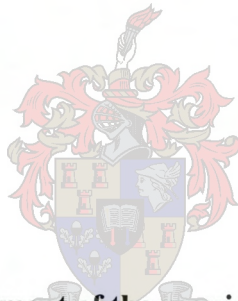


**Violence in the Home and in Intimate Relationships: A Qualitative
Exploration of Black Teenagers' Experiences and Views**

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**Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Philosophy in Social Science Research Methodology at the University of Stellenbosch**

Supervisor: Professor Andriennetta Kritzinger

April 2003

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work, and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submit it at any university for a degree

Alvina Makhosazana Kubeka

07-02-2003

Date

ABSTRACT

Domestic violence in South Africa is increasingly becoming a major social problem. Domestic violence disrupts family life and the functioning of family members. However, domestic violence is still narrowly defined and viewed as affecting women who are usually the victims/survivors of such violence. The impact of domestic violence on children is largely underestimated and ignored. Most research and intervention programmes have focused on the problem as it affects women thus treating the impact of violence on children as of secondary importance. The aim of this study is to examine domestic violence from the perspective of black teenagers who either witness or experience such violence themselves. In an attempt to understand and make sense of Black teenagers' experiences and views of violence in their homes and intimate relationships, insights from different theoretical perspectives are used. These are Trauma theory, Social learning theory and the Funnel of Violence theory.

Using a qualitative methodology, the study explores black teenagers experiences of domestic violence in their home of origin and their perceptions of violence in intimate relationships. Focus group interviews were conducted with 22 black male and female teenagers between the ages of 14 and 21 to obtain data. The study was conducted in Kayamandi, a township situated in the Stellenbosch area.

The findings revealed that the teenagers have been exposed to constant conflict between their parents, the causes of which include alcohol abuse and infidelity. The exposure to violence at home has been traumatic and has affected teenagers on an emotional, psychological and sometimes physical level. The conflict at home has also affected their ability to cope and adopt in their social and school environment. Some have also been direct victims of violence since they have suffered abuse at the hands of both their parents. As a result, their relationship with their parents has been strained. In addition, they seem to have adopted distorted views on how to deal with problems within relationships. They tend to view violence as a means to resolve conflict in intimate relationships and some of these teenagers have come to believe that violence is acceptable since it is an indication of love. They also believe that violent behaviour is a consequence of provocation and is carried out unwittingly to punish and discipline the victim. In most cases the victims of violence are women.

OPSOMMING

Gesinsgeweld word toenemend as 'n sosiale probleem binne die Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing geïdentifiseer. Gesinsgeweld word gesien as dat dit die gesinslewe en die gesonde funksionering van gesinslede ontwig. Gesinsgeweld word egter grootliks gedefinieer as dat dit slegs volwasse vroue affekteer. Die impak van gesinsgeweld op kinders word grootliks onderskat en selfs geïgnoreer. Navorsing oor gesinsgeweld en intervensieprogramme is dus hoofsaaklik gerig op die impak daarvan op vroue as slagoffers. Die doel van hierdie studie is om die impak van gesinsgeweld op kinders in die gesin te ondersoek. Ten einde swart tienerjariges se blootstelling aan gesinsgeweld en die wyse waarop hulle geweld binne intieme verhoudings konseptualiseer te interpreteer, is insigte uit verskillende teoretiese perspektiewe aangewend. Die belangrikste perspektiewe is Trauma teorie, Sosiale Leerteorie en die sg. 'Funnel of violence' teorie.

Die studie is kwalitatief van aard en eksplorieer swart tienerjariges se sienings van geweld binne hul gesin van oorsprong asook hul siening van die rol van geweld binne intieme verhoudings. Fokusgroeponderhoude is gevoer met 22 swart manlike en vroulike tienerjariges tussen die ouderdom van 14 en 21 jaar woonagtig in Kayamandi, Stellenbosch.

Van die belangrikste bevindings is dat swart tienerjariges alkoholmisbruik en huweliksontrouheid as die belangrikste aanleidende oorsake van geweld in die gesin identifiseer. Tienderjariges ervaar gesinsgeweld as traumaties en geweld beïnvloed hulle op emosionele en sielkundige vlak. Blootstelling aan geweld het ook 'n invloed op hul vermoë om suksesvol binne hul sosiale- en skoolomgewing te funksioneer. Terwyl die meeste deelnemers nie self slagoffers van gesinsgeweld was nie, was enkeles wel. Dit het stremming tussen ouers en kinders tot gevolg gehad. Blootstelling aan geweld beïnvloed tienerjariges se vermoë om konflik binne intieme verhoudings suksesvol te hanteer. Sommige definieer geweld as 'n indikator van liefde. Sommige interpreteer geweld as grootliks onbedoeld en 'n wyse om 'n persoon (gewoonlik 'n vrou) te straf en te dissiplineer. In die meeste situasies is vroue die slagoffers van geweld.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my beloved mother Christina Sibongile Kubeka, who passed away while the project was still under way. Ulale Ngoxolo Mntimande wam. Ngiyohlala ngikukhumbula njalo.



18 December 1946 - 11 July 2001

*"Morning breaks with her smile blossoming like flower,
when dusk comes, darkness set on her.*

*In a flash you had passed on
but you left us a love so rich,
your strong and free spirit lives on*

Mother, wife, river, rock, sea

A new angel, forever free

A love that endures eternally"

TO FAMILY

- To my father Joseph Kubeka, thank you for your unconditional love and support and for teaching me self-reliance and integrity.
- To my brother Bheki Kubeka, thank you for being my inspiration and for teaching me patience and commitment.
- To my aunt Miriam Ngwenya, thank you for your constant support, and for believing in me.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Domestic violence in the South Africa context

Domestic violence has been, and still is, a problem experienced in many nations of the world. Many scholars have often defined it as violence occurring in the domestic setting. Maynard and Winn (1993: 179), define it as "violence between adults who are in an intimate or familial relationship, most often a sexual relationship between a woman and a man". With regards to perpetrators of domestic violence, it has been noted that men are often the perpetrators of such actions and women the victims. For instance, findings from the British Crime Survey conducted in 1992 indicate that out of 530,000 reported cases of domestic violence in the United Kingdom, 80% of the victims were women. Notwithstanding these dramatic findings, women have likewise been physically abusive towards men. However, this is a rare phenomenon (Maynard & Winn, 1993).

There are no official statistics available on instances of domestic violence in South Africa, which is largely due to rarity in reporting. Volgeman and Eagle (1991) cite several factors for reluctance to report. First, it is the acceptance on the part of society of violence as a norm. This is because of a widely accepted view based on traditional beliefs, which promote spousal abuse as one of the normal dynamics in intimate relationships, which should be treated as a private matter between intimate partners (Human Rights Watch/Africa, (1995). This, as Rakoczy (2000) notes, is evident in some of the marriage customs and cultural practices, such as the payment of Lobola, which seems to propagate the idea that men own their wives, thus granting them the right to do as they please, including abusing them. In addition, the fact that men are physically stronger than women plays a crucial role in that men use their strength to overpower women and therefore act violently towards them. Unfortunately, women are often the powerless victims who are then forced to keep silent and accept the abuse as something they have to endure. For instance, the author notes from one of her studies with women who have been victims of violence:

One woman who spoke at a focus group organised by the Women's National Coalition had internalised societal views to such an extent that she saw herself as a child, who should therefore be subjected to physical punishment: "*a man should beat you up if you deserve it*" (Rakoczy, 2000: 47).

This statement indicates a degree of acceptance, on the part of many women, of violence, which may stem from the fact that they are powerless to escape from it. Interpreting their experience of violence as their fault may be their way of trying to cope with the constant abuse they experience from their partners.

Second, there is a lack of confidence in the effectiveness of the police as well as fear of losing their relationship once the abuse has been exposed to the authorities. This, Rakoczy (2000: 47) further notes, is because:

Battered women often want only the abuse to end, not the relationship, and are therefore reluctant to have recourse to official channels of redress, which often increase the likelihood of estrangement.

Third, there is also shame on the part of the victims in revealing the abuse. This is largely because of the stigma involving domestic violence cases, where society tends to treat the abuse as caused by women's inability to satisfy their husbands. Therefore, in order to keep the home intact and to paint a positive picture on the outside, women resort to hiding the abuse from the public (Volgeman & Eagle, 1991).

Finally, most women are economically dependent on their partners who are often the perpetrators of violence. This stems from the structural ideologies that have placed women in the home and limit them to looking after children while men are given the opportunity to go out and work in order to earn an income. The imbalance in economic power that prevails in South African society puts women in a subordinate and dependent position. Furthermore, even in cases where women are actually employed outside the home, they are still under the control of men. Waldman (1996), in her findings on domestic violence on Western Cape farms, argues that there is a structural oppression in the labour system, which women are subjected to. For instance, women do not have control over their labour. Their husbands often represent them during interactions with their employers. Second, women on farms also suffer abuse on the hand of their partners. Men are said to use violence to control women as a way of regulating their labour.

Despite the lack of official statistics it has been reported that wife abuse is prevalent across all socio-economic and racial groups in South Africa. Various South African non-Governmental organisations, in particular those who work with cases of abuse against

women, made estimations based on the cases they receive and research they conduct¹. In addition, a study conducted with 83 women in the Western Cape has revealed that 2% of this group have experienced marital rape and between them there have been 125 instances of sexual assaults by their intimate partners (Vogelman & Eagle, 1991:2). Moreover, in Mitchell's plain, one of the townships of Cape Town, 25% of social work cases are domestic violence related. In addition, the South African Police Services in that area report that wife abuse accounted for more than 15% of crime in 1981-1982. In 1984, a symposium was held on battered women at the University of Pretoria where it was estimated that violence affects up to 60% of marriages, and often results in alcohol abuse, depression and suicide among women (Vogelman & Eagle, 1991:2).

Some scholars believe that domestic violence, although it may be a global phenomenon, should be examined differently in the African context. Such sentiments are largely due to the cultural implications central to how domestic violence is understood, interpreted and handled on the continent. For instance, in the case of South Africa, authors such as Simpson (1993) have gone even further to suggest that not only cultural factors, but the social and political history of the country have contributed, one way or another, to the increase in violence against women. In particular, colonisation and apartheid have resulted in race, class, and gender divisions. As a result, the formation of a migrant labour system, domestic labour, forced removals and artificial homelands, are said to have directly or indirectly led to the disintegration of traditional African family structures. This disintegration has led to distress and escalation of problems such as domestic violence, alcohol abuse, poverty, child abuse and the breakdown in family relations.

Segel and Labe (1990) also agree that in order to understand domestic violence in South Africa, one has to take into consideration the broad ideological and socio-political context in which it takes place. In their thesis on the aetiological factors of wife abuse, they propose that the levels of violence in the broader society directly contribute to the pervasiveness of violence within the domestic sphere and are in turn perpetuated by the

¹ In 1992, Rape Crises estimated that 1 in 3 women was abused by her male partner. The Woman's Bureau estimates that 1 in 4 women is abused by her husband on a regular basis. The Advice Desk for Abused Women, People Opposing Women Abuse and Coordinated Action for Battered Women estimate that 1 in 6 is beaten by her partner and that 1 in 4 women are sometimes forced to escape fearing for their lives in a life threatening situation at home (Human Rights Watch/Africa, 1995)

society's sanctioning of violent behaviour. They note that the apartheid system in South Africa and its oppressive laws has resulted in many societal ills such as poverty, hardship, and poor-health as well as disrupted families. It is in such circumstances, they point out, that violence intensifies. This is because oppression results in resistance on the part of the oppressed. Resistance, here, comes in a form of "reactive violence". This means that when people experience discrimination and subjugation from a powerful force that they cannot challenge, they react violently as a way of defying the system. This is what Segel and Labe (1990), refer to as the "spiral of violence". This spiral of violence manifests itself in many forms, which include crime and domestic violence. Incidences of domestic violence in South Africa are very high and this is caused by a sense of entrapment and insecurity, which is experienced by people as a result of structural oppression.

Furthermore, the authors maintain that in a society where violence occurs so frequently, it subsequently develops into a norm, that is, people start to view it, not as a problem, but as a way of life. (Segel & Labe, 1990) Therefore, what we can deduce from what the authors say is that the role of the apartheid system should not be overlooked when we examine the problem of domestic violence in South Africa. Thus, even though apartheid has been dismantled, it has left a legacy of societal problems that are now becoming more visible and seem more intense in the new era.

Simpson (1993) contends that the present changes that have taken place in the post-apartheid era, have also had their toll on the lives of the citizens of this country. The new demands imposed upon individuals have been overwhelming. The social changes that have occurred in South Africa have spawned a deep-seated sense of insecurity and hostile stereotypes inherited from apartheid. As a result, a deep sense of social fear, among the historically marginalized groups, and loss of control, has resulted. These frustrations have led to the growth of "social aggression" among the disadvantaged. Since they are often unable to confront the appropriate targets of their frustrations, some male members of this group direct such aggression to those nearest them – those in the home environment.

It is within this milieu that men, who are often frustrated and weakened by the stressful outside world that challenges their sense of power, reaffirm their control (1993:3). Moreover, patriarchy with its strict norms and practices that promote male dominance and control over women and children is deeply entrenched within the South African context. Anything that disrupts traditional gender norms can result in violence as a means, for some men, to cling on to their male identities.

1.2. Impact of violence on victims

Wiehe (1998:91) argues that women, who are most often victims of abuse, suffer from low-self esteem and low self-image as a result of being constantly victimised by their intimate partners. It impacts on them on different levels: the economic, physical and psychological levels. In a study she conducted with 123 women in Britain, who were part of a support group for victims of assault, Wiehe (1998) concluded that there was a correlation between being abused at home and a decrease in women's performance at work. About 50% of the participants reported to have been absent from work on several occasions due to injuries sustained from the beatings and 25% reported to have lost their jobs. Loss of jobs strips these women of opportunities to support themselves financially and be self-reliant.

On the physical level, it has been reported that some victims of domestic violence are admitted to hospital emergency rooms for the treatment of injuries such as bruises on their faces and other body parts. In the South African Human Science Research Council brochure, it is stated that some victims suffer permanent damages to their organs, for example, kidneys and liver. These women also suffer from miscarriages as result of the impact of the beatings directed on their wombs (Lessing, 1994: 260).

Some research findings have also indicated that women who experience abuse at the hands of their partners are at higher risk of suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. A comparative study conducted by Wiehe, (1998) with 179 battered women and 48 non-battered but verbally abused women, revealed that the former suffered the most from PTSD since they experienced more physical, verbal and sexual abuse, than the latter. In addition, research on the psychological impact of battery on women victims has cited similar reactions of battered women to those who experienced the holocaust during the Second World War. In particular, these findings have concluded that battery is no different from torture (Segel & Labe, 1990).

Furthermore, theories of wife abuse seem to suggest that women are somehow addicted to violent relationships. There is a suggestion that the extent to which women get caught up in a violent relationship is dependent upon how they experience battery. Some theories even go as far as suggesting that women may remain in violent relationships because of "their inherent masochism". The theory on the cycle of violence, for example, explains the traumatic bond that battered women develop with their abusive partners. During the first two stages of the cycle, the husband is very aggressive. In the third stage, however, they are loving and attentive. Very often abused women suffer emotionally. They end up feeling

hurt, lost and lonely. They are in desperate need of warmth, which makes them vulnerable and they give in to their husbands' temporal comfort. Men on the other hand, driven by guilt and regret following a violent incident, offer care in an effort to appease the women and to make them forget for a short while. In this situation, it is said that women use "splitting" as a defence mechanism. This means that in an effort to cope with the situation, they unconsciously keep the abusive and warm fractions of the relationship separate. It is thus the desperate need to be loved and cared for that keep women in abusive relationships. Hence the cycle of violence continues (Segel & Labe, 1990). As will be noted in the next section of the chapter, children are also caught up in the cycle of violence because they too become victims in one way or another.

1.3. Statement of the problem

South Africa has high rates of Domestic Violence, especially in black communities. However, most of these cases are not documented because of reluctance on the part of the victims to report the abuse they experience to the authorities. Some of these communities are also plighted with other social problems. Young people are often exposed and subjected to various kinds of abuse at an early age within their communities and particularly within their homes. Some of these young people learn this violent behaviour and, as a result, perpetuate it in their own relationships. As a result of being exposed to abuse, such young people seem to develop certain gender attitudes towards control and submissiveness that make it difficult to break this cycle of violence.

Children who are reared in homes where there is spousal abuse are affected either directly (they are themselves abused) or indirectly (as witnesses). Most research on domestic violence has focused on women as direct victims rather than the effect this violence has on children. For instance, according to Kolbo and Blakely (1996), the physical abuse of women is a significant stimulus for the occurrence of problems, especially child abuse. This is because, when these women are abused by their partners, either they or the father or both parents often also subject children to some form of abuse, especially physical or sexual.

As a result, therefore, it is suggested that children whose mothers are battered are more likely to be physically abused than those whose mothers are not battered. The male batterer is said to be responsible for the maltreatment of children in families with domestic violence, and that women may turn to child abuse as a way of expressing their frustration and anger. In their work with children who witness domestic violence, Kolbo and Blakely, have

observed that these children are at high risk of maladaptation in their social environment. They manifest problems ranging from deviant behaviour to withdrawal from society. They may therefore develop similar psychological problems as child victims of abuse. This indicates an overlap between children who witness parental violence and those who actually experience abuse (Kolbo & Blakely, 1996).

The focus of this study was to ascertain how children, particularly teenagers, experience violence, how they view violence and how they deal with it. In other words, the aim was amongst others to explore how teenagers engage with violence within their family as well as their own intimate relationships. The theory of intergenerational transmission of violence poses that the more children experience or witness violence in their families, the more likely they are to engage in violent activities, as adults, against their own partners. This is because it has been observed that the majority of couples who are violent toward each other were, in most cases, brought up in an abusive domestic environment. Most studies of domestic violence, for example, show that men who saw one of their parents assaulting the other as children are three times more likely to physically assault their partners as adults and ten times more likely to frequently abuse them (Strauss et al, 1980).

It appears that children who grow up in violent families learn that the most effective ways of resolving conflict is through the use of violence. These children, of both sexes, also have a tendency to lay the blame on their mother, if the father is the abuser, for not giving in to the father's wishes. They may be doing this out of fear of the father or belief that he is doing the right thing by disciplining the mother. They may also blame the mother for subjecting herself to abuse. At the same time, however, the girls learn that being a victim is something that they can never escape from, since they witness the way in which their mothers tolerate the abuse.

These children, who witness violence in the home are generally said to live with anxiety and uncertainty and are thus at risk of developing behavioural and emotional problems (Rosenberg & Rossmann 1994; Gelles & Strauss, 1975).

1.4. Rationale and Objectives of the Study

The motivation behind conducting a study on domestic violence from a teenage perspective was borne out of my own personal concerns that originate from my experiences of living in a township. Growing up in Soweto, with its history of social tribulations, even though I have never experienced it in my own home, I have grown accustomed to seeing the negative and horrid impact that domestic violence has on the development of young people who are exposed to it on a daily basis. Domestic violence is a common phenomenon. Often, it is not frowned upon, but viewed as a normal part of life. My main concern is the negative influence this has on young people. As a result of being exposed to violence both within and outside their homes with society sanctioning the violence, teenagers have adopted a culture of violence within their own intimate relationships. They do not view abuse as an act of violence but rather as an indication of love. This distorted view of the relationship between love and violence seems to be the foundation upon which teenage intimate relationships are based. For instance, it is quite common for boys to beat their girlfriends and not be reproached for it. This is because for girls, it is a sign of jealousy, which is in turn understood to mean that a person cares. In addition, there is a growing perception among girls and boys that girls should be punished if they behave in a way that is perceived to be unacceptable. Moreover, girls are socialised to respect their boyfriends if they are to get married in the future.

Therefore, I argue that the gender socialisation to which children are exposed in their early lives, coupled with the exposure to violence, facilitates an environment that teaches boys to be domineering and abusive and girls to be submissive and tolerant of abuse. I believe there should be a fundamental change in the way children are socialised, which should foster self-respect and respect for other people of the opposite sex in order to break the cycle of violence in society. Thus, it is important that young people understand the effects of domestic violence in intimate relationships.

I believe that this study will contribute to the deeper understanding of gender relations in black communities in South Africa, especially as it relates to the problem of domestic violence and how teenagers view violence within intimate relationships, given their own exposure to domestic violence. It will also help in understanding the connection between gender role socialisation, culture and gender violence in the country. It is a small study, which serves only as a preliminary and explorative inquiry. Hopefully, it will pave the way for further research into the relationship between domestic violence and gender relations in

the country. It will also provide some guidelines for the implementation of intervention programmes, which will educate young people about domestic violence, its effects and ways to promote harmonious relationships between genders.

The fact that the study targets young people is crucial as they are often viewed as the leaders of tomorrow. In addition, interviewing teenagers who experience the problem at home will help encourage others in a similar situation to come forward and share their experiences. It may help professionals, such as the social workers and teachers, to identify the problem and come up with ways to assist those affected in coping with the problem. In essence, this study attempts to raise public awareness about the severity and the extent to which domestic violence affects those who grow up within violent homes.

Domestic violence in South Africa affects people from all racial and socio-economic backgrounds. However, since black South Africa has a higher rate of domestic violence as compared to the general populace and a historical past of social marginalization, this study examined the problem of domestic violence from the viewpoint of young black South Africans living in Kayamandi, a black township situated in the Stellenbosch area. These young people either witness or experience family abuse, usually between their parents. The objective is to gain insight into these teenagers' personal engagement with abuse within their homes and within their intimate relationships, either through personally witnessing, or actually experiencing the abuse. It is hoped that by exploring the problem of domestic violence from the viewpoint of teenagers who are exposed to it in their homes, new insights on the cycle of violence will be gained, and this will in turn be useful in efforts to stop it.

Given the aforementioned problem statement and rationale, the objectives of this study are threefold:

- a) to explore teenagers' personal experiences of and perceptions of violence within their home of origin.
- b) to explore these teenagers' experiences of and views on violence within their own intimate relationships
- c) to explore these teenagers' attitude towards gender roles in relation to violence within intimate relationships.

In this thesis, I report on the study I conducted with a selected group of teenagers in Kayamandi. Chapter two of the thesis will provide a literature overview of previous studies and theories on the nature of and factors contributing to domestic violence as well as the impact of such violence on children who are exposed to it. Chapter three provides detailed information on the research design and methods used to achieve the objectives set out above. The findings of the study are presented and discussed in chapter four and five respectively. Chapter four discusses the findings of teenagers' experiences of violence at home in terms of how it has affected them and how they responded to it. Chapter five discusses findings on the teenagers' perceptions of violence within intimate relationships. In the final chapter, the conclusions of the study are presented and the findings of the study are interpreted within the context of the literature overview presented in chapter two.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE OVERVIEW

Introduction

A family is said to be a complex social system, forming part of the larger social system of society. It is comprised of individual subsystems, which occupy differing positions, such as children, parents, siblings, husband and wife. These individuals each have different personalities and characteristics, interacting with one another within this system called the family (Minuchin & Fishman, 1981). Murdock (1980) examined the institution of the family in four areas representing different cultures, ranging from hunting and gathering bands to industrial societies. Having noticed some similarities in the structure and features of these family systems, he came to the conclusion that a family is universal. He perceives a family as a:

...social group characterised by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. It includes adults of both sex, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship and one or more children (Murdock in Haralambus & Heald, 1980: 325).

This is a typical nuclear family structure common to most societies, rendering this form universal. However, some scholars would disagree with Murdock's conception of a "universal family structure" on the grounds that in some societies a family is not as rigid as he suggests. Some authors argue that this conception seems to assume that a family can only be regarded as such if it only consists of two adults and that this is the case everywhere. For instance, Levinson (1988: 438), from his work on cross-cultural studies of families, argues that there are five types of family structures found in different cultures and societies. In addition to a nuclear family structure, he posits that there is (i) the matrifocal structure, which consists of a mother living with her children; (ii) the polygynous structure in which there is a husband with two or more wives and children; (iii) there is also the polyandrous family structure consisting of a wife, her children and two or more husbands; and (iv) the extended family structure which involves individuals who are related to each other as either father, mother, brother, sister, cousin and so on, living under the same roof. Most African family structures fall under the last category. The organisation of such a family largely depends on the socio-economic and political conditions that are constantly fluctuating. An African "traditional family" typically consists of relatives from several generations - the extended family living together and working as a unit (Green, 1999).

According to Gelles and Strauss (1988), the nature of the interaction between individuals within a family environment is such that they influence each other, more than in any other setting. The social structure of the family is unique in two ways. First, it consists of males and females, meaning that it has the potential for gender differences, which can sometimes lead to conflicts. It is said that many cases of intimate violence stem from the long-standing battle between the sexes. Second, the position and role each individual plays within the family also makes a family unique. These positions are invariably accompanied by tasks and responsibilities assigned to each family member on the basis of age and gender.

The literature to be reviewed in this chapter will examine aspects of family interaction in an effort to describe the dynamics that contribute directly or indirectly to family conflict. It provides an overview of violence that manifests itself as the phenomenon of family violence. In particular, the focus will be on studies that aim to explain the impact of domestic violence on the witnesses of such violence, in this case the children, and ultimately its influence on their perceptions of violence within intimate relationships.

2.1. Family Violence

By definition, family violence is a form of behaviour that involves the use of physical strength and thus causing harm to other family members. This leads to the infliction of pain for some reason or another (Gelles & Strauss, 1975). Kashani and Allan (1998) suggest that the term family violence would be inclusive of everyone living under the same roof who experiences violence. It is also worth noting that in the present review, the terms family violence and domestic violence will be used interchangeably. Both concepts seem to refer to violence that occurs between family members. This violence can manifest as physical, sexual, verbal and emotional abuse against spouses, children and elders. The review covers literature that focuses on children as either indirect victims, that is, children who witness their parents being abusive to one another or direct victims, that is, children who experience any form of abuse, which stems from the conflict between parents.

For decades, violence in the family has been an issue affecting the functioning of families in many societies. Despite this seemingly devastating role of familial violence, it has largely been viewed as a private matter to be resolved by family members in the privacy of their homes. This, according to Strauss and Gelles (1975) has been attributed to lack of interest, awareness and denial on the part of societies of family violence as a problem.

During the 1940's and 1950's in Britain, for instance, women who were abused by their husbands had few places to go. There were no agencies and centres within hospitals where these victims could seek refuge and receive counselling and medical attention. Moreover, the law afforded them little protection. Yet, while the abuse within families was invisible, it had an overwhelming impact on the lives of women and children. They experienced physical, psychological and emotional problems (Hague & Wilson, 2000: 157). Such problems were further aggravated by the social stigma domestic violence carried. Hence, such cases mostly went unreported. Domestic violence, for instance, was largely viewed as scandalous and the underlining fault of the woman. It was not until the 1970's, however, in countries like the United States and Britain that family violence began to be recognised as a social problem. These countries saw the emergence of women's movements, which demanded the involvement of authorities in alleviating the problem.

Moreover, the Seventies also saw the emergence of strong feminists movements in response to the growing numbers of women who were affected by violence. These movements mostly consisted of women who experienced violence in their own lives and who had embarked upon a mission to provide support to other victims of violence. Hence in 1972, the Women's Aid Federation, the first refuge for battered women, was formed in Britain. This organisation coordinates the provision of refugees, support and advocacy services. It also provides shelters, among other things, for battered women who are in danger of further abuse (Hague & Wilson, 2000: 161). The development of women movements has gradually led to an increase in awareness among women in many countries of the world, with women challenging forms of violence specific to their cultures. Hence, the courts, police departments and social welfare agencies became more involved. (Maynard & Winn, 1993:176).

Despite the fact that some domestic governments disregarded the problem of domestic violence, NGO based organisations for prevention of gender violence were also established and have over the years evolved into significant role players in the fight against domestic violence. The objective of these organisations has largely been to get domestic governments to acknowledge the problem. Such groups have eventually managed, in some countries such as the United States and Britain, to convince the authorities to regard domestic violence as a pressing issue to be treated as an agenda of politics, within the area of human rights. Hence as Green (1999) observes, women abuse today is increasingly being recognised as an

impediment to political, economic and social development. It now demands the attention of the Government to prevent, investigate and prosecute violations of human integrity.

Subsequently, with growing persuasion and demands from various women's movements for the recognition of women's human rights by the international community, organisations were set up by some governments in developed nations, which were aimed at ensuring the recognition and the upholding of the rights of women as capable citizens of society. For example, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the term "sex" has since been included which implies that under no circumstances shall women be discriminated against and be placed in subordinate positions. According to Article 2 of the UDHR "rights and freedoms set forth in the declaration are without discrimination of any kind, on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political opinion, national or social property, birth or other status" (Marcus, 1994).

