THE STORIES OF ABUSED WOMEN

IN SOUTH AFRICA

by

NKATEKO LORRAINE MANABE

DISSERTION

submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for

the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

in

COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY
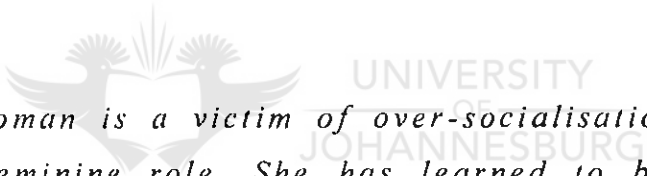
in the

FACULTY OF ARTS

at the

RAND AFRIKAANS UNIVERSITY

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR H.G. PRETORIUS

JULY 2001

I

Human problems do not spring up, full blown and announced into the consciousness of bystanders. Even to recognise a situation as painful requires a system for categorizing and redefining events (Joseph Gusfield. The Culture of Public Problems cited in Loseke, D.R. 1992).

An abused woman is a victim of over-socialisation into a stereotyped feminine role. She has learned to be docile, submissive, humble, ingratiating, non-assertive, dependent, quiet, comforting and selfless. Her identity is founded on being pleasing to others, but not to herself.

Acknowledgements

I want to express my gratitude to the courageous women who volunteered to be interviewed and share their experiences of abuse with me. I want to tell them that they taught me that each victimised woman is a unique person and must be understood as such. Their stories concerning abuse, anger, frustration guilt, self-blame and helplessness were emotional and traumatic. They showed tears of joy because they had managed to break their secret and the silence about their abuse experiences. They believe they are role models for the women who are still trapped and unwilling to speak up to free themselves.

I was very lucky and fortunate to find people like Prof. Gertie Pretorius, my supervisor. She gave me unending support, constructive advice and guidance. This study has benefited from her keen intellectual insight. Johan Hattingh, my clinical manager, was unfailing in his helpfulness with respect to literature reviews and tracking down references. I cannot leave unmentioned my husband Dudley and my three children who were supportive all the way through. It wouldn't have been possible without them. Emmauel Maluleke spent sleepless nights helping me with other technicalities and typing. You were my pillar and strength and helped me cope with my research study.

UNIVERSITY
OF
JOHANNESBURG

4

TABLE OF CONTENTS

UNIVERSITY
OF
JOHANNESBURG

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, MOTIVATION AND AIMS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South African women of all races and income levels face abuse from their partners. South African women are living in one of the most violent countries in the world and they are victims of abuse or violence.

The South African government, at the highest policy-making levels, has expressed commitment in addressing different forms of abuse or violence against women. However this problem has not attracted the highest level of political attention. Although there are a number of encouraging initiatives, there is, to date, no coordinated national strategy to address the problems in the criminal justice, law enforcement, health and welfare systems in a systematic fashion. Policy changes should be implemented consistently across government departments. The government attributes this lack of progress both to the fact that it is overwhelmed in trying to address all the problems caused by apartheid, and the fact that it is trying to overcome attitudes in society that condone abuse against women. These are valid points.

South African women's movements have made a number
of significant efforts to address the state's inadequate
response to women abuse. Limited resources, as well as
gender divisions amongst women's groups hamper the
abused women efforts. These are the things that get in
the way of women. Gender division can be improved if
the establishment of privately funded hotlines and
shelters for women could be implemented. The non-
government organisations (NGO's) have also been
deeply involved in legal reform in lobbying the police and
judiciary to improve their response to, and penalties for,
the abuse of women and children in South Africa,
(Ramphele 1990).

Women's organisations and feminists have taken up the
cause of women in South Africa, in the public and private
spheres. It is not because the condition is new. Rather,
it was ignored. Now it has been identified as a social
problem and this has required convincing the general
public that the behaviours we now call 'women abuse'
were morally intolerable and unacceptable. For example,
emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse and
economic abuse deserve public sympathy. Economic and
political upheaval and instability in South Africa create
much stress and frustration, which further increase the
likelihood of women abuse (Kakar, 1998). Definitions and
theories will attempt to explain the contemporary status
of women in abusive relationships. As there is no
coherent research or study of these concepts, the author
is forced to draw on other theories to contextualise the
objectives of the study.

1.2 DEFINITION OF ABUSE

The term "women abuse" is used as it is more inclusive
and has a less negative connotation for women. "Abuse",
"violence" and "battering" are terms that encompass
anything from the victim being slapped and roughed up,
or beaten until the loss of consciousness. The term
"abuse" is a source that should be considered as difficult
and confusing. There is no consensus as to the severity
of violence that can be considered "abuse". The term
"abuse" is limited to physical aggression.. Gelles (1980)
postulates that abuse does not imply what people think,
but physical abuse is more damaging than other types of
abuse such as emotional and verbal abuse. However, it
is so difficult to separate "violence" and "abuse", for the
sake of convenience, they limit their target group to
women who have actually been physically abused (Straus
& Gelles, 1986). A broader view of abuse will be fully
understood through the interviews. Abuse could be a
mere slap, physical or psychological damage, or both.
The definition in this thesis will encompass physical,
emotional or sexual abuse in marriage, home, work, and
other political issues. For practical reasons, the batterer
may at times be referred to as the abuser or perpetrator,
while the battered woman may also be called the victim
or abused woman. Battering is another concept that is
going to be included throughout the discussion.
Battering is characterised as a recurrent behaviour that

3

the abused woman is experiencing in a central relationship with the batterer (Walker, 1979).

1.3   DISCUSSION OF THEORIES ABOUT ABUSE

According to Jenkins (1997) men who abuse women are seen as having rigid views regarding gender roles and parenting and as maintaining unrealistic and unattainable expectations of their partners, children and themselves. For example, a high level of emotional dependency on others in the family is often described, along with feelings of insecurity and threat. Distrust and jealousy can lead to a strong desire to control or dominate. Abusers are often described as feeling threatened and experiencing others as hostile and rejecting. Researchers contend that most abusers tend to deny or minimise their abusive behaviour and are prone to projecting blame for problems to their partners. Abusers are described as egocentric (self-centred) individuals who lack empathy for their victims, or as showing a "Jeckyl and Hyde" personality in which they alternate between anxious concern over the consequences of the abusive actions and disrespect and insensitivity to others. Abusive men are frequently described as having poor conflict- management and stress management skills and poor communication (Jenkins, 1997).

1.4   DEVELOPMENT THEORIES OF ABUSE

1.4.1   LEARNING THEORIES

Social learning theories describe abuse or violence in terms of learned behaviour rather than psychopathology or character defects. Abusive behaviour is seen to be passed from generation to generation. For example, each generation or culture learns about abuse by participating in an abusive family. Psychological mechanisms such as modelling and reinforcement of abuse or violent behaviour are seen to mediate this learning (Jenkins, 1997).

Learning theorists such as Bandura cited in Sue, Sue, and Sue (1994) describe behaviour in terms of direct training and practice in abuse. Abusive behaviour may be reinforced or rewarded by getting one's own way. or sexual gratification (Jenkins, 1997).

Okun (1986) postulates that most of the literature on women abuse implicitly or explicitly view battering, violence and abuse as learned behaviour. Learning theories also help in explaining why perpetrators repeat their abusive behaviour. There is a positive reinforcement from the woman in her compliance with the abuse. The discharge of aggression by itself can be a positive reinforcer for violent behaviour. From the perspective of operant conditioning, intermittent and non contingent reinforcement produces the most persistent

behaviour patterns. Partners who abuse, do so on a random basis, therefore it is difficult for some women to remove themselves from the abusive relationships (Okun, 1986).

Sue, Sue, and Sue (1994) contend that Bandura's work on learning aggressive responses through vicarious reinforcement or modelling is clearly relevant to battering, as many batterers witnessed family violence or witnessed different types of abuse as a child. Children who have witnessed parental violence are likely to imitate their parents' abusive behaviour. This may be viewed as the only consistent risk marker associated with being victimised by violence.

Walker (1978) adopts Seligman's theory of leaned helplessness in an attempt to explain the battered wife's behaviour. Seligman demonstrates that if a person is subject to violent behaviour that cannot be controlled, motivation to respond to repeated events is impaired. Even if appropriate responses are made which control events, it is difficult for the people to believe that responses are really under the abuser's control and that they really do work.

Walker's theory of leaned helplessness cited in Okun (1986) is based upon studies conducted upon dogs: Seligman and researchers placed dogs in cages and administered electrical shocks at random and at varied intervals... Dogs learned quickly that no matter what response they made they could not control the shock.

The learning of the unpredictability and non-contingent nature of the aversive stimulus was of prime importance. At first the dogs attempted to escape.... When nothing they did stopped the shocks, the dog ceased any further voluntary activity. When Overmier and Seligman attempted to change this procedure and teach the dogs that they could escape by crossing to the other side of the cage, the dogs still would not respond.... Even when the door was left open and the dogs were shown the way out, they remained passive, refused to leave and did not avoid the shock. It took repeated dragging of the dogs to the exit to teach them how to voluntarily respond again (Okun, 1986, p.84).

Walker (1978) believes that abused or battered women are in a situation similar to that of the dogs in the above studies by Seligman. The dogs are subjected to random and inescapable aversive events in the form of beatings. Women who are continuously abused learn that their voluntary responses do not make much difference in what happens to them. Thus meaning that it is difficult for abused women to believe that their competent actions can change their situation. Like Seligman's dogs they need to be shown the way out repeatedly before change is possible (Okun, 1986). However, the disadvantage of this theory is that it neglects the social influences that encourage a victim to persevere in a violent relationship. In contrast, Walker integrates these influences in to her overall description of the battered woman syndrome (Dobash & Dobash, 1992). These social influences may reinforce the victim's experience of helplessness and

despair since they certainly pose her additional obstacles to escaping the battering or abuse that the victim endures. (Pagelow cited in Okun, 1986) hypothesizes that:

"The fewer the resources, the more negative the institutional responses; and the more intense the traditional ideology of women who have been battered, the more likely they are to remain in relationships with the batterers and the less likely they are to perform acts that significantly alter the situation in a positive direction," (Okun, 1986. p.85).

1.4.2   SOCIO-CULTURAL THEORIES

Socio-cultural explanation locates the causes of abuse within the social structures, traditions, norms, and ideologies of the culture. "A culture can be thought of as a community of individuals who see their world in a particular manner - who share particular interpretations as central to the meaning of their lives and action" (Pare, 1995, p. 12) Culture depicts a collection of people in terms of their world making practices, and thus gives primacy to the interpretive, cultural and narrative aspects of lived experiences.

Gelles (1980) postulates that abuse or violence is built into the structure of western society in order to degrade and humiliate women. Some women are trapped in their relationships because they are bound by their culture. A

8

common theory that has been used to explain violence cross-culturally is the "culture of violence". The culture of violence is based upon cultural patterning theory (Levinson, 1990). Cultural patterning theory in turn incorporates aspects of social learning theory to explain how people learn certain cultural values. For example, some cultures view women as submissive, and inferior and men as superior.

Straus cited in Okun (1986) notes that sexist structure promotes woman abuse and the social acknowledgement of the male partner as head of the family. Male authority is justified by the existence of male power.

Feminist theories focused extensively on inequalities of power and gender based structure. Women abuse is seen to be a systematic form of power and domination and social control of women by men. Some men in the South African context use violence as a powerful means of subordinating women. That is, some men benefit from how women's lives are restricted because of the feelings of powerlessness and the fear of violence. Wife abuse often reinforces women's dependence and enables some men to exert authority and control. The inequalities of power and gender-based structure include the explanatory utility of the constructs of gender and power differences and the analysis of the family as a historical situated social institution that degrades women (Hamberger & Renzetti, 1996).

Feminists unanimously reject studying family or spouse abuse, instead emphasising woman abuse as the appropriate topic to study (Okun, 1986). Feminists reject or class husband abuse as trivial. The feminist approach insists on a historical approach to conjugal abuse, which puts it in a position as the most relevant theory that abuse of women is likely to occur in marriages and in relationships (Bograd, 1988).

In conclusion, the learning theories and socio-cultural theories both emphasise the role of observing violence in significant others and institutions that are found around people as children. Adoption of power, abuse and patriarchy as a means of resolving conflicts is a learned behaviour in some societies. Society further condones and advocates techniques such as discipline or corporal punishment. Feminists point out how violence/abuse is linked to other forms of violence against women, that is, violence and abuse serve to keep women in their place. Social learning theories, socio-cultural theories and feminism are all closely related, and emphasise what occurs in the family situation is inextricably linked to historical and social forces and influences (Okun, 1986).

The aforementioned statement proposes that some men are systematically socialised into violence as a problem-solving technique and as a means of maintaining privilege in a sexist society. Consequently, men who abuse women learn to resort to the power of their fists or their genitals to control women. However, the individual motivators of abusers may be varied. Furthermore,

violence and sexual assault serve as ways of demonstrating power, control and ownership over women and maintain the patriarchal social structure. (Hamberger & Renzetti, 1996).

Many authors embracing a feminist or socio-cultural analysis of women abuse see it as a social problem. They emphasise the connections between individual behaviour and social variables such as the patriarchal social context, unequal power distribution and culturally supported patterns of gender relations. For example, boys are taught to be aggressive and in control, while girls are taught and socialised to be passive and submissive, thus setting the stage for abuse in adult relationships (Walker, 1990). Male striving for control and dominance, coupled with a need to demonstrate power and privilege, is viewed as central to the understanding of women abuse.

There is clearly a direct link between the personal and political understanding of women abuse. There are definite cultural and historical forces in the public and private spheres in our society, which encourage or allow the phenomenon of women abuse to occur, as well as sexism and the general subordination of women. The context in which violence or abuse occurs must be studied in order to be understood more fully.

1.5 OVERVIEW AND THESIS OUTLINE

This chapter attempts to introduce the reader to the importance of recognising the problem of women abuse. The thesis focuses on stories of women abuse in South Africa. The narrative approach was implemented to help interviewed women to tell their experiences of abuse. Chapter 1 consists of an introduction, motivation and aims. Chapter 2 will deal with what the author considers to be the most pertinent abuse of women in the South African context. Definitions of different types of abuse, together with the historical and statistical evidence of its endemic nature will be given. In Chapter 3 the discussion will be based on gender in the South African context. In Chapter 4 family and patriarchy in the South African context will be discussed. In Chapter 5 the author will examine the research methodology, which is a qualitative approach. The qualitative approach will be essential for this study because this method is useful in the "generation of categories for understanding human phenomena and investigation of the interpretation and meaning that people give to events they experience", (Rudejtam & Newton, 1992 p. 31). In Chapter 6 the stories of the three interviewed women will be discussed. In Chapter 7 recommendations regarding further research, prevention of abuse, and the limitations of the study will be discussed.

1.6 TERMINOLOGY

The terms "abuse, "battering" and "violence" are used interchangeably throughout the literature. The concepts such as "power to", "power over", "patriarchy", "gender" and "sex" will be discussed in the literature review.

The terms "violence" and "abuse" present the initial problem because they are often used synonymously, but they cannot be seen as conceptual equivalents. Gelles (1980, p. 875) distinguishes between these two concepts and sees **abuse** as a "subset of violent behaviours", (Basson, 1997, p. 18). Abuse is defined as physical aggression that causes injury and also as non-physical acts of maltreatment, which are considered to harm.

Violence is a more inclusive term that refers to all forms of physical aggression. Violence is defined as an act and condition which obstructs the spontaneous unfolding of innate human potential, that is, the inherent human drive toward development and self-actualisation (Gelles & Cornell, 1990). According to Steyn, Strijdom, Viljoen and Bosman (1987) a further distinction may be made between **legitimate violence** and **illegitimate** violence. In this context **force** represents more acceptable actions such as slapping and spanking, while violence indicates unacceptable actions. Gelles (1987) has found that much of the hitting in some families is culturally approved and normatively accepted. For example, most individuals

13

believe that spanking a child is normal, necessary, and good.

According to Gelles (1980, p. 875), the nominal definition proposed by Gelles and Straus (1988) of violence as "an act carried out with the intention, of perceived intention, of physically hurting another person" is most generally used. Yet again, such a definition is wider than physical abuse.

When it comes to the operationalisation of the terms violence and abuse, the most usual point of reference is victims who identify themselves as such and become publicly known and labelled by an official or professional (Gelles, 1980).

There are two kinds of power. The first is **power over**, meaning it kills or destroys others. That is, it kills the spirit. The second power is **power to**, and it nourishes the spirit because it is a personal power (Evans, 1992)

Evans (1992) postulates **power over** shows up as control and dominance. Personal power, which is power to, shows up as by mutuality and co-creation (p. 22). These concerns bring a sharp focus to human dignity and the quality of life. For example, power over life may deny the value and quality of life. Some men use power over to control and dominate their wives. The illusion of power is maintained only if they have an "other" to have power over. In contrast, **power to** is another way of experiencing power, but it does not need winners and

14

losers. Personal power works by mutuality and co-creation and may be considered a new way of being in, and perceiving, the world. For example, the abuser and the abused seem to be living in two different realities. The abuser's orientation is towards control and dominance while the abused's orientation is toward mutuality and co-creation. This means the two people are in different realities (Evans, 1992).

