ensuring that she had petrol in her car, making sure the grocery cupboards were well stocked with food and that his wife had enough money for an emergency, before he left for business trips. He states that he could not trust her to take care of such matters and was constantly worried about his children's safety whilst away. He says, he always thought, "What will she get up to while I'm gone?" and he would often work through the night in order to spend as little time away from home as possible. This uncertainty about his family's safety and well-being made him feel anxious when he was away from home, even if only for a short time.

Tom's abusive partner tried to control his movements as a result of her excessive jealousy. She forced him to get a pager (before he had a cell phone), so that she could "track him down" as he states, at any given time of the day. He refers to this behaviour as "the zero trust syndrome" as she would demand an explanation of his whereabouts and the amount of time it took to complete tasks. He states "it was like walking on a tight rope" and he felt she treated him like an obedient servant or slave, who had to give an account of everything he did. They would often have disagreements about how long it took him to do certain things, such as running errands or the time it took for him to return from work meetings. When this happened he would use the pager as a timing device so that he could track phone calls she

made to him from her, as evidence against her accusations (usually insinuating adultery).

He would often "escape" to his garage to work and in so doing tried to avoid spending time with her or intrude into what she considered "her space". At times he felt, that if there was physical distance between them, the abusive episodes could be kept to a minimum.

Even though Tom was the sole bread-winner, his wife would scrutinise how and where he spent his earnings, and would look through every cheque and bank statement. She did this to check whether there was any evidence of an adulterous relationship, for example, a cheque made out to a florist, which would indicate that he was buying flowers for someone else. She would often interrogate and accuse him of adultery if she thought he was spending money without her knowledge.

After his wife ran up a considerable debt on her credit card, Tom took it away from her and cut up the card to prevent any further excessive spending by her, as he was not comfortable with debt. He knew that this would be a stimulus that would provoke abuse from her and admits that cutting up her credit card may have been controlling on his part. He accepts responsibility for making her angry in this regard, but states that he had no regrets about taking such action. He could not trust her to handle her finances responsibly.

Tom's abuser would often try to shift the blame after an argument. He was always seen as the cause of everything that went wrong between them. He said, "There was only one problem-child in the relationship and that was me". Tom states that he always felt that he was doing everything wrong in her eyes and that there was "no pleasing her", no matter how hard he tried.

She would also undermine his self-esteem by criticising his career. She would often try to persuade him to resign from his job at the telecommunications company with whom he had built a long-standing career with. She felt that the company was not prestigious enough as an employer. During her verbal onslaughts, she would often state, "Jy's net 'n fokken .... werker – nes 'n kaffir". Tom postulates, that her

feelings towards government institutions, as places of employment, was closely related to her racial views, born from her upbringing and her father's occupation as a railway employee. She felt that Tom's position and company was inferior in comparison to other more prestigious places of employment. As Tom's identity is closely related to his work performance, such comments were very hurtful to him as he felt that he was doing his best to provide for his family.

She would also make him feel worthless and incompetent with regards to the choices he made for the children. When they were very young she took the children out of three different pre-schools which he had chosen for them. According to Tom this was done solely to undermine him, as there was fundamentally nothing wrong with his choice of schools for the children.

Tom also felt that nothing he did in the home on a practical level was ever "good enough" or met with any praise or gratitude. During the early years of their marriage he would also often help her brother with vehicle repairs and other maintenance to his home. He does not recall ever being thanked by her or her brother. As a result of these negative experiences he felt unappreciated in his marriage.

Tom felt trapped in the relationship and he described it as being, "A balancing act between honesty and suspicion of guilt by her", and he always had to find witnesses to account for his movements as proof of his honesty. He vowed early in the marriage to "stick it out" until the children were in high school and old enough to understand why he left the relationship. But up to that point he felt he owed it to his children to stay in the relationship and have their mother with them on a daily basis.

Tom's abuser also accused him of wife-battering on several occasions. She used the fact that she bruised easily when bumping into objects, for example, the dining room or kitchen table, to incriminate him. She even went as far as taking photographs of bruises on her body. She gave these to her lawyer during divorce proceedings as proof of violence perpetuated against her. This was done in retaliation to his reports of husband-battering by her. She later requested to exclude these statements from her report and withdraw these charges against him. Tom felt

resentful after hearing her allegations as he was strongly opposed to wife-battering or any forms of abusive behaviour.

Tom recalls the year of interaction with the Family Violence Advocate during divorce proceedings, as being "a nightmare" for him. His abuser insinuated amongst other things, that he sexually abused his daughter. He states, "If I hugged my daughter, it was not as if I was only looking for a hug, according to her (his abuser)". This also had a profound effect on his daughter and she found these insinuations by her mother very upsetting. Tom and his children later (after the divorce was finalised) burnt the report as a symbol of the lies his wife had told the family advocate to incriminate him. During the year of intense interaction with the family violence advocate, Tom would "tip them off" to visit his home so that they could witness her abusive behaviour first-hand, but states that the authorities would miss the appointments purposefully. He states:

> The insinuations were tremendous and disgusting on that report (which by the way I paid R54 000.00 for), to the extent that the case was so loaded against me that I had no chance, no chance in hell, of getting custody of my children. I could only resort to financial balance in the divorce case.

Tom was often fearful of what his abuser might do if her anger reached an uncontrollable level. Because of this fear he hid his firearm in different places so that she was never aware of where it was at any given time. He was also fearful of being near glasses and glass bottles when she was in the vicinity, as she would often break these and try to push him into the broken pieces of glass. His abusive wife would also threaten him with a kitchen knife. On one occasion she even hurt herself badly by stumbling (she was inebriated) and cutting her hand. He was blamed for the incident. After this he was particularly fearful of being near the kitchen knives during her tirades.

Tom's wife would also break precious objects during her violent episodes. He recalls her smashing their Royal Dalton crockery and destroying some of the children's books which he had purchased for them from Harrods of London on his business trips. He later resorted to removing the children's books and other sentimental

177

objects and keeping them at his office at work in order to prevent her from destroying these possessions which she knew meant a great deal to him and cost him a lot of money.

He was also fearful of what <u>he</u> might do if "pushed too far" by his abuser and once confided in a colleague by stating the following, "I'm actually very scared that I'm going to lose it one day and bash this woman to pieces and end up in jail". He had witnessed his own mother's short temper and believes that her lack of anger management was what led to her having a stroke. He was thus very conscious of his temper getting out of control and would rather, "Run for the hills when she came at me". This fear of "losing it" is one of the reasons why he joined Life-line as a volunteer counsellor. He states, "If I could help someone else, I could help myself". He found this was a way of managing his emotions, understanding them, and thus he managed to maintain control of his anger and behaviour.

Tom only recalls one occasion where he was taken seriously by the police. He had phoned them out of fear for his abuser. He says that when the police officers saw "the state of her", they threatened her with a verbal warning and told her to go to bed. They told her they would return to arrest her, should Tom contact them again to report her behaviour. Tom knew that he would never be able to retaliate physically against. He states, "The balance is so strongly to one side in the family violence courts (in her favour), that if I retaliated I would have been in big trouble and would possibly have landed up in jail – what would happen to my kids then?" He also states that he was "brought up too black and white - to always know what's right or wrong" to ever allow himself to take physical action against her during domestic disputes. He states, "Even my school uniform was black and white – I did not entertain thoughts of murder or the likes. I would just walk away and I knew that I had too much to lose if I retaliated".

The relationship would swing back and forth from emotional distance to periods of closeness. During the times of closeness he would try to work on the relationship and attempted marriage counselling on several occasions for the sake of the children. This however, did not help very much as he states that, "Things would just fall to pieces and the abuse would start again".

178

Although Tom was often accused of adultery by his wife, he never betrayed her during their 16 year marriage. There were, however, several incidences where he felt she displayed inappropriately flirtatious behaviour towards other men and in two specific incidences he felt betrayed by her. On the rare occasions that they had to socialise with his work colleagues, she would always seek out a "drinking buddy". The conversations that followed were often inappropriate, states Tom, for a married woman to be having with another man. He recalls a particularly embarrassing incident, when two colleagues, who had gotten drunk during a social event, had jumped into a swimming pool naked. His wife (equally inebriated) had removed their clothes from the side of the pool and had hidden them, forcing them to get out of the pool naked in front of her, enjoying every minute of it, according to Tom.

He also received a letter from a businessman's wife living in a nearby town. The letter had been written by his wife to this man. The letter contained very intimate feelings and affections conveyed by his wife to the businessman. When he confronted her with the letter, she denied having written it, despite the fact that her return address was at the back of the envelope and it was undeniably her handwriting. This coincided with his suspicion that his son was conceived during the period that he was working in Italy, and was not his biological child. He did not pursue his suspicion by having a paternity test done as he did not want "his" son to find out.

5.3.2   Individual: Effects of abuse on Tom's body (physiological effects)

Tom's abuse usually began with the consumption of excessive alcohol by his spouse. He described her as "having a very short fuse" and she was easily angered after she had consumed alcohol which Tom says "dulled her senses". He never knew exactly how much alcohol she had consumed on any given day, which caused tremendous stress and confusion for him, when trying to gauge her mood. His victimisation would start with accusations about his whereabouts and actions during the day. He would try to defend himself against her verbal onslaughts. This would normally be followed by her consuming more alcohol in private. He states, "She would sneak off to drink some more, and then there would be about an hour of silence, and then there would be a barrage of abuse". She would often proceed to

kicking his genitals, hitting him and screaming insults. If he tried to leave the room she would grab him by the shirt and try to rip it off. He would often escape to their spare bedroom where he would lock himself in whilst she kicked at the door. He would wait there until she had vented all her anger and stopped due to exhaustion. Occasionally when it became unbearable, he would phone the police to scare her into submission.

He describes one incidence which was particularly violent, where the abuse carried on beyond its "normal" time-span. She was drunk and scratched him and tore his shirt off. He managed to escape her temporarily and went to take a shower to sooth the scratches. Whilst he was in the shower she boiled a kettle of water and then proceeded to throw a cup of boiling water on him in the shower. He got out of the shower as soon as possible and tried to get dressed whilst warding her off. He searched for his car keys but she had hidden them. He walked to a chemist close to his home to buy ointment to treat the burns. The chemist referred him to a doctor nearby for treatment, who prescribed medication. Although Tom told the doctor and the chemist how he obtained the burns, neither wanted to "get involved". Once he had been treated for his burns he walked home hoping that she had calmed down. When he arrived home, she had locked him out and refused to let him in. He managed to climb through an open window, only to be met by further abuse. He then threatened to phone the police because his children were very afraid. He recalls saying to her, "You must stop now, this is going to lead to more trouble, you cannot do things like this, and it's not human".

After this incident she threatened the children by saying, "Julle het gesien wat met julle Pa gisteraand gebeur het, as jy jou nie gedra nie (pointing at them individually), gaan dieselfde met julle gebeur". A few days later Tom decided to file for divorce for the first time. He states that when she received the letter from his lawyer she "flipped her lid". He then told her that he would give her a year to stop drinking and abusing him, to prove to him that she really wanted to change and to work on improving their marriage. During the year that followed this incidence, they lived in different parts of the house. Tom did all the grocery shopping (even though she didn't work and it was her responsibility) and he took care of the children's needs. He states that he knew inwardly that this ultimatum would not have a profound effect

on her behaviour, but he wanted to be fair and give her a chance to change her abusive ways.

Tom cannot recall whether his abusive partner had physically hurt their children or not, or acted in an inappropriate manner. He admits that he is unsure of what happened during the prolonged periods when he was away from home for work purposes. The children never reported any kicking or beatings from their mother, which could be compared to the severity of the abuse he had endured from her. Tom states, "I think she knew what my reaction would be if she hurt the children..."

During the violent incidences which took place in the relationship, Tom had retaliated against his wife's emotional and physical attacks. However, this was done mostly in an attempt to restrain her and protect himself from her violent onslaughts. He testifies to grabbing her arm and twisting it behind her back in order to try to reason with her during her "episodes" or grabbing hold of her arms or legs to prevent her from kicking him in his genital area. He recalls one particular incident where he pushed her away from him whilst she was attacking him in a drunken state. She bumped her head on the metal frame of the bed, which resulted in her losing consciousness. He states that within minutes she had regained consciousness and was very angry, which only caused further attacks on him.

Tom often went to work with scratches on his face and endured secondary victimisation from his colleagues at work when they would make comments like "What happened to you? Did she finally get hold of you?" which caused him tremendous embarrassment. She would also destroy his glasses by either scratching them on the floor or screwing them into a ball with her hands (she was a strong woman). He would then have to explain how his glasses got destroyed to his optician, which he found extremely humiliating.

After these violent incidences, his wife would often "punish" him by refusing to make food for him or the children. He would then have to provide all their meals for several days even though he worked full-time and she was a stay-at-home-mom.

Throughout the abusive marriage Tom's spouse made him believe that he was sexually incompetent and unable to satisfy her needs. He describes their sexual relations as,"...not like rape, but almost like reverse rape", as there was usually a measure of coercion from her and when he did not oblige she would try to convince him that he had a serious problem. When they did have sexual relations he would often experience premature ejaculation which would lead to insults from her, as she would state that it was his problem not hers. When he sought medical advice for "his problem", the doctor could find nothing physically wrong with Tom. He realised that it was the relationship that was affecting his sub-conscious mind, he states, "Your mind controls all of that".

Tom refused to have sexual relations with his abusive partner whenever she had been drinking heavily as he did not feel that he was in a loving partnership. He describes one such incidence by stating:

> When someone takes a handful of glasses and smashes them onto the kitchen floor and then tries to push you into the broken glass...in a relationship like that you say, 'sorry this is not right, I'm out, I don't want to have sex with you'.

After remarrying, and experiencing a very happy partnership, Tom had no further sexual problems and states, "Now there is freedom from both sides to do what is appropriate at the appropriate time".

Tom found that he was often forgetful when the abuse was at its worst and reports that the stress of being in an abusive relationship caused him to forget important people's names and certain details of his work. He states that he managed to not let it affect his work to the extent that his colleagues or supervisors noticed a big difference in the standard of his work. He also testifies to experiencing some self-doubt as a result of his lack of concentration experienced as a result of the impact of his victimisation. He was also very forgetful when he was preparing for and during the divorce proceedings. He states that he experienced great frustration with the psychologists and family advocate who investigated the allegations that his abuser made against him. During this time he also had an anxiety attack as a result of the stress his abusive relationship placed on him.

Tom states that he did not really experience severe depression for extended periods and regards himself very fortunate in this regard. He is inherently an optimistic person. He did however experience feelings of hopelessness for short periods when he "tried to fix things that can't stay fixed" as he states. He did not seek medical or psychological help during these periods of hopelessness. Tom also experienced disturbed sleeping patterns during his abusive relationship which stemmed from the continuous negative thought patterns about his abusive relationship and his worries about the effect the violence was having on his children.

Tom gained a lot of weight whilst in this abusive relationship and as a result of his unhealthy state often slept during the afternoons or over a weekend, something which he no longer does in his current marriage. He reports having lost 17 kilograms since his second marriage and he leads a more active and healthy life-style with his current wife.

Tom also experienced severe back problems during his marriage to his abuser and he had considered surgery to rectify the persistent pain. He reports that this medical problem has improved dramatically since his divorce from his abusive partner, and he no longer needs surgery. His general health also improved greatly after leaving the abusive relationship.

5.3.3 Individual: Effects of abuse on Tom's spirit (beliefs, values and religion)

Tom was unable to express himself freely within his abusive marriage. Experience had taught him to avoid certain subjects of conversation as they were either "taboo or would back-fire on me later". Some of these subjects were, for example, money, sex, family, values and principles (especially regarding the use of alcohol). Because their fundamental values and beliefs were different, these subjects would often be taken out of context and would be used as weapons in later conversations. Tom said, "If your belief system is not the same, then there's huge margin for disagreement".

Tom tried hard not to internalise the critical things his abuser said to him and worked hard at "getting past those comments". He feared falling into a depression because

of her constant insinuations that, "You're not worth the air that you breath". Through this, he wanted to prove to himself that his spirit was strong enough to get passed these comments and he, "Concentrated on not losing it" by holding onto his faith/religious beliefs. This was not an easy task for him as she often told him that no-one else would want him and that he was lucky she agreed to marry him.

Tom always went to church by himself on a Sunday, which was either dismissed as a waste of time, or criticised, by his abusive partner. He states, "The pain of going against her will is overtaken by your personal search for strength from God". He also volunteered to work at Life-line as a counsellor and describes this as a "growth process where I realised I had to get out – this is not my world". He found it cathartic to compare his problems with those of others and called this process a "big salvation" for himself. Tom states:

> I have an almost philosophical approach to life now, because of hardships and lack of support. For me, if God never gave me that path to walk I would not have been as strong as I am now. I feel I could guide people who are having similar problems to what I experienced – into a different path, in other words to make sure that your children are okay, get good evidence, try and hang onto your house, etcetera".

During his abusive marriage, Tom used to "hate Sunday afternoons" as he would often have to endure long periods of silence (as punishment) from his wife when he returned from church. She would also drink during this period, which would often lead to verbal and physical abuse from her in the evenings. During the interview Tom stated that he now experienced the complete opposite emotions since remarrying. He has grown to love Sunday afternoons as a time of peace and tranquillity.

When researcher asked Tom why he had stayed in the abusive relationship for as long as he did, he stated that a part of him was not sorry he stayed married to his wife for 16 years, as he believes that children should grow up in a stable home with a mother and a father and that such a family system provides children with good norms. He wanted his children to grow up in a healthy, two parent environment, as he did, but later realised that his abusive partner was never going to provide such a home for him and his children. He did, however, decide to "stick it out" for the sake

of his children until they were old enough to understand why he wanted to divorce their mother. He believes that a divorce before the ages of 12 to 13 years would have been too traumatic for the children. In addition he states that he wanted to solidify his relationship with his children before divorcing their mother, so that no matter what the results of the court's decisions were, he would have a stable relationship with his children and thus would not risk "losing" them on an emotional level.

5.4 Background and family: Effects of abuse on Tom's relationships

Tom describes his upbringing as "basic and very stable". His parents were married for 60 years, had a fairly happy relationship, and did not permit drinking or smoking in their home. He states that he was often "over-disciplined" which involved corporal punishment as rules laid down by his parents (especially his mother, who was the main disciplinarian) were "black or white". This meant that there was very little room for negotiation if he did anything wrong in their eyes. He describes his mother as being a serious person who was often "hard" on her children. His father was a "soft natured individual who loved nature and the outdoors". During the interview he stated that several factors from his childhood might have had an effect on the "triggers of abuse" he recognised during his marriage, for example, his abusive partner's severe alcohol abuse – something which was taboo in his parent's home.

The rest of his childhood memories were very positive as he recalls being sent to good schools, having freedom of movement and not experiencing crime in any significant way. He does have memories of the effect of apartheid on their household when their domestic worker was chased away from their home by a police officer for not having the right identification documents to allow her to work in the city. He recalls this as being very traumatic to witness as a small boy.

After school he attempted to study Engineering at University full-time, but had to fund his own studies which made it very difficult for him to work and pass his first year. After his negative experience at university he joined a telecommunications company. He completed a diploma whilst doing his apprenticeship and built a very successful

career from there. This is where he met his abusive spouse, as she was employed as an administrative officer for the same company.

Tom and his abusive partner had a relatively short courting history of approximately one year. They got married as a result of an unplanned pregnancy. He was totally committed to the relationship as he took his parenting responsibilities very seriously. He said, "I took full responsibility because of my strict upbringing. I knew this is it – you don't try to duck-and-run – you work on it". Within twenty one months, their second child was born, although as previously mentioned, he doubts the paternity of his son. He believes that during the period that he was working abroad after his daughter's birth, his abuser was unfaithful to him, and conceived a child with another man. She denied this and he did not have DNA tests done to prove the contrary. During the short period between the births of both children he threatened to end the marriage for the first time as she had started drinking heavily and said to her, "Either you stop drinking or I'm out of here". The relationship was already strained after only a short period of marriage and Tom states that things became progressively worse after the birth of "his" son.

Tom saw evidence of abusive relationships within his spouse's family whilst they were married, but could not confirm any abusive episodes that took place during his abuser's childhood. He describes her mother as being "a depressive type who was often moody" and her father as being "sociable and a good tennis player which kept him out of the house quite a bit". This often caused jealousy on his mother-in-law's part that led to serious arguments between them. Tom says that he recognised a similar jealousy in his wife, early in their marriage. She was also close to her brother whilst living in her parental home. His abuser moved out of her parent's home at the age of 18 to further her studies, however, she did not complete her studies, and left university soon after enrolment, to work full-time. She maintained a close relationship with her brother even though by that time he was a wife batterer and she often stated that she did not approve of his behaviour. Her brother married three times and abused all three of his wives, breaking one's cheek-bone and another's jaw-bone. Tom also recalls being told that his brother-in-law was a bully at school.

Tom's describes his relationship with his in-laws as "mediocre" in the beginning as they were happy about the birth of their first grandchild, but in time this relationship deteriorated. His relationship with his mother-in-law was particularly strained as she suffered from severe depression, which according to Tom was as a result of a very difficult childhood and poverty in her family home. He had a slightly better relationship with his father-in-law who was a very practical person, something which Tom related to. As time progressed he found certain things, such as his in-laws bringing alcohol into his home on visits, completely unacceptable. When he "put his foot down" about alcohol abuse in his home, their relationship became strained to the point where he would avoid having contact with them.

Tom realised that he was also being isolated from many of his wife's extended family members during the abusive marriage. Even though they lived nearby, she would not take Tom to visit them. He suspected that this was because she drank heavily when she visited them on her own, something she knew he would disapprove of.

Because his family lived very far away from them, their visits were planned rather than spontaneous. This caused many arguments before they left on their visits to Tom's family and put strain on everyone involved during these visits. She did not share a loving relationship with Tom's parents or his two older sisters. Tom, on the other hand, respects his oldest sister a great deal as she married a Bishop and has a good Christian home where there is no alcohol permitted. He describes his relationship with his other sister as "tense" as she is married to an alcoholic whom had insulted Tom to such a degree that he had chosen not to have any contact with them.

Tom's relationship with his children was constantly put at risk by his abusive partner. He recalls moving to Cape Town for career advancement when his children were still relatively young, which she, as he states, "hated". Her alcohol abuse grew worse during this period. One year later she threatened to move back to Pretoria and take the children with her, if he did not agree to terminate his 17 year long employment with the telecommunications company he had worked for most of his life. He was not prepared to be without his children and agreed to her terms. Two days before their return to Pretoria, she flew with the children to her parents' home in Pretoria

without his knowledge and left him in Cape Town to manage the move of all their household belongings and vehicles on his own.

Tom was always afraid to discuss his concerns and feelings about the abusive relationship with family members. His father-in-law accused him of "being mental" for not allowing family to drink in his home, and he thus concluded that he would not get any support from his in-laws, should he tell them about their daughter's abusive behaviour. He did not share his abuse with his own family either and states that it was "the family's best kept secret".

5.5 Culture and community: Tom's victimisation in terms of cultural perspectives and systems theory at the meso level

After school Tom spent a year in the air force and describes the environment as very disciplined and "a strange cultural experience". He further states that there was, "A lot of English/Afrikaans cultural agro (aggravation)", but that this experience did not affect his outlook on life. On the contrary, it made him more determined to achieve something in life.

Tom had to give up playing social tennis as a result of his abuser's jealousy. This caused him to feel a loss in terms of community involvement and he missed the socialisation aspect of these gatherings. He also avoided many social events because of his wife's alcohol abuse (this caused him embarrassment) and jealousy, especially if he had to attend a function on his own for work purposes.

Although Tom states that while it was culturally acceptable during the time of his marriage, that a stay-at-home-mother (his spouse never worked after the birth of their children), would take primary responsibility for the home and child-care, he often had to take full responsibility in this regard. She would go through periods (especially during drinking sprees and abusive episodes) when she would refuse to take care of the household and the children's practical needs. Even though he was working full-time he had to wash nappies after work and get up for the babies with colic during the night. Tom's views on sex-roles within the marriage were fairly traditional as he felt that the children's needs had to be put first and thus a full-time

188

mother would be best for them, especially when they were very small. He states, however, that he never forced her to stop working indefinitely, and would have encouraged her to pursue a career should she have chosen to do so. He states that in his second marriage there was a very balanced approach to the sharing of responsibilities. His current wife is very career orientated and thus child-care and household responsibilities are shared equally between them. This indicates that he is not closed-minded about traditional sex-roles. He and his current wife even share a joint bank account, as he trusts her in every aspect, and states that their relationship is a true partnership.

Tom states that he did not have a good support system during the time of his abuse. There were no community members (in the form of friends or neighbours) to which he could turn for help or support during abusive episodes for physical assistance or emotional support. He states that he was taught that men do not complain about their relationship problems, especially not to other males as this would lead to profound embarrassment for both parties. He says that he was under the impression that others thought:

> What's your problem, just sort her out. Don't come and whine to everybody. Just get divorced and move on – what's your case?" He further states that other people feel, "You don't have to share your inner soul with me. I don't want to listen to your problems", and says, "I don't understand why I was feeling embarrassed as I did not feel like I was instigating abuse, but eventually started doubting myself".

At a later stage during his abusive marriage Tom found a confidante in a work colleague who was the only person who knew about the physical and emotional abuse which Tom had experienced. He states that he felt a kinship with this man as he suspected that this particular colleague was also in an abusive relationship as he could relate to a lot of what Tom had told him. He never judged Tom, but did not openly admit to being a victim of domestic violence himself. Tom suspects that he was too embarrassed to admit to his own victimisation.

5.6   Society: Tom's victimisation in terms of the culture of violence perspective and systems theory at the macro level

Tom testifies that in his opinion some cultures in South Africa are more violent than others, and gives Afrikaans households versus English households as an example. In his opinion Afrikaans parents are far stricter and more rigid disciplinarians than English parents, which results in conflict situations.   Other examples of cultural differences that cause family conflict in South Africa according to Tom are for example, polygamy in some black cultures, which in his family was a concept which was completely unacceptable.   He also states that to a white English male hitting your wife or "disciplining" her in any way was also not acceptable, but was not frowned upon in certain African cultures.   Tom also strongly disagrees with certain cultures who have their "own justice system" (vigilantes) and do not abide by formal laws.   He feels that this is completely unacceptable, as it contributes to the general culture of violence of South Africa.

5.7 Global: Tom's victimisation in terms of Westernised goals and systems theory at the macro level

Tom states that during the course of his marriage he did not experience his abuser as being very materialistic as a personality trait, but states that this changed once he had started divorce proceedings.   She then realised that she was financially dependent on him and had to get as much financial gain out of the situation as possible.   He found this extremely unfair.   She was the abuser, but was also the one leaving the marriage with all his cash and material possessions, for which he had worked very hard and under difficult circumstances.   Tom is very bitter towards the justice system for the way it treats the male victim of an abusive relationship and feels that "the odds were stacked against me from the start – there's something wrong with this picture".

Although Tom is very proud of the house that he built and he fought very hard to keep it after the divorce, researcher did not perceive this as being an indication of materialism, but rather a matter of pride for him.   He showed researcher all the improvements he had made to the property throughout his failed marriage and was

very proud of what he had achieved. He says, "I was constantly improving things, building something worthwhile, to demonstrate to her (and probably to myself) that I wasn't this worthless piece of shit, she said I was". To Tom the house was a symbol of his success in life and it held great sentimental value for him.

In Tom's work environment he states that he has a problem with colleagues who are "only worried about their own careers and back-pockets" and do not care about their team's growth. He says it's a growing tendency for team members not to help one-another as their only interest is in personal gain.

Tom states that throughout the duration of his victimisation he never considered asking for help from his neighbours. He states that he did not feel he could approach them as they were not friendly and inviting towards him. They did not even thank him when they returned from a holiday in Australia for looking after their dogs. He says that he generally experienced his neighbours as being selfish and self-centred, only caring about what happened in their own lives. He states, "The general caring between people here tends to be very low – 'dit is jou probleem' – if you had any domestic problems". He describes this as a "policy of non-interference" amongst community members.

Tom is of the opinion that South Africans live in a very violent society and it changes the way, we as South Africans, think. This, he says, is also "balanced out" or dependent on how you were raised within your family system and the type of people with whom you grew up as a child. He further states that the norms you were exposed to as a child, often determined your approach to the future. Tom states, "I saw policemen beating up blacks when I was a child, but even though this was certainly very upsetting, it had little influence on my family life". He says that one's personal norms or upbringing "affects your deeds or deeds done against you" and that this in turn "has an influence on society and how things are handled".

5.8 Conclusion of Tom's voice

Tom did not manage to forge an amicable relationship with his abusive partner after the divorce proceedings were finalised. He states that the "two years of hell" he

went through after his final decision to file for divorce, made that impossible. He had applied for full custody of the children, but it took the family court two years to complete the report and finalise custody hearings, which he describes as "devastating". During this time his wife refused to leave the house as she had been advised by her attorney to fight for as much of their material possessions and cash as possible and wanted to make sure that he did not remove anything from the house whilst the divorce was in progress.