Additionally, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against women (CEDAW) was formed in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly. CEDAW promotes the recognition of the rights of women and their role in societies. After much criticism and debates about CEDAW's initial superficial assertion and recognition of gender based violence as caused by the existing social and cultural patterns, sex roles, and stereotypes CEDAW², in 1992 issued Recommendation No. 19, which criticises gender violence as a violation of women's human rights and which should be adopted by all nations represented in the United Nations. The declaration defines violence against women as "any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life". This recommendation also acknowledges that a relationship exists between discrimination on the basis of sex and violations of human rights and freedom against women (Marcus, 1994).

Within the South African context, women have been historically disadvantaged under the South African justice system, in particular African women who suffered the effects of apartheid system as well. In principle, the judicial system³ has improved with the new

² In January 1993, Former President F.W. de Klerk signed CEDAW as well as other declarations that concerned women's rights. In 1995, a parliamentary committee approved its endorsement. It is now up to the government to implement the principles of the declaration within the South African context (Human Rights Watch/Africa, 1995).

³ On April 26 1994 a new Interim Constitution was adopted that recognised the need to protect the human rights of every South African citizen. Chapter 13 of the Constitution sets forth a list of

political dispensation and legislation has been passed that are meant to protect women. These include the Prevention of Family Violence Act, which was passed in 1993. This Act is aimed at assisting women in times of violence by allowing them to apply for a court interdict against their abusive partners. The Act prohibits the abusive partner from (a) assaulting or threatening the applicant or a child born of the union between the two partners, (b) entering the matrimonial home or any other place of residence of the applicant and (c) preventing a party or child from entering the matrimonial home or part thereof. However, despite the existence of such laws, violence against women continues to escalate in South Africa. This is due to the fact that many of the abused women are still not aware of their rights and the protection promised by the new constitution of this country. They continue to be reluctant in seeking help from family and friends as well as from the authorities (Human Rights Watch/Africa, 1995).

2.2. Historical Origins of Male-over-Female Domination

In addition to the involvement of authorities, an increasing number of researchers and scholars began to embark on studies that aimed at understanding and explaining the nature and causes of domestic violence (Erasmus, 1998). For this purpose, theories have been developed in an attempt to explain the aetiological factors of domestic violence and how it impacts on the social functioning of individuals and their relationships with others. Some theorists attribute the problem to social structures that perpetuate domestic violence in various ways. For instance, Laslett (1988: 29) has identified some attributes of the social structure of certain societies that contribute to the promotion of family violence.

The author argues that in certain societies the social attitudes towards violence are such that violence has been considered, and thus encouraged, as a socially appropriate means of solving personal problems. In other words, it is seen as the only way to bring about order and discipline in society. Secondly, the nature of the modern household is such that it has become a private system, preventing other forces of society from intervening. In comparing

fundamental right, section 8 of which states that 1) Every person shall have the right to equality before the law and to equal protection of the law. 2) No person shall be unfairly discriminated against, directly or indirectly, and without derogating from the generality of this provision, on one or more of the following grounds in particular: race, gender, sex, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture or language. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act (Act No. 200 of 1993) adopted from Human Rights Watch/Africa, 1995).

families in the 20th century, which are private in nature with those before which were more public, Laslett argues that families have changed from public institutions with a large and diverse audience to private institutions, limited only to a few role players such as husband, wife and children. The author posits that the modern role of the family relates to the processes of industrialisation, urbanisation and modernisation, which dominated during the 20th century. At that time, families were so secluded from the public eye that identifying violence within the home proved to be difficult. (Laslett, 1988: 30).

Laslett posits that there continue to be more structural inequalities that exist in modern families, that is, men enjoy more social and economic status than do women. Laslett (1988: 31) states that this economic power tends to give men the right to be violent towards women without fear because they gain rewards rather than punishment from society. This means that they still enjoy high status in society despite their actions. The author further posits that this inequality is based upon a legacy that has been in existence for centuries - women seen as properties of men and children the properties of their parents. Such a legacy was further enforced through laws, such as the law of coverture, which was instrumental in the promotion of gender violence through its encouragement of male domination of women and children.

Marcus (1994:19) agrees that the famous common law doctrine of coverture has played a crucial role in the maintenance of the traditional perception of marriage, which prevailed during the 18th and 19th century in American and British laws and that designated a man as the head of the family. According to this law, when a man and a woman entered into marriage, together they took up a single legal identity, that of the husband. Women were supposedly "protected" under this law. This means "By marriage, the husband and wife are one person in law, that is, the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage, or at least cooperated and consolidated into that of the husband" (Marcus, 1994:19). This law, Marcus argues, implied that women cannot exist on their own as individuals; they have to be secured under the protection of men. She says this conception exposes the nature of an imbalanced relationship between gender, identity and law. This relationship implies that women can only attain identity if they get married to men so that they can gain support. In return, women have to engage in household services to their husbands as a sign of gratitude for the protection they obtain. Moreover, this has been legitimised by the justice system. It is further argued that the law of coverture had the negative impact of disseminating distorted views of women as incapable of and incompetent

to act in the world as individuals. These beliefs were further reinforced throughout other important institutions of society such as religion, politics and economy. As Marcus (1994: 21) explains:

.... the selective use of theology, political theory, and economics, reinforced the claim that a family must have a clear, ascriptive locus of power, one that was sex based. Theology connected family to God's kingdom, which was unquestionably hierarchal. An earthly manifestation of God's will and command, family must be structured like that kingdom; there must be a designated head of the family. And since, though God transcended the sex/gender system, the cultural references for the Deity were male, hence the designated heads of His earthly will –*the family*–must also be male. Both political and economic theory reinforced the theological ordained structure of the family....

Thus, even though the law of coverture has since been dismantled, its beliefs are still deeply entrenched within the minds of people and its legacy has been passed on from generation to generation. In particular, it is visible in the power relations within marital and/or intimate relations between men and women and in the rate of violence against women that has prevailed over the years. Gelles and Strauss (1988) assert that this victimisation of women by men stems from the long-standing subordination of women and women being regarded as property. In addition, the social organisation of society perpetuates the problem with its tendency to condone people's violent behaviour towards family members. Men abuse women and children because they can, because the cost of being violent is low and because the fact that men are not reproached by societies for their actions, they are being rewarded and given permission to continue to be abusive. They derive immediate satisfaction from seeing that their action does bring change with the victims complying with their demands in the fear of further victimisation (Gelles & Strauss, 1988: 34).

2.3. The Private Nature of Domestic Violence

Scholars such as Schneider (1994) have argued that the notion of marriage and family as being a private institution has allowed, encouraged and fortified violence against women in many ways. The treatment of marriage as a private realm, she says, has contributed to the oppression of women and has helped in the safeguarding of women's inferior position within the family. In the early days, the state did not interfere in cases of domestic violence. It was

considered to be a private matter within the home environment. This was based on the principle of "separate spheres" which was spurred through the promotion and the corroboration of the dichotomy between the "private" world of the family and domestic life, which was viewed as the woman's world and the "public" world of the marketplace, which was known to belong to men. This dichotomous relationship between the private and public life was especially legitimised by the system of law accompanied by other institutional and ideological systems, which refused to intervene in the battles within family interactions, but at the same time ensured that in the public sphere, women were excluded from partaking fully in the running of societal affairs. In explaining how the concept of privacy perpetuates violence against wives, Schneider says:

The concept of privacy encourages, reinforces and supports violence against women. Privacy says that violence against women is immune from sanction, that it is permitted, acceptable as part of the basic fabric of American family life. Privacy says that what goes on in the violent relationship should not be the subject of state or community intervention. Privacy says that it is an individual and not a systemic problem. Privacy operates as a mask for inequality, protecting male violence against women (1994: 43).

As a result, wife beating in many societies is not viewed as violence. It is hardly considered a criminal and punishable offence. Rather, in Marcus's (1994) view, it is regarded as a way of disciplining and bringing order or an act in reaction to provocation. It is a culturally defined system used to oppress and silence women.

2.4. Culture, Power Relations and Family Violence

Radical feminists have always been adamant that gender violence functions as a mechanism used by men to exert control over women. Central to the radical feminist school of thought is the idea that gender violence reflects the nature of imbalanced power relations between men and women apparent in most societies. At the same time it is used as an instrument to maintain this imbalance. In essence, radical feminists view violence as a way in which men control women. This means that it is not only a product of women's subordination but it is also used in the creation and preservation of this subordination. As Maynard and Winn put it:

... men in fact hold an instrumental view of violence, whereby violence does indeed have its own social and/or material rewards which include social control, normative approval and management of (masculine) identity (1993:177).

Additionally, feminists see the institution of the family as a natural location for the occurrence of gender violence. This is because a family in most societies is predominantly patriarchal in nature. Patriarchy is defined as a network of public and private structures, beliefs and mechanisms for the control of women in which the family plays a central role. Within a family, males and females are indoctrinated through psychological training and socialisation into gender roles, which provides the basis for the social development of gender identity. Patriarchy is therefore destructive because it is shrouded with the ideas that women are subordinate to men. That is, women are not in charge of their lives and their own destiny because of their inferior position in society (Green, 1999: 17).

This ideology defines women primarily as objects rather than subjects of their own experience by virtue of their subordinate relationships to the men in their families

To understand patriarchy, Dobash and Dobash (1979) suggest that one must take into consideration its structure and ideology. The structure of patriarchy is based on the hierarchal organisation of social institutions and social relations that elevate some members of society to positions of power and leadership and others to inferior position. In this kind of set-up people do not gain access to certain positions or recognition on the bases of merit and competence, but on the bases of a predetermined status ascribed to them depending on which group they belong to. It is this structure that determines which group is likely to be dominant and which one is to be subservient. It is also through this system that those who are elevated to higher positions are able to enjoy some privileges over others. It is again such a system that confines women to subordinate positions with the aim of making sure that they remain at home and are kept away from occupying positions outside the family.

Patriarchy is further maintained and reinforced through cultural patterns that are characteristic of the societal structure in most societies, which are deemed patriarchal in nature. Strauss and Hotaling (1980) define culture as nothing other than a legacy, meaning that it is learned from previous human behaviour and passed on to the present generation,

who then uses it as a guideline for behaviour. This process takes place through the implementation of cultural norms. These are prescriptions and activities that individuals within a certain cultural system must perform through interacting with others. In order for these norms to be considered cultural, they must be shared by the whole society. These cultural norms, Mandela (1993) argues, are used to guide people's actions in most societies. Within these cultural norms, women are classified as inferior members of society when compared to men. This is evident in the kind of roles, activities and tasks allocated to women by virtue of their sexual make-up. In such societies, women are often perceived as passive, repressed members of society who do not have a "voice". Therefore, their role is to serve their husbands, brothers and fathers.

Such beliefs are learned through the process of socialisation. Socialisation is regarded as a subtle yet common process in the sense that social norms and values of society are so deeply entrenched that they are taken for granted. People have come to believe that women and men should occupy and perform certain roles as expected by the norms of the society. This eventually leads to people integrating these beliefs into their self-concepts. They begin to perceive themselves and their experiences in line with these roles (Mandela, 1993).

Furthermore, it is said that the process of socialisation also serves as the means by which gender identities are created. In most cultures, it is argued, gender is used as a main category for the organisation of social relations within a certain cultural framework. The differences that we see today between men and women were culturally defined through the processes of gender socialisation. Therefore, the concept of gender can be defined in terms of cultural attributes that include both social and psychological elements that are learned and are expected of different sexes by society. This system of categorising people in terms of gender is instigated through the process of placing males and females in either a masculine or feminine grouping. Here, masculinity refers to strength and endurance, whereas, femininity refers to physical and emotional weakness. This view, therefore, implies that women are somehow inferior to men by nature. It is clear from this conceptualisation that the cultural beliefs about biological and social events are so strongly instilled within human understanding and behaviour that they almost appear inherent in human life. However, research on human culture has revealed that there is no predetermined correlation between natural human features and human social conduct. The only thing that links biology and social life is culture. This is because culture and its symbolic nature, influences the way

people come to perceive themselves, that is, who they are and what they become (Anderson, 1983).

The process of socialisation is said to begin from the moment one is born and continues throughout one's lifespan. It is an ongoing process, in which a person's sense of self unfolds as they go through different stages of development. During these stages gender identity is also formed and is largely influenced by the information the person receives from their environment and the meanings thereof, at some point in their lives. It is said that from infancy, boys and girls are treated differently. Research reveals that parents have a tendency to treat children in terms of their sex. As a result, it has been found, that by age 13 months, little girls tend to be more attached to their mothers than fathers or any other caregivers. In a study conducted by Goldberg and Lewis (1979), where they observed babies from when they were 6 months right through until they were 13 months, they found that mothers are more inclined to touch girls than boys. As a result, by the time they are 13 month, girl babies have learned to react to the attention they receive from their mothers. Although, according to Weitzman (1979), such findings may not appear convincing since they are referring to infants, the impact of such conduct may become visible in the child's later development, especially if they have been persistent. This is because at this stage children's cognitive learning abilities emerge. These children are exposed to sex role socialisation before they are even aware of their sexual identity, which shows that cultural notions about gender roles are deeply ingrained.

The childhood stage is said to be the most critical since it is when children are able to not only observe, but also emulate gender differential behaviour. Around the age of 3-4 children are able to differentiate between sex roles and they tend to communicate their sex role preferences. George Herbert Mead proposed that this occurs in three different stages. He said that children can (a) copy the behaviour of the significant other within their environment (imitation), (b) adopt the behaviour by taking up the role of this important persons in their lives, in most cases parents, and see themselves from their perspective (play) and (c) they move on to not only to playing the roles of their parents/guardians but of the whole society, through interacting with others in their environment (games). They therefore end up assuming roles of the general population who represent the cultural expectations of a particular society (Mead in Anderson, 1983).

Socialisation does not, however, only occur through the unwitting adaptation to social roles, but also through deliberate training. The division of labour and the assigning of tasks

within the family for instance is one way in which children are groomed or prepared for their roles in society. As noted above, most scholars strongly believe that the family is indeed the main driving force behind the socialisation of men and women in societies. A clear example comes from Mandela's study (1993). Conducted in South Africa, which is predominantly patriarchal, Mandela examined gender relations and how they relate to patriarchy in Cofimvaba, a rural area in the Transkei. She concluded that gender roles within a patriarchal system are created, passed on and learned within the multifaceted interactions between individuals in a household and family that also form part of a whole system of communities. Here, language, rituals and ceremonies are utilized within a family as a way of teaching young boys and girls the appropriate ways of behaviour. In addition to language and rituals, the system of assigning roles to each gender also plays a crucial part within the socialisation process. The main aim is to prepare young boys and girls for their future roles as husbands who will be expected to earn an income outside the home and as wives who will have to see to their duties as housekeepers and child minders (Mandela, 1993: 66).

Young girls are socialised at an early age for these roles that they are expected to occupy. From the age of six to seven, little girls are trained for motherhood and wifedom. They are expected to busy themselves with household chores, to sweep, fetch wood and water and mind infants. Girls are encouraged to participate in these activities. Girls' duties are more arduous than those of boys. Boys are only required to herd livestock (cattle, sheep and goats) in the morning out to the fields, then go to school and fetch the cattle in the afternoon.

This training into roles is justified as being in the best interests of the children. It will enable them to grow up as competitive and efficient in their roles. This is clear in the case of Cofimvaba:

.... Every Thursday, girls with their mothers and friends walk 4km to and from the forest, carrying wood on their heads. Girls of school going age miss this day of school. Young girls who demonstrate good housekeeping skills and spend most of their time doing household chores rather than playing are praised and told that they will grow up to be good wives and all the boys will want to marry them because of their good industriousness (Mandela, 1993: 66).

Thus girls are given positive feedback to encourage them to, not only excel in these tasks, but to also aspire to be good wives to their future husbands. Marriage is seen as one way of maintaining the patriarchal system in some societies, particularly in Africa. For instance, traditional African marriages are supposedly meant for the establishment and enhancement of relations between two kinship groups. This means that marriage involves a group of individuals whose intention is to achieve the goal of procreation and survival through the union of a man and woman. However, marriage in such societies serves an additional purpose. It is used to control women. Through marriage, men acquire rights over women's lives and responsibility for them. Some feminist theorists view marriage as not only the way in which women are kept as perpetual minors under the control of their husbands, but it also renders them potential victims of violence which is aimed at strengthening gender roles and relations (Green, 1999).

Strauss and Hotaling (1980), argue that a marriage licence is an implicit hitting licence. Studies have shown that a typical adult female is more likely to be beaten and emotionally abused by her own spouse than any other person. What is even more astounding is that women are often said to be the ones who provoke the situation. Many believe that women actually desire to be beaten by behaving in ways unacceptable to their husbands. It is also said that most women actually give in to these stereotypical beliefs and they internalise them. In addition, the sex role socialisation also contributes because women are brought up to become submissive, which makes them vulnerable to the abuse. Therefore, certain cultural patterns that promote male dominance and female subordination play a very crucial role in perpetuating gender violence in most societies because they indoctrinate men into becoming powerful and aggressive people and women into becoming submissive to them (Green, 1999).

In addition, Wood (1997) also argues that gender violence is a socially constructed phenomenon simply because of the fact that it affects a certain group of people in society (mostly women). It can only be attributed to cultural values that are communicated through certain social practices such as the propagation of male dominance and female subordination in various sectors and institutions of society:

.... media bombard us with violent images, especially acts of violence against women. Police officers avoid interfering in violence between intimates, and judges often fail to impose firm sentences on proven batterers. From families to courtrooms, many institutions in our culture

communicate that violence against women is acceptable... (Wood, 1997: 74).

2.5. Impact of Witnessing and Experiencing Violence

So far the focus of this review has been on the interaction between culture, gender roles and domestic violence. It has become clear that certain cultural practices are responsible for encouraging divisions between people of opposite genders through elevating one gender above the other. This gender differentiation has in turn played a very crucial role in promoting violence between the genders, with the dominant gender striving to maintain its position through coercive measures. The attention will now turn to those who grow up in such an unequal and violent environment, the children. The aim is to determine how they are affected as individuals, what they learn from what they observe and how being exposed to such experiences impact on their own understanding of intimate relationships and gender relations.

It is estimated that between 3.3 million and 10 million children in the United States and 500,000 in Canada witness their mothers being assaulted by their fathers or their mother's partners on a regular basis. These assaults can be psychological, physical, economic, sexual and, in extreme cases, homicide (Lehmann, 1997). These children are also at risk of being abused themselves. For instance, it is said that there is a 30% to 40% overlap between experiencing physical abuse in homes where there is woman abuse (Ammerman & Hersen, 1999). Research has shown that marital violence is, in some cases, accompanied by child abuse. It has been found that fathers who abuse their wives tend to also abuse their children. According to the "double whammy" hypothesis, those children who witness domestic violence and are also abused in their homes are more traumatised when compared to those who are not physically abused but who are witnesses of violence (Lehmann, 1997). Children from abusive homes are said to have more difficulties and maladjustment problems than for instance, those who witness war. In a study comparing the experiences and perspectives of children and youth who have witnessed woman abuse, Berman (1998) found that those who have been exposed to woman abuse in their homes suffered the most because "they did not have any safe and supportive place or time of reference, with which to contrast the traumatic experiences, while those experiencing war trauma could view it as an aberration compared with the safety and security of their family and pre-war community" (Ammerman & Hersen, 1999: 346).

In other words, those exposed to violence at home suffer the most because it occurs within the home, which is supposed to be safe. Those exposed to war, on the other hand, even though traumatised, experience violence outside their place of safety. It would appear that the presence of violence within the home does impede or adversely affect the normal development of the child, whether through directly witnessing or experiencing it. The exposure to domestic violence alone is considered to be another form of child maltreatment. The fact that parental conflict occurs within the presence of the child makes them the unintended victims, which can be more traumatic (Holden et al, 1998; Kashani & Allan, 1998). The vulnerability of children to domestic violence may impact on their development in such a way that it hinders their abilities to successfully adapt and be competent in their environment. However, even though it may not be, on its own, the direct cause of maladjustment, the presence of violence does affect the child's ability to relate to others as well as tarnishing their social expectations (Holden, et al 1998).

In an effort to explore family violence in-depth, and its impacts on children, three theories will be examined. These seek to explain how family violence impact on children who are exposed to it, both personally and in their relationships with others.

2.5.1. Trauma Theory

Trauma theory focuses more on the socio-psychological impact of violence on children. It seeks to explain the nature of behaviour resulting from traumatic experiences. It proposes that people may develop posttraumatic stress disorder when subjected to disturbing events. This disorder is caused by life threatening events that occur in the external environment of an individual. The symptoms associated with PTSD are intrusive feelings of re-experiencing the trauma, or events that can trigger the memory of the trauma, concentration problems, shock, and general vulnerability to stress (Holden et al, 1998).

Violence in the family is also regarded as a source of trauma. Children who witness and experience it within the home have been found to display symptoms of PTSD because they are exposed in most cases to a variety of traumatic events such as repeated victimisation through abuse at any time (McCloskey, et al 1995). These children are also subjected to psychological maltreatment such as coercion, physical threats, sexual intimidation, insults and so on (Holden, et al, 1998). A study of the impact of woman battering on children

revealed that 13% of the children in the cases examined met the criteria for PTSD (Graham-Berman et al, 1998).

However, it has been argued that the trauma experienced by children from abusive homes differs from trauma resulting from being subjected to a single event outside of the family. The post-traumatic stress symptoms in these children are recurrent and ongoing since the violence and abuse are often also continuous (Levendosky & Alytia, 2000; McCloskey & Walker, 2000). According to McCloskey and Walker (2000), children who had been both targets and witnesses of adult aggression and anger in the home become more sensitive and react with fear when they view other forms of violence outside of home. For example, studies of television violence have shown that children are often exposed to images of violence that tend to trigger the painful memories of previous battering event at home.

Research has revealed that children who constantly find themselves in such a conflictual environment might feel stuck and confused since they do not understand what is going on around them. As a result, they may try and seek an explanation somewhere else. In other words, they may interpret the quarrels between their parents as having been caused by them. This, as Lehnmann (1997) argues, may result in them developing a sense of guilt, self-blame, personal vulnerability as well as seeing the world as being against them.

Furthermore, Grynych et al's cognitive-contextual model, offers an explanation of the underlying effects of marital conflict on children. This theory assesses the effects of conflict from the children's perspective, that is, how they view it and how it affects them. This theory maintains that there is a link between being exposed to violence and the children's subsequent behavioural and emotional problems. At the same time, since children are perceptive and they often try to actively interpret the implication and meaning behind their parent's conflict as it happens frequently, they tend to make various appraisals that shape its meaning for them. In other words, they may come up with explanations that will help them make sense of the violence they are subjected to and what causes it (Grynych et al, 1995).

Grynych et al, (1995) have discovered that, these children may see the conflict as a threat (perceived threat), fearing, for example, that the disagreements between parents may lead to aggression, which in turn may lead to divorce. Secondly, children may strongly believe in their coping skills and have high expectations (coping efficacy) about their ability to survive or deal with the conflict effectively. Finally, children may blame themselves for the conflict and as a result experience shame and distress (causal attribution and ascription of blame). For instance, in a study conducted by Adamson and Tompson (1998) on the influence of

parental conflict on children's emotional and coping abilities, they found that these children may be more upset with themselves and hence resort to intervening between parents since they feel responsible for the conflict and, as a result, run the risk of finding themselves being abused.

Other studies linking the battering of women to the children's adjustment problems have shown that such children have higher rates of internalising and externalising behaviour problems (Holden et al, 1998). They tend to manifest problems of lower self-esteem, more depression and lower attention span at school than those who come from non-violent homes. These children have also been found to be developing delinquent behaviours during adolescence, or in some cases become violent inside and outside their own homes later on in their lives. Children tend to respond differently to parental conflict and the trauma associated with it, according to age and gender. Jaffe et al (1990), for example, suggest that, since pre-school and younger children are considered to be incapable of controlling feelings and cognitive processes, they find it difficult to analyse the information they receive from their environment. They sense the tensions, which could make them more vulnerable to dysfunctional behaviour.

However, as they reach late childhood and adolescence, children's responses change. During this stage, they are more able to intellectualise and make sense of what is going on. They are able to verbalise what they see. At times they may become withdrawn, not showing their emotions, which may create an impression that they are strong and not affected. This, however, exposes them to depression (Jouriles & Norwood, 1995). Some of them may find themselves in relationships that are characterised by violence. For example, adolescent girls may begin to tolerate threats and intimidation from their controlling boyfriends (Jaffe et al, 1990).

On the other hand, some adolescents, in particular those who have been exposed to violence for most of their lives, may try and confront their mothers since they may feel they cannot tolerate violence anymore. In most cases, however, the mothers may ignore them and decide to stay with the father for the sake of stability within the family. These adolescents may recognise that, although their mothers may want to remain at home, there is a way out for them. Hence, they run away with the hope of finding peace somewhere else outside their home. Some older youngsters may take up the responsibility of caring for the other children in an attempt to keep the family stable. These teenagers, mostly girls, may try to protect their younger siblings during the violent periods and offer support afterwards to calm things down.

They may feel they cannot leave their home because they have to protect their siblings, their mother or find ways to calm their father down. Some may act out their anger and frustration in more overt ways, which may result in delinquent behaviour. Adolescent boys for instance, may resort to behaviour they have observed at home by taking it out on their mothers or siblings (Jaffe, et al, 1990).

During adolescence, gender related differences in children's reactions to chronic family violence also begin to emerge. Most studies have found evidence pointing to greater maladjustment in boys compared to girls who have witnessed interparental violence. A study conducted by Jaffe, et al (1990) found that 34% of boys and 20% of girls who witness interpersonal violence manifest maladjustment problems. Boys have been found to react to inter-parental violence with more anger. They perceive it to be a threat and as a result, they often experience adjustment problems. They tend to be disruptive, act aggressively towards objects and people and throw severe temper tantrums in the process. Girls, on the other hand are said to be more likely to blame themselves as levels of violence increase. Girls tend to internalise their anger and as a result they become withdrawn. They are reported to display withdrawal symptoms, passive clinging and dependent behaviours. As they get older, argue Kashani and Allan (1998), adolescent girls are likely to experience problems in relationships. They may develop an extreme distrust for men or tolerance in abusive relationships, since they perceive maltreatment from their boyfriends as inevitable or an indicator of love. This means that boys show greater adjustment problems than girls since they tend to develop aggression and externalise their anger toward others.

However, some studies refute this argument. Cummings et al, (1999), claim that it is girls who tend to experience greater maladjustment problems than boys in response to growing up in a home in which wife abuse occurs. Girls tend to manifest greater interpersonal sensitivity to emotional cues and tensions between the people around them. They react with fear since they somehow know that it is wrong to hurt others and that aggression should be stopped. In experimental situations where girls were exposed to artificial conflict situations, they demonstrated an antisocial behaviour and were more inclined to engage in behaviours that would alleviate conflict. They would feel responsible for the violence and therefore blame themselves for the conflict between their parents.

Cummings et al, (1999) also suggest that the fact that traditionally, in some cultures, the socialisation of girls is centred on the home, the social context of the family might be more important for girls compared to boys. Thus the family environment, whatever its

characteristic interactional patterns, may have a greater effect on the psychosocial development of girls than boys. They may be overwhelmed with fear, sadness and anger, which can be triggered by witnessing interparental violence to such an extent that they will fail to control and process the chronic misery. This may in turn hinder their healthy development. Further, these children cannot turn to their parents for emotional support since it is their parents themselves who are responsible for their distress.

A further observation explaining the reason behind the differences in responses of the different gender types is that children tend to identify with same sex parents (Cummings, et al 1999). This means that their self-concept mirrors the self-concept of that particular parent. This is the case, especially with girls, because they tend to identify themselves with their battered mothers, thus developing a “victim-like” identity. As mentioned before, children from families characterised by violence, are themselves at risk of being abused. Most of the time, Strauss et al (1980) maintain, they find themselves caught up in the cycle of physical parent-child aggression.

There is evidence suggesting the existence of a correlation between the battering of women and aggression toward children. Wolfe et al, (1997) argue that the scenario begins with one member of the family, in most cases the male figure, increasing his coerciveness beyond the normal range, thus putting others at the risk of being hit. As this continues, other members of the family, for example the mother who is in most instances the victim, would start becoming coercive and angry, taking her frustration out on children. Then the cycle continues with both parents being aggressive towards their children.

Furthermore, gender is said to also play a role in this cycle of parent-child aggression as a result of marital conflict. It is argued that boys tend to experience more aggression from both parents than girls do. This is attributed to the externalising of behaviour problems that is more common in boys. Since parental aggression is often intended to discipline children, boys are vulnerable because they are thought to require more discipline than girls because of greater misbehaviour (Jouriles & Norwood, 1995).