Patriarchy literally means the rule of the father or the "patriarch", and originally is used to describe a specific type of "male-dominated family". In a patriarchal society or family women, junior men, children, slaves and domestic servants are all under the rule of a dominant male. In the South African context it is generally used to refer to the male domination, to the power relationships by which men dominate women, and to characterise a system whereby women and children, especially girls, are kept subordinate in public and in private spheres. For example, subordination takes various forms, among which are discrimination, disregard, insult, control, exploitation, oppression and violence within the family, at the workplace and in society. The details may be different, but the theme of patriarchy is the same (Bhasin, 1993). Patriarchy is the male hierarchical ordering of society, and though the legal institutional base may be less defined in today's society than it was in the past, the basic relations of power, gender and sex remain intact (Goodrich, 1990).

Gender refers to the social quality of differences between the sexes (Ashmore, 1990). Gender is used in contrast to sex and sexual difference for the explicit purpose of creating a space in which socially mediated differences can be explored apart from biological differences (Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1990). Gender distinguishes whether a person is male or female and **sex** refers to physical differences of the body.

Gender refers to the expectations people have from someone because they are female or male. Gender is socially determined, for example, the women's gender refers to what she and others expect of her as a female (Mackenzie, 1992).

Sex is the physical, biological difference between women and men. It refers to whether people are born female or male. That is, sex is biologically determined and gender is socially determined. The sex-gender system continues to flow through the South African context. That is, the organisation of gender constitutes a critical battleground between men and women (Walker, 1990).

1.7   MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

The rationale behind the study of abused women should be a public and not an individual concern. Acknowledging and considering abuse of women to be unacceptable is not enough. However, the public needs to be further educated as to its prevalence and

seriousness. In the present study an attempt is made to redress some of these differences by studying women abuse in South Africa.

1.8 AIM OF THE STUDY

The most important aim of the research is to understand the ways in which three abused women have managed to have the courage to relate and be honest about their experiences of abuse that they have suffered for many years.

1.9 CONCLUSION

The research study will be based on the qualitative research method. The narrative approach will be integrated, whereby the three abused women will tell their different stories of abuse by their husbands. The researcher has found this study to be of utmost importance in contextualising the insight of women abuse although the sample of the three women does not represent all the abused women in South African context.

CHAPTER TWO

ABUSE OF WOMEN IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The devastating levels of violence and abuse of women that exists in this country has touched South Africa. It is not just the high rate of abuse, but its meaningless, excessive and brutal nature, which is a great cause for concern. Physical, emotional and psychological scars are consequences of this abuse. Research suggests that abused women differ from those who have had non-violent relationships in terms of feelings of personal control (De Maris & Dobash, 1992)

According to Watts, Osam and Win (1995) abuse of women in South Africa consists of abuse within relationships, at work and in the private sphere. It tends to take many forms, and often escalates in severity over time. Some types are common world-wide; others are limited to specific communities, countries or geographical regions. Wife beating, sexual assault and femicide all have one thing in common: they humiliate and control victims simply because they are women (De Sousa, 1991).

This chapter will explore the following aspects: abuse of women, definitions of different types of abuse, together

with the historical and statistical evidence of its endemic nature.

2.2   HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The "Battered Women's Movement" began in England in 1971 with the establishment of the first shelter for abused wives. Slowly and almost imperceptibly, the movement has spread throughout the continent. In 1974 a second movement started in Holland; and finally a grassroots movement sprang up in the United States in the mid 1970's. The movement spread to South Africa to help abused women fight for their human rights and provide shelters and relief for the battered or abused (Pagelow, 1984).

The discovery of wife abuse has been a traditional grassroots effort. The focus on the problem of wife battering/abuse has come from women themselves. Gelles (1987) revealed the results of research on wife abuse in the United States in 1973. The data revealed the extent of the problem, the pattern of violence and the factors associated with wife abuse. Those who believed that the abuse of women deserved the same place on the public agenda as child abuse seized these analyses. However, in the early 1980's public and professional interest in wife battering lagged far behind the interest in child abuse. A federal office of domestic violence was established in 1979. By the mid 1980's, The Woman's Act had passed into law. The year 1994 was a watershed year for the issue of violence against women. Perhaps

not coincidentally, this was the year that Nicole Brown-Simpson and Ron Goldman were murdered and Brown-Simpson's ex-husband, O.J. Simpson, was charged with murder. At that time, Congress was completing the 1994 violent crime control and law enforcement Act, for the Violence Against Women Act. After the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was passed a national public awareness campaign entitled "No Excuse For Domestic Violence" was advertised. This campaign was designed to educate the public about woman abuse and promote prevention and intervention. It appeared on television and in newspapers. In South Africa women marched to the Union Building to hand in their memorandum on women's rights and abuse of women and children, to the President.

2.3 STATISTICS

Umberson, Anderson, Glick and Shapiro (1998) write that national surveys indicate that at least 28% of women experience physical abuse at some point in their relationship and 16% experience abuse in any given year. Watts et al. (1995), write that in South Africa it is estimated that a woman is raped every 83 seconds but that only an estimated one in twenty of these cases is ever reported to the police. Dobash and Dobash (1992) estimate that one in every six women is subjected to abuse and violence in the home and at work. In eight out of ten cases that social work organisations deal with, abuse of women is involved. Ninety percent of reported

cases of abuse, especially physical and emotional abuse, involve women. Scientific studies show that in most recorded cases women are abused while men are the abusers (Serra, 1993). It is postulated that more than 90 million African women and girls are victims of female circumcision or other forms of genital mutilation, more often at the stage of early adolescence.

2.4 DEFINITIONS

2.4.1   WHAT IS WOMAN ABUSE, VIOLENCE AND BATTERING?

According to Horley (1988) woman abuse involves the repeated, habitual and random use of intimidation, whether by physical or verbal aggression, to force a woman to submit to her partner's demands. A woman who is forced to alter her behaviour because she is frightened of her partner's reaction is in an abusive relationship. The stereotype of a woman with a black eye and a drunken husband are examples of abuse that is easy to notice but it is difficult to notice many other instances of abuse (Horley, 1988). Abuse can occur without breaking bones or visible signs of bruising. Often abuse is emotional and psychological. For example, ridicule, ill treating children and hurting family pets can be attempts by a man to control his partner's behaviour, that is, to abuse her (Horley, 1988).

Woman abuse is rarely discussed. The reason is that it happens in secret and, because the woman usually lives

with the man who assaults her, it is very seldom that anyone outside the home knows that the abuse is taking place. Most people in the South African context do not seem to realize that countless women are being deprived of their basic human rights. Nor do they understand that assaulting a woman in the private and public spheres is against the law. For example, if the assault happened in private there would be no outrage, because it happened behind closed doors. " An Englishman's home is his castle" (Horley, 1988, p. 1), people feel they should not interfere. Furthermore, some men are shocked by woman abuse. They feel it is 'unnatural', and they do not like to admit it happens. Therefore the whole subject becomes a taboo. When it is discussed, women are blamed for the abuse. Statements such as 'she must have deserved it' or 'she provoked it' are commonplace. It is somehow easier for society to assume that women are responsible for violence against them than to acknowledge that men are perpetrating abuse (Horley, 1988, p.1).

The terms "abuse", "battering" and "violence" present the initial problem, since they are often used synonymously, while they cannot be seen as conceptual equivalents. Basson (1997) distinguishes between these concepts and sees abuse as a subset of violent behaviours. Gelles and Cornell (1990) define abuse as physical aggression that causes injury and also as non-physical acts of maltreatment that are considered to harm.

Violence is defined as an act and condition, which obstructs the spontaneous unfolding of innate human

22

potential, that is, the inherent human drive toward development and self-actualizatio'n. Such acts and conditions which violate the process of human development may occur at the interpersonal, the institutional, and the societal level and may differ in scope, intensity and consequences (Basson, 1997).

Walker (1990) defines violence as a purely descriptive term for behaviours or activities in which physical force is used to inflict injury, either randomly or to gain some specific end, such as control. Its definition has been extended in the case of male violence against women to include verbal threats and abuse, economic deprivation, sexual coercion and the creation of a general climate of fear that limits the full participation of women in the South African context (Walker, 1990).

According to Levinson (1990, p.11) violence is "an act carried out with the intention or perceived intention of physically hurting another person". Battering usually refers to physical abuse. However, it seldom occurs in isolation. Emotional, economic and sexual abuses are part of physical abuse. Furthermore, the word "abuse" is used, as it is more inclusive and has a less negative implication in the opinion of some women (Hansen & Harway, 1993).

According to Pryke and Thomas (1998) most of the definitions regarding domestic violence seem to be preoccupied with three elements:

- The nature of the relationship between the people involved
- The kinds of violence or coercion involved and
- The place(s) where the violence or abuse or battering occurs.

It is evident that the abuse, violence and battering occur in many situations and not simply in the domestic domain.

Hague and Wilson (1996), state that terms such as 'battered wives', 'abused wives', 'battered women' and 'victims of domestic violence' are also in use, despite the fact that they negatively label those experiencing violence or abuse as victims rather more positively, as survivors. In effect, the understanding and use of such terms places the violence back into the private sphere, often hiding or individualising the experience and thus closing down avenues for change (Hague & Wilson, 1996).

The afore-mentioned description of women abuse is particularly useful as it acknowledges that fear, anxiety, depression and learnt helplessness can force a woman to decide to modify her behaviour. All these may happen over very minor issues as well as major issues, although it is clearly a misuse of power imbalance over women (Grace, 1995). This study accepts that abuse, violence and battering can be perceived as an integration of physical, sexual and emotion abuse.

2.5   TYPES OF ABUSE

Many South African women experience some of the following forms of abuse: physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse and emotional abuse (Mullender, 1996). These types will be discussed in depth.

2.5.1   PHYSICAL ABUSE

Mullender (1996) postulates that physical abuse is the most common form of abuse men inflict on their female partners. Horley (1988) states that physical abuse is usually the most recognisable form of abuse. Attacks can result in black eyes, cut lips, fractured skulls and bruising. Sometimes they are even more vicious. For example, take the case of the woman whose husband broke her arm as she breast-fed their newborn baby. Physical abuse can cause miscarriage, blindness, deafness and other permanent injuries (Mullender 1996).

Physical abuse is the most obvious, pervasive, and discussed form of violence. It may take the form of minor acts like pushing shoving, pinching, grabbing, throwing dishes, or slapping. These often escalate over time. For example, the initial minor expressions of anger turn into severe assaults. Hoff (1990) includes a description of a man whose violence began with choking, controlled so as not to hurt too badly, "but as the beatings got on I just lost my temper and got hateful towards her" (Hoff, 1990, p. 138). Abuse can be an example of a man who wants

to control his partner with his violence, and believes that it is socially acceptable for him to do so. Over time, his inhibitions against hurting her become weak and he injures her more seriously. De Sousa (1991) writes that physical beating ends in the woman being hospitalised and sometimes end in the woman being permanently disabled or even dead. The most common forms of physical abuse suffered by victims are as follows;

Blows is one of the most common forms of abuse in relationships, that is, striking blows to the face, arms body or legs using open hands or fists. **Choking or Burning** is also a common form of physical abuse. Although all forms of abuse or violence are encouraged by the offender's desire to exert control over the victim, choking tops the list. This impresses upon the woman the strength of the offender as choking forces the woman to beg for mercy (Kakar, 1998).

Violence with objects often includes the use of objects like sticks, belts, knives or guns by the perpetrator (Kakar, 1998). **Throwing or destruction of property** is another means of expressing physical abuse. In order to show the anger, the perpetrator may go into frenzy and destroy property belonging to the woman. The abuser may throw small appliances, dishes, or other cherished objects at the victim (Kakar, 1998).

Physical abuse, regardless of its form, results in some injury and leaves certain marks on the victim. This form of abuse is most easily detected as it becomes almost

impossible to hide broken bones, bruises, burns, welts, or other physical injuries that may require medical attention (Kakar, 1998).

2.5.2   SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse causes pain and degradation. This type of abuse is often more hidden. However, physical abuse is often followed by sexual abuse. Sexual abuse is one the most difficult forms of interpersonal violence to be prosecuted because people find it hard to believe that sex within marriage or intimate relationships can be a sexual assault. For example, after being severely beaten, the perpetrator demands sex. The victim may also feel that since she is the wife or girlfriend, she cannot refuse sex anyway. The perpetrator may use sexual acts to humiliate and degrade the woman. He may ask her to have sex with his friends and co-workers. Therefore violent sex after physical violence is not uncommon (Kakar, 1998).

Horley (1988) postulates that the sexual act can be an expression of love, giving pleasure equally to both participants. In abusive relationships the sexual act can be an expression of violence and abuse. Some men use sex in order to control a woman's behaviour as well as to assert their authority and dominance. Sex is sometimes used as a punishment. That is, sexual abuse can range from mildly offensive behaviour to total humiliation and physical danger. A common form of sexual abuse is when

a man insists on having sex regardless of the woman's consent (Horley, 1988).

Sexual abuse is any sexual behaviour such as unwanted touching, sexual harassment, rape, hurtful sex and insisting that the woman should submit to his desired sexual needs and calling a woman with her private parts. Sexual abuse may precipitate into an emotional pain (Wilson, 1997).

According to Horley (1988) sexual abuse can also include a man insulting other women in front of his partner, thereby damaging her self-esteem and sexual identity; preventing her from using birth control measures, demanding sex whenever the whim takes him; criticising her performance in bed; forcing her to have oral sex and to participate in other sexual activities which the woman may find disgusting; pushing objects into her vagina or anus; forcing her to have intercourse in front of the children; physically injuring during sex or threatening her with violence if she refuses (Horley, 1988).

Some men who abuse women feel that they are entitled to have intercourse whenever they desire it because they have married them. However, even a marriage licence does not entitle a man to use his wife's body in any way that gives him pleasure. Forcing sexual intercourse on a woman in the South African law is rape (Horley, 1988).

"Physical sexual abuse also leaves emotional scars. It can make the strongest woman feel humiliated, ashamed and embarrassed. It undermines self-confidence and chips away self-respect", (Horley, 1988 p. 6). Meaning over time it can stop an abused woman from going and doing her daily routine. That is, the abused woman may become paralysed with the feelings of powerlessness and hopelessness. The woman who is abused suffers emotional turmoil (Mullender, 1996).

2.5.3   EMOTIONAL ABUSE

According to Mullender (1996), emotional abuse is an attack on a woman's personality rather than on her body. Like physical abuse the man uses it to undermine and control the woman. The weapons of emotional abuse include threats of violence, verbal and psychological harassment, lies, manipulation, blackmail, withholding money and isolating the woman from family and friends. That is, when a woman is severely emotionally abused, she can easily develop a distorted view as the reality of her situation (Mullender, 1996).

Mullender (1996) believes that constant severe assaults cannot be endured without emotional effects. However, chronic emotional distress is abnormal and not a normal reaction to this kind of treatment. Emotional abuse can break the woman's spirit and destroy her self-esteem. Not surprisingly, abused women report symptoms of stress, such as lack of sleep, fear, anxiety, weight loss

or weight gain, nervousness, irritability and suicidal ideation. Depression and anxiety are common and make it harder to escape the abuse. Kennedy (1992) says women who have been subjected to constant emotional damage appear to be flat, devoid of affect and have less energy to fight back.

Most women who have been abused find emotional abuse difficult to handle or cope with. This means that abused women might say it is better to be physically abused rather than to be emotionally abused. They believe bruises heal, but it is difficult to forget the insulting words. The women may feel degraded and humiliated especially when insulted or criticised in front of their own children (Mullender, 1996).

2.5.4   VERBAL ABUSE

Verbal abuse: can be viewed as words that attack or injure, that cause one to believe the false, or that speak falsely of one. That is, verbal abuse constitutes psychological violence (Evans, 1992).

Verbal abuse is hurtful, especially when such abuse is denied. When a woman's perception of the abuse is discounted and there is no validation of the reality, but part of her hurt can be her confusion (Evans, 1992).

Most women who are abused by their husbands feel that verbal abuse attacks the nature and abilities of their

humanity. For example, the woman may begin to believe that there is something wrong with her or her abilities are failing. Verbal abuse may be overt (angry outburst and name calling), or covert (very, very subtle, like brainwashing). Overt verbal abuse is usually blaming and accusatory, and consequently confusing to the partner. Covert verbal abuse is viewed as hidden aggression, and is even more confusing to the partner. Its aim is to control the woman without her knowing it. The woman sometimes does not even know that she is being manipulated and controlled (Evans, 1992).

Verbal abuse is insidious. It disregards, disrespects and devalues the abused woman in such a way that:

1.   Her self-esteem gradually diminishes, usually without her realizing it.

2.   She loses self-confidence without realizing it.

3.   She may consciously or unconsciously try to change her behaviour so as not to upset the abuser, so she would not be hurt anymore.

4.   She may be subtly brain washed without realizing it (Evans, 1992. p. 74).

According to Evans (1992) verbal abuse expresses a double bind message. There is incongruence between the way the abuser speaks and his real feelings. For example, the abuser may sound very sincere and honest while he is telling his wife what is wrong with her, or he may say 'I am not mad' while sounding very angry, or he may, for example, invite her out to dinner and then during dinner maintain an attitude of aloof, cold

31

indifference. "He tells me he loves me, and he tells me he can say anything he wants" (Evans, 1992, p.75).

As verbal abuse escalates towards physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse and economic abuse, the abuser may begin moving into the woman's space. Noting this transition from verbal to physical abuse is important because the researcher may provide evidence that all abused women have been verbally abused or economically abused (Evans, 1992).

2.5.5   ECONOMIC ABUSE

Men that abuse women use control in many forms (withholding money, regulating the use of family issues, verbal intimidation, and denigration) as a means of getting their needs met. Some men in the South African context want to maintain an image of strength and self-reliance. They often lack trust when dealing with money with their wives. Abusers do not want to share or involve their wives in financial issues, they have a negative perception about women that if they include them in the finances, they might kill them in order to benefit financially (Kelly, 1991).

