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Wright, Ruth Isabelle

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SHELTERING

IN THE LIVES OF FOUR WOMEN

AFFECTED BY

ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Ruth Isabelle Wright

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (Research Psychology).

Johannesburg, 2005

ABSTRACT

Domestic violence is recognized as a pervasive problem in South Africa. This study focused on the narratives of four abused women and attempted to establish the significance of sheltering in their lives. A qualitative research design was used based on semi-structured interviews and a short follow-up questionnaire, which were analysed thematically. The findings supported past research, indicating that the women's experiences were very diverse, and they contained many similar features to those reported in previous studies. Each of the four women was not a passive victim, having taken the decision to leave an abusive and violent relationship. Sheltering provided for these women the protected space necessary to move beyond, and in addition provided structure and social support necessary to start to transcend the abuse. Sheltering was found to fill in the gaps created by a society in transition, in which abuse and violence are often tolerated or condoned within the existing social and family structures.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts (Research Psychology) by course work and research report in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

_____

R. I. Wright

_____ day of _____, 2005.

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1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This study is a qualitative, naturalistic inquiry with the research aim of investigating the experiences disclosed by four residents and a manager of a shelter for abused women. The resulting data were analyzed to establish the links between domestic violence and the role of sheltering in the community. It attempts to evaluate the implications of sheltering in the South African context.

The research design was based on semi-structured in-depth interview technique and a short follow-up questionnaire, utilizing the examples found in Kirkwood's research (1997, appendix 3, p.159). The interviews were conducted on one-to-one bases by the researcher. The audio tapes of the interview and field notes were transcribed to paper copies, and onto a computer diskette, maintaining where possible the exact words used by the interviewees and included descriptions of their nonverbal behaviours. Data analysis followed the steps of interpretative phenomenological analysis and utilized content analysis and social construction approaches.

1.2 RATIONALE

Although theoretical concepts on domestic violence have been prolific over the last three decades (Lawson, 2003), domestic violence remains a persistent and elusive social problem without reliable solutions to stop the violence. Since the 1970s domestic violence has been increasingly recognized as a serious social problem (Mooney, 2000). Yet the study of domestic violence is considered to be in its infancy, plagued by numerous myths and misconceptions (Wallace, 1999).

The aetiology of domestic violence is extensive. Nevertheless, the most publicly and professionally debated aspect remains the quandary over why women remain in abusive relationships. Research has established that the problem has no socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, or national boundaries, affecting worldwide one woman in six (Lawson, 2003). In South Africa, Angless and Maconachie (1996) report that it is estimated that one in four women in South Africa is subjected to violence from her intimate partner. However, these estimates are

believed to be grossly under-estimated. South Africa has been described as 'one of the gender violence capitals of the world' (Dangor, Fedler, and Park, 2000).

Sheltering is a Western solution for domestic violence. This study focuses on how sheltering can be evaluated in a Southern African social context for its intervention and therapeutic appropriateness. In South African society, domestic violence forces women and children, not men, to leave their homes and communities in search of safety. In a social context in which there is no national health scheme or social security net, a safe retreat is an absolute necessity for survival.

In South Africa few women have the resources to escape the violence without some type of social assistance (Park, Peter, and DeSa, 2000). Shelters fill in this gap, giving women violent-free space, mutual support, and assistance in accessing resources (Dobash and Dobash, 1992). Although the sheltering movement is a Western concept, Park et al. (2000) point out that shelters have both validity and a purpose in the South African context. This study aims to contribute to knowledge in this area, and to establish whether this Western concept of sheltering does indeed have validity and purpose for a sample of four abused women.

Sheltering in this study is considered against a theoretical background of empowerment and agency, which have become two very prominent concepts in community psychology in prevention and intervention. Within the sheltering movement they are seen as major tools in unshackling abused women. The evaluation is considered on two levels: in the women's experience in the shelter, and through the transformative power of narratives in breaking the imposed silence (Kirkwood, 1997). An in-depth, case-study approach is used to provide a forum for the women to speak out, shattering the 'trap of secrecy and fear'. Silencing can have a profoundly negative consequence by encouraging women to see themselves as the problem entrapped in the dominant discourse of failure as a woman, mother, and wife.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In researching domestic violence the complex, multifaceted nature of the phenomenon is constantly emphasized in the numerous issues and theoretical positions discussed. How and why a woman attempts to leave an abusive relationship, the assistance she seeks out in her

social environment, and her ability to move beyond the effects of the abuse are the issues concerning this study. The literature review, therefore, covers significant topics in theory and research concerning theoretical concepts, responses to abuse, shelters, and empowerment and agency.

The current theoretical explanations for partner/intimate violence are divided into three major groupings, underlying it as a social problem but also an individual issue (Dwyer, Smokowski, Bricout, and Wodarske, 1996). The psychiatric model includes all theories pertaining to individual pathology. The social-psychological model analyzes the environmental factors and social structures. Finally, the socio-cultural model based largely on feminist theory is focused on the social roles of women and the cultural attitudes towards viewing violence against women as acceptable. Different theoretical models take dominant roles at particular times in history, and are dependent on fluctuating contextual influences.

There is some overlap in the theoretical approaches on how women respond to the abuse and their staying/leaving decisions. Although a number of authors concentrate on how women respond to abusive relationship, Lempert's (1996) framework provides a valid model, establishing a good starting point on which the work of other authors can expand and further explain the process. Dobash and Dobash (1992) and Green (1999) argue that women are not passive, docile victims as portrayed in popular literature but are actively negotiating their relationship in order to control and/or eliminate the abuse. Perhaps Kirkwood (1997) presents the most influential argument in emphasizing the empowering and learning elements of the staying/leaving actions in her spiral inward/outward concept.

However, exploring the types of abuse that women experience is also essential in determining the impact of the abuse on their lives, which in turn informs the choices the women perceive as available for them. Traditionally research into domestic violence concentrated on the type, frequency, severity, and uncontrollable nature of the physical abuse, but contemporary research acknowledges that men use other forms of controlling behaviours such as sexual, economic, and emotional or psychological abuse (Shepard and Campbell, 1992). What is defined as abuse and what are acceptable levels of abuse has been debated both in the academic and public forums. Sorenson (1996) points out that the attitudes concerning acceptable levels of abuse have evolved over time and are determined by social norms and practices.

The literature also suggests that the most significant need for women and children involved in abusive relationships is to find a safe place (Dobash and Dobash, 1992). However, in South Africa, sheltering specifically for abused women is a comparatively recent phenomenon. The knowledge and models of sheltering based on a western experience has created debate on the appropriateness of shelters in different environments (Park, Shaik, and Rasool, 2000). Many African and developing nations do not use or see the need for sheltering since the role of the traditional extended family is to act as a mediator in disputes between partners (Park et al., 2000). Yet social conditions such as urbanization, modernization, and the patterns of migrant workers in Africa have impacted on the traditional family deterrents to domestic violence (Vetten, 2000).

As two very prominent concepts in community psychology, empowerment and human agency have generated considerable debate, making them complicated concepts to operationalize. The critics of empowerment find the concept problematic since it is based on western social and economic belief systems (Riger, 1993), while authors such as Ramazanoglu and Holland (1993) argue that women's socialization and the discourses surrounding women's experiences with subordination compromise female agency and actions. Yet empowerment theory postulates that it is possible to empower women in a shelter environment through the providing access to resources and information, and the use of personal accounts to transform a sense of self in regaining a place and role in their communities (Kirkwood, 1997; Lawless, 2001).

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study focuses on four research questions. These are based on a theoretical position anticipating:

a. the presence of particular factors in the lives of four abused women;
b. that the presence or absence of these factors will have influenced their decisions to seek assistance in the form of sheltering; and
c. that the presence or absence of these factors will have influenced their ability to take the opportunities for support and empowerment offered.

The research questions are as follows:

- Why do women seek assistance in sheltering?

- Has the shelter experience met the expectations and needs of the women?
- Have the women experienced empowerment and/or agency through the shelter stay?
- Can an empowerment/agency shift be identified through the narrative process?

1.5 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Definitions of *domestic violence* in the research literature and public discourse vary widely among researchers, policymakers, different social institutions, the victims, the abusers, social activists, and the cultural context (Mooney, 2000). However, like any other social construct, definitions for domestic violence are not static but reflect the current social awareness and actions. The purpose of naming domestic violence is to open up discussion and to gain social recognition by giving abused women the legitimate means to identify and give voice to their experiences (Ashcraft, 2000). The theoretical stance taken in this study is to view domestic violence as men's violence towards their female partners in an intimate relationship, in which the abuse has the purpose of controlling the women, holding them in a subordinate role.

Battered/abused woman describes a woman who has experienced repeatedly over a period of at least six months verbal aggression, sexual coercion and assault, physical attack and intimidation, curtailment of normal everyday activities and freedoms, and/or restricted access to resources by the man who she is or was emotionally and/or sexually intimate and with in the context of intended, coercive control (Browne, 1993).

'*Domestic*' refers to the setting of the violence in an intimate relationship, situated in a home environment, which makes the presumption of safety, caring, and privacy. However, the domestic structures of families also vary considerably, from seriously dating to cohabiting to legally married. The couple may be of the same or different biological sex (Wallace, 1999).

'*Violence*' is used to describe the intentional, antagonistic, and aggressive nature of the physical and/or psychological acts (Dwyer, et al., 1996). The term violence can be also broadly defined as withholding of physical or emotional support; physical or mental acts or omissions, resulting in injuries to the victim; and/or the restricting or denying of certain rights and liberties (Wallace, 1999). Characteristics such as its frequency, severity, duration, and uncontrollable nature also identify the violence to be within the sphere of domestic violence.

Definitions can limit the focus of the research, and lack of agreement can lead to confusion of the research process and results, limiting the conclusions drawn. Dobash and Dobash (1998) debate the issue over the broadness or narrowness of the term violence in violence against women. They conclude that to arrive at a single definition should not be the objective but rather to consider different approaches. The particular context in which the term is used should reflect the reality of those experiencing the phenomenon. In the literature review authors have used a wide variety of terminology to identify intimate violence. Therefore, when citing the different authors, this research report has maintained the terms used by the authors. The following terms are used throughout the report to identify the violence women experience: male violence against women, intimate abuse/violence, partner violence, abusive relationships, abused women, wife battery/battering, battered wives, marital violence, and family violence.

Although empowerment and agency are difficult concepts, they remain a fundamental part of the sheltering movement. *Empowerment* is interpreted as the psychological awareness of having achieved personal control over one's life (Rappaport, 1987) while *agency* is defined as the power of people to act independently of the determining constraints imposed on them by social structures (Giddens, 1995). Zimmerman (1995) outlines the empowerment process as one that creates the opportunity to take control over one's destiny by accessing the necessary resources so that the individual has the ability to influence decisions concerning her life. However, the belief in individuality and the power to make individual choices does not extend across all cultures and social contexts (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 1993).

A feminist perspective emphasises the need to give careful attention to listening to women's experiences through a narrative process, which does not distort women's lives and activities. The *narrative* is the stories one constructs and tells about one's life: 'our autobiographies' (Bruner, 1987). Chase (1995) argues that by taking the interview beyond the level of a report to that of a narrative, a message is transmitted that informs the relationship between that particular life story and the social context, which shapes and/or constrains the particular narrative. The narrative process gives voice to women's experiences in allowing empowerment and solidarity, and allows for the healing transition from victim to survivor (Kirkwood, 1997, Lawless, 2001).

Shelters for abused women are social institutions, which respond to the needs of women experiencing intimate violence by providing a safe retreat and protection from the violence, and the basic human needs of shelter, food, and clothing. An admission criterion varies from shelter to shelter but is primarily derived from evidence that the woman is being abused and has no other place to go. More recent developments in the shelter movement include the concept of empowering abused women to overcome their oppression and to change gender inequalities plaguing society (Park, Shaik, and Rasool, 2000).

2. CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The problem of abuse and violence in a domestic relationship is well documented and established as a worldwide social problem, causing concern among health professionals and the public. The impact of domestic violence is considered to have both social and health consequences. Although domestic violence is the major source of bodily injury for women, it also has grave implications for the psychological and emotional well-being of both women and children (Kirkwood, 1997). Violence limits women's capabilities to function in their communities as fully productive, participating human beings (Green, 1999).

2.1 THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

2.1.1 CURRENT THEORETICAL EXPLANATIONS

Current theoretical approaches to domestic violence point to an extensive aetiology. The major theories fall under three specific model groupings:

I: THE PSYCHIATRIC MODEL: examines the individual personality traits and mental status of primarily the perpetrator, and to a lesser extent the victim as the chief cause of the violence (Dwyer et al., 1996; Wallace, 1999). This model includes the following theories:

Early childhood development: is based on the idea of abnormal or dysfunctional childhood as leading to personality defects, which cause violence. When stability of childhood environmental factors such as predictability, caring, and safety are compromised on a long-term basis, the regulatory strategies for intimate relationships become maladaptive and dysfunctional (Lawson, 2003). Yet, it is criticized as insufficiently explaining the etiology (Wallace, 1998).

Intrapsychic approach: the cause of victimization within the marital context is based on Freud's psychoanalytical theory in which female characteristics as narcissism, passivity, and masochism are significant. Other characteristics which differentiate between abused and non-abused women are the inability to cope, withdrawal, shyness, manipulative, inability to manage the family and home, sullen silence, nagging, depression, frigidity, and incapacity for deep emotional warmth (Foreman and Dallos, 1993). In this approach the woman is identified as a victim, and yet, she is blamed for triggering or exacerbating the violence and not actively

preventing it. However, empirical research results do not sustain this view (Schurink, Snyman, Krugel, and Slabbert, 1992).

Interactional and family theory: the partners purposely create conflict, possible violence, and sabotage the environment to increase tension and frustration in the relationship (Foreman and Dallos, 1993). The violence is mutual and an unfortunate merger of immature personalities and poor communication skills. Inherent in this explanation is the unconscious select to choose a partner whose characteristics help resolve unsettled conflicts which occurred with their parents.

Alcohol and drug abuse: although not established as the cause of the violence, the disinhibiting behaviour and altered judgment allows abuse to occur more frequently and severely, and excuses the behaviour (Wallace, 1998).

Self identity: how a woman forms a sense of self is instrumental in her ability to cope with the abuse. Individual and social identities are actively constructed out of and dependent on the shifting social context (Wetherell, 1996). Race becomes significant because it cuts across all other identities such as gender, class, and sexuality (Wetherell, 1996). In the South African race and culture have had a significant influence on one's identity. The transition to democracy dismantled identities based on the racial system, causing new forms of identity, experiences, and selfhood to be available. However, the apartheid racial categories that classified people into groups, determined place of residence, worship, and school, the public facilities available, and one's sexual partner continues to influence (Motsemme, 2003).

Resource deprivation: associated with unemployment is often theorized to increase risks of spousal violence. MacMillan and Gartner (1999) noted that employment is not just a source of economic funds, but it has symbolic significance in providing identities, self-esteem, and mental health for the individual, especially in constructing masculinity for males. Therefore, the issue is not just male employment, but male employment in connection to female employment. When both partners are employed, the risk of abuse is lower, but substantially increases when the male partner is unemployed.

II: THE SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL MODEL: examines external environmental factors and social structures that contribute to the violent conditions. The focus is on family structure, stress, intergenerational transmission of violence, and family interactional styles as explanations for the violence (Dwyer et al., 1996).

Social learning theory: suggests that children through watching and imitating others learn a script for violent behaviour. Violence becomes a powerful coercion tool and a process for resolving conflict in which child learns the positive expectations rather than the negative consequences. Children may associate aggressive behaviour as a normal part of romantic relationships, and use this type of behaviour as adults in intimate relationships (Simons, Lin, and Gordon, 1998). However, Mullender and Morley (1994) debate the issue of 'cycle of violence' or 'intergenerational transmission of violence' through social learning approaches.

Resource exchange theory: is an offshoot of patriarchy in which the control of resources within the relationship allows for a dominant position. Wallace (1999, p. 12) cites Gelles (n.d.) in stating that 'people hit family members because they can'. If one individual is at a disadvantage aggressive coercion is more likely (MacMillan and Gartner, 1999). Therefore, the amount of resources one commands is directly proportionate to the power and force that is available. Status within the marital relationships can include education, occupation, and income. The ability to hit is explained in the private nature of the family environment, which allows for low risk of intervention, diminishing the cost of the violence.

However, Riger and Krieglstein (2000) point out that theory based simply on resources overlooks significant contextual factors such as discrimination in the workplace, restricting the woman's access to resources. Also by increasing the woman's economic resources and independence the violence may not actually stop but be provoked. Finally, it does not account for the man's continued desire to maintain dominance over the woman.

Ecological theory: focuses on the context of battered women's lives to evaluate causal and maintaining factors (Carlson, 1984; Emery and Laumann-Billings, 1998; Maton, 2000). The theory examines what the individual partners bring to the relationship and the immediate social context of the family. The next level of analysis is the broader social-structures infringing on family life. The finale level, sociocultural focuses on social norms, cultural values, and belief systems (Carlson, 1984). Carlson claims the ecological model allows for

analyzing of the multifaceted and interacting causes and pervasive factors contributing to domestic violence over time or at a single point of time. However, Carlson argues that it is unable to identify all possible factors or to identify which factors are more likely to be influential for a given family.

Biopyschosocial theory: examines the combination and interaction of biological, psychological, and social elements. Authors argue that severe limitations occur in interpreting dysfunctional behaviours on only one of major components of human etiology (McKenry, Julian, and Gavazzi, 1995).

Evolutionary psychological theory: attempts to examine the mechanisms that produce human behaviour as an evolving process of the human mind (Wilson and Daly, 1998). The species typical parts of the mind/brain are examined for psychological adaptations. The authors argue that an evolutionary perspective can assist in understanding why men find it necessary to resort to violence in intimate relationships through the need for male-male competition. Wilson and Daly (1998, p. 202) use the concept of 'sexual proprietariness' to explain why some men go beyond jealousy to react in a violent manner when they feel threatened. These men are especially proprietary and controlling, engaging in autonomy-limiting behaviours towards their partner. The authors argue that this is a cross-culturally occurrence.

III: THE SOCIO-CULTURAL MODEL: focuses on women's role in society, and cultural attitudes towards women and violence. Dwyer et al. (1996) argue that in order to understand domestic violence, gender and power must be examined.

Violence in society: is often seen as an acceptable and justifiable part of our everyday life (Wallace, 1999). Although violence differs widely in meaning from user to user, and with context to context, it is bond to power and its ability to successfully force others to do something against their will, whether potential or actual. Violence is considered to be a chosen behaviour (Hoffmann and Mckendrick, 1990), and has many different forms, including physical, psychological, economic, social, structural, and political (Olivier, 1992).

McWilliams (1998) reports that gender-based abuse increases during times of social upheaval and stress. Traditional controls over domestic violence are not available for women as the

shift to providing protection and safety on other levels of society takes preference. 'Culture of violence' is a term often associated with South African (Vetten, 2000). Connected to apartheid violence was the militaristic aggressive masculinity seen in men's experiences on both sides of the struggle (Vetten, 2000). Some men transferred the capacity for violence from combat situations to their homes and relationships. In South Africa, violence was also found in economic violence resulting in poverty. Through the state's political, social, educational, and economic structures human impoverishment was enforced. Angless and Maconachie (1996) point out that the extensive prevalence of violence in South Africa affects all members of its society, and is the leading cause of death, disability and psychological trauma

Patriarchal theory: for domestic violence is grounded in the gender-based feminist perspective that identifies the social institutions of marriage, family, economy, and law as promoting and supporting the use of violence against women, rather than giving protection (Miles-Doan, 1998). Yet not all men use violence (Riger and Krieglstein, 2000). To further complicate the issue, Green (1999) points out that in many cultures women are considered the caretakers of morality, and therefore are the authority of the boundaries of acceptable female behaviours and suitable punishment.

Dobash and Dobash (1992, p. 4) and Levinson (1998, n.p., as cited in Fedler and Tanzen, 2000, p. 27) examine the contributing factors, leading to men's violent against women. Fedler and Tanzer, however, argue that there is no single cause but rather the interaction of numerous conditions. In combining the sources of conflict identified by the authors, the following factors are seen as significant in maintaining domestic violence: economic inequality; men's possessiveness and jealousy; violence as a conflict-resolving mechanism; men's cultural right to punish their women for perceived wrongdoing; male authority and control of decision-making, and the importance of maintaining and exercising this authority; men's expectations concerning women's domestic work; and restrictions on women's ability to leave the home.

In some African countries, females are considered property of male relatives and husbands under both civil and customary laws, allowing for little controls over domestic violence. Green (1999) points out that many African states resist any attempts to change laws, regarding such moves as undermining a husband's authority and attacking traditional family

values. In many African countries, the customary laws deem the husbands responsible for their wives actions in the legal and social spheres, giving the husbands absolute authority over their wives. The use of the legal system in solving marital problem is usually considered inappropriate. Marital rape is a contentious issue, therefore not considered as an abuse act or a criminal crime. Church and Muslim leaders criticize any state involvement (Green, 1999). Although marital rape in South Africa is illegal, Shefer, Strebel, and Foster (2000) state that hetero-sex and violence are inseparably interwoven.

The world economy has had a profound influence on marginalizing African women in their struggle for the survival. African women have moved across the traditional boundaries to enter capitalism but are forced to earn from subsistence and petty commodity production (Green, 1999). Male migration has a significant affect on women in Africa, causing marital failure, and decreased financial supports. With the loss of traditional supports, land privatization, and changing gendered divisions of labour, many women have migrated to towns and cities in order to ensure survival (Green, 1999). South African women because of apartheid policies had additional obstacles to over come through poor education and unequal employment status (Sadie and van Aardt, 1995). Women's entry into the formal economic sectors in Africa has exaggerated the 'crisis of masculinity' experienced by men (Green, 1999). Men in their role as a provider are threatened by women's ability to financially support themselves with wage employment, removing them from the traditional patriarchal controls but also increasing their vulnerability to violence.

2.1.2 TYPES OF ABUSE

Male abuse against women is seen to occur on a continuum of behaviours, involving explicit and implicit threats to misuse of power over women (Goodman, Koss, Fizgeral, Russo, and Keita, 1993). Socio-economic, racial, religious traditions, and ethnic variations do occur in defining acceptable levels of abuse, the types of abuse, and what constitutes abuse. Kirkwood (1997) proposes that the different types of abuse do not operate in isolation, but are interconnected, and therefore, impact on intervention and the healing process for the women.

Physical abuse involves intentional violent injury inflicted by someone with the purpose to cause physical harm and punishment to the victim (Dwyer, et al., 1996). It may involve serious and/or repeated injury such as broken bones, concussion, hearing loss, bruises, cuts, broken teeth, internal injuries, miscarriage, and dislocated bones. The South African 2002

national survey found that the women experienced numerous forms of physical abuse (Rasool, Vermaak, Pharoah, Louw, and Stavrou, 2002). The most common forms cited by the women were incidents of slapping, hitting, beating, punching, pushing, arm twisting, and/or kicked. The results also found that the abuse occurred over an extended period of time, not a single incident.

Economic abuse involves restricted or denied access to the family income and resources, or being forced to be the sole breadwinner or provider for the household (Johnson, 1992). The South African survey found that the most common forms of economic abuse were the taking of money without their consent; followed by not being allowed to know about or have access to the family income, and being forced to be the sole income earner for the family (Rasool et al., 2002).

Sexual abuse within an intimate relationship involves an aggressive, violent, traumatic sexual encounter and sexual exploitation to control and humiliate the victim (Horton and Johnson, 1993). Cultural relativity becomes an issue due to the debate around rape within the marital structures, and the belief in men's rights for sexual access without consent. Violent physical attacks often involve sexual aggression. Rasool's et al. (2002) survey of South African women found that although a wide range of different kinds of sexual abuse were experienced, unwanted kissing and touching, and forced sexual intercourse were the most common cited by the women.

Emotional, psychological, and verbal abuse is a sophisticated, subtle, and systematic wearing down of the woman's autonomy and self-esteem, causing her self-worth and independence to be undermined over a long period of time (Kirkwood, 1997). Hamby and Sugarman (1999) define psychological aggression as including attacks, which do not include direct assault on another's body. This type of aggression is seen as has having long lasting consequences. Hamby and Sugarman identified three characteristics shared by severe forms of psychological aggression: first, it is motivated, instrumental aggression; second, it is an attempt to undermine and has malicious intent; and third, it is explicit, not implied. The South African national survey reported being threatened with physical harm and being humiliated in public as the most common type of emotional abuse experienced by women (Rasool et al., 2002).

2.2 RESPONSE TO ABUSE

Dobash and Dobash (1992) and Green (1999) argue that contrary to common belief, women are active in attempting to deal with the abuse, making it important to grasp how women strategize to develop agency in halting, and/or coping with the abuse in making sense of their relationships. Women's responses are discussed in three areas of research: Lempert's stages of response, staying/leaving patterns, and the paradigmatic shift or last straw events:

2.2.1 LEMPERT'S STAGES

Lempert (1996) outlines three progressive stages that women use to cope with the abuse and its contradictions. Lempert argues that violent episodes are one part of a very entangled and multifaceted relationship between two individuals. Lempert's stages are a good starting point; however her research can be expanded on and explained through research reported by other authors.

First stage - keeping the violence invisible: here women are influenced the romantic image and the 'good wife' expectations, which are supported by the private, intimate social definition of the relationship. These early aspects are conceptualized as happy, loving, harmonious, sharing, and exciting. Violence often begins in this initial stage when love and romantic feelings towards the partner are very intense. The woman is ashamed to make the contradiction of her situation public, and therefore hides the violence. The good wife discourse portrays the wife as responsible for maintaining the public harmonious image.

Face-saving strategies to prevent public exposure of the abuse are used to preserve the couple's credibility, but it also allows the women to hide their own image as a victim. This is an interactive process in which the male partners are also involved by using controlled assaults to hide evidence of beatings, and by limiting the women's access to social interactions. However, Lempert does not write of the cultural practices where women are taught at an early age not to speak of the violence, leaving them vulnerable to further abusive relationships and continued silence (Kirkwood, 1997; Lawless, 2001). Lempert also did not identify the immobilizing role fear has in silencing women, preventing women from seeking help, knowing that their efforts may provoke further and more severe abuse (Baker, 1997).

Second stage - containing the violence and preserving agency: this stage brings realization that their expectations for loving relationships are unrealistic and possibly unattainable. The abuse can no longer remain invisible due to its increasing unpredictability, frequency, and severity. Campbell, Rose, Kub, and Nedd (1998) identify this stage as a 'turning point' in which the women negotiate for a non-violent relationship. Three strategies are often used to avoid physical abuse: problem-solving strategies, self-preservation strategies, and subordinating self. The strategies available are dependent on the woman's understanding of the violence and the resources perceived as being available. Yet, at this point the strategy is not to leave because the women are still committed to the relationships.

However, authors such as Sorenson (1996), Green (1999), Hamby (2000), Teifenthaler and Farmer (2000), and Yoshihamma (2002) caution that difference in cultural beliefs and norms, and individual circumstances influence the battered woman's choice of strategies. Yoshihama (2002) argues that care must be taken in interpreting women's responses to the abuse as active versus passive, or engagement versus disengagement strategies. Yoshihama (2002) points out that a significant variable overlooked in research of abused women's coping strategies is the influence of cultural norms and values in determining the strategies both available and advocated.

The differences in women's coping strategies are emphasized by Green (1999) in her study of African women who utilize what institutions are available to them, and will combine different strategies depending on the problem, context, and their stage in life development. The conventional perceptions of power are challenged through the alternative methods such as 'effective power', which originates out of women's reproductive and productive labour (Green, 1999). In this way the site of resistance is centered in the home. African women may appear passive or consenting in not directly confronting oppression. However, Everett, Charlton, and Staudt (1989, n.p., cited in Green, 1999, p. 154)) identify 'strategies of disengagement', comprising of four types of strategies: management of suffering, insulation within family and kin, collective action, and escape. Green emphases that these strategies are not rigid and fixed, but can be used in combination, and occur privately or involve the entire community.

Wood (1999) examines how love and violence co-exist in relationships to make the violence a normal part of the loving relationships. Cognitive strategies are used to make sense of and

justify the violence by minimizing the severity of the violence, or the woman blames herself for provoking the violence (Wood, 1999). Wood found a third strategy used to normalize the violence through dissociation by disconnecting the 'real him' from when he is 'not himself' during the violence episodes. The second type of dissociation is to contribute the violence as 'beyond his control' (Wood, 1999, p. 4). He is not his normal self because of the use of alcohol, drugs, is angry, or has lost control. Wood claims that dissociating the partner from the violence, forgives and excuses the man's violence, and constructs a real relationship with the real partner, making the relationship a viable one. Therefore, the woman is able to maintain her love for the man and remain with this 'real him'.