Tom and his abuser lived in separate parts of the house and often had conflict over the children. The children also found this "state of limbo" as Tom describes it, severely traumatising. His wife eventually gained custody of the children, which he states was the "lowest blow" and was granted a substantial maintenance claim for herself and the children. Tom also had to pay for all the legal costs and had to forfeit almost all of his furniture. He managed to keep the house that he had built, but was almost completely ruined financially as a result of her claim.

Tom concludes the interview by saying:

> Where there is such significant abuse in a relationship – it is terminal. If you lift a hand to someone, you are looking for real, long-lasting trouble! That's where a doctorate like yours (referring to researcher's thesis) will be effective. If someone reads it, they will realise that.
>
> Some guys might think, 'well if I give this woman a bloody good hiding, she might wake-up', but that was never an option for me. You can't change people from the outside - you've got to convince them to change from the inside. You can't change people who are in denial about their problems, something must happen to them internally, otherwise they just won't realise that they need to change.

5.9 The voice of Dick

Dick is a 56 year old immigrant from Europe, who has worked extensively across Africa as an employee of the United Nations (as a law enforcement agent), for whom he is now working in South Africa. Dick has two daughters aged eight and twelve who are living with him in South Africa. He fled from his abusive wife, whom he is still legally married to, with his children, approximately one year ago (at the time of

the interview) when a work opportunity arose for him in South Africa. Dick and his children may have to return to Europe on completion of his current project. Whilst he and his children are in South Africa he is attempting to obtain a divorce from his abusive wife.

Tom met his abusive partner at the age of 40 and married her two years later. She was 22 years old when they married, which made Dick 20 years her senior. It was both partners' first marriage. Dick states that his wife became abusive when their children were aged six and four respectively, and that the abuse took place approximately five years until he fled from Europe with the children without her knowledge.

Dick's abuser is a black African woman who comes from a very poor family. She grew up in an informal settlement (no electricity or running water) with her mother one older sister and two younger sisters. Her father abandoned them when she was very young and as a result she never knew him. She received very little education and left school at the age of 12 to help her mother with her two younger siblings. She has a good relationship with her mother and according to Dick there was no evidence of abuse in her childhood.

5.9.1 Individual: Effects of abuse on Dick's mind (cognitive processes and emotions)

Dick recalls, from his initial meeting with his abusive partner that she had displayed a very dependent personality with very little trust in him. He met her on a beach in Africa (where he was working at the time) and the very next day she showed up at his house to pursue him romantically. After only one month of courting she moved into his house, and they cohabitated for approximately one and a half years. He did not intend on marrying her at that stage as she was already verbally abusive and aggressive as a result of her jealousy and lack of trust. Dick, however, received a transfer to an Eastern country and as he states, "I felt obliged to take her with me... she insisted that I take her with me". As it happened, under Eastern law, he could not enter the country with her, unless they were legally married, which they then

subsequently did.   He feels, that for her, it was and still is, a marriage of convenience, and that she married him primarily for financial security.

Dick received much criticism from his abusive partner throughout the marriage. She would blame him for not supporting her family enough financially, constantly blaming him for her family's hardship and poverty. Even daily tasks were criticised, such as, his cooking skills, "just to aggravate me" as Dick describes, "Silly things, like, there's not enough salt in the food", instead of being grateful that he was prepared to cook a meal for the family after a long day at work. This frustrated and exhausted Dick as he felt that as a full-time housewife and mother, she had much more time for domestic duties than he did.

Dick was often humiliated in front of neighbours, his daughters or the community by his abusive wife. She would lock him out of the house if he came home too late from work according to her, and then make him beg to be let back into the house, whilst neighbours watched, as if Dick was a "spectator sport" as he stated. On another occasion Dick's abuser locked him out of their hotel room and subsequently slapped him through his face and then forced him to get down onto his knees and beg, in front of hotel staff and his children, to be let back into their hotel room. Dick states that he learned to tolerate the humiliation in sight of neighbours and strangers, but he found it very difficult to bear in front of his daughters.

Her shouting and cursing, or "robust speaking" as Dick refers to it, was "normal" to him, as it was common practice in the home he shared, with his abuser and daughters. Dick recalls his abuser cursing his youngest daughter in an aggressive manner by calling her, "A fucking cunt" in her face and pointing a finger between her eyes in a threatening manner when she confronted her mother about her abusive behaviour. Dick does not recall ever receiving "The silent treatment" and states that he wished that she would have "shut up for a few days, for some peace and quiet".

Dick states that his abusive wife was not very proficient in the English language because of her lack of formal education. As a result of this she would often resort to foul language when expressing her anger. She called him, amongst others, "cunt, wanker and fucking idiot" and was incapable, according to Dick, of solving a

disagreement by having a civilised discussion. Dick reiterates that she would often "flare up" (in anger) in front of others, as anything would trigger her outbursts and violent attacks and she did not care who witnessed it. Dick found this extremely humiliating and degrading.

Dick's abuser would also limit his time, movement and financial transactions because of her incessant jealousy and need to control him. For example, she would "time" his shopping trips and monitor the amount of time he spent at work events. He states that she was always suspicious of the length of time that he spent away from home. He would also have to turn down work socials as this would result in "vicious arguments". She even objected when he was called out to do investigations that took him out at night or far from home. This had a very negative impact on his work performance. Dick also had to account for the money he spent, although he was the sole breadwinner, as she often questioned what he spent his money on. Dick's wife, however, had "free reign" as he says, over his money and did not have to account for her spending. He found this "extremely frustrating and restrictive".

Dick states that his abusive partner would often shift the blame after an argument and that in his opinion this was a typical "African trait – it was always someone else's fault". He says that she blamed all their marital problems and her abusive behaviour on him by saying, "Look what you made me do".

Although Dick endured years of emotional and physical abuse, his abuser never managed to undermine his self-esteem or make him feel worthless in terms of his intellect and work skills. Dick had a superior education in comparison to his abuser and states, "I know I should never have married her. She cannot even read or write properly". Even though this was the case, Dick feels trapped in the relationship because of the children and feels, "She knew what she was doing when she fell pregnant. I will always be tied to her because of the children".

Dick states that he did not experience any depression as a result of his victimisation, but admits that he does not really know what depression is and that he may be in denial about it. He further states that he did not experience thoughts of suicide and is not afraid to make decisions for himself or his children, so he doubts whether his

state of mind could be described as "depressed". He admits to being very forgetful at times, for example, with important documents such as tax returns. He also experiences periods of general confusion with "small, everyday things" and says, "I'm unusually absent-minded lately and sometimes experience a lack of concentration", which he says, interferes with his work. He does, however, state that he had experienced severe anxiety whilst living with his abuser, especially at night when she had been drinking excessively. Dick now sleeps very well and states that he feels "so much happier and safer without her around".

Dick's abuser was extremely jealous and he was often accused of having affairs without this being the case. He states that this jealousy was the main cause of their marital problems. He admits that he is partly to blame for her jealousy because of one adulterous incident when he had sexual relations with a prostitute whilst working in another African city many years ago. He states that he was profoundly sorry that this had happened and admitted this to his wife and begged for her forgiveness. She was unable to forgive him and remained extremely suspicious and abusive after this incident. However, she would not agree to a divorce when he asked her for one when he realised that their relationship was not going to improve.

After his wife found out about the adultery, she began to drink much more and family life became progressively more unbearable for Dick and his children. He had to take the main responsibility for the household and childcare as she was constantly inebriated and unable to perform her duties as the primary caregiver. She did seek out psychological help and even threatened suicide, but Dick said her behaviour did not change after speaking to a therapist. He states that the only reason why she insisted on therapy was to "get attention". But, she soon found, that things were not going her way when the therapist identified behavioural traits that pointed at her being the one who was to blame for many of the marital problems. She stopped therapy after only a couple of sessions. Dick, however, constantly tried to get her professional help for her drinking problem, but states that this effort was futile, "She is an alcoholic who does not want help".

Dick states that he tried to keep the fact that he was being emotionally and physically abused by his wife a secret from everyone he knew for as long as possible, but when

196

colleagues and neighbours started to witness some of the abusive episodes, he says, "I just let it go. I couldn't keep it a secret anymore. Luckily no one in this country knows her, so we (referring to him and his daughters) could start over".

Dick states that the abuse had a profound effect on his work. He was often unable to perform at his best as a result of fatigue and stress stemming from his personal circumstances. As a result of his domestic problems, Dick would often have to leave work early, even if he was working on an important case, in order to "keep the peace at home". He states that he had rejected two promotions, which would have advanced his career, as he knew that his wife would react negatively if he were to take on extra responsibilities at work and thus have to work longer hours. He cites an occasion when he was called for an interview for a promotion, upon which his wife forced him to choose between going to the interview and attending his daughter's school play. She refused to go to the play and he said, "She left me with no choice. She knew I would never disappoint my child. One of us would have to be there, and it wasn't going to be her mother".

Dick testifies that his abusive wife was very controlling in their relationship. She exercised her control by, for example, keeping the children awake until the early hours of the morning against his will, or by keeping them indoors for approximately two weeks at a time. He says she did this in order to "punish" him for behaviour she did not approve of, for example, if he was working long hours.

Dick says that he often felt as though he was "walking on egg-shells" (he had to be very careful of what he did or said in her company) to keep her happy. He gave up watching certain television programmes such as, The Sopranos and especially soap-operas that had story-lines that would spark her anger, especially if the subject of the drama had connotations of adultery. In turn she would insist that he watch talk-shows such as The Jerry Springer Show with her so that she could draw parallels between his personality and behaviour and "the trailer trash" (lower class citizens) who appeared on the show.

He also had to give up many recreational activities to keep her happy, especially driving his own car as she insisted he use public transport to work and back. He

197

could also no go out with friends or colleagues. He states that she would even react in anger and become abusive if he wanted to wash dirty sheets, clothes or towels at a time that did not suite her. According to him, her behaviour became more and more irrational as their marriage progressed.

When Dick made arrangements for family outings or holidays (it was always his responsibility) he states that, "It was always a struggle to talk her into it". She would often say that she did want to go at the last minute and once refused to board the aeroplane after all the arrangements were already finalised. He and the girls had to "beg her at the airport" as he desperately wanted to take his children on the holiday which he felt they deserved. He says, however, that once they had arrived at their destination, she refused to take part in any activities with them and spoilt the vacation for everyone, by creating an unpleasant atmosphere as a result of her anger. He states that she was like this throughout the period that they were on holiday, ensuring that holiday memories with her were mostly unpleasant ones.

Dick states that his abusive partner would often threaten him with physical violence and that he learnt that these were very seldom idle threats. He admits that he was afraid of her, especially at night after heavy spells of drinking. She would rip bed sheets off him during the night when he was asleep and start "ranting and raving like a lunatic". He says that she would "ritually" scream threats at him and the children as was the custom in her culture. She would also punish the children physically with hidings and slapping them without warning. One of his daughters became physically ill (vomiting) after one particularly stressful incidence of abuse by her mother.

Dick's abuser also displayed violence towards pets and would not allow the children to have a cat which he had brought home for them against her will. She refused to feed the cat and got rid of it when they were not home. His abusive wife also displayed violence towards others and went as far as slapping the domestic-help. When the domestic-help's brother confronted her about the violent incidence she slapped him too.

Dick states that although he ensured that his abuser did not have access to his firearm, she used anything from shoes to shavers as weapons with which to assault

him. He says the children once witnessed her "going mad" when she cut her own hair, first with a knife and then with a pair of scissors, which scared them tremendously. They had several confrontations with the police when neighbours had witnessed her waving a knife around. They became afraid for the children's safety and contacted the authorities. Dick states that these incidences were extremely humiliating as he worked as a law enforcement official himself and knew that these incidences would be discussed amongst his colleagues and seniors.

The police recommended that Dick seek psychological help for the children after one incidence. He had threatened to leave her and she had been drinking heavily. At one o'clock in the morning they had to remove the children to a place of safety. After the police managed to calm her down, she was issued with a warning letter before allowing the children to return home. He states that the children are afraid of their mother and indicate that they do not want to live with her again.

5.9.2 Individual: Effects of abuse on Dick's body (physiological effects)

According to Dick his abusive partner would often throw and break objects in fits of rage and sites that she had broken, amongst other things, a glass coffee table, crystal glasses and bowls which he had given her as gifts and valuable Wedgewood china plates. She would also throw full beer cans and shoes at him when she became violent. In one particular incidence she covered the living room walls with body lotion as a display of her contempt. Dick states that when she did not throw objects at him she used her open hand to slap him, hit him with a fist, bite or spit at him, "head butt" him and rip his clothes. He admits to retaliating instinctually by violently pushing her away from himself, after she hit him in the face unexpectedly. He also retaliated a few times by throwing the beer cans that she aimed at him back at her.

Dick admits that he was fearful of his partner and what she was capable of if pushed too far, even though he was "the man", supposedly superior in strength, and she "the woman", the weaker one. However, he states, that because of the large age difference between them (20 years) she had the advantage of youth and strength over him as she is a large framed woman. He says, "I'm getting on in years (56

years old), I'm no match for her anymore. I'm always afraid that I will not survive her attacks, especially when she drinks – the alcohol makes her more violent".

She would consume large amounts of strong spirit alcohol, such as Gin or a very strong local beverage. After hours of consuming this strong alcohol, Dick's abuser would "brood for a while" and then follow with violent attacks on him. He states that towards the end of their relationship (before he left Europe with his children) she would drink alcohol constantly and he would find her drunk at home at any time of the day. This is when he became particularly fearful to leave his children with her. He states that she would also take medication, such as strong pain pills, together with vast amounts of alcohol, making her behaviour even more irrational and unpredictable.

Dick states that he has retaliated against the attacks in the past, but that this would only happen in self-defence as he would never hit her intentionally. He says that even when he retaliated physically in self-defence she would always find a way to turn the abuse on him and "play the victim" after provocation.

> Maybe I minimised my own role in everything, but I would never ever hit her first – ever! Even when I did hit her back, it was a ratio of 30:1, but she just sort of goes completely over the top if I respond. But once she was hitting me with a shoe, this was just one of the times (she's done it more than once) she'd just hit and hit and hit with the shoe. God knows how many times and I'd think, 'just let her get it out of her system, then she'll stop'. But she never did! The only time she'd really stop, is when I fought back. I'm not sure if it would have helped if I'd fought back earlier? I think it would have just escalated the situation, maybe something in me responded only when I knew it was the right time – I don't know.

Dick states that the abuse took place randomly as anything could trigger his victimisation, especially when his abusive spouse consumed alcohol. The abuse would always start as a result of something he had done which she did not approve of and could range from, for example, the words of a particular song, to language misinterpretations as a result of her poor grasp of the English language. He states that the abuse normally ended with her throwing him out of their home at night. He would then have to find somewhere to go for the night and would often phone a single friend or colleague and socialise in clubs until the early morning hours. He

was too embarrassed to ask people he knew very well for a bed to sleep in for the night. Thus he often pretended to enjoy clubbing throughout the night even though he was exhausted and needed to sleep. Dick says that he often had to go to work with only two hours sleep when she locked him out of the house. He states that the abuse was on a continual basis, "...it was just never ending; no-one can be expected to live like that."

Dick often felt obliged and even coerced into having sexual relations with his abusive partner. This often resulted in him not achieving an erection. He went for a medical examination thinking this was a problem resulting from diabetes (which he had a family history of) but the results were negative. The tests indicated that it was a psychological problem rather than a biological one. He admits that he had avoided having sex with his abusive partner as often as possible, but that she "demanded it" if he avoided her for long periods. He states that he "had no desire to be with her intimately". If he refused to have sex with her after these long periods (up to seven months) of abstinence, it would result in physical attacks from her. Dick admits to an adulterous incident during one of these periods of abstinence from his abusive wife, during which he had no problem achieving an erection and having normal sexual relations with another woman, proving the doctors diagnoses that his sexual problem was a psychological one.

5.9.3 Individual: Effects of abuse on Dick's spirit (beliefs, values and religion)

Dick's views on sex roles and the division of labour in a marriage is a contemporary one. He states that although his own mother was a house-wife and full-time mother he was in favour of women working and having careers. He believes in sharing all forms of domestic labour equally between both male and female partners in a situation where both partners are working. However, in his marriage, he worked full-time and had to take most of the responsibility for the household and children. He states that he did all the grocery shopping, paid the bills and shopped for their daughters' needs. He also had to prepare most of the meals for the family.

He would return home from a full day's work and ask, "What's for supper?" upon which his wife would reply, "Whatever you are making", even though she was

supposed to be a house-wife and full-time stay-at-home mother. Dick found it particularly upsetting when she neglected the personal hygiene of their daughters. He had to appoint a maid to help him with all the household responsibilities even though he could not afford this on a permanent basis in Europe, where such services are costly. His children now have a full-time caretaker in South Africa who lives with them. Dick is very proud of the fact that his girls are now well taken care of whilst he is at work. He states that he worries much less about their welfare than when they were living with their mother alone.

Dick's abuser tried to coerce him into obtaining illegal visas and work permits for her family and friends living in Africa. This went strongly against Dick's beliefs and values as he was a law enforcement officer by profession and believed in upholding the law. Should he have agreed to commit this crime for her family, it would have meant that he was dishonouring his oath to uphold the law, resulting in grounds for immediate dismissal. Refusing her request meant that Dick was subjected to emotional and physical abuse ("punishment" as he refers to the abuse) from her, but he was willing to endure the abuse as he was not prepared to do anything illegal for her or her family.

Dick states that he no longer believes the critical things his abuser has said about him in the past. He states, "I'm tougher than her. I know she's a crazy woman. My girls love me and want to be with me - that is proof enough that she's not right about me". Dick believes that the values and norms he is raising his daughters with are moral and just and that he will be able to continue to raise them by himself far better than if they were living with their mother.

He says that she would often call him an "old man" and insult him by stating that no other woman would want to marry him again if he divorced her. But he knows that she only insults him to try to erode his confidence and that these statements are not true.

On matters of religion Dick says, "I have no religious beliefs at all, but feel the girls must belong to a church if they want to". His abusive wife would not allow the children to go to a church when they were living in Europe. They would secretly

"play church" in their room as according to Dick "she would go mad if she caught them". Since living in South Africa he has taken them to a Catholic Church of their choice and allows them to take part in Catechism classes at the church, which they thoroughly enjoy, says Dick. He believes that his daughters should have the freedom to practice a religion of their choice.

5.10 Background and family: Effects of abuse on Dick's relationships

Dick did not have a very good relationship with his parents or siblings throughout his childhood and adulthood. He describes his father as being a "military man in every sense of the word". He was in the British army, resulting in the family moving around quite often during his childhood. They lived in Libya, Germany, the United Kingdom and Hong Kong. Dick was one of five siblings (his twin brother died when he was still a baby) of which he was the middle child. He describes his parents' marriage as "not good" and remembers them arguing a lot and showing little affection towards one another. He states that his parents were actually planning to divorce but they both died soon after each other. There was never any physical abuse in the relationship. Dick states:

> I never saw my father raise a hand to my mother or her to him. My father would just keep quiet if my mother went off at him and let her get it out of her system, then it was over and the next day, things would be back to normal.

His relationship with his siblings is equally negative. Dick was the only child in the family who achieved a tertiary qualification and went on to have a successful career. Both his brothers and one of his sister's are alcoholics and one brother also uses drugs and lives with a heroin addict. His eldest brother was involved in a serious collision with a bus as a result of his inebriation. He states that his oldest sister, whom he had a good relationship with in the past, let him down when he shared his victimisation with her in the hope that she would support him in his escape from his abusive wife. He has no contact with his siblings and has never received any support from them. His abusive wife also has no significant relationship or contact with his siblings.

Dick respected his mother-in-law and they got on fairly well in the year and a half that he and his wife cohabitated in Africa before moving to an Eastern country and getting married. He states that his mother-in-law was in favour of their relationship, as she wanted her daughter to have the financial security that he could give her. This also meant that he would be obliged to assist the remaining family in Africa financially when he and his wife relocated to an Eastern country.

Dick states that his abusive wife often used the children against him, but he says that his girls are "crazy" ("My girls adore me") about him, thus she was never able to alienate them from him. Dick showed researcher the cards (even a Mother's Day card for him) the children had made for him and photos he had on his wall in the office. It was evident that he loved them deeply and was very proud of them. He says that they openly admitted that they "hate her, especially the oldest one" because she was so unnecessarily strict with them and restricted their movements in order to avoid a lot of contact with him. When she contacts them telephonically from Europe, she tries to intimidate them over the phone. She has even threatened to travel to South Africa (even though she does not know exactly where they live) to take the youngest daughter back to Europe to live with her. She suggested to Dick that, "We'll have one girl each", but he refuses to allow the separation of the two girls and states that the only reason that she suggested such an arrangement is to have a financial hold over him. Dick states that the law will probably force him to take care of her financial needs, but he is willing to sacrifice this in order to obtain full custody of the children.

Dick testifies to being much better off financially in South Africa and that he spends his money on his daughters and holidays for them as a family. He says, "We are living well and the girls are very happy. I'm so much happier, we're all so much happier". Dick states that he should have ended the marriage earlier, "You are not doing your kids any favours when you stay in a bad relationship. It does them more harm than good".

5.11 Culture and community: Dick's victimisation in terms of cultural perspectives and systems theory at the meso level

Dick often found himself isolated from friends and neighbours as a result of his abusive wife's bad behaviour and jealousy. Neighbours and community members also withdrew from the family as a result of his wife's hostile behaviour when she was inebriated and her use of bad language. He states that he often had to phone some of his friends, who he wanted to stay in contact with, "on the sly", in order to prevent a confrontation with her. However, he testifies, to ending many friendships to "keep the peace, for the girls' sake" as a result of her jealousy.

Dick states that he had no support system during the abusive relationship. He says, "Nobody would help me! No police, court or counsellor believed me". In Africa he was desperate enough to seek out a Juju, which was a traditional or voodoo doctor to cast a spell on his abusive wife. Dick cried when he told researcher of this incident which testifies to his desperation to seek help from any source he could find to end his victimisation. He says the irony of the matter was that the voodoo doctor was very expensive and it did not help his situation at all.

Dick states that systematic husband battering is unheard of amongst Africans, even though the lesser educated were very vocal in the villages, which may be construed as aggressive behaviour. According to him their culture prescribes that, a wife, respect her husband, no matter what the circumstances of the marriage. He says, "She's forgotten she's an African. She doesn't have any real values to hold on to. It's all about her issues - she has no respect for me or others". Dick further testifies to the vast differences between him and his abusive wife with regards to values, norms and educational levels by stating, "They do say, 'you should never take the ski instructor home', that was my first mistake".

5.12 Society: Dick's victimisation in terms of the culture of violence perspective and systems theory at the macro level

Having lived in different African and European countries, Dick is in a good position to comment on how living in a country such as South Africa, which is prone to high

levels of violence, can affect family life. He states that although he and his daughters have a better standard of living on a financial level, their safety is a constant concern for him. He testifies that he has never been as worried about their general safety as since moving to South Africa. He constantly has to consider security measures for his children such as a full-time *au pair* and live in housekeeper as he is afraid to leave his children alone at home or anywhere else for that matter. For the first time in his life, he has had to install burglar proofing, an alarm system and 24 hour security standby for his home. He says, "The security aspects here are much worse than anywhere else we've ever lived".

Dick expressed his frustration at the South African classification of race which affected them negatively when the children went to school. He was asked how he would classify his children (as White, Coloured, Black or Asian) when completing the submission forms for school, as the children's mother is a black African woman and he a white European. Dick is of the opinion that, "South Africa has an obsession with colour and politics which is quiet bizarre".

At work Dick experiences similar frustrations when working with government departments. He says, "I hate the AA (Affirmative Action) grants that are being demanded of us. I hate the transformation process in South Africa". Dick is of the opinion that South Africans have an unhealthy obsession with colour and politics. He further states:

> South Africans have an obsession with this transformation, but they must realise that it's a process and has to be done gradually. It will not happen in one generation and cannot be forced. South Africa is as chaotic and as disorganised as the rest of Africa, and as corrupt. They just pretend it's not. Scratch below the surface and this is Africa.

5.13   Conclusion of Dick's voice

Dick's final words about his victimisation:

> People ask me, 'So why didn't you just leave her? You can't just leave! No washing up, no food cooked, no clean clothes... (pause). 'Why didn't you just take them (children)? You can't just take them! If I'd sneaked them out of the house when she was passed out from being so

206

drunk, there would have been hell-to-pay when we got back. Who would suffer? The girls would suffer!

You put up with it, I think, because – what was the alternative? Walk away without the girls? I could never have just walked away alone! In the end when I did walk away, I knew there was a possibility that I wouldn't be able to keep the girls, but it was never in the planning. I think if I knew I couldn't escape with the girls – I'd probably still be there now. I don't think I would have been doing them any good. One thing I've learnt – what will they grow up thinking about relationships, about the way people treat each other?

According to Dick there is no way in which to resolve the conflict between him and his abusive partner. He states that every conversation led to a "brawl" and that the only way out for him was to leave without telling her and take their daughters away from her, even if only temporarily. Dick cried when he said this during the interview and it was evident to researcher that he was deeply saddened and traumatised by the situation. He states that she did not commit adultery in their marriage and he respects her for that, but wishes, "...she would just run away with someone and leave us alone! At least I'd be rid of her if she met someone else".

Dick states that although he did not have thoughts of murder or violence towards her, he did wish that his abusive wife would die of natural causes, so that she would leave them alone. He says, "I never want to see her again. I wish she would just die". He reiterates that he would happily leave the marriage with no material possessions, if it meant that he and the children did not have to see her again. He says, "I can't wait to have her out of our lives for good... if I can get the courts to believe me".

When Dick was asked by interviewer why he had remained in the abusive relationship for as long as he did, he gave the following reasons:

> ➢ He was afraid of losing his children if he filed for a divorce in Africa or in Europe as the legal systems were in favour of children staying with their mother. According to Dick, it is very hard to prove that she is an abuser and that he should have full custody of their daughters.

- Dick states that he had to take financial considerations into account as the legal system would force him to pay her a considerable amount of money in maintenance and in settlement of their estate. According to Dick, a divorce is very expensive for a man if he is the sole breadwinner in the family.

- Finally, Dick admits that he "did not know how to deal with the situation" as he had no support system to advise him on what procedures to follow, especially as he was a victim of domestic violence and wanted to protect his daughters from further trauma. Thus, he made the decision to take his children away from their mother without her knowledge and settle in another country without her consent. He realises that he will have to face the consequences of his actions, but has no regrets about his decision to move to South Africa with his daughters.

Dick decided to make his final attempt at separation from his abusive partner when the opportunity arose for him to work in South Africa. He knew it was a rare opportunity to escape with his daughters. He discussed "the escape plan" with his children and they agreed to leave with him and even helped him finalise the finer details of the plan. He says, "It was my best piece of investigative work in my life", as they managed to deceive her completely. The children packed their most precious personal belongings into their school satchels the morning before their departure so that their mother would not notice anything out of the ordinary. Dick had started packing small quantities of clothing for him and his daughters a few days before their flight was to leave so that she would not notice immediately. Dick states that she was inebriated so often that he knew she would not notice something like clothing, taken out of their cupboards. He had organised emergency passports for his daughters and arranged his finances so that she would still have a home and enough money for necessities to tide her over for the rest of the year before they left.

When they landed in South Africa he phoned her to let her know that they were safe. She was very angry and accused him of abduction. She has not, however, contacted the authorities to lay a legal charge against him for this. The children speak to her weekly, on the same phone he contacted her on, when they landed and

this has become the designated "mommy phone". Dick has a separate cell phone for everyday use in South Africa, thus preventing his abuser contacting him or the children randomly. He carefully monitors the conversations the children have with her on the "mommy phone" as he says she uses these phone calls to "blackmail" the children into telling her where they are and giving her further details about their life. He says she forces them to say "I love you" over the phone to her and tells him, "We just do it to keep her happy Dad otherwise she starts shouting and swearing at us". He has as little conversation with her as possible and states that their relationship is strained. He finds it difficult to keep their conversations polite, thus keeps them to a minimum, discussing only financial issues as she is still dependent on him in this regard.

Dick realises that "a nightmare awaits, things are going to get difficult when I start legal procedures for a divorce". He is gathering as much legal advice as possible and states that he will attempt to divorce his abuser in South Africa. He is convinced that the European legal system will make it very difficult to get a divorce and it will force him to try and reconcile with her. Dick does not want to return to his abusive relationship and will thus do anything to avoid the latter. He is also seeking legal advice with regards to custody and her visiting rights, as well as counselling for his daughters. Dick realises that his, and his children's victimisation, is far from over.