Some men may give their wives money and accuse them of stealing. Sometimes the women might be accused of misusing the money. For example, the woman might be given little money to pay all the accounts for the household, rent, food, and clothes for the children and

money for the doctor or he may even demand money for beers to entertain friends. If he does not get the money he is demanding, the helpless woman might have to pay by being victimised or abused (Kelly, 1991).

In conclusion, abusers in the South African context generally experience many of their feelings as anger. For instance, if the verbal abuser feels unsure and anxious he may simply feel angry, possibly angry that he is feeling unsure and anxious. Yet part of being human is the ability to feel. The ability to feel, like the ability to think, is universal to the nature of humanity. Evans (1992) postulates that some men who abuse women are generally unwilling to accept their feelings and unwilling to reveal the feelings to their wives. They often build a wall between themselves and their wives. They might maintain a distance. Consequently, the verbal, physical, sexual, emotional and economic abuser may wage a kind of war with his words, usually unbeknown to, and not being understood by his wife. Sometimes the abuser's words are weapons, and these weapons are the categories of different types of abuse that have been discussed already (Evans, 1992).

CHAPTER THREE

GENDER IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

"The environment in which children grow
and learn are environments that are filled
with information of gender. (Girls and
boys) observe, organize, relate
themselves to their appropriate category,
try out various behaviours, experience
feedback from others, and acquire a
gender identity that matches to some
degree the ideology of their culture"
(Berenice, 1994, p.41).

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will focus on gender issues which are
distinguishable, related processes that operate
throughout life. The gender issues will help the readers
understand the acquisition of gender-relevant or sex-
type behaviours. These processes would describe ways
that behaviour is acquired and sometimes maintained
later in life. The processes are general, such as gender
in South African context, the reaction of parents and
adults in gender socialization, gender learning,
modelling and imitation, gender stereotypes and gender
and power. They are particularly relevant in

understanding gender and the abuse of women in South Africa.

3.2 GENDER IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

According to Sachs (1990) gender and sex have raised the greatest controversy among women in South Africa. Giddens (1989) postulates that gender concerns the psychological, social and cultural differences between males and females. Gender in the South African context refers to the expectations people have from someone because they are female or male. Gender is socially determined, for example, the woman's gender refers to what she and others expect of her as a female (Mackenzie, 1992). That sex is biologically determined and gender is socially determined (Walker, 1994).

As a central organizing principle among human groups gender is the constellation of personal attributes assigned to men and women in any culture. It is a primary characteristic by which people structure intimate relationships, divide labour, assign social values and grant privileges. In most contemporary societies including South Africa, dualistic gender systems endure, with clearly demarcated boundaries between what is considered masculine and what is considered feminine: temperamentally, physically, sexually and behaviourally. Gender is simultaneously a deeply embedded aspect of individual personalities and structural social

35

arrangements. However, it is also contested as a social terrain (O'Toole & Schiffman, 1997).

Gender makes women and men see the world through different lenses and develop different styles of relating, primarily because of differences in separation and individuation processes, These differences are either real or perceptual and their relevance to ethnic and socio-economic groups are still questioned (Knudson-Martin, 1994).

Some women in South African view gender issues as categorising men and women. The roles that men and women play are viewed as follows; gender identity, gender role and gender differences (Napier, 1991). Knudson-Martin (1994) emphasises that women differ from men and use differences to support the norm of male superiority and female inferiority.

Margaret Mead and Nancy Chodorow (cited in Knudson-Martin, 1994) postulate that men and women develop differently in internal psychic structures, because mothers usually do parenting of both boys and girls. This is the most influential contribution to gender differences. However, some authors suggest that developing a relationship of self requires a complex integration of self with others, based on empathy, caring and interdependence (Knudson-Martin, 1994).

Okin (1989) argues that historically, men and women have undergone radically different forms of social

conditioning and different life experiences. They may determine the access to education, to work, to the profession, to the tools and resources needed for industry and craft. They may determine people's health in terms of life expectation: women give birth to children and nurture them; men give shelter, food and security to children and women. Freedom of movement also differentiates men and women. It almost certainly determines the sexuality, relationships and ability to make decisions and act autonomously. Gender is perhaps the single most important factor in shaping how and what men and women become (Freedman & Combs, 1996).

In psychology, gender differences can be seen most in psychodynamic theories. Freudian theory takes masculinity and male anatomy as the human standard and views femininity and female anatomy as deviations from the standard. Perhaps the most influential and controversial theory of the emergence of gender identity is that of Sigmund Freud. According to Freud the learning of gender differences in infants and young children is centred on possession or absence of the penis. 'I have the penis' is equivalent to I am a boy; while I am a girl is equivalent to 'I lack a penis'. Freud is careful to say that it is not just the independent beings, but men and women are more related and share the same psychological make-up (Giddens, 1989, p.165).

The Jungian idea of the animus and anima places the masculine and feminine in opposition. The anima is the

feminine part of a man's personality and animus is the male part of a woman's personality. More recently psychodynamic theories also depict female experience as sharply divergent from male experience. For example, female identity is predicted on psychological and ethnic commitment to take care of human infants. However, male identity is associated with outer space, which involves excitement and mobility, leading to achievement and domination. In contrast, female identity is associated with inner space, staying home and taking care of children (Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1990).

Chodorow's theory suggests femininity may conceal feelings of aggressiveness or assertiveness, which are revealed only obliquely or in certain contexts (Brennan, 1995). In spite of their limitation, Chodorow's ideas are important. They help people understand the origins of what psychologists have called male expressiveness. This means the men experience difficulties in having to reveal their feelings to others. The concept of inexpressiveness explains a great deal about the nature of masculinity and femininity, which is directly relevant in understanding the universal nature of male dominance over women. However, Chodorow was criticised for not explaining the abuse of women, particularly in the current times towards gender (Brennan, 1995).

Walker (1990) postulates that women in the South African context suffer from emotional, physical and psychological problems because of the stigma of gender. Ramphele and Boonzaier (1988) postulate that some

white women are also discriminated against, although their membership of a privileged racial group softens the impact of gender discrimination as compared to black African abused women. All women share the same stigma of gender. However, it is still confusing to explain or describe women's oppression and abuse in contemporary South Africa, as well as to analyse the intricate interrelationship of gender, race and class. It is still difficult to map women's position since there is much to be conceptualised from the South African context (Ramphele & Boonzaier, 1988).

Ramphele and Boonzaier (1988) postulate that gender issues concerning abuse of women have recently become a more respectable concept in South African studies. The research is intended to add a much-needed historical dimension to the understanding of the gender power relations through the assessment of some case studies of abused women in South Africa. It is apparent that gender relations have undergone a major refashioning in South Africa, but female subordination to men still persists, because of male power over women especially in reaching social and political change. This is a sobering reminder of how deeply rooted male power is, not only in South African society, but in the way in which men and women have been constituted as social actors (Ramphele & Boonzaier, 1988).

Kaschak (1992) postulates that gender differences in South Africa are seen as a horrible reality that ignores female support. That is, some men and women are

socialised in ways that maintain their status quo (Kaschak, 1992).

3.3 GENDER SOCIALIZATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Gender socialization teaches people that males and females are responsible for different tasks and that female's tasks are less important than males (Mackenzie, 1992).

Many studies have been carried out of how gender socialisation develops. However, most forms of gender discrimination are more subtle and difficult to detect, for example, the way parents categorise the children's roles. For example, the studies of mother-infant interaction show differences in treating boys and girls. Some parents believe their reactions to both are the same. Adults were asked to assess the personality of a baby and different answers were given according to whether the child was a boy or a girl. In one experiment, five young mothers were observed in interaction with a six-month-old baby girl. They smiled at her often and offered her a doll to play with. The baby girl was seen as sweet. The reaction of a second group of mothers to a child of the same age and dressed with boys' clothes was noticeably different. The boy was offered a train and other male toys to play with. The baby boy was seen as

strong and bold (Giddens, 1989). The above shows how gender socialisation has an impact on people.

It is not only parents and grandparents whose perceptions of infants differ in this way. Other parents perceived newborn males infants as 'sturdy, handsome or tough and newborn female infants as dainty, sweet or charming' (Giddens, 1989). These patterns are passed on from generation to generation because of the primary role of the early socialisation.

Some women get the sense that to succeed as women they must succeed in their relationships, and that they have an obligation to try their utmost to make these relationships work, even if they are being abused. In contrast, men are taught to place a similar heavy investment on the husband and father's role (Sampselle, 1992). To be a good father and head of the family gives them privilege to dominate women.

The socialisation of women makes it easier for men to victimise women with battering and abuse. Women are not taught how to defend themselves physically to the same degree as men or rebelling against the abused. They are taught less achievement orientation, competitiveness and assertiveness than men. Furthermore, women are labeled as be passive, cooperative, self-denying, and to define themselves as powerless (Sampselle, 1992).

The negative image of women in some cultures views women as childlike, unreasonable, and overly emotional. Therefore, some women are more susceptible to physical punishment. "This myth goes on to say that women are less reliable sources of information because of their feminine irrationality and emotionality" (Sampselle, 1992, p. 95).

Raising girls to be feminine and boys to be masculine is part of their gender. This process of gender socialisation goes on for life. Furthermore, children learn at an early stage how to dress, sit and how to respond to others. Children often learn that girls (females) are inferior, dependent, and submissive while boys (males) are independent and powerful and brave (Mackenzie, 1992). Certain personality traits such as assertiveness, aggressiveness or shyness and sensibility are conceived of in gender-specific terms. Behaviours that are tolerated and even encouraged in boys are often admonished and ridiculed in girls, and vice versa. Labels such as effeminate or sissy, tomboy or bitch are used to critisize the person's behaviour. All this serves to emphasize the socially constructed gender socialisation and not biologically determined sexual differences (Eagle, Frenkel, Green & Wolman, 1991).

Gender socialisation shapes how people experience themselves and others. Gender socialisation influences people's psychological health and well-being. Men and women tend to approach relationships differently. For example, women are more oriented to .emotional

expressions and cohesion, while men appear to be more independent with leadership skills and more organised. Even what constitutes well-being and definitions of appropriate responses to distressing or problematic issues may be different for men and women (Liddle & Hague, 2000)

Goodrich (1990) and Hare-Mustin (1987) state that women have been discouraged from showing power or expressing anger. That is, female depression and anxiety have been related to internalised anger, inhibited assertiveness, and the loss of emotional connection in key relationships. Failures and sense of inauthenticity may be associated with doubting the appropriateness of one's actions.

In contrast, cultural directives for males to be assertive and in control encourage men to deny their dependency needs and make anger the only acceptable male emotion (Liddle & Hague, 2000).

3.4 LEARNED HELPLESSNESS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Levinson (1990) postulates that sex socialisation 'teaches' dominance and submissiveness, and encourages a belief system that is called learnt helplessness in women which may cause depression, anxiety and fear. Learned helplessness is defined as a condition in which a person does not attempt to escape

from a painful situation after learning from a previous and similar situation that escape is not possible. Therefore, a significant condition brought about the violence or abuse and the inability to stop, forces women who are being abused to remain trapped in their abusive relationships (Barnett, Martinez and Keyson, 1996).

Learned helplessness contributes to low self-esteem and to an explanation for the psychological paralysis on the part of abuse or violence against women, leading the abused women to maintain their victim status. Some women who have been abused have grown up with a feeling of helplessness. They might have learnt that men are superior and dominant as mentioned earlier. Often most women who feel helpless and trapped in abusive relationships depend on their husbands for all tangible support and emotional fulfilment. The abused women might find it hard to leave the abusive relationship. That is, some women are helpless to make things work for the benefit of others and not themselves (Jo Brothers, 1992).

The effects of learned helplessness culminate to form a cluster of mixed feelings that often constitute the battered women syndrome (Kakar, 1998). Further, learned helplessness describes the process by which organisms learn that they cannot predict whether what they do will result in a particular outcome and cannot respond with total helplessness or passivity, rather, they narrow their choices of responses opting for those that

have the highest predictability of creating a successful outcome (Barnett et al., 1996).

Kakar (1998) postulates that women who are victims of abuse feel they are hopeless and helplessly trapped in abusive relationships. The repeated incidents of abuse create feelings of self-blame and suicidal ideation. Most abused women feel that regardless of their actions, they are unable to improve their life and therefore remain in situations where their safety may be jeopardised (Kakar, 1998).

Women, as victims, believe nothing can prevent the abuse. Therefore, a pattern of learned helplessness results in accumulated tension. The abuser continues to threaten the woman, "if you leave I will kill you", or "I will take the children away from you". All this makes the abused woman start to rationalise her behaviour. For example, "he is not bad because he cares for his children". This sense of being trapped and helpless alters the victim's thinking and leads to her living in terror (Shen, 1995).

"The essence of male violence against women is the sense of inadequacy, of vulnerability, of helplessness, of weakness, and of sheer naked fear that men inspire in women when they threaten or use violence against women. The use of brute force by men makes women feel helpless" (Bunch & Carrillo, 1991, p.21).

3.5 GENDER LEARNING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

According to Berenice (1994) linguistic tags serve an organising function, while observational learning and positive and negative reinforcement focus on the child's relevant stimuli and provide consequences for behaviour. Thus, gender learning may guide a child's social interactions and activities that might be repeated at their later development due to learning.

Okin (1989) postulates early aspects of gender learning by infants are almost certainly unconscious. They precede the stage at which children accurately label themselves as either a boy or a girl. A range of pre-verbal clues are involved in the initial development of gender awareness. Males and females are different from those that the babies might learn to associate with. Systematic differences in dress, hairstyle and tone of voice provide visual clues for the child in the learning process. Often children who are age two or three have a partial understanding of what gender is. They usually know whether they are boys or girls and can categorise others accurately. At age five or six a child knows that the person's gender does not change, and that everyone has a gender and that differences between girls and boys are automatically assumed (Okin,1989).

According to Berenice (1994) the environment in which children grow and learn is filled with information about gender. Children normally observe, organise and relate themselves to the appropriate category. They might even try out various behaviours, experiencing feedback from others, and acquiring a gender identity of their culture. For example when girls play with toys pre-classified as a same-sex toy, mothers praise them and give them affection, but when they play with a cross-sex toy they are ridiculed or may be interrupted with their play. Boys receive similar consequences, especially from their fathers, who dispense more vigorous differential treatment of their daughters and sons than the mothers, leading the investigators to propose that "socialisation pressure for sex-typed behaviours come consistently most from fathers" (Berenice, 1994, p.43). Freud theory insists gender learning is concentrated in the oedipal phase, including the influence of learning beginning during infancy (Berenice, 1994).

Children usually learn their gender through toys, pictures, books and television programmes. All these resources tend to emphasise the differences between a boy's (male) and girl's (female) attributes. For example, toy stories and mail order catalogues usually categorise the products by gender. Even some toys that seem neutral in terms of gender are not so in practice. What is amazing is children usually recommend toy kittens, or rabbits for girls, while lions and tigers are seen as more appropriate for boys (Giddens, 1989).

By the time children start school they have a clear idea of the gender difference. Although some schools still associate other subjects with gender. In practice, of course, an array of factors may affect girls and boys differently. In the South African context most schools teach the same curricula to boys and girls. Although boys are usually recommended to study science technology. Sometimes peer pressure socialisation tends to play a major part in reinforcing and further shaping gender identity throughout a child's school career (Giddens, 1989).

During the apartheid era females and males were conditioned to certain gender roles such as, males are breadwinners, responsible for the family's monetary survival and family physical survival. They are warriors and should be able to protect themselves and family and country. They hold positions of authority in all social institutions in religion, work and in government. They are independent and have power over women and children. In contrast, females are homemakers and nurturers; they manage and direct the affairs of the household by cooking, cleaning and taking care of the children. They are dependent on their husbands and are submissive. Gender roles and stigma might have contributed to women abuse (Lessing, 1994).

Berenice (1994) postulates that placing a doll in a child's hands usually demands hugging, stroking, and tender loving care. A ball on the other hand usually demands bouncing, throwing and kicking. Therefore, social

48

learning theory locates the source of sex-typing in the sex differential practices of the socialising community, particularly those practices relating to the differential situations to which girls and boys are exposed to. Observational learning, and positive and negative reinforcement focus the child on relevant stimuli and provide consequences for adult behaviour Thus, gender labels may guide a child's social interactions and are likely to be repeated in adulthood (Berenice, 1994).

3.6   MODELING AND IMITATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Modeling is defined as a person regarded as excellent and worthy of imitation, or to pose for an artist. Children will imitate by acting in a similar manner to those adults and peers who are first available (sufficiently present to be perceptually salient), and second, likeable. Likeability, in turn, derives from the association of persons with positive consequences, rewards or satisfaction. Thus, a child will learn to imitate a person who is nurturing, who directly satisfies the child's needs or helps him get his or her needs satisfied, or who is consistently associated with positive and pleasant experiences. Persons associated with punishment, cruelty or unpleasant experiences will tend not to be liked and not to be imitated (Berenice, 1994).

The precise nature of the behaviours a girl acquires by imitating her mother depends on the mother's unique

characteristics as well as those she shares with other mothers. For example, daughters of mothers who work outside the home have been found more often to anticipate working when they grow up and to be more independent and assertive than the daughters of mothers who stay at home (Mackenzie, 1992).