Third stage - making the invisible visible: is dependent on cultural definitions, and contextual influences (Dutton, 1996). Dobash and Dobash (1992) identify relatives such as mothers and sisters as the first to be told of the violence in exposing the abuse and seeking help. There is an attempt to understand and change the man's behaviour. The woman and her family begin to include legal, social, and medical agencies. Kirkwood (1997) views this as an outward spiral movement in which the woman becomes aware of the consequences the relationship, and to gain personal resources in shifting the balance of control away from the abuser to reestablish her own needs, wishes, and eventually leave.

How family, friends, and social services react is often critical to how the woman will proceed. Foreman and Dallos (1993) state that community response to domestic violence falls into three broad categories. The first category is directed at protecting the victims of violence through the use of the law, police services, and alternative housing. In the community, the first line of protection for abused women is the police and the judicial systems, which have not always been responsive. Fedler (1995) examines the consequences of the Family Violence Act of 1993 in South Africa, and argues that without solutions to safety, financial, and housing issues for battered women such legislation will remain ineffectual. Sheltering accommodation is considered one of the short-term solutions in the community.

The second category is therapeutic interventions through therapy and counselling aimed at changing the behaviour of the perpetrators, and assisting the victim in rebuilding her life. Although therapy for individuals and couples points to the violence as an individual or relationship problem, changing trends due to the feminist perspective direct intervention towards assisting and supporting the women on a social level (Foreman and Dallos, 1993).

Grass-roots or advocacy programmes include safe houses for women and children, crisis lines, support groups, and legal advocacy (Browne, 1993). However, such programmes are reliant on local and state funding, and charitable contributions, making their continuing existence precarious. Studies conducted by Tutty, Bidgood, and Rothery (1993); Gondolf (1998); Thompson, Kaslow, Kingree, Rashid, Puett, Jacobs, and Matthews (2000); and Bybee and Sullivan (2002) emphasized the importance of advocacy and social supports in decreasing and/or stopping the violence. Lawson (2003) provides a significant overview of the different therapeutic paths and assessment tools available for counsellors, and the philosophy behind the each route.

Finally, the third category is based on the feminist perspective of working towards social change in areas of gender roles, legitimacy of violence, and the patriarchal system. Therefore, it targets extended sociostructural factors, which influence and reinforce abuse as a controlling agent (Roche and Sadoski, 1996). Since the early 1970s, campaigns have had varying degrees of success (Dobash and Dobash, 1992). The predominant form of response for governments in domestic violence has been for change in areas concerning temporary shelter, legal protection, housing, health care, and welfare provisions.

A national survey on violence against women conducted in South Africa found that age, rural or urban setting, cost, availability of services, the type of abuse, and transportation were factors, which impacted on the woman's ability to seek help from medical professionals (Rasool et al., 2002). In seeking assistance from the informal sources of support, the survey results found that 60% of the survivors of abuse obtained assistance from family while 43% utilized the help of friends, and 20% from their clergy. Although satisfaction with police assistance was generally good, it did vary from rural to urban settings. Legal advice and assistance was found to be a severely underused service. The authors state that the significant finding here was the indication that there was a need for education of the communities and families in the dynamics of domestic violence and the appropriate response (Rasool et al., 2002).

2.2.2 STAYING/LEAVING PATTERNS

Why women stay, leave and then return to abusive relationships continues to be one of the most debated research quests. Although it is perceived by most that women have the choice

to stay in or leave the abusive relationship, the woman's own perceptions and contextual factors may limit her opportunity to do so (Choice and Lamke, 1997). Kirkwood (1997) argues that the process allows the woman to gain 'personal power', resources, and the knowledge of living independently, leading to the understanding that she can actually leave.

Johnson's (1992) evaluation of the research literature found a number of possible reasons for these behavioural patterns. First were economic factors including lack of educational skills, income, and occupation that limit women's choices (Johnson, 1992). Others advocated socio-psychological factors such as masochism, social isolation, learned helplessness, passivity and internalization, low self-esteem, optimism that the abuse will cease, emotional love, and fear. A third research possibility looked at situational factors such as the number of children in the family, the history and severity of the abuse, the length of the relationship, and pregnancy. Finally, Johnson found that other researchers examined the role of institutions in the decision, such as the shortage of suitable legal and social interventions and support, the family, and the stigma attached to divorce.

As possible explanations numerous theoretical positions have been advocated, some of which overlap theory on domestic violence:

Learned helplessness: is identified as cognitive-behaviour (Walker, 1984, cited in Choice and Lamke, 1997). The unpredictable nature of the abuse leads the woman to feel a sense of lose of control and internalizing the blame (Dwyer et al., 1996). The woman's inability to utilize new information and strategies is explained as a cognitive motivational deficit. Instead she maintains the belief that nothing she does can help her, and is unwilling to try.

Cycle of violence: three distinct phases occur in the dynamics of battering, which trap the woman into the relationship (Walker, 1984, n.p., cited in Wallace, 1998, p. 150). The tension-building phase involves increased strain, resulting in low key battering. The woman attempts to calm her partner in a nurturing way, and adapts the man's reasoning, making her deserving of the abuse. In the next phase a major assault occur, differing from the first phase by its intense, aggressive violence. Both partners react with shock and possibly denial, making excuses. The batterer attempts to make amends and promising never to do it again, brings the cycle back into the third calm, loving respite phase. The woman will stay because of her desire to believe he will change, responding to his loving behaviour. Following from the

cycle theory of violence, Walker (1984, n.p., as cited in Wallace, 1998, p. 151) identify the 'Battered Woman Syndrome', theorizing that women stay much longer than they should because they are gradually immobilized by fear. The syndrome identifies the psychological symptoms of helpless and hopeless.

Traumatic bonding theory: accounts for women staying as strong emotional attachment within the violent intimate relationship, creating a cycle of dependency (Wallace, 1998). The theory focuses on the power imbalance of the relationship in which a woman's low self-esteem and feeling that she cannot take care of herself, causes her to seek a relationship with a more powerful partner. The intermittent character of the abuse creates a seesaw condition between experiencing the negative emotions associated with the abuse, and the relief of the absence of abuse. The woman's vulnerability in her need for support and affection is intensified because of the emotional and physical draining caused by the unpredictable abuse, leaving her susceptible to her partner's persistent loving apologies and promises. In leaving the relationship, her fear for her safety is diminished, and her emotional attachment for her partner resurfaces, making her once again seek his affection.

Psychological entrapment, the investment model, and reasoned action/planned behaviour approaches: concentrate on the investment the relationship represents for the woman in time, energy, and emotional commitment (Choice and Lamke, 1997). The woman cognitively evaluates how satisfied she is with her current relationship; determines her ability to maintain the relationship; and decides whether she thinks she would be better off if she were to leave the relationship. Rusbult and Martz (1995) identified three variables associated with commitment as: satisfaction, alternative quality, and investment size. Since satisfaction 'ebbs and flows', the availability of alternatives to a relationship become the focus. Investment size gauges the resources that are tied to a relationship and the consequences of losing them (Rusbult and Martz, 1995). The commitment will be higher if the woman is married rather than cohabiting or dating, if the relationship is long standing, and if there are children.

Normalizing violence: the violent events and their meanings to the couple are functional for remaining together (Eisikovits, Goldblatt, and Winstok, 1999). The researchers found that the couples decreased the importance of the violence by shifting the focus away from it to the normal social context. Three plausible causal categories for the violence were found. First,

loss of control relinquishes the man's responsibility for the behaviour, as not his general behaviour. Two, in the intra-dyadic regulation of control, conditions concerning roles and responsibilities within the relationship act as regulating control. Mild violence was perceived as a signal for more severe violence to come if the woman did not maintain her traditional duties. Three, in the extra-dyadic regulation the normative social identity of the couple was protected. The researchers found three conditions necessary: commitment to social and public identity; the sanction violence in the broader social context; and situations that allow the use of violence. Therefore, since violence is acceptable and socially expected, it becomes both sanctioned and legitimate in the function of maintaining the couple unit.

Exchange theory: is argued by Johnson (1992) as the most appropriate theoretical framework for explaining the process of leaving/returning because it examines decision-making based on the most rewards for lowest costs. The woman will evaluate her decision to return to the relationship on her perceived level of rewards-costs ratio. An unemployed woman may perceive her benefits within the marriage to be more rewarding and less costly than fending for herself. Johnson argues that the abuse does not occur twenty-four hours a day, therefore having financial support for herself and her dependents may be evaluated as less costly. Her physical and emotional needs to escape the severe abuse are overruled by her perceived economic need and dependency.

2.2.3 PARADIGMATIC SHIFT OR LAST STRAW EVENTS

Rosen and Stith (1995, p. 158) identify the process of leaving an abusive relationship as 'a paradigmatic shift and last straw events'. This process can occur over an extended length of time in which where is an accumulation of small and numerous events, or it can occur suddenly and dramatically with one catastrophic event, leading to immediately leaving. When women assess the situation as dangerous or undeserving, they let go of their relationship-maintaining rationalizations and begin to actively seek different options (Rosen and Stith, 1995). Instead of focusing on the relationship and keeping it together, the woman begins to seek ways of leaving for her own or her children's survival. Once the emotional attachment has diminished, the woman is able to take a step back and evaluate the relationship and its dangerous consequences. The authors argue that the woman starts a process of growing self-awareness and self-worth as a person. Although the shift brings about the desire to leave the relationship, leaving is a painful and difficult process.

2.3 SHELTERS FOR ABUSED WOMEN

Dobash and Dobash (1992. p.60) describe shelters as 'the heart' of the battered women's movement. In the early 1970s, public attention on the plight of the battered women led to the establishment of shelters. However, in South Africa, sheltering specifically for abused women is a more recent phenomenon. The first one was established by People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA) in 1984. Presently, there are about 25 shelters operating in South Africa for abused women and their children. McNamara, Ertl, March, and Walker (1997), nevertheless, point out that there is little empirical research on the effectiveness of shelter programmes in assisting battered women.

Types of shelters: Dobash and Dobash (1992) classify shelters into four types: philanthropic, organizational and bureaucratic, therapeutic, and activist. The philanthropic approach forms a benevolent hierarchical relationship based on notions of Christian charity, involving professional counselling and therapy. The therapeutic approach has its roots in the modern mental health movement and qualified, trained, therapeutic professions. The service delivery of counselling is through hierarchical channels, characterized by one-way communication and authority over the clients. The professional bureaucratic type reflects a civil service approach, administered by local government, or voluntary/profit-making agencies. The focus tends to be on the smooth, efficient running of the organization, and the containment of the problem, rather than on the individual woman or the wider social problem. The staff are professionals from various bureaucratic systems.

Finally, the activist orientation involves grassroots action, self-help, the involvement of the abused women, and an egalitarian relationship among all parties involved, inside and outside the shelter. The agenda is a broader, political view, which encompasses both social and individual change. The motivation is usually based on feminist principles, varying from equal rights to radical feminism. The first three models are criticized for their lack of involvement in the need for change in broader social traditions and practices, and for not taking an advocacy role (Park, Shaik, and Rasool, 2000).

Staffing: although the staffing of shelters is an important issue, it is very dependent on the particular type of shelter. Each shelter is a unique institution, in which its philosophy, available resources, and its institutional structures will dictate the staffing. The staff may

consist of a mixture of trained professionals, lay personal, volunteers, or peers, and they may be either full-time or part-time (Loseke, (1999).

Gaitskill, Park, and Joseph (2000) point out that shelter work is both physically and emotionally demanding, involving long hours and low pay, and a high potential for danger and burn-out. The authors also indicate that there is a worldwide debate on the level of training necessary for shelter workers. Staff in some shelters are also involved in community outreach programmes, fundraising, and client skills training for employment. Gaitskill et al. (2000) state their interviews and questionnaires revealed that woman working in these fields generally had 'helping' backgrounds. They find job satisfaction in making a difference as the women move to improve their own lives. However, the authors also express a cautionary note that shelter workers must be conscious of their own motivations, and address these issues.

Social construction of shelters as a suitable place for battered women: Loseke (1992) expands on this notion arguing that staff's moral stance maybe problematic in their judgment calls regarding the suitability of women for admission. Loseke identifies the collective representation of a battered woman as one who requires and wants to achieve her independence from the abusive relationship. Women are constructed as victims who are strong, but needing assistance to gain faith in the ability to become independent and responsible for their own decisions and actions. Therefore, constructing a particular type of 'good client', suitable for a supportive environment based on self-help and peer support. The contradictions occur between the idealized expectations and the practical experience. Staff's expectations about clients are not always met. Some women are not good clients because they do not adhere to the rules of communal shelter living, nor do they work towards independence. However, Dobash and Dobash (1992) also identify a battered woman as one who needs time out from the abusive relationship, because a large majority of the women do return to the abusive relationship.

General information: Dobash and Dobash (1992) define shelters/refuges as places of safety. It is usually an apartment or house; there is an attempt to keep the physical location confidential. The length of stay varies from shelter to shelter, such as for immediate crisis intervention, two to six weeks, or for longer-term, three to nine months. Children are welcome unless it is a single woman's refuge. An age limit of sixteen is common for male children. House rules are necessary for the co-existence of day-to-day living in a communal

setting. These usually vary from shelter to shelter, but normally they prescribe rules such as household chores, childcare, visitors, compulsory house meetings, sign-out-in arrangements, nightly curfew, non-violent discipline for children, and no alcohol or drugs on the premises. The diversity of race, class, religion, and ethnicity in shelters often created problems with discriminatory behaviours, causing women to leave (Mullender and Morley, 1994; Park, Peters, De Sa, 2000).

Access to shelters: is available through a number of routes in the community such as by emergency services, hospitals, clinics, police services, referrals or from other social service agencies (Dobash and Dobash, 1992). Pamphlets (NISAA Institute for Woman's Development) and networking among women are also useful means of alerting women to these services for self-referral. The cost again varies from shelter to shelter, from no charge to a standard daily fee or to a percentage of the woman's income if she is working.

Benefits and disadvantages: Dobash and Dobash (1992) point out that shelters are important for a number of reasons. They provide a temporary escape and safety from the violence. Critical material resources are available in time of crisis, and for the vital decision-making necessary for the survival of the battered woman and her children. Shelters allow for mutual contact with others in the same situation, thus overcoming the isolation so prevalent in domestic violence. The women can begin to the process of recovering their self-confidence and control over their own life. Shelters provide a physical location from which to work from in reorganizing their lives.

Kirkwood (1997) reports both problems and benefits to living in shelters. The benefits have been described in her research as safety, a roof over one's head, counselling, invaluable assistance, information on state institutions and how to apply for aid, and most importantly, being able to express one's feelings where staff are respectful and supportive, and where other residents have shared similar experiences. The problems reported are overcrowding, lack of privacy, resident conflicts, imposition of shelter rules, sharing of rooms and facilities with those from different race, culture, class, and lifestyles, poor living conditions, and the feeling of exchanging one prison for another.

Services: offered in shelters vary from crisis accommodation and basic counselling to a full array of counselling and empowerment services for both the mother and the children.

Dziegielewski, Resnick, and Krause (1996) state that the therapeutic models generally utilized are crisis intervention and cognitive-behavioural techniques. Crisis intervention concentrates on the individual's response to the situation and her ability to regain her equilibrium through learning new coping mechanisms and problem-solving skills. It focuses on the individual's personality traits and coping patterns, capitalizing on strengths and attempting to overcome weaknesses. A cognitive-behavioural therapy perspective makes the assumption that maladaptive behaviours are learned and maintained through conditioning (Dziegielewski et al., 1996). The authors argue that the abused woman's ability to control her life is interfered with by distorted beliefs about herself and her abuser. Rational emotive therapy, a form of cognitive therapy, has been found to be very effective in treating domestic violence victims in decreasing irrational, unrealistic belief systems and thoughts surrounding abusive intimate relationships.

The shelter provides temporary accommodation, and at some stage the woman will have to leave. In South Africa, shelters have very limited resources to assist in the women's needs for employment and housing. Only three shelters are able to provide subsidized housing for six months to women. However, the need is much greater than the resources available. Park et al (2000) argue that there is a clear mandate for the government and the corporate sector to become involved in funding long-term subsidized housing for abused women. Dobash and Dobash (1992) cite long-term housing as essential if women are able to escape the violence.

Children: are often described in the literature as 'the hidden victims' or 'the silent witnesses' of domestic violence (Park and Khan, 2000). Children do experience distress and behavioural problems as a direct response to their abusive environment. It has been also reported that the presence of children in the home is associated with an increased danger of assault on the woman, especially during pregnancy (Mullender, Hague, Iman, Kelly, Malos, and Regan, 2002). Although the children may not actually witness or be subjected to the violence, they do hear and see the results of the abuse. The abuser will often exploit the children in manipulating or threatening the woman.

Many shelters do not have a specific programme directed at the children who accompany the abused women. Carlson (1996) presents some fundamental elements, which should be implemented such as individual assessment, individual counselling, referral services, group counselling, advocacy, regular, structured recreational activities, aftercare, parenting

education, and prevention education. Children like their mothers are in crisis. Not only have they lost the familiar things of their everyday life, such as their father, friends, home, school, toys, and community, they have also been forced to live in a strange place with unknown people and routines (Park and Khan, 2000). They most likely experience ambivalent feelings towards both parents, along with feeling frightened, angry, confused, and/or relieved to be in the shelter. Intervention strategies in South African shelters for children usually focus on support and safety, and to target the specific needs of the child (Park and Khan, 2000).

Changing focus of sheltering: historically, sheltering provided the very basics of human needs for survival such as shelter, food, and the ability to escape male violence (Dobash and Dobash, 1992). However, Dobash and Dobash point out that sheltering has become a site for political and social change, drawing public attention to domestic violence, and the need for reform in criminal justice systems and other social institutions. Another recent innovation of the sheltering movement is the empowering of abused women to conquer their oppression, and to challenge the gender inequalities and patriarchal controls defining their social structures (Park et al., 2000). Kirkwood (1997) states that once a woman is free from physical and emotional abuse, new possibilities of being can be explored through understanding and examining one's own needs and self in an empowering self-reflective process.

Dangor, Alderton, and Taylor (2000) examine sheltering as a tool of empowerment for abused women as conceptualized in South Africa through the creation of a model of empowerment. The model encapsulates the spiral concept frequently used in domestic violence theory, based on a continuum from disempowerment/physical or emotional death to empowerment/life (Dangor et al., 2000, p. 297). The authors have included the concept of stay/leaving to indicate the repetitive nature of the process in which the women progressively learn new skills, find new knowledge, and develop new emotional coping strategies, moving back and forth through the process of empowerment and disempowerment. Most of the shelters in South Africa reviewed by the Dangor et al. (2000) made attempts in varying degrees to empower their clients either individually, through developing access to social and financial resources, and/or by promoting political action for social change.

Park et al. (2000) argue that violence occurs within diverse social-cultural contexts. Consequently, newer shelters have been designed to account for the cultural, social, and

political environment in which they are situated. Success of this kind of shelter lies in the 'indigenising' of their programmes.

Appropriateness of shelters: Park et al. (2000) posed the question of the appropriateness of shelters in all social contexts. The knowledge and models of sheltering are based on Western experience in the UK and the USA. Numerous African and developing nations do not use or see the need for sheltering. Park et al. (2000) state that there are two reasons to argue against shelters in Africa. First, is concerned with the very high cost for a small number of shelters, meeting the needs of only a small portion of the women in need. Secondly, is the removal of women from the economic and social support of their extended families. However, Park et al. (2000) point out that these arguments are challenged. Traditional extended family systems have throughout Africa fractured due to urbanization, modernization, and patterns of migrant. Along with this devastation of the family, traditional responses to abuse have also changed, and for the most part, no longer function successfully, leaving the women vulnerable. Park et al. (2000) conclude that shelters can serve to act as an alternative support resource to protect women and children where traditional protections have failed or no longer exist.

Shelters in South Africa: Park et al (2000) claims that in South Africa all shelters face identical challenges and struggles due to the persistent patriarchal social structures and violence against women. They identify the lack of funding as the most critical issue. Since most shelters are None Government Organizations, they are dependent on fund-raising activities, private donations, and funds from churches, international donors, or corporations. About one-third of the shelters are associated with religious organizations, while the remainder are affiliated with welfare agencies or are independent. Funding is scarce and at times very competitive, directly affecting the services. The authors pose a cautionary note regarding the link between commitments to funding agencies and the autonomy of the shelter's policies and objectives. They feel that the government has an obligation to provide funding and leadership in the fight against violence towards women, but that the service delivery should remain in the hands of the experts in the field.

2.4 EMPOWERMENT AND AGENCY

Empowerment and agency are prominent concepts in community psychology and therefore, in the sheltering movement. Within the feminist paradigm both empowerment and human

agency are associated with power or the lack of, and both concepts generate considerable debate.

Empowerment: is the psychological awareness of having achieved personal control over one's life (Rappaport, 1987). Zimmerman (1995) explains that empowerment involves having or creating opportunities to take control over one's destiny, to access the resources necessary, and the ability to influence the decisions concerning one's life. However, Zimmerman also argues that empowerment is dependent on the individual, the context, and fluctuates with time. Zimmerman, Israel, Schulz, and Checkoway (1992) state that the theoretical concept of psychological empowerment is characterized by three interacting components: intrapersonal, interactional, and behavioural. Since empowerment concepts are at odds with the disenfranchised population they target, the concepts are widely debated.

Human agency: describes the power individuals gain to act independently of the social constraints imposed on them (Giddens, 1995). Agency suggests that individuals can select their goals and rationally act to achieve them. This contradicts the theoretical position, which states that actions and ideas are ascertained by social position, economic resources, genes, historical events, or political institutions. The notion of individuality and agency does not extend across all cultures (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002). Although feminism acknowledges that agency is both difficult to establish and problematic, there remains a reluctance to disregard the concept. Women do challenge and resist their culturally assigned subject position, although the resistance is caught up in explaining women's experience as a function of men's power (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 1993). Isaacs (2002) claims that the traditional frame of agency based on individual choice is insufficient if it cannot go beyond the individual to use collective action. By taking a broader look at patterns of opposition and obstacles, places of inequality can be identified and addressed as a group in a way an individual cannot do alone.

Kirkwood's (1997) concept of empowerment/agency for abused women: can be identified in her research on three levels:

In the first level: Kirkwood identifies the practical acquisition of resources and knowledge denied to women. The power structures of patriarchy favour men, giving them greater access to resources through cultural status and financial opportunities. Kirkwood (1997) describes the spiral inward and outward movements as the process by which the woman gradually

moves towards regaining personal power. In her research, Kirkwood found four major categories of basic practical needs required by the women to secure their independence, moving them towards empowerment to be obtaining housing, financial support, medical advice or attention, and physical and emotional safety.

In the second level: Kirkwood points to the need to give voice in language to break the silence imposed on women. Women lack the ability to identify and voice their experiences within the context of language and culture. Kirkwood (1997), Ashcraft (2000), and Lawless (2001) explore the need for appropriate language to assist women in expressing the depth and quality of their experiences with abuse. Without language women cannot dispute or confront the false images and interpretations created in 'male language' to define their experiences. Only when they are able to name the abuse, can they regain the power to speak of and define their reality, and begin the healing process. Lawless (2001) found in her research that women were able to tell their 'stories' in the safe shelter setting, in the realization that they are no longer isolated and had others with whom to share their stories in an act of empowering and solidarity. Lawless (2001, p. 37) identifies it as the 'transformative power of narrative in the shelter context'. The stories are empowering in their functions of self-reflection and the healing self to articulate a new self (Lawless, 2001).

The third dimension: identified by Kirkwood (1997) highlights women's action for broader social change by altering the conditions confronting women who leave the abusive relationship. By drawing on the experiences and strengths of women who have suffered victimization, social systems that portray inaccurate images, beliefs, and attitudes about domestic violence can be challenged. Kirkwood found in her research two main themes in which the women transformed their experiences into wisdom for social change. The first theme saw the women voicing the problem as a social problem rather than an individual one. In the second theme women expressed desire to participate in social change such as by working for organizations aiding abused women, supporting abused friends, or being a role model by voicing personal experiences with abuse.

In South Africa, Vetten (2000) identifies the impact of social conditions such as the apartheid era, migrant labour practices, the breakdown of traditional family structures, an imbedded patriarchal system, urbanization, and modernization as impeding women's ability to control factors effecting their own lives and exacerbating the use of violence against women.

Furthermore, Vetten argues that social change in South Africa has resulted in additional violations of women resulting in a 'uniquely' South African manifestation of violence, which combines race, gender, and power, requiring unique solutions to empower South African women.

2.5 SUMMARY

Research has established that domestic violence has no socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, or national boundaries, affecting worldwide one woman in six (Lawson, 2003). Although Rape Crisis estimates that one in every three women in South Africa is assaulted by her intimate partner (Vetten, 2000), these statistics are considered to be grossly under-reported and under-estimated. Domestic violence is recognized as a pervasive momentous problem in South African society (Dangor et al., 2000).

Extensive theoretical discussion on the aetilogy of domestic violence as both an individual and social problem, and the use of shelters as an effective solution has lead debate into two important research issues. One is the appropriateness of theory developed in Western European context applied to different social and cultural settings, and two is the capability of Western research methodologies to sufficiently capture the uniqueness of a specific cultural experience with domestic violence. The literature review in this chapter was predominately drawn from Western European research. However, authors such as Sorenson (1996), Green (1999), Hamby (2000), Teifenthaler and Farmer (2000), Park et al., and Yoshihamma (2000) draw attention to differences in cultural beliefs and norms and individual circumstances, which perpetuate the violence and influence women's ability to respond.

Hence, a feminist perspective was utilized in this research to give careful attention in listening to women's experiences with domestic violence in this social milieu as expressed in the narrative of four women. The aim was to critically assess how Western European theories central to domestic violence were relevant in these women's experiences, and therefore, influential in determining prevention and intervention strategies.

3. CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 METHODOLOGICAL DEBATES IN RESEARCHING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Within the debates concerning the appropriate use of qualitative and quantitative research methods, Johnson (1998) discusses how the two methods of research are able to compliment each other when researching the issues relating to domestic violence, each with its own strength in this particular area of research. According to Johnson, good quality research yielding reliable statistical data has been instrumental in bringing public and academic attention to the plight of women and allowed for the rapid increase of funding for services. However, Johnson argues that no single research methodology can be successful for all the tasks involved in estimating the extent and nature of the violence, making policies, creating and evaluating intervention strategies, and investigating social and economic predictors.

Quantitative statistical methods are unable to access the social, cultural, historical, or context of the phenomenon being researched (Johnson, 1998). They do not portray the individual understanding and perceptions of the behaviour and events nor do they convey the subtleties of human interactions. Johnson suggests ethnographic and qualitative studies are required to document the real-life descriptions of violence against women. Patton (2002) states that qualitative findings reveal the people behind the phenomenon researched by putting 'faces' on to the statistics to deepen our understanding. However, the ability to generalize the results across populations, time, and context is severely hindered.

In studying domestic violence there are a number of methodological problems, which impact on the quality of the research process. A number of authors refer to the constraints and limitations in identifying problems facing abused women (Dobash and Dobash, 1998). Fedler and Tanzer (2000) have identified six different constraining issues, which contribute to violence against women remaining an invisible phenomenon, as the following:

- the 'private sphere' of women's place in the home as opposed to the 'public sphere' of men;
- the 'trap of secrecy and fear', which controls the lives of women and their children, preventing prosecution and punishment, and revealing the problem;
- the prevalence of cultural norms, which create environmental conditions to sustain violence against women;
- the failure, worldwide, of most legal system to recognize gender crimes associated with domestic violence, instead viewing them as assault and murder;
- the reluctance of the general public to believe the extent and prevalence of violence against women in their particular communities and ;

- the debate over what defines domestic violence by researchers, policy makers, the survivors, social activists, the public, and the cultural context.

Other authors discuss additional problems in researching domestic violence. Green (1999) points to the risk of ethnocentrism in researching cultures other than one's own when discussing sensitive secretive topics such as gender violence. Herbert, Silver, and Ellard (1991), Horton and Johnson (1993), and Rosen and Stith (1995) have criticized the use of shelter samples as non-representative of the problem. Such samples are considered to be problematic because of their retrospective accounts of the events, the decrease of emotional attachment to the process, self-reporting, and volunteer status.

3.2 DESIGN OF THIS STUDY

This study utilized a qualitative naturalistic design, using a semi-structured in-depth interviews and a short follow-up questionnaire. It attempted to explore the diversity of opinions, experiences, and the representations of domestic violence in a specific social milieu through the interviews of five women, making it context-bound. There was no attempt to manipulate, control, or eliminate variables; instead the individuals have been studied in their own environment.