In addition to being vulnerable to parental aggression as a result of marital violence, children are also at risk of developing feelings of neglect, especially by their mothers, who are usually the victims of battering. In a study with abused mothers and their perceptions of how their battering experiences impact on their parenting skills, it has been found that most women are unable to attend to their children due to strain that battering brings to their functioning (Levendosky & Alytia, 2000: 249). Battering impacts on women's

psychological functioning in such a way that it results in increased depression. The effects of the domestic abuse appears to be so severe that women end up feeling helpless to stop the situation especially if it occurs frequently. Hence they stop taking action against it. This in turn, affects their parenting capacity because it results in decreased attention, involvement and empathy for their children. These women tend to be less warm and are often distant from their children. This creates a strenuous relationship between them.

McCloskey et al (1995) claim that the abuse of mothers can have a negative impact on their parenting abilities. The physical and psychological trauma they experienced because of frequent abuse may result in them being less equipped to care for the children. Her mental health status could have equally harmful effects on her children. For example, it is suggested that children from violent homes appear to be more disturbed because they receive less support and nurturance from adults. It is suggested that there are two forms of social support that can benefit children at risk, namely, a positive relationship within the family, especially with one or both of the parents as well as support networks outside the family. Children of divorced parents, for example, cope better when they receive increased support from both family and from people outside their home. Therefore, a child's close relationship with one of the parents in a divorce can serve as a "buffer" in adjustment. Unfortunately, children of abused women are unable to develop these close relationships because their fathers are unlikely to play a supportive role during their childhood and because their mothers have fewer psycho-social resources to provide. An ideal situation, in such cases, is that a close relationship with the mother might be a protective factor for the child, where both the mother and child form a mutual alliance against a threatening and coercive father (McCloskey et al, 1995).

2.5.3. Social Learning Theory

The social learning theory seeks to explain the ways in which behaviour is learned through the observation of significant others. For instance, aggressive behaviour is learned in the same way as those that people acquire through observing others who are seen as models. Through modelling, these behaviours are transmitted and reinforced. As a result the observer (in most cases children) takes on the behaviour and then, automatically uses it in new circumstances and situations outside the home (Jouriles & Norwood, 1995; Holden et al, 1998).

How then does the modelling of aggressive behaviours occur? According to social learning theory, this takes place through the process of observational learning. In essence, observational learning involves two processes: attentional processes and retentional processes (Bandura, 1973). Attentional processes refer to the ways in which a person attends to and takes note of what is considered to be the important features of the model's behaviour. Here, the observer's personal inclinations of whose behaviour they learn, plays a crucial role in that they determine the types of behaviour that one will repeatedly observe and learn. In other words, the kind of persons the observer associates with and holds in high esteem will most probably be imitated because of their influence on them. This explains the tendency of observers to adhere more to imitating behaviours of those who possess high status than the behaviour of those who do not have these qualities. Identification with such people is firmly rooted and more pervasive during childhood in relation to one's parental figures, which are later engraved throughout one's later development. Moreover, the behaviour's efficacy, that is, its ability to produce a desirable response also strengthens the observer's attention to modelled behaviour. This means that the tangible desired outcomes and responses that are produced by the behaviour further strengthen their chances of being adapted and imitated by the observer (Bandura, 1973).

The second process, retentional process, emphasises the importance of memory in observational learning. It refers to a long-term preservation of the behaviours that have been modelled. In other words, the behaviour that has been selected and absorbed with greater attention is now being retained. The aim is to reproduce the behaviour when the model is no longer present. Therefore, through the repetition of the observed behaviour, the observer is able to retain through memory codes and are eventually used as internal guides for imitation (Bandura, 1973).

What role does observation and modelling play in family violence? According to Erasmus (1988), the family is seen as a most suitable "training ground" for violence in that it provides opportunities for imitation, comprises of role models and uses rewards and punishment to reinforce behaviour as well as when it is appropriate to act it out. Therefore, a family is where children learn aggression tactics. Research on domestic violence have shown that the behaviours of children who are raised in woman abusive families, sometimes reflect their background at home in the sense that they are characterised by the same aggressive actions of those whose intentions are to exert control over and oppress others (Erasmus, 1988).

Furthermore, in an attempt to apply the social learning theory to domestic violence, with special focus on spousal aggression, O'Leary and Arias (1988) have come up with a model from a longitudinal study they conducted with couples from before they got married to 36 months within the marriage. According to this model, there are five factors that may contribute to and foretell spousal aggression: namely, (i) violence in the family of origin, (ii) stress, (iii) aggression as a personality style, (iv) alcohol use and abuse and (v) relationship dissatisfaction.

(a) Violence from the Family of Origin

The first one, violence in the family of origin, implies that people who exert aggression against their intimate partners come from violent homes. In other words, they have either been witnesses to or have experienced violence in the home of origin. Here the intergenerational transmission of violence has been noted, which presupposes that modelling or observational learning plays a crucial role in determining the likelihood of a person's aggressive behaviour in marital violence. Modelling is said to have three types of effects on the person who is exposed to it: (i) acquisition of new responses or patterns of behaviour, that is, the observer's tendency to learn and later act out the observed behaviour in a new environment; (ii) the inhibition/disinhibition of previously learned behaviour, that is, the high or low chances of the observer acting out what is already in his/her range of behaviours previously learned and which resulted in reward or punishment and (iii) response facilitation, which refers to an increase in chances of a person repeating the same behaviour they have observed from their significant others and its consequences thereof (Arias, 1988:41).

(b) Stress

It has been found that stress, does contribute to marital violence. Violence is viewed as one of the responses to stress. In other words, the more stressed a person becomes the more his/her aggressive inclinations are heightened. However, many researchers have discovered, stress on its own does not lead to aggressive behaviour. Rather, it has been found to be a mediating variable that usually occurs in conjunction with other variables that may lead to the occurrence of violence (O'leary, 1988:45) In addition, it is argued that family relationships of their own tend to spawn stress. According to Strauss (1980: 22), a number of family circumstances can confirm this statement. First and foremost the nature of family

relationships, as dyadic relations, have the reputation for being unstable. Secondly, families undergo changes in their structure at times in response to events that occur within the family life such as birth, aging, death and so on. These changes often bring about crises within the family as members struggle to adapt to them. Thirdly, the general expectations from society of what a family should look like or should be run, are said to also generate stress for family members. This is because a family is expected to make ends meet by providing food, clothing and a security of a home for its their members. In reality however, society does not always provide families with adequate resources to meet such demands.

(c) Aggressive Personality Style

It is argued that most individuals who have problems controlling their anger as children and adolescents are most likely to display aggressive-impulsive personality styles as adults. This is because these behaviour patterns have a tendency to remain stable over time. In their study with the 393 couples, O'Leary & Arias (1988:48) have discovered when they assessed the couples before marriage, 6 months after marriage and 18 months after marriage, that there is high degree of stability in the levels of spousal aggression.

(d) Alcohol use and abuse

According to social learning theory, alcohol abuse can increase the chances of a person engaging in undesirable behaviour. This is because, as a depressant, it operates an "expectancy effect". This means that people who are under the influence of alcohol tend to believe that they will be less controlled and their behaviour excused when they are saturated with alcohol. A significant relationship has been found to exist between alcohol use and spousal aggression. In their study with the 393 couples, O'Leary and Arias (1988:46) have learned that alcohol abuse is indeed associated with physical aggression among partners when they used the Short Michigan Alcoholism Test.

(e) Relationship Dissatisfaction

Marital disputes that start off as disagreements between partners may eventually culminate in physical aggression as tension mounts. It is said that most of these arguments arise as a result of some level of dissatisfaction on the part of the couple about how the

relationship is going. In the same study with 393 couples mentioned above, O'Leary & Arias (1988: 50) found some evidence that confirms this hypothesis. It was found that approximately 42% of the women and 33% of the men in the sample reported to have been engaged in aggressive behaviour towards their partners in the previous year. At 6-8 months within the marriage, female participants reported to have resorted to physical aggression during arguments with their partners. From these findings the researchers concluded that some level of relationship dissatisfaction does lead to physical aggression. There seems to be a link between negative interaction and aggression. However, these negative interactions are not persistent to the extent that people will always act aggressively every time they have arguments with their intimate partners (O'Leary & Arias, 1988: 50).

The interaction between the five variables mentioned above is depicted in Figure 1.1. This representation shows how this interaction results in spousal aggression.

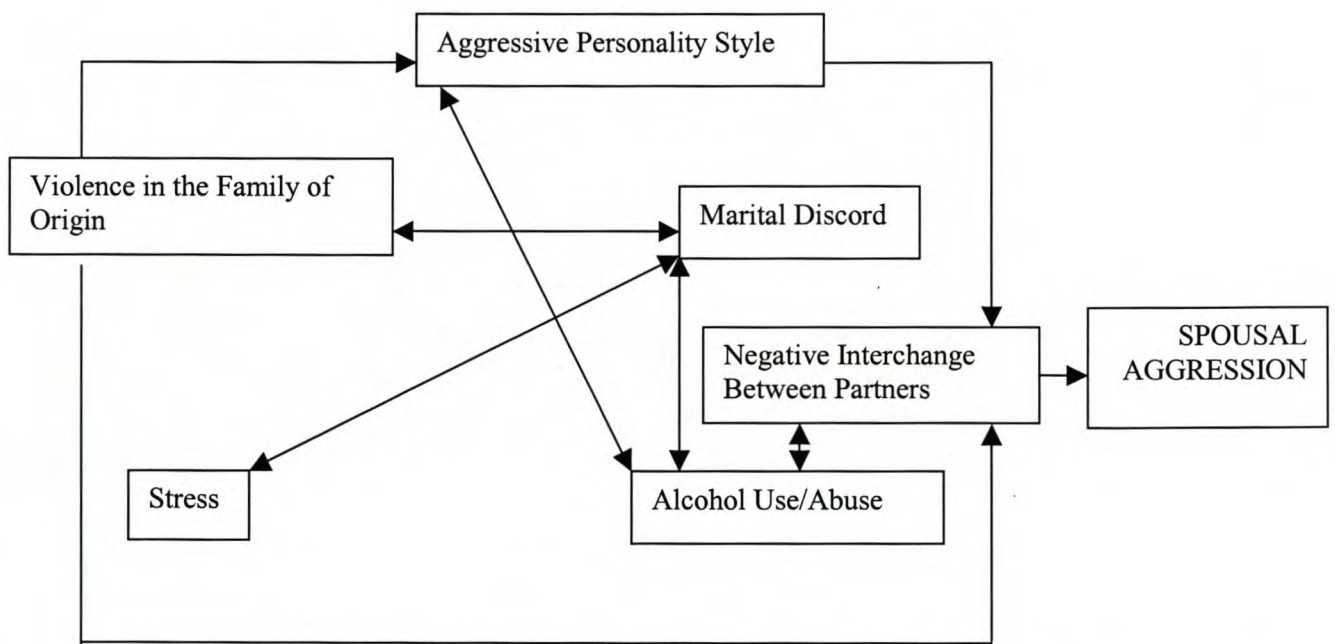


Figure 1.1 A social learning model of spousal aggression adopted from O'Leary & Arias (1988: 38).

In addition to observational learning, it is suggested that behaviour is also learned through direct experience. It is argued that the family is a setting where people first experience violence. Here, they first learn the emotional and moral meaning of violence at home. The abuse of children, for instance, is justified as punishment to discipline them. The fact that it is the parent who is punishing has a profound effect on the child because it shapes their personal view of the world. There are unintended lessons that children learn from such acts. Firstly, *“those who love you the most are also those who hit you”*, *“those you love are those you hit”*. This means that there is a positive link between love and violence. Secondly, *“violence can be and should be used to secure good ends-the moral rightness of violence”*. The message being conveyed here is that violence is necessary when teaching a child to behave properly. Lastly, *“violence is permissible when other things do not work”*, that is, violence is justified, after the person has tried other measures of control, to be used as the last resort. This justifies the use of violence as the only option that can be resorted to in order to make a point that can produce a desired effect. Therefore, both viewing violence and being subjected to it in one’s family of origin is said to create ideas and norms of when and to whom aggression should be directed (Strauss et al, 1980: 1034). Therefore, these authors view punishment by parents as an act of violence given the way in which it shapes childrens' views of violence, as an act motivated by love to bring order and to correct behaviour.

In their studies on the effects of intimate violence, Strauss et al (1980), found a correlation between child abuse and exposure to parental conflict in children’s family of origin and domestic violence in subsequent intimate relationships for both men and women, as either victims or perpetrators. The majority of couples in their sample reported that their own parents were abusive toward each other. They say that men were almost three times more likely to have beaten their wives

Furthermore, violence in intimate relationships is also learned through the process of differential gender socialisation. In other words, intimate violence here is approached from a gender relations' perspective and implies that violent behaviour among couples, and how it is learned, is influenced by the kind of interaction that exists between the sexes based on gender socialisation. For instance, women are socialised to become dependent and submissive, which makes it difficult for them to assertively handle the aggression they experience from men. Men on the other hand, are groomed to become autonomous human beings who are assertive and dominant, which gives them the power and the right to use physical violence, justifiably so, in a family context (Erasmus, 1988:44). Therefore, the basic premise of social

learning theory in relation to family violence is that it (parental violence) plays a very prominent role in the intergenerational transmission of violence. This model suggests that growing up in a violent home increases the likelihood that there will be violence later on in one's family or other intimate relationships. This is because it happens within a family context, observed and experienced by children and reinforced by society (Corvo & Carpenter, 2000).

2.5.3. The Funnel of Violence Model

The funnel of violence model provides a further in-depth look at factors that may expose children, in particular adolescents, to abusive relationships. It is based on the ecological paradigm of Bronfenbrenner (1979), in which he argues that there are contextual or environmental systems to which a child is exposed to that influence their development. These systems interact with one another and impact on their lives in various ways. They include the people with whom the child forms interpersonal relations such as, family, peers, school and cultural stimuli.

Therefore, the model focuses on the broader environmental factors both within and outside the home that exposes the children to violence and which in turn impact on their development. According to this model, these risk factors i.e. events within the environment are likely to increase the probability of a child developing interpersonal violence. They manifest as causal agents that lead to the greater chances of violent outcomes, particularly violent intimate relationships. They include, among other things, harsh family backgrounds, deviant peer groups and certain personality characteristics (Wolfe et al, 1997).

According to Wolfe et al (1997), this model presupposes that some young people are at risk of engaging in violent relationships. These youths are said to lack appropriate protective mechanisms during their critical stage of adolescence. Adolescence is supposed to be a period of growth, but for some young people it is subjugated by conflict and insecurity as they attempt to form intimate relationships with people outside their homes since they were unable to experience healthy relationships with their parents and caregivers. Therefore high risks of relationship violence can be predicted for these individuals, because the foundation for such violence is organised in childhood, but are often elicited during adolescence. In the model, these factors are conceptualised as moving from general to specific. General risk factors are those that affect all youth and specific risk factors are operative for youth who are

at greatest risk for relationships violence. The funnel is used to depict the interaction between the environmental factors and their influence on the adolescent. Below is a version of the "funnel of violence" as adapted from the original by Wolfe et al (1997:77), which is a representation of the "flow" from general to more specific risk factors that increase one's vulnerability to violence in relationship.

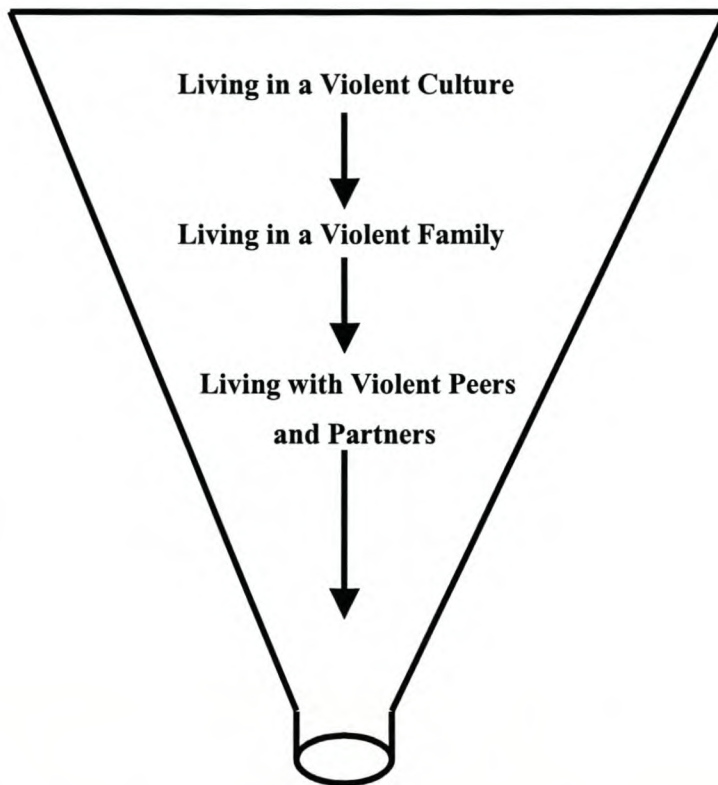


Figure 1.2: The Funnel of Violence

The first one, as cited by Wolfe et al, (1997), focuses on the violent culture in which an adolescent is reared. It refers to the explicit as well as implicit messages, which are characteristic of some societies' cultures, which epitomise and promote violent and abusive behaviours. These include stereotypical views of the sexes and the role of legal and social policies that reinforce tolerance of relationship violence. The media plays a very crucial role in exposing children to violence with its portrayal of violence in relationship as normal.

The male dominated culture within which children are socialised is also said to play a role in promoting violence. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, feminists argue that domestic violence is reinforced by the gender role rigidity, which is characteristic of many societies. The process of sex role socialisation is seen as playing a crucial role and contributes to men being abusive toward women. The power struggles and inequalities

between men and women as well as disrespect for women, are said to be the fundamental cause of violence against women. These are the product of traditional socialisation practices that depict boys as strong and powerful and girls as compliant and submissive. The stereotypes about gender roles tend to reinforce negative gender based attitudes and power imbalances between the sexes within intimate relationships and tend to encourage aggressive behaviour. These attitudes often lead to the ideas about roles within relationships according to which, women must always see to it that the needs of the men are met. In other words, women become accountable to men by virtue of the power vested on them by society. It also means that men should have greater freedom than women. Thus, it makes sense that children who are brought up under such a system will invariably adapt to these attitudes and gender relations. For instance, Wolfe et al (1997) provide empirical evidence to substantiate this point. They conducted a survey with adolescent males on the importance of traditional attitudes towards masculinity. They found that the boys who stick to traditional attitudes about masculinity, tended to have gender based behaviour that is characterised by stereotypes about women. It was revealed that these males had more than one sexual partner and engaged in relationships only for sexual gratification as apposed to intimacy.

Another way in which adolescents' interpersonal violent tendencies is elicited by their relentless exposure to sexist and violent media. The popular television shows, advertisements and musical groups are said to portray violence as an everyday and acceptable way of solving problems. Children are constantly shown coercive and sexist examples of relationships. The positive portrayal of such relationships on television aggravates matters because it impacts severely on those who are at a stage of their lives where they begin to form significant personal relationships (Wolfe et al, 1997).

The second group of agents are those that adolescents experience as a result of living in a violent family. The family is said to represent the broader society in teaching and applying a culture that encourages the use of violence in conflict situations. Living in an abusive home provides children with lessons for being abusive, surviving and coping. Adolescents in particular, find themselves in a difficult position because they are in the process of finding themselves and their role in society. They are also trying to develop their own intimate relationships. The violent influence they experience at home trains them in how to gain power through being abusive and how to fear others (Wolfe et al, 1997).

Whereas, the social learning theory focuses more on observational learning, here, the nature of a relationships one develops and experiences as a child in one's family of origin

plays a crucial role in providing children with lessons on how to approach intimate relationships outside the home. According to the object and attachment theories, the kind of relationships we develop with our significant figures in our home environment will determine and affect our future social relationships either negatively or positively.

Therefore, the relationships one develops later on in one's life represent one's previous interaction with significant others. Even though relationships change over time through new experiences, the impact of the initial relationships formed during childhood in one's family of origin is still strong and has more influence than relationships formed later in life. This is because the initial interactional sequences one is exposed to as a child are internalised and remembered as original ones, and used as a springboard for later interactions. Therefore, children carry not only patterns of learned behaviour, as social learning theorists maintain, but also learned interactional sequences and patterns, and thus have the same expectations of themselves and others within their later relationships with others (Holden et al, 1998). Thus children internalise not only the important figures in their family that is, parents and siblings, but the entire patterns of interpersonal interactions that are repeated over time. Children carry both the images of learned behaviour and interaction patterns into their social circumstances and interactions with others outside the home.

Family violence viewed as destroying any hope or chance for engaging in healthy relationships as it hinders the child's ability to develop safe, reliable expectations about people. Being exposed to violence and maltreatment leads to the development of distorted views on the part of the child, of how relationships should function and the child's role in them. These views are then carried over into their own intimate relationships later on in life. Hence, it is predicated that the nature of the intimate relationships that children who have been exposed to domestic violence engage in outside their home, are characterised by elements of domination and control and expectations around what it means to be a man or a woman. They are also organised around the dynamics of family role scripts that they have observed and experienced in their family of origin, Holden et al (1998).

Third, these children are more likely to engage in relationships with violent peers and partners. Here, the lessons learned from one's family are acted out within the adolescent's social network, with friends and partners. It is argued that young people who are considered to be at risk tend to associate themselves with others who are in similar "at risk" positions. In addition, the individual's personality characteristics, which include aggressive behaviour,

low self-esteem and impulsiveness, interact with the environmental influences in such a way that it leads the youth into violent relationships and anti-social behaviour (Wolfe et al, 1997).

Intimate violence in the case of young people is most visible and occurs frequently in social dating. These relationships are said to be the most crucial ones, apart from family relations, in an adolescent's life. They are also labelled as a testing ground because they represent a point of transition from the experiences of nurturance and care in childhood and the possible exposure to violence in later relationships. In an extensive study on the life histories of rural Mexican-American adolescents' experiences of abuse, Champion and Dimmit (1999) concluded that histories of family violence are predictors of adolescents' acceptance of interpersonal violence within intimate relationships. In their study, they found three patterns that represent transgenerational violence in the subjects' experiences and perceptions of violence through previous and current relationships. These include learning, loving and belonging.

Learning refers to the adolescent's experiences of abuse as a child and its role in shaping their self-concept. Loving, on the other hand, involves abuse in current intimate relationships, which are imitations of what has been learned through witnessing abuse at home. The theme that came out of this pattern is "fear", that is, fear of losing the love that one has within an abusive relationship as well as lessons about being a man and being a woman, meaning that men have the right to find sexual gratification somewhere else if they do not find it at home. Champion and Dimmit found that female adolescents in this group reported sexual coercion as a norm within their dating relationships. Subscribing it to jealousy and perceptions of infidelity. Moreover, behaviour that promotes the acceptance of male sexual coercion against women was found to be based on the belief that men have stronger sexual needs than women and must initiate in sexual situations (Champion & Dimmit, 1999).

The pattern of belonging is essentially about the adolescent's needs to belong to a group and their perceptions of the roles they need to play within a particular group. Here, the theme of "having a family" was dominant and it involved their views of how a family should function. It was found that these roles were an emulation of their own parents' roles. For instance, female roles included cleaning, cooking and taking care of the husband and children. The female participants indicated that even though their intentions were to study and obtain a degree, they still believed in maintaining traditional sex roles and responsibilities of being homemakers and parents. Male sex roles, on the other hand, include

being a breadwinner in the home and providing financial support for the family through employment outside the house. Therefore, sex role identification with abusive behaviour is found across generations (Champion & Dimmit, 1999). In addition to violence and victimisation, children from abusive families have been subjected to a family structure that is unable to offer proper socialisation opportunities that aim at encouraging co-operation and equality within intimate relationships (Jaffe et al, 1990).

This chapter has attempted to provide some background on the phenomenon of family violence by looking at some cultural and societal aspects that contribute to its maintenance. The ultimate aim has been to look at how young people are affected by the violence they are exposed to within their homes on a personal level and in their relations with other people, in particular those of the opposite sex. In the next chapter, the focus will be on the study I conducted with Black teenagers in Kayamandi, in an effort to determine how family violence affect teenagers within the South Africa context. The chapter will outline the methodological steps that were followed in order to achieve this goal.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

According to Taylor and Bogdan (1983) methodology refers to "the way in which we approach a problem" (1983:3). In other words it involves an application of techniques with which researchers obtain solutions to problems they study. It includes the actual methods that social researchers use as well as the principles and assumptions that underlie their use (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). It therefore forms a crucial part of the research process within the field of social science, especially since it binds meta-theory and social research. The methodology one chooses to utilise in the research is largely dependent upon the assumptions, interests, purposes and the research topic (Taylor & Bogdan, 1983).

There are two prominent approaches to social inquiry that have been used over the years within the social sciences, namely: quantitative and qualitative research methods. As mentioned in chapter one, the study in question focused on the problem of domestic violence. The goal was to find out how participants, in this case teenagers, experience and view violence in their homes, predominantly between their parents or guardians. The aim was to find out whether it affects them as individuals as well as their relationships with people of the opposite gender. In this chapter, the research design and methods of collecting data utilised in an effort to achieve this goal will be outlined in detail.

3.1. Theoretical Perspectives in Social Research

3.1.1. Postulates and Paradigms

Before going into a discussion on the approach employed in this study, I believe a background overview of the theoretical/philosophical assumptions underpinning research methods in social science is necessary if one is to make an informed and appropriate decision on the method for a study. Although the study was a qualitative investigation, a discussion on both the qualitative and quantitative paradigms respectfully is useful because it provides an understanding of their theoretical foundations and how they both approach social life.

Historically, two major perspectives have been influential and dominated the field of social science over the years namely Positivism and Phenomenology/Interpretivism. Traditionally, Positivism has been associated with the quantitative paradigm and interpretivism with the qualitative paradigm. What is a paradigm? Maykut and Morehouse (1994:4) define a paradigm as a "set of overarching and interconnected assumptions about

the nature of reality". In other words, in their efforts to make sense of the world, social scientists have come up with ideas/hunches and explanations that require further systematic testing through the application of certain methods. Guba and Lincoln (1985:15), on the other hand, describe a paradigm as "a set of metaphysical beliefs that are sometimes constituted into a system of ideas that either give us some judgements about the nature of reality, or a reason why we must be content with knowing something less than the nature of reality, along with a method for taking hold of whatever can be known". This means that a paradigm signifies an image of what people perceive as reality of the world within which they reside. These assumptions are said to be philosophic and manifest themselves in the form of postulates or axioms that can be viewed as stipulations that guide the application of these assumptions in social research. Therefore, whereas a paradigm provides an overall structure within which research is conducted, postulates are contained within a paradigm as stipulated assumptions about the true nature of reality and are a crucial foundation for conducting research within the field of social science. They are the building blocks of a conceptual or theoretical structure as well as statements that can be regarded as truthful.

Postulates or axioms consist of four methodological questions based on certain assumptions. The first set of questions are *ontological assumptions*, questions about the nature of reality, that is, explanations about the way things are/work. The second, *epistemological assumptions*, are concerned with the nature of the relationship between the knower (researcher) and the known (the researched), as well as the values embedded within that relationship. The third set of questions are concerned with the *logic/methods*, that is, the principles and steps followed by the researcher in an attempt to verify these assumptions and thus gain knowledge about the nature of reality. The last set of questions deal with the purpose of research and its contribution to the body of knowledge, hence they are called *teleological assumptions*, referring mainly to the significance and the role of a particular inquiry within the field of social sciences (Guba & Lincoln, 1985:35)

Both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms differ in the way they answer the above questions and this will be illustrated below.

3.1.2. The Quantitative Paradigm

Quantitative researchers believe that reality exists out there and is determined by fixed natural laws. Therefore the goal of science should be to discover the nature of reality and how it truly works with the aim of predicting and controlling natural phenomena. This principle is based on what is known as a realistic ontology (Guba, 1990). When studying social phenomena, the scientists carefully divide and study its parts (variables) so as to understand the whole. Thus the structure and direction of research will converge onto this reality so that it can be controlled and manipulated (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Lincoln & Guba; 1985).

This paradigm has its foundation from the positivist school of thought. Positivism can be traced back to the days of August Comte and Emile Durkheim, who are often held in high esteem within the field of social sciences as the founders of Sociology. Comte (1798-1851) believed that knowledge, in whatever form, goes through a number of phases within which it seeks to explain the nature of phenomena. The first phase, (Babbie & Mouton, 2001) is known as the “theological” phase where behaviour is seen as resulting from the work of a supernatural, omnipotent being, which controls the movements and the existence of all sentient and insentient beings. The second phase, the “metaphysical” is when behaviour is attributed to abstract forces and entities. The final phase is the “scientific” or “positive phase”. It is this phase of knowledge that positivism is concerned with. Here, behaviour is explained on the basis of direct observations in order to establish causation and correlation between two things. The main emphasis is on empirical evidence on which claims should be based. In other words, conclusions about the occurrence of certain human behaviour, that is, their causes, should be based on tangible evidence based on direct pragmatic, systematic annotations and not merely on assumptions and religion.