Children tend to imitate the behaviour of adults who are available and rewarding, as well as those that have power to dispense or withhold positive outcomes (unless this power is associated primarily with painful consequences to the child, in which case the punishing person becomes one whom the child will tend to avoid rather than imitate). For example, boys who grow up where their fathers are powerful, wealthy and independent, will tend to imitate their fathers at a later stage.

In imitating the behaviour of an available, likeable and powerful person, a little girl is, for all the reasons given, most likely to model her responses after those of her mother, although not consistently or entirely. In addition, a girl learns at an early age that she is in the same category as her mother when both are referred to as girl, sister, female, lady or woman.

3.7   GENDER STEREOTYPES IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Ashmore (1990) defines gender stereotypes as organised sets of beliefs about the characteristics of a particular group or culture. Gender stereotypes conform to negative fixed impressions or attitude that discriminate gender expectations for male and female behaviour (Berenice, 1994).

Gender stereotypes, modelling and imitation, and learning are preceded by comprehension of gender constancy, that is, by an understanding that gender is a "permanent, irreversible characteristic" (Berenice, 1994, p.38). Some researchers (Kuhn, Nash & Brucker) cited in Berenice (1994) argued that the attainment of gender constancy is not a necessary antecedent (a preceding thing or circumstance) of some gender modeling. For example, children with high gender constancy (who were also older) did more in imitating than children with lower gender constancy (who were also younger) but they did not differ in their tendency to imitate or model the same gender adults. This process is likely to accelerate with increasing cognitive and discriminating skills and to cover an increasingly wide range of models, including peers, baby sitters, storybook and real life heroes as well as television and cartoon characters (Berenice, 1994). Modeling and imitating behaviour may give children more knowledge about gender stereotypes.

In gender sensitive societies, children learn to associate particular behaviour stereotypes in traits, activities and occupation with females and others with males. As children get older they begin to label each other in terms of personality traits. The next paragraphs will describe/explain how the two and three year old children understand behaviour stereotypes.

In a study of two and three year olds, the children were instructed to select certain types of paper dolls. Girls at both ages correctly identified the doll as a girl, and boys identified the doll as a boy. Girls believed that the girl like to play with dolls, like to help mother, talk a lot, never hit and say I need some help (Berenice, 1994, p.52). Although the boys identified the doll with a boy they started kicking the doll and thought it is a ball and also hit the doll because they wanted to display their power. The girls started to believe that when boys grow up they will be strong and aggressive, while girls will grow to be weaker and sensitive (Berenice, 1994). All this can be viewed as behaviour stereotype.

Gender stereotypes have been reported as increasing with age although children with more intellectual abilities also have more knowledge of gender stereotypes. According to some children women (girls) cry a lot, are quiet and afraid, are thankful, gentle, loving and have good manners. Men (boys) are believed to be cruel, strong, get into fights, are self-reliant, and talk loudly. Men and boys often view passive behaviour as more

desirable for girls than for boys. More girls than boys considered the passive approach a good and effective way to solve problems (Berenice, 1994). For example, passivity, submissiveness, dependency, denoting inaction and subordination, and reliance on others, are generally measured together in studies of children and are defined by such behaviours as following rather than leading by occupation (Berenice, 1994).

Occupational stereotypes appear to have contributed to the abuse of women. Some abused women in South Africa are conditioned to be housewives. A housewife is defined by Lessing (1994) as a woman who manages or directs the affairs of the household, for example, cleaning, cooking and needlework and she ought to have the energy to teach the children the indoor occupations. Besides all this the woman should have temperament and bodily strength that enables her to find pleasure in household engagements (Lessing, 1994).

If a woman considers a career, teaching nursing, waitressing were the most suited occupations a woman could think of (Walker, 1994). Males on the other hand as mentioned already should provide food and security for the home. The man should consider careers such as an engineer, doctor, technician and businessman (Walker, 1994).

Richie and Kanuha (1993) postulate that stereotypes may also lead professionals to underestimate the impact of abuse on the minority of women in South Africa. For

example, some professional women who are being daily abused believe that they will be undermined or criticised if people learn of their abuse. This also forces the abused women to stay trapped in an abusive situation, or keep quiet because she might lose the job or position she is holding.

The gender stereotypes have manifested in unique ways leading to gender oppression. Looking at labour production, some women in South Africa still earn significantly less than men, partly because some of the women lack skills and education. Many women work in low paying job categories and in low paying industries. Even when women do the same jobs as men they are paid less. However, for some women who are in managerial professions or supervisory positions it was found that white women earned 98% of white men's salaries, and African women earned 70% (Neft & Levine, 1997).

According to Cock (1993) some women in South Africa have not only had to contend with issues of gender stereotypes, unequal remuneration, gender discrimination and firing, but also inflexible hours for child care, anti-maternity and paternity leave sentiments, lack of nursing rights and a lack of safety in relation to sexuality and sexual harassment (Sachs, 1990).

In South Africa women continue to be treated and valued as possessions and are objectified by members of their own racial groups. This is simply illustrated by the

traditional system of bride wealth. Lobola is one of the tools that are used to oppress women. A man pays a lump sum of money to marry a woman and later some men treat their women as possessions or part of their furniture. Lobola is the passing of a consideration in connection with a marriage, from the groom to the bride's father. Lobola no longer satisfies its intended purpose of protecting women (Cock, 1993). The practice of male domination and control has changed and is still a continuation of female subordination and oppression. It is important to mention that the experiences of abuse in South Africa are not homogeneous. There are numerous alternative lifestyles other than the nuclear family. Furthermore, women are publicly breaking the stereotype that they are submissive and dependent. However, it is clear that some women in South Africa are still facing oppression and discrimination (Cock, 1993).

Discrimination against women extends to every aspect of life. Women in South Africa are fed less, have poorer health and less education than males. Their contribution to society's production and reproduction is underestimated; therefore the gender stereotypes between men and women still persist in human development (Cock, 1993).

Gender-based power differentials combined with socialisation and gender stereotypes teach men to value independence and to put women more often in a weaker position. Men define a relationship as one that accommodates their needs and enhances their well-being

55

(Hare-Mustin, 1987). Socialisation practices and social structures such as patriarchy continue to promote male dominance. However, several studies have begun to observe the shifts in gender role attitudes about women's rights, and in gender role attitudes toward a more egalitarian expectation with regard to both women's employment outside the home and the division of labour within the family hierarchies (Hare-Mustin, 1987).

In conclusion the opinion that a just future would be one without gender stereotypes as it is the division into male specific roles and female specific roles that is the source of injustice. The opinion of this author is that a just future would be one without gender stereotypes. Men and women will have to work together in public and in the private sphere. Therefore, gender socialisation differences and stereotypes should not teach men and women that they are responsible for certain tasks and that women are less important than men (Chafetz, 1988).

3.8 GENDER AND POWER

"All fathers.... Are invisible in daytime: daytime is ruled by mothers. But fathers come out at night. Darkness brings home the fathers, with their real, unspeakable power." (Goodrich, 1990. p.11)

Umberson, Anderson, Glick and Shapiro (1998) postulate that the social structure of gender and power shape men and women's access to resources for control within

56

intimate relationships. Kirkwood (1993) suggests several ways that domestic violence, abuse and control may be shaped by gender and power differences. For example, a partner who is abusive uses his own power of persuasion to manipulate a woman. However, if the abused has access to external resources, such as family income, these can contribute to power and control. Umberson et al. (1998) explain that in the hierarchy of western culture, resources such as money, cultural status and historical legacy give men the right to punish or abuse their wives.

Goodrich (1990, p.10) defines power as "the capacity to gain whatever resources are necessary to remove oneself from a condition of oppression and to guarantee one's ability to perform and to affect not only one's own circumstances, but also more general circumstances outside one's intimate surroundings".

In understanding the power dynamics of women abuse in South Africa involves the use of the term 'power', since it evokes the tension between power over and power to or empowerment. In the current feminist literature, the former is usually used in the discussion of men's relation to women within patriarchal culture, and the latter in that of women's efforts to overcome the restriction of freedom created by patriarchal culture. Further, there is tension present in the use of the term 'power' because it is used to describe how abused wives are exploited or manipulated by their husband's knowledge of power. Examples of this are found in phrases such as

"reclaiming power", "women power" and "empowerment" that are part of the vocabulary of the battered wives movements (Kirkwood, 1993).

Power is seen as the true difference between men and women. The gender differences such as those already mentioned are reflections of unequal power. If women seek more connection and attend more to others, it is because they hold lower status in society. Gender theorists who focus on power differences suggest that male separations are an illusion that ignores female support. Both male and female are socialised in ways that maintain the status quo. For example, women seek to maintain relationships at the expense of their own autonomy and men learn that power or control over women is central to the definition of masculinity (Kaschak, 1992).

The power disparity between men and women influences most abused women's decision to remain in a violent relationship (Hoff, 1990). There is not much evidence about how power operates in the daily interaction between men women, or what the differences are between influence and authority in respect to abuse or battering.

Another aspect for potential research is the exploration of people's feelings about power. Archer (1994) interviewed young people about the ways in which they felt powerful or powerless as a woman or man in general. Over half of the women said they felt powerless because

of threats of violence, sexual harassment and abuse. Some women saw sexual harassment and male power as a result of the male's greater size and strength. Some men believed physical strength is a source of masculine power. Resulting in power to exert further control led to women abuse. In the same way, loss of identity, physical disability and depression are key elements in the power dynamics of women abuse (Kirkwood, 1993). Power and control over women is a widespread issue whose seriousness has not yet been fully revealed.

In conclusion, it is still rare for abused wives to have the same power as men, especially women who depend on their partners for survival. Even if they did have relatively equal power, physical differences in size and strength would still unbalance the equation in men's favour.

CHAPTER FOUR

FAMILY AND PATRIARCHY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

"The family may be imagined as a web, a flower, a tomb, a prison, a castle"
(Laing, 1971, p.6).

4.1   INTRODUCTION

Men who come from the patriarchal family and who are socialised to dominate women are likely to be abusive in their families or in relationships. In this chapter the researcher will define the concept 'family' discuss its composition, the family structure, function of the family, the division of labour in traditional families and patriarchy. A conclusion will follow.

4.2   DEFINITION OF THE FAMILY AND PATRIARCHY

According to Schaefer (1992) a family is defined as a set of people related by blood, marriage or adoption who share the primary responsibility for reproduction and caring for members of society. Giddens(1989, p.384) states that "a family is a group of persons directly linked by kin connections".

60

According to Bhasin (1993) an analysis of the main institutions in society shows some are patriarchal in nature. For example, the family, religion, media and law are the pillars of a patriarchal system and structure. This well-knit and rooted system makes patriarchy seem invincible; it also makes it seem natural (Bhasin, 1993, p.9).

The word "patriarchy" comes from the Latin word "father-right" or paternal figure. In patriarchal societies children are defined through the father and women are defined through their husbands' status and life. According to the social structure or system, men have taken, and have been given rights over women. Men have assumed rights over women's labour, women's bodies, women's childbearing and women's identity. In a patriarchal society most laws, customs and beliefs favour men (Bhasin, 1993).

According to Bem (1993) patriarchy is the power of the fathers. It is a social, ideological and political system in which men, often by force and direct pressure, or through ritual, tradition, law and language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labour, determine what part women shall or shall not play. However, this does not necessarily imply that no woman has power, or that all women in a given culture may not have certain powers under patriarchy.

The idea of patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices is another way of trying to understand and

explain women's oppression, subordination and submissiveness. However, the word "patriarchy" means different things to different people, races and countries. For example, Juliet Mitchell, a feminist psychologist, uses the word to refer to kinship systems in which men exchange women, and to the symbolic power that fathers exercise within the system. It is also important to go beyond the old usage of the term "patriarchy", which refers to the rule of the father. For example, patriarchy endures in the form of male bosses who have the power to instruct and control in private and public spheres (Eagle, Frenkel, Green and Wolman, 1991).

Thinking about patriarchy can help people to see that some societies are organised to oppress women, and how men generally benefit from this. However, abuse of women is often hidden unless the women come forward to talk about their abuse (Barret, 1990).

Patriarchy expresses the notion that the biological distinction of male and female can be used to distinguish social functions and individual power. Lindsey (1997) postulates that patriarchy is believed to be a significant external force that influences individual behaviour. Norms mores and customs play a central role in making human beings what they are. In some cultures patriarchy and male dominance are accepted and seen as desirable behaviour for family discipline. For example, women have to make sure everything goes well. They have to make men understand what it is that is good for the family and that would benefit all. In some cultures,

violence and abuse of women is widely accepted, encouraged and glorified. Physical force is used to discipline women and children (Lindsey, 1997).

The patriarchal mode of production exists in articulation with another mode of production. The husband uses power to control labour that he puts in action (Walker, 1979). Bhasin (1993), postulates that women receive their maintenance in exchange for their labour, especially when they are not engaged in wage labour. The nature of this work varies, especially, but not necessarily, with the wealth and income of the women and their husbands. The exploitation of women's labour benefits men's labour. Lindsey (1997, p.258) restates the position when he says that: "The basic cause of the income gap is not sexual segregation, but men's desire to preserve their advantaged position and their ability to do so by establishing rules to distribute valued resources in their favour".

Eagle et al., (1991) contend that working class women in South Africa carry a double burden, as they are both salaried employees and the primary caregivers of children and their husbands. Working women are engaged in particular kinds of menial work that men would not accept because of low wages. An example of such poorly paid work is night shift office cleaning. This means that women's physical and mental health are severely compromised (Eagle et al., 1991).

According to Walby (1990) patriarchal relations in the workplace and the state as well as in the family, are central to the determination of the position of women in paid work. The state is also viewed as capitalistic because it acts to maintain the capitalistic benefits from a particular form of family, because the patriarchal mode articulates with the capitalist mode. The primary mechanism normally ensures that women serve their husbands by being excluded from paid work on the same terms as men. Furthermore, patriarchal relations with paid work are crucial in preventing women from entering the work as freely as men, and are reinforced by patriarchal state policies (Walby. 1990).

4.3 SEXUALITY AND PATRIARCHY

According to Harley (1990) radical feminists focus their attention on institutionalised prostitution, pornography and forced heterosexuality as other examples of control over women's sexuality.

According to Bhasin (1993) and Harley (1990) women are obliged to provide sexual services to men to satisfy the men's needs and desires. The moral and legal regimes exist to restrict the expression of women's sexuality whereas customarily, a blind eye is turned towards promiscuity. For example, some men force the women in their control into prostitution. In other words, they trade women's sexuality for their own benefit. Rape is another way in which women's sexuality is dominated through an

invocation of shame and honour. Social, cultural, family and religious codes of behaviour carefully monitor dress code, behaviour and mobility.

Throughout history, especially under capitalism, women have been viewed as objects or possessions as mothers or producers. Contemporary vocabulary clearly expresses this when women are labelled: 'fruit', 'bird', 'chick' and 'doll'. Unlimited polygamy results in serious oppression of women, yet monogamy produces something similar since subjugation of one sex by the other is what usually occurs. However, Bhasin (1993) points out that the monogamous relationship can transcend present sexual institutions. Radical feminists say that women under patriarchy are not only mothers; they are sexual slaves or sex objects. The patriarchal ideology typically opposes women as sexual beings to women as mothers. With the partial exception of mothers, the male culture defines women as male pleasure (Bhasin, 1993).

Chodorow (cited in Giddens, 1989) postulates why patriarchy in one form or another may be universal. Many answers have been suggested but the most likely explanation was relatively simple. Women give birth to, and nurse children and this initial care is intensive and prolongs the centrality of mothering to women's experience. Women become what a French novelist called the "second sex", because they are excluded from the more public activities in which males are free to engage (Giddens, 1989, p.169).

4.4   COMPOSITION OF A FAMILY

There are two main types of families: the nuclear family and the extended family. The nuclear family consists of two adults living with their own or adopted children. The extended family according to Schaefer (1992, p.382) is a family in which relatives, in addition to parents and children, live in the same home. These relatives can be for example, grandparents, aunts or uncles.

Family can be formed by marriage. It is important to consider the different types of marriages when studying the family. Schaefer (1992, p.383) identified the different types of marriages. **Monogamy** describes the form of marriage in which one woman and one man are married only to each other. **Serial monogamy** means a person is allowed to have several spouses in his or her life but have one spouse at a time. **Polygamy** is when an individual is allowed to have several spouses simultaneously. According to Haralambos (1990) there are two types of polygamy, there is polygyny and polyantry. **Polygyny** is when a man is allowed to marry more than one woman and **polyandry** is when a woman is allowed to be married to more than one man.

The institution of the family is the basic unity of society. It is also probably the most patriarchal system that abuses women. A man is considered the head of the

family; within the family and controls everything such as production, reproduction and mobility (Bhasin, 1993).

Most South Africans think and see the family as the abode of love, and the home as a safe retreat where any member of the family is sure of support and protection. It consists of grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles and children as a closely-linked network of individuals who will stand united in the face of threat (Basson, 1997).

"The family was seen as a haven of peace, serving a 'tension management function' for the wider society, the emphasis being on the harmonious, nurturing and supportive nature of the woman's role in the home, as a counterpart to the husband's stressful task of winning resources form the wider society and setting goals and giving leadership in the family group" (Steyn et al., 1987, p.394). The reality is different, whenever ties of love hold human beings together, whether that love is primarily erotic or supportive, aggressive tensions are also inescapable, therefore, families are factories that produce human personalities (Steyn et al., 1987).

It is in the family where the abuse of women and male power over women are enacted most plainly and personally. The reproduction of patriarchy occurs through family structure and family process, from who serves the coffee to who drives the car, from who pursues conversation to who has the last word, from minor acts of deference to major decision making (Goodrich, 1990).