The data produced are rich in detail, and contain thick descriptions of the women's perceptions of their world intertwined in their experiences with violence. Analytical strategies involved capturing the details of individual cases followed by cross-case analysis to establish patterns and interrelationships to answer the research questions. The conclusions are therefore, value-bound, reflecting a specific focus of the problem within a particular context and the individual viewpoints of the participants and the researcher. The design process manifested as an evolving one, requiring changes and redirection.

This study had three primary objectives. First was to understand the experiences of four women exposed to domestic violence, and how this influenced each woman's decision to leave her abusive partner by seeking shelter assistance. Second was to describe her experience in the shelter in meeting expectations and needs for empowerment. Finally, the third objective was to examine whether the experience of telling the account of her life during the study had an empowering element.

3.3 METHODS

3.3.1 PARTICIPANTS

The purpose of this study has been to focus on individual experiences. The sampling strategies used have thus differed from those used in quantitative research, which would have required systematic representative statistical sample of the population.

This study maintains the qualitative research objectives of obtaining information and understanding a range of opinions and experiences, rather than counting those opinions and people (Gaskell, 2000). Gaskell argues that selecting a random probability sample is unsuitable for the purpose of qualitative studies because a given social milieu will contain only a limited number of views, positions, or experiences. Furthermore, the number of hours involved in analyzing a single interview essentially limits the number of interviews that can be completed. The aim was in-depth analysis of content.

The methodology process in obtaining the sample for this study has been as follows:
Four participants were recruited from a shelter for abused women. The recruitment method involved direct solicitation by the shelter staff for volunteers who were willing to talk about the violence they had experienced, and the need to seek safety in the shelter. The shelter sample represented a non-probability, purposeful, convenience sample, but one that represented and portrayed a range of opinions and experiences sought to further an understanding of domestic violence in South Africa.

The ages of the four women ranged from twenty, twenty-seven, twenty-nine to forty-one. Two women were South African, one woman was Zulu, and the other one referred to herself as ‘White African’. One woman was a refugee from the Congo, and the other one was a migrant worker from Zimbabwe. All the women were able to communicate in English to different degrees of proficiency. The Zulu woman spoke Zulu and was worried that her English was not good enough for an interview, while the other South African woman spoke Afrikaans and English. The Congo refugee’s home language was French but her proficiency in English and other South African languages was better than the impression she initially gave. The Zimbabwe migrant worker referred to herself as ‘English Zimbabwean’ and she also spoke the language of her husband’s Shona culture.

Educational backgrounds were also very diverse. The woman from Zimbabwe had not finished school and planned to work on her matric through correspondence courses. For the Congo refugee, it was difficult to assess her level of education, since she was vague, stating that she had a 'hostess diploma' from her country. The Zulu woman had grade nine education without further training. The white African woman had a diploma in business administration, however she had been unable to get a job utilizing these skills. The ages, educational, and ethnic backgrounds of the women in the sample were thus sufficiently broad, allowing for an inspection of different experiences with and reactions to abusive relationships.

Each woman's admission into the shelter was based on a claim that she was experiencing abusive relationships, and her decision to leave the relationship. The length of time they had been in the abusive relationships extended between almost one to eight years. Although each woman had been subjected to physical, sexual, economic, and emotional abusive behaviours (Kirkwood, 1997), in each case the escalation of the physical abuse combined with another form of abuse was instrumental in the leaving decision. The profile of the four women points to their appropriateness for the purpose of the research (Appendix II).

The fifth participant was the shelter manager who volunteered to give supporting information on the shelter. She had been employed at the shelter for the past two years first as a social worker for the children, and now as the shelter manager. She has a degree in social work. Along with managing the shelter and counselling, a great percentage of her work appeared to be networking with other community organizations and shelter institutions.

3.3.2 CONSTRUCTING THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

The use of semi-structured interview technique was felt to be necessary to protect the interests of the participants, providing some control over the topics discussed as well as flexibility in pursuing and extending discussion of topics.

Gaskell (2000) points out that a topic guideline for a semi-structured interview is an essential component to the research process, requiring specific attention. The topic guideline acts as a prompt for the interviewer, making sure the aims and objectives of the research are captured in the information obtained. However, Gaskell also points out that the use of a topic guideline

reflects the interest of the researcher and this may not be compatible with those of the participants, which in this research was evident and may have hindered the process somewhat.

The process of constructing suitable topic guidelines for this research involved revising the example presented in Kirkwood's research (1997, appendix 3, p.159), a critical search of the research literature pertaining to the topics, and drawing on previous field experience. As suggested by Gaskell (2000), the topic guide headings formed the first level in analyzing the transcriptions in this research. Gaskell states that the guideline is not a fixed, inflexible tool. In this study modifications and adaptations were found to be necessary during the interview process.

Neuman (1997) writes of the advantages in face-to-face interviews such as a higher response rate, and access to the non-verbal information exhibited by the participants. However, Neuman also discusses the disadvantages, some of which were noted in this research. Interviews can be vulnerable to self-reporting bias, selective memory, and social desirability. The participants may tend to present themselves in an approving manner or to answer to please the researcher (Rosenthal and Rosnow, 1991). There is a risk of introducing interviewer bias through the tone of the voice, appearance, or how the questions are phased. Willig (2001) refers to another disadvantage in the use of discursive analysis. The participant may be caught up in the interview situation, and this may result in data, which reflects his/her stake in the interview as an interviewee.

As a result of the information obtained during the interviews with the four women, it was found that there was an oversight in not obtaining sufficient information on the shelter. When this became apparent, a fifth interview was negotiated with the manager of the shelter, and approved by the shelter organization. The manager requested one restriction of not discussing the individual cases of the women interviewed. Since this was not the objective, it posed no problem. The interview schedule was formulated in the same process utilized for the women.

Appendix I contains the interview schedules for the women and the shelter manager.

3.3.3 CONSTRUCTING THE FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

Empowerment and agency are difficult concepts to operationalize and measure (Riger, 1993; Zimmerman, 1995). Some levels of empowerment/agency can be assessed in how the women describe obtaining concrete resources, emotional stability, increased self-confidence, and skills during their stay in the shelter. In this study as the interview focused on the process of telling of one's life experiences, the proposed theoretical shift towards empowerment/agency was addressed through a follow-up questionnaire.

The questionnaire items were based on Kirkwood's (1997) work, in her attempts to access this potential change through a short follow-up questionnaire. In this study, the four women were asked to complete a similar questionnaire, one-week after the interview (Appendix VI). The questionnaire had six short answer questions, asking how each participant felt about the interview, and their feelings and possible thoughts in the days following the interview. The last two questions elicited their help as experts. The first question gives a number of options to select from or space to explain in their own words. Questions two through to six are open-ended questions. The questionnaire included an explanatory statement for the questionnaire along with the procedure to be followed.

Self-reporting questionnaires are useful in obtaining the information directly applicable to the research questions, and have the advantage of being simple and versatile. It is a relatively understood procedure. However, there are many disadvantages (Neuman, 1997). Some these were noted in this research. Regardless how careful the wording and question structure was heeded, inevitably it was impossible to design the perfect questionnaire. Not all the questionnaires were completed or returned. Since the women were asked to complete the questionnaire one week later, conditions were beyond the control of the researcher.

3.3.4 CONSTRUCTING THE CONSENT FORMS

Two consent forms were prepared. One was for the agreement to participate in the research (Appendix I). The second was for the agreement to the audio recording of the interview and its transcription for use in research analysis and report (Appendix I). To ensure an informed consent was secured an information letter outlining the reasons for the research and the procedures to be taken was composed for each of the participants (Appendix I).

3.3.5 SETTING

The shelter's exact location and parent organization must be kept confidential for the safety and privacy of the residents. However, it is necessary for purposes of interpretation to reveal that the shelter is located in a major urban setting, and has been in operation for a number of years. The shelter is a residential home, located near to schools, employment opportunities, and other necessary social organizations. The shelter's capacity is approximately ten women with their children, and depending on the number of children, the number of women will increase or decrease. The length of stay is approximately one to six months, determined by the woman's circumstance. The cost of the shelter stay for those employed is fifty rands per month, and no cost for those unemployed.

The shelter staff consists of one manager (social worker), one social worker, and two housemothers. The advantages of conducting the interviews in this setting were that the women were in familiar, safe place to relive painful, traumatic experiences and feelings, and if they required assistance, their counsellors would be available.

Separate from the shelter house is a small building at the back of the garden, which functions as an office for the shelter staff. The interviews took place in this building. Three of the interviews were conducted on a Saturday when the main room was available. However, the fourth interview took place during the week when the staff were using the office. Therefore, this interview took place in a small interview room in the office in which privacy was maintained. The interview with the shelter manage took place two weeks later in the shelter office.

3.3.6 DATA COLLECTION

Prior to conducting the interviews, approval for the research and the instruments constructed were secured from the Human Research Ethics Committee, the Graduate Studies Committee, and the research manager for the shelter parent organization (Appendix VII).

Though contact with the research manager arrangements with the shelter manager were made to conduct the interviews at a time convenient for the participants and the shelter staff. The researcher was met at the gate by one of residents, and was shown to the office. The resident

was one of the participants and she organized the other women to come in turn to be interviewed. The process was well organized and executed with her assistance. However, the last participant had left the premises when it came time for her turn. Another appointment time was arranged with the manager to interview this woman.

As each woman presented herself for the interview, a short social conversation occurred before the purpose of the study and the recording process were verbally explained. The women were thanked for agreeing to participate and for their time. The researcher provided cool drinks and biscuits, and rearranged the furniture in the room to form a smaller conversational unit. These measures were taken in attempting to put the participants at ease and to make tentative steps towards developing a trusting environment to counteract social norms encouraging abused women to be silent. To develop a trusting rapport with the participants is a key foundation to the interview process but one that required time. As anticipated, the participants did test the interviewer's sincerity, interest, and dependability.

Copies of the information letter and topic guide were given to the participant and a verbal explanation given. The participant was given the opportunity to read both, and encouraged to present any concerns and questions she had about the research and the process. This was executed in a relaxed unhurried manner, giving the woman all the time and privacy she required. Once the woman indicated that she was ready to proceed, the consent forms were explained and signed. The tape recorder was turned on and the interview started.

On average the interviews with the women lasted approximately ninety minutes. After about forty-five minutes, the researcher stopped the recording, taking a small break, and encouraging the woman to have a drink and/or biscuits. At this time the researcher also gave the participant the opportunity to express how she was coping with the interview emotionally. This was a purposeful maneuver by the researcher to allow the woman some measure of privacy and space to deal with the possible emotional upheaval related to reliving the abusive experiences. At this point each participant was also asked if she felt comfortable in continuing with the interview. Although for the most part such a maneuver was not required for this particular purpose, it did help relief some of the tension occurring with the length of time taking to complete the interview topics.

The interview with the shelter manager was negotiated at a time convenient for her, and conducted in the shelter office. The copy of the topic guide (Appendix I) was given to her to read before starting the interview. Once she indicated that she was satisfied with its contents, the consent forms (Appendix I) were signed and the interview started. This interview lasted over two hours.

3.3.7 CLOSURE

Once the interview topics were completed, the tape recorder was turned off. The participants were again asked how they coped with the retelling of the abusive experience and if they wanted to talk about their feelings. The researcher encouraged the participants to seek help from the shelter staff if the re-telling of their stories resulted later in upheaval. The women were again thanked for their time and the sharing of their stories, and for participating in the research. Once again the conversation was turned to a more social informal format such as talking about their children or the garden. Two of the women expressed a desire to continue with their own education. They questioned how difficult would it be with children and doing it later on in life. This information was shared with the women.

The women were given copies of the questionnaire. Its purpose and procedure was verbally explained, again giving the women the opportunity to ask any questions. The women were asked to give the completed questionnaire in the envelope provided to the shelter manager so that she could notify the researcher. Field notes were taken between each interview to support the audio tapes in recording non-verbal behaviours.

The researcher on one-to-one bases conducted all the interviews. Confidentiality was ensured through the privacy of the location. The women were encouraged to speak freely about their lives, their decisions to leave their abusive partners, and their experiences in the shelter. The women were assured that if at any time the interview becomes disturbing, it would be terminated, and if they wished later to withdraw their details from the research it would be done.

3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research methods need to protect the welfare of the participants as human subjects and maintain basic human rights to prevent physical harm, psychological abuse, stress, and/or legal jeopardy (Rosenthal and Rosnow, 1991). Research is answerable to ethical scientific procedures, ensuring high standards of research, having value and purpose to scientific knowledge, and maintaining integrity (Baker, 1994). In interviewing abused women, the researcher must be very conscious to the sensitivity of the situation, and the potential trauma for the woman in the retelling of the abusive experiences. Therefore, three conditions were considered to be essential before the interview proceeded: privacy; the availability of her caseworker; and the right to stop the interview at any time.

Prior to conducting the interviews, approval for the research and the instruments was secured from the Human Research Ethics Committee, the Graduate Studies Committee, and the research manager for the shelter organization (Appendix VIII). The recommended changes made by these committees were implemented. To guarantee informed consent for voluntary participants, two consent forms were prepared and approved (Appendix I). An information letter outlining the purpose of the research and the procedures to be taken was given to each woman (Appendix I). This was reinforced with a verbal explanation.

The women were given the opportunity to read the topic guide for the interview and to ask any questions before starting the interview. The participants were informed of the true nature and purpose of the research, making sure each were fully aware of the purpose and aims of the study, and understanding what they are agreeing to. They were ensured of their right to withdraw at any time during the research process, and their granting the use of the data obtained. Confidentiality was ensured through the use fictitious names in the research report and the private location where the interview was conducted.

The audio tapes were labeled according to the number sequence of the interviews, no names were used. The name and location of the shelter and its parent organization were not disclosed in the research report. The data obtained will be kept for a period of approximately two years and than destroyed. Once the research report is completed, the researcher plans to follow-up with journal articles, which may require going back to the original data.

The procedure of applying discourse analysis contains two ethical issues, which must be addressed. One is concerned with the interpretation of the data by the researcher in a way not intended by the interviewee; and secondly, is the possible manipulation of subjectivity of the interviewee in the final report. However, appropriate guidelines have been established by rigidly following the theory already established in the literature on domestic violence. The research data collected was compared to these theoretical discourses to establish if present or absence for the South African context.

4. CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS

As anticipated the five interviews generated a substantial amount of data, necessitating careful organization of the data into manageable categories. The audio-tapes of the interviews and field notes were transcribed to paper copies and onto a computer diskette, maintaining where possible the exact words used by the interviewees, including pauses and non-verbal communications. This process was very time consuming, requiring constant reversing and replaying. The transcriptions were organized in the same manner as the subheadings in the topic guidelines. The researcher completed the transcriptions of the interviews; no other persons were involved. The audio-tapes, paper copies, and computer diskette were stored in a safe and secure location. In this process no names were used, instead references to the interview data were made through a number on the tapes and in the transcriptions (such as interview I, II, III, and IV; V-shelter manager). In this research report fictitious names were used for the residents.

The data analysis for this research report was conducted progressively, using three approaches:

4.1 INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGY

Interpretative phenomenological analysis is effective in researching transcripts of semi-structured interviews (Willig, 2001). The stages described by Willig were employed in this research. Although the laborious process of transcribing the interviews familiarized their contents for the researcher, the first stage of analysis began with numerous re-readings of the text to focus on the initial impressions of the content. In scheduling this first step a month was allocated, in which the re-readings were repeated each week with notes made in the margins in different coloured pen for each week. This process recorded changes or additions to the researcher's perceptions of the interview text. The second stage utilized the interview guideline subtopics to label the initial themes in a paper/pencil coding process. From within these initial themes other themes emerged. The third and fourth stages were directed towards bringing structure and clustering of the themes into summary tables to interpret the quality of the experiences of the participants. The integration of the interviews evaluated the common and individual experiences of the women.

The philosophy embedded in interpretative phenomenology directed the researcher to examine these women's narratives from the perspective of the women, to establish how they made sense of and interpreted their world as entangled in violence. In this process, the specific context, time, quality and texture of each woman's experience was identified as outlined in her responses to the open-ended questions in the interview (Willig, 2001). In utilizing this approach, it was recognized that the interactive characteristics of the social world were important elements, in how each woman gave meaning to events or situations in her life. Additionally, it was acknowledged that the researcher's own view of the world, and the relationship between the researcher and the participant had been implicated in the process, limiting the researcher's access to a full understanding.

Willig (2001) discusses the limitations of the interpretative phenomenological analysis. In order to communicate the experience, the participant uses language, making the analysis dependent on the validity of language. Language tells how the individual describes the event within the language structures available to her, not the quality of the experience itself (Willig, 2001). Thus language is seen as prescribing one's thoughts and feelings. Phenomenological research is criticized for not attempting to explain why a particular phenomenon occurs, or why it differs between individual accounts (Willig, 2001).

4.2 CONTENT ANALYSIS

In the second stage of analysis content analysis was utilized to identify the themes found in the transcriptions and the questionnaire. Content analysis is a method of classifying open-ended data. Neuman (1997, p. 272) defines content analysis as 'a technique for gathering and analyzing the content of text'. Text can be words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or any message. Content analysis allowed for the systematic reduction of the interview text to categories based on a coding system. Thereby, taking large amount of data generated in the interviews and organizing them into manageable themes from which to interpret and make valid inferences.

Bauer (2000, p. 133) states that content analysis has two basic purposes. First, content analysis, as a '*medium of expression'*, reconstructs symbol representations of the world to 'infer the expression of, and appeal in and across contexts'. The text is the representation and expression of a specific community, which point to specific 'worldviews, values, attitudes,

opinions, prejudices, and stereotypes'. Hence, Bauer argues content analysis can be defined as the dependent variable (the thing to be explained). Bauer (p. 134) proposes the second purpose as '*a medium of appeal*: an influence on people's prejudices, opinions, attitudes, and stereotypes'. In this role, content analysis is the independent variable (that which explains things). However, this function of content analysis is controversial.

The basic procedural steps followed in this research for conducting content analysis are described by a number of authors such as Weber (1985), Rosenthal and Rosnow (1991), Neuman (1997), and Bauer (2000), taking into account similar emphasis. The first step involved careful definition of recording units so that the procedure for coding could be replicated. In this research the subheadings from the topic guidelines formed the preliminary schemes, therefore using standard categories of prior research. From these standard categories, additional categories emerged in the women's narratives. Although random sampling is often used to select the units, and sample size depends on the purpose of the study, the units and sample size for this study were predetermined by its nature and structure. In the second step how broad or narrow the categories were to be was established, and care was taken in making sure the units were recorded in only one category to maintain the integrity of the results.

The third step involves measuring the categories (Neuman, 1997). The practical procedure of coding was done in this research by paper and pencil, using code-sheets composed of single-page grid with each code assigned a cell rather than by a computer programme (Bauer, 2000). Neuman (1997) identifies two types of coding. Manifest coding codes the 'visible, surface' content of the text, in which the coder scores the number of times a category shows up in the text. This is a reliable process since the category is present or not. However, the process does not take into account the meaning or context. Latent coding (semantic coding) discerns the 'underlying, implicit meaning' in the content of a text. This process is less reliable, for it rests on the coder's interpretations, and access to the language and social meanings of the text. Combining both forms of coding was attempted in this research to strengthen the results.

The process in this research necessitated progressive use of numerous coding sheets, beginning with manifest coding, which gave way to latent coding. The profiles (Appendix II) assembled on the women demonstrate the progress nature of the coding. Categories such as presentation, biographical information, and cultural beliefs were fairly straightforward

descriptive coding while the initial manifested coding for abuse experience, responses to abuse, staying/leaving decisions, and empowerment/agency categories promoted additional interpretive coding. Appendix II contains an example of a manifest, descriptive coding used in this research to establish the different kinds of abuse experienced by the women while appendix V contains one indicating the women's reported experience in the shelter. However, since the coding sheets were numerous, only a few have been included in the research report instead the written profiles record the findings.

In maintaining traditional research values the remaining steps described by the authors are concerned with validity and reliability. However, content analysis as a social construct places limits on the reliability-validity debate (Bauer, 2000). For content analysis Bauer (2000, pp. 143-144) defines reliability as 'the agreement among interpreters', while validity as 'the degree to which results correctly represents the text'. In content analysis, both reliability and validity can be severely influenced by ambiguity of word meaning or ambiguity of category or variable definitions (Weber, 1985). In this research as a small project, the researcher, following the steps outlined above conducted the interpretations. The categories of previous research were utilized in establishing a coding frame and maintaining clear word definitions. The resulting themes were then compared with the finding of a large South African survey (Rasool et al., 2000) to establish whether specific contextual themes identified in each of the women's narratives were similar to those of a wider group of abused women in South Africa. .

Bauer (2000) proposes that content analysis has both strengths and weaknesses. Among its strengths, content analysis is systematic; it utilizes naturally occurring raw data; it is capable of handling large amounts of data; and the methodology is developed and well-documented. Ethically, content analysis for the most part is not intrusive. However, it also has many documented weaknesses such as its dependency on the judgments and over scrutiny of a single analyst; its separating units of analysis can be misleading; its focus on frequencies neglects the rare or absent; the original text is lost in coding; the categories delete the 'sequentiality' of language and text; and the tendency to construct potential meaning rather than understanding actual meaning.

4.3 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS

The second stage of the analysis also included an investigation of the social constructs instrumental in the assumptions made about domestic violence in this particular social milieu. The dominant discourse of domestic violence often considers men's violence towards their female partners as justified. However, competing discourses are actively available through the sheltering experience. Throughout the research literature particular discursive positions are allotted to abused women through culture, historical time, contextual factors, and language. The interview data was examined for the presence or absences of these discursive positions in attempting to pin pointing what discourses are actively involved in maintaining and/or resisting domestic violence. Thus, informing the choices the women perceived as available in the South African context.

Authors such as Loseke (1992), Kirkwood (1997), Ashcraft (2000), and Lawless (2001) debate the role of language in domestic violence. Language influence women's inability to find words to express the depth and quality of their experiences and perpetuates the discourse of silence. Consequently, the language women have available to them impacts on their ability to find beneficial supports and solutions. Loseke (1992) argues that in the mid-1970's three new social categories were constructed to labeled a new social problem 'wife abuse', a new type of person 'battered woman', and a new type of social service 'shelters for abused women'. In doing so, a collective representation was established to describe a particular kind of experience, biography, motivation, and subjectivity (Loseke, 1992).

Burr (1995, pp. 3-5) refers to social construction as a theoretical orientation with no single technique but as loosely grouped around the following four key assumptions. It is critical to question the assumptions made about the world through our observations. Our understanding of the world is dependent on the historical and cultural context, therefore it can not be assumed that any one culture or time in history holds all the truths or superiority. Through daily social interact people construct their shared version of the world, therefore constructing the world through objective observations does not necessarily point to truths. Finally, because knowledge and social action go together and are dependent on the accepted responses in culture and time, constructs of the world allow for various forms of social action while disallowing others.

A social construction is a product of social encounters and relationships to create not a stable fix entity but one that is multifaceted, fragmented, changeable, and dependent on cultural and historical circumstances. Language gives expression and meaning to the phenomenon. However, language is also never fixed. The constructs created through language are not the work of an individual alone, but occur through interaction among people. Burr (1995, p. 44) identifies language as 'provides us with a system of categories for dividing up our experience and giving it meaning, so that our very selves become a product of language'. Therefore, language allows us to produce and create our experiences. Yet Burr argues due to the very nature of language it is also 'a site of struggle, conflict and potential personal and social change' (Burr, 1995, p. 44).

Although discourses are present in what people say and write, the meaning of what they say and write is also determined by the discursive context. Burr explains that social constructs are produced out of the discourses, which are culturally available, determining what is possible or not possible. This is explained as a 'subtle interweaving of many different threads' from numerous discourses in creating positive, negative, or restrictions of an individual's identity (Burr, 1995. P. 51). Embedded in these discourses are power inequalities. Foucault conceptualized knowledge as equivalent to power in defining the prevailing cultural 'truths' of society in allowing particular actions. This discursive knowledge permits certain individuals to exercise the power to claim resources, to control others, and to define the position of others within the society. Yet, the dominant or prevailing discourses are continuously challenged by competing or alternative views.

Discourses such as romantic love, marriage, and family provide a framework for understanding experiences and behaviours. Although these discourses are seen as important components in maintaining and reproducing the patriarchal capitalist economic system of many societies, they also define the roles of men and women in a particular way to create conditions, which maintain and perpetuate domestic violence. However, such discourses are continuously challenged. The construction of an abused woman is created out of numerous and alternative discourses. One discourse would see her as a failure as a mother, wife, or woman, while another discourse would see her as a survivor working towards overcoming the negative circumstance of her life.

Burr states that marginal positions are capable of gaining some validation and power by the utilizing other discourses. In applying this concept to abused woman, the woman is able to draw on the identification of an 'abused wife and/or victim' to gain power, and further the legitimacy of her claim through admission to a shelter for abused women. However, Burr also states that power is never a one-way street, debating the issue of who benefits from the shift in power and the strong resistance to the change. The abused woman may benefit from this shift but she still needs to resist the discourses of romantic love, marriage, and the family because the historical power inherent in social systems based on capitalist economy will interfere with her drive for an independent, violent free life.

Human agency allows for either acceptance or rejection of discourses through the process of 'consciousness-raising'. Individuals are able to free themselves from the restraints of the discourses, which normally identify them, and seek different alternative. In the case of the abused woman, her choices are to accept the dominant discourses of patriarchy which keeps her in a subordinate role or to resist by seeking alternative ways to explain her experiences. Often the shelter experience allows for 'consciousness raising' in which she is able to redefine her experiences and find alternative means to deal with the results. This may involve learning a new language to voice the experience, giving her agency to access resources and self-confidence, and to manipulate the discourse of domestic violence to her own advantage.

Burr (1995) and Willig (2001) discuss the problems and limitations of discourse analysis. Willig debates the issue of discourses alone as sufficient in theorizing subjectivity. Although discourses are involved with the processes of the ways in which one sees the world and ways one exists in the world, Willig argues that it is not clear if discourses are all that is necessary for the formation of identity. There are other significant concerns not found accountable through discourses such as emotions, attachment, motivation, fantasy, public persona, and stability. Furthermore, Willig is concerned with the relationship between discourse and material reality. However, she does conclude that this relationship is a complicated one, requiring additional work to answer if reality is separate from or outside discourse.

Burr (1995) defines the problematic issues of discourse analysis as reflexivity and identifying discourses or repertories. The theoretical position of discourse analysis postulates that there can not be a single truth, therefore the specific findings of the researcher are not the only possible interpretations of the text. Reflexivity involves including the participants' evaluation

of their own and that of the researcher's interpreting statements. Finally, Burr (1995, p. 181) cites Sherrard (1991) in arguing that discourse analysts generally neglect to acknowledge their own role in contributing to the research process. Since the identification of discourses is very dependent on the type of text chosen it is important for researchers to provide information on analysis procedures for coding and criteria used.

The analysis of social construction began during the initial stage of the research. In gathering and reading the material for the literature review on domestic violence it became apparent that numerous discursive positions were assigned to the social problems of domestic violence, abused women, and shelters for abused women. As each journal paper or textbook was read the different discursive positions were recorded on three large posters, each with the appropriate heading. For the discursive positions found for abused women, the authors also frequently described specific actions to accompany each position. These were recorded. The object was not to record how particular authors portrayed the phenomena but to establish an overview of the different discursive positions and how they were depicted.

The information gathered on the posters was assembled into table form. The interview data was subsequently examined for the presence or absence of supporting text for these discursive positions and actions. The analysis for domestic violence and abused women was concluded with an interpretation of the meanings of and the available actions for each position found within the interview data, while the different sheltering positions found in the interview data were compared to western style sheltering theory. Appendices III, IV, and V contain the tables.

4.4 INTERPRETATION USING AN ECOLOGICAL MODEL

Willig (2001) describes the third and fourth stages of interpretative phenomenology as bring structure and establishing an inter-relationship between the themes. In order to bring structure to how these women described their experiences and choices, a flow chart was created (Appendix II). The purpose of the chart was to bring together the different aspects of the woman's life, which informed her individual decisions in responding to the abuse, and her ability to empower herself. Furthermore, the flow chart enabled the pinpointing of the differences and similarities in the four women's accounts.