It was not until Emil Durkheim came into the picture, however, that positivism became functional within the field of social science and was used as one of the yardsticks for approaches to social inquiry. According to Durkheim, the scientific study of social phenomena is essential for the attainment of a more complete picture of the world. First, he recommended that, in order to achieve valid results or explanations about the nature of events, social scientists should embrace the approach and principles utilized in the natural sciences. This is because, according to him, the natural at that stage science were highly advanced and have made immense progress over the centuries. The social sciences on the other hand, are still in the developing phase when it comes to social inquiry. Second, given the fact that both the social sciences and the natural sciences aim at studying the social ills

and their causes, it demonstrates that they are not as far removed from each other as they are made out to be (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Taylor & Bogdan, 1983).

Third, Durkheim, Taylor & Bogdan, (1983), saw the function of social science as that of investigating social facts, that is, things that are separated from or external to an individual, but act as forces that affect and exert some degree of force on them by virtue of their being part of society. These include things like laws, custom, norms, economic institutions etc. Thus social scientists should study how social phenomena relate to one another by means of scientific laws and principles. The only way, according to Durkheim, a causal relationship can be established between phenomena, is if it is tested under certain conditions or circumstances (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

Thus, as Guba (1990), points out, positivist social scientists believe in an objective investigation based on measurable variables and verifiable propositions. This means that the researcher is restricted to practicing an *objectivist epistemology*, that is, they are supposed to stand back and remain detached from what they are studying and ask questions to nature in such a way that allows nature to answer back in its own way without any interference. The objective relationship between the researcher and the phenomenon being study means that it is *value free*. This is because by standing outside, researchers suspend their values in order to understand the nature of the phenomena they are studying.

However, even though the approach of the researcher is purely objective and value free, bias is possible. This means that even though the researcher may try to suspend their values in their approach, objectivity is still not guaranteed, they can be biased in their explanations. Thus, the most appropriate methodology that can enable the researcher to manipulate and control variables that form the parts of the whole is said to be *empirical experimentalism*. Here, questions, assumptions and hypotheses are formulated and tested in advance and subjected to empirical testing under controlled conditions (Guba, 1990). The experimentation in turn allows the researcher to *generalise* explanations under different circumstances and conditions (*replication*) because it reduces all of the features in the environment that might affect the results. Therefore, in terms of teleological questions, quantitative social scientists seek to confirm or prove existing explanations and not to discover new ones (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

3.1.3. The Qualitative Paradigm

Whereas positivists conceptualise the plight of social science as striving to understand social phenomena through studying social facts, interpretivists focus on studying the individuals who take part within the system where these social facts function. According to this perspective, understanding social phenomena from the point of view of the “actor,” himself or herself, that is, the individual within a particular culture or environment, should be the focal point of social science. Basically, interpretivism is based on the premises that humans are not merely biological beings or species, they have a conscious (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). When studying social phenomena from the point of view of the individuals, social scientists discover that there are multiple realities as opposed to one. This is also known as *relativist ontology* because the people construct these realities based on their circumstances and experiences. These realities are interconnected to the whole. The scientist therefore has to take a relativist stance when studying the multiple realities of subjects and treat them as unique experiences as well as finding the point at which they connect, that is, themes that may emerge (Guba, 1990).

This intersubjective understanding of people’s social realities is based on Max Weber’s *Verstehen* or interpretive understanding. This means that the social scientist is able to grasp the intersubjective meanings people use to explain behaviour. According to him, the understanding, on a personal level, of the motives, beliefs behind people’s actions is what social sciences should focus on. This can only be achieved in two ways: first, through an empathetic understanding of people’s experiences. This means that the researcher should try and put themselves in the place of actors in order to see things from their perspective. Second, by reproducing, in themselves as scientists, the purposive reasoning of the actor, the researcher is able to obtain a valid and concrete picture of a person's own reality (Hagedorn, 1983). Through *Verstehen*, we can not only learn about and understand the reasons or motives that cause certain personal feelings a person may develop as a result of decisions to act in particular ways, we can also discover the meanings they attach to their actions (Neuman, 1997)

Weber described action as referring to all human behaviour that a person attaches subjective meaning to and which occurs between people as they assess each other during their social interaction. Therefore, activities of social actors need more than just to have a purpose, they must have a meaning to the people that engage in them and they must be directed towards, and be in relation to other people (Hagedorn, 1983 & Neuman, 1997). Hence Herbert Blumer coined the term symbolic interactionism to describe these subjective

meanings that people attribute to their activities and their environment. Symbolic Interactionism is based on several assumptions: (a) that people act toward things based on what these things mean to them, (b) these meanings develop as a result of social interactions that people have with those they come into regular contact in their daily lives, and (c) these meanings are dealt with in, and altered through, the process of interpretation that enables an individual to cope with things they encounter (Flick, 1998).

Social scientists should therefore attempt to understand how people interpret phenomena in order to arrive at conclusions about the nature of reality. The purpose being to achieve a subjective understanding of how people assess, use, form and destroy their social relationships. This, social scientists are able to accomplish through getting to know a particular social setting and seeing it from the point of view of the actors, thereby reconstructing the subjective meanings behind social actions. They learn to share feelings and interpretations of the people and see things through their eyes. Thus, unlike positivists, interpretive social scientists study meaningful social action, not the external or observable behaviour of people (Hagedorn, 1983; Neuman, 1997).

Moreover, according to Weber, social science is unique in the sense that it concerns itself with the individual who engages in particular conduct or actions, driven by certain motives, which enables them to attach meaning to these actions. Social scientists are the only people who can study meanings simply because they share common characteristics with the objects of their inquiry, that is, they are also humans. This is the underlying difference between the social sciences and the natural scientists. Because humans are interpretive animals who can create meanings, symbolic and abstracts images, they are able to develop a science. Therefore, the study of human behaviour and meanings they attach to it is more sophisticated because of its subjective nature. In other words, social scientists are in a more advantageous position, than the natural sciences, to study social phenomena because they have more or less gone through the same experiences, reactions, emotions and meanings in their own social worlds, as do the people they study. This puts them in a better position to be able to relate to and get a deeper understanding of the how of social phenomena as viewed by people (Schwartz & Jacobs 1979).

In addition, interpretivists believe that social life is accomplished. This means that it is created with a purpose and it is not something that exists on its own, out there but having a certain degree of influence on people's lives. Instead it is what people experience and perceive it to be. This reality is reinforced and thus maintained through the processes of

communication and interaction in which people participate in their daily lives. This social reality is based on untested assumptions and knowledge about people and events that are often taken for granted in daily life. Moreover, whereas positivists argue that people function according to some pre-established and conventional regulations and systems that direct behaviour, interpretivists believe that people experience reality in different ways and therefore attach different meanings to certain events and behaviour. This means even though at times people can go through certain similar experiences in their lives, they can interpret them differently (Neuman, 1997).

Alfred Shultz, in his theory of phenomenology of everyday life, echoed this point. He based his argument on James Williams's theory of "sub-universe" which propagates the idea that people live in their small world, not physically, but in their minds based on how they experience reality. Here, reality is defined as what people relate to and experience in ways that are unique to them. In other words, reality exists, as people who participate in it see it. According to Schultz, the only way to capture this reality is through observing people in their everyday lives. He describes "everyday life" as the intersubjective world shared by all ordinary human beings. This world forms part of and is the most important of "sub-universes" that Williams came up with (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

Essentially, the world of everyday life can be understood to include every experience of events as well as the feelings, fears, trials, tribulations and elations that people go through in their day to day lives and within their personal relationships with others. It is what is relevant to people and what social scientists should pay attention to (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Furthermore, the key to understanding people is through common sense. In other words, social scientists should take into account the fact that people use common sense to guide them in their daily conduct. Common sense is the storehouse for the meanings people use during their social interactions. It is therefore an important way to the sources of information for understanding how people function in their own world (Neuman, 1997).

It is clear from this background that, in terms of epistemology, interpretivists are in support of a *subjective* rather than an objective position during the process of inquiry. Here, the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the researched is an interdependent one. This means that during the research process, the researcher becomes involved and forms an empathetic relationship with the research subjects. This is essential since the researcher seeks to understand reality from the viewpoint of the participants (Guba, 1990). Moreover, unlike in the case of the positivists, values play a very crucial role in the

interpretivist perspective. Again, this is because of the interconnection between the researcher and the researched. Values are entrenched throughout the research process. This also means that the findings of the inquiry are determined by the interaction between the researcher and the research subjects (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

For the researcher to depict the reality of individuals within a particular context as accurately as possible, they have to apply methods that would allow them to capture it as accurately as possible through the eyes of the people they are studying. The methods must enable them to interpret the words, actions and personal accounts. Therefore, qualitative methods are deemed useful in obtaining an understanding of and yielding descriptive information about, social phenomena. This is because data is gathered from people's own written or spoken words. Moreover, whereas in the quantitative paradigms, research methods used are the ones that will enable the researcher to generalise the findings from a study of a specific group to a whole population, in the qualitative paradigm, findings and explanation of an inquiry are only confined within the specific group that is being studied. In terms of teleological assumption, it is safe to say that qualitative researchers are oriented towards discovering new knowledge through observations and thorough examination of patterns and themes that may occur from the multiple accounts and meanings about the nature of reality (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

3.2. Qualitative Research Design

Since the main interest of the study on domestic violence was in Black teenagers' experiences and views on domestic violence, it is understandable that qualitative methods would be the best option. The next section of the chapter will focus on how I, as the researcher, applied the qualitative methods in order to meet its objectives, that is, the research design of the study.

Qualitative studies are known to be explorative and descriptive in nature. The researcher seeks to discover the process, meaning and understanding obtained through words or pictures. Here, a general focus of inquiry is developed with the aim of establishing how people experience and view reality. My study was an attempt to explore the experiences, views and attitudes of teenagers towards violence in their homes and intimate relationships. As mentioned before, qualitative methods are regarded as the most effective tools, if the researcher is interested in how people, in their environment, experience reality (Maykut &

Morehouse, 1994). With the "insider's perspective" as its main focal point, qualitative methodology permits researchers the opportunity to become more than just an observer in a particular setting because they take part in it. By placing themselves in the positions of the people they are studying, they are able to understand reasons behind people's actions, decisions, behaviour and practices as they view them (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

Since it is clear so far that both qualitative and quantitative researchers approach the social world differently, it is obvious that the design would invariably differ. Qualitative researchers have a different understanding of research in general, specifically the relationship between the issue being investigated and the methods used. In this regards, there is a mutual interdependence throughout the stages of research. For instance, in a typical quantitative study, a researcher takes up a *linear* approach to research. They begin by forming a model with certain assumptions about the phenomenon under study prior to entering the field of study. In this model, they consult previous literature on the topic, which they use to develop a theoretical framework. From there they come up with a hypothesis, which will be then operationalised and tested under specific conditions. In a qualitative study, on the other hand, the approach is not linear, but *circular*. Here, the process of research is based on grounded theory where data and the field are used to develop theories, not on prior theoretical assumptions (Flick, 1998).

This means that qualitative researchers first seek to identify unforeseen incidences and how they influence people being studied and then move on to generating new grounded theories about them (Maxwell, 1996). This is the inductive approach to social inquiry because the researcher first observes the social phenomena in detail before making abstract generalizations about what they see. They start out with only a topic and some vague concepts. Here theory is build from the ground up, hence it is called a grounded theory approach. This approach implies that theory in qualitative research only develops during data collection (Neuman, 1997). The process of grounded theory in qualitative research implies that the researcher is more interested in what goes on in the field and focuses more on the richness of data they can produce through detailed observations and not so much on theoretical constructs. This theory is based on the principle of "openness" according to which theoretical structuring on the issue under study is suspended until observations of and perspective of the people under study have emerged (Flick, 1998).

Various types of qualitative designs can be cited, which aim to investigate people's understanding of reality. The most prominent are case studies, ethnography, participant

observation, phenomenology, ethnomethodology, grounded theory and biographical life histories. All these are appropriate and efficient, but their success depends on the researcher's ability to develop a conceptual framework that is thorough and concise and a design that is systematic, manageable and flexible (Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Creswell, 1998). I would argue that the design I opted for in this study is a combination of a case study, biographical life histories and grounded theory. It was a multiple case study because I examined individual cases of domestic violence with clear boundaries. That is, I explored the unique personal experiences of participants and to what extent violence within their homes impacted on them. Individual participants were also examined, based on biographical information obtained from each participant's lives and events that have occurred over the years. This helped in illuminating even further the impact of violence within their life course (Creswell, 1998).

3.3. The Research Setting

According to Guba & Lincoln (1985), qualitative inquiry should be implemented within a natural setting. According to these authors, the construction of reality cannot be removed from the context where it is experienced. This is because people derive meaning from their environment in as much as they do from themselves. Observations must therefore be *time-and-context dependant*. Qualitative research in a natural setting requires the researcher to take into account all factors and influences of a certain environment. This means that they must be prepared to get involved in the field and become part of the context. This will make the research subjects become more used to their presence. In addition, observations must take place over a long period of time so that significant factors can be captured. Therefore, in a natural setting, the contact between the researcher and the researched becomes closer and more intense. It also involves the disclosure of everyday life, which cannot be easily controlled in advance.

3.3.1. Entering the Field

One of the challenges of conducting research in natural settings, however, is getting access to the field. This is especially true, as Flick (1998) has noted, when the research is conducted in an institution. Here, there are different rules and regulations by which the institutions are run and which might prove to be an obstacle if the approach of the researcher

is not appropriate. It is said that one of the best ways to get access to an institution is through a gatekeeper, someone responsible for authorising access. Establishing rapport and trustworthiness with the individual is crucial at this point. In my case, nurturing a relationship with a guidance teacher at the high school did not only help me gain access to the institution but to the participants themselves. I have learned from experience that it is very important to establish contact with people who understand the goals of research and who have a certain level of knowledge about the subjects being studied. The guidance teacher at Kaya high school has a special bond with her pupils. She knows her pupils both on an academic and a personal level. They trust and respect her. This makes it easier for them to open up to her about things that are of personal concern to them. My task as a researcher was to establish a professional relationship with the guidance teacher by clarifying my motives and goals of research. I also had to nurture rapport in order to gain her trust through spending more time with her and getting her involved in my research.

3.3.2. The Role of the Researcher

It is said that in a natural setting, humans are the best instruments when it comes to making observations and obtaining reliable and rich information. In this case what makes data valid is the fact that humans have the advantage of longer observation once access has been secured. The natural settings are also unfixed and thus require flexibility. However, the human instrument is said to possess the qualities, which enable them to cope with uncertain situations. This is because humans are *responsive*, that is, they are able to sense, react to, and interact with personal and environmental signals. They also have the capacity to *adapt* to whatever situation they find themselves in. In a research situation, this means that they can collect information about manifold factors and levels at the same time. *Holistic emphasis* is another function humans can perform. It refers to the ability to grasp everything about the phenomena under study (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). This indicates therefore that the researcher (Flick, 1998) has a very important role in the field. This also means that as an instrument they cannot take on a neutral stance both in the field and during their interaction with the people they are studying. They must rather take or be allocated certain roles and positions. This is a process that is negotiated by the researcher and the participant. My role in the field was that of an observer and facilitator of interaction during discussions of the subject matter. Negotiating my role in the field required me to familiarise myself with the pupils. This I did through constant visits and classroom observations. In this way, I was able to get a glimpse

into their routines and their actions and in turn they got used to my presence and gradually began to trust me.

3.4. Sampling

In quantitative research a random sampling is considered to be the most valid and accurate technique of selecting participants for a study. This is because it gives every person in the population an equal chance of being selected. This is essential since the aim is to have a representative sample from which one can generalise about the whole population. In qualitative research, however, the goal is not to select a sample, which will ensure representativeness and generalisability, but one that would allow a researcher to gain a deeper understanding of how people experience a certain phenomenon (domestic violence). Therefore, the sampling procedure is *purposeful* in that the researcher carefully selects those individuals (teenagers from homes affected by domestic violence), whom they believe can yield information on the particular phenomena from their own experiences of it. It is said that there are various strategies of purposeful sampling, a selection of which depends upon the researcher's focus and judgements about whether they can help in yielding information that is appropriate for the study. The *snowball sampling* is one such strategy (Berg, 2001).

This technique proved to be useful for my study because participants with certain attributes were selected, that is, those who have experienced violence in their homes (Maykut, & Morehouse, 1994; Berg, 2001). Here, the researcher identifies individuals with certain qualities and experiences and then interviews them. In my study, I, with the help of the guidance teacher, visited several classrooms and presented my study to the pupils and asked those who felt this issue was relevant in their lives, to volunteer. I then asked these individuals to suggest names of people who experience the same issue so that I could approach them. The process snowballs until the researcher reaches information saturation. In this study, the school was chosen as the best setting for sampling black teenagers who witnessed and/or experienced domestic violence. Two considerations are important; first the nature of the school setting is such that it is very organised. Secondly, it is where teenagers can be found in a group and where they spend most of their time. (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Berg, 2001).

Teenage boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 20, were approached, those who have either witnessed violence between their parents or guardians in their present homes or

who have been victims as a result of tension between their parents or guardians. It is suggested that at this stage, they have developed the ability to understand what is going on around them, and the ability to express their feelings, frustrations and understanding of the problem. Apart from physical changes, they are also at a critical stage of their development where they are more sensitive and aware of the social context in which they live. They are more likely to explore themselves and their roles in society. They are also more likely to want to try and fit in and understand their roles in relationships with others. This makes them more vulnerable to what they experience and they can easily interpret violence as a way of life. Therefore, if one of the things they happen to witness or experience in their lives at this stage is domestic violence, the study was an attempt to explore the way in which this violence influences their perceptions of violence within intimate relationships.

Since the qualitative approach to research is such that it seeks to study people's behaviour within their environment, an attempt to describe the kind of environment within which these teenagers are reared would be useful. This will help in providing a clear picture of the kind of precipitating environmental and personal factors that make them vulnerable to violence within their lives. Participants in this study are based in Kayamandi, one of the poorest areas of Stellenbosch. It is the only black township consisting of mostly informal settlements and a few brick houses. According to the findings of a survey on the basic needs of the different racial groups in Stellenbosch which was conducted by Kellerman et al (1995), of all the smaller towns of Stellenbosch, Kayamandi seems to be the only one that experiences most social problems which requires immediate intervention. First, according to the survey 80% of the Africans in the sample studied expressed concerns about the crime rate in Kayamandi. Only 37 % of the white sample from other areas expressed concerns over crime rates. Second, in terms of the living conditions, the findings indicate that Africans are the most dissatisfied and disadvantaged. It is said that 90% of the white population in Stellenbosch live under satisfactory conditions and more than 75% of the African population live under poor conditions. Third, the findings of the survey also indicated that over 70 % of Africans in the sample reported to experience more domestic aggression than do other racial groups. These findings indicate that teenagers in this study are at higher risk of experiencing violence in their lives given the fact that they are often exposed to it both within and outside their homes. As posited by the funnel of violence theory, these are the conditions that may put teenagers at risk of engaging in violent relationships because that is what they are used to seeing around them (Wolfe et al, 1997). The study was conducted in a school environment.

The interviews were carried out after school when participants were available. Kayamandi High school is situated in the middle of the township, which makes it accessible to all pupils living in Kayamandi and neighbouring towns. It is the only High school in Kayamandi.

3.5. Data Collection Methods

3.5.1. Qualitative Interviewing

Before describing the methods used to collect information in this study, I will discuss some characteristics of qualitative interviewing in general in an effort to elucidate as to where these methods fit into the qualitative paradigm.

According to Hunt and Eadie (1987), although an interview is a form of communication, it is unique because it is a planned conversation with a pre-established purpose and structure. Purpose here refers to the fact that one person in the dialogue poses questions to the other with the aim of obtaining their opinion on a certain subject. The structure, on the other hand, refers to the pattern of the interaction. In an interview session, the pattern is usually structured in such a way that one person drives the discussion in a specific direction with the questions they pose. However, even though the person who asks questions is considered to be the leader in the discussion, the one who provides answers does most of the talking. Another characteristic that makes an interview unique and a vital form of communication is that it can be used in different situations. For instance, there are various types of interviews, namely: counselling interview, employment interview, appraisal interview, persuasive interview and informational interview. The qualitative paradigm is concerned with the latter type of interviewing.

Information gathering is said to make qualitative interviewing more stimulating and very useful (Rubin & Rubin, 1996). It gives the interviewer access into the worlds of the people they are studying. This is because through qualitative interviewing, the researcher is able to discover how people feel, think and interpret the events that occur in their worlds. It also enables the researcher to later describe and reconstruct these events without having to take part in them or experience them. Furthermore, qualitative interviewing is based on a philosophy that is guided by certain principles. First, people are encouraged to describe their experiences in their own words.

Second, the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee is guided by certain values and rules, which both parties have to adhere to (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

In addition, qualitative interviewing comes in two formats, which can be adopted by the researchers depending on their research objectives. For instance the interview can be unstructured whereby the researcher suggests a topic of discussion with only few specific questions. Here the researcher conducts the interview in such a way that it becomes an open discussion that is not restricted by specific questions. The primary aim is to allow the interviewee to express their views freely. The interview can also follow a semi-structured format in which the interviewer has more specific questions. Although the researcher does not entirely restrict the interviewee with specific questions, they use the questions to guide the interview in a certain direction for the sake of obtaining answers to some issues (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Interviews conducted with the teenagers were unstructured in that my questions were more open and I was not looking for specific answers more than hearing their opinions on particular themes.

Furthermore qualitative interviews can either be conducted with individuals or with groups depending on the nature of the study. In the study with teenagers I opted for group interviews as the main tool. This is because the aim was to not only gather information on their personal experiences of domestic violence, but to also establish their perception of violence within intimate relationships. It is important to mention at this point that, originally, focus groups were not the only tool that was going to be used during the data collection phase of the research. In-depth individual interviews were also going to be conducted with all individual participants, as a follow up from the focus group discussions. However, even though they were going to be useful in further explorations of any themes identified through focus group discussions as well as any information, deemed important to the topic, that individual participants would rather share with the researcher on a one to one basis, it was impossible to conduct them in reality. This was due to unforeseen circumstances and conditions in the research setting. First, the school setting was restrictive in its organisation. Getting access to the participant had to be negotiated around the school's timetable. This made things difficult since the timetable was always full with activities throughout the day.

This meant that the interviews could only be conducted after school hours and not at any time of the day. For this reason, the number of interviews had to be limited since it was very difficult to track participants down after school for an interview. Given the above-mentioned reasons, it was clear that the focus groups would be the only efficient way to collect information in the study since I would be able to conduct interview sessions with several people at the same time.

In the end however, focus group discussions on their own, proved to be valuable in the study since they allowed me the opportunity to obtain valuable data on the differing experiences of and views on domestic violence by participants. The following is a brief discussion on focus groups and their usefulness in qualitative research.

3.5.2. Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions involve a group of people getting together to discuss specific issues. They are focused in that participants are involved in a common, collective goal. Focus group discussions, according to Barbour and Kitzinger (1999), are distinct from any other group interviews. They utilise interaction for a purpose, that is, to generate information. Here the group facilitator/researcher does not concentrate on individual participants by asking specific questions, but encourages them to communicate with one another by sharing ideas, asking each other questions, and exchanging points of view regarding the topic as presented by the facilitator.

Therefore, what makes focus group discussions effective in facilitating an environment, which allows a free flowing interaction among members, is the emphasis on the communication process during the discussions. This is because the kind of communication that occurs in focus groups is based upon the same patterns of communication, which people utilise when discussing issues when gathering in a group situation (Albrecht et al, 1993). Hence in a group discussion, members do most of the talking to one another with opinions that trigger other opinions; focus groups are able to use group dynamics to capture information and to obtain insights that might not be accessible in other ways (Morgan, 1997). In this way, Babbie and Mouton (2001) agrees, focus group discussions are effective because they provide participants with an opportunity to, and facilitate an environment in which they are able to, construct meaning among each other, and something they would not be able to do so in individual interviews. For instance, individual participants may hold different opinions that are accompanied by certain meanings for themselves, but once in a group setting, they are challenged to change or confirm their ideas through exchanging ideas with others. Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) add that this kind of open interaction allows participants the opportunity to react to and confirm the responses of others. This in turn, may trigger the expression of ideas that might not have been obtained from individual interviews. This open interaction also has the benefit of yielding large and rich amounts of data in the participant's own words in a more quicker and more cost effective manner.

This is most relevant in situations where group members are part of the same social environment. For instance, Michell (1999) conducted a study with young people who came from the same neighbourhood. She used focus groups to explore their experiences of their social world. She said that a theme came up during the discussions where young people were discussing the hierarchal nature of the peer group structures both in their schools and the neighbourhood. The participants were able to raise different as well as similar views surrounding the theme. This sparked a debate where participants expressed their thoughts on the topic. Michell (1999) argues that this was due to the contact they had outside the group environment. In this case focus groups were appropriate because they place more emphasis on dynamics between individual within the group, which helps in yielding rich information that will in turn provide a complete picture of the issue at hand (Bloor et al, 2001).

Focus group discussions can be used in various ways by researchers, depending on the focus of the study. First they are used as a *self-contained* method i.e. as the main method of data collection. Second, they can be *supplementary* methods in quantitative studies. Third, they can be used in *multimethod* studies that mix various methods for the purpose of data saturation. In this study, focus group discussions were employed as a self-contained method. They were used to obtain biographical data on the participants and their experiences and perceptions of violence within intimate relationships. According to Morgan (1997) one of the main benefits of using self-contained focus groups is that the findings of the study stand on their own. This provides the researcher with the opportunity to not only fully understand participant's attitudes and opinions, but to also understand their experiences and perceptions. He stresses that learning about the experiences of people through self-reports is more crucial and useful than data obtained from opinions that are not based on experience. In addition, the sharing of personal experiences in a group situation is also valuable because it produces a "livelier group dynamic" since people are able to compare their different experiences with others in the group.

Therefore, self-contained groups are more efficient when the purpose of the interview is to generate a free flowing interaction and exchange among group members. As mentioned above, using focus groups as the sole method of collecting information in the study with teenagers was very effective despite the constrained school environment. Even more so, teenagers were very open about their experiences of violence as though they wanted to be heard. This was because for the first time, they were provided with the opportunity to talk about their situations, surrounded by people who were interested and were willing to listen to

their sides of the story. In addition, listening to others in the group giving accounts of their personal circumstances gave them the opportunity to bond and empathise with each other. During our discussions, they expressed feelings of relief on learning that they were not alone in their struggles, which helped them cope with their trauma better. Moreover, as a researcher, I took a nondirective approach in which I played the role of a facilitator leading open-ended discussions with members, encouraging the flow of interaction among members of the group and picking up themes and issues that come up when members talk about their perceptions, experiences etc (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

With regards to the design of focus groups, Knodel (1993) emphasises that careful thought and consideration is crucial. Hence, it would be useful at this point to describe the steps involved in the process of developing successful focus groups. Knodel (1993) says that depending on the purpose of the study, the characteristics of the target population and the number of sessions to be held, the design of focus groups can be approached from two extremes. On the one hand, a more flexible approach can be adopted, which follows a stepwise style where the target population and the number of sessions change as fieldwork advances. On the other hand, researchers can use a more detailed design that is set in advance. The latter is said to be useful when the researcher has a specific issue to examine and will need to do an extensive analysis on the data. I would argue that in the study with teenagers I adopted a more detailed design, especially when selecting members and deciding on sessions.

(a) Setting Objectives and formulating guidelines

According to Knodel (1993), the first step in designing focus groups involves the clarification of objectives through the definition of broad concepts to be examined in detail. These concepts are put together as a set of discussion guidelines. This is meant to assist the researcher in laying out the issues for the group to discuss. For instance, in my study, I made use of an interview guideline in which I outlined five general themes with some probes as sub themes. The guideline covered issues such as (a) the participant's family of origin, (b) their experiences of abuse at home, and (c) participants' personal experiences and perceptions about violence within their relationships with people of the opposite gender. Additionally, as noted by Knodel (1993), a less structured guideline is desirable especially when the researcher seeks to keep the discussion open and to gain more insight from different members of the group. Therefore, keeping questions open ended is useful because it enable

the researcher to stimulate the discussion further. In an attempt to keep the discussions focused and to gain more insight from the teenagers I decided to divide the sessions according to the broad concepts I outlined above. Hence in each discussion we had, we focused on a single concept and in that way everyone in the group was able to participate freely.

(b) Targeting Participants

Another benefit of clarifying objectives and formulating concepts is that it enables the researcher to best decide on the characteristics of the individuals who are to be approached for the sessions. It is said that participants in a focus group discussion are not systematically selected through random sampling, but on the basis of the relevance of their contribution to the research topic (Bloor et al, 2001). As mentioned before, participants in this study were selected by means of snowballing technique. However, efforts were made to ensure that that all of them have experienced domestic violence in one way or another in their homes.