5.14   The voice of Harry

Harry is a 41 year old professional man who is deeply religious. He has been the victim of two abusive relationships, one of which was a 10 year marriage and the other, six month cohabitation with a girlfriend. Harry has been married twice - his first wife, a woman with whom he had a son, was not abusive. The marriage lasted three years, during which time they had a son, before Harry and his first wife decided to part amicably. She wanted to emigrate to the United Kingdom (UK) and he did not want to leave South Africa. Initially Harry was left with the care of his son, however his son has subsequently moved to the UK to live with his mother.

After a courting period of approximately one year, Harry, aged 32 at the time, married his second wife, aged 25. She had also been married once prior to meeting

Harry. According to Harry, this marriage had also dissolved as a result of her abusive behaviour towards her first husband. Within the first few months of marriage to his second wife, his victimisation (emotional and physical abuse) began. Despite the physical and emotional abuse, Harry stayed married to his first abuser (second wife) for almost 10 years and had a daughter with her. After divorcing for the second time, Harry rebound almost immediately into a romantic relationship with a woman with whom he had been friends for many years and became the victim of abuse for a second time. His girlfriend was an alcoholic and abused Harry emotionally, during their short cohabitation.

5.14.1 Individual: Effects of abuse on Harry's mind (cognitive processes and emotions)

Upon meeting Harry researcher observed that he was very nervous and self-conscious about talking of his victimisation experiences. When he walked into the interview room he stated, "Dit voel half onwerklik om hier te wees" (referring to the interview). Harry immediately verbalised that he felt the abuse he had endured for so many years, and in two consecutive relationships, was somehow his fault or that he caused it. He describes his emotional state by saying, "Hier sit Harry - hy kan nie eens 'n vrou hou nie!" which indicated to researcher that his pain was not yet in the past.

Harry states that he thought he was too weak a man to maintain a healthy, functional relationship with a woman until he heard of this study and realised he truly was a victim of domestic violence. He states that he was tremendously relieved when he realised he could talk about his abuse and that there were people who empathised and sympathised with his victimisation and that he was not the only man on earth who had endured such abuse. He reiterates that during the time of his abusive relationships, he was afraid to talk to anyone about his victimisation and that he believed, that no one would believe he was a victim of domestic violence. He was especially afraid to let his colleagues and friends from the police service know what he was going through, for fear that they would think him a weak man and not want to be associated with him.

During his marriage Harry often endured humiliation from his abuser in the presence of his colleagues, friends and children. He describes her as having a "loud and dirty mouth" as she would frequently use profanities he could not even bring himself to verbalise during the interview. His abusive wife would often use the Lords name in vain which caused Harry tremendous anger (as a Christian it went against his norms and values) and embarrassment. During this time he was employed as a police officer and states, "Sy was 'n klat op my naam gewees. Die ander polisiemanne wou op 'n stadium niks met my te doen hê nie, as gevolg van haar." He often had to apologise for her bad behaviour in front of friends, family and colleagues.

His abusive wife would often try to shift the blame after an argument and would make Harry feel guilty, even though he was not at fault. He says that she found it impossible to apologise to him after an argument or an abusive episode and would avoid the truth at all costs. This resulted in many unresolved conflicts and pent up anger in Harry.

Harry testifies that he experienced periods during which he found it difficult to concentrate as he was constantly thinking about his negative experiences. He states that he also suffered a period of severe depression, where he found that he did not look forward to anything anymore, nothing was enjoyable or fun for him and he was not interested in doing anything. This he said scared him as it was not in his true nature to be negative about life. He also states that he often felt claustrophobic in his marriage and he would try to "escape" the abuse as often as he could by going fishing or hunting. However, as the relationship progressed this became more and more difficult.

Despite the fact that Harry was unhappy in the relationship he felt trapped in it. He states that he had to consider the practical implications of divorce in terms of where they would live, the children and the financial losses which he would have to carry. Harry was also afraid of what his abusive wife would do when pushed too far. She had threatened suicide before, by holding his weapon against her temples, stating that she would kill herself if he left her. He had to be very careful around her and states, "Haar koppie haak uit" (she was irrational and dangerous). She had also threatened Harry with a knife and his weapon on several occassions during violent

episodes. Harry states that he realises that his abusive ex-wife needs professional help from a mental health practioner as she is unable to control her temper and aggression. He says he has come to the realisation that her violent nature is as a result of a personlity disorder and not his fault, although he still finds this difficult and has moments of self-doubt.

Harry states that he never retaliated physically during his abusive wife's violent outbursts, but would try to defend himself by restraining her arms and legs. He says that he was afraid to fight back for if he had lost control of his temper he may have killed her. He reiterates, "As ek gebreek of geknak het, sou ek daai vrou dood gemaak het. Dit is 'n geweldige selfbeheersing wat ek moes hê". His abuser phoned the police on several occassions claiming that **she** was the victim of abuse. Upon arrival of the police, Harry would remain calm while she accused him of violence. Fortunately he was never arrested as they could see the extent of his injuries and left without interference. Harry states that if he had retaliated physically whilst being attacked by his abuser he would have lost his training licence (he was involved in the training of reservists in the police), his weapon licence and would probably have ended up in prison. He says she was fully aware of the consequences of retaliation from him and took advantage of the fact that the courts and police officials showed chivalry towards woman regarding domestic violence situations. Harry reiterates, "Ek sou dit nooit waag nie want wie glo die polisie eerder? Die vrou!"

Harry's abusive wife was very irresponsible with money during the course of their marriage. He could not trust her with household finances, as she often lied to him about what she spent the money on - money that **he** earned. She also incurred debt whilst they were married and she would purchase items impulsively. She was aslo a compulsive shopper even if they were not able to afford the purchases. In addition, Harry also suffered great financial losses with the divorce and had to sell his home and give his abuser most of the furniture and household items as part of the divorce settlement. He had to rent a small flat after the divorce and at the time of the interview was still struggling to gain financial stability.

Harry states that during his relationship with his girlfriend (his second abuser), after the divorce, he was very vulnerable. Two months into the relationship his girlfriend

started drinking more heavily and believed that he cheated on her by having an affair with his ex-wife. This triggered the abuse. Harry was not guilty of her accusations, but despite trying to convince her otherwise, her jealousy became progressively worse. She often criticised and humiliated him, especially during drinking binges. She would also belittle him and degrade him in the presence of her adult son and staff (she was a business owner), by stating that he was no better than all the previous men she had been involved with (who had cheated on her). Her words wounded him so deeply that he was often reduced to tears in her presence. This did not affect her and she continued to purposefully push him away when he desperately needed love and nurturing. He sites one particularly stressful occassion where he held his weapon against his temple, threatening suicide because she had degraded him so much. When she showed no mercy, he suddenly realised that it was not worth taking his own life for her. He left her home, traumatised, and realised that he had to end the relationship.

Harry could not convince his abusive girlfriend of his loyalty and devotion. Nothing he said or did was ever good enough for her. Harry was confused and states that he could not fathom what was wrong with him or his behaviour to deserve the abuse. She would also send him mixed messages, by being loving for a period and then becoming extremely rude and emotionally distant the next, without warning or apparant reason. Commenting on both his abusers, Harry says, "Ek sou graag wou weet wat in hierdie vrouens se koppe aangaan?"

The emotional abuse he indured from his girlfriend made Harry feel worthless and eroded his self-esteem to such an extent that he avoided social gatherings with friends, colleagues and community members. He realised that he was becoming progressively more unhappy and depressed in the relationship and decided to leave her even though he still loved her deeply. He states that she is an intelligent woman with whom he had a deep emotional connection and misses the interaction that they had before the drinking and abuse started. Even during the time of the interview Harry stated that he would want to see her again, if she stopped drinking and sought counselling, as they had a wonderful friendship for many years prior to their romantic involvement. He realises though, that the chances of this happening are very slim as she is in denial about her drinking problem and he doubts whether she will ever stop.

Besides alcohol, she also abuses pain medication. He reports that he witnessed her taking seven to eight pain killers every evening with alcohol. Her father is also a very heavy drinker at age 74. She is surrounded by male friends, who drink with her on a daily basis as she supplies free alcohol to them as she has shares in a bottle store. Harry reiterates, "Drank is deel van daai gesin se kultuur". The addiction, according to him, could be genetic in origin or a learned behaviour from her father.

5.14.2 Individual: Effects of abuse on Harry's body (physiological effects)

The abuse Harry endured from his abusive wife did not follow any particular cycle or pattern and would take place randomly almost on a daily basis. She would even arrive at his work and start to provoke him in the presence of colleagues. He states that after the first time that she punched him with her fist in his mouth. The abuse became progressively easier for her and escalated in frequency. According to Harry his abusive wife was a large woman who could hit very hard and often caused him to bleed and bruise. Her attacks came with no warning – Harry states, "Jy weet nooit wat wag nie", and constantly had to "walk on egg-shells" to keep her happy. Her "weapon" of choice was her fist, but Harry testifies that she also kicked, scratched and hit him with any object which was close at hand during her violent outbursts. She would also kick doors, break ornaments and crockery whilst using profanities in the presence of Harry and the children. The fact that his children had to witness such violence caused him tremendous anxiety and Harry is greatly relieved that his children are no longer in her life on a daily basis. Harry states that the violence his son had to witness during his second marriage was the main reason why he requested to go to the UK to live with his mother.

Harry's abusive wife often used sex after an argument to compensate and excuse her bad behaviour. Although he did not experience any serious sexual problems during these occasions he felt coerced into having sexual relations with her and states, "Wat sou did gehelp het om te weier, dit sou haar net meer aggresief maak". He did however experience sexual problems in his second abusive relationship, mainly as a result of exhaustion and excessive alcohol consumption when visiting her. His abusive girlfriend would frequently stay up very late at night in order to drink and socialise with friends and expected him to do the same. He would often not eat

until the early hours of the morning as making food was not a priority for her, resulting in many meals being skipped and replaced by drinking binges. This behaviour did not only cause Harry's sexual problems, but also significant weight loss. In addition, he says that she would often insult him to such an extent, that he did not have the confidence to have sexual relations with her, and would decline her advances in order to save himself the embarrassment and further emotional abuse from her when she had been drinking heavily.

5.14.3 Individual: Effects of abuse on Harry's spirit (beliefs, values and religion)

Harry is of the opinion that his religious beliefs were a threat to both his abusers, as neither of them wanted him to attend church or to practice as a Christian. He says, "My geloof en verhouding met God het soos 'n bedreiging vir my teenoor hulle begin voel". According to Harry, this was a big problem in both his abusive relationships as his norms and values were fundamentally different in many respects, from those of his abusers'. Throughout his abusive relationships Harry remained a believer and prayed constantly for his abusers, children and himself. He states, "Gebed, gebed en nogmals gebed, het my deur hierdie tye gedra. Dankie Here". Harry enjoys going to church and says that it brings him a peace of mind that he is not able to experience anywhere else.

5.15 Background and family: Effects of abuse on Harry's relationships

Harry grew up in an unhappy household with a father who was an alcoholic and wife batterer. Harry's mother was abused both emotionally and physically by her husband in the presence of Harry and his four siblings. He recalls a very unstable youth with his father causing constant fear and anxiety amongst his family. Harry testifies that his father was part of an extremely militaristic police force where violence was a "normal" part of their lives in the old apartheid South Africa. He states, "Dit was maar 'n baie rowwe tyd gewees met my Pa en vir die polisiemanne van daai jare". Harry is of the opinion that police officers of his father's generation had to prove their toughness amongst each other to maintain their authority. He states that their levels of aggression, after violent incidences, was not dealt with appropriately with

debriefing and counselling and as a result inner turmoil was never resolved for these men. He continues so say that his father's generation of police officers believed that a woman should be submissive and that it was somewhat acceptable to discipline your wife and children whichever way you deemed necessary. He reiterates, "Daai vrees was iets vreesliks gewees. Sy woord was wet". Harry's mother was a soft natured, obedient wife who endured his father's abuse until he passed away in the late 1980's.

As a result of Harry's childhood he strongly believes that a man should not abuse his wife and should not model the violence he may have witnessed growing up. Fortunately, his siblings have also not continued the cycle of violence and are all in stable, happy marriages. Harry states, "Ek is nie 'n vroue slaner nie".

Harry's abusive wife with whom he was involved for ten years did not have a happy childhood. His abuser was the youngest of three children. She did not obtain a Grade 12 High School Certificate (which she lied about), but only managed to pass grade 10. He states that she lacked any ambition or self-discipline to further her studies. Furthermore he recalls that her father was a "robust man" who used foul language and had very bad "people skills". Harry states that his abuser's father had no respect for others and generally did not care what he said in the company of others, no matter how rude it may have been.

According to Harry his mother-in-law is a devoted Christian with whom he has a good relationship. His in-laws divorced many years ago and his mother-in-law is the primary care-taker and guardian of the daughter he had with his abusive wife. He has regular contact with his daughter as he has unlimited visiting rights to see her at her grandmother's house. His daughter has very little contact with her mother as she lives very far away since the divorce and visits irregularly. Harry maintains that this distance is to the child's advantage, as his abuser is not a fit mother and is unnecessarily aggressive towards the child.

He also states that his daughter displays uncharacteristically aggressive behaviour in her mother's company, something she does not do when in his or her grandmother's company. He testifies that his wife traumatised their daughter with her abusive

216

behaviour and tells of an incident where his abuser tried to roll her car with their daughter in the passenger seat. She was crying and scared as her mother drove at a high speed and then braked suddenly. His abusive wife did this repeatedly while Harry stood by the side of the road helpless. She would not listen to his plea for her to stop her irrational behaviour.

Although Harry wishes that he could take care of his daughter on a full-time basis, he realises that she is very happy and better off living with her grandmother who can devote all the time to her that she needs. He pays the child's maintenance (as per court order for her daily requirements) directly to his mother-in-law, as he cannot trust his ex-wife to use the money for what it is intended. Harry feels that both his son and daughter are better off since the divorce from his abusive wife. He deeply regrets that his children had to witness his abuse and states, "Ek was kwaad vir die Here – ek bid vir 'n vrou en hy stuur vir my die duiwel."

5.16 Culture and community: Harry's victimisation in terms of cultural perspectives and systems theory at the meso level

According to Harry, it is accepted within the White Afrikaner culture, that if a man is the sole breadwinner within a household and the woman a housewife and stay-at-home mother, she would take care of the majority of the cleaning, cooking and childcare. However, this was not Harry's experience during his marriage to his abusive wife. She lacked any ambition to work and according to Harry, could not keep a job even before they got married. She would sleep until late in the morning, sometimes past noon and would even keep the children out of school so that she could sleep in. She refused to do any housework and Harry was forced to employ a full-time maid and did most of the cooking himself after work. Harry states, "Sy het nooit haar deel gedoen nie. Ek kan nie glo ek het dit vir tien jaar gevat nie!"

Harry stated that he did not insist on traditional sex roles (women being the nurturers and men the providers within a marriage) in a relationship and did not mind helping with household chores and childcare, as long as it is done fairly within the partnership. He states, "Ek soek net 'n maatjie – nie 'n slaaf nie". However, he says his ex-wife was lazy and irresponsible, especially with childcare and similarly his ex-

girlfriend was not bothered with any form of housekeeping or cooking. In both abusive relationships he had to work full-time <u>and</u> take care of household responsibilities.

Harry lost many friendships and distanced himself from family and other community members because of his abusive wife's behaviour, and when he was involved with his alcoholic girlfriend. He testifies:

> Mense het begin wegbly van ons af. Eers nadat ek geskei is en my verhouding met die ander meisie beëindig het, het my vriende en familie weer saam met my begin kuier. My baas het gesê, 'Harry ons weet jy was met 'n mal moer deurmekaar, en so-en-so was deur dieselfde ding'. Daarna kon ek bietjie begin praat met mense oor wat als gebeur het in my verhoudings.

One of his colleagues even intervened when Harry considered reconciliation with his abusive ex-wife. She continuously contacted him to ask for his forgiveness in order to continue the relationship. His colleague spoke to him in an assertive manner (which Harry admits he needed at the time), in order to remind him of all the years of abuse and adultry that he had endured from her, and that he should not make the mistake of becoming a victim to her abuse again. His mother also warned him against reconciliation with her. Thereafter he ceased all unnecessary contact with his abuser and states that the support he got in this regard made him strong enough to do so.

Harry also gave up many social activities as a result of his abusive relationships. He states that he stopped exercising, discontinued hobbies such as woodwork and hunting, and quit the work which he did with the police reservists. All of these activities meant a great deal to him and kept him connected to his community, friends and colleagues. He states that it was impossible to keep up these activities as he was constantly exhausted both physically and mentally. However, since ending his abusive relationships, he has started all of these activities and hobbies again, which he so enjoys. He has also re-entered old friendships and associations which he was distanced from during his victimisation. Harry states that with time he is regaining his confidence and the ability to express himself spontaneously in the company of others.

He is given support by friends, colleagues and family by way of personal visits during which time they allow him to talk and express his emotions. He also receives many phone calls, text messages and prayers from members of his church by way of support during this difficult time of healing. It is also this support which gave Harry the confidence to take part in this research.

5.17   Society: Harry's victimisation in terms of the culture of violence perspective and systems theory at the macro level

Being an ex-police official, and having a father who was a police officer during the apartheid struggle, Harry testifies to living with the violence of the past and present, in and outside his family home. He notes that living with an abusive White Afrikaner father (culturally known for being harsh disciplinarians), who could not find peace after facing the conflict of the time (during the apartheid struggle) and not receiving the psychological help he needed, caused a lot of aggression within his family home.

Harry states that he has seen many changes in South Africa, some positive and some negative since democratisation. He is of the opinion that black South Africans suffer a great deal as a result of the political changes within the country. He says they miss the culture of order and respect of the previous regime and are now enduring more violence in their communities, including family violence and suicide which was previously not as prevalent.

Harry is also of the opinion that modern technology has contributed to family violence in South Africa, citing television programmes with high levels of violence between intimate partners and scenes of pornography. Cell phones and internet chat rooms, according to him, also influenced his marriage. His abusive wife mostly communicated with her lovers via text messaging on her cell phone which enabled her to hide her relationships from him for a long time. She also spent a lot of her free time in chat rooms on the internet, which had a further negative influence on their marriage.

5.18   Global: Harry's victimisation in terms of Westernised goals and systems theory at the macro level

Harry is of the opinion that the proverbial rat-race and violent society that South Africans are living in, has changed people to such an extent that family values no longer exist or are a lot weaker than a generation ago. He notes that marriage is no longer sacred to many couples and has lost its meaning and value in society. He states that the loss of wholesome family values has changed the core character of many South Africans and with that a drop in standards, norms and values. He quotes the rise in teenage pregnancies as an example of this and says that it is no longer the shame it used to be whilst he was a child in school. Now it is almost the norm in high schools. He also states that he finds it astonishing how many couples now chose to cohabitate instead of getting married.

Harry further states that women of his generation have become overly confident, aggressive and ambitious. This new found assertiveness, he says, has given them the power to destroy relationships as and when they see fit, without considering the consequences to their male partners. He states that in both of his abusive relationships the women did not care how much he suffered, because like most modern woman, they no longer have the respect that previous generations had for their husbands. He gives an example, by describing an incident where he had visited a sports bar to watch a rugby match and overheard a group of women talking about their male partners. He says they were boasting to one another about how badly they treated the men in their lives to gain control in the relationship. Harry reiterates, "Dis as of sommige vrouens deesdae 'n afbrekende selfvertroue het. Dis nie mooi nie".

5.19   Conclusion of Harry's voice

Harry is of the opinion that when a man finds himself in an abusive relationship, it is very important that he must admit to himself that he is a victim, no matter how hard it may seem in the face of his "manliness". He states that society does not accept the concept that a man can be weak and vulnerable in a relationship with a woman. He cites an example from his own experience at the hands of the family violence court.

220

He testifies to approaching a female court official in order to obtain a court order to collect some of his personal belongings from his abusive girlfriend's residence and was met with an astonished outcry, "Watse geweld doen die vroumens jou nogal aan?" Despite such reactions, Harry still feels strongly that male victims of domestic violence should talk about their abuse to others.

Harry further states that it is important for a male victim of domestic violence to talk about his abusive relationship to others. He did not seek therapy from a psychologist for financial reasons, but suggests that counselling from a non-profit organisation such as the church or life-line is a good idea for men such as himself. He testifies that talking to others, no matter how ashamed he felt, is what helps him through the difficulties of dealing with his post traumatic stress from the abuse he endured. Harry also says that it is important for the victim of an abusive relationship such as his, to realise that he is not to blame. It took him a long time to realise that he was not the primary cause of his abusers' problems and that he did not deserve the emotional and/or physical abuse he had to endure.

Harry states that he tries to think of his abusive relationships as part of a life lesson from which he has gained the wisdom he needs not to enter into an abusive relationship with a woman again. These insights (or signs) he lists as follows:

- Unfounded and unnecessary jealousy in a female partner
- False accusations, for example, adultery
- A very domineering and overly confident personality type
- Excessive brooding and moodiness in a female partner

Harry is not making any long term plans, as he is still dealing with his emotional pain on a daily basis, but states that he is generally more positive about the future. He looks forward to doing all the hobbies and activities he gave up during his abusive relationships. He states that he has no desire to have a romantic relationship with another female in the near future and is enjoying the time on his own, building up old friendships and family ties again. Mostly, Harry is finding it a relief to be able to talk about his victimisation, as this is what is helping him the most, "Dis 'n verligting om te kan praat".

5.20 The voice of Paul

When Paul entered the interview room, researcher observed that he was a self-assured attractive man, who was eager to share his trauma. He told researcher that he was happily remarried and was emotionally much stronger than two years ago when he was still being victimised by his abusive wife. He stated that when he heard about this study, he felt a sense of obligation to volunteer the information about his victimisation experience.

Paul, aged 44, had been married to his abuser for 19 years, nine of which he had been severely emotionally and physically abused. His victimisation ended when his abuser committed suicide at the age of 42, leaving Paul to raise their four children alone. Paul's abusive wife had been diagnosed with Bi-polar Depression, a personality disorder and she was addicted to various prescription medications. This ultimately led to severe psychosis and pathological violence, before she finally succeeded (after several attempts) to end her own life.

5.20.1 Individual: Effects of abuse on Paul's mind (cognitive processes and emotions)

Paul met his abuser at university where they were both studying towards degrees which they successfully completed. His abuser started what seemed like a very successful career (according to Paul she was very intelligent and ambitious), but she soon experienced problems at work with colleagues and was not able to find stability in her working environment. She fell pregnant shortly after she started working, at which stage they had been courting for almost four years. During this time Paul said that he had witnessed her abnormally quick temper and on one occasion she had become so angry that she cut her own hair out of fury.

The couple got married and she resigned her work to be a stay-at-home mother after the birth of their first born, a son. A year later their first daughter was born and shortly after that his abusive wife's mental health problems began. She experienced her first anxiety attack and depressive episode, for which she had to be hospitalised for sleep therapy. She subsequently received her first dose of prescription

222

medication for depression and anxiety. After her treatment she stayed at home to take care of the children for a few years, and later started a new job in a government department. After a short period of time she encountered problems with colleagues once again and was accused of racism and was suspended from work until the matter was finally resolved in court. Although she was not found guilty, she had gained such a bad reputation at work that she felt she could not return to the department and resigned.

Shortly after her resignation, Paul's abuser went into business with an acquaintance, with whom she became romantically involved, and had a long term affair. During this time she started to abuse Paul emotionally with verbal attacks, which not only impacted him severely, but also the children. These attacks would range from accusing him of being a weak man, without a "backbone" to belittling and cursing him in front of the children. He testifies that his emotional abuse gradually grew worse and eventually escalated into physical attacks as her addiction to prescription medication grew and her relationship with her lover intensified.

Shortly after Paul learned of her adultery, they decided to emigrate as a family. They discovered she was pregnant with their third child (who she later insisted was her lovers') and during this time her aggressive behaviour grew much worse. She became increasingly more emotionally unstable and verbally abusive. Paul states that despite this he tried to work hard at keeping her happy and creating a family unit for his children, whilst working in a new country. For a short period after the child's birth their relationship improved and she seemed fairly happy and stable to Paul. Subsequently, during this period their fourth child was conceived. After the birth of their youngest child Paul decided to return to South Africa, Paul's abuser rekindled her relationship with her lover upon their return. Her aggression towards Paul and their children grew (she suffered severe post-partum depression and had to be medicated) and he decided to cease any form of intimacy with her. He also decided to have their phones tapped in order get tangible proof of her adultery. Paul states that this was an extremely difficult period for him as he knew that he had to leave her, but did not want to take the chance of losing his children to her and the man she was having an affair with, especially not with her unstable mental health.

During this time, Paul's abuser's mental health took a drastic turn for the worse. She suffered anxiety attacks and severe post-partum depression for a second time. She stopped eating solid foods for many months and her health suffered as a result. She was prescribed strong anti-depressant medication and sleeping pills for her state of health. It was during this time that Paul noticed that she became increasingly dysfunctional and irrational as a result of the medication. He states that she would sleep much more than was considered "normal" and the children testified that she "acted strangely" in the afternoons when they were home. At night she became very violent towards him when he returned home from work and did irrational things, like cutting her own hair (as she previously did) in a fury, physically attacking their son, destroying furniture and other objects in the home and phoning the police to accuse him of wife-battering. During this time she made her first suicide attempt. Paul states that in order to cope with this situation, he read as much as possible about her condition and the medications which she was taking. He hoped that by educating himself he would have some form of control and insight into what caused her violent behaviour.

Paul states that he felt trapped in the relationship as she was the mother of his children and he could not just "throw her in the gutter". He realised that hers was a very serious illness and he developed sympathy for her even though he and his children were the victims of her abuse. Paul says he often felt desperate and alone and received very little support from the criminal justice system. The police refused to help and Paul sites one particular incident when his abuser had taken an overdose of medication and became very violent. He contacted the police for help and when they arrived the police officer on duty agreed to escort her to a mental hospital, but when Paul entered their home to pack an overnight bag for her, she started shouting and cursing at the police officers in the garden. When he returned with her overnight bag they had left without telling him, leaving him once again to deal with her violence on his own. He states that he often felt hopeless as he found that there were no social services structures in place to help someone in his situation. He was particularly fearful for his children and had many arguments with court officials and doctors about how to protect the children from the abuse or from witnessing it. Paul testifies to being sent from one department to another, finding

very little co-ordination and communication between mental health services and court officials.

5.20.2 Individual: Effects of abuse on Paul's body (physiological effects)

Paul says that he became very fearful of his abusive wife. Her violence escalated to such an extent, as her psychosis worsened, that she was "capable of anything". She often threatened to kill him and harm the children if he did not comply with her wishes, especially when she escaped from the psychiatric institutions. He was forced to admit her against her will. She threatened him with any dangerous sharp objects (knives, keys, ornaments) she could find in these fits of rage, regardless of whether the children were present or not. Paul testifies and showed researcher photos of the bruises on his body after she had attacked him with her car keys and dug into his flesh with her fingernails. This took place in the presence of the children. He also showed researcher photos of what their home looked liked after she had smashed the windows, tore up books and documents, cut up the curtains and carpets and burnt their clothes when her violence became uncontrollable. According to Paul, this would usually take place when she took an overdose of her medication or obtained medication from a doctor who did not know of her mental health problems. She would talk the new doctor into giving her additional medication. She would also often take the prescription drugs with alcohol which made her aggression levels much worse. Paul states that his abuser had an uncanny way of attacking him unawares and throwing him off balance, before he realised what was happening to him.

Paul states that he never retaliated during these violent episodes, but would try to restrain and calm her down in order to protect himself and the children. He states that he knew it would not have helped if he retaliated physically whilst being attacked as it would only have escalated her aggression levels. He also did not want the children to blame him for any of the abuse in the long term, although he says it made his son very angry when he "let her get away with it". As a result his son became a very violent teenager and grew to despise his mother. Paul recalls one of her suicide attempts when she tried to gas herself in her car. He and his son had discovered her unconscious and had to get her out of the car. His son was so

traumatised that he grabbed his mother by the arms and shouted that he wished she would kill herself and finally get it over with.

Paul's abuser also drove her car towards him at high speeds, aiming to injure him purposefully but luckily he managed to escape these incidences unscathed. She would also grab his hair, or clothes, which she tore off his body on many occasions. Paul states that although she was a petite woman, she had tremendous strength during violent episodes. She would also grab and kick his genitals during these tirades and all he could do was try to ward her off and get her to calm down, as he was always afraid that if she contacted the police (which she often did to lay a charge against him), he would be arrested and the children would be at her mercy. He testifies to having narrowly escaped an arrest, if it was not for the fact that he had the restraining order brought against her, with him at the time, to prove that she was the abuser and not him. The policeman on duty had to be persuaded to read the document by his older, more experienced partner who was with him at the scene. Paul states that initially the younger police officer was completely uninterested in hearing his side of the story and was very aggressive towards Paul. The police officer stated that he did not believe Paul was the victim, but eventually, after much explanation Paul was believed and the officer left.