According to Shalala (1995) the family is the recognised unit that confirms status, class, property rights, privilege or position upon its members, whether biological or adopted. Stark and Flitcraft (1996) argue that the family is a cradle of violence and probably the most patriarchal system. The family is a system that requires special focus when considering restraint and responsibility for abusive behaviour. The family is the social system where the failure to attribute responsibility to perpetrators of abuse is probably most apparent. Within the family, the traditional distribution of status has been along gender and age lines. Some husbands have traditionally been regarded as superior to wives, males to females and parents to children. For example, those in superior roles have traditionally been attributed ownership rights over those in subordinate roles and have been seen as entitled to greater privilege, deference and respect from subordinates (Shalala, 1995).

The family plays an important role in socialising the next generation in patriarchal morals and values. Therefore, it is within the family that the child learns the first lessons in hierarchy, subordination and discrimination (Stark and Flitcraft, 1996). Here the child gains a sense of self, learns language, and begins to understand norms of interaction with parents' siblings and significant others in her or his life (Stark & Flitcraft, 1996).

Bhasin (1993) contends that boys and girls learn to be assertive and dominating and submissive and caring

through imitation (social learning). For example, girls are conditioned and encouraged to act like women and be caring, loving and submissive. Boys are conditioned to portray the image of their father figure and be powerful and strong enough to control women. In terms of social learning theory, the family is seen as a training ground in violence/abuse since it provides examples for imitations and examples of role models which are used by children in their later lives (Stammers, 1996).

4.5 FAMILY STRUCTURE

The following is a description of the family structure which has been effected by violence and abuse especially on women.

1. The husband is controlling in order to get his needs met
2. The wife is demoted in the executive, adult hierarchy and, because of the abuse, emotionally withdraws from him. She may do all his bidding and try to please him; however, because of the verbal and physical assaults and fear, she cannot feel close (Pressman, Cameron & Rothery, 1989).
3. The husband isolates his partner from friends, relatives, and contacts outside the family.
4. The children are indulged, or neglected and become equals to the mother. They try to protect and or comfort the mother.

5. The husband feels more isolated and lonely, and becomes more controlling.

6. In general, the family is isolated from community involvement and outside resources. Children are reluctant to bring friends home (Pressman et al., 1989).

7. A major family rule is maintaining secrecy about the violence. It is quite common for battered women to seek help from clergymen, doctors, and counsellors. However, they do not identify violence as the central problem or even as a factor in their lives (Pressman et al., 1989). Further, a common presenting problem of abused women is anxiety.

8. The women who are abused by their partners believe that they cannot leave because they might hurt themselves or not be able to survive without the partner. "In time, the abused women lose their sense of strength or confidence in their ability to care for themselves" (Pressman et al., 1989, p.25).

4.6 FUNCTIONS OF THE FAMILY

According to Haralambos (1990), a family has its advantages and disadvantages. The advantage of a family is that it provides protection, education and recreational outlet. Its main disadvantage is that it leads to ageism. Children are sometimes treated unfairly or unjustly because of their age. Sometimes parents oppress or abuse their children physically, emotionally,

sexually and economically. The following are the main functions of the family:

1. **Reproduction**: the society maintains itself by replacing dying members.

2. **Protection**: parents have the responsibility for the protection and upbringing of children.

3. **Socialization**: parents and other kin monitor children's behaviour and transmit the norms, language and culture to the children.

4. **Regulation of sexual behaviour**: standards of sexual behaviour are clearly defined within a family circle. Children are taught how to behave, as this is vital to avoid the continuity of abuse/violence.

5. **Affection and Companionship**: the family should provide members with warmth and intimate relationships and help them feel satisfied and secure. The family is obligated to serve emotional needs of its members, and not to hurt them psychologically.

6. **Provision of social status**: the family provides social status and reputation. Family resources provide opportunities such as equal education and division of labour (Haralombos, 1990).

4.7   DIVISION OF LABOUR IN TRADITIONAL FAMILIES

Division of labour is one of the tools that are used to abuse women. Both men and women compete to perform different tasks. However, women are seen to be incapable and weak in performing some tasks that men do (Sollie and Leslie, 1994).

Ferre (1990) postulates that the male-domination in some families has managed to exclude women from many arenas of skilled employment, as well as to lower the prestige of femininity by occupations such as nursing and teaching. Furthermore, men control material resources in the family and this tends to benefit men and exploit women. For example, women do household duties, bear children, and take care of their husbands without being paid. Some men in the South African context benefit at the expense of their partners (Ferre, 1990).

According to Moghadam (1996) there has been a shift in the international division of labour from the old one in which raw materials were exploited from the colonies for processing in the industrialised world and then marketed worldwide, to a new international division of labour. In this new division, industrial production is transferred to the developing countries, producing unemployment in the industrialised countries. It is women who are the new industrial producers in the Third World, and it is women who are consumers. Women are the cheaper labour force in the Third World since their designation as dependent housewives enables them to be paid low wages (Moghadam, 1996).

Division of labour has seemed to be a necessity throughout history because of women's smaller and weaker build. But as women can actually perform the same quantity of work as men, the reason must lie

72

elsewhere. Employing Marx's Conflict Theory, it is argued that those men's greater capacity for, and willingness to be violent, has forced women into men's work through the long, historical process of coercion. This is due to women's physical weakness and their social weakness. The ideology has developed that women are unsuitable for certain professions. Therefore, women have been denied a role in production (Okun, 1986).

Lindsey (1997) postulates that religious laws generally offer some protection to the obedient weakling. While at the same time it justifies authority and preaches obedience. This enables some men to control/abuse women. The division according to religion restrains the authority of women in the name of a higher power and teaches men the limits of their insubordinate will. For example, many passages of the Bible have been interpreted to justify men's primacy over women and give them the right to exercise authority over them. A wife is under her husband's authority, if she goes astray she defiles herself. When a spirit of jealousy comes on a man and he is jealous of his wife, then he shall apply this entire law to her " The head of every woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. Men are not created for women but women for men"(Numbers 55:29-50, in Hart, 1992).

Bhasin (1993) postulates that some religions consider women to be impure and sinful. In patriarchal religions divinity is male, hence men see the image of themselves

in the divine, while women are denied this identification with divinity (Bhasin, 1993).

Shalala (1995) postulates that most of the organised religions that have dominated the historical and modern world have been profoundly sexist. For example, women have not only been denied leadership but have denied opportunities in general. Looking at political issues, media, education and knowledge are other issues that discriminate against women (Shalala, 1995).

According to Shalala (1995) women are underrepresented in formal political participation everywhere in the world. Males run almost all political institutions in society, from village councils to parliament. There are only a handful of women in political parties or organisations that decide the fate of countries. Women comprise less than 10% of the members of the South African parliament. Lindsey (1997) argues that men dominate in politics, business and culture. Women, on the other hand, are viewed as passive because they stay at home waiting to be informed by the active male principle. For instance, women are merely the passive incubators of men's seed (Lindsey, 1997).

The media is also seen as an important tool in the hands of upper class men that enables them to propagate through films, television, and magazines and radio these stereotypical and distorted portrayals of women. Further, the access of formal education through time and across

the globe has been a privilege for males. Opportunity for women is a very recent phenomenon and is still largely dependent on family and societal needs. Ever since learning and education became formal and institutionalised, men have assumed control over the whole area of knowledge, philosophy, theology, law, literature, arts and science. All these factors have marginalized women's knowledge and experiences, their expertise and aspirations. For example, in some countries women are systematically prevented from studying and even today there are very few women who are allowed to reinterpret religious and legal texts (Kimball, 1995).

According to Bhasin (1993) some men in South Africa control women's reproductive power. Women do not have the freedom to decide how many children they want. They do not have the power to decide whether they can use contraceptives or terminate a pregnancy.

In modern time, the patriarchal state tries to control women's reproduction through its family planning programmes. The state decided the optimum size of the country's population accordingly, by actively encouraging women to have one or two children (Ferre, 1990). This ideology of motherhood is considered one of the bases of women's oppression, because it creates femininity and masculinity character types, which perpetuate patriarchy. It creates and strengthens the ideology of abuse and control. However, many African countries do not grant women permission to terminate pregnancy, to use

contraceptives or have a limited number of children (Ferre, 1990).

In conclusion, the ideas presented here, confirm the absolute centrality for the understanding of women's position in South Africa, by looking at families where patriarchy oppresses or discriminates against women. The subordination of women under patriarchal relations is often presented as a female retreat into domesticity and second-class citizenship (Barnett & Laviolette, 1993).

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

"Those who seek an understanding of the fundamental nature of social reality are engaged in basic research. Basic research is the source of most new scientific ideas and ways of thinking about the world. It can be exploratory, descriptive or explanatory" (Neuman, 1997, p.2).

5.1   INTRODUCTION

In the researcher's view, the narrative approach within a qualitative research framework is best for this study. Before research on topics like women abuse, the researcher needs to have more knowledge, insight and understanding about all types of abuse that women experience. This is in order to clarify any misconceptions with regard to abuse. The researcher should also consider aspects like confidentiality, ethical considerations, her own bias as well as ways to avoid additional trauma to further victimise participants (Neuman. 1997).

Strydom, Fouche, Poggenpoel and Schurink (1998) postulate that research enables researchers to increase their knowledge and awareness. Firstly, researchers are better able to describe the phenomenon that they want to study. Secondly, research methodology helps researchers to interpret, explain, describe and ultimately understand the topics that are researched. The research methods are necessary in research because they help define the research process, give structure and help the researcher to systematically find answers to certain questions (Strydom et al., 1998).

Confidentiality was maintained by the use of pseudonyms for the participants in the research project. The participants in this research are female adults. They will all represent South African abused women. The participants granted the researcher permission to conduct interviews with them. The opportunity was also granted to ask for clarifications. This was a way to avoid misinterpretations of statements and possible contradictions.

This chapter will thus cover the narrative approach in conducting this research. The differences between qualitative and quantitative research will be explained and the reason for conducting a qualitative research will be discussed. Secondly, an elaboration of narrative method will be discussed. Explaining the research design and factors that contribute to good interviewing will follow, the roles of the researcher and participants,

data collection and data analysis will be discussed and followed by a conclusion.

5.2   QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Qualitative research is defined as a multi-perspective approach to social interaction that is aimed at describing, making sense of, interpreting, or reconstructing interactions in terms of the meaning that the participants attached to it (Strydom et al., 1998). It is also defined as an observational method in which the raw data exist in a non-numerical form, that is, reports of conversation or a discourse analysis (Atkinson, 1992).

The term interpretive refers to the fact that the aim of qualitative research is not to explain human behaviour in terms of universally valid laws, but to understand and interpret human action (Strydom et al., 1998). However, descriptive and exploratory research has many similarities. In practice they blur together. In descriptive research, the researcher begins with a well-defined subject and conducts research to describe it accurately. For example, exploring new issues or explaining why; who; and how something happens. Meanwhile, explanatory research looks for causes and reasons that determine the accuracy of a principle or theory (Strydom et. al., 1998).

According to Neuman (1997) qualitative researchers emphasize the importance of social context for

understanding the social world. A qualitative research paradigm will be used in this study in order to come to an understanding of the meaning of abuse and the experiences of women abuse in the South African context. Qualitative researchers hold that the meaning of social action or statement depends on the context in which it appears. For example, abuse of women can be in private or public spheres. Thus when a researcher removes an event, social action or conversation from the social context in which it appears, or ignores the social context, the social meaning and significance of understanding the abuse of women will not be valid or reliable (Neuman, 1997).

The research methods are necessary in research because they help the research process, give structure and also help the researcher to systematically find answers to certain questions. The narrative approach will be used in listening to the participants' stories about their abuse experiences.

According to Cresswell (1994) qualitative research elicits participants' account of meaning, and it thus involves identifying the participants' beliefs and values that underline their phenomenon, and investigation of the interpretation and meaning that the participants give to the events they have experienced. Therefore, qualitative research presents an in depth understanding of the individual program or personal life experience (Cresswell, 1994).

According to Neuman (1997) qualitative data are empirical. They involve documenting real events, recording what participants say with words, gesture and tone, observing specific behaviours, studying written documents or examining visual images. The researcher used qualitative research because it is more non-linear and cyclical. Rather than moving in a straight line, sometimes it is more of a spiral moving slowly upwards but not directly. This may help the researcher to collect new data and gain new insight while the interview continues (Neuman, 1997).

5.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Whether the researcher is examining the literature for qualitative studies or beginning the outlines of an own study, these characteristics are important to consider:

1. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding people's experiences in context. The natural setting is the most likely to discover, or uncover what is to be known about the phenomenon of interest (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

2. Qualitative researchers are more interested to discover what can be learned where people are participants (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

3. Qualitative researchers are more concerned with the process, rather than the outcome (Cresswell, 1994). The outcome of any of these studies is not the generalization of results, but the deeper understanding of experience from the perspective

of the participants selected for the study (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

4. Qualitative research is interested in meaning. This assumption refers to the way people make sense of their lives, their experiences and their structure of the world (Cresswell, 1994).

5. The most useful ways of gathering this form of data is to observe participants, conduct in-depth interviews, and the collection of relevant notes and audio-taped interviews which are later transcribed for use in data analysis.

6. Qualitative research is descriptive in the sense that it provides an accurate profile of a group. It describes a process, mechanism or relationship. It finds information to stimulate new explanations which present the basic background information of a context (Neuman, 1997).

7. Research design is flexible and unique and evolves through the research process. Meaning no fixed steps are formulated, but is an ongoing research activity (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

8. Cresswell (1994) says that qualitative research involves fieldwork, interviews and making personal contact with people.

9. In qualitative research, participants are carefully selected for inclusion, based on the possibility that each participant will expand the variability of the sample (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

5.4 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

According to Strydom et al., (1998) qualitative and quantitative styles of research differ in several ways but they are complementary. All social researchers systematically collect and analyse empirical evidence to understand and explain social life. For example, data are in the form of words, sentences and paragraphs rather than numbers, statistics and graphs. Qualitative research represents a naturalistic, interpretative, post-positivist and constructivist approach. In contrast, quantitative research represents the experimental, positivist and empiricist approach and takes scientific explanation to be nomothetic (Strydom et al., 1998).

In terms of reality the quantitative researchers believe in objective reality that can be explained, controlled and predicted by means of natural (cause-effect) laws. Human behaviour can be explained in casual deterministic ways and people can be manipulated and controlled. In contrast, qualitative researchers discard the notion of an external objective reality. They aim to understand reality by discovering the meanings that people in a specific setting attach to it. To qualitative researchers, behaviour is intentional and creative and it can be explained, not predicted (Strydom et al., 1998).

The comparison of qualitative and quantitative research can be summarised as follows:

Table 1

A comparison of qualitative and quantitative research

Qualitative research	Quantitative research
Uses an inclusive form of reasoning: develops concepts, insight and understanding from pattern data	Uses a deductive form of research: collects data to assess pre-conceived models, hypothesis and theories
Uses an emic perspective of enquiry: derives meaning from the subjects perspective	Uses etic perspective: the meaning is determined by the researcher
Regards reality as subjective	Sees reality as objective
Captures and discover meaning once the researcher becomes immersed in the data	Test hypothesis that the researcher starts off with
Concepts are in the form of themes, motifs and categories	Concepts are in the form of distinct variables
Data are analysed by extracting themes	Data analysis is undertaken by means of standardised statistical procedures
Data are presented in the form of words, quotes from documents and transcripts	Data are presented by means of exact figures gained from precise measurements

Table 16.1 adapted from (Strydom et al., 1998, p. 242).

According to Strydom et al., (1998) it is clear that data collection obtains significance only when placed in a particular context or meaning system. The qualitative researcher is concerned with:

1. Understanding rather than explanation.
2. Naturalistic observation rather than controlled measurement.
3. The subjective exploration of reality from the perspective of an insider as opposed to the outsider perspective that is predominant in the quantitative paradigm. The qualitative approach provides an in-depth view of how people view their experience and how they construct or create meaning to survive their experiences.

5.5   NARRATIVE APPROACH

White (1991) postulates that the narrative, or story telling, is an expression of people's experiences of life. It is the meaning, which persons attribute to their experience of life. It has encouraged social scientists to explore the nature of the frames that facilitate the interpretation of experience. The stories do not only determine the meaning that a person gives, but they also determine real effects in terms of the shaping of a person's life. The stories function as a reflection of life or as a mirror for life. The narrative metaphor proposes that women who are being abused live their lives telling stories. For example, these stories help them shape their lives and overcome their emotional pain. Stories also provide the structure of life (White, 1991).

According to Bruner (1986, cited in White, 1991) narrative or stories are composed of dual landscapes, a "landscape of action" and a "landscape of consciousness". The landscape of action is constituted by (a) events that are linked together in (b) a particular sequence through the (c) temporal dimension and through the past, present and future. A narrative approach provides the reader with a perspective on the thematic unfolding of events across time. In contrast, the landscape of consciousness features the meanings though reflection on the events as they unfold through the landscape of action. For example, in the case of women abuse the woman might have a perception of what action to take. Perception, thoughts, speculation, realizations and conclusion dominate this landscape and many of these relate to the:

1. determination of the desires and the preferences of the characters,
2. identification of their personal and relationship characteristics and qualities,
3. clarification of their intentional state, for example, their motives and their purposes and to the substantiation of the beliefs of these characters (White, 1991).