However, the use of the flow chart demonstrated the complex and interconnected nature of domestic violence on the lives of the four women interviewed. It highlighted that for these four women there could be no single theoretical position. Instead multiple factors were involved. Therefore, an ecological model was considered the most appropriate way to represent the women's accounts. An ecological model (Figure 4.4) was created by revising the work of Carlson (1984) and Maton (2000). The model draws attention to not only the individual woman and her partner but also to her social milieu, which took a major role in informing her ability to make choices.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model visualizes a series of layers, surrounding the individual, in which the individual and the environment engage in a reciprocal relationship. These combined forces instigate and influencing each other in the development of the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Each level is influenced by and embedded in the subsequent levels to impact the individual's behaviour and experiences in a continuous, reciprocal, and interdependent manner. In domestic violence it is essential to explore this person-environment interaction. Therefore, guiding the research to focus not just on the women and their partners, but also includes the context of the abused Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory claims that the demands, character, values, and norms of the context in which the individual lives determine the behaviours and attitudes of the individual, therefore making it important to understand human behaviour in context.

Appendix VII displays the application of the model for each of the women interviewed.

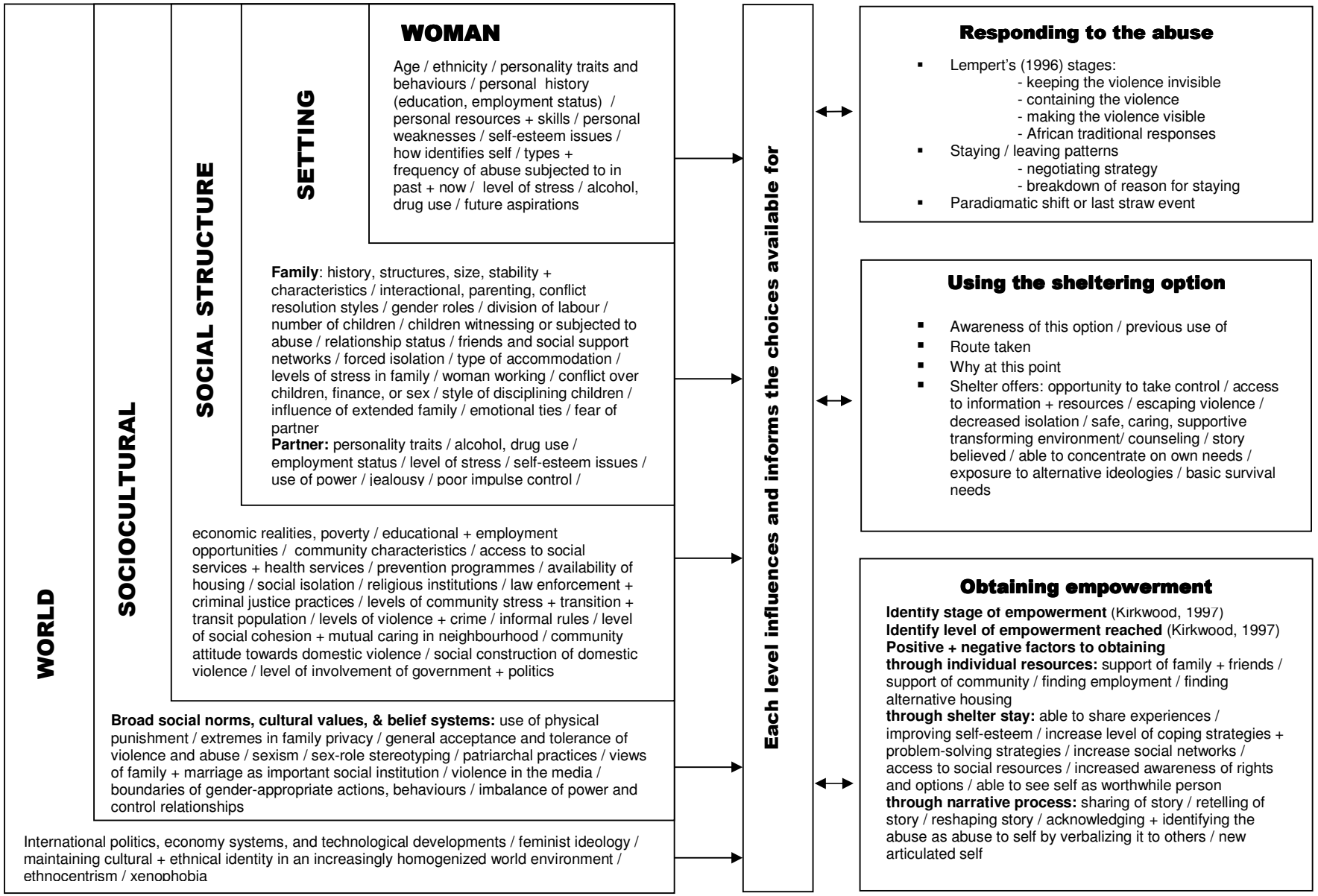


FIGURE 4.4.1 Ecological Model to Illustrate Factors Influencing the Decision Process of Abused Women

4.5 TIME SEQUENCE OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The chronological order of the research questions reflected the need to establish particular markers in the women's lives, which informed their decisions. This sequence has been followed in reporting the results of this research. In chapter five, research question one asks why the women at this point in their lives sought sheltering assistance. To answer this question, numerous theories were drawn on to establish the aetiology of abusive relationships. This involved examining psychological, social-psychological, and social-cultural causes, and the significance of the types of abuse experienced by the women. Furthermore, in question one the theoretical framework of Dobash and Dobash (1992), Lempert (1996), and Green (1999) were utilized to establish the different responses, which had informed each woman's decision-making process, relative to the decision to leave the abusive male partner and seek sheltering.

Having taken the decision to leave the abusive relationship, and use the sheltering option, the focus of the research questions turned to the women's experience in the shelter. To identify the reaction of each of the women to the support provided by the shelter as elicited in research question two, the work of authors such as Dobash and Dobash (1992), Loseke (1992), Kirkwood (1997), and Park et al. (2000) were used to provide insight into the functionality of shelters for abused women.

Research questions three and four then examined the possibility for empowerment and/or agency as possible outcomes in both the shelter experience and the narrative process. The research of Rappaport (1981); Loseke (1992); Kirkwood (1997); and Gaitshkill et al. (2000) were drawn on to establish whether empowerment occurred on institutional and personal levels in the shelter. Finally, the narrative process was examined for an empowerment outcome based on guidelines provided in Kirkwood's (1997) work.

In the following chapters five, six, seven, and eight, the research questions are examined separately, in the following format:

- An explanation of how the data were organized and categorized
- The application of the theories which could be identified with the data
- Summary of main trends and conclusions from the study.

5. CHAPTER FIVE: Why do women seek assistance in sheltering?

5.1 DATA ORGANIZATION

Using the subheadings from the interview topic guideline, a profile for each woman was assembled. The coding procedure utilized progressive operations of descriptive and interpretive coding, in terms of which each of the initial categories was further subdivided. In appendix II the profile introductory page stipulates the subdivisions used in each category, and contains the profile of each of the women.

The information assembled on the social construction of domestic violence and abused/battered women, was then analysed to identify themes relevant to the research question. This was done by assessing whether the interview data contained relevant discursive positions and supporting text, or if it was absent. An interpretative analysis was then conducted to evaluate both the meaning of and the available actions for these women as expressed in their accounts. Tables relating to these analyses are located in appendices III and IV.

A substantial amount of data was generated pointing to numerous themes, which had brought the women to this particular leaving decision at this point in their lives. The use of the ecological model was then used to compile information on the individuals involved and on the social milieu in which they resided.

5.2 APPLICATION OF THEORY

To answer the research question, two routes of theoretical enquiry were then followed. First, the themes relating to the different factors associated with abusive relationships were explored in the data. Second, the kinds of responses the women had employed in the past are identified and evaluated in the context of taking the sheltering option at this time.

5.2.1 THEMES ASSOCIATED WITH ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS

In the data six themes were identified:

1. Psychological factors associated with abusive relationships:

The following theoretical explanations were identified in the data relating to psychological traits and mental status of the perpetrator and the victim in determining significant and recurrent factors of the violence on an individual level:

Early developmental factors: A number of developmental factors were identified in the data. Amy and Dora had experience with abuse in their formative years, and both expressed difficulties confronting and coping with this abuse, leaving them vulnerable in their present situations. Clara referred to her partner as being 'just sick'. His jealousy and hypervigilance appears to be connected to a fear of abandonment, producing severe rage and the inability to control his aggression.

Interactional and family theory: Poor communication skills between the individuals as a contributing factor in creating conflict and possible violence was identified. All four couples were unable to converse and negotiate in clear and mature manner to settle their differences, instead the male partners restored to violence. Amy's husband did not tolerate any discussion, and used his traditional practices to settle potential discord with violence, teaching Amy the necessity to remain silent and to lie low to prevent beatings. Beth's husband used violence to obtain his perceived rightful attention from her, and Beth stated that she was unable to talk to him about his behaviour. Clara reported that she and her partner were unable to understand each other's needs and behaviours. Dora stated that her husband put the onus for poor communication between them firmly on her shoulders.

Intrapsychic approach: Some of the female characteristics, which contribute to the violence and repeated victimization within the marital context, leading dysfunctional dependency in women were evident (Foreman and Dallos, 1993). Amy and Dora presented with depression, shyness, withdrawal, low self-esteem, anger, and insecurity. Both women were accused of nagging by their husbands. Clara reported feeling despondent.

Beth presented at the beginning of the interview as confident and efficient but exhibited extreme anxiety, insecurity, and dependency as the interview progressed. Beth's anxiety was based on the reality of not having an income or a place to live. Yet, Beth was totally

financially dependent on her husband, and had spent eight months in the shelter, knowing it was not a permanent solution. Both actions coupled with her plea to the researcher to ask her supervisor for assistance pointed towards a possible level of dysfunctional dependency.

It was possible through the women's accounts to assess some of the male partners' characteristics. All four women were condemned by their husbands as not being able to manage their homes and family, and being unable to show emotional warmth towards them. However, from the women's accounts this appeared to be more of a psychological ploy by the men to undermine the women's self-confidence as wives and mothers. Each of the women demonstrated a competent level of coping in their specific circumstance.

For Amy and Dora their domestic difficulties were further magnified by their partners' alcoholism. Clara also touched on her partner's 'bad man' status in her community in her interview.

2. Social-psychological factors associated with abusive relationships:

Social-psychological factors were identified, which pointed to external environmental factors and social structures that allowed violence to perpetuate (Dwyer et al., 1996). The following social-psychological theories are relevant to understanding abuse as a social phenomenon in these relationships:

Social learning theory: It was evident throughout the women's accounts that as adults the men were using violence as powerful coercion tool and a process to resolve conflict. What was clear from the accounts was that these forms of behaviour were well established and considered appropriate by their partners. What was not clear in the examples provided was at what stage the male partners commenced this type of behaviour or whether they learnt the positive expectations of using violent behaviour through exposure to violence during their formative years.

Exchange theory: It was evident from all the interviews that in evaluating the costs and awards of the relationship, these men hit because they could. The privacy of the family environment coupled with differing degrees of isolation were important issues with Amy, Beth, and Dora. The low risk of intervention was critical in this context. Furthermore, it was evident that the men expected very little or no penalizing or social sanctions for their

behaviour. None of the men made any attempt to hide the results of the beatings. Both scars and bruising were evident, suggesting that the men anticipated little or no external social control over domestic violence. Instead the evidence of beating appeared in this context to take on a badge of ownership. Fear was very significant in the women's accounts. For Beth, Clara, and Dora access to resources were controlled by their male partners, in which the men used the access as a controlling lever, not as a shared commitment.

Evolutionary psychological approach: All the women cited extreme jealousy as a cause of the physical abusive, controlling behaviour of their partners. Sexual proprietariness in the form of extreme jealousy is theorized as an adaptational response to a perceived threat to a man's paternity and protection against woman's infidelity (Wilson and Daly, 1998). In such cases the man is overly proprietary and controlling, often engaging in autonomy-limiting behaviours in curtailing their partner's contact with others outside the relationship and resorting to violence. For Dora and Clara their partners did attempt to prevent them from having contact with others, using violence or the threat of to maintain control. However, for all the women their male partners kept a tight rein on their activities and contact with others by interrogating, checking up on them, and investigating.

Personal and community resources: have been emphasized in previous research (Bybee and Sullivan, 2002) as important in the ability of women to respond to domestic violence by improving their quality of life, and their abilities to maintain a non-abusive existence. Although Clara was active in utilizing both informal and formal support, for Amy, Beth, and Dora isolation, fear, dependency, embarrassment, and guilt prevent them from utilizing fully family and friends. Formal assistance such as social services, doctors/hospitals, police and criminal justice system, religious organizations, and shelters were utilized to differing degrees by the women. Dora stated she was not aware of any available services. Amy and Beth due to their frequent and severe injuries were in contact with hospital services. Beth was referred to a social worker, and Amy's situation was documented within the court system. However, it was unclear why neither fully utilized the system to protect themselves. Clara reported that the police intervention was not useful.

The availability of safe long-term housing was critical for abused women's decisions to leave the abusive relationship. Beth, Clara, and Dora were dependent on their male partners for their accommodation. Beth had been at the shelter for eight months and had not been able to

find housing for herself and her children, causing her extreme anxiety. One of Dora's main concerns was to find employment so that she could afford a home for herself and her daughter. Clara planned to and wanted to return to her Congo community in the city center, likely returning to the abusive relationship and the accommodation he provided. Amy as the only woman interviewed to be employed did not have difficulty finding accommodation; however this ability appeared to be tied to her husband's continued demands and abuse.

Although religion was important and significant in the lives of all the women, only Clara appeared to utilize this path in coping with the abuse. The Jesuit priest was responsive to her need for assistance. Dora stated she has had little contact with her pastor since her husband's alcoholism excluded them from attending church. There appeared to be an element of embarrassment to her self-imposed isolation from the church along with her husband preventing her from contacting her church friends.

3. Social-cultural factors associated with abusive relationships:

In this context the family structure and economic realities are tied into the feminist perspective of patriarchy theory. This identifies social institutions such as marriage, family, religion, law, financial systems, and government policies as promoting, maintaining, and supporting the use of violence against women (Dobash and Dobash, 1992; Miles-Don, 1998). The following feminist theories are relevant to the data:

Family theory: predicts that the particular characteristics of the family predispose conflict and tension, leading to violence (Carlson, 1984; Dobash and Dobash, 1992; and Fedler and Tanzer, 2000). A number of these characteristics were evident in the women's accounts:

a) **Age:** Amy and Dora were young and inexperienced, and married older men with more experience and power to establish the boundaries of the relationship.
b) **Style of conflict resolution:** for all the couples the male partners used violence in order to control any real or potential disagreements, and to maintain the upper hand.
c) **Forced isolation:** although only Clara's and Dora's partners attempted to restrict their ability to leave the home, all the men did keep a tight vigilance on their partner's activities.
d) **Supreme male authority:** for three of the couples the male partners made all the major decisions without consulting their female partners. In all the relationships, the male's cultural right to physically punish their women for perceived wrong doings was implied and accepted by the women but only directly stated by one woman.

e) **Conflict over sex:** occurred in all the relationships. The women stated that they were forced to have unconsensual intercourse with their partners. The issue of condom use was contentious for two of the couples. Beth's husband refused to use or discuss the use of condoms even though he was having sexual relations with other women. Clara's partner sometimes refused to use condoms; however she felt he was not having sexual relations outside their relationship.

f) **Conflict over children:** this occurred in two of the relationships. Beth's husband felt that the attention she gave her children was at his expense, and to this end he would beat her. Dora's husband refused to buy the things their daughter needed, forcing Dora to use her pension or for her family to buy these items. This caused further conflict resulting in violence and making her feel guilty. His severe punishment of their daughter also made Dora feel helpless and guilty in her inability to protect her child.

g) **The lack of or limited social networks:** was a major issue for these women. Clara was the only one to have developed and utilized an extensive social network; however she had not utilized these supports for a permanent solution. Amy as a migrant worker had only an uncle close by in South Africa. Her other contacts were through her employment. Amy did not have friends and neighbours to turn to when her husband evicted her. Instead she went to the police station. Beth reported having no family in the area, but had friends. Yet she states that no one helped her. Dora had family and the church. However, she was unable to obtain assistance from them. Dora reported that she did not have friends, since her husband prevented her from making friends among her neighbours and from seeing her church friends.

h) **Gender roles, division of labour, and the men's expectations concerning the women's domestic work and responsibilities:** played significant roles in the maintenance of domestic violence in the accounts of the women. They expressed a belief in woman's nurturing role, and that men should provide for the family in a caring nonviolent manner. These two traditional roles were reinforced with the women's trust in romantic love, and the significance of religion in their lives. The women reported being very much in love with their partners in the beginning of the relationship. All reported that their male partners used maneuvers designed to appeal to and manipulate that love. Such behaviours were instrumental in their returning to their male partners. Only Amy stated that the relationship did not contain periods of love alternated with severe abuse, 'never loving, always abusive'. However, all the women reported that their partners used their core identities as a woman, wife, and mother to attack them through criticism,

humiliation, belittlement, ridicule, name calling, and making fun of their lack of skills and knowledge.

Resource exchange theory: It was clear in the accounts of the women that they were at a disadvantage in their relationships; therefore their male partners were able to use violent aggression to coerce in obtaining desired goals (MacMillan and Gartner, 1999). Beth, Clara, and Dora were dependent on their partners for financial support. Clara and Dora were prevented from obtaining employment outside the home by the extreme jealousy exhibited by their partners. Dora was very proud of her status as a stay-at-home mother, a role reinforced by her husband as her job in their marriage. Although Clara had education, as a refugee she lacked the identification papers to permit her access to the formal sector of the economy, therefore, making her dependent for survival on the low paying informal sector employment or as she has done a male partner.

Amy was the only one of the four women who was employed. However, as a migrant worker with little education she had been limited to employment in fast-food establishments. Amy had been forced to be the sole financial supporter of her family. MacMillan and Gartner (1999) found in their research that when a male partner is unemployed and his female partner employed, the risk of abuse substantially increases. Amy stated that the severe physical abuse began when they came to South Africa and her husband was unable to find employment. Her ability to be employed was an area in Amy's life in which she found some measure of self-confidence and self-esteem. This may, however, have also been a foundation for the abuse, due to her husband's resentment of his dependency on her.

Poverty: was a significant stressor for these women. Although poverty is not considered to be directly related to domestic violence, conditions connected to poverty are often seen to aggravate exposure to domestic violence (Bybee and Sullivan, 2002). Amy supported the family and paid rent on a flat with low wages. Clara and her partner lived in a rented room and were dependent on his unsteady work repairing refrigerators. Beth's and Dora"s husbands had full-time but unskilled, low-wage employment. Beth and her husband owned their home. Dora and her husband lived in a rented garden cottage. The education levels for Amy and Beth were problematic for employment prospects. Clara's educational level was difficult to evaluate, and without identification papers she was unable to use her educational

status. Dora had a diploma in business administration, but had never been employed in the area and appeared to be having difficulty in regaining the confidence to start over.

Social conditions: In South Africa conditions such as 'a culture of violence', a society under stress and in transition, the lack of community resources, and the mistrust of the legal system all contribute to the prevalence of domestic violence (Fedler and Tanzer, 2000; Vetten, 2000). Furthermore, such conditions influence the evolution of acceptable levels of abuse in establishing social norms, attitudes, and behaviours (Sorenson, 1996). For Amy and Clara conditions occurring outside of South Africa had impacted on their lives, making them in this context vulnerable to abusive relationships.

Amy and her husband came to South Africa in search of better employment conditions. By leaving her country of origin Amy had increased her vulnerability to abuse. First, being isolated from their culture permitted her husband to be the expert on the acceptable level of physical punishment. It also allowed for the complete absence of any type of traditional controls. Secondly, as a common practice in Africa for migrant workers, Amy had left her son with his paternal grandparents and plans to take her daughter to them. This practice leaves the parents free to pursue employment without the responsibility for day-to-day childcare. Amy traveled to Zimbabwe each month to see her son, bring her into contact with her husband's parents. Amy was very aware of their feeling that she was an unsuitable wife for their son. It also strengthened her fear for her children, and decreased her ability to keep her whereabouts secret.

Clara escaped the civil war conditions transpiring in the Congo. Clara arrived in South Africa pregnant and without family or a male partner, and without the necessary papers including a passport. To obtain such papers is a costly endeavour, one, which Clara planed to work towards in the future. However, her inability to enter the formal sector of employment, her status as a refugee, and being without the protection of her family increased her vulnerability, and influenced her ability to find financial independence. Clara expressed a feeling of separation from her distinct cultural group, the loss of friends, and an alienation from the dominant culture in the shelter environment. Thus, forecasting an inevitable return to the abusive relationship and her Congo community where she felt safe and had some measure of protection from greater threats.

Finally, the data suggested that migrant workers and refugees from other countries are subjected to xenophobia in South Africa in the form of persecution, discrimination, and distrust. This made it difficult for Amy to establish an effective social network system, and for her to trust and utilized the public services such as police. Although Amy's husband was incarcerated for stabbing Amy, she was unable to seek assistance from the police when he threatened to kill her if she did not take him in again. In the present economic climate and as a refugee, Clara could also be subjected to such conditions, increasing her vulnerability.

For Beth and Dora the legacy of apartheid had effected their positions as women. Beth as a Black Zulu woman, had limited educational chances and therefore, now limited employment opportunities, forcing financial dependency on her husband. Her trust of the police could have been undermined. Beth for all her serious injuries did not report seeking help from the police. Like Clara, Beth's actions of tolerating severe physical abuse could be tentatively contributed to her need for survival. Dora's situation differs in that she was a white South African female. She did have the privilege of further educational training. However, her entry into the workforce occurred at a time when affirmative action in the workplace would have been a major issue, making competition very significant. Yet in her present situation as in any context worldwide having been a stay-at-home wife and mother for numerous years, attempting to enter the workforce could be difficult for Dora.

4. Social constructions of domestic violence:

An interpretative analysis of the research literature on domestic violence found three discursive positions to be available in understanding domestic violence and in assigning responsibility, and therefore determining the different actions available to the women: women's problem, men's responsibility, and a social phenomenon. The interview data were examined to determine if these discursive positions were available for these women, relative to their particular time in history and the social context.

As a social phenomenon domestic violence has been described in the literature as a chronic, devastating, pervasive, serious, social global epidemic and responsibility (Kirkwood, 1997; Park et al. 2000; Lawson, 2003). The data from this study indicated that women and children were the victims, and that the problem was kept hidden and women forced to be silent. Significantly, physical abuse was central to these women's understanding of domestic

violence, while other forms of abuse were present in their narratives but not labeled as abuse. In addition, these women viewed the problem on a very individual, personal level.

In constructing domestic violence as a 'women's problem', it moves back into the sphere of individual gender context, making it the problem of the woman involved. In this position domestic violence becomes personalized and individual pathology, placing the problem firmly and solely at the woman's doorstep. These women were held responsible for provoking the situation and also for finding solutions. The women as defined by their partners were viewed as failures in their roles as women, wives, and mothers. Yet, in the context of the shelter they encouraged to consider themselves as survivors for leaving the abusive relationship.

However, in interpreting the research literature when domestic violence is constructed as 'men's responsibility', it is not viewed at the same level of failure but as a cultural choice to use violence (Dobash and Dobash, 1992; Green, 1999). The male partners of these women appeared to have culturally sanctioned options available to them where such violence was seen as justifiable and necessary for male proprietariveness. In the accounts of the women, they were viewed as property in need of discipline and chastisement for their failure to meet their obligations as wives. The women did express the need for the men to be accountability for the violence and for not adhering to their roles as providers and caretakers of the family. Yet, what was critical in the accounts of the women was the absence of the need to or the means to punish the men for their severe physically violent behaviours. Furthermore, the type of violence from the very unset of the abuse was very severe in which mild warning signals noted in Western research were bypassed for immediate and life-threatening reprimand (Wallace, 1998; Eisikovits et al., 1999; Lawson, 2003).

In constructing domestic violence from the prospect of women's problem and men's responsibility, two salient components are evident in the interview data: gender and power. The data indicated that the strategies and resources each woman perceived as available were dependent on her understanding of the violence, her ability to communicate this understanding, and her access to resources. The women constructed the violence comparatively to the western patriarchal ideologies as part of the cultural norms and practices in the private sphere of the family. The findings suggested that these women were held responsible for provoking the violence and for finding solutions to stop it, while the men had

a choice but also a duty to control in such a manner. The women appeared to accept it as away to settle disputes. However, this may be due to their inability to access socially defined ways to turn the responsibility back to the men.

Appendix III contains a detailed account of the discursive positions and the supporting text found in the interview data, and the analysis of the meanings of these positions and actions available for the women in this context.

5. Social construction of abused women:

Loseke (1992) describes the social construction of an abused woman as a collective representation of a woman with a specific type of experience, biography, motivation, and subjectivity. The survey of the research literature on domestic violence yielded three main competing and a number of alternative discourses identifying abused women. The first dominant position of 'good wife' emerges out of patriarchal ideology (Dobash and Dobash, 1992). The second and third competing positions transpire out of the feminist ideology identifying an abused woman first as a victim and then a survivor (Ashcraft, 2000; Kirkwood, 1997). Other alternative discourses were identified as romantic love, situational/contextual factors, and divergent cultural ideology.

Each of the women was asked directly if they saw themselves as a battered wife, a victim, and/or a survivor. Amy, Clara, and Dora did not see themselves as 'battered wives', while Beth reported that she suffered and did see herself as battered. Dora and Amy reported that they were not victims but that they were survivors, while Beth and Clara felt that they were both victims and survivors. Amy clarified her situation by adding that she felt a survivor only some times.

Supporting evidence in the interview data indicated that the women were able to verbalize and describe actions consistent with the different positions but the actual labels were not used except when elicited by the interviewer. The women wavered back and forth between images and actions of a good wife, victim, and survivor. All the women were victims of the different forms of abuse identified in research literature (physical, sexual, economic, and emotional) to different degrees but significantly identified with the physical abuse. The core cultural identity as a woman, wife, mother, and religious person were identified by the women as

important but also used by the male partners to reinforce a perception of failure and a need for control.

Marriage and romantic love remain important to these women. However, with the removal of love and trust from the relationship combined with the continued high levels of physical abuse the leaving action became conceivable as a possible solution. Finally the women were aware and believed in different cultural and contextual paths that should be available but were not necessarily useful or possible in this context.

As a woman moves from one position to another, she gives up and rejects specific rights and obligations to bring in another set of rights and obligations, allowing for a different set of actions (Burr, 1995). In their roles as good wife and victim the women attempted to fulfill their obligations by being obedient, serving, and respectful. They took the responsibility for change and attempted to defuse the violence through different strategies. However, such actions resulted in these women entering a victim profile of feeling fear, anxiety, anger, helplessness, and internalizing the lack of control over events in their lives.

In feminist ideology for a woman to take on the role of survivor requires she acknowledge the harm and consequences of the abuse, and therefore seek assistance and work towards change and a new purpose in life (Kirkwood, 1997). In leaving the abusive relationships and entering the shelter these women entered the position of survivors but continued to waver between images and actions of victim and survivor. However, this state of emotional turmoil is considered to be part of the process of regaining personal power (Kirkwood, 1997).

Appendix IV contains the supporting text found in the interview data for the different discursive positions for abused women, and the analysis of the meanings of these positions and actions available for the women in this context.

6. Abuse experienced by the women:

Past research has found that the type, frequency, severity, and uncontrollable nature of the abuse experienced are significant in women's decisions in responding to the abuse (Kirkwood, 1997; Rasool et al., 2002). Although these women essentially focused on the physical abuse, they were also subjected to sexual, economic, and emotional abuse. However, the degree of

severity and frequency in the types of abuse experienced differed among the women. Refer to appendix II for the coding sheets indicating the types of abuse experienced and further evaluation in the profiles.

The combination of the physical abuse with another form of abuse was instrumental in the leaving decisions made by the women. Amy experienced progressive more severe and frequent physical, economic, and emotional abuse. Yet she remained in the relationship until her husband evicted her and her daughter from their flat to install in their place his pregnant girlfriend. Beth tolerated increased severe and frequent beatings with an axe, requiring numerous emergency treatments. However, until her husband refused to financially support the family, causing her extreme anxiety and worry, Beth remained in the relationship.

Although Clara tolerated the beatings and her partner's attempts at controlling her leaving their home, the safety of their unborn child forced her to make the decision to leave. Dora was subjected to more severe and frequent beatings, as her husband becomes more embroiled in his alcoholism, putting the family at risk by also beating his daughter. However, combining this with his lying and his sexual demands, her love and trust were undermined. In Dora this created anger and determination for change.

5.2.2 THEMES ASSOCIATED WITH RESPONSES TO THE ABUSE

This research report postulates that how women response to the abuse and are able to move beyond the abuse towards empowerment was dependent on numerous factors. To report the results found in the data the women's responses were divided into three themes:

- Lempert's (1996) stages
- staying/leaving patterns
- paradigmatic shift or last straw event

1. Lempert's stages: were utilized to organize the data. Support for the framework was enhanced by reference to the work of other authors.