5.20.3 Individual: Effects of abuse on Paul's spirit (beliefs, values and religion)

Paul grew up in a home where traditional values in terms of sex roles were the norm. His mother stayed at home to take care of the housework and childcare responsibilities, whilst his father provided financially for the family. Paul testifies that he agreed with these traditional family values, but realises that it is almost impossible for many households to survive on one income in the 21st century, and that most women therefore have to work. He states that he was happy to be the sole breadwinner during his marriage as he felt it was best for children to grow up with a full-time mother who is dedicated to their health and happiness. As his abuser's condition worsened, Paul found himself having to take on the bulk of the household and childrearing responsibilities, especially when he and the children moved out of the family home into a rental property to protect the children from her.

226

Paul believed that the family should belong to a church and be actively involved in a congregation of worshippers and tried to raise his children accordingly. His abuser, however, saw no benefit in this, and withdrew from the church completely. He states that her behaviour was very erratic and impulsive and she could never understand why he would pray about certain issues and thus take his time to make important decisions, for example, about financial matters.

5.21 Background and family: Effects of abuse on Paul's relationships

Paul grew up in a very happy home, with good parents who loved each other dearly. He states that he and his siblings were always loved and treated fairly by both parents. In his family there were no cases of divorce, alcohol or drug abuse or any other deviance. Similarly, Paul reports that his abuser also grew up in a very stable, happy home with good Christian values. He states that his in-laws were wonderful parents and grandparents and that he had tremendous respect for them.

Paul testifies that his abuser's relationship with his parents and her own parents would swing back and forth from being very good when they agreed with everything she did or said, to being strained when they opposed her. He states that there was "no middle ground with her" and anyone who did not agree with her on certain issues was "bad" and she would refuse to speak to or visit with them for months at a time. She became very manipulative and would refuse to visit his parents' home and later also for short periods only with her own parents. During the time when her addiction was at its worst, and she had to be removed from the family home, Paul would take her to her parent's farm to detoxify and recuperate. However, she eventually became violent towards her parents and on one occasion attacked them physically when they withheld her medication from her, so that she could not take an overdose. Eventually Paul could no longer rely on them for help, as they were elderly and not strong enough to handle their daughter's verbal and physical abuse.

Paul's abuser became increasingly violent and emotionally abusive towards their children and recalls an incident when she attacked their first born son, broke all his toys, and then drove him to an orphanage where she threatened to leave him. Paul states that this traumatic incident was also the start of his son's mental health

problems. His son later testified of many more violent incidences with his mother and was even physically attacked by his mother's lover on one occasion. As Paul's abuser's mental health deteriorated and she became more aggressive, he had to obtain a court order to refrain the children's mother from having any contact with them. She ignored this court order on many occasions and would enter the property, which he had rented for him and the children, illegally, and traumatise them severely. The impact of their abusive mother's behaviour was so traumatic for the children that Paul testifies to having the three girls sleep in his bed for weeks at a time for fear that their mother will return to the house that he had rented for them to escape her.

To demonstrate the level of fear she induced in them Paul tells of an incident where upon leaving one of the many mental hospitals which she had been admitted to, his abuser drove to the house that he stayed in with the children and proceeded to throw stones at their front door and windows whilst shouting profanities at them. This caused the children to become hysterical with fear until the police arrived to remove her from the premises and re-admit her to the hospital which she had left. Paul states that to his horror he experienced several occasions where the police officers would arrive at the premises where she was being abusive and proceeded to drive away so that they would not have to deal with the situation. Paul says this left him feeling desperate and anxious as he knew he would be left to try and end her violence on his own, often in front of the children.

5.22 Culture and community: Paul's victimisation in terms of cultural perspectives and systems theory at the meso level

Paul lost many friends as a result of his abusive wife's erratic and violent behaviour. When her psychosis grew he could not take her with to any social or work events and even family members withdrew their support as her mental illness became uncontrollable. During the four years before her death, Paul's main source of support and communication was from doctors, psychiatrists, chemists and hospital staff. When it was possible his mother would help with childcare and his in-laws would assist him with his abuser's rehabilitation efforts. When this was no longer an option for them, Paul found himself isolated and desperate at times.

228

Paul received unrelenting support from his boss who had become aware of the conditions under which Paul and his children were living. He often "turned a blind eye" when Paul had to leave work for long periods at a time to handle a crisis concerning his abuser or to take care of the children's needs during the time that she was institutionalised.

Paul states that he did receive some support from his immediate family during the two years before his abuser's death, in particular from his brother and mother after his father passed away. He also received assistance with the children from one of his abuser's close friends who took pity on him. Paul eventually also sought psychological help for himself and his children so that they could all talk to someone who could help them process their trauma and grief.

5.23   Society: Paul's victimisation in terms of the culture of violence perspective and systems theory at the macro level

Paul and his family were victims of an armed robbery in their family home which caused them all to experience tremendous fear and anxiety. Soon after this incident they decided to emigrate abroad. He was not prepared to raise his children in South Africa, with its high levels of violence or expose his already mentally unstable wife to additional trauma. Paul testifies how his children fought back during the robbery, displaying levels of aggression that he did not realise they possessed. He states that he did not know such violence as a child and feels tremendous sadness that his children have had to live with such high levels of violence from such a young age. He states that it was unfortunate that he had to return to South Africa as a result of his abuser's severe post-partum depression after the birth of their fourth child. He would have preferred to raise his children in a safer country than South Africa.

Paul states that South African children in general, including his own children, become defensive from a very young age in order to protect themselves and their belongings. He says that his children have had many of their possessions stolen at school or in other public places and his son has been attacked in the street. Paul has observed that his children and many of their friends feel that they have a right to

defend themselves and their possessions with violence, something which he had not experienced to such an extent during his own youth.

5.24 Global: Paul's victimisation in terms of Westernised goals and systems theory at the macro level

Paul further states, that in his opinion, the youth of South Africa are "angry" and he is afraid that this anger will lead to war in the future. It is his view that this negativity and anger is a result of a generation of people who are growing up not knowing how to say that they are sorry when they have done something wrong or able to "turn the other cheek" during a confrontation. In Paul's opinion many of our youth's problems stem from the violence they see on television and the bad language which accompanies many of the shows that they are exposed to. He states that in addition to this negative audio-visual stimulation on television, children also have access to various video games and technologies, such cell phones and computers, where they see an aggressive approach to problem solving and communication within a relationship. Paul states, "Children now see there is a shooting solution to a problem, with the attitude of, 'make my day!"

5.25 Conclusion of Paul's voice

Paul has realised that his abuser's violence and his victimisation is a tragedy, rather than something to be angry about. He states that although it is sad to admit, he feels that his abuser's suicide is a relief, not only for himself, but especially for his children as he fears that she would have been capable of much more harm, had she not ended her life. He states that he is eternally grateful that neither he nor his children had to witness her final hours and eventual suicide as they had all been victimised enough during the marriage. He testifies that since his abuser's death he experiences greater clarity, stability and predictability in his life, which allows him to feel "safe" once again.

Although Paul has remarried and has found happiness for him and his three girls with his new wife, he states that his son is the ultimate victim of his mother's abuse. He has struggled through school, failing two grades, getting into trouble with the

authorities for minor offences and displaying high levels of aggression in his relationships. His son suffers from severe depression and has to be under constant medical supervision and treatment for his depression. Paul hopes that his son will be able to lead a normal happy life as he moves into adulthood, but realises that his, is still a long journey to recovery, as a result of his mother's abuse.

5.26 The voice of Blogger

Researcher posed the generic question "What does it mean to be a male victim of abuse/domestic violence?" on the web page and received the following response from Blogger:

> The suffering is sufficient to get to a state of mind that a separation and divorce is the only way out to avoid doing physical damage to the abuser which may lead to something between assault and murder charges being laid against the abused person. This may be the reason or symptoms leading to several instances of family murder in South Africa although these cases have reduced in the media. There is a possibility that they continue and do not come to or attract my attention because I am no longer on the receiving end of physical and verbal abuse.

> I believe the male South African to be proud and this would lead to abuse being covered up to some extent by the victim. When it does emerge there is generally denial by several parties until the evidence of physical abuse, burn marks and broken spectacles can be produced as evidence.

> I have had an experience where the South African Police Service came to my assistance to witness the attitude and intoxicated state of the abuser and after some discussion with her finally simply issued a stern warning 'You need to go to bed and sleep off the state you are in and stop looking for trouble'. In one instance when a neighbour witnessed an incident in my driveway the response was, 'Nee, julle moet julle eie goed uitsort', and walked away despite the abuser being totally intoxicated and really looking for trouble.

> The effect on children of the abused and abuser and the potential of their propagating and or condoning such behaviour is also of interest to me and many abused fathers would not want a permanent effect on their children who may or may not have witnessed the abuse, mine did.

In response to the latter comment concerning the children of victims, researcher probed further and asked Blogger what his opinion was on the short and long term effects of the abuse was on children. His response was as follows:

> I have not raised the subject of the memories of the abuse with my children although I believe that my son has signs of having a suppressed anger which may emerge at some stage. I believe there is pent up anger associated with those memories although it remains to be seen how it emerges.

> At the passing of my parents I perceived a very strong association with their way of life and I even made the comment, 'It made me feel as if I know where I came from'. The short term effect was that a strong bond has developed between us (between Blogger and his son) and that there is recognition of the differences between my children's parents despite possibly wanting us to be together at some stage. There is no longer this desire (to have his parents reunited) which is possibly balanced by the understanding of the differences between our (his divorced parents) principles and possibly upbringing.

> We (Blogger and his abuser) do not communicate at all and at a social function she did not hesitate to sling verbal abuse at me in her speech which is evidence that her anger still exists. I try desperately to move on and do not get floods of anger when thinking of her as I did some years back.

Researcher went further and asked Blogger whether his victimisation changed his perceptions of women in general. He replied shortly by stating:

> My victimisation has made me patently aware that there is abuse in our society emanating from both males and females since I am now married to someone who was also abused by her ex-husband, who I believe to have been suffering from bipolar depression. In view of his departure for Europe soon after their divorce I have not had to deal with any disturbing interaction with him to protect my second wife and our daughters whom I have adopted.

> I have had very normal interaction with my wife and several female friends with whom I have spoken of some of the abuse and do not perceive woman all to be the same as this past experience. I have, in fact, a very close friend who was commissioned to do personal coaching last year and this association with a normal, somewhat religious woman, was excellent and set me up to handle the grief of losing both my parents late last year.

> I have a strong belief that the abuse is as a result of a childhood pattern that was set up in their (his abuser's) home.

In addition researcher posted the question/statement on the blog page which read as follows: "Do you think that living in a country (like South Africa), which is known for its high levels of violence, contributes to violence in the home, or is this abusive behaviour just due to individual personality traits on the part of the abuser?". Blogger responded by stating the following:

> The situation in apartheid South Africa seemed less stressful (than his abusive marriage), although this is a broad statement. My experiences (victimisation) spanned from 1986 to 1996. The basis or the start of the outbursts of abuse did not seem to be associated with any external factors associated with 'living in a country like South Africa', I put this in quotes because I even experienced it in two different parts of the country having being blackmailed to move to be with my children.

> I do believe, although this I cannot prove, that this behaviour may have been an inbred or learnt/tolerated behaviour in the home where the perpetrator was raised. Her brother was equally violent having broken his wife's jaw and beaten her.

> The outbreaks originally started as a result of jealousy and thereafter were perpetrated during spells of inebriation where there was severe denial that the consumption of alcohol was a problem. I believe this is sufficient evidence to separate the personality from the external circumstances we attribute to South African conditions. I do feel that there is sufficient other evidence to separate the two which I could provide in other contributions.

Researcher tried to probe further into the "other contributions" Blogger refers to, but received no further correspondence from him regarding the above.

To further stimulate correspondence from Blogger researcher posed a question on whether male/husband abuse (both physical and emotional) by a female partner is a problem in South Africa. His reply was:

> I think that it is a hidden problem and that the Child Court ignores these circumstances when deciding on custody claims by fathers who are weary of the abuse being reverted to children. The cost of these custody claims is a waste of money and the court is ignoring the possibility that this problem or anger could be transferred to the children. There is no question that the female allegations are considered and the male allegations are totally ignored despite fairly conclusive evidence.

Researcher probed further regarding Blogger's statement on this form of abuse being a 'hidden problem' which is not taken seriously by the courts to which he replied:

> The South African male is proud and may have been taught that 'you do not hit girls', so one takes the abuse until it is converted to emotional and or serious detrimental bodily violence. In view of the example one wishes to set for any children in the home, the violence is not returned with violence and the cycle then propagates to more inappropriate treatment (by the abuser). My perception is that it (the abuse) is started from a jealous feeling on the part of the female or a feeling of inferiority.

> It remains hidden because it is also not socially acceptable to admit or publicise that you are being mistreated and even seriously harmed. The association between mother and child is given preference in our courts and the psychologist who prepared my 50 page report at huge cost could not see through the blackmail (by the abuser) which led to my children's statements being totally untrue.

Blogger ended his correspondence via website with researcher after the above statements.

5.27   The voice of telephonic interviewee (T I)

T I stated that he was a 50 year old businessman who has been married to his abuser, a school teacher, for 23 years. At the time of the interview they were not yet divorced, but living separately whilst divorce proceedings were taking place. He was both emotionally and physically abused for five years, as a result of his abuser's alcohol abuse which had spiralled out of control during that period. They have two adult children, a daughter aged 24 and a son aged 21 who witnessed the abuse in their family home.

5.27.1 Individual: Effects of abuse on telephonic interviewee's mind (cognitive processes and emotions)

During the couple's courting period of approximately three years, T I did not experience any emotional and physical abuse from his wife. He testifies that this was also the case for most of their marriage, until she started consuming excessive

amounts of alcohol around the time that their daughter left home to attend university. His abuser's alcohol problem grew to such an extent that she became extremely violent when intoxicated. His son had to witness most of the abuse as he was still living at home during this time.

T I's abuser would often ignore him after she returned from work as this was her "drinking time". He described her as an "eight to four person" meaning she was friendly during working hours when she was unable to consume alcohol, but would become a different person after work as the alcohol started to have an effect on her psyche. He later discovered, after a meeting with the principle of the school where she taught, that she would also drink during school hours. He was told that she would take alcohol to school in a drinking bottle which could not be identified by the other staff members. It became obvious to the other teachers and the head master that her behaviour changed dramatically and she started smelling of strong alcohol. T I found this meeting extremely humiliating and was told in no uncertain terms that he was to do something about his wife's alcohol problem or she would lose her job. He states that he also got the impression that the head master blamed him for her alcoholism which infuriated him. He apologised to the head master for her behaviour and confronted her after the meeting. She denied that she had a drinking problem and refused to go for treatment. This, according to T I, happened on several occasions when he tried to help her. She would "dismiss him as a nuisance" and simply not show up for the appointments he made for her with doctors or counselling services.

T I endured much humiliation as a result of his wife's abusive behaviour. She would often call him "slap gat" in the presence of his children or friends at social occasions. He states he knew that it was "the alcohol talking" when she used profanities, but was none-the-less very hurt and embarrassed by her "dirty mouth". T I states that he always had to try and keep the peace when she was intoxicated as her behaviour was so unpredictable when she had consumed too much alcohol. She became particularly verbally abusive when he had to work late and would often accuse him of having affairs with female work associates, which he states was totally unfounded.

5.27.2 Individual: Effects of abuse on telephonic interviewee's body (physiological effects)

T I states that the physical abuse he had to endure became so unbearable that he had to sleep in a locked spare room at night for fear of her "nightly attacks". As a result of his victimisation, T I did not have any sexual desire for his abuser and refused any intimate contact with her during this time. He says that this was mostly due to the fact that she was often extremely intoxicated in the evening when he returned home from work. She would often point a finger between his eyes, very close to his face in a threatening manner, and then proceed to push him around and shoving him with hands and elbows to invite a reaction from him.

T I testifies that his physical abuse took place mostly during the night when he fell asleep. She would wait until he was in a deep sleep and then start to hit him with her fists, elbows or a wooden spoon. He reiterates that during one particularly violent attack, she broke her hand so badly whilst punching him with her fist, that she had to be hospitalised and eventually operated on in order to regain full functioning of her hand. The only way he could end her attacks was to escape their bedroom and lock himself in, so that she could not get hold of him. T I testifies that she would eventually "pass out" and fall into a deep sleep and deny any of the abuse the following morning. She would refuse to apologise or acknowledge her abusive behaviour even though he had bruises on his body to prove it to her. He states that she often took strong pain medication with alcohol which would numb her senses completely and eradicate her memory of the previous night's events completely. For this reason he was very "careful" around her the morning after an abusive episode, as her temper was very volatile, and if he talked about her drinking and abuse too much he states, "dan is die hel los!"

T I states that the abuse took on cycles when her drinking started approximately five years prior to him leaving the family home. She would go through a period (usually a week or two) of heavy drinking and the accompanied abuse and would then stop for two to three months before repeating the cycle. However, this happened for about

two years before she started drinking on a daily basis and his victimisation followed suit.

T I testifies that he would not have dared to retaliate physically for fear that she would phone the police. He had been a member of the police service for 18 years prior to a gunshot wound, which caused him to be declared medically unfit to serve in the police force, and was therefore well known amongst most of the police officers in their town. He states that this would have caused him tremendous humiliation and that he would not have been able to counter her accusations, for fear of being ridiculed by his peers, for not being able to control his wife. He admits to "fighting back" verbally by calling her a "dronkgat" and a "skande".

The respondent stated that he suffered other physiological symptoms as a result of his abuse. He is often unable to concentrate and testifies to having lost his focus at work and often felt anxious. This anxiety often leads to feelings of inexplicable anger and which caused him to start shaking. T I also reports that cannot explain why, but sometimes starts to cry for no specific reason and is left with a tremendous feeling of sadness, but cannot confirm that this is as a result of depression. In addition to these symptoms he reports that he lost a great deal of weight whilst being subjected to daily emotional and physical abuse. Since moving out of the family home where his abuser lives, he has experienced weight fluctuations as he eats excessively for short periods of time, alternated by loss of appetite for days.

5.27.3 Individual: Effects of abuse on telephonic interviewee's spirit (beliefs, values and religion)

T I and his abusive wife shared the financial and household responsibilities for most of their married lives. He married his partner with an anti-nuptial agreement, had separate bank accounts and divided the financial responsibilities between the two of them proportionately. He was happy with this arrangement as he felt that such responsibilities should be shared equally within a marriage. He states that although theirs was not a traditional but fairly modern arrangement, he found himself taking on more and more of the financial and household responsibilities as her alcohol addiction grew. During the last five years of their marriage his abuser did not meet

her financial or housekeeping responsibilities and he had to buy, for example, food and prepare meals and take care of his son's needs for school and extracurricular activities. This took a lot of his time and as a result he was unable to give his business the same amount of attention which he was accustomed to. He says however, that this "freed him" in some respect, as he soon realised that he could live without her and take care of himself and the children without her help. He admits that this made it easier for him to leave the family home.

T I is a very religious man and prays constantly for his family, especially his abusive wife. He also believes that it is his strong faith that has helped him through one of the most difficult times of his life.

5.28 Background and family: Effects of abuse on telephonic interviewee's relationships

T I states that he came from a relatively close family unit and shared a very close bond with his father and sister, but was not particularly close to his mother. He testifies that his mother was very much opposed to his marriage to his abusive wife which caused a lot of friction within their relationship. His mother became very ill and later died of cancer. During her illness he made an effort to support his mother as much as possible and states that their relationship improved during that time. His sister committed suicide as a result of severe post-partum depression which was a very difficult time for him as they were very close.

T I's abuser did not come from a happy home and did not have a good relationship with either of her parents whilst growing up. Both parents were alcoholics and she witnessed her mother abusing her father emotionally and physically from a very early age. Her father committed suicide at a fairly young age. Her four siblings all married and divorced again as a result of alcohol abuse within their marriages. One of her brothers, a medical doctor, had his licence rebuked as a result of fraud and addiction to pain medication whilst practicing medicine. T I did not have a good relationship with his in-laws, and would see them as little as possible, and the same was true for her relationship with his parents. In general family relations were strained with this couple.

238

T I says that as her alcohol addiction grew stronger, they started to lose many friends and family members who systematically withdrew from their lives. He also had to decline many social invitations, especially school functions, as she could never attend such functions without getting intoxicated and causing embarrassment for everyone.

He did not want to leave the family home before his son had finished his schooling to leave home, and states, "Ek wou vasbyt vir my kinders". His son had a bad relationship with his mother and was not as strong as his sister with regards to her excessive drinking. T I wanted to keep him in a safe environment for as long as possible hoping that their relationship would improve as his son grew older, but this did not happen. T I states that his son has very little respect for his mother and was eager to leave home after he had matriculated.

5.29 Culture and community: Telephonic interviewee's victimisation in terms of cultural perspectives and systems theory at the meso level

T I states that he has had a lot of support from family, friends and community members from his church since he left his abuser. He has managed to rekindle former friendships and is often invited for visits and receives supportive phone calls from them. T I has also sought therapy for both him and his son, but states that this has not helped them a great deal. He confirms that his son harbours a lot of anger towards his mother and has very little contact with her. T I was very emotional at this point and cried whilst talking about how his victimisation and their mother's alcohol abuse have traumatised his children.

When asked how he experienced the levels of violence in South Africa and how this affected family violence, T I responded by saying that South Africa's culture of violence was a very big problem. However, he reiterates by stating that he noticed a significant difference between the Western Province, where he lived, and Gauteng, where he also has a business, and travels to regularly. He describes the Western Cape as being much more "relaxed about work" and that he does not experience the same stress levels as in Gauteng where the traffic and crime is much worse in his

opinion. He further states that the Affirmative Action laws in South Africa has put a lot of pressure on the White South African male and says, "Die wit man in Suid Afrika kan homself nie meer uitleef in sy werk nie". He goes further to testify to his experiences as a rugby coach to school teams. He has noticed higher levels of aggression amongst the boys on his team and states that he has also noticed a big change in this regard in general with children in various schools.

5.30 Global: Telephonic interviewee's victimisation in terms of Westernised goals and systems theory at the macro level

T I still feels trapped in his abusive relationship even though he has left the family home and physically moved on with his life, because his abuser keeps delaying the divorce settlement by demanding more and more financial assistance from him. He states that he has already purchased a new home for her, given her all the furniture (including his antique furniture which he inherited from his father), and a cash settlement, yet she remains dissatisfied. He states that she is demanding large sums of cash from his business ventures which prolongs the divorce with expensive and time-consuming court procedures. T I says that her greed and pride is costing him a great deal of money, and may eventually lead to his financial ruin.

5.31 Conclusion of telephonic interviewee's voice

When researcher inquired why T I remained in the relationship for as long as he did he stated that at the time he was hopeful that the marriage could be a good one again if his abuser stopped drinking and sought professional help for her alcoholism. He was also afraid of disappointing his children if he left the relationship before trying everything in his power to help her. When he realised that she did not want his or anyone else's help he decided to end the relationship. The specific turning point for him was whilst he was in a meeting with his staff. He received an extremely rude text message on his cell phone from her and decided, "That's it! I've had enough". When he confronted her about the message and its meaning his abuser was astonished at his reaction to it and could not understand why he was offended. Within days he vacated the family home and filed for divorce.

Researcher asked T I what advice he would give to other men who found themselves in a similar situation to his own and he replied that they should believe that God will find a way forward. He also reiterates that male victims of domestic violence should put the needs of their children before their own and then try to save themselves. He also advises such victims to talk to "anyone who will listen" about their abuse.

5.32 The voice of e-mail respondent (quoted verbatim)

A respondent who did not wish to be interviewed in person or telephonically for personal reasons sent researcher an e-mail in which his victimisation experience was conveyed in letter form and reads as follows:

> I am a well qualified, professional man in my late 50's. I have held many senior posts in large corporate companies and in the medical field. I was born under the star sign of Libra (the scale) and believe that everything should be weighed up carefully before one can make the correct decision about a situation.

> I am a gentle natured man who has never lifted a hand to a woman and believe that a woman should be treated with love and respect even if I don't agree with her decisions. I have also explained this to my children. I am a devoted Christian and base all my actions and decisions on Christian principles and values.

> My wife and I got divorced in the mid 1990's as a result of suspicions of adultery. She believed that I was cheating on her with several of the nurses at the medical institution where I was working at the time. She threw me out of the house and I lived in a caravan in the back yard for three months. I then proceeded to live in a caravan park for an additional six months before being transferred to another town for work purposes.

> After my transfer to another town, my son asked to come and live with me and attend school where I lived, which I subsequently organised. During this time I met Lyn (my abuser) through mutual colleagues. Our relationship remained platonic for the duration of my divorce proceedings. We became good friends and spoke regularly. During this period I learned that she was a widow with two children (her husband had committed suicide). At the time she was involved with a group of women at her work, which were rumoured to be lesbians.

> Once I had settled into my new home, I invited Lyn and her children to visit for the weekend. At the end of this weekend she told me that she and the children wanted to move in with me

241

to start a new life. Our relationship developed into an intimate one and soon we lived together as husband and wife. I grew to love her deeply and treated her with great respect and gave her everything her heart desired. I accepted her children into my life and raised them like my own. When I asked for her hand in marriage she laughed at me and said "maybe some-day". We attended church regularly and raised the children according to Christian principles, but she refused to let her children become official members of the congregation, even though my son and I were.

I come from a close-knit family and am the youngest son of nine children, two of whom have already passed away. The rest of us are very close and try to get together for family reunions as often as possible. Our family values are based on Christian principles and we are all religious. My whole family accepted Lyn and her children as part of the family and always make a point of remembering her and her children's birthdays.

Her family is not close and they have very little contact. She is one of five children, one of which has passed away. Her parents were divorced when she was a young girl and her father remarried a foreigner. I have only met one of her brothers briefly and have visited her father and his wife on a couple of occasions for short periods only.

After being partners for five months we decided to buy a farm together as a business venture. At this point we had an active sex life as she could not get enough of me. This physical attraction intensified my love for her. However, when the registration of the property we had bought together was finalised, she started to attack me verbally and physically on a regular basis. When the children made her angry, I would have to pay for it. She was psychologically unstable and would want to murder the children for the smallest things they did or said. She would throw any object within reach at them or swear at them, which scared them to such an extent, that they would run away. If I questioned her about this she would attack me with any object she could get hold of at the time. Her violent attacks were unpredictable throughout the relationship, and seemed worse when she could not get her own way.

I often had to think up excuses at work for the injuries and marks these attacks left on my body. In my opinion that she was taking strong medication which she obtained from the hospital where she worked as a nurse. I could not prove this but her behaviour was so abnormal that it was enough proof for me that something was wrong. One moment she was loving and caring towards me, and the next she would change into someone with murderous, sadistic notions. The only time I retaliated against her was when she when she attacked me so severely that I had to push her away and as a result stumbled into a wall. I did this because she was about to take her anger out on the children and I wanted to protect them.

By pushing her away I gave them a chance to run away from her. They were so afraid of her that they managed to escape through a 120mm opening in a security gate.

On several occasions she would kick me with her foot or hit me with her knee on my genitals. Her attacks became so bad that I developed growths on one testicle which caused a lot of pain. During these violent episodes she was oblivious to the amount of pain she caused me.

She broke all the crockery I had from my previous marriage by smashing them onto the floor during her angry tirades and damaged my pots and pans to such an extent that they became useless. She did not care if an object had sentimental value to me, her aim was to destroy.

We visited a psychiatrist together and later I attended one session alone with him, whilst she continued to see him regularly for three months. The psychiatrist prescribed medication for her, which helped her control her temper for a while, provided that she took it regularly.

Lyn was a beautiful, tall and well built woman who was 11 years younger than me. When she entered a room all the male attention was focused on her. Her female friends would warn her against it, but she found pleasure in being a temptress. She would purposefully wear short, full skirts which she would spin around in, in the company of men, to get their attention. She enjoyed flirting with men and would openly try to seduce them. This behaviour I would just have to grin and bear, because if I said anything about it, she would attack me in the car or once we got home.

A few years into our relationship I received a job offer, as a result of my field of expertise, to work on an exclusive private island off the coast of Africa. I arranged for a position for Lyn with the hope that the change would be beneficial to her and our relationship. We left and for three months things were going fairly well between us, but then she became violent once again. This time the abuse was worse and it became almost impossible to hide it from others as the island was small and the inhabitants few. I ran out of excuses after a while.

She was the most desirable woman on the island and her "audience" was rich, international men who visited the island to dive there on holiday. During this time her children left to work in Britain and upon their return announced that they were both homosexual. She accepted this and approved wholeheartedly.