Morgan (2000) postulates that narrative therapy seeks to be a respectful, non-blaming or non-judgemental approach to counselling. A narrative approach centres people as the experts in their own lives. It views problems as separate from people, and assumes that

people have many skills, competencies, beliefs, values, commitment and abilities that will assist them to reduce the influence of problems in their lives. The word stories or narratives have different associations and understanding for different people. For narrative therapists stories consist of events, linked in sequence across time and stories. These give meaning to people's experiences constantly as they live their lives. A narrative is like a thread that weaves the events together forming a story (Morgan, 2000).

The narrative approach is a process to discover meaning by listening to the participants' stories and the conversation between researcher and participants (Morgan, 2000). Qualitative and narrative approaches have been linked for the purpose of qualitative research to present the realities based on the lived experiences of the three participants who experienced physical, verbal, emotional, economic and sexual abuse in their lives. Therefore the structure of the narrative provides the principal frame of intelligibility for abused women in their day to day lives. It is through this frame that abused women link together the events of abuse in sequence according to specific themes (White, 1991).

5.6   RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Strydom et al., (1998) designing qualitative research starts off by following an ethnographic strategy using the participants for data gathering. The researcher

will use this strategy to gain insight into the needs of women abuse in the South African context. In order to gain a better understanding of their world of abusive relationships a narrative and ethnographic strategy will be used to interpret the meaning that subjects give to their everyday lives. A naturalistic strategy will also be used to analyse the conversations and interaction between the researcher and participants. Interviewing will be used as a method of data collection.

Naturalistic methods in qualitative research are intended to aid in understanding phenomenon in the naturally occurring states. It is a discovery-oriented approach in the natural environment. Although naturalistic research is closely linked to participant observation in a natural setting, Strydom et al., (1998) indicate that researchers are interested in how participants perceive abuse. In this research the naturalistic study method is followed, using interviews as a means of data collection. Interviewing is a technique that is often used to accommodate the fears and the lack of responsiveness that is sometimes evident in participants. An interview is defined as a conversation or a dialogue between the researcher and a participant (Neuman, 1997)

The use of interviews in the narrative approach allows the researcher to ask sensitive questions relating to abuse. For adequate answers the researcher needs to probe and seek clarification when necessary. Neuman (1997) characterised the following assumptions of interviews:

1. Listening
2. Observing
3. Forming an emphatic alliance with narrator
4. The participant gives meaning to the story
5. Once the basic observations are recorded the data may be reduced, reconstructed and analysed.
6. Making sense of the world of women abuse can be achieved through interpretation and clarification with the victim of abuse.
7. The stories for each participant are summarised and the original text is used to support the themes that the researcher has identified during the interview and a dialogue conversation should occur between the participant and the researcher (Rapmund, 1996).

These principles are important to integrate when conducting an interview and when focusing on research that is both naturalistic and qualitative.

5.7 THE ROLES OF RESEARCHER AND PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The role of the researcher is more active and participatory than in quantitative approach. The researcher develops close relationships with participants who also play a more active and egaliterian role. The researcher enters the research process not knowing the reaction from the participants. The researcher should build a rapport and remain neutral and objective. The

researcher should reduce embarrassment, fear and suspicion in order for the participants to feel comfortable in revealing information or relating the story. The researcher should reassure the participants of confidentiality. In terms of naturalistic studies the researcher should minimise her pre-supposition about the phenomenon that is studied. The researcher regards the participants as the experts about their experiences and reality about life (Neuman, 1997).

The role of the researcher is to introduce general themes on which information is required, motivate interviewees to participate, stimulate the participant through probing and steer them tactfully back to the research topic when there is digression.

The participants in the present study are the three women who volunteered to tell their story about abuse from their partners and relationships.

The researcher is a woman who is interested in listening to the stories of the three abused women. She understands abuse because she was once a victim who grew up in an abusive family (physical and emotional abuse) but she did not know how these three women would attribute their experiences of abuse. Further, she enters the dialogue as a participant observer. She explained to the three women that the research is for academic purposes and that she is doing her internship in counseling psychology. With these trusting

90

relationships, the research progressed and all participants were interviewed and related their stories.

5.8   DATA COLLECTION

Marshall and Rossman (1995) identified the interview as the most common method of data collection used by researchers to get information about social life. Three participants were selected and approached to take part in the research. The three participants were selected on the basis of their experiences of different types of abuse that is, physical abuse, emotional abuse, economic abuse, verbal abuse and sexual abuse in their relationships. Hospital doctors referred the participants for counselling and motivation. The three participants agreed to share their experiences of abuse with the researcher. The in-depth, face-to-face interview, which is an unstructured interview, is used to gather data (Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

The aim of aim of listening stories of abused women is to actively enter the worlds of people and render those worlds understandable from the standpoint of a theory that is grounded in behaviours, languages, definitions attitudes and feelings of those studied (Strydom et al., 1998). In order to understand the innermost feelings, attitudes, behaviours and experiences of the interviewees the researcher encouraged the participants to:

Speak openly during the first phase of their acquaintance. The researcher introduced the general theme on which information was required and motivated the participants to disclose information freely.

The interview became effective because the researcher managed to set boundaries for the study, managed to collect the information through interviews and managed to establish the final results of the statement.

Literature review was used to gather information for the relevant study. Collateral information was also received from social welfare. Preparing for the interview by liaison with the mental health professionals for guidance allowed the research to be successful and effective.

Strydom et al., (1998) suggests that the interviewers should limit their own contribution to the interview in order to gather more information. The information was gathered because the participants gave their personal narratives, meanings and experiences of the abuse.

Permission was obtained from each participant to make short handwritten notes during interviews. Confidentiality was again negotiated with the three participants and they were assured that their identities would not be disclosed. The principle of confidentiality implies that the dignity of participants should be respected. (Strydom et al.,1998).

The advantages of the unstructured interview are closely related to the objectives of qualitative methodology. Unstructured interviews enable an interviewer to obtain an "insider's view" of the social phenomenon as well as to explore other avenues of research emerging from data collection during the interviews. However, its disadvantage is that it is time consuming (Strydom et al. 1998).

5.9   DATA ANALYSIS

Marshall and Rossman (1995, p.111) indicate that "data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data". Data analysis is a messy, ambiguous, time consuming, creative and fascinating process because it is a search for a general statement about relationships among categories of data, as well as building grounded theory. Strydom et al. (1998) indicate that analysis is a reasoning strategy with the objective of taking a complex whole (narrative) and resolving it into parts (themes). Analysis is utilised in coding to identify the properties of identified categories in data. "Open coding is the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualising and categorizing data" (Strydom et al., p271). It is also the central process by which theories are built from data.

During the process of data analysis the researcher's task was to recognise statements and themes within the data for later retrieval. Therefore, the researcher wrote all the

themes that were related to the study. The data were first analysed in the language in which interviews were conducted. All the common themes that were related to the study were selected for the final results.

5.10   CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher attempted to describe and explain the research methodology, which is qualitative research within the narrative approach.

CHAPTER SIX

THE STORIES OF THREE WOMEN WHO SURVIVED ABUSE

"Nothing in life has any meaning except the meaning you give it" (Morgan, 2000, p12).

6.1   INTRODUCTION

Data concerning each narrator is presented as follows: the background is presented first, briefly detailing some biographical information and the narrator's written description follows. Then the presentation of common themes relevant to this study will be given. Finally a brief summary to conclude the presented stories of the three narrators will be discussed and followed by a conclusion.

6.2   THE NARRATORS

The three women were all in their 30's. They had been married and later divorced. Two narrators had children and one did not. They are Lulu. Bushy, and Lompsie. The three women are highly intelligent: Lulu is a social

worker by profession, Bushy is a caterer and dressmaker, and Lompsie is a pharmacist. All three women believe in God and are Christians.

The three women volunteered to share their stories and experiences of abuse that occurred within their relationships. They wanted to use pseudonyms instead of their real names to protect their privacy and confidentiality.

6.3   THE STORIES

6.3.1   LULU'S STORY

Lulu is a 30-year-old woman who married at the age of 20, and it is three years since she left her husband. She is blessed with two children, a boy and a girl who are now 10 and 13 respectively. She is a qualified social worker by profession and she was never allowed to be employed, after her marriage, but had to stay at home and look after the family and raise the children. She left her husband and does not have regrets about her decision. She states: "Goodness, I do not know where to begin. I suppose I never thought of myself as a victim".

Lulu was raised in a patriarchal and dysfunctional family; her father was an alcoholic, and always neglected his children. Lulu's mother was frequently physically and emotionally abused by her husband. She was

unemployed but sold vegetables to pay for the children's school fees and to buy food for her own family. The only reason that kept her mother in the abusive relationship was her faith in God and that she wanted a home for the children. Lulu's father came from a violent home. Lulu assumed that her father was projecting his anger onto them.

Lulu was married traditionally at the age of 20, lobola was paid without her consent. She was told to be a good wife and make things work like her mother. Her mother was said to be a good wife (umfazi). Lulu was also expected to be the same. She stayed with her in-laws and became "makoti", meaning a bride who moves in with her in-laws to take care of the whole family, cook, clean and wash and do everything that is expected of her without complaining (like a slave).

She was told to be "good at heart", meaning that she should be loving and caring to the in-laws and her husband no matter what feelings she might be experiencing. She was told to do the household duties alone. She said her so-called husband pretended to be sympathetic and caring and she trusted him. Her husband was much older in age and was working on the mines and most of his time was spent there. Her husband visited her when he was off-duty or during some of the holidays. After she had stayed with her in-laws for years, her husband decided to stay with her in Witbank where he was working. Still she was not allowed to go and look

for work. She felt frustrated because she was a social worker and she was denied to develop her career.

After she moved to Witbank, her husband started to be possessive and jealous of her. She mentioned that her husband did not want her to visit her family or to have friends. Sometimes he accused her of being bossy and suspected her of being unfaithful. They went through periods of not talking to each other.

Lulu's husband started abusing alcohol and he became aggressive and violent when under the influence of alcohol. He would argue about small issues and would beat her up. She said that he would push or hit her. Then he began to punch and kick her. She always ended up in hospital due to bruises. However, she always protected him because she loved him. The doctors were aware that she was lying. She said she did all this because she felt helpless and hopeless, thinking that if they arrested him, there would be no one to pay the house bills and buy food for the children. She always put her husband's needs first and sacrificed her happiness for him. She also mentioned that her husband's drinking caused their financial burden. Sometimes they would sleep without food because there was not enough money to buy any.

During the interview she often said: "Really, he was a good person. But he always hurt me. He would buy me flowers or take me out for dinner and apologise for his behaviour and I always trusted him. I thought he really meant what he said, and I forgave him".

Her abuse became a vicious cycle and no matter how difficult the situation became, she never told her family, because she felt she should be like her mother who made her marriage work. She pretended to her family that everything was fine and that she was happily married. She kept it a secret because she was told not to discuss her problems with outsiders.

In 1986, she gave birth to a baby boy and 1990 a baby girl was born. Due to the abuse she was experiencing, her doctor suggested that she should be sterilised. Lulu said that she was too afraid to convey the message to her husband whom she now called a monster although she believed that he was a good person and she loved him.

The last time that she was hurt badly was in December 1996 when her husband came home drunk and threatened to kill her. She said it was the first time she realised that her husband had a gun. He pointed the gun at her head and said "I am going to kill you and then the children and then myself". She said she was afraid and begged him to stop. She said that because he was so drunk, she thought it was her last day to live. She had her two children with her and he grabbed them and locked them in another bedroom. He started to hit her again and again. She said she shouted for help and thought that nobody would come to her rescue because all the neighbours were afraid of her husband. The next day, when she woke up, she was in hospital again, this

time with two broken ribs. She could not recall or remember who brought her to the hospital. She started to cry and she could not stop. Then followed a 20-minute break in the interview. She said that was the moment she felt she had had enough and wanted to end the abuse by committing suicide to free herself. She allowed the doctor to lay charges against her husband and he was arrested for attempted murder and abuse. Lulu said her in-laws blamed her and threatened to take the children away but the law did not allow it. Lulu also said her husband had a bad temper, he is aggressive, and lacked a sense of responsibility towards her and the children.

Lulu's words: "Since I've been smacked around and emotionally and sexually abused, I feel like nothing but humiliated and degraded. I have felt like a loser with no purpose in life. Even now, I feel that life has absolutely no value and I do not even know why, because what keeps me going are my children and my work".

Lulu seemed proud after ventilating her emotions. She was brave and feeling free because she is independent and working. She indicated that she still suffers emotional pain and has flashbacks of physical and verbal abuse as well as sexual abuse. She indicated that most of the time she felt depressed, anxious and couldn't sleep during the night. She said she felt lonely and isolated herself from people. She would not go back because her life would be hell. She would cry without any apparent reason and lie in bed without talking to anyone. Sometimes she heard voices shouting and

swearing at her and she thought life was not worth living. She said she does not trust any man. She wished that her mother could have freed herself like she did and she wished other women could have the courage to do the same. She also thanked the women at the shelters for the work that they did, which was not easy but "they were strong and gifted". She ended her interview by saying that she was a survivor and that nobody would ever break her. She said she managed to divorce him. It appeared that Lulu is working very hard to give her children a better life and she does not regret divorcing her husband.

6.3.2. The aftermath of Lulus's experience of abuse

Lulu suffers from depression and posttraumatic stress disorder and never received any professional help after leaving her husband. Depression, anxiety and stress-related problems are her main concern. She lives in constant fear thinking that her husband might return to hurt her and the children. Sometimes she feels lonely and withdrawn because she does not have close friends. She does not sleep well (insomnia) due to the flashbacks. Sometimes she will dream about the gun that her husband used to threaten her. She will imagine her children being orphans without parents who loved them. She will cry without any apparent reason and lay in bed without talking to anyone. She is still scared, especially when she was hospitalised due to bruises and broken ribs. She remembers the abuse that she used to suffer. Sometimes she would hear voices shouting and swearing

at her and that would be the time that she becomes suicidal. Her biggest agony is that she is afraid of falling in love, she feels trapped emotionally and feels she is not able to trust any man again. She lives in constant fear thinking that her husband might come back to hurt her and the children.

6.3.3 BUSHY'S STORY

Bushy is in her mid-thirties. She was secure and happy as a child. She traces her vulnerability to the death of her mother during her early adolescence. This major loss was compounded by the expectations that fell on her as the eldest child. She had to take care of her younger sister and brother because of her mother's death. She described her parental home as rich in material resources but poor in emotional support and affection after her mother's death. She also mentioned that food was her only means of killing the pain that she suffered, initially from her alcoholic father, and later from her husband. She believed that marriage and motherhood were both a natural destiny and an opportunity to leave her parental home.

Bushy was married to a building inspector, a well known and respected person in the community. He is a churchgoer and is a member of a school governing body. Bushy is blessed with two boys, who are now 11 and 6.

After their marriage they bought a home in a white suburb in town. She portrayed him as a loving husband. He was always responsible in the family. Sometime he would take her out for evening dinner and would remind her of how much he loved her. Bushy said that every month end they would go together for groceries and shopping. She said her husband would buy everything for the house and give her enough money to save for the family.

Bushy said that after two years of their marriage, life started to change. Her husband became cold and distanced himself from her. She said it was difficult to find out what went wrong until one day he came home smelling of liquor and claimed that he lost his salary. He was raving like a lunatic and she tried to get him out of his bad humour, but he blamed her for not being caring.

In 1997, her husband's employer took all the employees to a Christmas party and she was invited too. That was the day she knew her husbands true colours. When they came back home he was so drunk that he could not even tell his name. He made a fool of himself and she said she felt embarrassed and humiliated by his behaviour. She states: "I was amazed and in terrible shock. I realised from that day that I was living and married to a liar". The next morning her husband denied that he had been drunk and showed no remorse for his behaviour. "I forgave him and convinced myself that maybe he wanted to make himself happy since it was a Christmas party". However, her husband's drinking did not stop. It also

affected his work performance. He would stay away from work without any apparent reason, lying to his supervisor that he was sick and buying sick notes from doctors became his way of life. Finally he was forced to resign but later re-employed. He was referred to a clinic for alcohol rehabilitation.

Bushy said after her husband came back from the clinic, he blamed her for his initial dismissal from work and accused her of stealing his money to give it to her alcoholic father. He would swear and scold her and she suffered emotional pain daily. He humiliated and degraded her daily, especially when he saw that their neighbours were watching. All this abuse made her feel ashamed and made her lose her trust in her husband. She said she was always in tears and desolate.

She mentioned that the only thing that kept her alive was praying. She states: "I was not sure if he was overreacting or if I really deserved this bad treatment". She said she knew what was going to happen when she was about to be hit. She could tell because his look was terrible and scary. He pulled her hair and bumped her head against the wall. She said from that day she is experiencing terrible headaches and she has been diagnosed as suffering from migraine (recurrent throbbing headaches that usually affect one side of the head and disturbance of vision). However, she kept it a secret because he promised not to hit her again.

Bushy said she knew that there was a reason for her husband's behaviour but she did not know what it was. One day she was told by one of her neighbours that her husband was having an affair. She confronted him and he denied the affair and accused her of listening to gossip and destroying their marriage.

The activities they used to share disappeared. The only thing he would do was to leave the home for days and she would not know his whereabouts. When he decided to come home, he would hit her and demand sexual intercourse. If she refused, she would be beaten, kicked and left with bruises all over her body. Surprisingly, he would not hurt her face because he knew people would not believe her stories of ill-treatment if her face was not bruised. The children suffered emotionally because he would swear and they were scared of their father and hated him for abusing the family. Bushy states: "I reported him to the police but the police would not believe me and called me a liar and an opportunist". She indicated that at that moment she felt angry and disappointed about how the police treated her when she needed them to rescue her.