First stage: of an abusive intimate relationship sees both parties attempting to keep the violence private (Lempert, 1996). In the beginning romantic love and being a good wife were elements of the relationships for these women. Clara was the only one who still questioned the possibility that her love existed. Amy and Beth reported no longer feeling love

toward their partners while Dora stated that her love for her husband was not the same. Dora expressed a tremendous amount of anger towards her husband verbally and non-verbally for his deceitfulness and for what she referred to as wasting her life. In attempting to satisfy their partners' expectations and requirements in their roles as a wife, each of the women indicated they did take this very seriously, regardless of the constant criticizing and belittling of their attempts and skills by their partners.

It was difficult to evaluate if there was an attempt to keep violence invisible as a face-saving strategy because of the contradicting evidence indicating that the results of the physical beating were apparent in scaring and bruising, and in this context the relationships were beyond the initial stage. Amy stated that her husband warned her never to talk about the violence, yet she had to go to work with injuries on her face. Beth's husband talked to family and friends about his need to keep his wife and children in line, justifying his violent behaviour. Dora's husband was very concerned about what she told her family, and called her and her accusations crazy. Evidence of severe bruising was visible on Dora's face at the time of the interview. Only Clara apparently was very open and public about the violence. Living in a rented room would not have given the couple very much privacy. However, Clara's partner already had a reputation for his violence in the community, perhaps giving Clara a significant strategy.

All the women were in some way made responsible and to feel guilt for the abuse. Fear was a component of the relationships. For Amy and Beth fear acted to keep them silent. Dora's fear that she would not be believed kept her from telling others. Fear for Clara spurred her to bring others into the situation in attempts to halt the beatings. The inward spiral movement described by Kirkwood (1997) was apparent in the accounts of Amy, Beth, and Dora, and to some degree with Clara, in which loss of personal control to the abuser was evident. Their sense of identity and self-esteem was weakened through constant degradation, isolation, and objectivity. Amy experienced feelings of hopelessness, leading to suicide attempts. Beth suffered from extreme worry and anxiety. Clara stated she felt despondent at times. Dora expressed feeling very depressed and crying when she was alone. Dora also experienced a physical response of epileptic seizures.

Second stage: the women's accounts indicated that their strategies moved to attempting to contain, manage, and control the violence through cognitive processes (Lempert, 1996). For

all the women the abuse increased in unpredictability, frequency, severity and uncontrolled nature. Each of the women reported using some kind of problem-solving and/or dissociation strategy. Amy stated that she would attempt to stop the attacks by doing what he asked, trying to reason with him, and by not questioning his behaviour. Beth stated that any attempts to talk about housekeeping money, condom use, and forced sex would escalate her husband's violent behaviour as he interpreted her actions as rejecting him. Beth used crying as a way to control the violence, and did what he asked.

Clara reported doing whatever she felt was necessary for the particular situation to stop the escalation of the abuse such as calling out for help, asking for his forgiveness, or just staying quiet. Dora reported trying different ways to avoid the physical abuse by being quiet, walking away or yelling back at him. Dora felt that keeping quiet only increased his agitation, and that sometime yelling back was effective. The above strategies utilized by the women are consistent with the 'subordinating self' strategies identified by Campbell et al. (1998). Three of the women utilized temporary leaving and returning as a strategic move to get the attention of their partners or as a time-out strategy. Clara made more use of this strategy than did the other women.

Green argues that African women utilizing different strategies from those reported in Western research. For the women interview the urban setting had limited the use of the traditional strategies described by Green (1999). The use of 'effective power', associated with women's reproductive and productive powers, did not appear to be an issue with these women. The three African women were removed and isolated from their extended families due to urbanization, migration, and refugee status. However, for each the influence of the male partner's family was more evident. All the women did use some measure of 'management of suffering' through nonconfrontational and nonthreatening strategies by conforming to their roles as mothers and wives, and being obedient, submissive, and compliant.

Yet, Clara was the only woman to use the collective strength of others to attempt change in her partner's behaviour. The other women due to their isolation and belief in the private and loyal nature of the family did not have the resources for such a strategy. Clara was the only one who utilized a form of negative activity in a 'going on strike' strategy to draw attention to her displeasure in her partner's behaviour.

The literature would suggest that the social structure of the African society relies heavily on patriarchal ideology (Green, 1999; Vetten, 2000). The theme of patriarchal ideology was found in all the women's narratives, affecting the strategies available. The women described the ideal concept of how they feel a sharing respectful partnership between couples should evolve. However, for all the women this ideal did not exist. In the accounts gave by the women their positions within the relationships were identified as subordinate and property, and subjected to the expectations and traditional roles of wife and mother as defined by their male partners. The family units appeared to follow the description of an urban, nuclear family structure. Again due to isolation and with two of the couples, older male partners, the males held a more powerful position and thus limited the strategies available to the women. African traditional and customary laws were not issues with the women. Although Beth was legally married, her husband was involved with other women, weakening her ability to strategically control her marriage but also strengthening her position in a legal divorce.

Wood's (1999) theory on the co-existence of violence and love could be identified in the accounts of the women as a 'dissociation' strategy. Amy justified the violence as due to her husband's use of alcohol as if to point to a 'not real self' during these episodes of drinking. Although Dora also justified her husband's drinking as the cause of the escalating violence, her interpretations differ. Dora's anger was very potent, and she felt she had uncovered the 'real self' in her husband's behaviour, and felt betrayed. In addition Clara presented another dilemma to the co-existence of love and violence. Clara reported feeling loved and seeing the love her partner had for her son, making her unsure of how to interpret the situation. Yet Clara justified her partner's behaviour as bad temper, crazy. All the women reported feeling self-blame and being accused by their partners for provoking the violence. However, with exposure to the shelter process, all of the women appeared to be rethinking and questioning taking on this blame.

Third stage: is identified by Lempert (1996) as 'making the invisible visible'. At this point these women had made the abuse visible by their admissions to the shelter. They also made attempts to involve other. Nevertheless, Lempert argues that it is essential for the woman begin to look at the relationship critically, acknowledging the abuse and the harm it is doing to herself and her children.

The shift towards concentrating on their own needs had occurred for the women interviewed because of the shelter stay, giving them the time, space, and counselling needed. However, it was questionable if the shift would have occurred if they were still living in the abusive environment. Amy's passivity and her isolation resulted in her not having family and friends to confide in. Amy was forced by the eviction to seek assistance for accommodation, not for the violence. Although Beth had the support of a social worker and her friends, the combination of physical abuse and financial deprivation forced her to acknowledge that it was all too much and that it was time to leave. However, Beth's problems were centered on the more practical aspects of survival such as food and shelter, safety.

Dora could be appraised as having reached the third stage in her relationship, motivated by anger and the feelings of betrayal. Dora attempts to involve her mother failed, and she felt that she could not approach her sisters. She also felt that her husband had too much power for her to get assistance. However, by making her daughter the focus of concern she was able to get help for herself.

Clara did not fit into the third stage. She was still negotiating for a non-violent relationship, which may be motivated by the necessity for survival on levels of financial and accommodation resources, and acceptance.

2. Staying/leaving patterns:

Women's responses to the abuse can be evaluated in their staying/leaving patterns, which Kirkwood theorized as a spiral of inward and outward movements of loosing and regaining personal control. These patterns were examined on two different levels: one, as a negotiating strategic response, and two, to theorize the possible reasons for staying in the abusive relationship and their breakdown causing a permanent leaving decision.

A: Negotiating strategic responses:

Beth and Dora had used this strategy on one other occasion during their marriages. Beth's decision appeared to be a bid for time-out and cooling-down period. Dora's situation could be interpreted as a bid to negotiate a change of behaviour in her husband, but it instead escalated his controlling behaviours. Clara who had been with her partner for just under a year, used the leaving/returning strategy much more frequently to instigate both time-out and change in her partner's behaviour.

Amy had left her husband on two other occasions. However, this couple's behaviour differs significantly from the others. Amy's behaviour was passive, allowing others or the events to take the initiative and control of the leaving/returning decisions. Each time her husband through intimidation and threats had forced her to take him in and support him financially. For Amy the purpose of changing behaviour or for time out did not appear to be the objective.

B: Possible reasons for staying and their breakdown:

In evaluating the interview data for feasible reasons for the women to remain in the abusive relationships and how these motivations collapsed to facilitate a leaving decision, a number of theoretical approaches were relevant:

Learned helplessness was an explanation for Amy's continued participation in the abusive relationship. Amy reported internalizing the blame, feeling useless and hateful, and attempting suicide. Her sense of control over the situation had been diminished severely with her husband's threats of killing her since one occasion he almost succeeded. She had learnt that nothing could help, therefore was unwilling to try, leading to further depression. However, once out of the oppressive environment, Amy had a glimmer of hope for a different life.

Cycle of violence theory was a feasible explanation for Beth, Clara, and Dora having remained in the relationships. The women had identified the presence of the three stages in their relationships. Furthermore, all the women describe fear as a major component, making 'battered woman syndrome' applicable. However, both conditions may also have instigated the leaving process. The episodes of loving and caring may have been effective in the past. Yet when accompanied by continued, unpredictable violence, it appeared to have lost its effectiveness with the women in their present accounts. Perhaps the men in these relationships had over used the strategy, causing it to loss its effectiveness as the women begin to acknowledge the damage the abuse had done to their children and themselves.

Investment model and exchange theory: the costs and benefits ratio of staying in the relationship is the focus of the decision to remain, leave or return. Different variables in the interview data were noted as benefits to remaining in the relationship. However, it was also noted that once these benefits were undermined or eliminated from the relationship then the benefits / costs ratio became unbalanced.

In Beth's situation, she was legally married for eight years; owned their home; had six children to support; and was totally financially dependent on her husband. Yet the increased severity and frequency of the physical abuse combined with the absence of emotional love for her husband, his infidelity, and his refusal to financially support the family had escalated the cost of remaining in the relationship. However, with her continued responsibilities, wanting to return to her home and community, the diminished memory of the abuse, and being unable to find financial independence or alternative housing in the last eight months may have also push the scales once again the other way. Beth had possibly returned to her husband and her home.

Dora had invested seven years in the relationship; was legally married; was financially dependent on her husband; and had established and invested herself in her role as 'good mother and wife'. In Dora's situation, the increase of physical abuse of herself and their daughter had caused her to question her love, trust, and respect for her husband, her isolation, and other aspects of his behaviour towards her such as the sexual and psychological abuse; therefore increasing the cost of the relationship. Dora gave the impression of having burnt her bridges in this present leaving action and was adamant about seeking a divorce.

In Clara's situation, the relationship offered a number of benefits such as protection in her refugee status, accommodation within her Congo community, financial support, love for herself and her son, and the father of the expected child. There was also the question of her partner's status within the community, which may add status to her through her association with him and prevent her from leaving him if she wished to stay in the community. However, at this time the cost had drastically increased with possible harm to their unborn child, forcing her to seek alternative accommodation until the child was born. Yet, once this particular cost no longer exists, and based on her assessment of her partner's past behaviour towards her son as caring and loving, Clara was likely to return to the relationship. She evaluated the relationship as safe for the children and containing the above benefits.

Age may have been a variable influencing benefits/cost ratio for Beth, Clara, and Dora as older women. The possibility of establishing another relationship or remarriage may have been perceived as problematic to these women, especially in a climate where AIDS effects so many.

Normalizing the violence: The theoretical model proposed by Eisikovits, Goldblatt, and Winstok (1999) postulates that the violent events and their meanings to the couple are functional for remaining together. The shifts occurring on three levels within the relationship can be identified in the interview data. The loss of control was explained as a reason for the violence, taking the responsibility away from the male partner and placing it on the circumstances. For Amy it was explained through traditional practices and his alcoholism, for Beth his need to control, for Dora his alcoholism, and for Clara his uncontrollable temper. For the women jealousy was pinpointed as a significant cause for the violent reactions. These rationales were possible in normally socially expected explanations, however, at only at low levels of violence.

For an intra-dyadic regulation, the women reported threats to existing expectations of roles and responsibilities, and achieving mutually desired goals as potential triggers for the violence. However, the authors identify a mild form of violence signaling more severe violence if the women do not obey. In these reports the male partners appeared to have wavered the mild form of warning and gone directly to the severe form of violent control.

Finally, for the extra-dyadic regulation, the presence of certain norms and values in the social environment were evident in the women's accounts. Social and public identities as mothers, wives, and religious persons were identified as important in the status of the women interviewed; therefore increasing their invested interest in maintaining these roles. The sanction of violence in the broader social context was significant in 'culture of violence' creating a legacy of physical and economic violence. Poverty would increase with leaving the relationships. The men's use of violent behaviour in their homes and relationships appeared to be acceptable behaviour. The patriarchal social structure of South Africa were also instrumental the use of violence. Eisikovits et al (1999) argue that since violence was acceptable and socially expected, it became both sanctioned and legitimate in the function of maintaining the couple unit.

3. Paradigmatic shifts or last straw events:

Paradigmatic shift and/or last straw events were identified by each of the women (Rosen and Stith, 1995). For Clara and Dora their children's welfare motivated leaving. As a woman tries to negotiate her way through the abuse, often her focus does not extend beyond getting through one day at a time. The danger the relationship represents for the children is often the

finale and deciding factor to penetrate this survival mode. Clara feared for the safety of her unborn child, seeking accommodation in the shelter. In Dora's situation the decision to remove her child from the abusive home was taken out of her hands and made by other parties. However, indirectly or passively Dora facilitated the process by sending her daughter to school with obvious evidence that the child had been subjected to a severe beating. Dora was then able to put into action her own departure with the assistance of the social worker. Dora had given permission to herself and with re-enforcement by others to abandon the marriage, something she had not been able to do previously.

For Amy and Beth the nature of the leaving decisions were different. For Amy the eviction of her daughter and herself from their home, forcing them to seek refuge began the process towards a paradigmatic shift. The experiences in the shelter had facilitated a change in Amy's attitude towards the abuse, and lessen her isolation. This had allowed for the possibility of new directions and behaviours in how she viewed the abuse and her husband's demands, and her responses to it. For Beth a series of events built up to create 'a last straw event', forcing Beth to make an abrupt decision. Beth reported the last beating as 'too much'. However, it was possible that Beth's financial and housing problems may have forced her back to her husband, making the children the reason for her inability to leave the abusive relationship.

5.3 SUMMARY: Sheltering as an option

This chapter has focused on analysis of the women's narratives, relative to the literature on causes of domestic violence and women's responses. From the analysis in sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2, there were a number of indications as to why sheltering became the solution of choice for these women at this time.

It was apparent that a number of psychological, social-psychological, and social-cultural factors influenced the domestic abuse experienced by these particular women, and their abilities to respond to the abusive relationships. The lack of social and personal controls over such behaviour, the acceptance by the women of the violence, and insufficient alternatives for the women were the most significant differences to this social milieu. However, there was considerable variation in the women's accounts. No single dominant cause could, however, be established, suggesting the need for an ecological model in understanding the prevalence

of domestic violence. Appendix II contains summary tables of these causes and the women's responses to the abuse.

It was also possible to tie themes in the data to theory. In patriarchal theory, all the sources of conflict leading to violence in intimate relationships identified by Dobash and Dobash (1992) and Fedler and Tanzer (2000) were present in the accounts of the women. These responses to conflict were apparently aggravated by the women's socialization to believe and trust in the nurturing role of women, romantic love, and the religious sanction of marriage. The data pointed to a need for the women to find excuses for the abusive behaviours so that they could maintain their roles of 'good wife/mother'. Consequently, the women had not strongly identified with the abused wife image.

Each of the women experienced to differing degrees all forms of abuse identified in research, but identified mainly with the physical abuse and to some extent with sexual abuse rather than with economic or psychological abuse. Two of the women experienced severe physical abuse requiring hospitalization and one husband was incarcerated his attack on his wife. Significantly, the women tolerated progressively more frequent and severe levels of physical abuse until it co-occurred with another form of abuse, making the leaving action a possible solution. Each experienced this differently.

The women's responses to abuse and violence were consistent with Lempert's stages. They attempted to satisfy their partners' demands and expectations. They used cognitive, dissociation, subordination, non-confrontational, non-threatening, and problem-solving strategies. Staying/leaving behaviours were used as negotiating strategies by three of the women. Few traditional African strategies were identified, pointing to the changing social constructions of family. However, the abilities of the women to move into the third stage were hindered by their isolation, poverty, and lack of knowledge of both informal and formal social resources and networks available to them. Individual pathology and vulnerability contributed to the women's abilities to find solutions. Significantly, fear played a major role in the women's perceptions of how to strategize in making sense of their abusive relationships and their options. This underscored the importance of how family, friends, and social service personal reacted to the women's initial disclosures of the abuse.

The analysis also indicated that women's responses to the abuse are dependent on how domestic violence and abused/batter women are constructed in their social milieu. Domestic violence was socially constructed by those interviewed as a normal cultural practice embedded in the private sphere of family life, and to be an acceptable way to settle family disputes. The social environment created a high level of indulgence for physical abuse with low risks of intervention; therefore the men beat their partners because they could. Extreme jealousy appeared to necessitate the need to demonstrate control and ownership; hence the evidence of beatings was not hidden. The women essentially constructed domestic violence as physical violence. Therefore, it appears that these women had permission to question such behaviours only when the severity of the physical abuse becomes life-threatening or basic survival needs were compromised.

For all the women some type of paradigmatic shift or last straw event was identified in their accounts. Thus they were able to give permission to themselves to seek alternative solutions. Once others noticed their plight, the women moved beyond their immediate resource pool and were directed by different community services such as police, social workers, Jesuit priest, and CPU to take the sheltering option. The women were removed and isolated from the violence, and an already overextended poverty-stricken environment to have the opportunity, support, and time to explore different permanent solutions in the shelter setting.

For these four women sheltering became a viable solution at this time in their lives to escape the violence.

6. CHAPTER SIX: Has the shelter experience met the expectations and needs of the women?

6.1 DATA ORGANIZATION

Since there were three sets of data for this research question, it was organized into three modules and then subdivided into themes:

- Women's views
- Shelter manager's views
- Social construction of shelters for abused women (appendix V)

In order to focus on the initial impressions of the content of the interviews dealing with the women's experiences in the shelter, the assembling of the data began with constructing a summary table. The coding categories basically reflected the subheading in the interview topic guideline to record how the women felt in terms of positive/negative, yes/no or with very brief explanations. This table is in appendix V and was instrumental in identifying the five themes presented in 'women's views'.

However, at this point it became apparent that there was insufficient information on the shelter from the women's interviews, necessitating a fifth interview with the shelter manager. The nine themes compiled in this module were derived from combing items from the interview topic guideline.

The third set of data investigated how shelters for abused women are socially constructed. The interview data were examined for the presence or absence of supporting text for seven discursive positions found for shelters in the research literature. Appendix V contains the tables presenting this information. Finally, the shelter for this study was compared to theory on western style shelters. The table compiled on similarities and differences is in appendix V.

6.1.1 WOMENS VIEWS

THEMES:

1. Route taken: for both Amy and Beth this was the first time that they had sought the services of a shelter, while for Clara and Dora, this was their second admission to a shelter. Amy was brought to the shelter by the person in-charge of her daughter's crèche. For Beth,

her social worker at Baragwanath Hospital arranged for her and her three youngest children to come to the shelter. Arrangements were made elsewhere to care for the other children. Clara sought help from her Jesuit church refugee community organization. The priest took her to the shelter organization offices, where arrangements were made to admit her into this shelter. Dora's referral to the shelter came through the social worker at the Child Protection Unit. Dora continued to live with her husband until arrangements were made for her admission. The women indicated that the availability of a shelter made it both possible and easier for them to leave their abusive relationships.

2. Attitudes about shelter: the women reported positive to feeling safe in the shelter environment. They felt that their privacy and confidentiality were respected and maintained in the setting. Clara did qualify her answer 'yes' by adding 'for the moment'. This may have been due to her reluctance at first to talk to the interviewer. Clara was the only woman who felt that there was anti-male prejudice in the shelter: 'they hate men. Don't talk to them about it'. The other women reported no anti-male prejudice. Dora was the only one to feel that she had exchanged one prison for another one. However, this may have been due to her voiced frustration of not having a life to get on with, rather than with restrictions on her movements. Beth and Clara felt that they could share and talk about the abuse with the other women. Amy did not feel comfortable talking with other women but she did find the counselling very supportive. Amy was employed during the day and may not have had the opportunity to develop rapport with the other women. Dora stated she 'had to be very careful who I talk to but that is how it is'.

3. Shelter services: the shelter's services and programmes appeared to be on an 'as needed or requested basis'. This made it difficult to obtain the information from the women, therefore necessitating an interview with a shelter staff member.

Amy found having a place to stay and getting counselling for her daughter and herself as the most useful for her needs. She planed to continue the counselling after she had left the shelter. Her counselling appeared to involve assertiveness training: 'I am not a very forceful person. They help me to say no to something I don't like'. Amy stated that she must attend the Friday night meetings and that she must express her opinions (must was stated very forcefully). When asked if she was able to take this behaviour beyond the shelter to her work environment, she replied that: 'I talk about it if something happens now'. Since Amy was

employed she did not require help with areas related to employment. Amy stated that the shelter staff were helping her to obtain information on metric night classes. Legal assistance was not an issue for Amy since her marriage was a traditional one. When asked if there was any other service not available at the shelter that she would like to have, her answer was 'no'.

Beth was pleased with the emergency accommodation and the counselling she was receiving at the shelter, especially having a safe place to live for herself and her children. She said 'yes' to both assertiveness and parent training skills counselling, but it was felt that she did not understand the question. However, she did understand the idea of problem solving skills and became very excited in affirming that she had help from the staff with finding solutions to her different problems. This appeared to include help with writing a CV and getting legal assistance for her divorce. Yet Beth had not been able to find a job, causing her extreme anxiety. Beth indicated that the shelter was helping her financially. She appeared very pleased with the opportunity of attending a HIV care course and obtain practical caregiver certificate. Beth felt that there were no other services that she would like to have or needed.

Clara's involvement in the services and programmes at the shelter appeared to be very limited. She stated that she sometimes talked to the housemother if she had problems. However, she did state that her own Jesuit Church community centre was preferable to the shelter for her needs. The shelter represented a place to wait for her baby to be born, and a place 'free from the fighting'. She described her life in the shelter as 'putting life on hold', and not normal. She felt isolated and lonely away from her Congo community. Clara distances herself from some aspects of the shelter, but at the same time had some involvement. For example she ran a telephone and small foods stall at the end of the street with another woman from the shelter, and did not have problems with the chores and cooking duties. The impression Clara gave during this interview was that she did not see herself as an abused woman in the same sense as the other women, and therefore did not require the same assistance. She maintained control over her life. She also did not express a desire for more services than already available.

Dora's admission to the shelter was planned. She expressed appreciation for both the accommodation and the counselling. Dora was involved in problem-solving counselling, and assistance with CV writing and job search. She had legal assistance in seeking a divorce. Her medical assistance and pension were already in place due to her epilepsy. When asked if she needed more services or information than available in the shelter, her response was for more

assistance in finding a job and job skills. She also expressed her frustration at being confined to the shelter and putting her life on hold. However, this could also be due to a change in her life style. She no longer had the care of her daughter, home, and husband to attend to.

4. Communal living: Amy stated that she had no problems. However, this may be due to the fact that she was employed, spending little time at the shelter. She also had difficulty expressing issues, which concern or annoy her. Beth found the lack of privacy difficult but did not have any concerns with the house rules and chores. She had no problems with the different cultural and life-styles of the other residents. Dora expressed no problems with the house rules, chores, the cultural differences, or the lack of privacy. However, Dora did voice her annoyance over food disappearing. Clara had no problems with the household chores or rules. She recognized the cultural differences and missed her people, but accepted this as temporary.

The Friday evening meetings were compulsory for all the shelter residents. Amy spoke of them as something she must attend and participate in, while Beth found the discussions a useful place to confront problems of living in the shelter with other women. Dora also felt comfortable expressing her concerns in the Friday meetings. However, she felt that the other residents did not listen to her and only become more resistant to her concerns. Clara's participation in the Friday meeting was unclear since she stated she did not attend any group meetings.

5. Children: the presence of children is very crucial to how a woman experiences an abusive relationship, and what choices she perceives as being available such as the use shelters. The women interviewed were mothers, and for three of the women, their future plans and ambitions centered on their children. The women reported concern about their children's behaviours, questioning if it was due to witnessing the abuse. Amy described her daughter's behaviour as 'violent, very violent', and that she made sexual movements of her body in her play. Clara describes her son's behaviour as 'he likes to fight, he starts other children'. Dora explains that after her husband was abusive their daughter was non-communicative and very sad. Beth reported that her children cried and left the house when her husband was abusive towards her.

Both Amy and Clara reported that their partners did not abuse their children. However, a child exhibiting sexual moves could be an indication that she was sexually abused. Clara states that her partner has 'big affection for my son'; giving this as the reason for staying with him and tolerating the abuse. Nevertheless, Clara left her partner because of her fear for her unborn child. Both Beth and Dora stated that their husbands were physically abusive toward their children. Beth reported that her husband's beatings of the children had resulted in one child suffering from epilepsy, and others experiencing broken arms and concussions. Dora reported that her husband on two occasions beat their four-year-old daughter severely. The first time about one year ago, the child was unable to eat for a number of days for fear that she would vomit her food, causing her father to beat her again. She stayed in her room, sitting in the corner, refusing to come out or to talk.

The shelter's policy towards the family appeared to give equal attention to both the mother's and the children's needs. The children have the services of a social worker, who was available according to the assessed needs of the child. The manager stated that their aim was to keep families together. Therefore, they accommodate the teenage children as long as the male children felt comfortable in sharing a room with their mother and their siblings. The housemothers minded the children if the mother was working in the evenings or had an appointment during the day. The shelter had an arrangement with a local crèche in which the children of working mothers at the shelter were cared for free-of-charge, including transportation.

6.1.2 SHELTER MANAGER'S VIEWS

THEMES:

1. Background information: the manager had worked at the shelter since 2002. She began as the child social worker and had recently became the manager. The shelter was established as a shelter in 2000 in a residential home. It was located in an urban setting, where there was easy access to schooling, transportation, and unemployment assistance for the women. Funding for the shelter was through government agencies, corporate and private sectors, and individual donors. The shelter staff and organization were accountable to the Government Department of Social Services. The manager was required to write progress reports regarding problems, changes, and security incidents. A government officer checked administration guidelines, audits reports, and made recommendations.

The manager pointed out that due to new government health policies, there were plans to change the way the shelter was run in 2005 such as providing the residents with three meals daily and increased counselling time. The shelter manager attended meeting for two community organizations. The network shelter meetings occurred monthly to discuss problems commonly experienced in running a shelter. The shelter forum met every three months to discuss issues concerning safety and includes all interested parties in the sheltering process from the West Rand. However, when asked if the police send a representative to these meeting, the manager replied, 'I have never seen police there'.

2. Admission criteria and cost: the referrals to the shelter came from numerous sources within the community, as seen with the four women interviewed. The manager cited such sources as their parent organization, different clinics and hospitals, child welfare and child protection units, church organizations, doctors, police, social services, and social workers. There was no cost for staying in the shelter. However, if the woman was employed, she was asked to contribute fifty rands per month. The manager argued that this was to 'infuse in them a sense of responsibility'.

The information given on the shelters by Park et al. (2000) stated that this particular shelter organization did not accept emergency cases. The women were taken through referrals only and required interviewed before admission. However, this was not the case for the women interviewed. Amy, Beth, and Clara came directly to the shelter from community, only Dora was referred. The manager stated that in the beginning referrals and pre-interviews were necessary for admission, but they had implemented a new policy to take emergency cases. The old policy was seen as problematic and 'unfair', by putting the women at risk and denying them immediate service.

Now, if the police station contacted the shelter with a request, the woman and her children were admitted. The screening interview took place the next morning or as soon as possible. If the woman was an appropriate client for the shelter she stayed, otherwise arrangements were made for placement with other services. Often the women brought in by police were destitute. The manager argued that it was necessary to get the background information from the women, but that the emphasis was on the future. The admission policy appeared to be very flexible. If the woman was being abused and she needed shelter then 'we must shelter her'. Cases involving mentally ill or suicide were referred elsewhere, since the shelter did not have the

facilities to deal with such individuals. They did accept HIV and AIDS cases. Those with alcohol and drug dependency were sheltered. However, they were referred to other agencies for treatment.