I developed a rare skin disease whilst working on the island, which was treated by doctors in South Africa. They forbid me to fly on an aeroplane again as this would make my condition worse. As a result I stayed in South Africa and she insisted that I sell the farm which we had bought together. After six months she informed me that she is staying on the island and will not be returning to me. After 14 years she just ended the relationship without much

explanation, leaving me to take care of all her belongings which are in storage. I have heard rumours from my ex-colleagues on the island that she is now romantically involved with a woman her own age, and that they are living in the house which we shared for five years.

I feel humiliated because I was abused by her. Very few people understand what I went through and just about no one wants to listen to my story if I try to tell them. The one or two people I have tried to tell refer to me as a "Pissie" who cannot stand up to a woman, especially these "Matcho Blou Bul Boelies" that attack their wives after a party to prove their manliness. They also don't care in whose company they abuse their wives. I believe that this is wrong and would never raise my hand to a woman. I believe that a man has a lot more power to injure than a woman does.

The e-mail respondent ended his contribution to the research, with these final words:

I feel as though life is punishing me for something and this is really troubling me. It is extremely difficult for me to discuss my victimisation and what happened between us. I am afraid to talk about the abuse, as the law only protects the woman in such cases, and not the man. She knows she can get away with it and I will never lay a charge against her, as I still love her very much and will probably love her till the day I die.

5.33 Conclusion of victims' voices

In each case researcher found a unique set of circumstances within which the respondents experienced their victimisation. Each abuser also had a unique background and family dynamic. Such a diverse spectrum of cases has given researcher good insight into the male victim of domestic violence within a heterosexual relationship. With the above data, researcher is able to understand this form of domestic violence more clearly with the aid of the theoretical perspectives which follow in the next section of this chapter.

5.34 The victims' experiences in terms of general systems theory

A system is a set of organisms that affect one another within an environment. The family is also viewed as a system, or as a subsystem, where its members belong to other systems (for example, agencies or organisations). Other subsystems such as the spousal, parental and sibling subsystems can also be differentiated (Umbager,

1983:21). Most of the abusive relationships took place within a traditional two parent family system where there was an average of two children per household. Paul was the exception and had four children with his abusive wife. E-mail respondent was not part of a traditional marriage but in a cohabitating relationship with his abuser, two stepchildren from her first marriage, and his biological son, which formed their family system. Most of the respondents had good relationships with their extended families with the exception of Harry who grew up in an unhappy home with an alcoholic father who battered his mother. With the exception of Paul's abuser, all the other perpetrators of domestic violence grew up in unstable, unhappy family systems, marked by conflict between parents, and a substantial amount of sibling rivalry.

A closed system does not interact with its environment, but an open system on the other hand receives information, which it uses to interact dynamically with its environment. This openness increases the systems likelihood to survive and prosper (2008, http://www.tcw.utwente.nl/theorieenoverzicht). There is a continuum between openness and closedness of a system. A balance needs to be maintained for the system to be healthy, as the system must not be too open or closed (Levant, 1984:141). Tom testifies to a relatively closed family system and states that he often felt trapped in the relationship as a result of his abuser's jealousy and suspicion. In addition he took the responsibility of fatherhood very seriously and kept his family together despite the fact that his was not a healthy, balanced family system. Dick testifies to keeping his abuse a secret from everyone he knew for as long as possible, but that changed, when colleagues and neighbours witnessed some abusive episodes. Once Dick had left his abuser, he maintained a firm bond with the children to form a new family unit. His abuser suggested that they each keep one child after their separation, but Dick refuses to separate the siblings from one another in order to keep the new family system closed.

In a relatively closed system it can be expected to find highly repetitive patterns of behaviour and a high degree of negative feedback to new behaviour. If the system is relatively open to input from the outside social system, then the impact of social norms that discourage abuse may be felt sooner, and change may occur in that pattern (Giles-Sims, 1986:11). Tom experienced this "change" when he volunteered to join Life-line and counsel others who were experiencing relationship problems.

Through this interaction he was able to gain some perspective on his own victimisation. E-mail respondent states that when the family emigrated to the island where he and his abuser worked, it became impossible to keep his victimisation a secret from his colleagues and the other community members. He states that the island was too small and the inhabitants too few to hide it and says, "I ran out of excuses after a while" which changed the nature of the family system from closed to open.

Clear boundaries are firm, yet flexible, and are considered ideal for a stable family system as opposed to rigid boundaries where family members are isolated from one another, as well as from systems within the community, of which the system is a part of. From different kinds of boundaries it is clear that certain pathologies are likely to occur in family systems with either rigid or diffuse boundaries (Becvar & Becvar, 1996:192). In a dysfunctional family, a strong boundary may protect the family as a prison would, and not as a haven would (Stark & Flitcraft, 1996:68). Tom experienced isolation from both his abuser's extended family and from his own family as his abuser did not approve of regular interaction with them. This was mainly as a result of her alcohol abuse, and the fact that most of her family also abused alcohol, which Tom was opposed to. Rigid boundaries which led to isolation from family members were reinforced as Tom kept his abuse a secret from family members for fear of being ridiculed by them. He also gave up social activities which kept him connected to certain community members, such as tennis and social events for work, because of his abuser. Dick testifies that he had to phone friends "on the sly" in order to prevent confrontation with his abuser and had to end many friendships as a result of her jealousy. Dick states, that, although he loves his children, he felt trapped in the relationship because of the children, as his abuser would always be their mother.

Harry's children have become part of stable family units with firm, yet flexible boundaries. His son emigrated to live with his biological mother abroad, in order to escape his violent family home in South Africa. He is able to visit his father regularly, as Harry has a good relationship with his first ex-wife and both have agreed to do what is best for their son. Harry's daughter is also part of a happy, functional family unit, with her grandmother, who is devoted to her care. She also allows Harry

246

unlimited access to his daughter with whom he shares a close bond, keeping the boundaries firm, but flexible.

Paul also experienced isolation during his victimisation as he lost many friends as a result of his abuser's erratic and violent behaviour. Even family members eventually withdrew their support as his abuser's mental illness became uncontrollable. Blogger testifies to feeling isolated from community and family as his abuse remained hidden because it was not socially acceptable to admit and publicise that you are being mistreated and even seriously harmed by your wife. He states that he received very little support from the SAPS and neighbours, who did not want to get involved in family disputes, not matter how much evidence there was that he was being severely abused. T I states that as his abusers alcohol addiction grew, they started to lose many friends and family members who systematically withdrew from their lives perpetuating the closedness of the dysfunctional family system.

5.34.1 The victims' experiences in terms of systems theory and the communication perspective

According to Loring (1994:64) the systems perspective explains abuse in terms of the abuser's sense of inadequacy and the victim's need to feel that his partner is dependent on him. Feeling inferior to her partner, the abuser uses violence to bring the relationship back into equilibrium. The victim accepts the abuse and his powerlessness is accepted by both parties and serves as a security bond between them. Tom experienced this to an extent when his abuser insisted that he give an account of his whereabouts at all times so that she had a measure of control over him. She achieved this by insisting that he carry a pager with him at all times so that she could track him down. He obliged and became her "obedient servant or slave" to avoid violence, but at the same time this formed an unhealthy, but strong bond between them. Tom's abuser was also financially dependent on him and he admits to controlling her to an extent by cutting up her credit cards so that she no longer had access to credit. Tom also accepted his abuse and did not retaliate as he thought that he had too much to lose by leaving the relationship, thus the abuse continued and became a regular occurrence in the marriage. His abuser would also "punish" him by refusing to make food for him and the children. He would accept this and

simply provide all the meals for the family to "keep the peace" and thus maintain the equilibrium.

Dick testifies that his abuser displayed a dependent personality from the inception of their relationship and found it very difficult to trust him as a result of her jealousy. Dick's abuser was financially and socially dependent on him as a result of her lack of formal education and limited communication skills. She would often resort to bad language when frustrated which caused Dick tremendous humiliation. He states that he learned to tolerate the humiliation and physical abuse in order to "keep the peace for the girl's sake".

Harry states that his abuser did not have a Grade 12 matric certificate and lacked the ambition or self-discipline to further her studies. This resulted in her being dependent on him financially as she did not work outside the home during their 10 year marriage. Harry testifies that the inequality in their relationship contributed towards her violence as she constantly tried to control his movements in order to exert a measure of power over him. Harry states that he accepted his victimisation for many years as he felt too embarrassed to admit to this family, friends and colleagues that he was being abused.

Paul testifies that he read as much as possible and consulted with professionals about his abuser's mental state, in order to understand her abusive behaviour, and accept that she had an illness which led to uncontrollable spates of aggression towards him and the children. He also accepted that it was in his, and the children's, best interest to remain passive during his abuser's violent attacks in order to calm her down as soon as possible. Retaliation would only have escalated her levels of aggression. Blogger states that "one takes the abuse" (acceptance of victimisation) as he was taught that; "you do not hit girls" and a proud South African male does not talk about such matters (his abuse).

Communication is inherent to the understanding of family systems theory. Messages are continually being conveyed verbally and nonverbally in an organised process of feedback loops. Negative feedback loops serve to maintain the previously known state or homeostasis. Each communicated action serves to
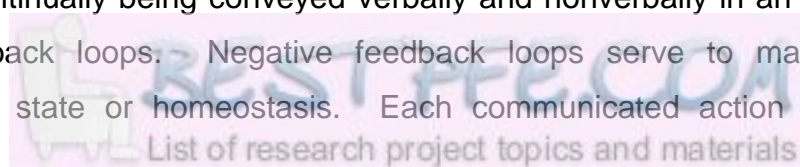
maintain the familiar and thus the predictability of future events and equilibrium is preserved (Stark & Flitcraft, 1996:67). Stark and Flitcraft (1996:69) explain that communication, whether verbal or non-verbal can cause a variety of behaviours, from mild intimidations to overt violence. Tom received many verbal insults which ranged from criticising the shape of his face or the size of his penis (which predictably led to sexual malfunction) to screaming, cursing and belittling him. He also received the "silent treatment" until he succumbed to her wishes in order to keep her happy. Tom's non-verbal abuse was also manifested in his abuser breaking precious objects that belonged to him or the children during violent episodes to "punish" him.

Dick states that his abuser's "robust speaking" (verbal abuse) was a common occurrence in their home and was not only aimed at him, but also at the children, by screaming threats of physical violence. He also testifies to certain forms of non-verbal abuse, such as keeping the children awake long after their bedtime in order to "punish" <u>him</u> for working long hours. Dick's non-verbal abuse in the form of physical attacks took place after his abuser had consumed large amounts of alcohol, and he admits to being afraid of her during these times.

Harry endured humiliation as a result of his abusive wife's "loud and dirty mouth" as she frequently used profanities in the presence of others. He was angered the most by her use of the Lord's name in vain during arguments, as this went strongly against his beliefs. Paul's abuser resorted to unusual tactics as non-verbal abuse, such as cutting her own hair in a fury, breaking windows in their home, tearing up books, cutting up curtains and setting their clothes on fire, to name but a few, which was often life threatening to him and the children. Her verbal threats to kill him and the children is what traumatised the family the most as Paul states that she was, "capable of anything" and was therefore fearful of what she might do to them. T l's abuser would often ignore him (as a form of non-verbal abuse) after she returned from work as this was her "drinking time". He describes this as her "eight to four" persona, meaning she was friendly during working hours when she was unable consume alcohol, but would become a different person after work (abuser). His abuser would also attack him during the night once he was in a deep sleep without warning by hitting him with her fists, elbows and a wooden spoon. T l's abuser also

used verbal abuse which caused him humiliation. She would call him derogatory names in the presence of the children or at social events and used profanities to attack him verbally which hurt him very much.

5.34.2 The victims' experiences in terms of an abusive relationship as a system

A system can also be looked at to find the periods of stability and change, and identify the processes that took place during different times to produce stability or change. Tom testifies to experiencing periods where his abusive relationship would swing back and forth from emotional distance to periods of closeness and stability, during which time he would attempt to work through their marriage problems for the sake of the children, only to have "things fall to pieces" when his abuser started drinking and abusing him again.

Contrary to this, Dick states that his abuse was continual and triggered by the birth of their first child. Harry testifies to receiving mixed messages from his abusive girlfriend as she could be loving for a period and then become extremely rude and emotionally distant soon after, without warning or apparant reason. Paul testifies that before his abusive wife's mental health took a drastic turn for the worse, their relationship would go through periods of stability and happiness with the aid of medication to control her depression and anxiety. This would change, however, as soon as she abused her medication (by taking an overdose) or stopped taking it all together.

T I states that the abuse he endured took place in cycles when his abuser started (first two years) abusing alcohol. He states that she would go through a period of heavy drinking, during which time he was abused by her, and would then stop for a couple of months before repeating the cycle. E-mail respondent states that when he obtained a contract to work on an island off the coast of Africa, he arranged a position there for his abuser, so that she could accompany him when he emigrated. He believed that this change would be beneficial to her and their relationship. He testifies that their relationship did improve and for approximately three months she was not abusive towards him, but after that period, she reverted back to being violent.

Giles-Sims (1986:9) further explains that systems have boundaries that define where the system begins and ends, and what information or behaviour is an acceptable part of that system. Any behaviour that deviates from the ongoing pattern of behaviour, or that challenges the boundaries of the system, triggers a response. The nature of the response is governed by how the new behaviour fits the goals of the particular system. Tom found that if he was not able to give an accurate account of his time spent away from home or his actions during that time, his abuser would become very suspicious and as a result resort to violence. Thus, he would try to stay within the confines of the boundaries which had been created, so as not to trigger violent responses from her. Tom's abuser also challenged the boundaries of what was considered acceptable behaviour within a marriage by displaying inappropriately flirtatious behaviour towards other men at social events. A particular insidence, when Tom discovered evidence of adultery in the form of a letter, was very challenging for him as this led him to doubt the paternity of his son.

Dick admits to one incidence of adultry with a prostitute which caused his abusive wife to drink more heavily and as a result his victimisation intensified as she was unable to forgive him for his transgression. Harry was very happy in his relationship with his abusive girlfriend for the first two months of their relationship. Then she started drinking heavily and occused him of cheating on her, with his ex-wife, which changed her behaviour towards him, from loving to abusive. This grew progressively worse, until Harry decided to end the relationship to avoid being abused physically for a second time.

Paul testifies that his abuser's mental health took a drastic turn for the worse as a result of post-partum depression, which was severe after the birth of their fourth child. This response after the birth of their youngest child triggered an uncontrollable downward spiral for Paul's abusers mental health and escalated her violent attacks to a point where he had to remove himself and the children from the family home for the sake of their safety.

E-mail respondent states that his abusers first spates of emotional and physical abuse towards him started when they decided to purchase property together and the registration of the property was finalised. This triggered a change in her attitude

towards him and subsequently her behaviour.   In addition, E-mail respondent testifies that the skin disease which he had contracted whilst working abroad, forced him to leave the island for medical purposes. This challenged the boundaries of the abusive relationship once again and triggered a drastic change. This did not suit her goals, and as a result his abuser refused to return to South Africa when they found out that he was unable to return to her on the island, as a result of his illness.

5.34.3 The victims' experiences in terms of the threshold of viability

When a crisis occurs, or when there is change in the environment in which the system exists, the internal regulation of the system may be disrupted. To change behaviour patterns that have become stabilised within the system requires some new input. This could assist the man in reaching a threshold of viability and cause him to leave the relationship as the system is no longer a viable one (Giles-Sims, 1986:11). Dick decided to make his final attempt at separation from his abuser when the opportunity to work in South Africa arose and an escape with his daughters was possible.

Paul states, that when he found out that his abusive wife had reconnected with the man she had committed adultery with earlier in their marriage, together with her deteriorating mental health, he realised that he had to leave the family home with the children. His abuser was growing very violent towards them and he feared for their safety. Blogger reiterates that if one suffers sufficiently, one reaches a state of mind where "separation and divorce is the only way out to avoid doing physical damage to the abuser..." T I states that there was a specific turning point is his relationship, which took place whilst in a meeting with members of his staff. His abuser had sent him an extremely rude (he would not give the details) text message to his cell phone, at which point he decided "That's it! I've had enough". The final deciding factor was when he confronted her about the message and its meaning and she saw no harm in it and told him that he was over-reacting. He decided from then on that he had to leave the family home and file for divorce.

E-mail respondent testifies that after he had informed his abuser that he was unable to return to the island where they had both been living and working, she decided to

stay on and not return to him in South Africa immediately. After awaiting her return for a period of six months, she informed him of her decision to end their relationship, after a 14 year co-habitation.

5.34.4 The victims' experiences in terms of systems in transition

Giles-Sims (1986:15) states, that, because systems are relatively stable over a period of time, transitions require adaptation to many changes. These include the transition to married life, to having a first child, to a divorce, to the "empty-nest" stage of life, to aging, and to death. These critical periods of transition or adjustments indicate that when people are going through transitions they are particularly vulnerable to physical and emotional problems. Studies also indicate that factors such as social support and prior histories of coping with problems affect how people deal with major life transitions. The transition from a relationship with an abusive woman may result in the male victim facing many new problems.

Tom had no support during his abusive marriage and had to ensure that his family's basic needs were taken care of when he went away on business trips, as he could not rely on his abuser to provide for the children. Likewise he also had no support when he decided to divorce his abuser and fought a two year battle before he could make the final transition.

Dick states that the transition from living abroad with his abuser, to escaping to South Africa and making new life for him and his children, was a smooth one. He testifies to being much better off financially and emotionally as a result of this. Harry states that his abusive ex-wife tried her best to reconcile with him after their divorce. He was feeling vulnerable at the time and went through a period of doubt as to whether he should attempt a reconciliation with her, but fortunately a colleague (whom he confided in about his victimisation) intervened and supported him during this difficult time. Harry also received support from friends, colleagues and family during the difficult time after his divorce and break-up with his abusive girlfriend, which helped him make the transition to live on his own and start the healing process after his victimisation.

Paul states that when his abuser's mental health had deteriorated to a state of psychosis he often felt desperate and alone and received very little support from the criminal justice system and mental health professionals during the time of transition, when he had to leave the family home with the children, but was still terrorised by her when she left the hospitals where she was supposed to receive the necessary treatment. Both he and the children were traumatised during this period and he describes it as being a very stressful time in his life.

T I testifies that he has received a lot of support from family, friends and community members from his church since he has separated from his abuser. He states that without this support he would have found the period of transition into bacherlorhood very difficult and is grateful for the visits and phone calls he receives. T I also has a very strong faith and believes that God will find a way forward for him during difficult times.

For E-mail respondent the period of transition that took place once he had returned to South Africa, after working abroad with his abuser, has had tremedous practical implications. Not only is he battling a serious skin disease which he contracted whilst he was working on the island, but he has also been left with the responsibility of selling the property which he and his abuser owned together in South Africa. He also had the responsibility of disposing of her personal belongings because she refuses to leave the island to see to it herself. He has had to endure all of this without any support from friends and family, as he has not told anyone of his victimisation. From his correspondence refer paragraph 5.32) it is clear that E-mail respondent is still traumatised by his abuse and has not made the transition into acceptance, that the relationship has ended, and his life has changed irrevocably.

5.34.5 The victims' experiences in terms of a systems theory approach to conflict

Giles-Sims (1986:22) postulates that marriages that have long-standing patterns of conflict can also be stable marriages as specific patterns of communication become part of the system of interaction and relatively resistant to change. The conflict process usually goes through several stages and the system's feedback processes

controls the nature of the conflict itself.   The victims in this study went through these stages as follows:

➢ **Stage 1 – Pre-competition**

At this stage **cooperation** and relative **independence** is prevalent within the relationship. Paul testifies that the courting period of four years with his abuser was relatively free of conflict, although he witnessed a quick temper at times, it did not have a profound effect on their relationship.   T I testifies that during the couples courting period and most of their marriage he did not experience abuse, until his wife started drinking heavily, which changed her behaviour dramatically.   E-mail respondent states that during the time that he met his abuser they developed a platonic relationship and became good friends who spoke regularly with no conflict.

➢ **Stage 2 – Competition**

During this stage, the system **changes** due to **internal dynamics** or to **events** in its environment, so that the **parties become competitive**. Tom's abuse began shortly after the birth of his children. Tom was often victim to severe verbal abuse by his abuser, which he later used as evidence against her. He did this by recording some of her onslaughts, to present in court to try and gain custody of his children during divorce proceedings.   In defence, Tom's abuser used the children to manipulate events to suit her interests. He uses the example of when he was transferred to Cape Town for work purposes and she refused to stay there with him and threatened to take the children back to Pretoria with her, if he did not resign and move back. He was not prepared to be without his children and thus agreed to her terms, even though it was to the detriment of his career.

Paul's abuser experienced her first episode of post-partum depression soon after the birth of their second child. She became severely depressed and suffered anxiety attacks and had to be hospitalised. She also received her first dose of prescription medication for her mental illness and subsequently his victimisation began.   T I states that his abuser's alcohol problem and his victimisation started when their eldest child left home for the first time. E-mail respondent testifies that his abuser

and her children moved into his home fairly soon after they met which changed the nature of their relationship significantly. They also decided to buy a farm together as a business venture which changed the nature of their interaction even further.

➢ Stage 3 – Conflict

Stage 3 is characterised by **verbal abuse** which results in **polarisation** and **mutual punishment**. This **intensifies the conflict** within the relationship which leads to further arguments. Paul testifies that when his abuser went into business with an old acquaintance (with who she had an affair) her abuse intensified with verbal attacks, which not only impacted severely on him, but also affected the children.

T I states that as time went on his abuser started drinking more heavily and subsequently his victimisation grew worse, progressing from severe emotional abuse to physical abuse when she was completely intoxicated. E-mail respondent says that once the property that he and his abuser purchased together registered she began to abuse him emotionally and physically. She became very "unstable" according to him and would react with rage at insignificant things that the children would do or say.

➢ Stage 4 – Crisis

At this stage there is a **turning point**. It is distinguished by a new, intense, and different level of interaction. At this stage **violence** is most likely to occur. Tom became fearful of his abuser when her verbal abuse escalated into physical violence as a result of alcohol consumption, which made her unpredictable and dangerous. This fear was intensified when they were in the vicinity of glasses or glass bottles and kitchen utensils which she used as weapons to attack him. When the abuse was at its worst, Tom would retaliated by pushing her away from him or restraining her arms and legs to protect himself, which only served to intensify her aggression.

Paul states that his abuser's verbal attacks escalated into physical attacks as her addiction to prescription medication grew and her adulterous relationship intensified. T I testifies that when his abuser reached the stage of addiction where she was drinking daily he had to sleep in the spare room with a locked door as he became

256

fearful of her nightly attacks and what she was capable of when out of control. E-mail respondent states that he would have to "pay" for whatever his abuser thought that the children were doing wrong, no matter how trivial, or if he dared to question her anger for them. She would attack him with any object she could get hold of at the time.

➢ Stage 5 – Resolution/Revolution

The **turning point** or period of change usually means a resolution or a revolution takes place. A **resolution** can be immediate or it can be gradual, but in either case in involves a **return to cooperation or competition**. If a **revolution** takes place the **system** is **drastically restructured**. Tom decided to file for divorce for the first time after a particularly abusive incident when his abuser also threatened the children. He did not follow through with the divorce action but gave his abuser a year to stop drinking and abusing him. During this time Tom wanted her to prove to him that she would change and try to restore their relationship. However, her cooperation did not last long before the abuse began once more and Tom decided to finally divorce her.

Shortly after Paul learned of his abuser's adultery, they decided to emigrate as a family as a form of resolution. They went through a period of reconciliation while they attempted to build a new life and subsequently she fell pregnant with their third child. Shortly after this her aggression started again. Paul states that he did everything in his power to keep her happy and maintain a stable, happy home for them in a new country. For a short while the family unit and his abusive wife was stable and happy. During this period their fourth child was conceived, but during this period Paul learned that she had made contact with her previous lover once more and rekindled their relationship. Shortly after the birth of their fourth child Paul decided to return to South Africa and end his marriage. His abuser had suffered severe post-partum depression once more and became extremely aggressive towards him and the children, whilst continuing with her adulterous relationship. Paul states that this was the turning point in the relationship, but that the final "revolution" took place when his abuser eventually committed suicide.

E-mail respondent and his abuser reached a "resolution" when they went to see a psychiatrist together about her violence. She received additional counselling and was prescribed medication which helped control her temper for a while, provided that she took the medication regularly. However, three months after they had emigrated to the Seychelles, her abusive behaviour started once more and continued until he left the island for medical reasons. This was also the "revolution" in their relationship as they did not reconcile again.

Siegel (2008:243) states that there are **factors that can predict spousal abuse** by taking various social and psychological issues into account which can further provide insight into why and how violence occurs within these groups. For example, Siegel postulates that excessive alcohol may turn otherwise docile wives into abusers. In addition, access to a weapon and previous threat with a weapon may lead to abuse given a conflict situation.

Dick testifies that his abusers' violence increased with the consumption of alcohol and strong prescription medication, which turned her into a "raving lunatic". She used a number of "weapons" ranging from shoes to shavers, scissors and knives with which to attack him, but fortunately did not have access to his firearm.

Harry's abusive wife threatened suicide with his firearm, and also threatened him with it, and a knife, on several occasions. He states that it was during these particularly violent episodes that he realised she needed professional help from a mental health practitioner, as her levels of aggression were out of control. Harry's abusive girlfriend became very violent with the consumption of alcohol which was compounded by the use of strong pain medication whilst drinking.

Paul's abusive wife's aggression was triggered by psychological disorders ranging from Bi-polar depression, addiction to prescription medication to psychosis, all of which contributed to her violent behaviour. Blogger testifies that his abuser's violence was triggered and escalated as a result of her excessive jealousy and the consumption of large amounts of alcohol. Similarly T I was abused both emotionally and physically for five years, as a result of his abuser's alcohol addiction, which had

258

spiralled out of control during that period. He states that her behaviour was unpredictable and very violent during that period.

Furthermore, some husbands or wives who appear docile and passive may resent their dependence on their wives or husbands and react with rage and violence as a result of their own inadequacies. This reaction has also been linked to sexual inadequacy. Siegel (2008:243) adds that excessive brooding and obsession with a husband or wife's behaviour, however trivial, can result in violent assaults. Coupled with flashes of anger after a verbal dispute and the unpredictability of abusers, these factors can often lead to violent episodes between spouses.

Dick states that his abusive wife's incessant jealousy and need to control him would often lead to "vicious arguments". She would sit and brood at home if she did not know his exact whereabouts and expected time of arrival, which, together with alcohol consumption, intensified her angry outbursts. Harry's abusive wife was an impulsive shopper and would spend money on items which they could not afford. He states that the unpredictability of her spending would often put financial strain on the household. E-mail respondent testifies to the unpredictability of his abuser throughout the relationship, which intensified with the use of strong medication, which she obtained from the hospital where she worked as a nurse. He states, "One moment she was loving and caring towards me, and the next she would change into someone with murderous, sadistic notions".

5.35   The victims' experiences in terms of the culture of violence perspective

According to Cote (2002:91), like all human behaviour, violent crimes must be viewed in terms of the cultural context from which they spring. Thus, if one is socialised in a culture with a violent context, especially from a young age, the chances that one will learn and internalise such values is greater than if one does not have exposure to such violence. This exposure may render certain adults more prone to violent expressions of frustrations and anger within a family context than adults who were taught to deal with frustration and anger in a non-violent manner, for example, through negotiation.

Tom testifies to having "a strange cultural experience" when he was in the air force where he experienced tension between Afrikaans and English speaking officials who served with him, which sometimes led to conflict situations. In addition Tom states that in his opinion Afrikaans households are more violence prone than English speaking ones, as children are raised with a lot more corporal punishment, and wives "disciplined" more by their husbands. He also comments on certain black cultures where vigilantes are an acceptable part of the culture, and which cause a great deal of violence amongst community members.

Dick testifies that he was raised in a non-violent household where he did not witness any spousal abuse between his parents, and believes that this was how "civilised" couples behave in a marriage. Similarly both Paul and his abuser came from happy families where there was no domestic violence. Paul's abuser became violent as a result of psychological problems and various drug addictions, not because she was raised in a violent environment where problems were solved with aggression. Paul's response to his victimisation is also witness to the fact that he was not raised in an environment where violent methods of problem solving were used. Thus, his response to his abusers violence was passive and sympathetic, rather than retaliatory. T I testifies that his abuser did not come from a happy home and did not have a good relationship with her parents whilst growing up. In addition both her parents were alcoholics which led to a lot of violence in her family home.

According to Siegel (2008:227) some nations have relatively high rates of violence. The author states that a number of national characteristics are predictive of those countries with high rates of violence. These include a high level of social disorganisation, economic stressors, high child abuse rates, approval of violence by the government, political corruption and an inefficient criminal justice system. These violent problem solving techniques are learned by younger generations and ultimately influence every aspect of life, including family life and intimate relationships. Eventually this creates South Africa's unique "culture of violence" which shapes, not only, part of our national identity, but ultimately who we are as individuals and the manner in which we relate to one another.