In June 1998, she decided to work as a caterer and as a dressmaker. Her husband became jealous, paranoid and became more possessive of her. He accused her of having an affair. He became insecure when she earned a living. He would ask her whether her boyfriends were giving her money. He would start yelling and shouting, and if she replied back, he would hit her again and again

and remind her that he is the head of the family. Her husband threatened to kill her several times. She was told that he would kill her if she took his children away from him.

Bushy decided to break the silence after she was forced by the doctors in the hospital to tell what had happened to her before she could receive treatment after one of her encounters with her husband. She said that she realised that they were serious and that telling the truth was the only solution to her problems. She said she had a broken rib, bruises all over her body and a fractured leg. She said with her low voice: "I knew then that no one would help me, and it was up to me to help myself". She believed that it was through God's help that she found the strength and the will to break the silence.

After she was discharged from the hospital, she went straight to a woman's shelter for protection. The children stayed with her for a short period until it was arranged that her aunt should stay with them. Her husband was interdicted for abuse and harassment by the courts. Finally, she felt relieved and liberated from the slavery that she had suffered ever since she got married. Bushy said now that she has finally liberated herself from violence and an abusive husband, she has also set the stage to live without any anti-depressants that she used to take to treat her depression and anxiety when she was abused.

Her last words: " At last I had made a concerted effort".

She was proud of herself because she said it was not an easy decision to take. She knew that she was not to blame for her husband's behaviour and that she did not deserve the beatings and any form of abuse she suffered.

"I think my husband is a psychopath. He is a sick man, because no man in his right mind would go on like he did. Maybe it is his drinking, maybe it is me. I am not a good wife. I just feel I cannot trust him anymore; he is not the same man that I first met and fell in love with. He is a total stranger, a monster full of lies".

Bushy thought that her husband might be suffering from a mental problem. Her statement was full of emotions and she could not stop crying and trembling with anger and hate. However, she is happy to break the silence and live independently without being abused.

6.3.4   The aftermath of Bushy's experience of abuse

Bushy remembers the times she was responsible for her younger sister and brother. The role she played as a mother during her adolescent stage makes her feel cheated and robbed of her adolescent development stage. She never enjoyed her adolescence; she never enjoyed her love relations. She is angry towards the death of her mother and the treatment she got from her father. Her development stage was full of agony and misery. The only thing that comes to her mind is embarrassment and humiliation. She is still shocked that

she married an alcoholic and a liar. Although Bushy had some ways to cope she still experiences fear and anxiety when she thinks of him. She would experience a high emotional state when seeing bruises and scars all over her body, followed by a depressed state, immediately she would lock herself in the bedroom and cry. She still blames herself for what happened to her.

She is still confused and helpless because of abuse. Due to physical, emotional and sexual abuse she still suffers terrible headaches that were diagnosed as migraines. She is always sick because of the broken ribs. She always panics because she cannot forget when her husband threatened to kill her. All the trauma she experienced due to abuse has led her to live with depression and other stress-related symptoms, that is sleeplessness and panic attacks.

6.3.5   Lompsie's story

Lompsie is a good-looking woman. She presented herself well, appeared highly intellectual and seemed well prepared for the interview. She came across as an extrovert. She shared her experiences without fear. She is the only daughter and the only child in the family. Her family history includes successful professionals extending over several generations. In spite of the professional heritage, Lompsie was keen to share what she envisioned as her destiny, being a mother and choosing a profession that would complement the mother

108

role as much as possible. She is 35 years old and she does not have any children. She is a Christian and believes in God.

Lompsie states: "I fell in love with him for the second time. The first time it did not work out and I believed we were still young and did not know what love meant". Lompsie said her parents did not approve of him but she married him. She said everything started well like any other marriage. They planned to have children but they never succeeded. They were both diagnosed as having fertility problems. They tried for several years but they never had children. Her husband started to change and life became difficult.

Lompsie's husband told her that it was her fault that they could not have children. He would abuse her emotionally by calling her names. He would swear at her and she suffered a lot of emotional pain. He would prevent her from visiting friends. He would accuse her friends of gossiping about him. She was convinced that her husband had low self-esteem. She tried to talk with him about his behaviour and his negative attitude towards her, but he never changed. She said his jealousy led him to reach the point of fetching her at work. However, he would still accuse her of cheating on him. Lompsie said that maybe her beauty made her husband feel insecure. She said he was a strange man and she did not understand him. She states: "I really don't understand him. If I was late from the shops he would say that I was

with other men. He would not sleep, but would shout the whole night that I was a whore".

Lompsie became worried about her husband's laziness. He would lie in bed and give instructions. She would clean the house, wash the dishes, make food, and also do all other responsibilities that were supposed to be his. She said she felt tired of this routine because she never had time for herself, but had to put her husband's needs first.

She said she hated him for not being responsible and caring. She felt she was nothing but a sex slave. Her husband never cared for her even when she was ill. Lompsie said he would come home drunk and demand food without taking any initiative to prepare it himself. He would instruct and she obeyed the instructions. There was no communication, equality, honesty or trust in the home. Her husband played the master and she was the slave serving her master. She was submissive and he was superior and bossy. He would not even compromise in helping her.

In 1998, it was New Year's Eve, when her husband came home drunk and physically attacked her. She was beaten and her body was bruised. Lompsie said she kept all this abuse to herself because she was depending on her husband financially.

Lompsie left her husband in January 1999, because of long-term emotional and physical abuse. She could not

bear the fact that she was labelled a whore. She finally decided she had no reason to stay with a "monster" who would never change. She began to weigh her alternatives and decided to leave, no matter how hard it was. She felt she would be better off by herself. She blames herself for not listening to her parents, but she is finally free and independent. Her husband was given a restraining order to stop him from harassing her. She is in the process of adopting a child. She feels she made a good decision to leave him.

6.3.6   The aftermath of Lompsie's experience of abuse

Lompsie went through tough times with her husband. She felt like a punch-bag. When her husband felt frustrated he would project all his frustrations on her. He would kick, punch and hit her until she was hospitalised. She would wake up and cry when thinking of him. Lompsie lived life of fear and confusion. She was trapped between hate and love. She reported various experiences of guilt feeling, blame, stress, loneliness, helplessness and flashbacks of the abusive experiences. She currently feels lonely because she does not have children.

Lompsie said she is still suffering from depression due to the physical, emotional and psychological abuse by her husband. She still finds it very difficult to forget the bad life she experienced during her marriage. However, she feels confident that she can survive without him.

6.4 COMMON THEMES OF THE THREE WOMEN: LULU, BUSHY AND LOMPSIE

6.4.1 Alcohol Abuse and Jealousy as an initial experience of physical, emotional and verbal abuse.

Lulu

Lulu did not know that her husband was drinking alcohol. She only realised that her husband was abusing alcohol after she had moved in with him in Witbank. Her husband would come home and argue about trivial issues because he would be under the influence of alcohol and still denied that he was drunk. He would restrain her from having friends or visiting her family. Lulu was denied freedom and independence. Sometimes he accused her of being bossy and suspected her of being unfaithful and promiscuous. He would humiliate and degrade her only when he was under the influence of alcohol. His dependency on alcohol always created conflict within the marriage. She said that her husband used alcohol to control her. He would physically and emotionally abuse her and later make promises and even lie and pretend not to remember what he had done. She states: "I realised that this behaviour was due to alcohol abuse. I could not believe because I never had a clue that he drank alcohol".

Bushy

She states:

"I did not understand what was happening to my husband."
After two years of marriage, life started to change. Her husband became cold and distanced himself from her. She said it was difficult to find out what went wrong until one day

he came home smelling of liquor and claimed that he lost his salary. He was raging like a lunatic and she tried to humour him, but he blamed her for not caring. Bushy said she was shocked and amazed when she realised that he was drinking alcohol. She started to believe that his drinking of alcohol created problems in the marriage. When drunk he would argue, swear and even call her names to humiliate her. He would also blame her for not caring.

The next morning her husband would pretend and deny that he had been drunk and showed remorse for his behaviour. All this made her feel ashamed and desolate. In order to avoid the frustration she decided to work as a caterer and as a dressmaker to keep her mind pre-occupied, to forget about her drinking husband. She said she started to make a living and her husband became jealous, paranoid and more possessive of her. He accused her of having an affair. He became insecure when she earned a living. He would accuse her of having boyfriends who gave her money.

Lompsie

"I really do not understand him. If I come back late from the shops, he would say that I was with other men. He would shout and swear the whole night". He would come home drunk and demand food. Lompsie said the time she realised that her husband was drinking alcohol was on New Years Eve in 1998. He came home drunk and physically attacked her. Lompsie stated that he was full of jealousy and he was suspicious. He would try by all means to degrade and humiliate her. He would call her names and calling her a

whore was his favourite. . As his jealousy got worse he prevented her from visiting friends and socializing with other women. His jealousy led him to reach the point of fetching her from work. However, he still accused her of cheating on him. If she left home without his knowledge he would say that she was with other men and called her a whore.

6.4.2 Hospitalisation as an initial experience of physical, emotional and verbal abuse.

Lulu

Lulu indicated that her husband wanted to kill her. She said it was the first time she realised that her husband had a gun. He pointed the gun at her head and said " I am going to kill you and then the children and then myself". She said she was afraid and begged him to stop. He started to hit her again and again. The next day when she woke up, she was in hospital and had two broken ribs and was badly bruised.

Bushy

She states: "I was not sure if he was overreacting or if I really deserved this bad treatment". She said she knew what was going to happen when she was about to be beaten. He pulled her hair and bumped her head against the wall. He would kick her and she was left with bruises all over her body. He threatened to kill her several times. Like Lulu, she was also hospitalised because of being hit by her husband.

Lompsie

Lompsie said she felt like a punch-bag. When her husband felt frustrated he would project all his frustrations to her. He would, kick, punch and hit her. She one day she ended up in hospital due to physical abuse. She was beaten and her body was bruised. These common themes tie in with the findings of Mullender (1996), who is of the opinion that physical abuse is the most common form of abuse men inflict on their female partners. Physical abuse can result in black eyes, cut lips, fractured skulls and bruising. It may take the form of minor acts like pushing, shoving, pinching, grabbing and slipping.

6.4.3 Secrets as an initial experience of physical, emotional and verbal abuse.

Lulu

"No matter how painful the suffering was. I kept a secret because I wanted to be like my mother who made her marriage work. I pretended to the family and gave them the impression that I was happily married". She pretended to her family that everything was fine and that she was well cared for. She kept it a secret because she was told not to discuss their problems with outsiders because they will destroy their marriage.

Bushy

"I knew them that no-one would help me, and it was up to me to break the silence and help myself. I believed that it was

through God's will that I finally had courage to break the silence". No matter how Bushy was physically, emotionally or sexually abused, she always kept her abuse a secret because he promised not to hit her again. Bushy decided to break the silence after she was forced by doctors in the hospital to tell what happened to her before she could receive treatment.

Lompsie

Lompsie went through bad times with her husband. She was completely dependent on her husband because she was unemployed. She was depending on her husband financially and emotionally and he took advantage of it knowing that she would never leave him. Lompsie became scared to share her experiences of abuse with anyone. She kept all this abuse to herself and could not share the secret with anyone else.

6.4.4 Stress related problems and divorce as an initial experience of physical, emotional and verbal abuse.

Lulu

Lulu indicated that she was depressed. She could not sleep well due to the flashbacks of physical and emotional abuse. She lived in constant fear thinking that her husband might return to hurt her. She felt lonely and withdrawn because she never had close friends. She would cry due to emotional pain. Anxiety, headaches, self-pity and nervousness were the contributing factors to depression. She said she was still scared, especially as she nearly died because of the broken ribs she had suffered. She indicated that sometimes she

would hear voices shouting and swearing at her and she would think of committing suicide. She still feels trapped emotionally although she has divorced her husband and does not regret the initiative she took to free herself from the 'monster' as she now refers to her ex- husband.

Bushy

Bushy indicated that she still experiences constant fear and anxiety when she thinks of her husband. She would experience a highly emotional state when she saw bruises and scars all over her body. Her main concerns were frustration, anger and helplessness followed by a depressed state. She would live in isolation; lock herself in the bedroom and cry. She was confused, could not concentrate and sometimes lost control over reality. Due to physical, emotional and sexual abuse she has recurring headaches and experiences panic attacks because of thoughts of her husband threatening to kill her. The trauma she experienced due to the abuse has led her to live with symptoms of depression, namely, sleeplessness and panic attacks. Post-traumatic stress is another contributing factor to the stress. She indicated that although she trembles with anger and hate, she is happy that she finally managed to break the silence and she is proud that she divorced him, " a monster full of lie and deceit".

Lompsie

Lompsie indicated that she lived a life of fear and confusion. She felt totally lost and trapped between hate and love. She would cry when she thought about the abuse. She reported various experiences of guilt feelings, blame, stress, loneliness, helplessness, irritability and flashbacks. She currently feels lonely because she does not have children or friends to share or ventilate her emotional pain with. She was denied access to freedom of choice and freedom of speech. She was dependent and submissive to her husband. Lompsie also presented symptoms of depression, post-traumatic stress due to physical, emotional and psychological abuse by her husband. However, she said she feels confident and happy that she won the battle by divorcing him and she does not regret the decision she made. She can survive without him.
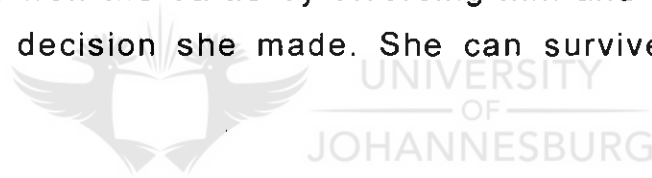
6.5 SUMMARY OF THE STORIES OF ABUSED WOMEN IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

The researcher has attempted to describe the stories of the three women who lived in abusive relationships. The commonalties that existed between the narrators' descriptions of their experiences were discussed.

It should be borne in mind that this study does not pretend to represent the population at large, owing to the

few women interviewed to obtain information about their experiences of abuse, and the nature of its collection, which was anything but random. All the information was obtained from three women residing in Witbank.

The three women shared common themes: their husbands abused alcohol, their husbands were jealous and they were all hospitalised due to broken ribs. The three women kept their abuse secret and finally presented stress related symptoms of depression, helplessness and post—traumatic stress episodes but finally succeeded in untying the knot by divorcing their husbands and they are surviving without them. The researcher felt that the narrative method is adequate in understanding the experiences of the three abused women who volunteered to tell their stories. The narrative method provided a means of discovery of psychological meanings, and enabled the researcher to come up with final results of the study and integrating common themes among the three women.

6.6   EMPOWERING WOMEN IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Women in South Africa need to be liberated from abuse, but they should take the responsibility to empower themselves. This could be done by the formation of women's organisations to challenge the existing cultural and religious stereotypes that lead to women abuse. There is a need to resocialise men and women who have

been affected psychologically by gender socialisation into believing that they are lesser beings.

Discrimination against women extends to every aspect of life. If women are fed less, have poorer health and less education than males, and their contribution to society's production and reproduction is underestimated, it is no wonder that gender discriminates against women in the public and private spheres. In order for women to benefit from gender equity and be accepted as human beings, a fundamental emphasis must be placed on increasing women's self-confidence and assertiveness, as well as their ability to participate in all aspects of society without being discriminated against (Bunch & Carrillo, 1991).

It is important to empower women, because abuse, violence and battering affect the whole family system. Children suffer as a result of their parents' violence. Partner violence and abuse often precipitates marital dissolution and may seriously diminish the quality of family life for victims. It also impairs normal functioning in the social, emotional, physical and spiritual realms.

Policies regarding health and female fertility affect women's daily living. Organisations such as VAWA (Violence Against Women Abuse) should empower women in South Africa to improve women's rights and basic needs through education. Women should participate in leadership training, and coping skills which are not only useful in party politics, but can also help

women to negotiate with development agencies, and promote the formation of independent organisations. For example, training in leadership skills can help South African women to monitor the manner in which laws are implemented and to promote political participation. Women should also participate in policy making and decision making. Women need to mobilise around issues that block their emancipation in the mainstream, to challenge and resist gender stereotypes that discriminate and undermine their intellect and capacity to achieve goals and equal rights (Bunch & Carnillo, 1991).

Considering the relative position of men and women in terms of power, control of material resources and of self-determination for example, women should be fully represented and given positions of power like their male partners.

Women in South Africa and worldwide should have equal sharing of workloads and division of labour, as well as the right to own property for women regardless of their marital and professional status. If South African women can be empowered and supported through this critical time, abuse of women will eventually decline. Women can change the world when they lead it, but they will change it with men as their partners (Mongella, 1995).

CHAPTER SEVEN

RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.1   INTRODUCTION

The roots of male violence against women in the South
African context run deep throughout history. The abuse
of women is so widespread that biological determination
has often dominated debates about its origins. "During
the last twenty years, violence in the family has been put
back in the agenda, and the abuse of children and
women, particularly sexual abuse, has been constructed
as one of the major social problems of our time" (Saraga,
1995, p.47). Therefore, there is a need for a range of
recommendations to empower women. It is also important
to highlight some of the limitations of the study, and that
will be followed by a conclusion.