3. Capacity: the shelter had the capacity for about ten women and their children. There were single rooms and a family room. If the family room was not occupied the number of women could be increased to fifteen. The length of stay in the shelter was three to six months. However, the manager implied that with the new rules, the clients will be told that it was for one month only. Extensions will be granted through assessments, if was felt necessary due to the woman's circumstances.

4. Staffing: the shelter staff included four paid employees: two social workers and two housemothers. One social worker was the house manager *(interviewee)* who was responsible for the management of the shelter, the monthly progress reports, supervising the staff, networking with other agencies, and problem/conflict management. She was also involved in the screening interviews, assisted in organizing the treatment plans, and some counselling. It appeared that the managing of the shelter involved being on-call twenty-fours a day, seven days a week. The other social worker was employed to counsel both women and the children.

There was a housemother present in the shelter at all times, and she was responsible for the day-to-day running of the shelter, making sure household chores were done, children were cared for, buying food and other necessary household supplies, conflict resolution, and some counselling. One came in from 10:30 to 16:30 during the day, and the other one covered the opposite hours. The housemothers were required to have a care-worker diploma or some type of background working in the care service area. They received basic counselling skills through a six-week course with the parent organization so that they were able to give the clients support during the time that the social workers were not available, and were able to deal with emergency admissions during the night.

The present arrangements in the shelter were not to use volunteers. The manager argued that volunteers pose a risk to confidentiality. However, with increased government funding and the implementation of a new model, the social worker will be required to increase counselling hour for the residents. Therefore, it was possible that a volunteer will be needed to implement an outreach programme into the surrounding schools, clinics, and police stations.

The manager felt that it was unrealistic for the social worker to be expected to do justice to both.

5. Relationships within the shelter: communication between staff members was done through a team meeting once a month, and the housemothers updated the manager daily. If there was a crisis that the housemothers were unable to deal with, they contacted the manager by telephone. However, if things could not be settled over the telephone, then the manager came in.

The housemothers conducted compulsory house meetings for the residents every Friday evening. All issues concerning the shelter, and relations between staff and residents, and between residents were discussed. The residents were encouraged to participate as a learning exercise in expressing their concerns, rather than keeping silent. The housemothers kept a written record of all conflicts and incidents during each month. The housemothers were responsible for making a roster to organize the household chores.

The policy of a communal evening meal was initiated because of the high costs of electricity with individual cooking throughout the day. Now one woman was responsible for cooking each evening. She received the rations for everyone for that particular meal, cooked, divided the food, and cleaned up. The manager points out that unfortunately food was a source of conflict in the shelter. Some of those who could afford to buy food do share while others did not. However, with the changing policy in which the shelter must provide three meals per day to the residents, things should improve.

The manager expressed a disappointment that it was not always possible to maintain a positive, non-abusive environment. She pointed out that women coming from diverse cultures and life-styles, and with different coping or operating styles had difficulty sharing one house. However, there was evidence that the women do support and help one another. Nevertheless, she also argued that ‘there are always those who are not interested in anything’. When asked about the dynamics of power struggles within the shelter, she replied that struggles were always present in some form. When conflict did arise in the shelter, she and the housemothers were responsible for dealing with it. This was accomplished individually, in the Friday house meetings, or by convening a special session for all those involved.

6. Safety issues: the shelter manager stated that they did have problems with safety. During the screening of the new residents, they were told that the location of the shelter must be keep confidential for the safety of all concerned. No visitors were allowed in the shelter. The women arranged to meet with family and friends outside the shelter. However, this arrangement had proven to be a problem. Often the woman agreed to meet their partner at the local Spar, and from this he was able to deduce that the shelter is near by. Usually, the meeting was arranged because the man demands to see his children, and the woman feeling guilty, gave in to this demand. Partners were also able to find out the location of the shelter through their knowledge of where the women work and the children's schools.

The shelter manage stated 'one way or another their partners find their way here'. The shelter at present did not employ a security company. The manager argued that this was due to the cost and the need for privacy of the residents. There were plans to pilot a security system at another shelter, and if the system worked it would be used in this shelter. The manager described a good relationship with the local police station, and their prompt response to the shelter's needs of assistance when necessary. The residents had a curfew but they were able to go out whenever they wanted. There was a passbook to be signed so that the staff were aware of where the woman was. Consumption of alcohol and/or drug use was not allowed in the shelter. There were no restrictions on contacting family or friends while a resident of the shelter.

7. Shelter services and programmes: assessed needs were accommodated within the shelter's ability to comply, and referrals to outside agencies where necessary. The social worker used play therapy with the children. Individual confidential counselling was available for the women. Other services such as life skills, budgeting, parenting skills, job finding, CV writing, or obtaining educational information were either done through group counselling or individually. Housing assistance, medical assistance, welfare support, mediation between partners were services arranged by the staff. The manager argued that since she knows what was involved and the right people to approach that it was only right that she assist the woman in need, rather than force her to go through the unnecessary anguish of attempting such things on her own. The parent organization had a full-time lawyer on staff, available for legal assistance.

Presently the shelter did not have a job-training programme. However, future plans if funding allows were to include some type of job training skills such as computer skills, hairdressing, security guard training, and the possibility of growing vegetables for selling.

8. On leaving the shelter: the manager specified that in the last year her statistics indicated that twelve of the forty-four shelter residents returned to their abusive partners. She added that once a woman had spent three months in the shelter, she cannot return. Some women did move from shelter to shelter in the city area. However, her response to this was that since they were abused and need shelter then they must provide a service.

9. Empowerment: the shelter manager felt that shelters were appropriate response to domestic violence in an African context because women's lives were at stake. The manager felt that they did have an empowerment role to encourage women to speak out against their partners' behaviour towards them: 'in a respectful manner women must let men know how they feel'. The manager felt that through individual and/or group counselling, it is important for women to understand that it was all right to convey these feelings. The second way in which the shelter was able to empower the women was by giving them the skills to be financially independent.

Often empowering requires a difficult balance between doing too much or allowing the woman the opportunity to learn the skills necessary to take control of her own life. The manager felt that one could never do too much, and as a social worker she must help. The last question posed to the manager was 'how did she measure her success?' Her answer was given in full because the manner in which she answered indicated an important but common conflict, which was often encountered working in this service area:

> 'Seeing a woman leaving the shelter, and knowing where to go and what to do. Finding her own place, and managing to find her independence rather than moving back to their partner. I measure myself whether they have succeeded or not. But most of the times are not like that. Because you can see that she is the cause of it all, and she is experiencing difficulty. When they leave the shelter you will never know where they go. You will not know their whereabouts. I really and truly don't know. Have I done something wrong as a social worker and manager, or is it the person? But for those who manage to discover their own legs, that is how I measure. Where she got the support she needed'.

6.1.3 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF SHELTERS

The interview data were examined to establish how the women and the shelter manager constructed and understood shelters. Appendix V identifies seven of discursive positions for shelters found in the research literature. These were also available in the interview data to differing degrees.

The women reported that having the shelter to go to made leaving their homes easier. The women were aware that the shelter was a short-term solution in escaping the violence and dealing with their problems. However, two of the women did express anxiety about what would happen to them when it was necessary to leave. They all reported feeling safe and secure in the environment. Yet two of the women were unable to share their stories. Individual counselling played an important role. The women and manager cautiously communicated the disadvantage of living in a shelter. The shelter as a place requiring 'good clients' was not evident in the speech of the manager or the women. Instead the objective tended towards assisting abused women on their terms. The shelter as a 'transforming' environment is discussed in the subsequent section. However, the emphasis for the women was on the shelter's role in finding safe accommodation and support. Furthermore, the individualism of the problem was highlighted in the accounts of the women and the manager.

6.2. APPLICATION OF THEORY

In Western societies for the last three decades sheltering has been seen as one of the major community responses to domestic violence. However, its appropriateness, and therapeutic and intervention merit across all social contexts poses an engaging research endeavor. This research attempted to evaluate whether the women interviewed found the experience beneficial in meeting their expectations and needs. The research of Dobash and Dobash (1992), Loseke (1992), Kirkwood (1997), and Park et al. (2000) are utilized in determining the theoretical functionality of the shelter in this study, which in turn influenced how the women interviewed experienced their stay in the shelter.

6.2.1 THEMES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PARTICULAR SHELTERING EXPERIENCE

1. Type of shelter: This shelter utilized a mixture of therapeutic and activist approaches, involving not just the containment of the social problem but also encompassing individual and social change. It had, therefore created a specific experience for these women. By basing the therapeutic environment on a mental health approach, counselling by professional staff became the main intervention strategy. The women reported benefiting from the counselling they received, in differing degrees from Amy‘s positive enthusiasm to Clara’s casual talks with the housemothers.

2. Shelter access: the women’s access to the shelter took similar routes to those seen in Western societies. However, what was absence with these women was direct self-referral to the shelter, which is often available and encouraged in Western societies through media campaigns. There was also noted that sheltering was not the first choice for these women when leaving the abusive relationship, rather family and friends were asked to assist.

3. Expectation of safe place: although all the women felt safe in the shelter, the manager reported that security posed a similar problem to shelters worldwide. The women were aware that it was a temporary solution to their problems. The women reported that the shelter environment was a safe place to share their stories of abuse. However, two of the women could share only with the staff, likely due to personality and cultural restraints.

4. Relationships within the shelter structure: there were hierarchical relationships between the staff members, the staff and the residents, and the staff and government agencies. However, based on South African’s past, all the parties may be more comfortable with an authoritarian management style as people adjust to concepts of egalitarism, self-responsibility, and democracy. Such behaviours were evident in how the women interacted with researcher, and how Dora yielded to the manager’s request that she participate in the interview, although her body language indicated a different inclination.

The staffing to the shelter consisted of trained full-time professionals. There are plans for the staff to become involved in community outreach programmes and employment skills training

for the clients. However, it should be noted that there is a high potential danger for burnout among these staff members, due to the long hours and firm belief in their 'helping roles'.

5. Adaptation for change: the management of the shelter was a very flexible, evolving process, directed at meeting the social needs of the community, not a rigid feminist ideology. The shelter policies were similar to Dobash's and Dobash's (1992) concept that battered women need time out from the abuse, and what the women do with the time was up to the individual.

This type of flexibility had lead to a positive experience for the women. Screened admissions gave way to emergency admissions when it was observed that the policy could present a risk for some women. Three of the women interviewed were at immediate risk of severe abuse, and all were appreciative of the opportunity to get prompt refuge. Although this policy presented a risk of women and other services abusing the system, the manager indicated it was a risk they were willing to absorb because it responded to the reality that the woman face in this social context. It also encouraged reciprocal responses from the police.

6. Expectations of shelter environment: the moral high ground noted by Loseke (1992) often associated with radical feminism was not evident. Rather than constructing an image of a 'good client', which wants to and is required to achieve her independence from the abusive relationship, these women were not forced to change but gently encouraged to reassess their circumstances and attitudes by the shelter staff.

The expectations that the women share and discuss their life situation in order to find solutions were evident in their willingness to participate in the research study with a stranger.

7. Diversity of the clientele: the women interviewed represented a wide diversity of race, ethnic, and social-economic backgrounds, making living together problematic. Both the women and the staff cited house rules as necessary for co-existence and cooperation in day-to-day communal living. The women for the most part reported a tolerance in living together, and the manager stated that the staff were vigilant in dealing with any incidents. Dora, as the only white resident, reported that she was subjected to racism. The catchment area for this shelter was a large urban area, in which attempts to 'indigenize' the programme would be

very costly and impractical. There are other shelter organizations in the area, which catered to the different religious affiliations.

8. Services and programmes: the facilities at the shelter were on an 'as needed or requested' basis. The women's individual diverse needs were attended to rather than forcing them to participate in programmes, which were of little interest or benefit to them personally. The sophisticated services and programmes of Western shelters would be very costly and required highly skilled professionals, making them unrealistic in a shelter where the women had only one meal per day and meat once a week.

The social workers at the shelter used the skills they had, and made referrals to other facilities for those they were unable to provide. The manager fostered a network of other agencies and social services. Both were excellent strategies when funding was limited. The expectations of these women were not as well developed as those of a Western clientele. Having their basic survival needs attended to with the added bonus of individual crisis intervention were seen as an improvement over that available through their community and family resources.

9. House rules and chores: are necessary for communal living. In this shelter, they were similar to Western shelters, indicating that a Western model was used. However, some changes specific to the African environment were made such as cooking once a day in order to cut costs. Restrictions over the women's movements were more flexible than usually seen in Western shelters.

The compulsory Friday evening meetings and the house rules gave the women a sense of belonging and responsibility, and an area in which to demonstrate their practical skills as women. The staff members encouraged the women to speak out, expressing and defending their own points of view, which the women report they were unable to do in their relationship with their male partners.

10. Benefits and disadvantages: although the women were enthusiastic in discussing the benefits they experienced in the shelter, reluctance was noted in discussing the disadvantages of the shelter experience. Only a few disadvantages were noted as lack of privacy, food disappearing, and racism.

11. Children's needs: children as well as their mothers are in crisis as a result of forced departure from the homes and communities (Park and Khan, 2000). One social worker was assigned to evaluating and planning interventions required for the children's needs in this shelter. The women reported finding this a valuable service since all reported changes in their children's behaviour, which they felt was due to the children's experiences with and/or witnessing of the violence.

12. Appropriateness of shelters in South Africa: it is argued that sheltering is not necessary in specific societies because traditional practice and extended family structures are valuable deterrents to domestic violence, which will be lost if the women and children are separated from these resources (Park et al., 2000). Yet, for each of the four women interviewed such resources failed to stop the violence. It was evident that the family structure had changed in this urban setting, leaving these women even more vulnerable to the violence.

Funding is cited as one of the major problems in establishing shelter for abused women in developing countries in which there is a major need with few resources available. Funding for this shelter came from government agencies, corporate and private sectors, and individual donors. The manager reported that her last year statistics indicated of the forty-four residents, twelve women returned to their abusive partners. The other women were able with the assistance of the shelter staff find other solutions for their problems. Although the women interviewed in this study remain vulnerable, the shelter experience presents alternative ways to eliminating the violence they experience in their relationships, and a useful future resource.

6.3 SUMMARY: Sheltering experience

For these abused women sheltering filled in many gaps in social and provisions, which have been created by the stress of a society in transition. The women's stories illustrated legitimate cases of domestic abuse, the need for the women to escape the abusive environment, and the community's inability to respond on levels of family and traditional controls. Although the manner in which the women came to the shelter was similar to that of a western society, there were indications that sheltering was not a familiar solution. Furthermore, the absence of self-referral was significant.

For each of the four women, the shelter represented a safe place to stay. It met their basic needs for survival, accommodation, food, and support. The availability of a shelter made the process of leaving easier. Counselling as the main intervention strategy in the shelter fulfilled the needs of the women for the support they needed at this time. The results also confirmed past research findings (Loseke, 1992) indicating that there women come to shelters anticipating that the shelter will meet a wide diversity of expectations and needs.

An evolutionary process occurred as the shelter's objectives were geared to meeting the needs and expectations of the community in which it resides rather than a specific theoretical paradigm. These changes conceivably influence the experience the women had in the shelter and their ability to shift towards experiencing empowerment. However, the social realities for these women remain the same, and are beyond the shelter's capabilities to solve in the short-term. Finally, in comparing this shelter to those described in theory based on a Western experience of sheltering, there are a number of positive differences as this shelter evolved to its unique African circumstances and environment.

7. CHAPTER SEVEN: Have the women experienced empowerment and/or agency through the shelter stay?

7.1 DATA ORGANIZATION

Empowerment and agency are prominent abstract concepts in the sheltering movement, theorizing shelters as significant empowering tools for abused women. As they are difficult concepts to operationalize and measure, this research made assumptions based on four sources of data to answer this research question:

- the women's profiles (Appendix II)
- the women's experiences in the shelter (research question two)
- the manager's report on shelter policies and objectives (research question two)
- the social construction of sheltering (Appendix V)

The data were organized into two categories relevant to theory on sheltering as an empowering, transforming environment. Each category was then subdivided into themes:

- evidence that this particular shelter represented an empowering, transforming environment
- evidence that the women individually were able to take advantage of the empowering, transforming environment

7.2 APPLICATION OF THEORY

7.2.1 THEMES ASSOCIATED WITH THE SHELTER AS AN EMPOWERING, TRANSFORMING ENVIRONMENT

1. Meeting needs of the community:

Rappaport (1981) has argued that to enable empowerment, the programmes and policies of a community project must be specific to the context of the particular community targeted. The shelter in this research can be assessed as an excellent example of a programme evolving over time to target specific community needs in such ways as changing the admission criteria and incorporating services on 'an as needed basis'. There are future plans to implement an outreach programme into the surrounding schools, clinics, community organizations, and police stations. The shelter manager has been active in establishing a community network system. This has included accessing availability of free childcare at a nearby crèche for working mothers from the shelter.

The evidence from this study would suggest that these community networks have been helpful to each of the women interviewed. Even though the women may not be able to return to this particular shelter, they have made valuable contacts, which will empower them in the future if they find themselves in a similar situation.

2. Policies, services, and objectives pointing to empowerment and/or agency:

The data from this study would suggest that the shelter routines bolstered the women's self-confidence, making it possible for empowerment. Friday evening meetings, house rules, and supportive counselling facilitate a sense of belonging, responsibility, and a way to demonstrated practical skills as women.

All the women felt safe in the shelter, and that their privacy and confidentiality were respected and maintained. The women began under these conditions to see themselves as worthwhile people, with the right to be free from the abuse and as individuals who could contribute to their surroundings. Although each woman had fears and anxieties about the future, they were enthusiastic in answering what they aspirations were.

The shelter manager stated that they attempt to change social attitudes and norms by encouraging women to speak out about their concerns and feelings to their male partners regarding their abusive behaviours. She felt that if this was done in a respectful manner the women could draw attention to their desire for equality in the relationship rather than maintaining the subordinate role normally assigned to women.

Although therapeutic environments have very positive results for the women and their empowerment, it can also act as a deterrent to empowerment. Gaitshkill et al. (2000) and Loseke (1992) critically point to the need to keep a balance between the staff's desire to assist the woman and the need for the woman herself to take 'ownership' of the change process. The shelter manager felt that they could never do too much for the women. However, she did acknowledge the conflict she experienced. Her self-doubts illustrate the very difficult task performed by shelter workers.

The shelter manager felt that they were successful with some, but for some a long stay brought dependency. The shelter manager's statistics for last year indicated that slightly more

than one quarter of the women returned to their abusive partners. However, she stated that she measured her success by seeing a woman 'get the support she needed and discovering her own legs'. Kirkwood (1997) argued that the process of leaving can involve numerous attempts. The information and the support these women obtained during this shelter stay may be the empowering ingredients needed to make the next attempt successful.

Obtaining employment and job skills was voiced as a significant deterrent to the ability to transcend (Tiefenthaler and Farmer, 2000). The shelter manager spoke of future plans to empower the women through courses to develop employment skills. The shelter parent organization has a lawyer who is available to give advice and assist in separation or divorce actions.

3. How shelter was viewed:

The manager characterized the shelter as a place of safety, empowerment and a transforming environment in direct speech. However, the women constructed this role in their descriptions and reactions to counseling and the ability to escape the violence. The emphasis was on concentrating on the future of the women through counselling and problem-solving interventions.

7.2.2 THEMES ASSOCIATED WITH THE ACHIEVEMENT OF INDIVIDUAL EMPOWERMENT AND/OR AGENCY

1. Stages of empowerment as identified by Kirkwood:

Kirkwood (1997) argues that empowerment and agency for abused women transpires in stages. The first stage is coping with the abuse. The second is acknowledging its effects on freedom and control over one's life. The third stage involves entering a survival mode. In the shelter environment, Amy, Beth, and Dora had entered the second stage and were fluctuating between acknowledging the effects the abuse and attempting to find the most appropriate survival mode for their particular needs. Clara, however, remained in the first stage of coping with the abuse and negotiating for a non-violent relationship.

2. Factors blocking empowerment/agency:

The woman's psychological presentations of helplessness, depression, anger, hopelessness, passiveness, dependency, and/or anxiety found in the interviews were possible influences in

their abilities to move beyond the abuse. Isolation had played a significant role allowing these women limited options in escaping the abuse.

Other factors noted included the continued influence of the abusive partner, limited supportive social networks and social services, and the responsibility for children. The patriarchal subject positions of 'good wife and mother' were significant in defining their position within their marriage and community, and had major significance in determining who they were as individuals. However, they abilities to challenge and/or resist their culturally assigned subject positions were severely obstructed by extreme fear and the lack of control over physical violence in this social setting, and viable alternatives.

3. Kirkwood's levels of hierarchy in obtaining empowerment/agency:

With in the context of domestic violence, Kirkwood (1997) identified in her research three levels, which are necessary for abused women in moving towards empowerment and/or agency.

First level: these women had been denied or restricted in obtaining the practical resources and knowledge to secure their independence due to severe social conditions, patriarchal practices, and past apartheid government policies. Kirkwood (1997)identified housing, financial support, medical assistance, and physical and emotional safety as essential for abused women to move towards empowerment. Financial independence and alternative housing are significantly connected to a legacy of poverty in South Africa. Poor educational opportunities along with racial discrimination and patriarchal social practices had created very sparse employment opportunities for Black women. Limited low cost housing as part of past policies had restricted access to housing for the Black population in large urban centers.

Nevertheless the shelter environment did present an opportunity for the women to develop strategies to take control, and to obtain access to resources and knowledge not previously available. The shelter stay also decreased the isolation felt as a battered wife by giving them insight into knowing that they were not alone in these experiences, and giving they alternatives for future assistance. The shelter was significant in beginning to shape their healing process.

Second level: points to the need to break the silence imposed on women. The ability to share stories of abuse among women is seen as an important empowering aspect of sheltering (Kirkwood, 1997; Lawless, 2001). These women by coming to the shelter essentially began the process of negotiating for a nonviolent relationship and/or moving out of the relationship by breaking of the 'silence'. For these women their accounts legitimized their admission to the shelter and their descriptions as battered wives. However, for these women only a minimal decrease their sense of isolation and embarrassment was evident. Two of the women were comfortable in sharing their stories while the other two were not. One woman continued to be very cautious about revealing the extent of the abuse.

Third level: of empowerment, Kirkwood (1997) identified as working towards social change. However, from the women's accounts only the role of resource person to other women in their communities could tentatively be identified. The shelter manager stated that they were attempting to teach the women to speak out about their concerns and feelings to their partners in an equal but respectful manner in breaking constraining social norms.

7.3 SUMMARY: Empowerment and/or agency within the sheltering setting

The results of this study would suggest that each of the women did experience some shift towards obtaining empowerment and/or agency within the supportive, transforming environment of the shelter, but it is questionable for these women how sustainable these changes will be once they leave the shelter environment.

Maslow's theory of self-actualization (Kaplan and Sadock, 1988) points to the sequence of stages that must occur before the individual reaches ultimate functioning levels. For the women interviewed, the inability to obtain the basic survival needs such as shelter, food, and physical and emotional safety had seriously hindered their abilities towards self-actualization and eventually empowerment. The shelter environment had limited facilities to carry the women beyond their short-term stay, therefore the reality severe social conditions will once again endanger these women. Yet, with limited funds and resources in an overwhelming need, the shelter environment strives to facilitate change towards empowerment and/or agency.

8. CHAPTER EIGHT: Can an empowerment/agency shift be identified through the narrative process?

8.1 DATA ORGANIZATION

In establishing if a shift towards empowerment/agency had occurred and could be identified as an outcome of the narrative process, two data sets were utilized:

- Verbal and non-verbal interview data from the women (Appendix II, profiles of women)
- Analysis of the responses to the questionnaire (Appendix VI)

The data were organized into the above categories and further subdivided into themes.

8.2 APPLICATION OF THEORY

8.2.1 THEMES FOUND IN THE INTERVIEW DATA

1. Sharing of abuse stories:

Kirkwood (1997), Ashcraft (2000), and Lawless (2001) were concerned with the impact of battered women's lack of ability to identify and voice their experiences within the context of language and culture. Lawless found in her research that the ability of battered women to share their stories constituted an act of empowering and solidarity. For these women it legitimized their statuses as battered women, allowing for admission into the shelter and the access of other social services. Although telling did function in a self-reflection purpose, helping in the healing process and enabling accumulation personal power to move beyond the restraints of the abusive context, the women did teeter between actions and images of victims and survivors. Within the shelter environment there was evidence that women were respected for their courage in retelling.

The interview process revealed that the women had told their stories to a number of different people in legitimizing their status as battered women. This may have influenced the retelling of their experiences during the interview. The patterns of retelling their stories as identified in the data were as follows for each woman interviewed:

- Amy – employer, police, uncle, crèche owner, and shelter staff;
- Beth - family members, friends, neighbours, social worker, shelter staff and lawyer, and other women in the shelter;

- Clara - friends, neighbours, police, priest, staff at shelter parent organization, shelter staff, and the other women in the shelter;
- Dora - mother, CPU and social worker, school staff, shelter staff and lawyer.

2. Verbal and non-verbal Behaviour during interview:

Kirkwood (1997) and Lawless (2001) argue that it is critical that women are able to speak of and define their reality, to explain their views, and to verify their interpretations of the abuse with others. In this manner they are able to begin the healing process, access resources, and to decrease their isolation in moving beyond the image of a victim

.

Amy, Clara, and Dora began the interviews with differing degrees of hesitation, while Beth began very eagerly. Amy and Dora presented as shy, where as Beth was enthusiastic. Clara used language as a way to demonstrate her reluctance. However, a behavioural and attitude change was noted as the interview proceeded. Amy, Clara, and Dora began to be more spontaneous, gave fuller answers, and had more confidants in expressing their opinions, and describing their experiences. The changes in the tone of their voices, their body language, and the enthusiasm expressed in their future plans demonstrated that they felt more comfortable and relaxed with the process. However, for Beth the retelling of her story progressively brought more anxiety in her worry about the future and consequences of her husband's behaviour. Once the tape recorder was turned off all the women were more friendly and relaxed, wanting to continue talking.

3. New articulated self:

Lawless (2001) describes the narrative process as an act of speaking in which the woman begins to reconstruct herself in moving beyond the identity of a battered woman to articulate a new empowered self. Beth and Dora moved away from their responsibilities to their husbands in identifying themselves as 'wives' to identify their roles as 'mothers' to be the most significant position for their future. Amy's enthusiasm in finding a new career path indicated her belief in an attainable new self.

4. Safe environment in which to share stories:

The shelter setting by nature of its theoretical function, is one in which women are encouraged to tell and retell their experiences with abuse, to name the abuse, and to seek plausible solutions for their particular situation (Park et al., 2000). The women's consensus to

participate in the study demonstrated their acceptance of the expectations that they were to retell their stories as part of the healing and transcending processes.

Although the women were evidently familiar with the office setting, the interviewer's presence and the request to retell their stories to her caused some discomfort for the women in the initial part of the interview. As anticipated, the participants did test the interviewer's sincerity, interest, and dependability as a new and unfamiliar addition to the setting. The interview process began with a large number of yes/no answers. The participants were uncomfortable with the audio tape recording of the interviews as evident with Amy's constant drawing away from the tape recorder, the need to reschedule Dora's interview, and Clara's hints that her privacy may now be compromised. A trusting space, which included the interviewer began to emerge with each participant as the interviews proceeded, as seen in the women's more spontaneous answers with fewer yes/on ones and their friendly interest in the interviewer.

8.2.2 THEMES FOUND IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

The questionnaire attempted to examine any potential change towards empowerment facilitated by the narrative process as gauged by the women's reflections of the interviews in the week following. The questionnaire results were difficult to interpret, and severely hampered with the completion of only three.

1. Rehashing or agonizing over information revealed:

The women did not report rehashing or agonizing over their disclosures since none of them indicated giving it much thought during the following week. The women also reported that they revealed no new information. Perhaps this signaled that the women were comfortable with the articulation of their stories and had cautiously moved beyond the label of battered woman to find and identify a new concept of self, as found for Amy, Beth, and Dora.

2. Emotional response:

The women were asked if talking about their experiences evoked particular emotional responses. However, this question was poorly constructed giving two examples: stressful or relief. The women used these particular words to answer.

Amy checked stressful and this reaction was observed in the interview, and indicated in her answer to the third question. Dora and Clara used 'relief'. In Dora's case the use of 'relief' may have indicated relief in having the interview over since her interview had to be rescheduled and she needed encouragement from the shelter manager. However, in the next question Dora did indicate that talking about the abuse brought relief in getting it out of her system. Dora exhibited an immense amount of anger during the interview, and having an outlet to verbalize that anger could be viewed as facilitating a release.

Clara's answer presented an engaging response. She answered this particular question with 'Its just about to relief'. However, she followed through on a later question with the following answer: 'according to your questions, I was more relief'. It was difficult to decide if she actually did feel relief or if she was indicating that the questionnaire was biasly constructed to obtain such an answer.