Tom's abuser had a lot of anger towards government institutions and resented the fact that he worked for one during their marriage. Her racial prejudice was evident and fuelled her verbal abuse, which according to Tom, stems from her childhood. Her father also worked for a government institution which she equated with lower class citizens and uneducated South Africans. Tom is of the opinion that one's upbringing, and personal norms (violent or non-violent) affect the way you interact with others, which in turn influences society.

Dick testifies that the safety of his children is of great concern to him in South Africa, much more so, than in any other country he has lived in previously. He feels the need to take precautionary security measures to ensure the children's safety at all times, measures which he was not accustomed to, but are vital in South Africa.

Harry testifies to having a very unstable youth with a father who was part of an extremely militaristic police force, where violence was part of their lives in the old apartheid South Africa. He states that it was culturally acceptable for his father's generation of police officers to discipline your wife and children as you deemed fit, which included the use of physical violence.

Paul and his family were victims of an armed robbery which led them to emigrate to North America for a few years. He did not want to raise his children, or expose his mentally unstable wife to further violence in South Africa. Paul states that the armed robbery caused the entire family to have tremendous stress and anxiety about their general safety. He states that his children have become very defensive, and somewhat aggressive, in the manner in which they protect themselves, and their belongings at school and in public, when they feel threatened in any way.

Blogger states that his own victimisation has made him aware that there is abuse by both males and females in every society (he is re-married to someone who was also abused by her ex-husband, who they believe to have suffered from bi-polar depression). He does, however, agree that the White South African male from his generation, is proud, and is taught not to abuse women, and if one wishes to set an example for children in the home, the violence is not returned with violence. However the cycle then results in more inappropriate treatment by the abuser.

T I testifies that he experienced different levels of violence in the two provinces in which he worked and owned businesses. He has noticed a difference in the social interaction and attitudes of people in the Western Cape and Gauteng, the latter being more stressful as a result of high crime rates, traffic and racial tensions in his opinion. He also comments on the role that the Affirmative Action laws has played in the lives of many white South African males, who find themselves under economic pressure, as a result of job losses or shortages of opportunities. In his opinion these factors play a role in family violence and the general culture of violence in South Africa.

5.36 The victims' experiences in terms of Westernised goals

According to Cote (2002:104) it cannot be denied that globalisation (technology) and the pursuit of Western goals (such as individualism and materialism) which are emphasised in the proverbial "American Dream" as a cultural ethos, has a large impact on developing nations, such as South Africa with its serious crime problem. Tom felt this individualism to a large extent within his community and family, and states that he did not feel that he could share his problems with anyone. He says that his neighbours in particular were selfish and egotistical. He also experienced extreme individualism in his work environment where colleagues' only concern was personal gain and not team growth. Tom was also victim to his abuser's materialism once he started divorce proceedings and realised that she would not leave the family home for fear of losing the possessions that she had laid claim to, and further demanded large sums of money from him.

Harry states that modern technology contributed to the final breakdown of his marriage, when he discovered that his abusive wife was receiving text messages and visiting chat rooms with other men in an adulterous manner. In Paul's opinion many of our youth's problems stem from the violence seen on television, coupled with the use of bad language, violent video and computer games and cell phones. In his opinion children are exposed to negative audio visual stimuli as a result of their access to advanced technology (for example, pornographic images on cell phones) which contributes to their aggressive approach to problem solving and general disrespect for others.

T I testifies to experiencing an uncharacteristic level of materialism from his abuser since he filed for divorce. His abuser keeps delaying the divorce settlement by demanding more and more financial assistance from him. He states that her greed and pride is costing him a great deal of money, and may eventually lead to his financial ruin as a private business owner. E-mail respondent was victim to his abuser's selfish nature (individualism) as she refused to reconcile their relationship and return with him when he was forced to return to South Africa due to a life-threatening skin disease. She ended a 14 year relationship with a phone call and not much explanation as to her motives for doing so.

It is the homeowner (in traditional patriarchal households, this is the male "breadwinner"), rather than the homemaker (thus the female who tends to the household and children and is not economically active) who is widely admired and envied – and whose image is reflected in the "American Dream" (Cote, 2002:108). This may lead to conflict situations between spouses as a result of pent-up frustration, especially on the part of the female partner who may feel trapped and oppressed in a patriarchal marriage. This may cause her to react to her situation in an abusive manner, either lashing out at her partner emotionally and/or physically to express her frustration.

Dick testifies that he had a far superior education to his abusive wife and was the sole breadwinner as a result of his professional position, rendering her completely dependent on him financially. This was compounded by the fact that Dick was expected to support her mother and extended family in Africa also. If he refused to do so, his abuser would "punish" him by neglecting her household and child-care duties to such an extent that he would cook, clean and take full responsibility for the children's needs, despite the fact that he worked full-time. His view on sex roles and the division of labour in a marriage is a contemporary one, and would not have minded if his wife chose to work outside the home. The fact that she did not work, but still expected him to take on domestic responsibilities, angered and frustrated him.

Harry is of the opinion that marriage is no longer sacred in modern society and that woman of his generation, have become overly confident and more aggressive

towards men in general. He further states that modern women, no longer have the respect that previous generations had for their husbands, as head of the household. Paul testifies that he was happy to be the sole breadwinner during his marriage as he felt that it was best for the children to grow up with a full-time mother, but that his abuser was not happy with this. After her first spate of post-partum depression she decided to return to work and pursue her career, but was unable to maintain stability in her working environment, which led to feelings of anger and frustration which escalated her abusive behaviour.

5.37   The victims' experiences in terms of social structural theory of violence

Gelles (1987:187-191) looks at propositions found in the social structural theory of violence which serve as a starting point for the theoretical conceptualisation of family violence. These propositions appear as follows from the case studies in this study:

> ➢ **Violence is a response to particular and situational stimuli**

This proposition states that few cases of family violence results from irrational attacks. Generally, violence is a response to stress and frustration, threats to identity or particular family structures, such as different religious beliefs or unwanted pregnancies to name but a few. Tom's abuse started straight after the birth of his children, which was unplanned and left him little choice with regards to marrying his abuser, as he took his responsibilities as father very seriously. Thus, his marriage was subject to stress and frustration from inception.

Dick's abuser was subjected to stress and frustration from a very young age when her father abandoned the family, and she had to leave school at the age of 12, to help her mother raise her two younger siblings. This stress and frustration emerged again after the birth of their own children and eventually lead her to violent reactions in certain situations.

> ➢ **Stress is differentially distributed in social structures**

The ability to cope with the stress is unevenly distributed. Consequently, families that encounter the most stress have the fewest resources to cope with it. This can take the form of stressful events, stressful family relations, and educational, occupational or income disparities. Tom had to cope with the stress of leaving his children, with his abusive wife, whilst going on business trips. He had to make sure that they were provided for, and could not rely on any form of support from family or friends in his absence, and always worried about what she would do whilst he was gone from home. Tom could not even rely on the police as a resource in times of trouble, when his wife became abusive, as he recalls being taken seriously only once, and even then they only gave her a verbal warning for abusing him.

Paul experienced several occasions where the police officers would arrive at his home, after he had contacted them for help with his abuser's violence and destruction of property, and they would proceed to drive away so that they would not have to deal with the domestic violence. He states that the police officer's often did not know how to deal with cases such as his, and would subsequently leave him to deal with his abuser on his own. This left him feeling desperate and anxious as he did not know where else to turn at times when her violence was out of control and the children had to witness it.

> **Exposure to and experience with violence as a child teaches the child that violence is a response to structural and situational stimuli**

The role models for violence presented to an individual during childhood provide a learning situation where the use, rationale, and approval of violence are learned. Such role models can create a preference for violent responses to stimuli. In Tom's case, his mother's short temper taught him that a lack of anger management can have detrimental effects on people, as he believes that her anger led to her having a stroke.

Paul testifies to being fearful for his children's psychological health and had many arguments with court officials and doctors about how to protect his children who were being exposed to so much violence. Paul had witnessed violent reactions to

various situations from his son who was the oldest child and thus exposed to his mother's violence the longest.

> **Individuals in different social positions are differentially exposed both to learning situations of violence as a child and to structural and situational stimuli for which violence is a response as an adult**

It asserts that certain individuals, as a result of their social position, will have been socialised to the use of violence in certain situations. As a result, individuals are also more likely to be exposed to these situations where violence is an appropriate reaction. This is a result of the differential distribution of norms that approves of violence and the causes of violence in social structures. Dick testifies to being afraid that his children, who have been exposed to so much violence from their mother, will accept violence as an appropriate response to various stimuli, for example, solving a difference of opinion with peers. The police had also recommended that Dick seek psychological help for his daughters, for this very reason, after a particularly violent incident where they had to be removed from the family home and taken to a place of safety by the police. Dick however did not have the resources to do so at the time.

> **Individuals will use violence towards family members differently as a result of learning experience and structural causal factors that lead to violence**

Family violence generally is explained by examining the factors in society, and in the family, that lead to violence and whether or not an individual learns to use violent behaviour in these situations. Norms and values that approve of violence and lead to a "subculture of violence" (which in this case is the family) arise from the underlying social structure. Such a social structure in the South African context may be the "culture of violence" which was discussed in the previous section.

5.38   The victims' experiences in terms of social learning theory

Social learning theory basically assumes that humans commit crime as a result of learning and socialisation experiences with significant others (such as parents,

266

siblings and other family members) in primary groups. In these primary groups people develop specific sets of norms and codes of conduct that they apply to themselves and in turn translate in their activities (Henry & Einstadter, 1998: 215). Parents or primary care givers may fail as effective role models, or other deviant models may be available outside the family, for example in the media or amongst peers (Henry & Einstadter, 1998: 237).

Tom testifies that his abuser was not a good role model for his children and has had a lasting influence on them as adults. Neither of them can drink alcohol as a result of their mother's alcoholism. Tom also states that his abuser's jealousy was a behaviour which he had seen in his mother-in-law when his father-in-law played tennis and socialised with other members of the tennis club. This led to severe arguments between his in-laws which his wife witnessed and subsequently displayed similar behaviour towards Tom. He states that his wife's alcohol addiction is also something which was fuelled by her parents as they drank in their own home and brought alcohol into his home on visits even though he forbade it.

Harry reiterates that his abusive girlfriend's alcohol addiction is either a learned behaviour or genetically transmitted by her father, as they both drank heavily on a daily basis. Harry's abusive wife was also raised by a father who had no respect for others and generally did not care what he said in the company of others, a trait which is also prevalent in his daughter. Blogger testifies that he has a strong belief that his abuser's violent behaviour is "a result of a childhood pattern that was set up in their (his abuser's) home".

Social learning theory further proposes that the deviant and social definitions of behaviours themselves are learned through reinforcement within the socialisation process and that they function as cues which signal that certain behaviour is appropriate and likely to be rewarded, or inappropriate and likely to be punished. It is this anticipated reinforcement or punishment (based on direct or vicarious reinforcement in the past) that provides motivation for the behaviour. One may be willing to commit a crime if one holds a favourable definition of the behaviour, but one is less likely to act unless the situation also allows for the expectation of a "payoff" or reward and low risk of punishment (Henry & Einstadter, 1998: 236-237). A

woman may be aware of the fact that violence towards her husband is unlawful and reprehensible in the eyes of other family and community members, but engages in violent tactics anyway to obtain her goal (whether that may be control over her partner or material gain) as previous violent behaviour achieved that without dire consequences (Henry & Einstadter, 1998: 238).

Paul states that his abuser would often phone the police to lay a charge against him, which caused him tremendous stress, as he was afraid that he would be arrested and the children would be left at the mercy of their unstable and violent mother. Because the police never arrested her for her abusive behaviour or false accusations against Paul, she did this continually to induce fear into the whole family.

Tom testifies that his abuser accused him of wife-battering to incriminate him and to retaliate against his reports of husband-battering. He states that she knew that police officials and the family violence court would rather believe her accusations, than his, and in addition she would not have to face punishment for these false accusations. Similarly, Harry states that his abuser was aware of the fact that if he had retaliated against her abuse, he would have lost his Firearm Training Licence, and probably ended up in jail, as the court and police officials were more likely to believe her in a domestic violence case.

T I states that he was a police officer for 18 years in the town where they lived before he was declared medically unfit to continue his service and opened his own business. He states that for that reason he would never have dared to retaliate against his abuser, for fear that she would contact the police and he would have to face accusations of wife beating in front of his peers. He states that his position in the community and his pride ensured that she got away with her abusive behaviour repeatedly. E-mail respondent reiterates and states that his abuser "knows that she can get away with it and I will never lay a charge against her..."

5.38.1 The victims' experiences in terms of locus of control

Theodore (in Viano, 1992:37-39) addresses the issue of locus of control, a construct found within social learning theory. The locus of control is said to be a personality

268
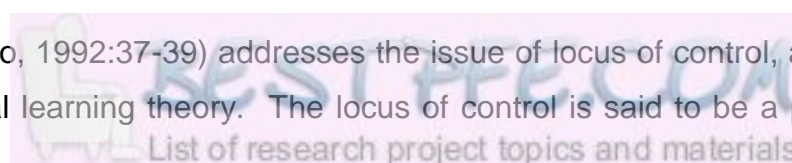
variable that can be expressed as an internal orientation or an external orientation depending on the style learned as a child. It appears that the dynamic of external locus of control may be operating in hostile marriages.

According to Tom his abuser demonstrates an external locus of control, as she denied that she had an alcohol problem and refused any help from psychologists and even went to the extent of accusing a therapist of "picking on her" when she was confronted about it. In addition his abusive wife accused him of having an affair with the therapist to divert the attention from the real problem. Tom's abuser would also try to shift the blame after an argument so that he would always be the guilty party, and in so doing, not accepting any of the responsibility for their marital problems.

Dick's abuser similarly tried to shift the blame after an argument, something he describes as being a "African trait – it was always someone else's fault". She would even blame him for her physical abuse and would state "Look what you made me do" after a violent episode. Dick also attempted to get help for his abuser's alcoholism but his efforts were futile as she refused to admit that she had a drinking problem. Similarly, Harry states that, his abusive wife would often try to shift the blame after an argument and would make Harry feel guilty, even though he was not at fault. He reiterates that she found it impossible to apologise to him after an argument or an abusive episode and would try to avoid the truth at all costs. His abuser even phoned the police on several occasions claiming that she was the victim of abuse.

Blogger also states that his abuser was in "severe denial that the consumption of alcohol was a problem", indicating that she was unwilling to take responsibility for her actions. Similarly T I testifies that his abusive wife denied that she had an alcohol addiction and refused to go for treatment. On several occasions he tried to help her, but she would "dismiss him as a nuisance" and simply not show up for the appointments he made for her with doctors or counselling services. On occasions where T I confronted his abuser about her violence towards him she would refuse to apologise or acknowledge her abusive behaviour even though he had the bruises to prove it. He states that she often took strong pain medication with alcohol, which

would numb her senses completely, and eradicate her memory of the emotional and physical abuse she had administered.

5.38.2 The victims' experiences in terms of model of transgenerational abuse

Viano (1992:16-18) uses the model of transgenerational abuse to explain that verbal abuse is the most likely, and physical abuse the least likely, form of maltreatment to be transmitted from one generation to the next. He also found high correlations between how a mother was treated as a child and how she treated her children in return. A child's perceptions of family members and their interactions with each other are important factors in a child's development. Essentially, early life attachments (also referred to as bonding) often translate into a "map" of how the child will perceive situations outside the family. A positive attachment based on warmth, affection, caring, protective behaviours, and accountability leads to basic trust, and trust is at the core of building a social human being. A child who does not have a caretaker's protection experiences anxiety, is overwhelmed, and may survive through a process of dissociation from the trauma. Such dissociation inhibits a sense of feeling connected to the outside world. In the earliest manifestations of this "numbing", children are cruel to animals, siblings, friends and even parents and grandparents. These children lack sensitivity to the pain of others and may develop a distorted association of pain with various events. Some children even become isolated and disconnected from others. The latter could lead to severe depression in adolescence and adulthood which may make an individual more prone to violence. (Rapp-Paglicci, Roberts & Wodarski, 2002:16).

Tom saw evidence of abusive relationships within his abuser's family and gives her brother as an example of this. His abuser had a close relationship with her brother even though he was a husband batterer who had been married three times and had abused all his wives, breaking one's cheek-bone and another's jaw-bone. He also testifies that his mother-in-law was "a depressive type who was often moody" which had a negative effect on the family and ultimately on Tom's abuser.

Dick's abuser did not grow up with a father, and thus, the bond with a male whom she could trust, was probably never formed during childhood. This may have

contributed to her abusive behaviour in general. Dick states that his abuser was insensitive towards their children and would often curse and threaten them with no regard to how this would affect their future behaviour. Dick testifies that this was one of the main reasons why he did not want his children near their mother. In addition he says that his children are afraid of their mother and do not want to live with her.

Harry testifies that his children had witnessed a great deal of violence while he was married to his abuser and it was the main reason why he agreed to let his son move abroad to stay with his biological mother. The perpetual violence that his children had to witness caused him tremendous anxiety as he feared that they too would learn to treat others in an aggressive manner during a disagreement. He reiterates that since the divorce his daughter displays uncharacteristically aggressive behaviour in her mother's company, something she does not do when she is in his or her grandmother's company.

Paul testifies that his son (who is the eldest child and was exposed to his mother's violence the longest) has suffered greatly due to his mother's violent nature. He has been diagnosed with depression and displays aggression towards his family, girlfriend and in school.   Paul states that his son grew up to be a very violent teenager who despised his mother and blamed Paul for "letting her get away with it". At the time of the interview Paul's son was still being treated for depression and making a final attempt to complete high school, having failed two grades, as a result of his victimisation and mental health problems. Paul fears that his daughters will be facing similar problems in years to come, but hopes that the stable and happy family environment within which they are now being raised, will prevent this.

Blogger states that he believes that his abuser's behaviour may have been an "inbred or learnt/tolerated behaviour in the home where the perpetrator was raised. Her brother was equally violent having broken his wife's jaw and beaten her." Blogger testifies that he was concerned with the effect that the abuse he endured would have on his children. He states that there is the potential of "their propagating and/or condoning such behaviour" as a result of them witnessing his abuse. He states that his son has signs of suppressed anger associated with memories of the violence he witnessed, which he fears may emerge at some stage.

T I testifies that his abuser came from a home in which there was not only alcohol abuse by both her parents, but she also witnessed her mother abusing her father both emotionally and physically from a very early age. Her father committed suicide at a fairly young age and her four siblings all married and divorced soon after as a result of alcohol abuse.   T I also states that his son does not have a good relationship with his mother as a result of the abuse he witnessed in the family home and harbours a lot of anger towards her as a result. He further states that his son has very little respect for his abusive mother and was eager to leave home after he had completed his schooling. T I sought therapy for his son but states that this has not helped a great deal in resolving his son's anger.

E-mail respondent states that his abuser was oblivious to the amount of pain she caused him during her violent attacks. Her aim was to immobilise him completely by kicking or hitting him on his genitals. She also did not care if an object which she destroyed had sentimental value to him.   He states that she was completely insensitive to the amount of fear and anxiety she caused the children, who were afraid of her. This total lack of disregard for the amount of pain she caused may have resulted from his abuser not forming close bonds with her parents from an early age. E-mail respondent reports that his abuser's parents were divorced when she was very young and that she did not have strong family ties. Her father remarried a foreigner whom she did not accept.   As a result she does not share a good relationship with her father even though he lived fairly close to them when she was still in South Africa. He states that one of her siblings has passed away and that she has no contact with the others.

5.38.3 The victims' experiences in terms of gender roles

Gender role attitudes adopted by individuals or groups take into account the various roles men and women play within families and how these roles make marriage and childbearing more or less attractive to men and women.   Fenstermaker, West and Zimmerman (1991 in Chibucos & Leite, 2005:225) suggest that wives and husbands share more gendered roles than unwed couples, for example, husbands are considered the "head of the household" because they may be the "breadwinners" while wives are considered the caretakers of the home and bare most of the

responsibility for child-rearing. Tom testifies that he was not opposed to his abusive wife stopping work after the birth of their first child to take care of the children's needs and the household responsibilities whilst he worked. This however, was not always the case, and Tom found that he had to do a lot of the housework and childcare when his abuser refused to do so, especially when her drinking became a daily hindrance.

Recent decades have seen marked changes in gender role attitudes however. Men and women are increasingly apt to approve of wives and mothers working and to think that men should help with housework. Changes in beliefs about appropriate behaviour for women and men at work and home are bound to affect family dynamics.   Attitudes matter, because they signify the internalisation of role responsibility, which goes beyond acting out a role. Tom states that his second marriage is a partnership, as his wife pursues a career and therefore household and child-care responsibilities are shared equally between them. Paul testifies that although he grew up in a traditional household where his father was the breadwinner and his mother the care-taker, he realises that it is almost impossible for many households to survive on one income in the 21st century, and that most women therefore have to work. As a result household and childcare responsibilities have to be shared by both parents.

Behaviour may also influence attitudes towards gender roles. For instance, divorced women have more non-traditional attitudes than married women, but these attitudes may have become less traditional following divorce. Likewise parenthood can change one's attitudes. E-mail respondent testifies that his abuser laughed at him when he asked for her hand in marriage and said, "Maybe some-day" but "some-day" never arrived during their 14 year relationship. She was a widow whose husband had committed suicide and had left her with two children. Both were gay, something she overtly approved of. She was also rumoured to be involved in a lesbian relationship prior to, and after their relationship ended, which bears testimony to her non-traditional attitudes. E-mail respondent's abuser was also very flirtatious with other men and would "openly try to seduce them". He states that she expected him to accept her behaviour without objection and if he did object he would experience further abuse from her.

5.38.4 The victims' experiences in terms of stereotyping

According to Viano (1992:337-39) foundational research into spousal abuse was limited to wife battering, in part because the women's movement provided motivation for further investigation, the accessibility of battered women in shelters, and the fact that traditional male roles did not encourage men to admit being victims or abusers. As a result, men as victims of abuse or mutual abuse between partners, is rarely addressed by researchers or the media. Literature continues to focus on what has become accepted as the "typical" situation (stereotyping males) in which the husband abuses the wife.

Tom's abuser often accused him of wife-battering. She would say he was the cause of the bruises that she had actually obtained in her inebriated state from bumping into furniture, as "proof" that he had hurt her. This was done in order to incriminate him, with the family violence advocate, when he tried to obtain custody of his children during their divorce. She knew the court was more likely to believe that she was the victim and not Tom. Tom also found it difficult to prove that he was being victimised, as police and court officials simply would not believe that this was the case. They would not even respond when he contacted them and asked them to drive to his home and experience her violent outbursts first hand. Tom was always afraid that the police would believe her. He realised that the chances were good that they would, as a result of male stereotyping, and that he would be put in jail immediately. For this reason Tom never considered lifting a hand to his abuser, knowing that "the odds were stacked heavily against him" should such a matter go to court. Tom also testifies to feeling embarrassed about his victimisation, although he does not understand why he felt this way, as he was not the abuser. This reiterates the fact that the stereotyping of the male victim of domestic violence is something which not only society, but even the victim, finds difficult to accept.

Dick testifies to being fearful of his partner because of her superior strength and youthful advantage over him. He states that even though he was "the man" and was stereotypically supposed to be superior in strength, and she "the woman" and supposedly the weaker sex, this was not the case in their marriage. Dick says that no one would help him, or believe that he was being abused by his wife. He became

so desperate for help with his victimisation that he resorted to seeking assistance from a voodoo doctor in Africa to cast a spell on his abuser.

Harry testifies that he was relieved when he realised he could talk about his abuse and that he was not the only man on earth who had endured such abuse. He states that, during his abusive relationships, he was ashamed to talk to anyone about his victimisation. He was afraid that no one would believe him, or that they would accuse him of being a weak man for not standing up to his abuser. He says that in his opinion society does not accept the concept of a man being vulnerable in a relationship with a woman, and cites his experience with a court official (refer paragraph 5.19).

Paul testifies to narrowly escaping arrest on several occasions when his abuser phoned the police to accuse him of wife-battering. He cites one incidence where a young police officer refused to listen to him and became very aggressive towards Paul. His more experienced partner believed Paul when he was able to prove his innocence with a restraining order, which Paul had obtained against his abuser, to ensure the children's and his own safety. Paul states that even though she had violated the restraining order against her, by being on the premises and in close proximity to him and the children, the police officers chose to ignore this, and did not arrest her. The young police officer left the premises convinced that Paul was the perpetrator and not the victim.

Blogger states that he believes that the South African male is too proud to admit to his victimisation and that this leads to the abuse being "covered up to some extent". He reiterates that this has lead to male abuse being a "hidden problem" and as a result the legal system pays little or no attention to such claims when deciding on custody claims by fathers who want to protect their children from the abuser. Blogger reiterates that the "female allegations are considered, and the male allegations are totally ignored, despite fairly conclusive evidence (of abuse)".

As an ex-police officer, T I feared that his abuser would contact the police if he retaliated physically against his abuse, and he would have to face one of his ex-colleagues, and defend himself against her accusations of wife beating. He states

that this would have caused him tremendous humiliation, as he feels that he would have been ridiculed by his peers for, "not being able to control his wife". They would simply not have believed that he was the victim.

E-mail respondent testifies that he feels humiliated as a result of his victimisation. He states that very few people understand what he went through and says that his male friends are not interested in hearing about his abuse. They refer to him as a "Pissie" (a weak man) who cannot stand up to a woman, and that the image of a man being battered by a woman, does not fit with their "Matcho Blou Bul Boelies" image of a South African male.

5.39 The victims' experiences in terms of social exchange theory/rational choice theory

The key assumption of **social exchange theory** is that people stay in relationships (even abusive ones), and adopt certain behaviours within these relationships, because the benefits out-way the costs of being in the particular partnership. Social exchange theory may be viewed as providing an economic metaphor to social relationships. The theory's fundamental principle is that humans in social relationships choose behaviours that maximise their likelihood of meeting self-interests in those situations (Chibucos & Leite, 2005:137). In an abusive relationship, patterns of abuse are often repeated when the abusive partner benefits by gaining power over, and obtaining desired behaviour from his or her victim. Patterns of abuse are perpetuated especially if the victim offers little or no resistance. As a result, the abuse repeatedly brings desired rewards to the abuser.

Tom testifies that for many years he felt he owed it to his children to stay married to his abuser, so that they could have their mother and father with them on a daily basis, and he would also feel no guilt for breaking up the family. He states that he "tried to fix things but realised that some things can't stay fixed". Tom's abuser knew he felt strongly that their children should be raised in a two parent home and thus continued her abuse for 15 years.

276

Paul states that during his marriage to his abuser he felt it best for the children to grow up with a full-time mother, who was dedicated to their health and happiness. Therefore he consistently tried to help his abuser with her mental health problems, in the hope that she would improve, and be the wife and mother that he longed for her to be. He realised that her abusive behavioural patterns were not only continued with the birth of each additional child but that they were becoming increasingly more violent in nature without much consequence to her. However, he and the children were paying the price (proverbially) for her actions.

Similarly, T I testifies that he did not want to divorce his abuser before both his children had completed school and left home as he did not want to disrupt their lives. For this reason he offered little or no resistance to her abuse in order to keep the peace for the sake of his children. He feels that male victims of domestic violence should put the needs of their children before their own, even though this may perpetuate the abusers violence.

Social exchanges carry three potential costs, namely, **investment costs** which represent the energy and personal cognitive or emotional investment put into an exchange by the actors involved. Tom vowed early in his marriage to "stick it out" until the children were in high school and old enough to understand why he ended his marriage. He did not want the children to blame him for breaking up the family.

For Dick, the emotional cost of removing his children from their mother was the greatest, although he believes that it is beneficial for them not to be near her. He testifies to going through periods of tremendous anxiety as a result of this. Paul states that because he loved his abuser and felt great sympathy for her as a result of her deteriorating mental health, he was unable to distance himself from her for many years during his victimisation but "paid" an enormous emotional price for this decision.

Direct costs, which include time, financial resources or other structural resources, that are dedicated to the exchange. Tom's marriage cost him a great deal in terms of financial and other resources as his abuser never contributed to the family income

for the duration of the 16 year marriage. His divorce also cost him a great deal of money in legal and maintenance fees and almost caused his financial ruin.

Dick's abuser was not only financially dependent on him, but also expected him to support her family in Africa. Even during their separation he has to support her financially as she refuses to work and knows that the law is on her side with regards to maintenance payments from her spouse. Dick also realises that his abuser will cost him a great deal of money with regards to the divorce settlement but is prepared to "pay the price" for the sake of his children.

Harry states that he felt trapped in his abusive relationship as he had to consider the cost of divorce in terms of the practical implications thereof. He would have to sell the family home and find an alternative residence for himself and the children. This is in addition to other costs pertaining to the divorce settlement which he could not afford as the sole breadwinner. Harry's abusive wife also destroyed many household objects during her violent episodes, which he had to replace. When he finally decided to end the marriage he did suffer great financial losses and at the time of the interview was still struggling to regain financial stability.