The normal practice in social research, especially when comparing views of people with different backgrounds or attitudes on a subject, is that discussions are held separately with each being group homogenous in its composition with certain similar characteristics such as gender, race etc (Knodel, 1993). However, this was not going to be useful for the objectives of my study for the following reasons. First, setting and the time factors once again had to be considered. It was difficult to separate the participants according to their gender because this would have meant more sessions, this was not possible within the school environment. Secondly, the nature of the topic required that group discussions be held with different genders. This is because the aim was to capture their perceptions of and the meanings they attach to violence within intimate relationships through stimulating a debate and comparing and contrasting their views with each other. Although I did not feel that boys were uncomfortable with expressing their true feelings and experiences, there is the possibility that I, as a female researcher, was in a less advantaged position to obtain more information from the boys. However, I believe that it would have been more difficult for me to get boys to open to me as a female researcher if I had interviewed them separately from the girls. Therefore, I believe that the presence of the girls had in fact lessened the resistance of the boys to speak out.

Hence, group discussions comprised of both girls and boys. This was useful in obtaining both sex's position. Differences in their perspectives across members of the group were identified and confirmed (Morgan, 1997). In addition, these teenagers are from the same school and live in the same community. This means that they have constant contact with one another. However, according to Stewart & Shamdasani (1990), the extent to which focus group discussions are able to produce valid and useful information is said to largely depend on how comfortable members feel about openly expressing their ideas or opinions. It is said that group dynamics play a crucial role in this sense in that there are some group characteristics or variables that can exert an influence on how members will interact with one another. These include (a) intrapersonal variables, that is, demographic, physical and personality characteristics. Collectively, these are said to determine the kind of behaviour that triggers a certain manner of acting in a group situation, (b) the interpersonal variables, which refer to the characteristics of group members as they relate to one another. These are said to determine the achievement of compatibility, homogeneity versus heterogeneity and group conformity and (c) environmental variables, which refer to the general appeal of focus group environment which in turn determines the level of rapport and participation in the group.

It is argued however, that too much emphasis on group interaction does have some weaknesses, which at times make the use of focus group as a sole method, not ideal. Critics argue that the danger with employing focus groups without any follow up methods is that within the group session the researcher does not enjoy greater control over the group and they are unable to extract a lot more and in-depth information from each individual (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The latter may be perpetuated by the influential nature of groups. It is argued that group members have a tendency to conform, thus withholding information, which they would rather disclose in private. The presence of other group participants may therefore affect what members have to say and how they say it (Morgan, 1997). However, Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) critique the secure nature of individual interviews by saying that individuals may still be unwilling to express their views for fear of having to defend these views. They may be afraid that whatever they say may be perceived as radical or unacceptable by the interviewer. In a group situation, however, they may find comfort in knowing that there are others who share their views and who would support them, which will in turn make it easier for them to speak freely. The problem of less control of the researcher and the threat of conformity can be countered for by the researcher's ability to clarify their

role and boundaries during the discussion. Researchers, he maintains, should use their power as moderators in the following ways: (a) through formal direction of the discussion where they control the agenda of the speakers from the beginning, middle and end of the discussion; and (b) steering the topic, that is, introducing new questions and leading the discussion in a certain direction which is relevant to the subject matter (Flick, 1998).

(c) Data Collection Procedure

Interview sessions were recorded through the use of a tape recorder in order to ensure data accuracy. Data was captured from in-depth focus group discussions with 22 male and female pupils from Kayamandi High School, between the ages of 14 to 21. Group composition for the sessions were as follows: The first group comprised of 9 members (6 girls and 4 boys). The second group comprised of 8 members (3 girls and 5 boys). The third group comprised of 5 members (girls only). Three sessions were held with each group, which amounted up to nine sessions for the whole data collection process.

Three focus group discussions were conducted with each of the three groups. The first session was aimed at obtaining biographical information of each participant. The kind of information obtained included participants' personal history, their family history and current family circumstances. The second session was used to explore the personal experiences of and views on violence in their respective homes. The third group meeting focused on how teenagers view violence within their own, and in general, intimate relationships based on their experiences.

Before the interviewing process, participants were given consent forms to fill in as a way of getting their permission to go ahead with the interview. All interviews were conducted primarily in Xhosa and were transcribed into English for analysis purposes. Transcripts were entered into a computer programme for qualitative data analysis, known as Atlas ti. Here, three main tools of the programme were utilised for various purposes, namely: the coding function for identifying common themes from the segments of the text and to organise them into categories; the network view function, where codes are linked in order to develop relationships among them, and the memo function, which allows the researcher to write comments and give theoretical explanations of themes.

3. 6. Validity and Reliability

Whereas positivists believe that the validity of an explanation of the nature of phenomenon can only be determined by its ability to be replicable, i.e. be repeated under different circumstances, interpretivists, maintain that an explanation is only valid if it makes sense to the subjects as well as the extent to which the researcher is able to understand deeply and enter the world of people they are studying (Neuman, 1997). The main emphasis is on the quality of data, which is found in the power of its language to present a picture of the world within which individuals function (Miller & Dingwall, 1997).

Therefore, the qualitative strategies for enhancing and ensuring validity of data are different from that of quantitative approaches, which pay attention to the sample size, the reliability of an instrument e.g. a questionnaire, the time frame of the study and the unit of analysis. Qualitative researchers rely more on strategies such as triangulation, field notes, member checks etc, to ensure that participants' responses are accurate and not distorted. Triangulation involves the use of multiple methods at the same time (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). For instance, the use of focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews concurrently, with the former supplementing the latter. This does not only help in exploring in-depth the themes picked up during the discussion, but it also helps in establishing whether the researcher has interpreted the participant's responses accurately. However, since it was not practical to use triangulation in this study, the compilation of extensive field notes was another option, which is another way to ensure validity. Babbie & Mouton (2001) suggest that the researcher must keep about two sets of notes during their fieldwork. The first set, observational notes, describe the environment in which the study takes place. The second set are notes on observation that the researcher can use to compare with the literature, i.e. information in the study setting that either agree or dispute the initial theoretical assumptions related to the study. Field notes in this study, in addition to observational notes, were successfully captured through a tape recorder, which Flick (1998) sees as the most effective way of assessing the reliability of data. Here, participants are given a voice. Data is captured in their own words and thoughts. Participants in this study did not have a problem with their interviews being recorded. This is because they were made aware beforehand that the tape recorder was only used to capture accurate information. I emphasised during the recruitment phase and in the consent forms that whatever information they provide will remain in the group and between the participants and the researcher.

3.7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data collected from this study was analysed through the use of ATLAS ti, a computer programme designed to analyse qualitative data. I have opted for the grounded theory approach as my analytic strategy. This is because it is said to be insightful and useful when one works with complex and huge amount of textual data. The fact that it is an inductive approach is most useful in theory building because theory is grounded in the data. It also enables the researcher to make comparisons between phenomena through working directly with textual data and different respondents from the people themselves. In other words, when the researcher is working with raw data, they do so with the intentions of discovering and learning more about the world of the respondent and discovering themes from their own words. Grounded theory is based on the theoretical assumptions of Pragmatism and Symbolic Interactionism and it is a method of developing new theories through the comparison of empirical phenomena under study. It is largely used in qualitative research, where methods are designed to discover and that where theory is grounded in reality (Kelle, 1995).

3.7.1. Principles and aims of Grounded Theory

According to Strauss and Corbin, in Newman (1997), grounded theory aims at providing a basis for a theory that is derived from empirical data. It therefore seeks to enhance the validity and reliability of qualitative research by providing methods and procedures that can generate empirically grounded theory. Moreover, the fact that it enables the researcher to make constant comparison and to examine incidences means that theories that are captured in the data are constantly refined. The approach also helps in integrating categories of coded texts into their properties. Lastly, data reduction is done through the merging of categories, which therefore helps in transforming substantive data to formal one. However, though the grounded theory approach was very useful during data collection and analysis in my study with teenagers, especially the coding functions that will be outline below, I would not claim to have been able to build theory in the end. This is largely due to the fact that (a) my study was small and explorative and (b) I did not spend enough time in the field that would allow me the opportunity to make discoveries that would enable me to build sound theory on my observations.

3.7.2. The Process of Grounded theory

In Grounded theory, the processes of data collection and analysis occur simultaneously. In other words, analysis begins at the onset of interviews. The researcher begins to analyse the first bit of raw data after the first interview so as to get direction on how to enhance the next interview or observation. This systematic and sequential process allows the researcher to capture all the relevant aspects of the subject matter while they are still new (Strauss & Corbin, in Kelle 1995).

When using grounded theory to analyse text, the researcher starts by reading the text carefully and analysing it. This process is known as conceptualisation. This is because, while reading, the researcher forms concepts as they continuously ask critical questions about different aspects of the data so as to identify differences and similarities between different texts. These new or refined concepts are grounded in data. Therefore, concept formation is an integral part of data analysis and collection since it is one way a researcher organises and makes sense of data (Strauss & Corbin 1990 in Neuman, 1997).

3.7.3. Coding

While analysing the data set the researcher codes the text. Coding is said to be the process of labelling and categorising text (Kelle, 1995). In addition, when coding in qualitative research, the researcher organises raw data into conceptual categories and creates themes or concepts, which they use to analyse data. Moreover, coding serves two functions in analysing qualitative data. Firstly, it serves as a mechanical data reduction and an analytic categorisation of data. There are three distinctive kinds of data in qualitative research, namely: open coding, axial coding and selective coding:

(i) Open Coding

According to Strauss in Kelle (1995) open coding is a process of concept identification and development in accordance with their properties and magnitude. It is performed during the first phase on recently collected data. The basic analytical strategy is to ask questions about the data and to make constant comparisons in order to locate similarities or differences between texts.

The researcher locates themes and assigns initial codes or labels so as to condense the data into categories. They then write preliminary concepts i.e. a code list. It is important to note that these codes are just provisional ones and the researcher is open to creating new themes and to change these initial ones as the analysis continues (Neuman, 1997). In open coding categories are developed by focusing on their properties (attributes of a category) and examining their nature, relationships and dimensions. Each of the properties corresponds to a different continuum. The process of breaking a property down into dimensions is known as dimensionalisation. (Strauss and Corbin, in Kelle, 1995)

Open coding brings themes to the surface from deep inside the data. The themes are at a low level of abstraction and come from the researcher's initial research question, concepts in literature, terms used by the people or new thoughts stimulated by fascination in the data (Neuman, 1997). Therefore, after open coding, the researcher makes a list of themes and this serves three purposes:

- 1 It helps the researcher see emerging themes at a glance.
- 2 It stimulates the researcher to find themes in future open coding.
- 3 The researcher uses the list to build a universe of all themes in the study, which he or she recognises, sorts, combines, discards or extends in future analysis (Kelle, 1995).

(ii) Axial Coding

Axial coding involves working with each of the categories created in open coding intensively. In other words, whilst in open coding, the researcher identifies and organises categories, their properties and dimensions, in axial coding, he/she focuses on one category and makes connections between the categories and their subcategories (Kelle, 1995). The focus is on organised set of codes. Additional codes or new ideas may come up during this process. The primary task of the researcher therefore, is to review and examine initial codes. He/she moves towards organising ideas and themes and identifying the axis/alliance of key concepts in analysis. The researcher focuses on causal and consequences, conditions and interactions, strategies and processes and looks for categories or concepts that cluster together (Neuman, 1997). Furthermore, Axial coding stimulates thinking about linkages between concepts or themes and it raises new questions. It reinforces the connection between evidence and concepts (Neuman, 1997).

(iii) Selective Coding

In selective coding, the researcher selects the most important categories and their specified connections and then adjusts the whole study to this category in order to specify and validate its relationship with other categories. This category is known as the “core category”. This process takes place later in the research process (Kelle, 1995). By the time the researcher reaches this last stage of analysis, they have identified the major themes of the research project. Selective coding involves scanning data and previous codes. The researcher looks selectively for cases that illustrate themes and make comparisons and contrasts after most or all data collection is complete. They begin after they have well-developed concepts and have started to organise their overall analysis around several generalisations or ideas. During selective coding major themes or concepts ultimately guide the researcher’s search. They organise specific themes identified in earlier coding and elaborate more than one major theme (Neuman, 1997).

3.7.4. Analytic Memo Writing

Memo writing plays a very crucial role in qualitative data analysis. Here, the researcher writes down his/her thoughts and ideas about the coding process in a form of notes. Each of the coded themes/concepts are organised in separate memo, which contains the discussion of a theme. Memo writing serves as a link between tangible evidence and abstract theoretical thinking. In other words, it is a reflection of the researcher's own thoughts and ideas about coding and the data (Neuman, 1997).

This chapter outlined in detail the methodological procedure that was followed during the data collection and analysis phase of the study with teenagers. In particular, the reasons for choosing qualitative as opposed to quantitative approach to research were presented. The following chapter will present and discuss the findings of the study, which were collected and analysed using qualitative procedures.

CHATER 4. PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS: EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE AT HOME

Introduction

The findings of the present study will be presented in two chapters. The aim is to provide an interpretation of the information gathered as it relates to the goals and objectives of the study as well as the theoretical models outlined in previous chapters. Themes that came up from the group discussions will be reviewed with the hope of determining whether they support or deviate from the theory and whether they provide new and additional insights on the topic. Adhering to the same format and structure that was followed in the interview guideline, the chapters will comprise of four sections with different themes. Chapter 4 will discuss information on (a) each participant's family of origin, (b) participant's experiences and perceptions of violence at home, and (c) the impact of violence on participants. Chapter 5 will discuss, teenage experiences and perceptions of violence within their own intimate relationships as well as their attitudes towards gender roles and relations.

Quotations from the transcripts will be presented in these two chapters as evidence and examples, with the aim of giving the participants a voice in the presentation of findings. It is important to note, however, that the quotations cited in this presentation have been obtained from different discussion sessions with different groups. It is also important to note that during data analysis, participants' names were not mentioned. The aim was to ensure anonymity. Hence, as shall be seen, numbers were used to identify each participant throughout the presentation.

4.1. Participants' Personal Profiles

The personal profiles represent participants' life histories in relation to their family circumstances. These personal profiles were useful in the study for various reasons. First, they provided a picture of each of the participant's lives in relation to their family circumstances. Information was gathered on the origins of their family as well as the present structure, which reflects the nature of interaction between family members. Second, from the profiles, an understanding of the role of violence and its impact on the participant's family life was also captured. Third, the social context and factors under which the participants are reared which contribute to violence in their homes were revealed. Therefore, the family here represents the "context" because it is where the "phenomenon" of violence occurs. The

family circumstances, that is, migration from the rural to urban areas and the nature of interaction and relations between members, represent the intervening conditions because they somehow either contribute to or are a consequence of the existence of the phenomenon of domestic violence.

As was revealed in the data, of the 22 participants who volunteered to be interviewed for the study, 14 were females and only 8 were males. This gender imbalance in the sample can be attributed to the fact that females were more willing to participate in the study than males were. I would argue that this unwillingness to open up about their experiences of violence and their views on issues of violence in intimate relationships could have been attributed to the fact that males found it difficult to talk about such sensitive issues. In other words, the sensitive nature of the topic and the fact that they would have to talk about it in front of other people and strangers may have played a role in discouraging males to take part in the study.

The personal profiles revealed that most participants in the study originate from the rural areas of the Eastern Cape as well as other areas of the country. Their families moved to the urban areas of Cape Town in search of employment and eventually settled in Kayamandi. It appears that the change in environment and lifestyle have had a negative impact on the families' living conditions, relationships and interaction patterns. The demands of the urban areas and the scarcity of employment have exerted a lot of pressure on family members' ability to cope. It is estimated that most of the adult population in Kayamandi are uneducated and unskilled, which makes it difficult to obtain employment. Most participants reported that in the rural areas, even though living conditions were difficult, their family lives were much better compared with the situation in the urban areas. They reported that interaction between family members was much more positive. However, when they had to move to Cape Town, things began to change. Tension built up between parents. They would fight about issues such as money, alcohol etc. The tension usually led to violence, which in turn resulted in the break down in the family structure, with the parents separating. This has had negative effects on the children's lives because they found themselves living at the mercy of relatives or with stepparents who ill-treated them from time to time.

In order to provide a more detailed picture of the participants' background, the following summary of each participant's personal profile is presented:

4.1.1. Personal Profiles:

Participant # 1

This is a 16-year-old female participant who comes from Umtata in the Eastern Cape. Together with her mother and five other siblings, they moved to Cape Town when she was very young to join her father who was working on a wine farm in Stellenbosch. They are currently staying in Kayamandi with only their mother. Their father moved back to the Transkei. He left in 1997 when he started receiving his pension. Her mother is their sole breadwinner, working at a guesthouse as a cleaner. She says her parents are still involved even though they are not staying in the same household. They maintain a distant relationship. The father does not seem to provide any financial support for his wife and children. The participant's parents have had problems in their relationships. Her father has a history of abusive behaviour and often physically abused his wife. She left him on several occasions, but then would return because she was dependent on him financially.

Participant # 2:

This is a 17-year-old female participant. During the interview sessions she had reported that she and her other 8 siblings (6 girls and 3 boys) were living on their own in the house. Their parents had separated due to unresolved differences. Her family is originally from Cofimvaba in the Eastern Cape. They all moved to Cape Town when her father was due to receive a disability grant. Her father was injured on duty and will never be able to work again. When they came to Cape Town her mother also found a job as a cleaner in a guesthouse. She says that in the beginning her parents got along well until 2000 when their relationship turned sour. They started fighting over money and her father's inability to support the family due to his abuse of alcohol. It happened often until they ended up separating. Both parents eventually moved out of the house because "they could not stand each other". Apparently, they are both still living in Kayamandi. Her father moved in with his sister (participant's aunt) and her mother is staying with another man. They come and visit the children from time to time on separate occasions.

Participant # 3:

This is a male participant who is 20 years old from the Eastern Cape, Umtata. He came to Cape Town in 1994 to join his parents who had since settled and work here in the Western Cape. His mother is a domestic worker and his father a plumber. His parents left him in the Eastern Cape when he was still young. His uncle, whom he said ill-treated him, brought

him up. When he was in his early teens, he left his uncle's home and moved to Cape Town with his parents and has since been living with them. Judging by his age, he started going to school at a very late age. He said he had problems coping at school due to the unhappiness he felt while staying with his uncle and his family. After a while in Cape Town, tension began to rise between his parents due to his father's infidelity. This led to a lot of arguments, which sometimes had culminated in violence at home.

Participant # 4:

This is a 20-year-old male participant whose family originates from Lesotho. His parents got divorced in 1989. His father has since moved back to Lesotho and his mother remarried and is living in Kayamandi. The participant is currently living with his grandparents in the same area. He said his parents began to have disagreements in 1986, which often ended in violence. He said his father's drinking problem and his inability to keep his jobs caused the clashes between his parents. This made his mother angry and frustrated. She would often confront him and they would argue. She eventually filed for a divorce when he became more aggressive and abusive. According to the participant, his father has since recovered and regrets his actions. The participant wants his parents to reconcile, but his mother had since moved on with her life and remarried. The participant refuses to accept his mother's new life and this has caused a strain in their relationship. According to the participant, his father has since changed his ways in that he no longer drinks. Therefore, there is no reason, he says, for his parents not to reconcile.

Participant # 5:

This is a 17-year-old female participant from the Eastern Cape in Gcuwa. She is currently staying in Kayamandi with her grandparents. Her mother is in the Eastern Cape, while her father has settled in the Free State with his girlfriend and their younger son. According to the participant, the problem between her parents began in 1998 when her father moved to Gauteng in search of work and began to have an extra marital affair with another woman. He started to neglect his family in the Eastern Cape because he stopped sending money home. He also began to have severe mood swings, which made him aggressive whenever he visited the Eastern Cape. He would beat up his wife whenever she confronted him about his behaviour. Ironically, her parents did not get divorced even though her father is still living with this woman and her mother is aware of the affair. According the participant, there is nothing her mother can do to stop his father from cheating on her. She does not have the power to and her voice is not heard. The participant expressed feelings of resentment towards her father's girlfriend. She blames her for the tension between her parents.

Participant # 6:

This is an 18-year-old female participant. She currently stays in Kayamandi with her mother and her younger brother. Her parents are both from the Eastern Cape in Cofimvaba. They moved to Cape Town about 2 years before the participant was born. Her parents have since been divorced. According to the participant, the problem, with her parents was alcohol. Her father was always abusive towards her mother when he was drunk. Years later the mother also started drinking as a way of coping with the abuse. This made things worse, however, because it perpetuated the conflict even further. The participant has always been the one to carry the burden because she always had to take the responsibility of being a child and a mother to her younger brother. She also had to constantly intervene when her parents argued and fought. Now that her father has left, the family has no one to support them because her mother is unemployed. In addition to going to school, she has to work on a part time basis to support her mother and her younger brother. This has had a negative impact on the participant's performance at school. She said she is behind with her studies because "girls my age are already in Matric and I am still struggling with grade 9"

Participant # 7:

This is a 17-year-old female participant. Her family is originally from Worcester. Her parents got divorced when she was about 3 years old. She and her mother then moved to Kayamandi where they are currently residing. Her mother got involved and shared a house with another man. According to the participant, theirs was a sour relationship because they constantly fought. Her stepfather had a problem with alcohol. He would come home drunk and demand food. When her mother refused, he would beat her up. This went on for quite a long time, until her mother asked her stepfather to leave after he hit her while pregnant with his child.

Participant # 8:

This is a 15-year-old female participant who was born in Bloemfontein. Her parents moved to Cape Town when she was about 2 years old in search for work. They moved from one place to another, staying with relatives, while her father was searching for employment. Her father eventually got a stable job in Stellenbosch where they settled and managed to buy a house. After some time her mother also found a job in a guesthouse. Her father had a history of abusing alcohol, a behaviour that became worse when they moved to the Western Cape. He was also very abusive towards her mother, especially now that she was employed and was able to support herself. The participant reported several violent incidences that occurred between her parents. They were so severe that, on several occasions, her mother was hospitalised due to injuries she sustained from the beatings. After each incident, her mother would leave only to come back to her father and fights would continue. Eventually the participant's mother started to drink because "she felt she could not stand

the abuse anymore". On one occasion, during one of their fights, the participant's mother retaliated. They fought until the participant's father pushed her mother to the floor. On her way down, her head hit the doorknob causing damage to her head. This led to her death. Her father was arrested for the murder, but was soon released. He also died mysteriously soon after that. Meanwhile, the participant was moved from one relative's house to another until she settled with her aunt in her parent's house.

Participant # 9:

This is an 18-year-old male participant, who was born and bred in Stellenbosch. His parents are originally from the Eastern Cape in Gatyana. He has four half siblings and they all live in Kayamandi with their mother. His parents got divorced and his mother remarried. However, his stepfather lives in a hostel in Cape Town where he works and comes to visit occasionally. According to the participant, his stepfather has a drinking problem. Although he has been physically abusive towards his mother before, on several, occasions, he had since stopped because the participant and his other half brothers stood up to him and threatened him. Even though his stepfather no longer exerts his physical strength on his mother, he still verbally abuses her.

Participant #10:

This is a 21-year-old male participant, from the Eastern Cape. He currently lives with his father and his younger brother. His mother moved back to the Eastern Cape soon after she broke up with his father due to unresolved differences. Even though the participant came to Cape Town because he wanted better education, he is unhappy living with his father. He says his father has a very aggressive personality and he is difficult to get along with. He says his behaviour has caused a lot of problems for his relationship with his mother. He had a tendency to be physically and verbally abusive towards the participant's mother. He still continues to take out his anger on his children even after he has separated from his wife

Participant # 11:

This female participant is from the Eastern Cape. She is 17 years old and she came here to live with her grandparents. She arrived in Kayamandi in 1993 to pursue her primary school education. Her mother is currently in the Eastern Cape looking after her 5 younger siblings, while her father lives and works in Gauteng as a long distance taxi driver. Problems between her parents began when her father moved to Gauteng and started to have extra marital affairs. He had stopped sending money home to his wife and children and instead used to spend it on his girlfriend and her children. This caused problems between her parents. The participant did report some incidences of violence between her parents, which occurred

on several occasions. She had to move to Cape Town to stay with her grandmother. They are surviving on her grandmother's pension.

Participant #12:

This male participant is 18 years old and his family is originally from Heshele in the Eastern Cape. His father arrived in Cape Town in 1988, where he works as a police officer. In 1993, he came to join his father in Kayamandi where he goes to school. His mother has been living in Heshele for a while until in 1999. They lived together as a family until his mother moved back to Heshele after a clash with his father. The problem was his father's infidelity. The participant also reported incidences of violence between his parents, which eventually led to their separation. The participant's mother has since moved back to Kayamandi where she stays in her mother in law's old house and is now employed. The participant moved in with his mother and says his relationship with his father has since been strained. He says his relationship with his father has been affected by the tension between his parents.

Participant #13:

This is an 18-year-old male participant who was born in Kayamandi. His father is originally from the Eastern Cape and his mother from Calamander. The participant lives with his parents, his older brother and younger sister. The participant and his siblings do not get along with their father. The participant claims he is bossy and abusive. It appears his father and his mother have different and conflicting ways of bringing up children. His father always makes the rules and demands that his family obey them. He also has a drinking problem and often lashes out at his children and his wife because he believes they disobey him. He is also said to have a tendency not to support his family and spends his money on alcohol and with his friends.

Participant # 14:

This is an 18-year-old male participant. He was born in Stellenbosch. His parents are originally from the Eastern Cape where they are currently based. He has two older sisters. He is currently staying with his sister who is employed as a sales lady. He says violence between his parents used to occur when they lived together with them in the Eastern Cape. His mother had a drinking problem, which caused a lot of clashes between them. His father used to have a problem with his mother's drinking. He always got annoyed when she came home drunk and made a noise. According to the participant, his father would end up beating his mother often as a way of punishing her. However, he also said that this happened when he was old enough to understand what was going on. He tried to intervene on several occasions. He then decided to move back to Cape Town to be with his sister and grandmother because he could not stand his parent's feud.

Participant # 15:

This male participant is 17 years of age. He is presently staying with his mother and two younger sisters. He is originally from Ashton, Worcester where he used to stay with his parents. His parents never married. However, his father is married to another woman and she is currently living in the Eastern Cape with their other children. The father moved to Worcester in search of work where he met the participant's mother, a union, which resulted in his birth. His parents never got married and have since broken up and his father went back to his original wife.

Participant # 16:

This is a 16-year-old female participant who lives in Strand with her mother and stepfather. Her mother is a domestic worker and they live in the servant's quarters. The participant came to join her mother in 1999 after she experienced abuse while living with her grandmother, uncles and aunts in Elliot in the Eastern Cape. Her biological father has since broken up with her mother and last paid maintenance for her when she was two years old. He has since been married, has children and is currently based in George where he practices as a lawyer. Apparently, when the participant's mother fell pregnant with her in 1986 things changed between her parents and they broke up. Her mother is married and has a 4-year-old daughter. She has been living with her husband since 1994. According to the participant, her mother's marriage to her stepfather has brought problems for her. She says they constantly argue about her and sometimes her stepfather is abusive towards her mother. The participant is convinced that her stepfather does not like her and that her mother silently blames her for the problems in her marriage.

Participant #17:

This is a 14-year-old participant who is currently staying with her grandmother and mother in Kayamandi. Her family is originally from Cape Town, in Nyanga. They moved to Stellenbosch when her mother got a job on a wine farm. Her parents never married. Their relationship ended in 1995 after her father severely injured her mother in a fight. Her mother has a drinking problem, which began during the days when she was still the participant's mother. According to the participant, drinking was the only way her mother coped with the abuse from her father. Her father eventually abandoned them and disappeared for a year without a trace. However, he had since returned and is rumoured to be living in Nyanga East, in Cape Town. He has not seen his daughter.

Participant #18:

This is a 17-year-old female participant who stays in Blackheath with her mother and siblings. Her father passed away on the 27th of March 2002. He died of TB complications. She has a younger brother and two other 7-year-old twin sisters. Her father started getting sick last year June and eventually died. He used to work for a firm that delivers fruit countrywide. Her mother has never been employed. They are currently living on her late father's savings and pension. According to the participant her father refused to let her mother work while he was alive. He used to be very abusive towards his wife. Even though she only witnessed her parents fighting once in 1999, she was aware of the fact that they fought often because she used to see her mother's bruises on several occasions. The fights always took place in the bedroom and her mother never spoke to her children about what was going on.