3. Retelling to stranger:

The third question attempted to evaluate how the women felt in speaking to a stranger about the painful and personal aspects of their lives. The answers were very individual. Amy felt that it was easier to talk to a stranger but that any discussion was difficult, since it brought back the pain and the feelings of uselessness. Clara felt as both were women that it was easy to discuss things openly; perhaps indicating the solidarity among women. Dora did not answer the stranger aspect of the question but did indicate that talking about the pain brought it out of her system and that was beneficial.

4. New insights:

Amy and Dora felt that the interview process was not instrumental in revealing any new insights into their situations. This may indicate that the interview just rehashed the same information covered in other retellings. However, both women continued to be emotionally paralyzed by the events in their lives as noted in the interview data. Amy's presentation indicated a very depressed and despondent individual, while Dora was very angry. Kirkwood points out that empowerment and agency are severely obstructed by the psychological damage inflicted by the abuse.

5. Space and opportunity to discuss their issues:

Question five was poorly constructed, therefore, hindering useful information. Interpretation of the question could tentatively indicate that the women had space to discuss the issues important to them.

6. Eliciting their help as experts:

Question six asked for their input into the process. Amy did not answer. Dora responded with a 'no'. Clara again challenged the interviewer, indicating that an interview was not that helpful to her personally. She also asked if the interviewer would think of the women after she had completed her work. Clara's answer indicated that such interviews from outside parties were of no practical use to women in her situation.

8.3 SUMMARY: Empowering through the narrative process

The analysis of the data indicated that once the women had adjusted to the interview process by an outsider, they gradually became more responsive and accepted the interviewer. The women had consented to participate. The shelter environment provided a safe place to explore such narratives. Evidence was found for a tentative move towards the articulation of a new empowered self for three of the women. The absence of agonizing over the information revealed, allows for speculation that they had solidified their stories to engage in the very first step towards empowerment. Instrumental in this process was their familiarity with the expectations of the shelter setting and having retold their stories on numerous occasions.

The last two questions in the questionnaire unsuccessfully attempted to elicit the help of the women as experts to improve the interview process. A possible reason for the lack of success of this aspect of the interview process was that each of the women was focused on her own situation, and the process of reliving and coming to terms with the abuse she had experienced. Collectively, the women interviewed had not gone beyond the pain, shame, or feelings of responsibility for the abuse, and therefore may have been unable to recognize themselves as being able to play a role as experts.

The interviews thus provided evidence that the women had the self-confidence to retell their stories in the shelter setting, but would suggest that they continued to feel stressed with what their lives had become and with the consequences of the abuse on their future. The inference

would be that at this point in these women's lives, they were still reliving and coming to terms with the experience rather than empowered to move beyond the abuse.

A possible exception to this was Clara, for the reason she did not identify herself as an abused woman. Clara's responses to the questionnaire posed a very unique and engaging paradox. On one level she stated that she found it easy to talk to and be open with the interviewer because both were women. However, her verbal and nonverbal responses indicated a potential for inserting power into the relationship by acknowledgement of the bias construction of the questions in the questionnaire, and her dissatisfaction with whole encounter: 'bring us something better'.

With the extra paper supplied for the questionnaire, Clara, first thanked the researcher for her 'help moral', and then asked if the researcher would think of the women after her research work was finished. This question included a 'how'. Clara challenged the complex reciprocal nature of the interview relationship. Clara's answer indicated that such interviews by academic researchers brought no practical answers for women. Clara also pointed out the one-off nature of the encounter for the benefit of the researcher, challenging the researcher to reciprocate in the future for the access she obtained to the women's experiences.

Overall, the data from this study would not suggest that empowerment occurred through the narrative process. The narratives rather provided a window into each woman's perspective of her own situation. Three of the women were focused on reliving the abuse experienced, and on coming to terms with their new situation. This left little psychic energy for activities outside these needs, or for attention to the interview process.

The fourth woman appeared to have denied the abuse, or moved beyond the abuse experienced. Her narrative reflected the perspective of a more empowered person who was more able to focus on issues involved in the interview process. In her case, however, the data would suggest that the process of empowerment had already taken place prior to the interview, rather than as a concomitant, result or effect of the interview process.

9. CHAPTER NINE: DISCUSSION

9.1 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

9.1.1 SHELTERING AS AN OPTION

To understand why these women at this point in their lives sought sheltering as an option, involved assessing the data on three different levels: causes the abusive relationships, types of abuse experienced, and responses to the abuse. Although all the sources of conflict leading to violence in intimate relationships as postulated in patriarchal theory (Dobash and Dobash, 1992; Fedler and Tanzer, 2000) were present in the data, other causes were also present in different combinations. The types of abuse experienced and the extreme social conditions were significant in steering the women to respond at this point to take the sheltering option.

The results of the research support past research in evaluating domestic violence as a problem in South Africa with severe social and health consequences (Dangor et al., 2000). Although these women attempted through different strategies to negotiate for a non-violent relationship, they were unsuccessful. For the women their immediate individual and community resources were not sufficient or effective, forcing them to remain longer in a destructive environment. The process by which the women came to the shelter and their previous use of sheltering services indicated that it was not a familiar or excepted solution. Yet the stress of poverty experienced by these families may have inflicted further stress on others beyond the capability of the extended family and friends to respond. Furthermore, the congested living environments and lack of policing of family violence poses a risk to safety for all involved. Sheltering takes the women and children out of the dangerous environment, decreasing the risk to them and all others potentially involved.

In South Africa as a society in transition, in which traditional practices have been eroded and replaced with the isolated nuclear family, and remnants of past policies have limit resources, women need to be made aware of their alternative solutions. However, this pose a problem of how can women be reached when the stigmas of disclose, and patriarchal norms maintain an impenetrable silence.

The data in this study would suggest that there was a protracted lead-in before these four women sought help, as well as time for them to become noticed by community professionals.

Only when the women's physical and emotional health was at extreme risk did they seek assistance. Safety was found to be paramount in this context as fear was significant in the women's abilities to find solutions. This underpins the seriousness for issues such as alternative housing, financial maintenance, and employment to be addressed before women have a chance at escaping the violence.

This research supports the 2002 national survey (Rasool et al., 2002) calling for more services to be made available for women living in abusive relationships but adds that these services must be made very visible, accessible, and promoted as acceptable solutions. The sophisticated services of Western shelters requiring highly skilled, costly professional, are impracticable in this setting, indicating the urgent need to develop community based network systems for sheltering.

Kirkwood (1997) points out that the escalation of physical abuse is often accompanied by the escalation of other forms of abuse. The interview data indicated that the women identified with the physical abusive behaviours and used it as legitimizing their presence in the shelter. Yet, each woman did describe experiences of sexual, economic, and emotional/psychological abuse (Appendix II). The women did not appear to have the language or knowledge to identify the significance of their experiences with other forms of abuse. The conclusions of the 2002 national survey (Rasool et al., 2002) argue that if the women cannot identify the abuse as abuse either through naming it or finding it socially identified as such than they cannot seek assistance. Public awareness campaigns, which name, and socially identify and accept all forms of abuse, would significantly enhance the yearly media campaigns opposing violence against women.

An additional finding emphasized the influence of patriarchal ideology as a significant barrier to the eradication of violence against women and children in this social milieu. Traditional deterrents have been undermined without adequate acceptable replacement controls. There appeared to be a compliance and expectancy for such behaviours by the women. It was found that the women tolerated a high level of physical abuse until it co-occurred with another form of abuse to unbalance the cost/benefit ratio of the relationship, making the leaving action a possible solution. Significantly, for such a small sample, combined woman and child physical abuse was reported in two cases and possible child sexual abuse in a third.

9.1.2 THE SHELTERING EXPERIENCE

Each of the women made the decision to leave the abusive relationship and to take the sheltering option as directed by community professionals. The focus of the research subsequently turned to examining how the women experienced their stay in the shelter. The results of this study demonstrated that these experiences were fussed to the consequences of abuse the women experienced and social conditions under which they lived.

Although the data indicated that there was a wide diversity of circumstances and experiences among the four women, overall the shelter experience appeared satisfy their needs and expectations. The shelter represented a safe place to stay in order to escape the violence, and its availability made leaving the abusive relationships easier. The women reported the therapeutic environment as beneficial, supportive, and informative, bolstering badly damaged self-confidence and self-esteem. Significantly the shelter played an important role in breaking the silence and isolation surrounding domestic violence. Although the women may not be able to return to the shelter at a later date, they have made important supportive contacts in their community, which have the potential to expand when necessary.

The shelter as an institution appeared to be flexible and evolving over time to meet the needs of the community; therefore, orchestrating specific experience for women, which did not demand change but gently instigated change. It reinforced the need for battered women to have time out from the abuse, and to be exposed to different attitudes and reactions concerning abusive, violent behaviours. The manager reported similar problem with funding, safety, communal living, and misuse of the service as seen in shelters worldwide. Some of their solutions were specifically African in nature while others conformed to sheltering theory. Networking appeared to be essential where funding and services in an African setting were devastatingly restrictive; making corporation among community resources imperative.

In the changing social and economic conditions of urban Africa, sheltering for abused women could be a concrete practical way in which to assist women. However, sheltering for abused women is a fairly recent phenomenon in South Africa, and the women's expectations did not appear to be very sophisticated. Significantly, this research found that the women's situational factors such as basic survival needs were influential in how they experienced the shelter environment because even in the shelter these needs remained overwhelming.

9.1.3 EMPOWERMENT AND AGENCY

The final research task involved assessing if empowerment and/or agency could be an attainable outcome for these women through the shelter experience and the narrative process of retelling one's story. Data assembled in research questions one and two, and from the questionnaires were examined for evidence of such a shift. The results indicated some movement towards empowerment and agency could be identified for the women in the study.

The shelter provided a transforming environment, mainly based on supportive counselling facilities. It also provided a safe place for the retelling of their stories in which the women were valued and accepted. In utilizing Kirkwood's (1997) stages of empowerment for abused women, it was found that three of the women had reached the stage of acknowledging the effects of the abuse on their lives and freedom, but they were having difficulties finding the most appropriate survival mode for their individual needs. The fourth woman remained in the first stage of coping with the abuse.

Although the factors influencing empowerment and/or agency were similar to those identified in Western research (Kirkwood, 1997; Lawless, 2001), the abilities of these women to take up the opportunities were aggravated by the severe social conditions in South Africa connected to poverty and discrimination. The shelter environment offered access to resources and information not previously accessible to each of the four women interviewed. It also offered the opportunity for exposure to a different way of acknowledging and voicing the abuse, which may in the future allow for empowerment. The shelter played a successful role in enabling the women to obtain the practical necessities they required to avoid the escalation of severe abuse. It provided space for recovery, enabling the women to move beyond their abusive relationships and gradually take control over their lives. However, this particular shelter's limited role in obtaining the practical survival necessities for the women beyond their stay was acknowledged.

Even though each of the four women in this study appeared to feel comfortable with the retelling of their stories, their narratives contained shame, guilt, and feelings of responsibility. Three of the women were able to articulate a new empowered self. However, the questionnaire results emphasized that the women had not reached the point of moving beyond defining the problem as an individual one to one of social construction and consequences.

9.2 CRITICAL REVIEW

This study has several limitations, influencing the findings. These include the possibility of bias due the self-reports of the participants. No generalizations can be made since the participants represented a selective, non-random, volunteer shelter sample of four women and a shelter manager. As it was not possible to involve the respective partners in the study, the women's reports could not be verified.

The data collection procedure involved interviews, which may have introduced bias into the data. The analysis of the data has been subjective, and may thus be open to alternative interpretations. The transcriptions, for example, all contained a large number of 'yes/no' answers. This was an indication that each of the subjects imposed limitations on their response to the interview questions for possibly different reasons, affecting the quality and continuity of their stories, and the narrative quality of the data obtained.

Although attempts were made to treat the women with respectful equality as woman-to-woman, issues of power were evident. Beth sought the help of the interviewer's supervisor through the interviewer. Perhaps indicating the limited power of the interviewer but recognizing the power involved in the larger picture of research institutions. The uneven power relationships were evident in Amy's and Dora's reluctance to participate. Amy demonstrated this in her body language, inaudible voice, and movements away from the audio tape recorder. Dora was absent from the shelter grounds requiring rescheduling of the interview with gentle encouragement from the shelter manager. Clara challenged the interviewer with her constant inference that she was not a disempowered abused woman, and that such interviews have no practical benefit for women in the shelter.

Having tentatively developed a trusting space as evident in the behavioural changes at the end of the interviews, a second interview would have been ideal to create a working phase to the relationship. Items the women refused to discuss the first time could be reintroduced or gaps in the information clarified. Furthermore, the short follow-up questionnaire would have been more successfully handled through a face-to-face second interview. Some of the questions were leading or confusing. Language, although not as big an issues as initially though, was a problem. Verbal contact rather than written would have allowed for a fuller exploration of the issues and clarification of confusing ones. However, considering the context of the research a

second interview could have posed a difficult task as seen with one woman leaving and the staff losing contact with her within a day after the interview.

The research attempted to evaluate if empowerment and/or agency through the narrative process involving the retelling of their experiences of living with violence. In order to obtain the approval for the research from the Human Research Ethics Committee and the research manager for the shelter organization, a topic guideline indicating what type of information would be solicited was necessary for the protection of the participants. However, the process became more of a question-answer routine with the women looking to the interviewer for direction. This activity was difficult to break. The topic guideline somewhat obstructed the process of evaluating an empowerment and/or agency shift. Instead the process failed to elicit the women's stories in some sections. The topic guideline was also too ambitious, covering too many topics. The challenge here was to find a workable balance between protecting the women's interests and obtaining the necessary information to answer the research questions but to also allow the women to develop their own stories in their own voices.

9.3 CONCLUSION

This research has examined the experiences of four abused women. It has produced a number of indications, which are similar to the finding of the 2002 South African national survey on violence against women. The use of qualitative methodology, however, allowed for the examination of the more subtle components of domestic violence not accessible by surveys.

The overall emancipatory goal of research into domestic violence is to eliminate violence against women (Kirkwood, 1997). Despite limitations, this study indicates the importance of conducting similar research in this area in the future. One avenue for future research would be to focus on the staying-leaving-returning decisions of the abused women. This would assist in developing an understanding of why women remain in abusive relationships, and the factors in specific social, family, and societal context, which contribute to decisions to stay or leave. Such studies are necessary so that interventions could be designed to support abused women in particular communities.

In conclusion, understanding and effecting positive change associated with social problems such as domestic violence requires considering both the individual and the multifaceted environment in which the individual functions (Maton, 2000). Without understanding how

these networks impact on the abused woman's decision process, positive, effective interventions can not be devised. Social transformation and empowerment in communities must consider on both bottom-up and top-down levels of power and resources (Maton, 2000). Therefore, an ecological approach becomes paramount in assessing different social milieus. Change is not possible if the focus remains on one given discipline, a single theoretical approach, or one institution, instead it is critical to bring together all elements involved.

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APPENDIX I

1. Topic guide for interviews with women
2. Information letter for the women
3. Topic guide for interview with the shelter manager
4. Consent form for participation
5. Consent form for taping of the interviews

TOPIC GUIDE FOR INTERVIEW FOR THE WOMEN

PERSONAL HISTORY:

Age
Employment history
Parent's employment
Ethnicity
Education
Training
Children: Ages & Sex
    Who do they live with?
    Are they children of abuser?
Relationship status:
    Married: living together / not
    Divorced
    Friend: living together / not
Age when met partner
How long together?
Objections to relationship:
    From whom / why
Able to maintain friendships during relationship? Why / Why not
Employed during relationship
Any financial problems in relationship
Type of housing: owned / rented / lived with others

ABUSE:

How was conflict resolved:
    In your family growing up
    In your present relationships
How do you define abuse?
    Acceptable / not
What have you experienced as abuse?
    In childhood / dating adolescent
    In your present relationships
        Mental abuse
        Physical abuse
        Sexual abuse
        Financial abuse
        Resulting Injuries
When and why did the abuse occur in your present relationship?
    First attack
    First seen as abuse
    How often
    Patterns in abuser's behaviour
    Related to substance abuse
    Changes over time and marital status
Have your children witnessed the abuse?
    How did you feel about this?
    Notice any change in their Behaviour?

REACTION TO ABUSE:

Silence Why?
Your reactions to the abuse:
    Emotional / physical
Ways tried to stop attacks or abuse:
    Physical / Verbal / Emotional
How successful were the attempts?
Did feelings change over time:
    About the abuse
    About self
    About partner
Children's reactions?
Whom did you tell about the abuse?
Reactions of friends and family?
People contacted for help
Service agencies contacted:
    Responses of

LEAVING:

Why did you decide to leave?
    Change in feelings
    Still love your partner
    Specific event or circumstance
    Sudden or planned for
Who contacted for help in leaving?
    Family / Friends / Agencies
What kind of help asked for?
What responses were most helpful?
Were you aware of your options?
Ever return to partner after leaving?
    Why?
Fear of reprisals?
    From abuser / Family / Friends

SHELTER:

Use of shelter services before:
Why / When?
How did you find out about the shelter?
Through other women
Other community services
Written information
Availability of shelter: did it effect your decision to stay / leave? How?
Do you feel safe?
What services have been most helpful?
Emergency accommodation
Counselling
Group discussions
Educational programmes:
Assertiveness training
Parenting skill
Problem solving skills
Job / computer skills
Arts / crafts
Life skills
Job search / CV writing
Legal assistance
Medical referrals
Financial aid
Information: social assistance
Women's rights
Resources
Child care
Help with paper work involved
What services not available would you like to have?
What information was most useful?
What services / information gave you the feeling that you could regain your independence / control over your life?
Do you feel free to talk about your abusive relationship in the shelter?
Does the presence of other women with same experiences help?
Having difficulty: With lack of privacy?
With shelter rules?
With sharing facilities?
With other's lifestyles / cultural behaviours?
Some describe sheltering as exchanging one prison for another – is this so for you?
How is conflict resolved in shelter?
Effective / not?
Is there too much anti-male prejudice?
Is the shelter a culture relevant environment for your needs?
Language/food/religion
Is your privacy and confidentiality maintained?

CULTURAL BELIEFS:

Role of women
Role of men
How are these beliefs formed in your culture?
Do role definition contribute to violence in the family?
Are marriage bonds sacred, not to be broken? Under what conditions can be broken?
Must you always listen to, obey your partner?
Is marriage important to you?
Is loyalty to family/ husband important?
How are decisions made in your home?
Does your community practice non-interference in relations between husband and wife?
Do you share household chores/ child care?
Religion: healing – source of support / guilt / defines your role as mother / wife? Enforce marital controls?
Are culture values changing? How?

Do you see yourself as 'battered'?
Do you see yourself as a survivor / victim / neither?
What are your hopes, desires, ambitions for the future?

INFORMATION LETTER

DEAR MADAM,

As a Research Masters student in the Centre for Psychology of the University of the Witwatersrand, I am requesting your voluntary participation in a research study into the effects of domestic violence and the use of shelter services. The focus of research has changed in the last ten years to move away from large statistical surveys to acknowledge the specific individual experience and expertise of women's real-life descriptions of living with violence. The intention of the research is first to understand what factors influence a woman's decision to leave her abusive partner and to seek assistance through a shelter, and secondly, to understand her experience in the shelter. Therefore, I have undertaken to examine four women's histories. The staff at the shelter have suggested that you may be interested in participating in the study. To achieve this goal, your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

The research will be conducted through interviews, which should require approximately two hours of your time. A short questionnaire will be left with you to complete one week after the interview. An envelope is provided for the questionnaire, which can be sealed, and will be collected by the researcher. The interview will be conducted in privacy in the shelter, and recorded for later transcription. A topic guide will be presented for your approval and consent. This guide is composed of the six different areas and related questions concerning domestic violence, which the researcher wishes to explore with you. Confidentiality will be ensured through the use of fictitious names. Only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to the interview tapes and transcriptions. You have the right to withdraw at any time from the interview process, and to withdraw your permission to use the information obtained. The shelter staff will provide counseling if you require assistance. All information obtained will be treated in strict confidence.

Sincerely,

Ruth Wright

Supervisor: Professor Charles Potter

TOPIC GUIDE FOR INTERVIEW WITH THE SHELTER MANAGER:

HISTORY OF THE SHELTER:
When established ---- why this particular location

ADMISSION CRITERIA:
Where do the referrals come from: social services, police, churches
No emergency cases? / Pre-shelter interview
Abuse within intimate relationships (husband / partner)
? lesbian relationships / ? abuse from in-laws / father / son / uncles / others
Any restriction on women with: serious mental / psychological illness suicidal behaviour / alcohol or drug dependencies / HIV / AIDS / Male children over 12 / 13 years

INTAKE PROCEDURES: Interview / History and present situation

COST: None? / if cost ? amount

CAPACITY: # of women and children / shared rooms

STAFF: Number / Hours worked / Volunteers / Role of shelter manager / Role of other staff members / training / How do staff communicate between shifts?

ACCOUNTABILITY: To government agencies / To shelter organization / To funding agencies

FUNDING: Rely on: fund-raising initiative / private donations / churches / international donor agencies / corporate sector / government funding (national or local)

HOUSE RULES: CONDITIONS OF COMMUNIAL LIVING
Household chores / Arrangements of childcare / No visitors / Attendance of house Meetings / Sign-out arrangements (curfew rules) / Must become involved in shelter life / Keeping location confidentiality / ? # days without contacting outsiders when first arrived / No consumption of drugs or alcohol on shelter premises / Women organize or run the household daily activities on their own or do the staff / do control the running of the house?

SAFETY / SECURITY ISSUES: Strict policies of confidentiality or is the location of the shelter public knowledge / Problems with violent partners seeking out clients / Supervised visits with family members allowed? / Established good relations with police – speedy assistance if necessary / Security company?

LENGTH OF STAY: Six months with reviews / extensions on individual basis
Why was this time period chosen?

SERVICES / PROGRAMMES: individual & group counseling (intervention / supportive, decision -making, assertive training, focusing on why in shelter)play therapy for children / life skills (managing finances, budgeting, parenting skills) / employment assistance (job skills, CV preparation, training, educational info) / housing assistance / medical assistance / welfare support / legal advice and referrals / mediation with abusers (fathers) / learning about informed choices and options available

RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE SHELTER:

Positive / non-abusive interaction with others / Overcoming isolation associated with abusive Relationships / Problems with: race / lifestyle / class / religion / ethnicity / sharing / respecting personal boundaries / Conflict: how is it dealt with (ie discussed at weekly house meetings / workshops) / Power dynamics (between the women, enforcing house rules, staff and clients)

ON LEAVING THE SHELTER: Assistance on finding housing & employment / How many return to their abusive partners? Why? / How many return to the shelter?

PHILOSOHICAL ISSUES FOR PARENT ORGANIZATION:

1. **DEFINING:** 'ABUSED WOMAN' / VIOLENCE / SURVIOR / VICTIM

2. **SHELTERS FOR SOUTH AFRICA:** Need for and application in a traditional, non-western cultural setting / Its function for women / Its role in society / Support – how is it defined in the shelter & what kinds of activities enable it

3. **EMPOWERMENT**

How understood within the organization? / How applied in context of this shelter?
How is the balance between doing too much for the woman and encouraging her to make her own decisions, maintained?
Longer stay (6 months) how does it fit into the empowerment process (positively or negatively)

.

4. **SOCIAL CHANGE:** Does the shelter have a role in social change, how?

How do you measure your success?

CONSENT FORM:

I agree to participate in the study conducted by Mrs. Ruth Wright, Research Masters student of the Centre for Psychology, University of the Witwatersrand. I have read the topic guide and agree to its contents. I am aware that the interviews will be recorded for later transcription for use in research analysis and a thesis.

SIGNATURE:_____

DATE:_____

CONSENT FORM:

I agree to participate in the study conducted by Mrs. Ruth Wright, Research Masters student of the Centre for Psychology, University of the Witwatersrand. I agree to the tape recording procedure for the interviews, and to its later transcription for use in research analysis and a thesis.

SIGNATURE:_____

DATE:_____

APPENDIX II

1. Flow chart
2. Profiles of the women interviewed
3. Coding sheets for the different kinds of abuse experienced by the women (a, b, c, & d)
4. Summary table of possible causes of abusive relationships found in the interview data
5. Summary table of the different responses to the abuse as identified in the interview data
6. Summary table of social construct of domestic violence and abused women as identified in the interview data

INTER-RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEMES

APPENDIX II - 1

WOMAN

PERSONAL HISTORY

- Age
- Employment Status
- Ethnicity
- Education
- Number of Children
- Relationship Status
- Age first met partner
- Type of housing
- Employment status of partner

CULTURAL BELIEFS

- Role of Man / Woman
- of Marriage
- of Violence
- Religion
- Values
- Social construction of domestic violence

HOW IDENTIFIES SELF

- as Batter Wife
- as Victim
- as Survivor
- Future Plans

EXPERIENCE WITH ABUSE

- as a Child / Young Adult
- Physical Abuse
- Economic Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- First attack in present relationship
- Frequency
- Severity
- Children witnessed

Theoretical Models of Domestic Violence

- Psychiatric
- Social-Psychological
- Socio-Cultural

INFORMS CHOICES AVAILABLE

HOW SHE RESPONDS TO THE ABUSE

- Stage 1 (Lempert)
- Stage 2
- Stage 3
- Traditional African Responses (Green)

RESPONSE OF INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- Family / Friends
- Police / Legal Assistance
- Shelter Accommodation
- Housing
- Employment Assistance
- Financial Aid
- Crisis Line
- Community Women's / Support Groups
- Government Social Services
- Hospital Emergency Units / Family Clinics / Physicians / Child Protection Agencies
- Counselling (Social Worker / Psychologist / Psychiatrist / Religious Leader)



INFORMS CHOICES AVAILABLE





STAYING / LEAVING DECISIONS

- If left and returned on previous occasions
- Attempts to negotiate non-violent relationship
- Why at this time
- Fear of reprisals
- Economic factors
- What theory appropriate
- 'Paradigmatic shift' (Turning Point)



SHELTER OPTION

- Awareness of this option
- What route was taken to arrive at
- The use of shelters on previous occasions
- Why now?



INFORMS ABILITY TO EMPOWER SELF







THROUGH CULTURAL OR CIRCUMSTANCES

- Support of family and friends
- Support of community
- Finding employment
- Cultural solutions
- Involved in social change

THROUGH USE OF SHELTER STAY

- Escaping violent / abuse
- Improvement of self-esteem / self-confidence
- Increased level of coping strategies / problem solving skills
- Increased social network
- Access to social resources (Community Resources)
- Increased awareness of rights and options (Feminism)

THROUGH THE NARRATIVE PROCESS

- Sharing story with others
- Retelling of story
- Reshaping of story
- Acknowledging / identifying the abuse as abuse to self by being able to verbalize to others.

PROFILES OF THE WOMEN INTERVIEWED:

Each of the profiles was organized to assemble information in seven categories. Each category was subdivided for the purpose of coding specific information found in the interview data:

1. **Presentation:** physical appearance, attitude, and behaviour during interview;

2. **Biographical information:** age, childhood and family history, education, employment history, ethnicity, relationship status, number of years in the relationship, number of children, living arrangements prior to the shelter, presence and/or involvement of extended family, how identifies self, hopes for the future, and important live changing events;

3. **Cultural beliefs:** roles of men and women, beliefs about marriage, love and family, and the importance of religion;

4. **Abuse experienced:** first experience with abuse in the relationship, the patterns of the abuse, and children's involvement. In order to operationalize the types of abuse, a number of sources were utilized to develop itemized tables describing the kinds of abusive acts found in past research (Shepard and Campbell, 1992; Sorenson, 1996; Farmer and Tiefenthaler, 1997; Kirkwood, 1997; Hamby and Sugarman, 1999; and Rasool et al., 2000). Appendix II contains the resulting tables for physical, economic, sexual, and psychological/emotional abuse as reported for each of the women. However, psychological/emotional abuse was found to be difficult to categorize since it emerged in the data as falling into clusters of the following headings: humiliation, criticized, and rebuffed as a person and woman; made feel guilty and/or responsible; campaigns of psychological abuse aimed at intimidation and fear; tactics of domination; maneuvers designed to appeal to her love and concern; and alternating periods of love, respect, and caring with severe physical abuse;

5. **Responses to the abuse:** identify what stage at (Lempert), if used traditional African responses (Green), and who was told about the abuse;

6. **Staying/leaving decisions:** other occasions in which left, reasons for leaving and then returning, why and how left in present situation, planned or sudden spontaneous leaving, identify if events constitute escaping the violence or a ploy to change partner's behaviour, who sought assistance from, awareness of different options available and if fears of reprisals an issue;

7. **Empowerment and/or agency:** possible obstacles and/or positive influences identified in above information and in the sheltering experience, and identifying where women were in Kirkwood's stages of empowerment/agency for abused women.