Paul suffered great financial and structural losses as a result of his abuser's violence and mental illness. Apart from her enormous medical bills, she also damaged the family home and its contents, to such an extent that he could not sell it after her suicide. He had no choice but to repair it to an acceptable state, at great cost. He moved back into the house with his new wife and children in order to try to recoup the financial losses he suffered.

Blogger states that the cost of his custody claim for his children was a waste of money and that the claim was ignored by the court. He refers to the cost of the psychologist's reports for legal purposes, which were of no help to him. His abusive wife was still given preference in the custody battle for the children, despite the conclusive evidence he provided proving that she was abusive.

T I also suffered great financial and structural losses with his separation and pending divorce. He was forced to purchase a new home for his abuser and he gave her

278

most of the family home's furniture (including precious antiques which he inherited from his father). He is also burdened with high legal costs, whilst his abuser drags out the divorce with additional financial claims against him.

Finally, **opportunity costs** represent possible rewards that may be lost as a result of the relationship or social exchange. For example, a parent sacrifices considerable possible rewards or benefits in order to raise children in a responsible manner. Tom believed that, staying married to his abuser for as long as he did, he would solidify his relationship with his children to such an extent that he would not risk "losing" them when he finally decided to end the marriage. He also made a considerable career sacrifice to be with his children as his abuser refused to take a transfer to another city with him for promotional purposes.

Dick states that he rejected two promotions as he was afraid of the consequences of accepting more responsibilities at work which could result in longer workings hours and ultimately increase his victimisation. On one particular occasion, his abuser forced Dick to choose between attending his daughter's school play and going for an interview, knowing that he would never disappoint his daughter by not having a parent to watch her perform. Needless to say he was not considered for the job.

According to **rational choice theory**, unlawful behaviour is the product of careful thought and planning. Offenders choose crime after considering both personal (monetary gain, revenge, thrills and entertainment) and situational factors, such as target availability, security measures, and possibility of apprehension by the police. Violent perpetrators select suitable targets by picking people who are vulnerable and lack adequate defences. Tom experienced his abuser's thrill at humiliating him in social circles or on a personal level and said she did this to get the "psychological upper-hand – give a downer to get an upper". According to him, she knew she could get away with this form of emotional abuse, and that he was vulnerable when she commented on things such as his face or size of his penis.

Dick's abuser would often take out her anger on the children, who were unable to defend themselves, especially if he was not present. She knew that there was little consequence to her behaviour, as the most punishment she had received from

police officials was a letter of warning. She was also cruel to the children's cat and would refuse to feed it. She eventually got rid of the cat when the children were not home. Dick's abuser also physically attacked her domestic help who was at her mercy for employment. Dick testifies that his abuser was a large framed woman and was superior to him in strength, which made him vulnerable in her presence, especially if she had consumed alcohol. She would often call him an "old man" which further eroded his confidence. He admits that he is "no match for her anymore" and is afraid of her physical strength.

Harry reiterates by stating that his abuser knew that she could get away with attacking him physically and emotionally with no retaliation by him – "Ek sou dit nooit waag nie want wie glo die polisie eerder? Die vrou!". This made him a perfect target for her aggression. E-mail respondent testifies to being a suitable target for an abuser, as he states that he is "a gentle natured man" and believes that a woman should be treated with love and respect even when in disagreement about her decisions.

Rational choice theory postulates that various personal traits and experiences affect a perpetrator's choices. Criminals or violent individuals appear to be more impulsive and have less self-control than other people and they seem unaffected by fear of punishment. They are typically under stress or facing some serious personal problems or condition that drives them to choose risky or violent behaviour (Siegel, 2008:74). This can often be related to domestic violence cases, where the male is the victim of abuse by a female partner, who has little self-control and faces personal problems and/or severe stress.

Tom's abuser displayed impulsivity and little self-control especially when she had been drinking. She also became violent as a result of this. He states that he constantly felt that he was "walking on egg-shells – quail eggs for that matter" to keep her happy. He says that her behaviour was "really unacceptable" and not the way mature adults behaved when they became angry (for example, shouting and screaming whilst smashing empty bottles on the floor).

Dick testifies that his abuser had little self-control and would often "flare up" (in anger) in the presence of others with little regard for who witnessed her behaviour. Harry also testifies that his abusive wife's attacks would take place randomly and could be provoked by anything he or the children said or did. He states that her attacks came with no warning and that she had little self-control when attacking him.

Similarly Paul's abuser had no self-control in the final months before her suicide when her psychosis was at its worst. She became uncontrollably violent and displayed risky behaviour by for example, breaking windows, setting clothing and curtains on fire and destroying furniture, without considering the consequences. Paul states that she became utterly fearless in her attempts at suicide and destruction, without any consideration of punishment.

T I testifies that he had to be very "careful" around his abuser the morning after an abusive episode, which had resulted from the previous nights drinking. He states that her temper was very volatile, and if he confronted her about the abuse, "dan is die hel los!"

E-mail respondent states that upon visiting his home for the first time with her children, his abuser announced at the end of the weekend, that she and the children wanted to move in with him to start a new life. Their relationship developed into an intimate one and soon they were living together as husband and wife. This is testimony to her impulsivity and his vulnerability at the time (shortly after his divorce from his first wife). He admits that he was a suitable target and lacked the defences to withstand her charm and beauty.

5.40 Conclusion of analysis and interpretation of data

In this chapter the data, which was obtained by conducting interviews with respondents, was analysed. Interpretation was done against the aims of the study which were formulated in Chapter 1, paragraph 1.4. The findings of this study confirmed the relevance and practical application of the **integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence** refer Figure 3.1). Research findings of this study formed the basis from which conclusions and recommendations are made in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter the impact of physical and emotional abuse on the respondents in this study and the resulting trauma they endured, is assessed in accordance with the aims of the study. Researcher also investigated the respondents' perceptions of their future and the impact of their victimsation on their lives. Conclusions that were made by the respondents concerning their experiences were also documented. Finally, recommendations for the healing process of male victims of domestic violence, as well as those pertaining to further research, are presented in this chapter.

6.2 Conclusions

Researcher revisits the aims as set out in Chapter 1 and draws the necessary conclusions as to whether these aims were sufficiently met and discussed in the thesis.

6.2.1 Conclusions in connection with the aims of this study

Aim 1: Construct a theoretical model according to which data can be analysed and the phenomenon of the physical and emotional abuse of the male partner in a heterosexual relationship can be better understood.

This aim was met successfully as researcher constructed **an integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence** (see Figure 3.1) and succeeded in analysing the phenomenon of physical and emotional abuse of the male victims of domestic violence, within a marriage or cohabitating relationship, who formed the research sample within the framework of the model. Analysis and interpretation of the data of this study was done effectively according to the model as the model served as a theoretical foundation upon which this form of domestic violence could be in understood, interpreted and analysed for exploratory purposes.

Aim 2: To investigate the forms of emotional abuse a male partner endures from his female partner within a domestic violence context.

This aim was achieved by conducting an extensive investigation on the phenomenon of the male victim of domestic violence in terms of his emotional abuse within a heterosexual relationship as presented in Chapter 2. Thereafter researcher drew on the **integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence** (see Figure 3.1) in order to investigate the abuse the respondents in this study were subjected to, and to interpret the experiences of these men accordingly. This served to distinguish certain characteristics unique to male victims, in contrast to female victims of spouse/intimate partner abuse.

Aim 3: To investigate the forms of physical abuse a male partner endures from his female partner within a domestic violence context.

This aim was achieved by doing an extensive investigation in on the phenomenon of the male victim of domestic violence in terms of his physical abuse within a heterosexual relationship as reflected in Chapter 2 . Thereafter researcher drew on the **integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence** (see Figure 3.1) in order to investigate the abuse the respondents in this study were subjected to, and interpret the experiences of these men accordingly. This served to distinguish certain characteristics unique to male victims, as opposed to female victims of spouse/intimate partner abuse.

Aim 4: To investigate the forms of sexual abuse a male partner endures from his female partner within a domestic violence context.

This aim was achieved by doing an extensive investigation on the phenomenon of the male victim of domestic violence in terms of his sexual abuse within a heterosexual relationship as discussed in Chapter 2. Thereafter researcher drew on the **integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence** (see Figure 3.1) in order to investigate the abuse the respondents in this study were subjected to, and to interpret the experiences of these men accordingly. This served

to distinguish certain characteristics unique to males, as opposed to female victims of spouse/intimate partner abuse.

Aim 5: To determine why the victims in these abusive relationships remain in these relationships.

Researcher achieved this aim by asking direct questions to the respondents who were interviewed in this study in this regard. They gave several reasons for remaining in their abusive relationships, of which the most common reasons were, concern for their children, financial and practical implications and the hope that their partners would seek help and change their behaviour in order to save the marriage/ relationship.

Aim 6: To determine why some of these victims eventually leave their abusive partners.

Researcher achieved this aim by asking direct questions to the respondents who were interviewed in this regard. They gave unique, individual reasons for what drove them to this "turning point" (see paragraphs 5.34.3 and 5.34.5 Stage 5) in their abusive relationships.

Aim 7: To explore characteristics and personal backgrounds of respondents, in order to gain an in-depth understanding of their tolerance of victimisation.

Researcher explored the personal characteristics and backgrounds of the respondents in this study as far as possible, in order to successfully analyse and interpret the data in Chapter 5, according to the **integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence** (see Figure 3.1).

Aim 8: To determine the effect of victimisation on the respondent, either, emotionally and/or physically.

Researcher achieved this aim by investigating the impact of emotional and physical abuse on three levels by asking direct questions during the interview process pertaining to the victims' mind (cognitive processes and emotions), body (physiological effects) and spirit (beliefs, values and religion).

Aim 9: To determine the effect of victimisation on the victim's interpersonal relationships with his:
  - ➢ **Partner**
  - ➢ **Children**
  - ➢ **Family**
  - ➢ **Friends**

This aim was achieved by doing an extensive investigation into the family and community interactions of the victims' by looking at how and where they lived and worked during the time of their victimisation. Thereafter researcher drew on the **integrated systems model of abuse of the male victim of domestic violence** (see Figure 3.1) in order to investigate these relationship and social aspects of the victims in this study and to interpret the experiences of these men accordingly. This served to distinguish certain characteristics unique to male, as opposed to female victims of spouse/intimate partner abuse.

Aim 10: To determine the effect of victimisation on the victim's interactions within other institutions, namely:
  - ➢ **Work**
  - ➢ **Church/religion**
  - ➢ **Other professional or extra-curricular associations**

The same process as above (Aim 9) was followed for the aspects which formed part of this aim.

Aim 11: The utilisation of the findings of the study in order to assist victims in gaining a deeper understanding of their victimisation experience.

Researcher achieved this aim by showing empathy and by doing some debriefing of certain respondents during and after the interview process. During the recall process it allowed respondents to see their experiences in a structured manner through researcher's "eyes". This showed respondents that their experiences were real, an abnormal set of circumstances in which they were victims as well as survivors. Researcher has used this study to encourage further discussion on this phenomenon via the blog so that respondents can share their experiences and concerns with others who have also experienced this form of victimisation. This will assist in victims supporting one another by corresponding via the blog at their own convenience on a regular basis. Researcher has also made certain aspects of the literature review available to respondents who have requested to read more on the topic via e-mail.

Aim 12: Recommendations for further research.

This aim is met in the study and is in the form of recommendations for the victims, for society as a whole and the criminal justice system. Further recommendations for research is also made and discussed in detail in paragraph 6.3.2.

6.3   Recommendations

6.3.1 Healing

Recognition for the fact that most of the male victims of emotional and physical abuse, as well as their abusers, are in need of healing is a major contribution made by this study and culminates in the following recommendations based upon the male victims' experiences who took part in this study:

6.3.1.1   Support groups

Support groups for men who are victims of emotional and physical abuse should be encouraged by institutions and therapists that deal with family violence and are in contact with these victims.

286

➢ **Religious institutions**

Church and other religious groups can facilitate the process of support to male victims of emotional and physical abuse by offering opportunities for these victims to unite and speak out about their experiences. Once these victims realise that there are other individuals who have been subjected to emotional and physical abuse, and who are interested in supporting each other, the road to healing will be easier. This support is especially important to those victims who do not have adequate family and other support, to help them through the initial adjustment period after a separation or divorce. These religious institutions can circulate pamphlets or make use of any method they chose to encourage these support groups. Many churches also have trauma centres that can assist in assembling such support groups, if they do not already exist.

➢ **Trauma centres**

Organisations such as Inter Trauma Nexus and Life Line can make a valuable contribution by offering support to male victims of emotional and physical abuse, by providing therapists who have adequate knowledge of the subject. These therapists should receive comprehensive training on the phenomenon of the male victim of domestic violence and how best to counsel these victims and/or their children. Trauma centres can also offer group therapy as they are in the ideal positions to set up regular support groups for these victims. These centres can advocate an awareness of this phenomenon and indicate their willingness to help through any means at their disposal, whether through radio talks or newspaper advertisements. These trauma centres can also create a multi-disciplinary awareness by making doctors and other health care workers aware of these services. They can then put victims in contact with help, as victims of emotional and physical abuse often present with psychosomatic symptoms as discussed in Chapter 5.

6.3.1.2   The criminal justice system

There must be a greater awareness of and sensitisation by the criminal justice system so that men feel free to approach criminal justice authorities in cases where

criminal charges are justified. This awareness can be created by media campaigns such as television and radio programmes, thus ensuring that husband/male battering is fully recognisable under the Domestic Violence Act and a reality in our society.

> **Police, attorneys and court officials**

Police training should acknowledge the phenomenon of male battering and include explanations concerning emotional and physical abuse of the male victim of domestic violence specifically, making it distinguishable from wife battering, so that it is perceived clearly as a form of domestic violence and an act punishable by law. Once the criminal justice system views this form of abuse in a serious light and gives it the attention it deserves, through media exposure and recognition within its ranks, the healing process for the victim begins. The male victims of domestic violence will then be recognised and given an official voice, thus empowering them.

6.3.1.3   Family therapy

Family therapy for victims, their children and the abusers should be encouraged by divorce attorneys and other role players, as the emotional abuse often continues long after the separation or divorce and the victimisation process is perpetuated. Thus the cycle of abuse continues relentlessly.

The victims, other family members or other roles players such as their attorneys can suggest family therapy directly to the abusers after the initial trauma of the separation has dissipated. This can be done verbally or in writing, whichever is deemed most appropriate at the time. This family therapy can also include close family members who are intimately involved in the situation, for example, the parents of both the victim and the abuser. This therapy should however be conducted in a controlled environment and led by qualified therapists or counsellors.

6.3.1.4   The media

Actuality programs on television, radio talk shows, and men's magazines can play an active and visible role by featuring discussions and articles on husband/male abuse.

288
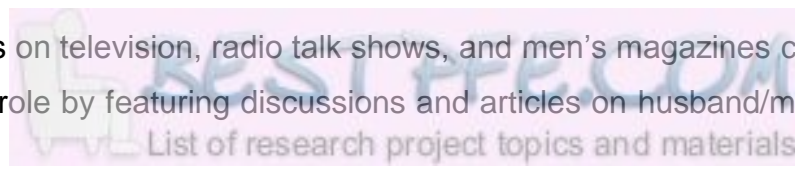
This will create an awareness of this issue and bring to the fore that men should not accept their victimisation within their relationships and thus their efforts can make a difference to assist in the prevention, treatment and healing process of male victims of emotional and physical abuse. This information dissemination would also spread the necessary awareness amongst our youth, in order to make a valuable contribution to prevent the intergenerational cycle of such abuse, and assist the holistic healing process.

6.3.2 Recommendations for further research

6.3.2.1 Intervention programmes

Social workers and psychologists can write intervention programmes for middle and high school students, as awareness campaigns for young girls and boys. This can educate them on the phenomenon of emotional and physical abuse of both sexes, and its impact, in a subject such as Life Orientation. This can also be adapted for tertiary education facilities.

Suggested title:

Education programme for middle and high school students: Are men victims of emotional and physical abuse by their female partners?

6.3.2.2 Typologies

An in-depth profile or typology of the female abuser can be drawn up, by looking at psychological characteristics based on various theoretical perspectives. This can also be done for male victims of emotional and physical abuse.

Suggested titles:

A typology of the female emotional abuser

A typology of the male victim of domestic violence

6.3.2.3   Impact on children

Investigate the impact of husband/male abuse by their female partners on their children. A few ethical dilemmas can come to the fore in such an investigation, for example, will the researcher do more harm than good if he or she is not a child psychologist with the necessary skills to work with children, or will the child be unduly traumatised by the research? These and other issues will have to be considered before conducting research with children.

Suggested title:

The impact of husband/male abuse by his female partner on their children: A victimological study

6.3.2.4   Comparative study

Conduct a comparative study between men and women who are victims of emotional and physical abuse, to determine whether their experiences have any significant gender related differences. This could be done in a quantitative study in order that research findings can be generalised and thus utilised in gender studies.

Suggested title:

The effect of emotional and physical abuse on male versus female victims in marriage or cohabitating relationships: A victimological study

6.4   Conclusion

Although the majority of the respondents in this study were positive about their futures and still believed that the institution of marriage can be a happy and fulfilling experience, they offered the following advice to other male victims of domestic violence:

- **The voice of Tom**

Tom states that, the victim cannot change the perpetrator, unless the perpetrator has an inherent need and desire to change her behaviour. This cannot be achieved if the perpetrator is in constant denial about her addiction (whether it may be to alcohol or something else), and that her abusive behaviour is unacceptable. Tom says that where there is significant abuse within a relationship, the relationship is "terminal".

- **The voice of Dick**

Although Dick's abusive marriage was not over during the time of the interview, he was fully aware that he would have to go through a lengthy legal process during which he would endeavour to fight for legal custody of his children as part of the divorce settlement. He states that men who are in abusive relationships where there are children involved cannot walk away from such a relationship without considering the consequences such action will have on the children. He also realises that by staying in an abusive marriage the children will ultimately suffer the most, as they will be socialised into believing that it is acceptable to be abusive within a relationship and may grow up to be violent adults.

- **The voice of Harry**

Harry thinks that if a man finds himself in an abusive relationship, the first step towards healing is admitting to himself and then to others that he is being abused even though it may feel humiliating to talk about it. He also feels that it is important that the male victim of domestic violence realises that he is not to blame for his abuser's problems, and thus, does not deserve the abuse.

- **The voice of Paul**

Although Paul gained insight into his abuser's mental health problems, and was able to forgive her for her transgressions against him, he feels that his children are the ones who have suffered the most as a result of their mother's abuse. He is not optimistic about the long term effects that her violence will have on his children, especially his son who was exposed to it the longest. He has found happiness once more with his second wife, but has suffered great losses due to his abuser's violence and destruction. Paul is saddened rather than angered about his victimisation, and expressed the hope that others who find themselves in similar situations, will be fortunate enough to get the help that they need from mental health professionals and the criminal justice system before the abuse results in a death.

- **The voice of Blogger**

Blogger expressed that divorce is the only way out of an abusive marriage, to avoid being pushed to the point where, the male victim retaliates and does physical harm to the abuser. This could result in assault or even murder charges being laid against the victim instead of the abuser, as the criminal justice system falls prey to the stereotypical image of the man being the aggressor and the female the innocent victim in domestic violence disputes.

- **The voice of telephonic interviewee (T I)**

T I is a deeply religious man and states that other male victims of domestic violence should believe that God will show them the way forward, with regards to their relationships and victimisation experiences, as every victim has unique circumstances. He also feels strongly that a male victim of domestic violence should put the needs of their children before their own, and then only "try to save themselves". Furthermore he advises male victims of abuse to "talk to anyone who will listen", as it is vital to seek the help and support that one needs when you are a victim of domestic violence.

- **The voice of e-mail respondent**

  E-mail respondent expressed feelings of humiliation as a result of his victimisation. In addition he is still greatly troubled by the way his abuser ended their relationship, partly because of his unresolved feelings for her and partly because he finds it very difficult talk about his victimisation. He states that the law protects the woman in such cases, and not the man, but warns that a man must never "raise a hand to a woman". He believes that a man has a lot more power to injure, than a woman does.

In researchers opinion the respondents who took part in this study are not victims, but rather "survivors". These men have survived situations of extreme trauma and through it all, maintained their integrity and protected their children, to the best of their abilities. These survivors have coped with their victimisation remarkably well if one considers that there are no trauma centres or places of refuge for these victims to turn to when their abusers became extremely violent and life threatening. They did not lose control of their emotions and did not resort to violence themselves. All the survivors who had children within their relationships put the needs of their children above their own. This is especially significant to researcher, as we live in a society where it is still believed by most, that a child's mother is the best caretaker.

In addition, researcher has learned through this study and the reading of other victimology texts that the tolerance of domestic violence in one generation, encourages its continuation in the next. Therefore, to assist in the prevention of domestic violence in general, but especially in the endeavour to illuminate the victimisation of the male victim of abuse at the hands of his female partner in South Africa, researcher concludes this thesis with the following quote:

> I swore never to be silent whenever or wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must always take sides; neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. – Elie Wiesel

REFERENCES

Babbie, E. 2007. *The practice of social research.* 11th Ed. United States of America. Thomson Wadsworth.

Bailey, K.D. 1994. *Methods of social research.* 4th Ed. New York, United States of America. MacMillan, Inc. The Free Press

Barak, G. 1998. *Integrating criminologies.* Boston. Allyn and Bacon

Bartol, C.R. & Bartol, A.M. 2005. *Criminal behaviour: A psychosocial approach.* 7thEd. New Jersey, United States of America. Pearson Prentice Hall

Barbour, R.S. 2009. *Introducing qualitative research.* London, United Kingdom. Sage Publications

Becvar, D.S. & Becvar, R.J. 1996. *Family therapy: a systemic integration.* 3rd Ed. Boston, Allyn and Bacon

Brown S.E, Esbensen, F & Geis, G. 1996. *Criminology: Explaining crime and its context.* 2nd Ed. Cincinnati, United States of America. Anderston Publishing

Brown S.E, Esbensen, F & Geis, G. 2001. *Criminology: Explaining crime and its context. 4th* Ed. Cincinnati, United States of America. Anderston Publishing

Chibucos, T, R. & Leite, R.W. 2005. *Readings in family theory.* California, USA. Sage Publications

Collins, W. 1988. *Pocket reference: Thesaurus in A-Z form.* London, United Kingdom. William Collins Sons & Company Limited

Coltrane, S & Collins, R. 2001. *Sociology of marriage & the family: Gender, love and property.* 5th Ed. United States of Amercia. Wadsworth

Davis, R.C., Lurigio, A.J. & Skogan, W.G. 1997. *Victims of crime.* 2nd Ed. California, United States of America. Sage Publications

Davis, L & Snyman, R. 2005. *Victimology in South Africa.* Pretoria, Van Schaik

De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouchè, C.B. & Delport, C.S.L. 2002. *Research at grass roots: for the social sciences and human service professions.* 2nd Ed. Pretoria. Van Schaik

De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouchè, C.B. & Delport, C.S.L. 2005. *Research at grass roots: for the social sciences and human service professions.* 3rd Ed. Pretoria. Van Schaik

Ewing, C.P. 1987. *Battered women who kill: Psychological self-defense as legal justification.* New York, United States of America. Lexington Books

Esterberg, K.G. 2002. *Qualitative methods in social research.* United States of America, McGraw Hill

Fowler, B. 1996. *Grensvegter. South African Army Psychologist.* United Kingdom, Sentinel Projects

Gelles, R.J. & Cornell, C.P. 1986. *Intimate violence in families.* California, United States of America. Sage Publications

Gelles, R.J. 1987. *The violent home.* California, United States of America. Sage Publications

Gelles, R.J. 1997. *Intimate violence in families.* 3rd Ed. California, United States of America. Sage Publications

Giles-Sims, J. 1986. *Wife battering: A systems theory approach.* New York: The Guilford Press

Gough, B. 1998. *Feminism and psychology: Men and the discursive reproduction of sexism: Repertoires of difference and equality.* London, England. Sage Publications

Gosselin, L. 2003. *Prisons in Canada.* Montreal, Canada. Black Rose

Heidensohn, F. 1995. *Women and crime.* 2ndEd. California, United States of America. Sage Publications

Henry, S & Einstadter, W. 1998. *The criminology theory reader.* New York, United States of America. New York University Press

Kirkwood, C. 1993. *Leaving abusive partners.* London: Sage Publications

Levant, R.F. 1984. *Family therapy, a comprehensive overview.* New Jersey, Prentice Hall

Leedy, P.D. 1989. *Practice Research: planning and design.* 4th Ed. London. Collier Macmillan

Litman, L.C. 2003. *Dependent personality disorder as a marker of battered husband syndrome: A case exemplar.* Canadian Journal of Psychiatry. Vol 48. Issue 11: 772

Loring, M.T. 1994. *Emotional Abuse.* New York, United States of America. Mac Millan, Incorporated

Lurigio, A.J., Skogan, W.G. & Davis, R.C. 1991. *Victims of crime: Problems, policies, and programs.* 2ndEd. London. Sage Publications

Mouton, J & Marais, H.C. 1993. *Basic concepts in the methodology of the social sciences.* Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council

Neuman, W.L. 2007. *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches.* Massachusetts, United States of America. Allyn & Bacon

Olin,L & Tonry, M. 1989. *Family Violence.* Chicago, United States of America. The University of Chicago Press

Pagelow, M.D. 1983. *Marital Violence.* London, England. Routeledge and Kegan Paul

Patton, M.Q. 1990. *Qualitative evaluation methods.* London: Sage Publications

Patton, M.Q. 2002. *Qualitative evaluation methods.* London: Sage Publications

Popenoe, D., Cunningham, P. & Boult, B. 1996. *Sociology. 1ˢᵗ* Ed. New Jersey, United States of America. Prentice Hall

Pretorious, R. 2003. *Crime Theories: Module for Criminology III.* University of Pretoria, South Africa. Van Schaik Content Solutions

Rapp-Paglicci, L.A., Roberts, A.R. & Wodarski, J.S. 2002. *Handbook of violence.* United States of America. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Reid, S.T. 2003. *Crime and Criminology.* 10ᵗʰEd. New York, United States of America. Mc Graw- Hill

Ritzer, G. 1996. *Classical sociological theory.* United States of America. Mc Graw-Hill

Saunders, D.G. 1986. *Victims and violence.* United States of America. Springer Publishing Company

Schurink, W.J., Snyman, I. & Krugel, W.F. 1992. *Victimization: Nature and trends.* Pretoria, South Africa. HSRC Publishers

Siegel, L.J. 2008. *Criminology: The core.* 3ʳᵈEd. California, United States of America. Thomson Wadsworth

Silverman, D. 2008. *Doing qualitative research.* London. United Kingdom. Sage Publications

Stark, E & Flitcraft, A. 1996. *Women at risk: Domestic violence and women's health.* California: Sage Publications

Tolman, R.M. & Edleson, J.L. 1992. *Intervention for men who batter: An ecological approach.* United States of America. Sage Publications

Tshiwula, L. 1998. *Crime and delinquency.* Pretoria, Kagiso Publishers

Umbager, C.C. 1983. *Structural family therapy.* New York, Grune & Stratton, Inc.