Participant # 19:

This is a 16-year-old female participant whose family is originally from Gatyana in the Eastern Cape. She came to Cape Town in 1998, to join her mother who was working here so that she could attend school. Her father passed away in 1994, leaving his wife and two children. Her mother moved to Cape Town in 1995 in search of employment. She remarried in 1997 and had two more children. According to the participant, problems between her mother and stepfather started last year when violence struck. Apparently her stepfather drinks and cheats on her mother. This is frustrating for the participant because it has affected her relationship with her mother. She said her mother has changed towards her. She seems angry and takes it out on her children. The participant says her mother has a tendency to punish her even though she does nothing. The participant finds it very difficult to communicate with her mother because she always gets upset and lashes out at her.

Participant #20:

This is a 17-year-old female participant who was born and bred in Kayamandi. Her parents are originally from the Transkei. Her father moved to Cape Town for work purposes. Her mother later joined him. In 1990, her mother developed heart problems. Apparently her father used to cheat on her and was often physically abusive towards her. She eventually suffered a heart attack and was operated upon in 1992. With the advice of the doctors and friends, she eventually filed for a divorce and left her first husband. In 1997, she met and got married to the participant's current stepfather. All was well in their relationship until they started fighting over money in 1999. According to the participant, her stepfather had friends who influenced him against his family. He changed his behaviour, started drinking and became abusive. After every fight he often begs her mother for forgiveness and she takes him back. The participant no longer trusts her stepfather and is concerned about her mother's health condition.

Participant # 21:

This is a 17-year-old female participant who currently stays in Calamander with her father. Her family is originally from the Eastern Cape. In 1990 her mother passed away. During that time her father had already moved to Cape Town where he was working. In 1994 he asked the participant and her two younger sisters to join him so that he could look after them and for them to go to school here. He soon remarried another women. According to the participant, she and her sisters had a good relationship with their stepmother. However they use to fight a lot with her father. She says they did not have any respect for each other. Her father often used to beat her up. In 1996 she finally left him "because she could not take it anymore".

Participant # 22:

This is a 15-year-old female participant who is originally from Khayelitsha in Cape Town. She moved to Calamander after her parents got divorced. She is staying with her aunt until her mother finds employment so that she can look after her and her older brother. However, she expressed feelings of unhappiness about living with her aunt. She feels her aunt is ill-treating her and sometimes deprives her of basic things like food and clothes. She has spoken to her mother about this and her mother has since promised that she would come and get her as soon as she finds work. Her father also stays in Khayelitsha, but is not allowed to come near her mother. He was served with a restraining order after it was discovered that he used to abuse his ex wife. On two occasions she had to be hospitalised due to injuries she sustained on her body. The participant is not getting any financial support from her father.

4.2. Experiences of Violence at Home: Contributing Factors

In this section participants' perspectives on the factors that contribute to the occurrence of violence between their respective parents/guardians are presented. Here, the common factors that were raised by participants were the abuse of alcohol and infidelity on the part of their fathers. The findings indicate that fathers are the ones in, most cases, who create tension, which eventually leads to aggression in the home.

4.2.1. Alcohol, money and abuse of power

Most participants, both male and female, attribute the conflict at home to alcohol abuse of their parents, in particular their fathers. It appears that the fathers have a tendency to spend their income on alcohol and therefore fail to maintain their families. In families where fathers/stepfathers are the sole breadwinners, this becomes a crisis because those who are

dependent on his income, in most cases wives and children, struggle to make ends meet. In families where the mothers are also employed, the conflict transpires because of the father's unwillingness to contribute to the family's financial needs. In both cases the fathers have been reported to come home drunk and to act aggressively, demanding food from their wives. When it is not forthcoming, they become abusive towards their wives and sometimes towards their children. This is a clear case of an abuse of power because these men demand the respect of their wives when they do not provide for their families. Some participants offered their views on what they perceived to be the problem in the following manner:

Participant # 2, a teenage girl whose parents ended up separating because of the tension that culminated in violence at times, had this to say:

We all got along very well when we were living in the Eastern Cape. However, last year, things changed between my parents. They started fighting over money. It happened so often that they ended up separating. We then found ourselves living alone in the house as children since our parents had both moved out. They cannot seem to stay together under one roof any more. The one would come back for a while, while the other was not there and visa versa. I think the problem is that one parent does not want to support the family on her own, while the other does not want to contribute. I think my father's problem is alcohol. He spent all of his money on alcohol. This made things difficult for my mother so she decided to leave.

Another female participant # 7, whose mother experienced abuse from her stepfather for years and who believes the problem was her stepfather's abuse of alcohol, described her situation as follows:

They used to fight a lot. For example, when my stepfather came back home maybe on a Friday from drinking, he would demand food from my mother, especially meat. My mother would refuse saying she does not want to cook for him because he has not given her the money to buy that meat. So the problem would start then. This used to happen late at night. He would beat her up just like that, even if she did not do anything. My mother would ask him "why are you beating me for no reason? I have not done anything.

Participant # 4 who is male and at the time of the interviews had a difficult time dealing with his parents divorce in 1989, comments:

At home, where I come from in Lesotho, my parents had a disagreement in 1986-89 and my mother decided to move out. They started fighting a lot and my father would end up hitting my mother, until one day she left. The problem was that my father used to work in Gauteng. He would be

away for some time then come home when he was on leave. But he had the tendency to not go back to work once his leave was over. He would then lose his job. He was fortunate because he would always get another job, but he would repeat the same behaviour in every job he got. This made my mother very angry. She would confront him and they would argue. After my mother left, my father, my brother and I moved to Knysna.

Another female participant # 11 says the problem was that her father abandoned them when he got a job in Gauteng. The conflict occurred whenever her mother confronted her father for deserting his family:

My parents used to fight a lot when I was living in the Eastern Cape with my mother and sister. My father used to refuse to send money to my mother in the Eastern Cape. You see, my father had to go to Gauteng in the early 1990's in search of work. He got a job as a long-distance taxi driver. In the beginning, he used to send money regularly without any problems. However, as time went by, he stopped. For a while, it was very difficult for my mother to get hold of him. He made excuses about how busy he was and promised to send money. Several times we would go to the bank and we would find that he did not deposit any money as he had promised.

Participant # 3 who is male also believes that his father's drinking contributed a lot to his aggressive behaviour towards his mother. He had this to say about the matter:

This (father's drinking) caused tension between my parents. They started having frequent arguments. You see my father always drank, but then he started drinking more and he would start a fight with my mother. There were times when he became aggressive and wanted to beat her. But then I would intervene since I am old enough to stand up to him, as a boy, and stop him

One may argue that aggression is the one way in which these men could maintain their control over their wives and children. When their power was threatened, that is, when they did not get what they wanted, they became aggressive. Another contributing factor may be the traditional division of labour both within and outside the home. Within such a system, men have always occupied the role of being a provider who is in charge and in control of the financial matters within the home. Women on the other hand, have been regarded as homemakers and child minders who are subservient, powerless and dependent on their husbands. It appears that the traditional role of power and control puts an overwhelming amount of pressure on these men, which in turn threatens their sense of identity. For

instance, in situations where men are the sole providers in their homes, they are expected to meet the financial needs of the family. However, the stiff competition in the market world, lack of skills and the high costs of living make it difficult for these men to meet these needs. Feeling powerless, some men resort to violence at home as a way of protecting their status and power.

4.2.2. Infidelity and abandonment

Some male and female participants in the group discussions reported cases of infidelity on the part of their fathers. Those fathers who work in the urban areas away from their families tend to get involved in extra marital affairs. They spend all their money, supporting their girlfriends while abandoning their wives and children. When confronted by their wives, these men become aggressive and violent. According to the participants, this contributed a lot to the conflict between their parents. This is because some of the fathers did not even hide their affairs from their wives and children. These participants see this as an indication of disrespect for their mothers. Therefore, these actions not only caused their fathers to neglect their families, but they also brought shame and humiliation to the family, in particular their mothers. Here are some of the accounts provided by the participants on the issue:

Participant #20 had this to say about how her father's infidelity affected her mother:

In 1990 my mother developed heart problems. They said it was because of the way my father treated her. She used to worry a lot and was upset most of the time. She had a heart operation. It was clear that the more she stayed with my father, the more she got sick. She was advised by the doctors to leave my father. She decided to file for a divorce. My father cheated on her. You see, my father works for this company, which sometimes required him to work night shifts. Sometimes he would lie and say he is going to work when he is going to spend the night with his girlfriends.

In addition to her stepfather's drinking problems, which made him aggressive most of the times, participant # 19 says her stepfather cheated on her mother on several occasions. Whenever he was confronted, he became aggressive and he would fight with the participant's mother. Describing one incidence, she said:

The next time they argued was because of my father's infidelity. My father left one day, saying he was going to work. He was lying. My mother saw him that morning entering this house down the road. My

mother decided to follow him into the house. She knocked and indeed found him in the arms of another woman. She did not say anything. She just came back home. She did not say anything to us. But it was clear that she was upset about something. My father came back and he apologised for what happened earlier. My mother shouted at him and called him names. She was still upset. They ended up fighting.

Participant # 12 says her father's unfaithfulness was the main problem between her parents. She says:

Most of the time they used to fight because my father would just disappears for days visiting other women. My mother knew that he was seeing other women. She would confront him and my father would deny it. My mother would get angry and continue accusing him and pester him with questions. He would ask her where she got that information. They would go on and on. Their arguments always ended in violence.

4.3. Violence at Home: Incidences

In this section participants' accounts of the actual incidences of violence are presented. The aim is to capture the severity of the violence as it occurred in front of the teenagers. The impact of the abuse on mothers as well as their responses to it was explored in order to gauge their pain and the factors that keep them in abusive relationships.

4.3.1. Incidences of violence

As indicated above, the tension/conflict between parents often results in incidences of violence. Fathers, who in most cases exert physical harm on their wives and sometimes children, perpetuate these violent actions. The scenario begins with arguments, with one partner (often fathers) making demands. These fathers become verbally abusive and aggressive if they do not get the response they want. In other instances, the clashes would erupt when the mothers confront their husbands about something or other, for example, money, and infidelity. These parents would clash and violence would occur with the father striking the mother or most of the time, as it happened in some cases, mothers would strike back in defence. These incidences occurred frequently and in front of the children. They ranged from verbal to physical abuse (punching, kicking, stabbing). Some participants described the violent incidences they have witnessed:

Female participant# 8 described one violent incident she witnessed as follows:

We got into the house and found my father sitting on the chair with a knife in his hand, threatening to stab and kill my mother. He was swearing at her saying things like he is going to kill her because when he wants food she does not obey him instead she gets up and leaves, who does she think she is, she came to Cape Town because of him and now she thinks she is better. He then tried to stab my mother with that knife, but somehow he was the one who ended up being stabbed by my mother with the same knife. He was then rushed to the hospital in a very critical condition. He almost died.

Female participant #16 said:

Then in 1995, I remember this one-day, I arrived home from school. Then I used to attend a White school. I came back and I found my stepfather at home. I do not know why he was not at work that day. I could feel there was tension in the house. I asked my mother what was going on. My mother just sent me away to play at our neighbour's house, with a coloured friend of mine. When I got back I found my stepfather beating my mother. I stood there, crying and watched them. I then ran outside into my main house where my mother's boss was and I told her what was happening.

Male participant # 13 said:

They would start talking, and then yelling at each other when we were all sitting in the living room. Later when we are all asleep we would still hear them argue in their bedroom. We would then hear noise of someone crying, usually my mother.

Male participant # 12 said:

We used to live in a one-roomed house in Kayamandi. All four of us, my parents and my sister and I were crammed in that house. Since it was a one room we would always see our parents fighting. My mother was a very stubborn woman so that provoked my father even more. He would beat her up so badly. She would try and fight back and end up defeating him because she has more physical strength than he. Once my father decided to handcuff her on the bed so that she would not move while he was beating her. He tied her on the bed and just kept on slapping and punching her. I was watching the whole time.

Female participant # 18 said:

When we arrived from church, we found my mother sitting outside crying. We asked her what was wrong. She told us about the stolen card. She said her main worry was my father i.e. how he was going to react to this. I noticed that she was not as worried about the stolen cards than what my father would do to her once he found out. Apparently my father was very upset on the phone when he heard what happened. He accused my mother of carelessness. It did not occur to him that she made a mistake. He was just mean to her. He eventually came back. He was already upset when he entered the house, since he knew that the bankcards were missing. Oh! While on the phone, he did instruct my mother to quickly go and block the card at the bank before someone could use it. She did that and fortunately the money was still there. Despite that, my father beat up my mother anyway, as a way of punishing her. We were around. We saw him beating her up. He regretted it later on. We all, except for my brother, just became hysterical and cried when we saw this happening because we felt sorry for our mother.

Female participant #22

One afternoon we were sitting in the house as usual. My father came home from work. He wanted food. My mother prepared something for him to eat. After he finished eating, he left and went out to drink. He came back around 7pm and wanted more food. My mother gave him some food again. He left again and this time came back around 10pm, very drunk. He demanded more food, complaining that he had not eaten for the whole day. He was very agitated. My mother prepared some food for him. This time, he did not eat; he just threw the plate on my mother's face. He then wanted to splash her with boiling water. She managed to get away and the water missed her. She then ran outside to the neighbours.

Female participants # 19 said:

My parents started quarrelling last year. One day my stepfather told us to get ready; he was taking us shopping for the children's clothing. We did go. We shopped and shopped for all kinds of things. When he was supposed to pay for the clothes, he complained that he had lost his money, all of a sudden. We got stuck in the shop. We eventually left because it was clear that he did not have any money on him so we could not take the clothes. We were so upset with him because we felt he made a fool of us. His money did not get lost while we were in the shop. He knew he did not have money in the first place. My mother was especially upset with him. When I came back, my parents were arguing and my father slapped my mother. I did not understand why he had to slap her, seeing that it was his fault; he was the one who was wrong. My mother was not fighting with him. She only wanted to find out why he

did not mention the fact that he does not have money with him. He insisted that he had it, it got lost on the way somehow. But anyway, when he hit her, she retaliated. They fought. My mother ended up beating him up. My grandmother eventually intervened and scolded them for fighting in front of us. They then stopped fighting for a while.

4.3.2. Impact of violence on mothers as victims

These violent incidences commonly resulted in women sustaining injuries. Some participants in the groups reported that their mothers frequently suffered because they ended up with physical wounds that left them temporarily paralysed. Some said their mothers even ended up in hospitals on several occasions after fights with their fathers.

Participant # 8, whose mother eventually died during one of the many violent clashes with her father, described the impact it had on her mother:

My father once hit my mother with a chair on the head and she ended up with a big cut across her head. My mother ended up fighting back saying she was tired of being beaten. She went to the hospital and came back with stitches on her head. My father promised not hit my mother again. He stayed for 2 months without beating her because she had stitches. After a while, they started to fight again and this time my father broke my mother's arm and she ended up not working. I would do everything for her from washing to cleaning. It took a long time, about a year, before my mother's arm could function properly again.

Participant # 18 said her mother suffered the abuse in silence. This happened quite frequently until her father started to get sick. Her mother never opened up to her, but she could tell what was happening to her when she saw the bruises on her body:

I used to feel hurt and sorry for her. I remember wondering how long was thing going to go on. I mean, how long was he going to go on abusing her? I would feel bad for her because she had terrible wounds. For example, there was this one-day she complained about a pain on her right side just above the hip. We had to take her to the hospital. He had kicked her with a shoe. Apparently, she tried to hide under the bed. He dragged her out and kicked her again. So I felt really bad when I saw that.

Another female participant # 22 said:

There was this one time she ended up in hospital because of the violence. It was then that she decided to file for a divorce. After a while, when the divorce proceedings were still under way, my father apologised again and she took him back. He hit her again and she ended up in hospital for the second time. She was told that, in addition to her

bruises, she was suffering from depression. She was warned to leave my father. She did finally leave him in 1994 and has not taken him back since.

4.3.3. The mother's response

When asked how their mothers, in particular, responded or reacted to the constant abuse they were subjected to, various responses came up. It was interesting to note that none of the mothers reported their cases of abuse to the police or authorities. Although some of them did leave their abusive husbands or partners eventually, that only happened after years of abuse. Some of the women left their abusers only to go back to them after some time.

There are various factors that determined women's responses to violence in terms of why it was difficult for them to leave: First, most of these women were financially dependent on their husbands/partners. Thus they had to remain in the abusive relationships in order to survive. However, those women who were employed and could take care of themselves financially still tolerated the abuse. I would argue that the reason for this was that deep down they were hoping that their husbands/partners would change. These women would always punish their husbands by kicking them out of the house, for example, with the hope that these men would learn and stop being abusive. However, these efforts were unsuccessful, as these men would keep abusing their wives.

As one female participant # 7 explained:

Well, in my case, the house we are living in belongs to my mother. So whenever they fought she would kick my stepfather out and tell him to leave. But the following day, he would come back and ask for forgiveness. She would forgive him and take him back.

Second, there was the fear of being marginalised and stigmatised by society and abandoned by their families. This is because in these communities, abuse is not regarded as an offence, but something that is normal that often happens in relationships. It was interesting to note from the participants' accounts, the responses of extended family members to the abuse of their mothers, which contributed to these women's decision to remain with their abusive husband. In this situation, the woman is always expected to take responsibility as though it is her fault that she is being abused. She is always encouraged by family members to persevere and to become a better wife to her husband. These people seem to condone the men's behaviour since they do not blame the men. This is because they refuse to

acknowledge that violence is an offence. These people believe that men have the right to hit their wives as a way of putting them in order since it is their duty to do so. Describing the role and influence of in-laws on the violence between their parents, some participants had the following to say:

Participant # 8 said:

At first my mother used to be helpless and she did not want to defend herself, because she felt it was going to get her into trouble with my father's family. But she got tired of being beaten and decided she was going to start drinking. When I asked her why she was drinking she said she was not going to tolerate the beatings anymore, and if she fights back my father's family will make an issue out of that and she is going to be the bad guy for hitting her husband. She had come to a point where she did not even care what my father's family would say about her, she was going to fight back. I am not sure what she was doing when she was killed, but my father said he pushed her against the door and she hit her head and died

Another female participant #22 said:

In my case, when my parents fought, my father's family would intervene. There were discussions about their conflicts on several occasions. My father would apologise, but after a while he would beat her up again. There was this one time she ended up in hospital because of the violence. It was then that she decided to file for a divorce. After a while, when the divorce proceedings were still under way, my father apologised again and she took him back. He hit her again and she ended up in hospital for the second time. She was told that, in addition to her bruises, she was suffering from depression. She was warned to leave my father. She did finally leave him in 1994 and has not taken him back since.

Another female participant # 21 said:

My stepmother always used to run to her parents' house whenever they had a fight with my father. Her family would intervene. My father would apologise. He would repeat the same behaviour later on. It came to a point when my stepmother felt she had enough and she reported him to the police. He begged her to drop the charges and promised he would change. She did cancel the case. It was not long after that when he beat her up until she sustained severe bruises. She decided to leave him in the end.

Therefore, as a way of coping, some of these women resorted to drinking alcohol in the hope of gaining courage and strength to fight back. Others used alcohol as a way of avoiding the pain they felt as a result of the abuse.

In most cases the violence at home has led to either divorce or as was the case with one female participant, death. The consequence of this conflict was a broken family structure. Parents separated because they were unable to resolve their differences, leaving children either on their own, or with single parents or relatives.

4.4. Violence at Home: Experiences and Responses

Participants' accounts of their experiences of violence in the home, whether as witnesses or victims, are presented in this section. The aim was to explore the responses of teenagers to violence at home.

4.4.1. A traumatic impact

As predicted by trauma theory, growing up in a violent home does have a traumatic effect on children who witness or are subjected to violence on a daily basis. All the participants in the group discussions reported to have been exposed to some form of violence at home, which was an outcome of clashes between their parents. Some of the Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms were evident from the accounts of the participants in the groups on how violence has affected them personally. According to most participants, they have never attempted to get help from professionals such as social workers about their problems. They said that they were reluctant to go to social workers in particular because they were afraid they would never be taken seriously since they are still young. These teenagers, displayed a general distrust of social workers, hence they did not open up about their problems until we were in the group discussions.

Most participants, both male and female, reported to have experienced confusion, anger and fear because they did not understand what was happening around them. This is because for some, violent incidences often occurred while they were still very young. They often could not explain why their parents were fighting rather than resolving their problems. For instance, this is what participant # 8 said she felt when she realised that her mother had passed away after she was violently pushed by her father during a violent argument:

I did not understand what was going on. I just saw my mother lying down in the same clothes I left her in the last time I saw her. I then asked our neighbour what was going on. She could not reply, she just cried. It was then that I realised that my mother was gone. I tried to go and see her but they refused to let me go through. They then told me she was gone. I was so angry and upset with my father. I knew it was him who did this. It was a nightmare for me.

Some participants experienced both health and psychological problems as a result of the trauma they have been exposed to. For instance, male participant # 4, who at the time of the interviews, was treated for heart problems and depression said:

I want this tension between my parents to end. I do not like it. It is affecting me in many ways, especially my health. I want them to get back together. My mother does not want to see me because I want her to come back home.

Another female participant # 22 who had to undergo counselling because she was traumatised describes her experience as follows:

My brother and I were taken to counsellors since this thing affected us. I used to get upset and cry. I would hold on to my brother, as I was scared. We were once taken to live with my mother's sister for a while. This conflict really affected my brother and I. For example, my younger brother changed. He started becoming naughty and stubborn. He also became confused about his sexual orientation for a while. I used to feel bad; especially when I saw other kids who seemed to live normal and happy lives with their parents. I was always confused and regretted the day I was born. I could not seem to find my place in the world. I used to feel as though my father did not care about us. Even the place where I am right now, I am not comfortable. I am not happy at all.

Parental violence also had a negative impact on teenagers' performance at school in that they had difficulty concentrating in their classes. As a result, most participants fell behind in their studies. This is evident in that most of the participants in the group discussions are over age and they were still in lower school standards.

Participant # 6 finds it difficult to concentrate at school because she often has recurring thoughts about the violence and she also has to work part time to support her mother and brother. Hence, her performance at school has dropped tremendously:

It (the conflict between parents) has been going on for as long as I can remember I have always had this problem. It really did affect me. For instance with my studies, I am now behind at school. All my friends, who are my age, are in matric now. I have not been ok ever since. So what happened was that my parents separated and my father moved out. The problem now is that he is not supporting us. He is not giving us money. We sometimes have to ask my mother's sister. Another problem is that my mother is unemployed, so I had to find a part-time job in order to support my mother and my younger brother.

This participant's experience, in particular, shows that there are also negative economic implications imposed on teenagers in the sense that they become financially insecure to an extent that it impacts on their rights to get a good education.

A male participant # 13 had the following to say about his school performance and the reaction of his father:

I am a bit worried because this affects my schooling. I always find myself thinking about this all the time, even though I try to push it aside. I always tried to talk to them. I would tell them to stop fighting and making a noise because I have to go to school in the morning and I cannot sleep. My father tells me to stay out of it and sometimes he even tries to hit me too. I am very scared of my father. He is very unpredictable. You will never know what he is thinking or what his intentions are.

4.4.2. Participants' response to violence

Differences in gender have been observed in male and female responses or reactions to the violence they constantly witnessed or experienced at home. Females, especially, reported that when they were younger they used to feel helpless and frequently cried when they saw their parents fighting in front of them. When they were older their responses changed slightly in that they tried to intervene several times. However, that did not help much because their parents often ignored them. Their parent would promise not to fight, but then repeat the same behaviour a few days later. One male participant offered an explanation for this in one of the interview sessions and said it had to do with lack of physical power on the part of the female teenagers to stop the violence:

I think it is because girls do not have the strength and power to stop their fathers because they know they will end up being victimised themselves. They are weak, just like mothers. They are afraid of their fathers. Boys are able to defend themselves because they have the power.

However, female participant #16, who very much believes in being assertive and standing up for oneself, disputed this statement, commented as follows:

I do not think it has anything to do with power or lack of it. I think everyone has power. I feel I have rights as a human being and I am able to stand up for myself. If my father does something I do not like and I feel it is wrong, I have the right to tell him to stop it. If he is reasonable and he is able to listen, he will stop. But if he is that type of a person who sees himself as "the boss" and everyone has to comply with that, he will not listen. It does not have anything to do with power.

However, not all participants were as assertive as the above participant. Some of them resorted to avoiding the situation at home as a way of coping with it, since they felt that there was nothing they could do to stop the violence. For instance, participant # 12 reported to have run away from home because he felt he could not deal with seeing his mother being assaulted:

He hit her while I was there. There was nothing I could do to stop him. I just cried. I would sometimes go to my grandmother's house just to get away. The fights still went on though. Every time my father beat up my mother she would fight back. She later stopped doing that in the end and just gave in to it. She would always tell my father to just go ahead and do whatever he wanted with her. She did not care anymore. I remember once I was with my sister, while they were fighting. I do not know what happened, but I just felt like disappearing. So I decided to go to my grandmother's house and stayed there for about a week. I just did not want to go back home. I kept remembering the violent scenes. Even at school I could not concentrate. I just lost interest in my subjects. I used to feel really bad. Tears would just stream down my face while I was looking on the board. I remember I almost failed my subjects during those years.

Another female participant # 2 said that avoiding thinking about the situation at home, was the only way she could cope although it did not always work. She still felt depressed by the conflict between her parents:

This (parental conflict) makes us all unhappy as children. It affects us because we do not understand what the problem is. Why can't they get along? I always try not to think about it. I try to avoid it by playing and hanging out with my friends all the time. I try to be around people who are laughing and joyful so that I can take my mind off of what is happening at home. The feud between my parents really disturbs me because I would really like them to live together in peace.

Others were so confused by their parents' conflict to the extent that they decided they were the cause for its occurrence. They developed feelings of self-blame in order to be able to make sense of what was going on in their homes. Most of them tried to intervene while their parents were fighting, but in vain because they were ignored. Therefore, as a way of coping, they decided to avoid the situation. The following quotations describe the different ways in which some female participants coped with the violence they witnessed at home.

Participant # 8 said:

Sometimes I would try and intervene, until I got tired of it because there was no point. I would then just leave them and go away. I would go away and come back late and they would also beat me up for coming home late. After a while (few months after the incident that ended her mother's life), I was doing fine at school, while in Khayelitsha. I tried not to let everything that happened between my parents get to me. I mean I tried to stop them until I did not care anymore. I would often feel bad when I always saw them fighting. But then at one point I decided to ignore them and I would just disappear for days and come back when everything was quiet, to prepare for school.

Participant # 6 explained:

I intervened most of the time and told them that they are our role models so they should act like ones. I mean we look up to them. I had to intervene because they used to throw dangerous items at each other such as vases, knives etc. He used to beat her up and she used to have terrible bruises. Her eyes would get swollen. So I had to intervene all the time. Then when I try to intervene sometimes I would end up being beaten. I did not mind because I stood in the middle to try and stop them. I would tell them to stop what they are doing. It has been going on for as long as I can remember I have always had this problem. It really did affect me. For instance with my studies, I am now behind at school. All my friends, who are my age, are in Matric now. But they did not listen to me. Every time they drank they would fight with my brother and I always had to intervene. In the end I felt I was the one who caused problems at home because they seemed to drink while I was around. Because when my mother used to live with my sister, she never used to drink. Sometimes she would drink, but not too much. But when I was around she would drink a lot even though I used to ask her to stop because my father will come back and they would fight. Indeed my father would come back, find her drunk and they would fight.

Participant # 16 responded:

Sometimes when they argue about something, at that moment, whatever it is, my stepfather would ask my mother why she left my father in the first place. It was as though he was talking about me since I was the result of my parents' union. Sometimes I feel responsible, yes. I sometimes think if my mother had left me back in Elliot, things would have been better between them. I do feel my presence contributes a great deal to the tension between them. Some years ago, I found out that I had a twin sister who died when we were very little. Apparently, when we were born we had heart problems. They operated on us but one of us survived. Sometimes I feel if both of us did not survive things would be better between them. I mean, I would not have been here and my parents would not fight. There was this one time, my parents were having one of their arguments, and I do not belong there; there is no place for me there. So it seems to me that I am the cause of their problems.

However, for some male participants the impact/effect was different. As mentioned before, some of them were also confused and helpless if the violence occurred when they were younger. They reported to have run away often because they were angry with their parents. However, in cases where violence occurred when they were older, some male participants said they managed to intervene and could stand up to their fathers. Thus, violence in these cases was not as severe. Some reported to have warned their fathers not "to lift his hands against my mother or I will deal with him".

Participant # 3 is one of the few male participants who managed to stop his father from abusing his mother. He explained as follows:

This happened when I was old enough to intervene. I would try and convince my father to rather try and talk to my mother instead of hitting her. My father and I would talk about this. I would tell him I do not like seeing violence at home. I would rather they sit down and talk about this.

The other one was Participant # 9 and explained:

Yes if my brothers and I are around, he knows that he cannot do anything to my mother because we will stop him. I do not have a problem with him; I can deal with him, with my own hands. But it irritates me and makes me angry, but still I do not want to fight with him.