7.2   RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The prevalence of women abuse is such that it can
accurately be termed a national disaster. The expense to
South Africa' economy in terms of unemployment, long

working hours as well as medical, psychological and legal costs is phenomenal. The emotional cost to women and the next generation is incalculable. At present it is estimated that one in four women is abused by her partner, yet there are only a few shelters in the country. It is of the utmost priority that abuse and violence against women be placed high on the national agenda and that the following areas should be addressed:

7.2.1   Safe accommodation

The strongest recommendation is for far more shelters in every community so that abused women have a safe place beyond the perpetrator's sphere of influence from which to initiate a process of change. Halfway houses after staying in a shelter should be proposed to provide temporary relief for the accommodation crisis. Emergency shelters or safe houses for women who fear for their lives are required in each community.

Lack of accommodation is the most fundamental constraint on women who want to leave the perpetrator. On leaving the shelter, housing is also a major problem that women have to face. In fact, all the women with experiences of abuse, struggle to find accommodation once they leave the shelter. Some women return to share a house with the perpetrator albeit (without success) with new conditions for behaviour. Many of the women who are now in their own homes had to move several times before settling.

7.2.2 Law and the police

A comprehensive policy for addressing abuse needs to be developed and implemented. This would include specially trained personnel, specialised units and readily available and effective peace orders and interdicts. The legal aid system needs revision to speed up help for abused women and to increase accessibility to the system. Legal remedies are of limited value without the full backing of the judicial system and police force. The effectiveness of the Prevention of Family Violence Act still needs to be evaluated.

7.2.3 Advice and counselling services

An increase in these aspects as well as a coherent welfare policy addressing the concerns of women abuse is called for. Specialised services, which can provide comprehensive and centralised intervention programmes, are needed. Networking between all similar agencies is required. The children of abused women need urgent intervention if the damage and cycle of violence is to be interrupted. Childcare and women abuse facilities are presently inadequate; this means more resources are required.

7.2.4 Community responses

Women need to feel supported by their neighbours, employers, organisations and the wider community. It is felt that abused women should no longer be silent, but

should encourage wide publicity on the issue. Programmes and initiatives that actively confront and challenge the prevailing attitudes and values, and social, economic, legal and personal equality need to be implemented in order to put an end to the abuse of women.

Social norms such as patriarchy, lobola and gender politics should be examined for the role they play in abusing women. Women who are victimized and live in an abusive relationship should be granted interdicts or see a lawyer to stop the abuse. They must be provided with counselling for emotional support and get help immediately they tell others about the abuse.

Research is needed that focuses on minority families in South Africa. Programme evaluations are needed to aid practitioners and policy makers by providing them with programmes or policies that work to stop abuse recurring.

More research is needed on the consequences of abuse for female victims, and the methods that they can use to escape from abuse. It is also important to provide protection for victims early so that the psychological consequences are reduced or eliminated. The most important factors that contribute to the abuse of women in ethnic minorities, including poverty, lack of education opportunities, and unemployment should be considered. Counselling services where rural areas can be reached should be considered. This entails networking with the

minority community, using expertise in minority issues, and employing bilingual or multilingual helpers to help women who are trapped in abusive situations

It is recommended that further research be undertaken to explore the role that women play in perpetuating their own abuse and that additional treatments be researched in terms of their applicability to empower the victim.

There is also a need for research on how victims cope, how they escape, how others can help facilitate change in these relationships to buffer stress, women's strength and resilience in the face of violence and abuse, and most important, how to prevent the abuse of women or protect them early on so that the psychological consequences are reduced or eliminated.

The reconstruction and development programme (RDP) must focus on the reconstruction of family and community life and respond to the needs of women and children who have been victims of domestic and other forms of violence and abuse.

In order for the abused women to benefit from participating in the research study, a fundamental emphasis must be placed on increasing their self-confidence as well as their ability to participate in all aspects of society as free women and to be treated like human beings.

The South African government, at the highest policy-making levels, has made a commitment to address these forms of abuse against women. However, abuse of women and children has not achieved the sort of high-level political attention that the more general political violence, for example, has been given both during the transition period and under the new regime. Policy changes have yet to be implemented consistently across government departments. The government attributes this lack of progress both to the fault that it is overwhelmed in trying to address all the problems caused by discrimination and oppression of women, and to entrenched attitudes in society that condone abuse of women. These are valid points. However, lasting political and social transformation towards a democratic South Africa cannot be achieved without systematically addressing the violence inflicted on South African women by men.

It is important to realise that the South African women's movement has made a number of significant efforts to address the State's inadequate response to domestic violence, abuse and rape. Their efforts, although at times hampered by limited resources as well as race, class and other divisions between women's groups, have resulted in many positive developments. These include the establishment of privately funded hot-lines and shelters for women in need and the conducting of occasional training sessions on abuse against women for police and judicial officers. Yet, South African women's organisations contend that these improvements remain

7.4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the most valuable insight learned and gained in conducting these interviews was how these three brave women confided their feelings of guilt, frustration, humiliation, degradation, low self-esteem and dependency. The three women appear to be fighters, competent and courageous, hoping that they will be role models to other women who are still trapped and secretive about their abuse.

piecemeal and should address the need for systematic change.

7.3   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following limitations were also experienced:

- The findings of this study may not necessarily fully represent all the women who have been abused in South Africa due to the small sample that was used.

- Though permission was granted to conduct the research by the source of referrals for counselling and motivation, other women initially refused to be part of the study. Some of them cited reasons such as that the study was not going to help them directly, as it was a personal endeavour by the researcher to use them pass her masters degree, and leave them where they have been before.

REFERENCES

Archer, J.C. (1994). *Male violence*. London: Rouledge.

Ashmore, R.D. (1990). *Sex, Gender and the Individual*. New York: Guilford.

Atkinson, S. (1992). *Understanding Ethnographic Text*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Barnett, O., Martinez, T.E. & Keyson, M. (1996). The relationship between violence and social support, and self-blame in battered women. *Journal of interpersonal violence*; 11, 221-240.

Barnett, O.W. & Laviolette, A.D. (1993). *It could happen to anyone: Why battered women stay*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Barret, M. (1990). *Women oppression today* (2nd Ed) London: Versa.

Basson, G. (1997). *Marriage & family life in South Africa. Violence in the family*. Pretoria: HSRC

Bem, S.L. (1993). *The lenses of gender transforming the debate of sexual inequality*. New Haven: Yale University.

Berenice, L. (1994). *Women's lives themes and variations in gender learning*. California: Brooks/Cole.

Bhasin, K. (1993). *What is Patriarchy?* New Delhi: Raj Press.

Bograd, M. (1998). Family systems approaches to wife battering: a feminist critique. *American journal of orthopsychiatry,54, 558-568.*

130

Brennan, C. (1995) Counselling and values. *Counselling and Violence*. Vol. (39) 99-105.

Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge. M.A. Harvard University Press.

Bunch, c. & Carrillo, R. (1991). *Gender violence. A development and human rights issue*. New Jersey: ATTIC Press.

Chafetz, J.S. (1988). The gender division of labour and reproduction of female disadvantage: Toward an integrated theory. *Journal of family Issues*. 9 (1) 108-131.

Cock, J. (1993). *Women & War in South Africa*. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press.

Colgan, K. (1995). *You have to scream with your mouth shut. Violence in the home*. Marino: Mevaer Press.

Cresswell, J.W. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

De Maris, A. & Dobash, R.P. (1992). Family relations. *Journal of applied family and child studies*. 45 (4), 98-106.

De Sousa, J. (1991). *Behind closed doors. Guidelines for supporting battered women and raising community awareness*. Cape Town: CMB.

Dobash, D.S. & Dobash, R.F. (1992). *Women violence and social change*. London: Routledge Publishers.

Eagle, G., Frenkel, L., Green, J. & Wolman, W.L. (1991). *Women & Gender in Southern Africa: Mental health issues in relation to South African women.* January 30th-February 2nd, 1991 University of Natal Durban (OASSSA Transvaal).

Espin, O. & Gawelek, M. (1992). *Woman's diversity: ethnicity, race, class, and gender in theories of feminist psychology.* New York: The Guilford

Evans, P. (1992). *The verbally abusive relationship.* United States of America: Bob Adams, Inc.

Ferre, M.M. (1990). Beyond separate spheres: Feminism and family research. *Journal of marriage and the family 54, (4) 806-890.*

Freedman, J. & Combs, G. (1996). Gender stories. *Journal of systematic therapies, 15, No. 1.*

Gelles, R.J. & Cornell, C.P. (1990). *Intimate violence in families* (2nd ed.). New York: Sage Publishers

Gelles, R.J. & Straus, M.A. (1988). *Intimate violence: The causes and consequences of abuse in the American family.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Gelles, R.J. (1980). Violence in the family: a review of research in the seventies. *Journal of marriage and the family,* 42, 873-884.

Gelles, R.J. (1987). *Family violence.* London: Sage Publishers

Giddens, A. (1989). *Sociology.* Great Britain: Polity Press.

Goodrich,T.J. (1990). *Women and power perspectives for family therapy*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Grace, S. (1995). *Policing domestic violence in the 1990's; Home office research study 139*. London: HMSO.

Hare-Mustin, R. (1987). The problem of gender in family therapy theory. *Family process*, 26, 15-27.

Hague, G. & Wilson, C. (1996). *The silenced pain: Domestic violence* 1945-1970. Bristol: The Policy Press.

Hamberger, L.K. & Renzetti, C. (1996). *Domestic partner abuse*. New York: Springer Publishing Company.

Hansen, M. & Harway, M. (1993). *Battering and family therapy. A feminist perspective*. U.S.A.: Sage Publishers.

Haralambos,M. (1990). *Sociology, themes and perpectives*. London: Harper Collins Publishers.

Hare-Mustin, R. & Marecek, J. (1990). *Making a difference: psychology and the construction of gender*. London: Yale University Press.

Harley, S. (1990). *For the good of the family race. Gender, work and domestic roles in the black community*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hart, B. (1992). *State codes on domestic violence, analysis, community and recommendation*. Reno: National council of juvenile and family court judges.

Herbert, T.B., Silver, R.C. & Ellard, J.H. (1991). Coping with an abusive relationship. How and why women stay. *Journal of marriage and family*. 53, 311-325.

Hoff, L.A. (1990). *Battered women as survivors*. New York: Routledge.

Horley, S. (1988). *Love and pain: A survival handbook for women*. London: Bedford Square Press

Jenkins, A. (1997). *Invitations to responsibility. The therapeutic engagement of men who are violent and abusive*. Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications

Jo Brothers, B. (1992). *Equal partnering. A feminine perspective*. New York: Harrington Park Press.

Kakar, S. (1998). *Domestic Abuse. Public Policy/Criminal justice Approaches towards child, spousal and elderly abuse*. London: Austin & Winfield Publishers

Kaschak, E. (1992). *Engendered lives: A new psychology of women's experience*. New York: Basic Books.

Kelly, H. (1991). Unspeakable acts, Abuse by and between women. *Trouble and strife, 21, 13-30.*

Kennedy, H. (1992). *Eve was framed: Women and British Justice*. London: Chatto & Windus.

Kimball, M.M. (1995) *Feminist vision of gender similarities and differences*: New York: The Haworth Press, Inc.

Kirkwood, C. (1993). *Leaving abusive partners: from the scars of survival to the wisdom of change*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Knudson-Martin, C. (1994). The female voice: Applications to Bowen's family systems theory. *Journal of marital and family therapy*, 20, 35-46.

Laing, R.D. (1971). *The politics of the family and other essays*. Penguin Books.

Lessing, M. (1994). *South African women today*. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman.

Levinson, D. (1990). *Family violence in a cross cultural perspective*. London: Sage Publication.

Liddle, H.A. & Hague, A. (2000) *Journal of marital & family therapy* vol. 26, (3).

Lindsey, L. (1997). *Gender roles: A sociological perspective* (3rd ed.) Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.

Loseke, D.R. (1992). *The battered woman and shelters. The social construction of wife abuse*. Albany: State university of New York.

Mackenzie, L. (1992). *On our feet: Taking steps to challenge women's oppression*. Cape Town: UWC

Marshal, C. & Rossman, G.B. (1995). *Designing qualitative research* (2nd ed) London: Sage Publications.

Maykut, P. & Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning Qualitative Research: A philosophic and practical guide*. London: The Falmer Press

Meth, R. Pasick, R. (1990). *Men in therapy: The challenge of change*. New York: Guilford

Moghadam, V.M. (1996). *Patriarchy and economic development. Women's position at the end of the twentieth century*. Oxford: OUP.

Mongella, G. (1995) *The advancement of women.* Notes for speakers. United Nations: Department of Information.

Morgan, A. (2000). *What is narrative therapy? An easy-to-read introduction.* South Australia: Dulwich Centre Publication

Mullender, A. (1996). *Rethinking domestic violence. The social work and probation response.* London: Routledge.

Napier, A. (1991). Heroism, men and marriage. *Journal of marital and family therapy.* 17, 9-16.

Neft, N. & Levine, A.D. (1997/1998). *Where women stand: an international report on the status of women in 140 countries.* New York: Random House.

Neuman W.L. (1997). *Social research methods. Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (3rd ed) Boston: Allyn and Bacon

O' Toole, L.L. & Schiffman, J.R. (1997). *Gender violence: Interdisciplinary perspectives.* New York: New York University.

Okin, S.M. (1989). *Justice, gender and the family.* New York: Basic Books.

Okun, L. (1986). *Woman Abuse: facts replacing myths.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Pagelow, M.D. (1984). *Family violence.* New York: Praeger.

Pare, D.A. (1995). Shifting paradigm of family therapy. *Family Process,* Inc. 34, 1-19.

Pressman, B., Cameron, G. & Rothery, M. (1989).*Intervening with assaulted women. Current theory, research and practice.* New Jersey: Sage.

Pryke, J. & Thomas, M. (1998). *Domestic violence and social work.* Aldershot: Ashgate Arena

Ramphele, M. & Boonzaier, M. (1988). *The position of South African women: Race and gender in South Africa.* South African Keywords. Cape Town: David Phillip.

Ramphele, M. (1990). Do women help perpetuate sexism? A bird's eye view from South Africa. *Africa Today,* 37, 7-17.

Rapmund, Y. *(1996). Social support and depression in women contructivist approach.* M.A. Thesis. Psychology. University of South Africa.

Richie, B.E. & Kanuha, X. (1993). Battered women of colour in public health care systems: Racism, sexism and violence. *Wings of gaze. Women of colour and the experience of health and illness.* Detroit: Wayne State University.

Rudejtam, K.E. & Newton, R.R. (1992). *A comprehensive guide to content and process.* London: Sage Publications Newsbury Park.

Sachs, A. (1990). Judges and Gender: Constitutional rights of women in a post-apartheid South Africa. *Agenda: A journal about women and gender* 17, 1-11.

Sampselle, C.M. (1992). *Violence against women.* New York: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation.

Saraga, E. (1995). The abuse of children. In Dallos, R. and Mclaughlin, E. (1993). *Social problems and the family.* London: Sage Publications.

Schaefer, R.T. (1992). *Sociology*. USA: McGraw-Hill

Serra, P. (1993). Physical violence in the couple relationship: A contribution toward the analysis of the context. *Family Process. 32(1), 20-33.*

Shalala, D.E. (1995). *Women's realities, women's choices. An introduction to women's studies.* New York: OUP.

Shen, F. (1995). *For the battered spouse, insurers bias worsens pain.* Washington: Sage Publishers.

Sollie, D. L. & Leslie, L.A. (1994) *Gender, families and close relationships, feminist research journey.* London: Sage Publication.

Stacey, W.A. & Shupe, A. (1983). *The family secret: Domestic violence in America.* Boston: Beacon Press.

Stammers, T. (1996). *Love lies bleeding. When intimacy turns to abuse.* London: Hodder & Stoughton (LTD).

Stark, E. & Flitcraft, A. (1996). *Social knowledge, social policy, and the abuse of women: The case against patriarchal benevolence. The dark side of families.* California: Sage Publishers.

Steyn, A., Strijdom, H.G., Viljoen, S. & Bosman F.J. (1987). *Marriage and family life in South Africa: Research Priorities.* Pretoria: HSRC.

Straus, M.A., Gelles, R.J. (1986). Societal change and family vilonce from 1975n to 1985 as revealed by two national survey. *Journal of marriage and the family*, 48, 465-479.

Strydom, H., Fouche, C.B., Poggenpoel, M. & Schurink, E.W. (1998). *Research at grassroots: A primer for the caring professions.* Pretoria: Van Schaick Publishers.

Sue, D. Sue, D. & Sue, S. (1994) *Understanding abnormal behaviour*. Boston: Houghton Miffin Company.

Umberson, D., Anderson, K., Glick, J. & Shapiro, A. (1998). Domestic violence, personal control, and gender. *Journal of marriage and the family 60 (May 1998):442-452*

Walby, S. (1990). *Theorizing Patriarchy*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Walker, G.A. (1990) *Family violence and the women's movement*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Walker, L.E. (1978). Battered women and learned helplessness. Victimology: *An International Journal. 3, 525-534*.

Walker, L.E. (1979). *The battered women*. New York: Harper & Row.

Walker, L.E.D. (1994). *Abused women and survivor therapy*. Washington: American Psychological Association.

Watts, C., Osam, S. & Win, E. (1995). *The private is public. A study of violence against women in Southern Africa*. Zimbabwe:Wildaf.

White, M. (1991). *Deconstruction and Therapy*. Adelaide:Dulwich Centre Publication.

Wilson, K.J. (1997*). When violence begins at home, A comprehensive guide to understanding and ending domestic violence*. U.S. A: Hunterhouse Inc. Publishers