Viano,E.C. 1992. *Intimate violence.* California, United States of America. Sage Publications

Walklate, S. 2007. *Handbook of victims and victimology.* Devon, United Kingdom. Willan Publishing

Wellington, J & Szczerbinski, M. 2007. *Research methods for the social sciences.* New York, United States of America. Continuum International Publishing Group

Williams, F.P & McShane, M.D. 1999. *Criminology theory.* 3rd Ed. New Jersey, United States of America. Prentice Hall

INTERNET REFERENCES

Bowman, C.G. 2003. *Domestic violence in the African context.* American Journal of Gender, Social Sciences and Law. Vol 2: 847-863
(http://academic.udayton.edu/health/06world/africa03.htm)
06/09/2004

Brott, A.A. *Battered men – the full story* (armin@parentsplace.com) 18/10/1994
The World Wide Web Virtual Library: The men's issues page – husband battering

Cook, P.W. *Abused men: The hidden side of domestic violence*
(http://www.batteredmen.com/abusedme.htm)
16/07/2004

Cohen, L. *The violent wife*
(http://web.ebscohost.com)
05/06/2007

The Criminological and Victimological Society of South Africa (CRIMSA): Code of conduct for criminologists, victimologists and other scholars or practitioners aligning themselves with the criminological sciences. 2004
http://www.crimsa.ac.za
31/12/2009

Engle and Evans
http://www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/counseling/document/emotion.htm
01/12/ 2002

Fiebert, M.S. and Gonzalez, D.M. *Why women assault: College women who initiate assaults on their male partners and the reasons offered for such behaviour*
(http://www.batteredmen.com/fiebertg.htm)
16/07/2004

Flynn, C.P. *Relationship violence by women: Issues and implications*
(http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=960229143&db=aph)
26/07/2004

Gross, D. *Husband battering: A problem not taken seriously*
(http://www.menweb.org/throop/battery/commentary/dgross-hbat.html)
31/05/2004

Heylighen, F. and Joslyn, C. *What is systems theory?* Principia Cybernetica Web
(http://pespmcl.vub.ac.be/SYSTHEOR.html)
21/07/2008

Hoff, B.H. *Men suffer equally from domestic violence. British home office research report*

(http://www.batteredmen.com/brithor.htm)
16/07/2004

Hoff, B.H. *Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile – 2000: Intimate partner violence.*
(http://www.batteredmen.com/batrcan.htm)
16/07/2004

Lucal, B. *Battered husbands and battered wives: Why one is a social problem and the other is not.*
(http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=ED359483&db=eric)
26/07/2004

Packer, M. *An overview: What is interpretive research?*
(http://www.mathcs.duq.edu/~packer/IR/IRmain.html)
2010/05/27

Pearson, P. *Abused men: The hidden side of domestic violence*
(http://www.batteredmen.com/abusedme.htm)
16/07/2004

Pizzey, E. 1997. *Working with violent women*
(http://www.batteredmen.com/pizzey.htm)
16/07/2004

Miller, S.A. and Sharif, S. 1995. *Domestic violence: The way mens advocates see it.*
The Family Guardian Journal. Vol 2. Issue 6
(http://www.batteredmen.com/husbandb.htm)
16/07/2004

Moody, L.B. and McLeod-Butler, M. 2000. *Family violence*
(http://www.abanet.org/yld/affiliate/oct00/familyviolence.html)
20/06/2007

Randall, V.R. *Theories that appear in the African literature of domestic violence*
http://academic.udayton.edu/health/06world/Africa03a.thm
26/06/2008

Sniechowski, J. and Sherven, J. 1994. *Backlash and battered husbands*
(http://www.batteredmen.com/abusedme.htm)
16/07/2004

Terdiman, D. 2005, *Study: Wikipedia as accurate as Britannica*
(http://news.cnet.com/Year-in-review)
28/12/2009

11/07/2007
(mhtml:file://C:\Data\Domestic violence – Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia)

21/07/2008
(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender-roles - Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia)

21/07/2008
(http://www.tcw.utwente.nl/theorieenoverzicht - Theory clusters. University of Twente, The Netherlands)

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Gender and Society, Volume 15, 2001, Number 2, p. 262-281
Author: Berns, N. *Degendering the problem and gendering the blame: Political discourse on women and violence*

Victimology: An International Journal, Volume 3, 1978, Numbers 1-2, p. 216-226.
Authors: Fields, M.D. and Kirchner, R.M. *Battered Women are still in Need: A Reply to Steinmetz*

Journal of Forensic Sciences, JFSCA, Volume 31, 1986, Number 4, p. 1409-1419.
Author: Frazer, M. *Domestic Violence: A Medicolegal Review*

The Journal of Men's Studies, Volume 3, Number 2, November 1994 p. 137-159,
Author: George, M.J. *Riding the Donkey Backwards: Men as the Unacceptable Victims of Marital Violence*

Victimology: An International Journal, Volume 2, 1977-1978, Numbers 3-4, p. 680-684. **Authors: Pleck, E., Pleck, J.H., Grossman, M. and Bart, P.B**. *The Battered Data Syndrome: A Comment on Steinmetz' Article*

Deviant Behaviour: An Interdisciplinary Journal, Volume 16, 1995. Pages: 95-112.
Author: Lucal, B. *The problem with "battered husbands".* Taylor and Francis, USA

The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, Volume 48, 2003. Number 11, p. 772-773.
Author: Litman, L.C. *Dependent Personality Disorder as a marker of Battered Husband Syndrome: A Case Exemplar*

Journal of mental health counselling , Volume 14, 1992, Number 3, p. 375-392.
Author: Macchietto, J.G. *Aspects of male victimization and female aggression: Implications for counselling men*

Electronic Journal: The Family Guardian Journal, Volume 2, 1995, Number 6. The World Wide Web Virtual Library – Menweb.
Authors: Miller, S.A. and Sharif, S. *Domestic Violence – The way mens advocates see it.*

Victimology: An International Journal, Volume 9, 1984, Number 2, p. 254-261.
Author: Mills, T. *Victimization and self-esteem: On equating husband abuse and wife abuse.*

Acta Criminologica – Southern African Journal of Criminology, Volume 19(1), 2006, p.127-136. **Ovens, M.** *The function of the criminologist in the South African criminal justice system*

Victimology: An International Journal, Volume 2, 1977-78, Numbers 3-4, p. 499-509
Author: Steinmetz, S.K. *The Battered Husband Syndrome.* United States of America. Visage Press

American Journal of Psychotherapy, Volume 34, 1980. Number 3, p. 334-348.
Author: Steinmetz, S.K. *Women and violence: Victims and Perpetrators*

Title: The physical and emotional victimization of the male partner within a
heterosexual marriage or cohabitating relationship: An explorative study

Background information

1.	Respondent number:	V1	1-2
2.	Age	V2	3-4
3.	Marital status of abusive relationship	V3	5

Married   1

Cohabitating   2

4.	Length of abusive relationship (years)	V4	6-7
5.	Were any children part of this relationship	V5	8

Yes   1

No   2

6.   Describe your upbringing (Probe for history of abuse)

……………………………………………………………………………	V6	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V7	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V8	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V9	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V10	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V11	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V12	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V13	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V14	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V15	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V16	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V17	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V18	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V19	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V20	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V21	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V22	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V23	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V24	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V25	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V26	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V27	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V28	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V29	…...
……………………………………………………………………………	V30	…...

……………………………………………………………	V31	……
……………………………………………………………	V32	……
……………………………………………………………	V33	……
……………………………………………………………	V34	……

7.   Briefly describe your partner's upbringing (probe for abuse during childhood or in family of origin)

……………………………………………………………	V35	……
……………………………………………………………	V36	……
……………………………………………………………	V37	……
……………………………………………………………	V38	……
……………………………………………………………	V39	……
……………………………………………………………	V40	……
……………………………………………………………	V41	……
……………………………………………………………	V42	……
……………………………………………………………	V43	……
……………………………………………………………	V44	……
……………………………………………………………	V45	……
……………………………………………………………	V46	……
……………………………………………………………	V47	……
……………………………………………………………	V48	……
……………………………………………………………	V49	……
……………………………………………………………	V50	……
……………………………………………………………	V51	……
……………………………………………………………	V52	……
……………………………………………………………	V53	……
……………………………………………………………	V54	……
……………………………………………………………	V55	……
……………………………………………………………	V56	……
……………………………………………………………	V57	……
……………………………………………………………	V58	……
……………………………………………………………	V59	……
……………………………………………………………	V60	……
……………………………………………………………	V61	……
……………………………………………………………	V62	……

8.   What is your highest qualification?   V63   …..

Matric	1
Diploma/Degree	2
Post graduate	3
Other	4

9.   What is your career description?

…………………………………………………………........   V64   …..

10.   What are your partner's qualifications?   V65   …..

Matric	1
Diploma/Degree	2

Post graduate   3

Other   4

11.   What is her career description?

……………………………………………………………………   V66   …..

12.   Describe your courting history

………………………………………………………………..   V67   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V68   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V69   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V70   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V71   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V72   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V73   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V74   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V75   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V76   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V77   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V78   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V79   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V80   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V81   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V82   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V83   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V84   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V85   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V86   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V87   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V88   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V89   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V90   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V91   …...
………………………………………………………………..   V92   …...

13.   At what age did you marry or cohabitate?   V93   …..

14.   How old was your partner?   V94   …..

15.   Was the marriage or cohabitation: V95   …..

Planned   1

Unplanned (pregnancy)   2

16.   Was it your first marriage or cohabitation?   V96   …..

Yes   1

No   2

17.   Was it her first marriage or cohabitation?   V97   …..

Yes   1

No   2

18. Describe your relationship with your in-laws

……………………………………………………………………	V98	……
……………………………………………………………………	V99	……
……………………………………………………………………	V100	……
……………………………………………………………………	V101	……
……………………………………………………………………	V102	……
……………………………………………………………………	V103	……
……………………………………………………………………	V104	……
……………………………………………………………………	V105	……
……………………………………………………………………	V106	……
……………………………………………………………………	V107	……
……………………………………………………………………	V108	……
……………………………………………………………………	V109	……
……………………………………………………………………	V110	……
……………………………………………………………………	V111	……
……………………………………………………………………	V112	……
……………………………………………………………………	V113	……
……………………………………………………………………	V114	……
……………………………………………………………………	V115	……

19. Describe her relationship with your family

……………………………………………………………………	V116	……
……………………………………………………………………	V117	……
……………………………………………………………………	V118	……
……………………………………………………………………	V119	……
……………………………………………………………………	V120	……
……………………………………………………………………	V121	……
……………………………………………………………………	V122	……
……………………………………………………………………	V123	……
……………………………………………………………………	V124	……
……………………………………………………………………	V125	……
……………………………………………………………………	V126	……
……………………………………………………………………	V127	……
……………………………………………………………………	V128	……
……………………………………………………………………	V129	……
……………………………………………………………………	V130	……
……………………………………………………………………	V131	……
……………………………………………………………………	V132	……
……………………………………………………………………	V133	……

20. Describe your career path

……………………………………………………………………	V134	……
……………………………………………………………………	V135	……
……………………………………………………………………	V136	……
……………………………………………………………………	V137	……
……………………………………………………………………	V138	……
……………………………………………………………………	V139	……
……………………………………………………………………	V140	……

…………………………………………………… V141 …...
…………………………………………………… V142 …...
…………………………………………………… V143 …...
…………………………………………………… V144 …...
…………………………………………………… V145 …...
…………………………………………………… V146 …...
…………………………………………………… V147 …...
…………………………………………………… V148 …...

21.   Describe her career path

…………………………………………………… V149 …...
…………………………………………………… V150 …...
…………………………………………………… V151 …...
…………………………………………………… V152 …...
…………………………………………………… V153 …...
…………………………………………………… V154 …...
…………………………………………………… V155 …...
…………………………………………………… V156 …...
…………………………………………………… V157 …...
…………………………………………………… V158 …...
…………………………………………………… V159 …...
…………………………………………………… V160 …...
…………………………………………………… V161 …...
…………………………………………………… V162 …...
…………………………………………………… V163 …...
…………………………………………………… V164 …..

22.   Who was/is the "bread-winner"?   V165 …..

You 1

Partner 2

Equal 3

Description of emotional and physical abuse within the relationship

23. Describe the emotional and physical abuse that took place
     within the relationship in terms of:

- Criticisms………………………………………………….. V166 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V167 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V168 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V169 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V170 …..

- Make fun of / humiliation…………………………………. V171 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V172 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V173 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V174 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V175 …..

- Shouting and cursing……………………………………. V176 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V177 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V178 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V179 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V180 …..

- The "silent treatment"……………………………………. V181 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V182 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V183 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V184 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V185 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V186 …..

- Calling of names…………………………………………. V187 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V188 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V189 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V190 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V191 …..

- Belittle you in front of family, friends or colleagues…… V192 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V193 …..
  ………………………………………………………………….. V194 …..

……………………………………………………………………………	V195	…..
……………………………………………………………………………	V196	…..

24.　Are you able to express yourself freely?

Yes 1　　　No 2	V197	…..
……………………………………………………………………………	V198	…..
……………………………………………………………………………	V199	…..
……………………………………………………………………………	V200	…..
……………………………………………………………………………	V201	…..

25.　Are you isolated from family or friends?

Yes 1　　　No 2	V202	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V203	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V204	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V205	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V206	…..

26.　Does your partner limit your:

• Time:　　Yes 1　　　No 2 ………………………………	V207	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V208	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V209	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V210	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V211	…..
• Space/movement:　　Yes 1　No 2 …………………..	V212	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V213	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V214	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V215	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V216	…..
• Money:　Yes 1　No 2 ……………………………………	V217	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V218	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V219	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V220	…..
…………………………………………………………………………..	V221	…..

27.　Do you ever feel obliged to have sexual relations
　　　with your partner?

Yes　1　　No　　2	V222	…..

…………………………………………………………	V223	…..
…………………………………………………………	V224	…..
…………………………………………………………	V225	…..
…………………………………………………………	V226	…..

28.   Do you feel there is something wrong with your sexual relationship or specific acts she demands?

Yes 1 No 2	V227	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V228	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V229	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V230	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V231	…..

29. Have you ever refused to have sex? Yes 1 No 2	V232	…..
(What were the results?)………………………………...	V233	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V234	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V235	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V236	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V237	…..

30.   Has she ever tried to make you do something illegal or against your beliefs?   Yes 1   No 2

	V238	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V239	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V240	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V241	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V242	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V243	…..

31.   Does she use the children against you in anyway?

Yes 1 No 2	V244	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V245	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V246	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V247	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V248	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V249	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V250	…..
…………………………………………………………..	V251	…..

32.   Did she try to shift the blame after an argument?

Yes   1   No   2   V252   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V253   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V254   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V255   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V256   …..

33.   Does your partner make you feel worthless or incompetent (undermine self-esteem)?

Yes   1   No   2   V257   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V258   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V259   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V260   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V261   …..

34.   Do you feel "trapped" in the relationship?

Yes   1   No   2   V262   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V263   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V264   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V265   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V266   …..

35.   Are you ever afraid of her, or of what she might do when pushed too far?

Yes   1   No   2   V267   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V268   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V269   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V270   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V271   …..

36.   Do you feel despite the abuse, that you can't, or do not want to live without her?

Yes   1   No   2   V272   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V273   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V274   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V275   …..

…………………………………………………………….. V276   …..

37. Is she very jealous (accused of having affairs)?

Yes   1   No   2   V277   …..

………………………………………………………..   V278   …..

………………………………………………………..   V279   …..

………………………………………………………..   V280   …..

………………………………………………………..   V281   …..

38. Do you feel you can't get anything right i.e. nothing you do is ever good
enough?

Yes   1   No   2   V282   …..

………………………………………………………..   V283   …..

………………………………………………………..   V284   …..

………………………………………………………..   V285   …..

………………………………………………………..   V286   …..

39. Do you have the urge to "rescue" her when she is
troubled?

Yes   1   No   2   V287   …..

………………………………………………………..   V288   …..

………………………………………………………..   V289   …..

………………………………………………………..   V290   …..

………………………………………………………..   V291   …..

40. Do you feel that you are the only one who can
"reform" her or did you suggest that she get professional or "outside"
help?

Yes   1   No   2   V292   …..

………………………………………………………..   V293   …..

………………………………………………………..   V294   …..

………………………………………………………..   V295   …..

………………………………………………………..   V296   …..

41. Do you apologize to others for her bad behaviour?

Yes   1   No   2   V297   …..

………………………………………………………..   V298   …..

………………………………………………………..   V299   …..

………………………………………………………..   V300   …..

………………………………………………………..   V301   …..

42. Do you believe the critical things she says to you? Why?

Yes 1 No 2   V302   …..

………………………………………………………….. V303   …..

………………………………………………………….. V304   …..

………………………………………………………….. V305   …..

………………………………………………………….. V306   …..

43. Do you get mixed messages? (e.g. she disciplines

you because she loves you or she apologises for bad behaviour/abuse

but defends it simultaneously)

Yes 1 No 2   V307   …..

………………………………………………………….. V308   …..

………………………………………………………….. V309   …..

………………………………………………………….. V310   …..

………………………………………………………….. V311   …..

44. Are you told that no-one else would want you, or

that you are lucky she has agreed to take be with of you?

Yes 1 No 2   V312   …..

………………………………………………………….. V313   …..

………………………………………………………….. V314   …..

………………………………………………………….. V315   …..

………………………………………………………….. V316   …..

45. When does the abuse take place?

(e.g. when she has had a bad day at work)

………………………………………………………….. V317   …..

………………………………………………………….. V318   …..

………………………………………………………….. V319   …..

………………………………………………………….. V320   …..

………………………………………………………….. V321   …..

46. How does it start?

………………………………………………………….. V322   …..

………………………………………………………….. V323   …..

………………………………………………………….. V324   …..

47. How does it end?

………………………………………………………….. V325   ….

.... V326 .....

.... V327 .....

48. Does the relationship swing back and forth from emotional distance to closeness, or does the abuse take place on a continual basis?

.... V328 .....

.... V329 .....

.... V330 .....

49. Do you fight back during violent incidences/abusive episodes? (verbally/physically)

Yes 1   No   2   V331 .....

.... V332 .....

.... V333 .....

.... V334 .....

.... V335 .....

50. Are you "punished" for your actions?

Yes 1   No 2   V336 .....

.... V337 ....

.... V338 .....

.... V339 .....

.... V340 .....

51. Does alcohol or drug abuse play a part?   V341 .....

   Yes   1

   No   2

   Alcohol   1   V342 .....

   Drugs   2

   Both   3

52. If "yes" what is the impact of the drugs or alcohol on her behaviour?

.... V343 .....

.... V344 .....

.... V345 .....

.... V346 .....

53. Do you feel that you are "walking on egg-shells" to

keep her happy? Yes 1 No 2 V347 .....

.... V348 .....

.... V349 .....

.... V350 .....

.... V351 .....

54. Have you given up any activities to keep her happy?

Yes 1 No 2 V352 .....

.... V353 .....

.... V354 .....

.... V355 .....

.... V356 .....

55. Have you ended any relationships to keep her happy?

Yes 1 No 2 V357 .....

.... V358 .....

.... V359 .....

.... V360 .....

.... V361 .....

56. Does she make big decisions and run up debts

without your consent? Yes 1 No 2 V362 .....

.... V363 .....

.... V364 .....

.... V365 .....

.... V366 .....

57. Are you afraid to discuss your concerns and feelings

about the relationship? Yes 1 No 2 V367 .....

.... V368 .....

.... V369 .....

.... V370 .....

.... V371 .....

58. What are your respective domestic responsibilities? Is work and

childcare shared equally?

Yes 1 No 2 V372 .....

316

.... V373 .....

.... V374 .....

.... V375 .....

.... V376 .....

59. Who makes decisions about family outings,
    holidays and future events?   V377 .....

    Mainly her   1
    Mainly you   2
    Jointly   3

60. Do you comply with her wishes because you are
    afraid to hurt her feelings?

    Yes   1   No   2   V378 .....

    .... V379 .....

    .... V380 .....

    .... V381 .....

    .... V382 .....

61. What is your opinion on traditional sex roles?
    (i.e women nurturers, men providers)

    .... V383 .....

    .... V384 .....

    .... V385 .....

    .... V386 .....

    .... V387 .....

62. What is your partner's attitude towards men in
    general (e.g. Flirtatious, friendly, respectful…)

    .... V388 .....

    .... V389 .....

    .... V390 .....

    .... V391 .....

    .... V392 .....

63. Was there adultery in the relationship, or flirtations
    which felt like betrayals from either side?

    Yes   1   No   2   V393 .....

    .... V394 .....

…………………………………………………………	V395	…..
…………………………………………………………	V396	…..
…………………………………………………………	V397	…..
…………………………………………………………	V398	…..

64.   Does your partner ever threaten physical violence:

a) To you: Yes 1 No 2	V399	…..
…………………………………………………………	V400	…..
…………………………………………………………	V401	…..
…………………………………………………………	V402	…..
…………………………………………………………	V403	…..
b) To the children: Yes 1 No 2	V404	…..
…………………………………………………………	V405	…..
…………………………………………………………	V406	…..
…………………………………………………………	V407	…..
…………………………………………………………	V408	…..

c)   To others (family members, friends, pets):

Yes 1 No 2	V409	…..
…………………………………………………………	V410	…..
…………………………………………………………	V411	…..
…………………………………………………………	V412	…..
…………………………………………………………	V413	….

65.   Has your partner ever displayed or used any weapons?   Yes 1   No 2

weapons? Yes 1 No 2	V414	…..
…………………………………………………………	V415	…..
…………………………………………………………	V416	…..
…………………………………………………………	V417	…..
…………………………………………………………	V418	…..

66.   Has your partner ever had any contact with the authorities?   Yes 1   No 2

authorities? Yes 1 No 2	V419	…..
…………………………………………………………	V420	….
…………………………………………………………	V421	…..
…………………………………………………………	V422	…..
…………………………………………………………	V423	…..

67. Does your partner ever throw and/or break objects? V424 .....

Yes 1 No 2 V425 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V426 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V427 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V428 .....

68. Does your partner ever physically abuse:

a) You: Yes 1 No 2 V429 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V430 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V431 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V432 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V433 .....

b) The children: Yes 1 No 2 V434 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V435 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V436 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V437 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V438 .....

c) Other family members or pets: Yes 1 No 2 V439 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V440 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V441 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V442 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V443 .....

69. Have you ever retaliated physically during an

argument? Yes 1 No 2 V444 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V445 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V446 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V447 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V448 .....

70. Do you ever have thoughts of murder?

Yes 1 No 2 V449 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V450 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V451 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V452 .....

……………………………………………………………….. V453 .....

71.   Do you ever have thoughts of suicide?

Yes   1   No   2   V454   …..

………………………………………………………… V455   …..

………………………………………………………… V456   …..

………………………………………………………… V457   …..

………………………………………………………… V458   …..

72.   Are you afraid to make decisions for yourself?

Yes   1   No   2   V459   …..

………………………………………………………… V460   …..

………………………………………………………… V461   …..

73.   Do you doubt whether you can live without her?

Yes   1   No   2   V462   …..

………………………………………………………… V463   …..

………………………………………………………… V464   …..

74.   Are you generally

a)   Forgetful: Yes 1   No 2   V465   …..

………………………………………………………… V466   ….

………………………………………………………… V467   …..

b)   Confused: Yes 1   No 2   V468   …..

………………………………………………………… V469   ….

………………………………………………………… V470   …..

c)   Unable to concentrate: Yes 1   No 2   V471   …..

………………………………………………………… V472   …..

………………………………………………………… V473   …..

d)   Often very tired: Yes 1   No 2   V474   …..

………………………………………………………… V475   …..

………………………………………………………… V476   …..

e)   Anxious: Yes 1   No 2   V477   …..

………………………………………………………… V478   …..

………………………………………………………… V479   …..

f)   Depressed: Yes 1   No 2   V480   …..

………………………………………………………… V481   …..

………………………………………………………… V482   …..

75. Have your eating or sleeping patterns changed
a lot since your marriage or cohabitation?

Yes 1 No 2 V483 …..

………………………………………………………….. V484 …..

………………………………………………………….. V485 …..

76. Have you suffered any other physical symptoms?

Yes 1 No 2 V486 …..

………………………………………………………….. V487 …..

………………………………………………………….. V488 …..

………………………………………………………….. V489 …..

………………………………………………………….. V490 …..

77. Do you have a good support system?

Yes 1 No 2 V491 …..

………………………………………………………….. V492 …..

………………………………………………………….. V493 …..

………………………………………………………….. V494 …..

78. How do they support you?

………………………………………………………….. V495 …..

………………………………………………………….. V496 …..

………………………………………………………….. V497 …..

………………………………………………………….. V498 …..

………………………………………………………….. V499 …..

79. How has the abuse affected your work/colleagues?

………………………………………………………….. V500 …..

………………………………………………………….. V501 …..

………………………………………………………….. V502 …..

………………………………………………………….. V503 …..

………………………………………………………….. V504 …..

80. Why did you remain in the relationship for as long
as you did (refer question 4 – longer than 5 years)? V505 …..

………………………………………………………….. V506 …..

………………………………………………………….. V507 …..

………………………………………………………….. V508 …..

………………………………………………………….. V509 …..

.... V510   .....

81.   At what point did you decide to leave?

.... V511   .....

.... V512   .....

.... V513   .....

.... V514   .....

.... V515   .....

.... V516   .....

....

....

....

82.   What was your partner's reaction?

.... V517   .....

.... V518   .....

.... V519   .....

.... V520   .....

.... V521   .....

....

....

....

83.   What was the time-frame from making the decision
        to leave, and the actual break-up?

a)   Years   V522   .....

b)   Months   V523   .....

84.   Describe your relationship with your partner after the break-up

.... V524   .....

.... V525   .....

.... V526   .....

.... V527   .....

.... V528   .....

....

....

....

85. Describe her relationship with the children after the
    break-up?   V529   …..

………………………………………………………… V530   …..

………………………………………………………… V531   …..

………………………………………………………… V532   …..

………………………………………………………… V533   …..

…………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………

86. How has your life been affected on a practical level?

……………………………………………………….. V534   …..

……………………………………………………….. V535   …..

……………………………………………………….. V536   …..

……………………………………………………….. V537   …..

……………………………………………………….. V538   …..

……………………………………………………….. V539   …..

………………………………………………………..

………………………………………………………..

87. Have you sought therapy?   Yes 1   No 2   V540   …..

……………………………………………………….. V541   …..

……………………………………………………….. V542   …..

……………………………………………………….. V543   …..

88. What advice would you give men in
    abusive relationships? (what would you have
    done differently if you could turn back the clock?)

……………………………………………………….. V544   …..

……………………………………………………….. V545   …..

……………………………………………………….. V546   …..

……………………………………………………….. V547   …..

……………………………………………………….. V548   …..

……………………………………………………….. V549   …..

……………………………………………………….. V550   …..

89.   How do you see the future?

………………………………………………….. V551   …..

………………………………………………….. V552   …..

………………………………………………….. V553   …..

………………………………………………….. V554   …..

Questions pertaining to issues on:

- **Culture of Violence in South Africa (including economic and political influences)**

90. Do you think that living in a country which is prone to high levels of violence (like S.A.) or has a violent climate in general, has any influence on family life/violence in the home i.e. does the one influence the other?

………………………………………………….. V555   …..

………………………………………………….. V556   …..

………………………………………………….. V557   …..

………………………………………………….. V558   …..

91. Has your family life/relationship been influenced by your culture (i.e. Afrikaner, S.A. Coloured, Xhosa etc.)? Do these influences contribute to violence in your home/relationship?

………………………………………………….... V559   …..

…………………………………………………… V560   …..

…………………………………………………… V561   …..

…………………………………………………… V562   …..

- **Westernised goals of materialism (greed, monetory gain above all else) and individualism (i.e. selfish, self-centred/egotistical behaviour)**

92. Has the above had any influence on your personally or your partner/abuser?

…………………………………………………… V563   …..

…………………………………………………… V564   …..

…………………………………………………... V565   …..

…………………………………………………… V566   …..

93. Has this contributed towards violence in the home or between the two of you?

………………………………………………………………… V567 …..

………………………………………………………………… V568 …..

………………………………………………………………… V569 …..

………………………………………………………………… V570 …..

APPENDIX B - INFORMED CONSENT FORM

DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Researcher: Merlyn Barkhuizen

Title of Thesis: The physical and emotional victimization of the male partner within a heterosexual marriage or cohabiting relationship: An explorative study

Purpose of Study: The exploration of the phenomena of physical and emotional abuse amongst male victims in marital or cohabiting relationships in order to make recommendations for helping professions and further academic research.

Procedures: The researcher will be conducting an interview with the help of an interview schedule. The researcher may also make use of a tape recorder to record conversations. The interviews will not be longer than three hours, but may end sooner by natural process or on request of the respondent or researcher, depending on the circumstances.

Risks and Discomforts: The respondent may become tired or feel emotional discomfort at which point a break may be requested or the interview may be postponed to a later date or terminated if so desired. The researcher will make every effort to ensure the comfort and minimize the risks for the respondent.

Benefits: It is my hope that the respondents partaking in this study will feel the satisfaction of contributing to solving a social problem and facilitating in illuminating the problem for those studying the phenomena, which may help others in the future. The respondent shall also assist in providing insight into the problem, which can stimulate

326

future research, and thus be of even greater help in the future. On a personal level, it is the hope of the researcher that the respondents will obtain personal satisfaction once they have discussed certain issues with the researcher and thus gaining personal insights that were not gained prior to the interview.

Respondent's Rights: Participation in this study is voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time without negative consequences for the respondent. All information is treated as confidential and anonymity is assured by the researcher. The data shall be destroyed should the respondent wish to withdraw.

The researcher (Merlyn Barkhuizen) and her study leader (Professor Michelle Ovens) are the only individuals who will have access to raw data from interviews, and hereby ensure that data will be treated as stipulated above.

Right of Access to Researcher: Respondents are free to contact the researcher at the telephone number as stipulated on this form, at a reasonable hour, in connection with interview particulars, if they so wish.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY.

I, the undersigned, agree to participate in this study voluntarily without duress.

Signed at ……………………………on this…..day of ………………………2009

………………………………………   …………………………………..
(Print Name…………………………)   MERLYN BARKHUIZEN