4.4.3. Children as victims of abuse

Some participants, both male and female, claimed to have been direct victims of violence at home, particularly when they tried to intervene. As noted earlier, some female participants recalled being beaten by their fathers while trying to intervene. Some participants, both male and female, reported to have been punished by their parents and stepparents for something they did not do and this, they believe, was caused by the tension at home. In some instances, some participants were told to leave the house by their angry fathers because they were siding with their mothers. This they did not understand because they felt they had nothing to do with the conflict at home and they did not deserve the treatment. This is what some of them said:

I used to feel very bad. It was even worse if he ended up beating me as well. And also it was embarrassing for me when it happened in front of my friends. My friends used to see that and they would talk about it. That used to frustrate me.

I would always try and talk to them. I would tell them to stop fighting and making a noise because I have to go to school in the morning and I cannot sleep. My father tells me to stay out of it and he sometimes even tries to hit me too.

4.4.4. Strained parent-child relations

It appears from the discussions with the participants in the group that the violence at home has put a strain on their relationships with their parents. Most participants perceive the violence at home to be the fault of their fathers and have therefore expressed feelings of resentment and anger towards them. Those who blamed their mothers for the conflict at home feel that their mothers deserved to be punished because they have "done something wrong". Thus by hitting them, their fathers were "putting them in order". Some participants, on the other hand, blamed the alcohol abuse of their parents on the grounds that when sober, their fathers were "nice people". However, during the group discussions participants did not go into details on how violence impacted on their relationships with their parents. They did however, explain that they are unable to talk to their parents because of fear. Therefore I would argue that the communication patterns between parents and children are affected by the violence at home. For instance, here is how some female participants described their tense relationships with their mothers:

I think there is something that bothers her (mother), personally. I do not know what it is. She seems to be angry about something and she takes out her anger on us. I do not think it has anything to do with me because I try my best to please her.

My mother on the other hand, I think inside she thinks it's my fault that her marriage is in trouble even though she does not say it out loud to me. I mean I do sometimes talk to her, but I am unable to tell her everything. I find it hard to do that because I feel she might be blaming me, even though she does not say it out loud.

In this chapter, findings participants' personal profiles, that is, their family backgrounds were presented with focus on family dynamics and factors contributing to the occurrence of violence within the home. Incidences of such violence were examined where teenagers described how they were affected by their exposure to such incidences. The impact of such violence on these teenagers and their mothers as well as their reactions to it were presented in their own words. In the following chapter, the views expressed by teenagers in this study on violence in intimate relationships, will be presented. The aim is to find whether being exposed to violence at home has influenced their perception of violence within their own relations with people of the opposite sex.

CHAPTER 5. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS: VIOLENCE IN TEENAGE RELATIONSHIPS

Introduction

As mentioned in the previous chapter, this second chapter on the discussion of results will focus on the experiences of participants of violence in intimate relationships as well as their perception of violence in intimate relationships. Here, keeping in mind the social learning theory, participants' approach to relationships and how they handle conflict within their relationships was explored. In addition, their attitudes towards gender roles was also explored in order to determine the role of gender socialisation and its implication for the way they perceive gender violence.

Even though participants in these discussions had different and conflicting views on violence in intimate relationships, they did not have difficulty in expressing them. They were vocal and spoke their minds on the subjects, citing reasons for their stance. The topic sparked interesting conversation in which everyone had the opportunity to say what they thought and felt.

5.1. Experiences of Violence in Intimate Relationships

Some female participants admitted in the group discussions that they have experienced violence within their intimate relationships. However, although some these girls claimed to be against violence, they still remained in these relationships. They explained their decisions by saying that despite their acts, their boyfriends love them. They also excused their boyfriend's behaviour as caused by "anger" and "short temper". According to these girls their boyfriend's rage is understandable because of their (the girls) wrongdoing. In other words, they are implying that they cause the abuse. It is interesting to note that "wrongdoing" here is defined as, for instance, being seen talking to other boys on the street. This is seen as leading to jealousy and anger on the part of the boyfriend. The tendency of these girls to justify their boyfriend's behaviour and thus to tolerate the abuse could be due to the fact that they associate love with violence. They view aggression as an indication that a person is paying attention and therefore they care. Some of the female participants shared their experiences of violence in the group discussions.

The comments of one female participant's # 19 who claimed in the discussions that she was against violence, is a clear indication of how these girls justify violent behaviour on the bases of jealousy and love:

Let me tell you what happened between my boyfriend and me on Sunday. My boyfriend does not stay in Kayamandi, even though he is from around here. He is studying at Peninsula Technikon. He comes and visits once in a while. So what is happening is that in the same area where I am currently staying, I used to be involved with this other guy last year, before I met my current boyfriend. There were some girls who did not like my relationship with my boyfriend. They were jealous. They wanted him for themselves. So, I do not know why, but they told my current boyfriend lies about me. They told him I am still involved with this guy. I broke up with this guy and we are just friends. So, on Sunday, my boyfriend came to visit me at home. We decided to take a walk. On the way, he asked me what was going on. I asked him what he meant. He said he heard that I was seeing someone who lives in the block of flats down the road. I told him that was not true. He was then quiet for a while and we kept on walking. A few minutes later, he started accusing me of lying to him. I insisted that I was not lying and that all these accusations were false. He then slapped me in the face. I cried and sat down for a while. I then decided to leave him standing there and went back home. He came around again on the same day. I told him my mother knows what happened and she wanted to speak to us. She warned him not to hit me again and stop listening to other people's lies. So what I am saying is that people do not think the same. Some people can end up hitting you unintentionally because they cannot help the love they feel for you.

When asked whether she would understand if her boyfriend slapped her again, she said:

No. I will make sure that my boyfriend does not hit me again. I told him that if he does it again, it is over between us. He also promised that he would do it again. I told him I would not stand for it next time.

Another female participant # 5, based on what she had seen at home between her parents, argued that she did not see anything wrong with a man beating a woman, especially if that woman did something to provoke him. She even gave her boyfriend permission to punish her when she has done something wrong. This is what this participant has learned from her parents in terms of how conflict in intimate relationships should be handled. Here is her story:

I understood that a person must be punished if they did something wrong. My mother was punished by my father because she did something wrong that caused my father to be angry, I figured it made sense that he would

end up beating her. Well, yes, my boyfriend does beat me up when I am wrong. But sometimes when I am not wrong, he beats me up anyway. When I ask him after a while, when we chat, he tells me he has a short temper. We had an agreement and I told him I do not want to see him with other girls and he also said he does not want to see me standing with other boys. The reason why we ended up coming to this agreement is that I saw him standing with this girl and he was drunk. In-fact they were both drunk. I confronted him, we fought, and I ended up beating him up, I almost injured him.

Another female participant # 22 also shared her experience of how her boyfriend deliberately beat her up for no reason and then claimed that he did it to show her how much he loves her. Again, love is seen justify abuse.

My boyfriend once beat me up. It was this one evening around 10pm. There was a party in Coastal Land, down the road from where I live. My cousin and I decided to go towards that direction to use the public phones. We were not going to attend the party. On our way, we bumped into my boyfriend. He asked me where I was going. I told him I was going to make a call. He said I was lying I was going to attend the party. I told him that is not so. He accused me of being unfaithful to him. He said I was going to that party to look for men. I denied it and told him he was the only man in my life. He then said, "Lets just drop the issue". He started to be nice again. We walked together for a while. When we reached a certain corner, he started slapping me lightly on the cheeks as though he was playing with me. I reminded him about the fact that I do not like violence. He then started to slap me harder. I tried to get away, but he grabbed me by my hair. He then started to hit me several times. At that moment, his friends came and intervened. They stopped him. He came back later that evening and told me that he beat me up to show me how much he loves me. He said he does not like it when other men come between us. I asked him why he had to abuse me if he claims to love me. I told him he does not love me, instead, he is abusing me. He promised never to do it again. So since then he has never hit me.

In all these cases the participants claim that their boyfriends had promised never to beat them up again. This is a clear indication of some confusion on the part of girls. On the one hand, they seem to understand aggression from their boyfriends as punishment, which is based on love, which therefore makes it acceptable. They do not view the beatings as violence. Expressions such as "what if you love them, no matter what they do you just cannot help yourself" indicate that these girls do not see the seriousness of this problem. On the other hand, they also find it uncomfortable and not entirely acceptable behaviour "I will

make sure that my boyfriend does not hit me again....". It would appear that these girls' experiences of violence through witnessing their mothers being abused and still remaining in that environment have influenced them to tolerate violence within their own relationships, even though they are not aware of it, are not willing to admit it.

5.2. Perceptions of Violence in Teenage Relationships

When participants were asked what they thought the main causes of violence within teenage relationships were, various views were expressed. First, some male and female participants seemed to agree and their comments insinuate that girls indirectly "ask" for and "deserve" the abuse. They claim that some girls have a notoriously "bad attitude". Bad attitude here is defined as shouting at their boyfriends in front of their friends. This usually happens, for instance, in cases where the girl has received some information from her friends about her boyfriend's infidelity. With this information these girls would confront their boyfriends. Apparently this infuriates boys who then end up beating them as a way of punishment. It appears that the act of violence is justified here as something that has been provoked by bad behaviour on the part of the girls.

It is interesting to note that whenever a girl confronts her boyfriend about issues of infidelity, whether it is true or not, she is the one who is the culprit and is therefore punished for having a "bad attitude". Whereas, if a guy suspects his girlfriend of being unfaithful and confronts her as well as beat her up, he is justified to do so because he loves his girlfriend. Some male participants were adamant that the problem with most girls is that they are dishonest. According to these young men, they sometimes feel betrayed when they hear or see their girlfriends "hanging out" with other boys and cheating on them. They argue that they become violent because of anger and heartbreak because they "love" their girlfriends too much. Here anger is viewed as something that cannot be controlled and hence a person ends up "acting in a way they did not mean to". The following are some of the quotations in which participants expressed their views on what causes violence in teenage relationships:

One female participant commented that girls are sometimes verbally abusive toward boys. This results in being beaten by their boyfriends:

I think what causes girls to end up being beaten is friends. Your friends can destroy your relationship. Let's say, for instance, you see your boyfriend standing with another girl, or your friend tells you she saw your man with another girl. You make it an issue, get angry and decide

to go and confront him. You shout at him, swear at him and then break up with him. You do not even approach him with respect, you know; ask him, you just shout at him because you are convinced that your friends were right. Instead of asking him politely and hear his side of the story, you provoke him then he beats you up.

Another female participant agrees:

Also some girls just go ahead and shout at their boyfriend without enough evidence of what really happened. That can make other guys angry. If they did do it, they may not be angry.

Male participants commented as follows:

It is difficult to talk to women sometimes because they can be rude and stubborn. Guys on the other hand are able to calmly talk without shouting. Girls like to rely on the information they get from their friends. When they approach you they are already convinced that you have done something wrong without hearing your side of the story.

Ok! Let us suppose I am involved with P#7. We have been together for two years, maybe. Then I discover that all this time, she has been involved with another guy. Then she comes to me and tells me it is over between us. Yes, that is what happens. You get angry because you feel that person has played you for a fool.

I think they do it (hit girls) because of a broken heart. I mean you love someone, you are committed to him or her and then they cheat on you. Off course you are going to be hurt and disappointed. Sometimes you may try and talk to your girlfriend about something you feel is wrong; they may be rude and shout at you. I think that is another thing that irritates guys.

I would like to comment on what P#3 said about violence not being an answer. I think sometimes you find yourself beating a person without intending to do so. Sometimes you feel pressured. You cannot control your anger. Maybe it is because you love a person too much that when they hurt you become very angry and you, you become violent.

Some girls agreed with the boys. However, few girls disagreed, referring to the dishonesty of boys. For example, one female participant said:

There are also guys who are dishonest and who cheat on girls too. When you find out that your boyfriend is cheating on you and confront him, he becomes angry and then beats you up.

An interesting gender variation can be observed in participants' responses to what causes violence in their intimate relationships. For instance, among female participants, very few seem to support violence as an indication of love. Overall, females were against violence and would not stand for it. With male participants, on the other hand, I found that most of them, even though they did not come out straight and admit it, seem to also condone violent behaviour as something that guys do unintentionally. For example, when asked what they thought the difference was between the violence at home and the conflict within their own relationships, a contradiction in the comments could be picked up. These young men responded by saying that the violence at home was entirely the fault of their fathers, which was instigated by their drinking problem.

In the case of their own relationships, however, they claim that the situation is different because guys are provoked by girls and compelled by anger and love to hit them. Only a few males stated that they are against violence and that they do not believe that it should be used under any circumstances, for example, when a person has done something wrong. They said that they do not believe in the idea of punishing a woman because you want to "put them in order". Some of these male and female participants suggested that the idea of "punishment" in a relationship could be traced back to their parents' understanding of "punishment". They argue that parents have taught their children to be violent because they punish their children in the name of love. Therefore, these children learn this violent behaviour and use it later on in their own relationships because they believe it is the right way of solving problems. The following quotations are examples of some of the comments participants made on the issues outlined above:

One male participant said:

The way I see it, they do not have the right to beat girls. But you see guys are strong, and violent by nature and girls on the other hand are weak and not powerful. Yes. I think guys do not have a right to beat girls. But you see, boys are like dogs and girls like cats. A dog always chases a cat and is more powerful. Guys are like that, I do not know where they get that, but that is.

Another male participant said:

The thing is we are different as people. I mean personally, I am against violence. I do not like to get into fights with anyone. I believe in sitting down and talking things over. Other guys believe violence is the only way to sort out their girlfriends. I often hang out with some other

friends of mine and one of them said one day, referring to his girlfriend, 'I am going to beat that girl, I am going to show her who the boss is.

A female participant responded:

I would like to support P#4. I believe if a guy beats you up he is showing you what you have done is wrong. So they do love you. The way I see the issue of violence is that men do it in order to put women in order. They want them to stop doing what is wrong. I still think if people are not punished they become spoilt and continue to misbehave.

Another female participant disagreed:

I think guys who beat up their girlfriends do not love them. They do not care about them. They just want to destroy them.

Another female participant commented:

Let me tell you what love is. When people hurt each other that is not love. If you love someone, you would not beat him or her up. That is abuse. Love is about respect. But still it does not mean you should abuse them because they broke your heart. Also, you cannot show a person how much you love them by laying your hands on them. Let me tell you what our teacher said when she was commenting on that idea that "love is blind". Let us suppose you are involved with a guy and you cheat on him. He then finds out and punishes you. After a while, he also cheats on you. You also find out and when you confront him about it, he becomes aggressive and he beats you up again. The next day he brings you a cheap flower from PEP as his way of apologising. Then you forgive him and take him back. That does not mean he is going to stop abusing you. He is going to continue to abuse you until you are six feet under ground.

Another female participant said:

I think it is very important for a girl, when she meets a guy for the first time, to tell him how she wants to be treated. She must tell him that she does not like to be abused. It is sometimes girls who let guys abuse them.

Another male participant #12 believed that violence, under any circumstances does not solve anything. He argued that boys do not have the right to beat up girls no matter what they have done. He explained his position by describing his own relationships:

In my opinion, violence does not solve anything. I personally have never and will never hit my girlfriend, no matter what. I can argue with her, yes, but I do not believe in laying my hand on her. For example, my

girlfriend and I have been together for a while. We have had problems. There was this one time she cheated on me with another guy. She told me she wanted to have two boyfriends. I told her I would rather step aside because I would not like to be in that kind of a relationship. I told her to just count me out. Ok! We continued seeing each other. After a while, I found out from someone that she was involved with another guy. She came to me saying there was something she wanted to tell me. I knew what she was going to say, but I wanted to hear her say it. When she came to me she was convinced that I was going to beat her up after finding out what she has done. The first thing she said was "P#3, please do not hit me". I said "why would I hit you?" then she said "I am afraid you are going to hit me after hearing what I want to tell you" I told her "just go ahead and say it". She then told me about this relationship. I told her to leave me alone and go back that guy. I just left it at that and moved on. I believe in that (avoiding conflict). After a while I heard that things did not work out between her and that guy. She came back to me and apologised, begging me to take her back. I did and we are still together even today. She is no longer cheating on me. I believe that if you beat up a girl, you are making things worse because she is still going to continue being dishonest. Let them go. Beating her up will not stop her or put her in order.

Another male participant said:

I think the idea that punishment is a way of preventing a person from doing what is wrong and teaching them the right way to behave, originates from our parents. I blame our parents because every time you do something wrong, parents will never sit down with you and talk to you about it. They just beat you up. So what P#2 is saying is not new, we have heard it and seen it at home. Whenever a parent punishes you they would say, "My child, I am punishing you so that you can stop repeating the same mistake" So, it is exactly the same thing. If a parent tells you that, you tend to think that it is right so you follow the same example in your own relationships. You tell yourself that "if my girlfriend does this, I will beat her up so that she will stop" and so it goes on and on.

When asked whether they thought people should remain in violent relationships most participants argued that violence is totally unacceptable. Some female participants were of the opinion that girls should not tolerate violence under any circumstance.

These female participants emphasised the importance of open communication in relationships in the following comments:

Ok! Let me tell you about my relationship. My boyfriend has never lifted a hand on me. We respect each other. That is the basis of our relationship, respecting one another. Whatever decision I make he must accept and respect and the same applies to me. Also we talk things out if we are wrong. If he does something I feel is wrong and I do not like, I tell him. If he is wrong he will admit and apologise. So I do not encourage violence in relationships. There is even a saying Kwa-Xhosa that goes like this: "Induku ayakhi Mzi" (A cane does not build a home, it destroys it). So if you are going to tolerate being abused by a guy, everyday, forget it. He does not love you he is using you. My mother always tells me to always bring my boyfriend home so that she can talk to him. She knows my boyfriend. The only thing she hates is seeing me with different guys at the same time.

I believe that couples should sit down and talk about issues that bother them. A woman should stand up for herself and tell her partner how they feel about their behaviour. If their partners continue to with the abuse, they must end the relationship.

I think when you meet a person for the first time, before committing yourself to them, you must sit down with them and tell them the things you like and those you do not like. Tell them you do not like violence.

If you meet a guy for the first time, you must tell them you do not like to be abused. Tell them about the situation at home, that is, the fact that you have seen violence and its effects and you do not want the same thing to happen to you. I am now talking about someone I would marry. I do not want to be in the same situation my mother found herself in.

I would tell the guy straight from the beginning that I could never stand violence. I do not want to let what happened between my parents happen to me. If he becomes violent towards me, it will be over between us. That will be a sign that he is not good for me.

It seems like the more you give a man a chance, the more he repeats his behaviour and the cycle continues. You must be firm from the beginning. Tell him to rather talk to you if he feels you have done him wrong so that you can resolve the matter through communication.

There are also some girls who would say to you "if your boyfriend does not beat you up, you must know that he does not love you". They seem to think that if a guy does not abuse you they are just using you. They are not interested in you. They also have this belief that by beating you, he is showing you the right way to behave. It means he cares for you. I do not believe that. I mean there are many positive ways to prove to someone how much you love him/her. A guy can always spoil you and buy you gifts. Surely, there is something wrong when they start abusing you.

5.3. Gender Role Attitudes

As cited earlier in the thesis, many scholars believe that one of the factors that contribute to violence between intimates is the societal structure, which is dominated by patriarchy. This is more the case within the South African context. During the group discussions with teenagers, I posed certain questions that related to power and roles in violent intimate relationships.

From the present findings, the interplay between culture and issues of power and gender relations were revealed when participants offered their views on the role of each in the maintenance of violence in intimate relationships. According to Doo-Aphane (2001), through its socialisation patterns, culture teaches women to be submissive and men dominant. Hence we find women enduring violence and men becoming abusive because this is how they were brought up. She argues that patriarchy has taught women from a young age, to accept their inferior positions both within and outside the home. Therefore, women victims of violence have one thing in common and that is that they have unconsciously accepted that they should be subservient to their men by the time they get married.

Most participants in the group discussions have indicated that they have been brought up in a society, which has taught them that men are the "leaders" in relationships and "heads" of the families. Despite having been exposed to violence within their homes and sometimes intimate relationships, most female participants are conscious of the need for equality between men and women. They argue that times have changed and women have the capacity and the right to stand up for themselves. For instance, one male participant commented about leadership in relationships:

In adult relationships, that is, people who are married, it is often said that the man is the head and the woman is the neck. But I do not think being a head gives men the right to abuse women. For the head to turn, it has to have the neck. So I do not think one of them should be abusive. I think they should talk and solve problems by communicating with one another.

However, some female participants disagreed with the idea of men being leaders in relationships saying: "I do not think there should be a leader at all in any relationship because that is what causes the problem in the first place. They both should be equal," Another one said: "I think it is old fashion to say that a man should be a leader in relationship. That is something that is done by old people, the older generation".

Some male participants, on the other hand, although they agree that times have changed and that there needs to be equality between genders, have some reservations concerning some changes. They seem to be hanging on to old customs, especially those that concern the role of men and women in relationships. This was evident in the way these young men justified and defended their beliefs by stating that it is a cultural perception and the way things have been done for many years. For them this is what they have been taught and they are simply following in the footsteps of their elders:

In most cases guys are older than girls, so that makes them leaders. If we are going to be equal in our relationships, none of us is going to lead the relationship to the right path. Also, as someone has mentioned, all of this originates from the olden days. So we are following that route. Both our grandfathers and grandmothers accepted and practised these beliefs.

However, some of the male participants agreed with the females. Challenging their counterparts' views, they said:

I do not think that is relevant among us young people today. I cannot claim to be the leader or the head these days. It just does not make any sense. Things have changed. People who still believe in that are those of the older generation. It does not mean that because our forefathers believed in such things, we should too. Today everyone is equal.

Challenging the argument on the age factor, another female participant said:

No, that is not correct. I mean we both have rights. I do not believe that there should be a leader in a relationship. Men always tell themselves that they will not listen to women because they are afraid people are going to think they are stupid.

Another male participant added:

Yes, it does not make any sense because these days everyone is equal. We now find women who work in places that were previously reserved for men. What would you do in a situation where you find you and your wife are both working and she happens to earn more money than you and she buys everything in the house? Are you still going to claim that you are a leader?

Another female participant said:

I think the tendency of men to claim that they are the bosses and more powerful than women dates back to the olden days, when men were put in the position to lay down the laws and refuse to let anyone challenge

them. I think that has contributed a lot. Some people are still holding on to that kind of thinking, even today.

Some of these participants argued that the fact that men have been put in dominant positions within relationships, has contributed to gender violence. They use violence to maintain power and control.

On the other hand, some male participants, who insist on male dominance over women, argued that men were put in charge of relationships because they paid lobola (brides worth) for their wives which gives them the right to lead their wives. Sakala (1998), points out that traditional practices such as the payment of lobola have a negative connotation for women in Southern Africa. She says they tend to programme men into thinking that they are superior and women inferior, powerless and therefore voiceless. According to her, lobola serves to dehumanise women. Doo-Aphane (2001) agrees that lobola relegates women to a status of being a commodity that is bought and sold. The payment of lobola means that the woman is expected to perform her duties of bearing children and looking after the home without objections. As one male participant puts it:

I think the idea of men being leaders and claiming to be bosses in their homes, stems from the fact that they know they paid Lobola (brides worth) for their wives, so they own them.

Some female participants opposed that argument, however, and said that lobola is being misconstrued and used to control and abuse women, whereas that was not its original purpose:

Men believe that since they have paid for the woman, they should treat her however they want. I think lobola plays a very crucial role, yes, but it is misunderstood. Lobola does not mean that you buy a person, just because you paid money. She can still go back to her original home. You do not have the right to abuse her because you paid lobola for her.

Another female participant, explaining the real purpose of paying lobola for a woman in African culture, said:

There is nothing wrong with lobola. It does not mean that by paying lobola a man has to abuse a woman and make her his slave. When someone pays lobola for you, they are showing your parents gratitude for bringing you up. Parents look after us through thick and thin. You were supposed to work for them in return, but instead someone takes you away from them through marriage. Therefore, the man has to pay them. However, it does not mean that they own you.

According to some sociological theorists, the traditional patriarchal "mode of production" is such that within a household, men who are designated leaders of the family institution control the "means of production". Women and children in these households are deprived of free access to these means of production. This is because of the ideological and political principles that have been set out to purposefully limit women and children's access to the means of production. This patriarchal ideology of how the mode of production should be regulated implies that the division of labour should be based on sex, age and family position. Within this milieu, women are expected to perform surplus labour, which is considered to be subordinate. The position of men within this system gives them the power to control economic resources that are important for the day-to-day production process (Henn, 1988). In simple terms, this means that within this system, men have access to structures outside the home, which will enable them to produce in order to gain economic reward. On the other hand, women are limited and are denied access to such opportunities and are confined to the home. This gives men control over women and children's lives since they are the only ones who enjoy the benefits of economic power.

Participants' views on gender roles of both men and women both outside and inside the home were explored. The objective was to ascertain the extent to which socialisations at home as well as the roles of their parents have influenced their views on gender relations.

When the question of who should go out and work outside the home and who should remain was raised, most female participants argued that in the olden days men were the ones who were allowed the opportunity to work outside the home and this, in turn, has led men to believe that they are the leaders. However, as one female participant points out:

In the olden days, men used to work and could occupy all the positions. But now that there is a new democracy, women are getting more involved. They have proved that they can also do the jobs that were previously reserved for men. So if someone still claims to be the head of the house, they are just fooling themselves.

These teenage girls stressed that it is imperative for a woman to be employed today for various reasons: First, so that they will not have to depend on men for financial support. Second, so that they can be able to help their husbands and partners in supporting the family. In their view

People should cooperate with one another, they must both work to support the family because, if a man tells me to stay at home and that he will look after me, I would refuse because what if he does not support me? What if he does not bring money at home?

Agreeing with this view, another girl commented as follows:

Yes, I do not think women should depend on their husbands. If your husband goes out to work, you must also go to work. When he buys things like furniture, you must contribute because you will never know in times of divorce, he might claim everything and leave you with nothing because he bought them. Also, if you get married to someone who is educated, you must also get an education. It is not your education it is his achievement.

Other female participants emphasised that in cases of abuse, women should be able to leave their husbands without worrying about how they will survive without their husband's financial support:

I think people should be equal in the house. They must both work for in the event that the woman gets abused. You must be able to break free. It will be easier to leave because you are not dependent on the person.

Most male participants also agreed that both men and women should be employed because these days the cost of living is too high. They also added that having only one breadwinner in the house can be problematic and can cause conflict. This is because earning a living has become a basis for power and abuse:

Today both men and women are educated and they are both employed in most cases. That is how it should be because in some cases where you find one person working that can cause a lot of tension. The one who is the breadwinner may start to feel burdened by the one who is dependent on him.

Even though participants agree that both men and women should be employed in order to support themselves and their families, they differ in terms of responsibilities within the homes with regards to the division of labour. For example, most males do not seem to be prepared to cooperate fully in the house chores. They still believed there are those responsibilities that are meant for women and those for men, such as looking after children. Female participants, on the other hand, believe that responsibilities in the house must be equally shared between men and women. "Everyone must pitch in," says one female participant. The following are some of the male participants' views:

I can wash dishes while my wife takes care of the baby. I do not mind sharing the responsibilities.

I can do that (*changing baby napkin*). What if one day my wife works late and I come home early and have to fetch the baby from the crèche only to find out that they have messed up. Are you going to just leave them like that? I can change him because he is mine too.

You know there are some cases where you find that it is the woman who is calling the shots. You find her instructing her husband to wash her underwear, for instance. No! no! I can never wash baby napkins. Yes, we must help each other out, but each must decide on a task they feel comfortable with. You know there are some cases where you find that it is the woman who is calling the shots. You find her instructing her husband to do some household chores. Yes, we must help each other out, but each must decide on a task they feel comfortable with.

I also can never wash or even change a baby's napkin. It is disgusting. The only thing I am there for is to put food on the table. I can wash dishes and clean the house, but not baby napkins.

I think we agree that I do the garden and my wife would work in the house, it is embarrassing for a guy to be seen working in the kitchen because they feel their friends may make fun of them. You sometimes find men sitting together as friends and making fun of each other. Doing housework will somehow make you lose your dignity.

A female participant said:

Everyone must pitch in. If my husband finds dirty dishes at home, he must go ahead and wash them, while I am doing something else like the laundry. Things have changed now we are all equal.

There have been gender differences that came up in the way that participants in this study interpret their experiences and what they have learned from their home environment as well as their communities, on the issue of violence and gender relations. In the final analysis, one may argue that although violence has influenced their perceptions of gender roles and relations, the socio-political changes that are taking place in South Africa, the influence of the media, information from schools, and living in urban areas, have broadened their knowledge of gender relations and the importance of equal treatment of genders. Even though some male participants may display resistance to some of the changes that are taking place, such as the gender equality at all levels of society, they acknowledge such changes. Most female participants, on the other hand, unlike their mothers, show a deeper understanding and are more aware of their rights as women.

They argue that women's positions in society have changed. They no longer need to be subordinate to men.

As one female participant explains:

We grew up in homes where our fathers are thought of as leaders. So all these things about women rights, we got from outside our homes, from schools and other people. That is why we see things differently. People, women in particular, only got their freedom in 1994. They were now able to look after themselves and their families. This idea of women not being able to do certain jobs has stopped. You now find women everywhere.

A question was raised as to why they think the problem of gender violence is still escalating, despite the changes in the women's positions in South Africa. Various explanations came up, most of which were from female participants since males seemed to find it difficult to respond to the question. These participants argue that today the onus is on the women to stop the violence that they are being subjected to. This is because they now have the right and access to protection from the law. The problem is that they do not use these resources; instead they choose to suffer in silence. Here are some examples of why these teenagers believe some women act this way:

I think women allow men to abuse them. I think as soon as a man beats up his wife or girlfriend, it is the responsibility of that woman to take action against; them I think women should take action. These days, women can go to court and get protection. So immediately they experience abuse, they must not remain silent. They must do something. I mean my mother ended up having heart problems as a result of tolerating emotional abuse from my biological father. Also, if a woman who is being abused is scared to do something, she must talk to someone she can trust and have them go to court on their behalf. They can then confirm the statement later. Women must use their rights.

It is also this belief that men have more physical strength than do women. Women tell themselves that there is nothing they can do to defend themselves because they do not have the strength to fight back. Men on the other hand, know that they have more strength that is why they are abusive.

Some women believe that they have no courage to speak up and stand up for themselves. If a man beats up his wife or girlfriend, it is the responsibility of that woman to take action against them. Some women may even resort to not saying anything that will make their partners angry as a way of avoiding violence. They prefer to keep quiet most of the time.

I think people must get to know each other first. They must also learn to communicate well. They must work together as a team when taking care of things like buying a house, looking after children etc. The problem, I think, is alcohol. I think it is better not to get married to a man who abuses alcohol because when they cannot handle problems in the house, they tend to go out and drink. They spend the money on alcohol, while a woman is at home taking the responsibility for everything on their own. The man would come home and claim that everything in the house belongs to them. He is the head of the house.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

In the concluding section, the findings of the study are examined against the background of the literature overview presented in chapter two.

6.1. Traumatic implications

In this section, the psychological problems experienced by teenagers as a result of being exposed to violence at home are discussed against the background of the assumptions of Trauma theory. The theory focuses on the socio-psychological effects of domestic violence on children. Therefore, in this study, the personal experiences of teenagers as well as their interpretations of the effects violence at home had in their lives were explored. The aim was to determine how these teenagers interpreted these events and how it has affected their lives in relation to their self-concept and intimate relationships. As posited by Trauma theory, some of the symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, which is described as behaviour resulting from exposure to traumatic events (Holden et al, 1998), were identified from the interviews with both male and female participants. The most notable one was confusion, which trauma theorists attribute to lack of understanding on the part of children of the causes of the tension between their parents. Confusion, then gives rise to anger and fear since they are aware that violence is wrong and threatens the well being of their family. Therefore, they know that it should not take place in the first place. As a result, most female and some male participants reported to have experienced severe health and psychological problems especially if the violence occurred when they were still very young.

Although the trauma experienced by the participants left them helpless and vulnerable to general stress and depression, they did attempt to decipher what was happening around them as a way of dealing with their unfortunate circumstances. As noted in their cognitive-contextual model, Gryncz and Fincham (1995) explain that at this stage, the children's perceptive capacity is well developed and at optimal level. With this ability, they are able to construct and attach subjective meanings from what they see so much so, that it becomes their reality. Consequently, this permits them to shape their own views regarding what they believe to be the underlining source of the conflict between their parents.

It is interesting to note how differences in gender emerged from the interviews with teenagers in the way they interpreted violence at home. For instance, whereas males clearly perceived the clashes between their parents as perpetuated by their fathers, females on the

other hand, tended to take the blame and feel responsible for the hostility at home. This, as stated by Holden, et al (1998), may be attributed to the tendency of boys to externalise their feelings as opposed to girls, who are more likely to internalise traumatic feelings.

Furthermore, the explanations and realities that children create are said to influence how they respond to the violence at home and the trauma associated with it. Again, further gender differences were identified in the way that teenagers react to family violence. Although it has been revealed in previous studies that boys react with anger and tend to express it by acting aggressively and throwing tantrums on objects and people (Jaffe, et al, 1990), it cannot be determined whether while younger, male participants developed such behavioural problems as a result of the trauma. Some male participants did, however, indicate that when they were older, they managed to intervene and were able to defend their victim mothers. Hence, violence in these cases was less severe.

Female participants, on the other hand, reported to have used avoidance as a coping mechanism since their attempts to intervene and pacify the situation at home were in vain. This confirms the conclusion that girls internalise their feelings of trauma more so than boys. Some male participants in the discussions even suggested that this was due to the fact that girls do not have the physical strength that may enable them to challenge their fathers. Other scholars have explained this behaviour in relation to the traditional socialisation of girls. According to this view, the well being of family life and stability of the relationships among family members are much more crucial to girls than to boys. Therefore, anything that threatens the stability of this family structure may prove detrimental to the psychological development of teenage girls (Cummings et al, 1990). This was especially true in cases presented by some teenage girls who have made continuous efforts to intervene when their parents were fighting and who, at times, took the responsibility of running the household in order to keep the family together.

Moreover, as suggested in some of the literature, children sometimes become direct victims of violence at home. They are at risk of being abused when they try to intervene and are also at high risk of being subjected to violence by their mothers. Mothers often project their frustrations on their daughters. I would like to point out that the victimisation of children by their parents in domestic violence situations often results in strenuous parent-child relationships. I have picked up from the interviews with teenagers that there exist feelings of resentment, fear and disappointment either towards the fathers who are the perpetuate violence or the mothers who are in most cases the victims. However, the

conclusion that boys tend to experience more aggression from both parents than do girls due to their externalising behaviour problems, as noted by Jouriles and Norwood (1995), was not relevant in the cases of teenagers in this study. In these cases, the teenagers experienced violence from both their parents not because of their gender, but because of their presence at the time most of the clashes were taking place at home.

6.2. Spousal aggression and observational learning

In this section, the effects of domestic violence on teenagers is discussed in the light of the assumptions made by the social learning model of observational learning and the possibility of the intergenerational transmission of violence. Social learning theory maintains that behaviour is learned through the observation of significant others, in most cases parents or guardians. The theory maintains that children learn aggressive behaviour by observing those they consider their role models. They then adopt that behaviour and apply it in their relationships with people outside the home (Bandura, 1973).

From the interviews with the participants in this study, two of the factors cited in the social learning model of spousal aggression as contributing to the escalation of domestic violence (O'Leary & Arias, 1988), were identified. These include (a) the use and abuse of alcohol and (b) stress. Firstly, most participants in the study emphasised that the abuse of alcohol by their parents aggravated matters. It instigated the already existing tension between their parents. Whereas in some cases the fathers used alcohol as a means to strengthen their power and control over their wives and children through threats of aggressive behaviour, the mothers used it as a means to cope and respond to the abuse they experienced from their husbands or partners. Thus, as indicated in the social learning model, alcohol in these cases is utilized as a means to an end since its use "permits" people to engage in irrational and adverse behaviour with the anticipation that they will not be held liable for their actions.

Second, it is said that some stressful circumstances, coupled with the complex nature of family relationships, intensify family violence. For instance, unstable relationships, changes in the family structure and the general expectations from society are said to generate stress, which invariably leads to aggression (Strauss, 1980). The family circumstances under which the teenagers in this study were brought up represent the broader socio-economic circumstances, which are characteristic of the South African society. Therefore, most of the

stress caused by instability in relationships and family structure, which was noted by Strauss, is in some instances, the result of the social problems faced by the previously oppressed groups in the whole of the country. As mentioned earlier, the history and socio-political characteristics of South Africa have had a negative impact on many family structures. The social problems inherited from the apartheid system and the changes that have taken place as a result of political transition have put a strain on most black families. In addition to the social problems, the social structure of the country, which is patriarchal in nature, serves to exacerbate the matter since it is intrinsically embedded within some of the cultural practices in these communities. This is because it is based upon principles and values that are meant to elevate one group, mainly men, to the highest position in society while undermining and putting the other group, mainly women and children, on the periphery of society under the control of the men. In addition, South Africa is a violent country. The levels of crime and child abuse are escalating by the day. Children are constantly listening to reports of crime. Violence in the country has become a part of everyday life and part of the culture in many communities.

Therefore, the stressful "outside" world, which threatens the identity and the position that allows the men to gain respect from their wives and children may elicit frustration, anger and resentment on the part of the men which they express at home to the most vulnerable members of the family, their wives and children.

Moreover, as previously suggested, children who grow up under such violent circumstances are more likely to integrate violence as a pattern in their own lives which may lead to them either becoming aggressive or submissive in their own intimate relationships later on in life. It has been suggested that children may adopt certain behaviour patterns of their caregivers or significant others through observational learning, (Bandura, 1973). In other words, through attentive observation, children learn behaviour, which they perceive to be acceptable since those they consider to be their role models carry it out. They then retain it in their minds, only to practice it later on under different circumstances and environments. This theory assumes that aggression is best learned through this process. In addition to observation, some theorists have suggested that children also learn behaviour through direct experience. Thus, being subjected to violence at the hands of their parents, teaches children that it is right since those who supposedly care for them engage in it. The lessons learned from observing and experiencing violence are said to be powerful because they also influence the way in which children view themselves in relation to others. This was also true

in the case of both male and female participants in the study. They stated quite clearly that they were taught through punishment at home that the violence directed towards the ones you care for is justified. It is used to demonstrate the strength of your love. In addition, some female participants, those who communicated their personal experiences of violence within their own intimate relationships, directly and indirectly indicated that, if someone loves you, they have the right to abuse you considering the fact that they are trying to help you change for the better. I would conclude that this is the lesson they learned from observing their fathers abusing their mothers and the way their mothers reacted to the violence they experienced. They have learned to tolerate the abuse on the basis that it is right and that they deserve to be punished if they have done something that infuriates their partners.

Furthermore, perceptions of violence in intimate relationships were explored by comparing teenagers' views on the causes of violence between parents versus the causes of violence within teenage intimate relationships. The aim was to ascertain the effects of learning violent behaviour from observation and direct experience at home. Conflicting views came up across the gender spectrum. Here, two groups, each consisting of males and females, emerged with the one legitimising violence in intimate relationships under certain conditions, and the other completely opposing its occurrence under any circumstances. The first group of teenagers indicated that girls "ask" for and "deserve" the beatings from their boyfriends because of "unfaithfulness" and "a bad attitude". This is a behaviour that "provokes" their boyfriends and results in them becoming aggressive. The abuse suffered by girls at the hands of their boyfriends is perceived as "punishment" that is meant to "put the girls in order". It is behaviour that is done inadvertently in the name of love. The second group of teenagers, on the other hand, argued that violence should not occur under any circumstances. They argued that the idea of punishment as an indication of love, which their parents have taught them, is misleading because it teaches children to be aggressive towards others in their relationships.

According to Champion and Dimmit (1999) the perception that violence in teenage intimate relationships is a symbol of love, is a direct reproduction of what these teenagers have learned through witnessing violence between their parents. They argue that the main premise of this perception stems from fear of losing the love one experiences with the relationship as well as the lesson that men's interests are more important than those of women in intimate relationships. The duty of women is therefore to always respect and satisfy those needs at all times.

6.3. The role of culture and gender socialisation

As I have indicated earlier, the lessons learned about violence in intimate relationships resulting from exposure to violence at home are also instigated and thus entrenched by the gender role socialisation of children. This conclusion is derived from radical feminist literature, which perceives domestic violence as originating from broader structural imbalances that are implemented through certain cultural practices prevalent in most patriarchal societies that promote and reinforce male dominance over women. This view also maintains that such attitudes are reinforced through gender role socialisation that both male and female undergo from infancy and it is centred within the family environment. (Green, 1999; Laslett 1988; Maynard & Winn, 1993).

Therefore, in order to ascertain whether culture and gender socialisation plays a role in the way teenagers approach relationships with respect to violence, participants' attitudes towards gender roles were explored. Participants in this study unanimously agreed that they have been brought up to believe that men are leaders within relationships and therefore heads of the family. Again, there were differences in views concerning the issues of power in male-female relations. All female and some male participants, for instance, argued against male dominance by challenging its relevance. These participants also believe that the fact that men have been put in dominant positions contribute to violence. These attitudes can be attributed to changes in gender relations in the country that stem from the increasing promotion of equal human rights by institutions influenced by the media and organisations that aim to eradicate gender inequalities. The changes in gender roles both within and outside the home are also influential since it is now widely accepted in most societies that the socio-economic challenges prevalent in most modern societies require cooperation and equal access to means of production so as to better survive within such an environment.

Some male participants, on the other hand, argued in favour of male dominance by saying that it is important to establish clear role definition in relationships to avoid confusion. These males stated that leadership is crucial to "steer relationships in the right direction".

They also emphasised that the elevation of men to leadership positions within the home is inevitable since they pay "lobola", which means they earn it.

In conclusion, it is interesting to note that there exists an overlap or interconnection between the assertions and assumptions proposed by trauma theory, social learning theory, and some feminist theories cited in the literature overview as they apply to the findings of this study. In particular, the familial, environmental and cultural dynamics have been viewed as spurring the occurrence of violence within families. This has affected children who are constantly exposed to it. Violence in the home impacts on the personal development of children and affects their positive sense of self. It also influences their perceptions of violence within intimate relationships as an acceptable behaviour done out compassion and caring. This, in turn, may cause them to be vulnerable to abusive relationships with people of the opposite gender.

Therefore, given the evidence presented in this study in Kayamandi, I would argue that violence at home causes extensive damage to the lives of young people who are exposed to it on a regular bases. In addition, this problem has implications for domestic violence in general as it serves to strengthen rather than break the cycle of violence in intimate relationships. I believe, for this cycle to end, more attention should be directed on the effects of domestic violence on children. Further research should be conducted, gathering more information on the nature and scope of the problem, which would inform and assist intervention programmes aimed at eliminating the problem of domestic violence in South Africa. Finally, I would like to point out that the study on teenagers in Kayamandi had shortcomings which can be attributed to the fact that it was a small study and explorative in nature. Thus, further research including a greater number of children in different social settings is essential if we are to address domestic violence more successfully.

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDELINE

a) The participant's family of origin.

- Background information of the participant's family (Where does the family originate from?)
- A Genogram. That is, Household family structure and composition of the family including people who are part of the family and their relationship to each other.
- Socio-demographic
- Family circumstance e.g. economic situation
- The nature of interaction between members of the family
- Move from rural to urban areas and changes in the lifestyle of the family
- Changes in economic relations of power within the family.

b) Their experiences of abuse at home

- When and what form of abuse and factors precipitating incidences.
- The frequency of abuse (How often does it occur?)
- Participant's personal experiences of abuse (how are they affected by it. If not what makes them to cope?)
- What do they do
- Participant's feelings about the violence and abuse at home (i.e. how do they perceive violence/abuse).
- Explore how their mothers react/does and why, do they think, their mothers tolerate the abuse

c) Gender Socialisation

- Participant's opinions about and what they have learned about gender roles within their homes and society
- Participant's beliefs about socialisation at home and society
- Beliefs about sexuality
- Beliefs about gender roles both within and outside their home
- Opinions about culture/gender relations and violence

d) Participant's personal experiences and perceptions about violence within their relationships with people of the opposite gender.

- Are they in intimate relationships? If no, why not?
- Describe their relationships
- Their attitudes towards gender/power in their own relationships
- Attitude towards violence within their relationships
- Should people stay in abusive relationships?
- Their future roles in relationships

APPENDIX 2: NETWORK VIEWS FROM ATLAS Ti KAYAMANDI DATA FILE

PERSONAL PROFILES

All the codes in this network view are linked to code personal profile. This is because; I feel they are a part of the participants' life histories. They have information on the origins of the their family as well as the present structure, which reflects the nature of interaction between family members. The family here represents the context because it is where the phenomenon of violence occurs. The family circumstances i.e. the family migration from the rural to urban areas, the nature of family interaction and relations represent the intervening conditions because they somehow either contribute to or are a consequence of the existence of the phenomenon of domestic violence.

CAUSES AND INCIDENCES OF VIOLENCE AT HOME

This network views captures a combination of causes (causal conditions) and incidences of domestic violence (phenomenon). Notice that all the conditions are linked to the phenomenon in various ways.

IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

This network view contains relations between codes that indicate the impact (consequence) of parental violence (phenomenon) on the children who are exposed to it.

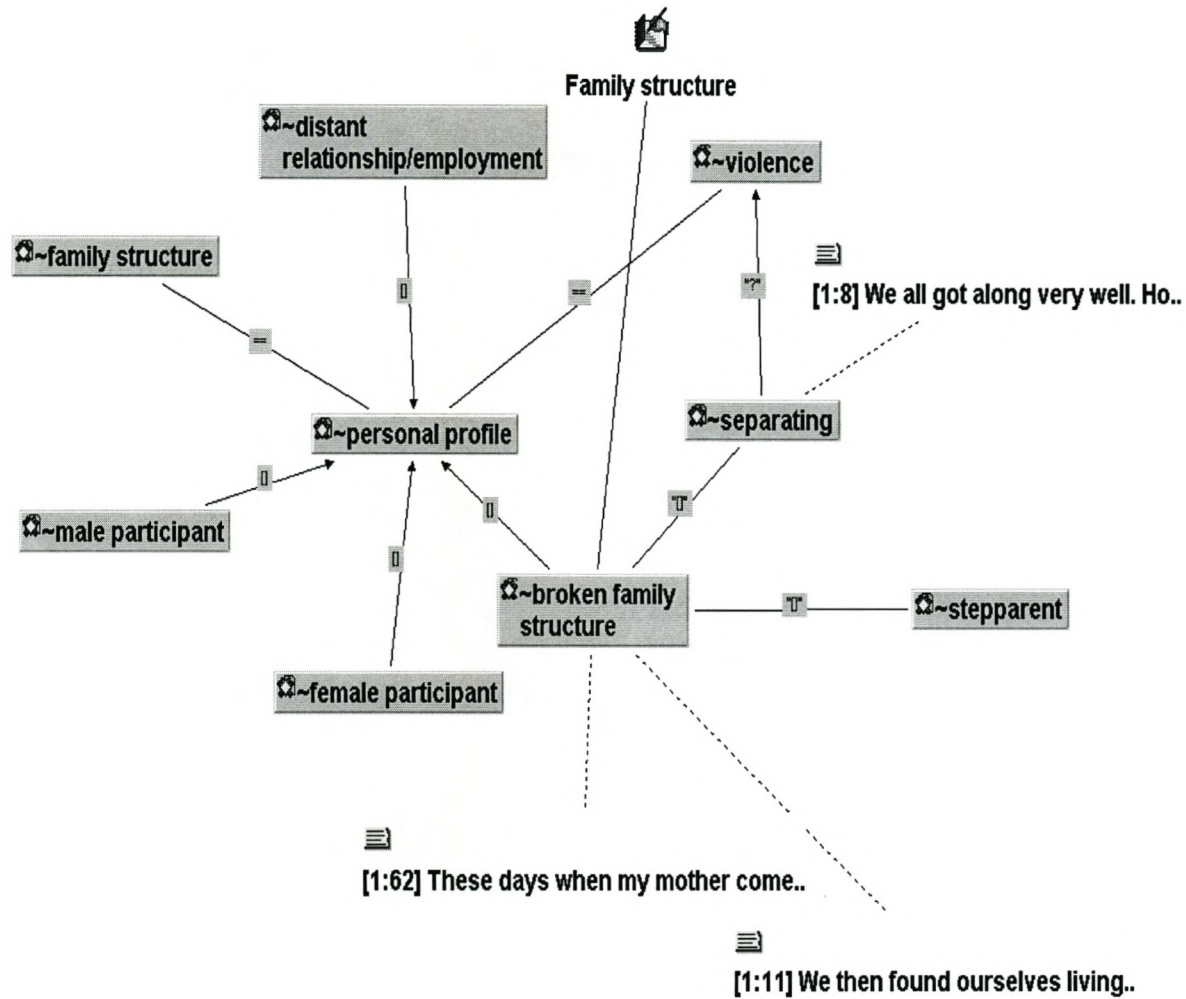
VIOLENCE IN TEENAGE RELATIONSHIPS

All the codes in this network view are linked to a free code "violence in teenage relationships". These codes denote teenagers' personal experiences of violence as well as their perceptions on teenage violence.

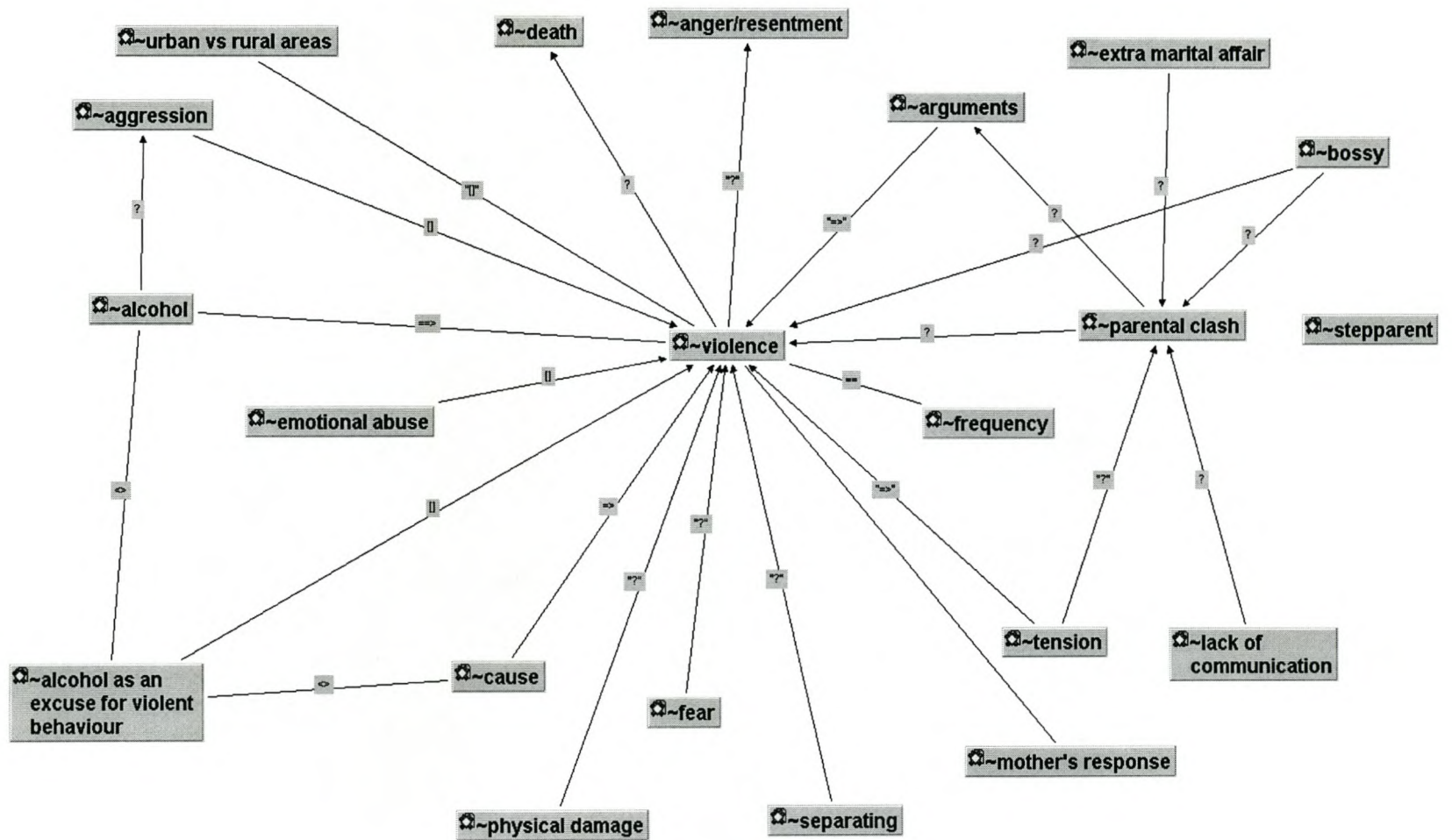
GENDER RELATIONS, ATTITUDES AND VIOLENCE

In this network view, interparental violence (phenomenon) is used in a different yet related context i.e. as it applies to teenagers intimate relationships with people of the opposite sex and how it contributes or influences or not the participant's perceptions about issues of gender relations. Violence is used to determine the extent to which it influences the way in which participant views violence within their relationships. Secondly, violence is also used to examine the current attitude towards gender relations among participants.

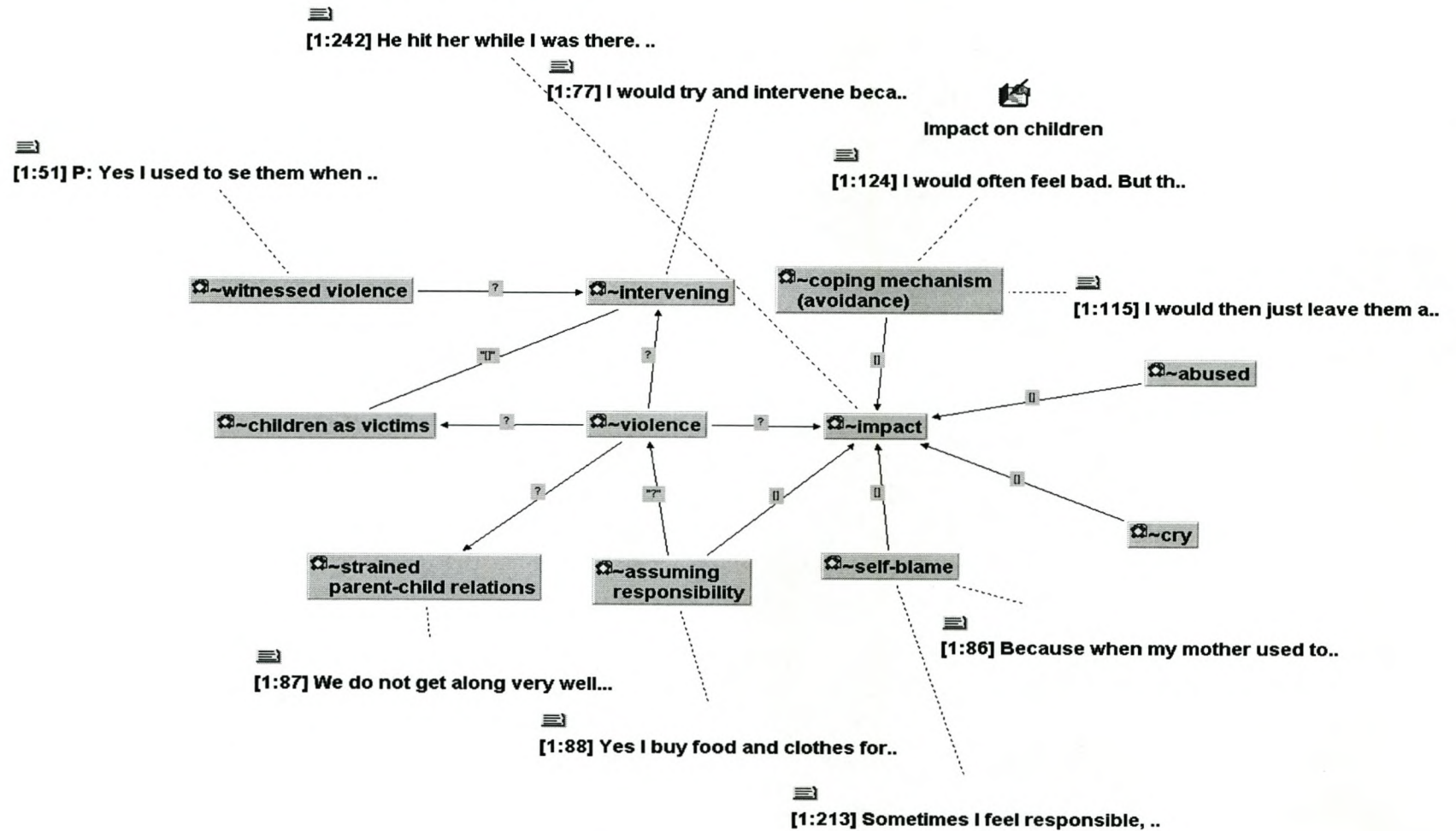
I). PERSONAL PROFILES



II). CAUSES AND INCIDENCES OF VIOLENCE AT HOME



III). IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN



V). GENDER RELATIONS, ATTITUDES AND VIOLENCE