AMY:

1. Presentation:

Amy presented as beautiful, professional dressed, but fragile young black woman who has experienced a tremendous abusive life in a short few years. However, there appeared to be a strength to survive regardless of these experiences but this could be very dependent on how much contact she continued to have with her husband. During the interview Amy spoke in an extremely soft voice, making it very difficult to understand what she said. A number of times it was necessary to ask her to repeat her answer or for the interviewer to repeat what she said for clarification. The seating arrangement was organized so that the tape recorder was near to both the interviewee and the interviewer. Amy would hold herself back from it and gradually move her chair slightly away.

Her observed affect during the interview was extremely flat, her voice was monotone, and her facial expressions immobile even when dealing with her daughter. When talking about the abuse experienced at the hands of her partner, there was an almost inappropriate dissociation from the experience. It was difficult in the short interview to make an assessment if the behaviour was due to retelling her story too many times or a generalized psychomotor retardation due to severe depression, which was reinforced in the observed flat affect. Amy told the interviewer that she had tried to commit suicide on a pervious occasion. The only time during the interview in which limited enthusiasm was observed was in relation to being a 'good saleswoman', and in discussing her future plans in which she hoped in continuing her education and securing professional employment in communications or commerce.

2. Biographical information:

Amy was a twenty-year-old woman who was employed at Steers as a cashier. Her cultural ethnic background was English Zimbabwean. She had two children, her daughter of two and half years was with her in the shelter while her son of six years had been living with his paternal grandparents in Zimbabwe for a number of years. Her daughter was with her during the interview. Amy has an uncle living in South Africa, although the rest of her family members were in Zimbabwe and England. Her father was a businessman and her mother a qualified nurse. Amy's father stressed education during her growing up years at home. She states that her sisters

are all well educated but she as the last one did not finish school. At the end of the interview when the tape recorder was turned off, Amy became more animated in discussing her plans to continue her education. Having missed out on her education, it now seemed to be a focus point for her life. As a young girl she stated she had wanted to study to be a nurse, now she would like to go into communications or commerce. Amy planed to work towards getting her matric through correspondence courses. Although Amy wss proud of the fact that she was a good saleswoman, and always able to find employment, she was limited to working in fast-food restaurants as a cashier and wants a better career.

Amy's life appeared to undergo some very dramatic changes around her fourteenth year. Her parents were divorced and she was living with her mother who she reported was verbally abusive towards her, and her sisters. She met her present partner and in order to escape her mother she married him. They had a traditional marriage through her partner's African Shona culture. In the next year Amy gave birth to her son, and she and her husband migrated to South Africa in 1999. Amy states that her partner's parents objected to the marriage. She felt they did not like her. Amy did not expand on how her parents felt. Since coming to South Africa her husband had not found employment, and he spends his time drinking with his friends and spending money. They had been living in a rented flat at the time that Amy was forced out by her husband. She states that they are now separated. Amy does not see herself as battered or a victim. However, she does see herself: 'as survivor, yes sometimes'. This statement is a strong indication of Amy's state of mind at the time of the interview and how she defines her situation. When asked what her hopes and ambitions for the future were, Amy stated she wanted to be married. After a long pause, she talked about her ambitions to complete her education.

3. Cultural beliefs:

When discussing her views on cultural beliefs, Amy indicated that her husband and she have two very different beliefs systems and upbringings. In her cultural system, women were independent and educated to have a life of their own within the marriage. When asked if her independent ways contributed to the violence, she answered 'no, because I believe in marriage'. Amy stated that in her family, her father never hit or shouted at her mother or his children. However, her husband's culture was very different. The wife was to stay at home, to be a servant, and wait for

her husband's return. She must look after her husband's needs and was responsible for the children and their home. Amy stated she could not question or disobey him:

> 'I didn't have the right to say no to him. I wasn't allowed to talk back. He told me do this, do that, I must do. He made all decisions, I must shut up.

To show disapproval for his drinking would cause a beating:

> 'When we moved here to South Africa, he had to make up friends and he was drinking too much. He was not speaking at all. So I asked him "where were you?" He would say to me "a woman doesn't ask a man where he was'.

Amy stated that in her husband's culture they believed in beating women to discipline them: 'normally you do not sit and talk about it'. Although Amy still believed in marriage, she stated that she was unable to try again with this person. Amy stated that religion was important to her and she saw herself as a religious person. She found religion to be a source of healing and support, and as defining her role as a mother and wife. From what Amy stated it appeared she tried to fulfill these roles according to her religious beliefs and those demanded by her husband. However, she could not accept the way he treated her.

4. Abuse experienced:

Although Amy focuses on the severe physical abuse she had experienced in her relationship with her husband, she had also been exposed to the other three types of abuse in varying degrees of severity, leaving her very despondent and depressed. Amy's past experience with abusive behaviour by her mother, her youth, and the isolation of her marriage had left her very vulnerable to the abuse.

Physical Abuse:

Amy first experience with her husband's violence was when he physically beat her three weeks after the birth of her first child when she refused to have sexual intercourse with him. Amy stated that 'he was always fighting'. He would beat her whenever he felt it necessary, defending his actions as traditionally based. He would stab her with scissors, knives, forks, or broken bottles. He would also punch her, push or shove her against walls or furniture, slap her, yank her clothes,

pull her hair, or knock her to the floor. Amy's husband did not strategically place his punches or stab wounds to hide the evidence of the physical abuse:

> 'No, he thought me to be beautiful so he was always punching me in the face so I would not be beautiful'.

Amy sustained broken ribs, concussions, cuts, bruises, internal bleeding, and hearing loose in one ear as a result of the physical abuse. The most severe consequence of the violence was her husband stabbing her in the back during her pregnancy with her daughter. She was hospitalized in a coma for three months, and her husband was charged and sent to jail. Amy reported that her husband has not directly harmed the children, but was violent towards her during her pregnancy and in her daughter's presence.

Economic Abuse:

Amy's husband had difficulty finding employment since coming to South Africa. He spent his time with his friends, and drinking. Amy was forced to become the sole earner for the family. She stated that he misused the family income on his drinking, and any questioning by her about what he spent the money on resulted in him beating her. Amy's husband would take the money he wanted from her, and he controlled how she spent the money she earned, often not leaving enough to feed, cloth, or for household expenses. Her employment was at risk because of the beatings, causing hospitalization and the need to change jobs. He used the threat of eviction from their flat to intimidate her even though Amy earned the money to pay the rent. He eventually did evict her and her daughter resulting in their admission to the shelter. Although she thinks he was unaware of the location of the shelter, he continues his vigilance on her work place.

Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse for Amy consisted of forced sexual intercourse, and unwanted touching and kissing. He expressed dissatisfaction with their sexual relationship as her failure by insulting and degrading her. He also forced her to perform sexual acts seen on videos. Amy's husband was engaged in sexual relationships with other women, and he did use condoms when having sexual intercourse with her. The reason he forced her and her daughter from their flat was because he had got another woman pregnant and moved her into their home. Amy reported that she felt her

daughter witnessed her father having sex with another woman because of her daughter's behaviour: 'acting in a sexual manner'.

Psychological Abuse:

Amy's experience with emotional, psychological, and verbal abuse had constituted a large part of the abuse she endured during her relationship with her husband. He essentially attacked her very core of existence through his constant humiliation and rebuffs of her as a person. Amy was made to feel guilty, that events were her fault, and she was reprimanded and scolded like a child both privately and in public. Amy's husband criticized belittled, insulted, humiliated, ridiculed, and made fun of her in crucial self-defining areas. He attacked her in such domains as her approach to child rearing and mothering skills, her looks and appearance, in her role as his wife, her housekeeping skills, her education, knowledge, and employment skills, and her family and friends. Calling her names such as worthless, lazy, stupid, and crazy emphasized his judgment of who she was. He accused her of paying more attention to and doing more for others than for him. Amy's husband reinforced his campaign of psychological abuse through intimidation, humiliation, and threats to her life. He threatened to harm, kill, and/or take her children away. He locked her out of her home, and he threatened to destroy her belongings.

Amy's husband used tactics of domination defined by him as traditional practices by acting as 'master of the castle', defining their roles within the marriage, making all the big decisions without consulting her, and treating her as a servant. Although he did not restrict her activities, Amy's husband did keep a very tight restraint on her activities through investigating, interrogating, and following her. He continues to make sure Amy feels his presence in her life by coming to her work place and waiting for her outside. He also used other maneuvers designed to appeal to and manipulate her love for him such as threatening to commit suicide, sulking and refusing to talk, giving false hope of change, showing false remorse of his actions, using jealousy to justify his actions, and promising to stop the abuse.

However, Amy stated that her husband never tried shifting the blame for the abuse on to her, nor did he try to make light of the abuse or deny it happening. Amy reported that their relationship never comprised of periods of loving, respect, caring, and thoughtfulness by her husband only abusive. From Amy's description of her and her husband's attitude, both justify the interpersonal

and intimate elements of their marriage as decreed by his traditional practices and beliefs. Simply it was not identified or considered as abuse. Amy was very young when she married her

husband, and he used his traditional beliefs and practices to control her without the traditional recourse to enforce modifying his behaviour.

5. Response to the abuse:

Amy stated that she would try to stop his attacks by doing what he asked of her, trying to reason with him, and by not questioning his behaviour. She did not attempt to fight back physically but was paralyzed by fear. However, she felt very emotional and internalized her feeling: 'I was feeling angry, felt useless and hateful'. She stated: 'I don't care anymore, felt like killing myself. I tried.' Amy stated that when the abuse started her feelings changed towards her husband: 'when he started slapping me around, the love stopped'.

6. Staying/leaving decisions:

Amy describes two different occasions in which she had left her husband but had been forced to return. On the first occasion, her employer was made aware that Amy's husband was severely beating her through the bruising on her face. Amy's employer helped arrange a place for her to live, and assisted her in obtaining the necessary living items such as bedding and cooking utensils. On the second occasion Amy's husband had stabbed her in the back. She was hospitalized and remained in a coma for three months. On discharge her uncle helped her find another place to live and she found another job. Her husband was in jail during this time for stabbing her. However, on both occasions her husband was able to find where Amy worked, and used threats of killing her and her daughter to force her to once again take him in. Her husband's family was also involved in coercing Amy to remain with her husband, and they are actively involved in the situation since Amy visits her son monthly in Zimbabwe.

For the next two years they have continued to live together, until Amy took refuge in the shelter. Amy stated that the abuse had escalated during this time. Amy's husband had been sexually active outside the marriage. He evicted Amy and their daughter form the flat in the late evening to install his pregnant girlfriend. Amy and her daughter were forced to spend the night at the police station. The next morning Amy sought the assistance of the person in-charge of her daughter's crèche, who brought them to the shelter. This time Amy does not plan to return to her

husband. Through the help of the shelter staff she planed to continue with her education by correspondence courses, and in order to give herself more time she planed to take her daughter to

her husband's parents to join her brother. However, her husband continued to harass her at her place of employment. Amy feels he does not know where she is staying, but once she is out of the shelter, he could as in the past assert his demands on her.

7. Empowerment/Agency:

On previous attempts to leave her husband, Amy received the assistance of family, friends, and employer. Amy's decisions appeared to be of a more passive nature, relying on others or events to take the initiative for leaving. Leaving for Amy was not a ploy to force her husband to change his behaviour towards her since they both believed in his rights to treat her in such a manner. Amy stated that she was not aware of the different social services available to assist her in plight. However, indirectly she used hospital and police services but from what she reported not to stop the abuse, only to deal with the consequences of the abuse.

Amy was the only woman of the four interviewed with a job, and she had been able to find alternative accommodation on leaving the shelter. In the previous leaving actions, Amy had been able to access the resources and activate problem-solving skills to tend to her immediate survival needs. However, her behavioural actions geared towards taking control of the outcome had been always influenced and sabotaged by her husband.

For Amy this was the first time she has used the facilities of a shelter, having depended on her uncle and co-workers on other occasions. This time Amy had been given an opportunity to take control, and access resource and knowledge not previously available to her. Therefore, she has the tentative ability to influence decisions, which concern her life. Through the sheltering experience, she had contact with other women who are living with abuse, and the knowledge of a place to go for help, hopefully decreasing her isolation in times of need. She participated in counselling techniques, which enabled behavioural changes, allowing her ability to decide for herself to accept or not the demands and 'cultural' abuse inflicted on her by her husband, and her right to say 'no'.

However, Amy's severe depression and passiveness impacts on her perceptions of her ability to control and motivate change. Continued involvement of the shelter staff or another social service will be required. How she avails herself of these facilities will depend on a number of already

existing factors in her life. Her husband continued to make demands on her, through his persistent vigilance of her workplace, making sure he still features in her life even though he was living with another woman. She planed to take her daughter to Zimbabwe, so that she will be free to continue her education with plans to establish herself in a new career path. Although this will relief her of the necessary involvement in the day-to-day care of her children, it will perhaps also eliminate one of her reasons to keep going each day. She was motivated by the high value placed on education by her family, and she wants to regain what she missed by taking up with this man at such a young age.

What self-confidence Amy still maintains was centered in her self-efficacy and competence at finding and keeping employment, an area, which needs continued building and reinforcing during counselling. Amy had attempted suicide in the past; this, coupled with her depression and the failure or success of the above factors, will feature greatly in her ability to take and maintain control over her life. She stated that she found the counselling very useful and planed to continue with it once she leaves the shelter.

Amy has the ability to become a community resource person rather than an active social change agent at this time in her life. Through her experience at the shelter Amy would be able to pass on information regarding women's rights, furthering one's education, and the access to shelters. However, Amy was just learning about herself as a person, and her capabilities. Her confidence level in being able to voice her feelings and opinions was still very tentative and hesitant. Her involvement in this abusive relationship at such a young age denied and numbed Amy's opportunity to develop and mature over the last six years in the normal stages of development.

Using Kirkwood's (1997) stages towards empowerment and agency, Amy can be assessed in the following way: Amy had spent six years attempting to cope with increasing and severe abusive by her husband, and she acknowledged the effects of the abuse on herself and her daughter, but movement into survival mode was effected by her continued depression, passivity, and

hopelessness. Amy had acquired the practical resources of housing, financial independence, and medical assistance. Yet maintaining physical and emotional safety once she leaves the shelter ws questionable.

BETH:

1. Presentation:

Beth presented herself initially as an organized motherly figure, very friendly, smiling, and confident as she met the interviewer at the gate. She indicated where the car should be parked; she unlocked the office; and specified how we would proceed with interviews. She made sure the women came in turn for their interviews, and locked the office when we were finished. Beth was a very keen participant in the research. She was very attentive to what the interviewer was asking, sitting forward in her chair and concentrating.

Beth stated at the beginning of her interview that her grasp of the English language was limited. It proved impossible to get background information on Beth's early years of life, and her parents. Beth appeared not to understand the necessity of such a direction in the questions, and wanted to concentrate on the here-and-now aspect of her life. She indicated that she had not experienced abuse at any time in her life as she had experienced with her husband. Her answers were vague and short. Questions of her earlier years brought answers concerning her relationship with her husband. Even with rephrasing the questions, it appeared that Beth and the interviewer were at cross-purposes, confusing each other, and her frustration was evident so they were abandoned. However, for most of the interview and the questions she understood, Beth was very cooperative and at time very excited in her answers. Her voice often took on a sing-song quality as if reciting her story.

However, Beth presented a number of contradictions in her behaviour during the interview. The first contradiction was in her confident, cheerful, motherly control over the management of the interviewing procedure, which contrasted to her anxiety during the interview over finding employment and a place to live, and asking whoever was available for help.

The second contradiction was in identifying herself as 'her own woman' and not having to obey her husband but at the same time stating that she never talked about, resisted the beatings or demanded that her husband use a condom. Nor did she seek help from the police, 'only cried'. This was emphasized by her complete financial dependency on her husband.

The third contradiction, presents Beth through her own empowerment as a possible social change agent in her community. During her stay in the shelter, Beth participated in an AID's care course, which she enjoyed. These skills would enable her to dispute the misinformation surrounding AID and HIV in her community, and possibly leading to obtaining employment.

2. Biographical information:

Beth was forty-two year old Zulu mother of six children, three boys and three girls. The three younger children were with her in the shelter, and the three older ones were in a children's home. The children's ages range from twenty-four to seven. Her last child, a boy, was the only child of this present marriage. At the end of the interviews, when locking up the office Beth introduced the children with her as 'these are my children', and she was obviously very proud of them. This was evident in her attention to them and her apparent delight in introducing them as her children.

Beth was educated to grade nine, and did not have further training. Since her marriage eight years ago she had not been employed. When asked if she had been employed her answer was: 'I am working for piece job. I think only, yea, domestic worker'. Beth was very vague about what kinds of work she had done.

Her husband had family living near them, which she felt he utilized in recourse against her. Beth appeared to have lost contact with her extended family. She was again vague but stated that her parents were dead, and her sisters were not in this city. However, it was difficult to decipher what exactly 'sisters' met to her (siblings or female friends).

> 'yes, no one to help, because my parents is gone. I am one. Sisters can't help me. If my family in (*name of city*). No family in (*name of city*).'

Beth was married to her husband for eight years. Since coming to the shelter she stated that they are separated and she was consulting the shelter's lawyer for a divorce. They owned their home, and Beth hoped to get enough out of the divorce settlement and the sale of the house to be able to establish another home for her and her children.

3. Cultural beliefs:

Beth defined her role as a woman in her culture to be 'I feel right to be my woman', for her children as their mother. She stated that in her culture she was not expected to obey her husband at all times. The role of her husband was to work and 'build my house', which Beth stated he had not been doing for a long time. Along with the increasing and severity of the physical abuse, her husband was not financially supporting the family. Beth was very adamant that although marriage was good, it was not right for her now, and definitely not with 'this man' or any other man:

> 'Ah, marriage is not right for me now. I not like it. It is a good thing (shaking her head, looking very worried). No, another man, No, No, No, No (very loud and firmly).'

For Beth religion was important. She found support and healing within its teachings. It defined for her how to perform her role as a mother. Beth saw herself as a 'batter wife' and as both a victim and survivor. Beth's hopes, desires, and ambitions for the future were to leave the shelter, find work, and 'build my house' for her children and herself. She stated that to have a job for her was important in her life, and that she liked to be busy working in her own home. She expressed fears of loosing the children through the legal court procedures to her husband, but also reassured herself in stating that because the children are young this should not happen and that the children wanted to remain with her. She expressed acute anxiety with her desire to find a job and a house, and her inability to do so.

4. Abuse experienced:

Beth main concern when talking about her experiences was the severe physical abuse she and her children had experienced. However, from what she reported she also experienced other forms of abuse to differing degrees of severity and frequency.

Physical abuse:

Beth stated that her husband did not start beating her until four years into their marriage, causing some confusion in her story. She stated that her husband beat her and kicked her legs while she was pregnant, which would have been shortly after their marriage. She did not report a miscarriage, thus questioning the possibility of a subsequent pregnancy. However, she stated that

he was jealous of the attention she gave to the children, and that he was very demanding sexually. He would become violent when she refused to have sexual intercourse or appeared not to enjoy it by crying and avoiding him. Beth stated that her husband was constantly fighting with her:

> 'Yes, fight, fight, every time fight. Go out and beat me. And go at me every time want to fight me'.

Beth's husband used less serious forms of physical abuse such as kicking, pulling on her clothes and hair, push her against the walls and furniture, and arm twisting to more serious punching, strangling, beating, and burning her. However, he was extremely violent with the use of an axe on her and the children. Beth pointed out a number of places on her body where she had stitches resulting from the injuries her husband inflicted on her by attacking her with an axe. She pointed to her head where she had twelve stitches and to her buttock where she had eight stitches and to scars on her arms. She also complained of bruising, soreness, sprains, and internal bleeding as a result of the beatings. Beth's husband beat the children, and forced them out of the house when he was beating her or forcing her to have sex.

Economic abuse:

Beth was not employed during her marriage, and was dependent on her husband for financial support. Her husband had permanent employment with the city water company. However, Beth complained that he did not give her money, and she did not know 'where he puts money'. At the end of each month he refused to give her money, and told her that there was no money for her. She agonized over the situation:

> 'I suffer in my house, and in my house, I suffer. And he beat me. Suffer, wicked man, no money. When he does not pay me, you suffer without the money. Now, I don't know where I going when I finish this shelter. Where I am going, no money. Shish, I suffer'.

Sexual abuse:

Sexual abuse for Beth was the very violently, forced sexual intercourse. Although her husband had sexual relationships with other women, he refused to use a condom with Beth. He did not like using condoms, and would not discuss the matter with Beth. She was fearful of him, and therefore, was unable to insist that condoms be used because if she refused to have sexual intercourse with him or if he was not satisfied he would severely beat her.

Psychological abuse:

When discussing emotion, psychological, and verbal abuse, it again was difficult to get her to understand the questions. Questions had to be rephrased. Beth was belittled, criticized, and made to feel guilty for her failure as a mother, wife, and housekeeper. Her looks, appearance, and abilities were insulted and she was humiliated. Her husband was very critical of the attention she paid to others, which he felt was at his expense. Her husband would tell her she was stupid, crazy, and always wrong:

> 'He tell me wrong very time. It's me, I am wrong. When I am talking, me I am wrong'.

Beth's husband did not prevent her from talking to other, going places, or doing any activities nor did he lock her in or out of the house. However, he made sure he knew what was going on with his family, and did follow her at times. He used control and intimidation tactics such as threatening to harm or kill her and her children. Beth's husband used tactics of domination by being the 'master of the castle' in his home, he made all the big decisions without consulting her, and her treated her as a servant.

Beth's husband employed maneuvers designed to appeal and manipulate her love for him by promising never to beat her again. Beth left him once before to stay with a friend. He came for her and apologized, showing remorse for his actions, so she returned. He utilized behaviours such as refusing to talk and sulking to gain her attention. They experienced alternating periods of love and caring with severe physical abuse in their marriage. He had never tried to shift the responsibility for the abuse to her, but he had made light of it.

Beth stated that he behaves violently towards her, causing scares because: 'so jealous, that's why he make me like this'. Beth never once referred to her husband by name, only as 'this man'. Beth stated that he had not attempted to make contact with her this time.

5. Response to the abuse:

Beth stated that she cried, and 'I suffer'. She tried to talk to him but could not. Beth reported being afraid and very worried. The idea of yelling or hitting back appeared to shock her. This

information was related to the researcher in a sad voice and a dejected despondent look. Beth reported trying to do as he asked of her. However, she reported that it was difficult to enjoy having sexual intercourse when she was terrified for her safety and life. Beth stated that her feelings towards her husband have changed:

> 'Me, yes, I loved him but I loved. No, not now, not now. I finished to love him'.

Beth was very determined not to return to her husband and her children also do not want to go back.

6. Staying/leaving decisions:

In the eight years that Beth had been married, she had left her husband on one other occasion because of the physical abuse. On this occasion she did not use the services of a shelter but went to stay with friends and relatives. Her decision was not planned but an immediate response to the abuse, which appeared to be a 'time-out' strategy to distance herself from the beatings. Her husband came to fetch her. He apologized for his behaviour so she returned to their home.

With the present situation, Beth had been experiencing progressively more severe and frequent beatings. Beth reports the last beating as too much:

> 'I leave with friends. I am going but I am tied. I am crying, full of blood. I am going.
> Don't know where I am going'.

Due the numerous injuries resulting from the physical abuse, Beth and her children were clients of the Baragwanath Hospital, and therefore, Beth was attending counselling with a social worker. When she left her husband this time with her friend, her friend suggested that she seek help from the social worker she saw at the hospital. Beth stated that she asked for help from her relatives (husband's?) and neighbours but no one would help her. The social worker arranged an emergency admission to the shelter for Beth and her children.

There appeared to be elements of both escape and a ploy for change in her husband's behaviour in the present leaving. By involving people outside the relationship such as friends, relative, and neighbours, Beth is acknowledging and exposing the violence, which may force a change of

behaviour in her husband. Yet, at the same time by leaving, seeking the help of a social worker, and staying in the shelter she was both demonstrating her dislike for his behaviour and was also escaping the violence. Nevertheless, as already reported Beth stated that she will no longer tolerated the beatings, no longer loves this man, and did not want to return to her home with him there. She does not fear reprisals but was concerned about the custody of her children and getting a fair settlement through the divorce procedures she was instigating.

Beth was seeing a social worker but did not appear to be aware of the services available for her and her children. The police were not involved even with seriousness of the abuse and the use of an axe resulting in numerous injuries for Beth and her children. Beth had never used the facilities of a shelter before, depending on family and friends in previous leaving actions.

7. Empowerment/agency:

With admission into the shelter, Beth was given the opportunity to take control, and access resources and knowledge not previously available to her. Therefore, she had the possibility to influence decisions concerning her life. In the shelter she had contact with other women and was able to share her story and experiences decreasing her isolation as a battered woman, and she had knowledge of where to come in times of need. Beth participated in counselling and group activities. However, her ability to control her life and move on will be effected by her extreme anxiety and worry about her family's future. Beth appeared to have the motivation to escape the abuse, and was following up with divorce actions. She was aware of the resources needed to follow through on taking control but appears to be stalled in her ability to access these resources. However, in Beth's situation her limited access and opportunities for financial independence and alternative housing may severely impede her ability to control the outcome.

Beth's past employment were in domestic service and assembly piecework. Her education was to level of grade nine. She had not worked for the last eight years that she had been married. Economic factors, children, and housing problems often cause the woman to remain in an abusive relationship or to return to it on leaving. Beth appeared overwhelmed with the prospect of sorting out her future. Beth fits the profile of the women with limited choices and resources

that find themselves returning to the abusive relationship, mainly for the financial security it represents. However, through this shelter experience, for Beth, the exposure to the possibility of assistance when things were going badly may enable her to take the next steps in either finding ways to stop the abuse and remain with her husband, or to take the final step and leave. Presently the shelter staff do not know what has happened to Beth and her children since she has not made contact since leaving.

Following Kirkwood's steps towards individual empowerment, Beth had moved beyond just attempting to cope with the abuse to acknowledging the negative effects it had on her children and herself. However, Beth does not appear to be able to activate a survival mode for herself, and was rather looking for solutions from other people. Her practical needs for alternative housing and financial independence were significant in her high level of anxiety and worry, and could hinder her ability to move into controlling her life. Physical and emotional safety was sustained within the supportive environment of the shelter but once Beth and her children leave the shelter they are once again vulnerable.

Beth would be a good resource and possibly a political person in her community for social change. She gave the impression of a person who enjoys talking to people and taking on a 'helping role'. Beth was comfortable with sharing her experiences and solutions with other women.

Clara:

1. Presentation:

Clara presented as beautiful pregnant black woman dressed in tradition clothes who held herself with dignity, pride in a very erect posture. Initial impression was that this was a very intelligent and streetwise woman. After introductions, she stated that her English was not extensive and that the interview would be difficult because her first language is French. At the beginning of the interview, answers were difficult to obtain and often contained only one word or were very confusing for the interviewer. Yet, once the initial resistance was out of the way, Clara's English improved and there was little difficulty in communicating. She was able to express herself very effectively in English and through her body language.

During the interview, especially at the beginning Clare spoke in a soft, low, hesitant voice alternating with a stronger, more assertive one. Sometimes it appeared she was irritated with the questions and did not want to bother answering, giving exaggerated sights and aggravated dramatic body movements (very French). At one point when asked if she resisted the beatings in any way, she became very impatient. Through her body language, the tone of her voice, and the expression on her face she indicated that she though the question was ridiculous because one does not resist. This only intensifies the beating.

2. Biographical information:

Clara is a 27-year-old woman who was a refugee from the conflict in the Congo. Clara came to South Africa on her own without family. She had been in South Africa for three years, living in the area of the city, which contains a Congo community. The community was centered near a Catholic Church in which cultural concerns of the French speaking Congo people are catered for. She had one son who was almost two-years-old who was with her in the shelter. At the time of the interview, Clara was eight months pregnant with her second child. Her present partner was not the father of her son, but ass the father of the unborn child. They were not married but had been living together for about one year. He was also from the Congo, and had family in the community. However, his family and friends, and her friends objected to the union. This was apparently due to his volatile bad behaviour, which appeared to be very much a community concern, including the Catholic priest. Yet, Clara left the interviewer with the distinct impression that she would return to this man when she had given birth to the child. She appeared very

pleased that he wanted her back, noted through her verbal response and her nonverbal expression of happiness and pleasure on her face, and sitting up straighter with pride.

They lived together in a rented room. He had unsteady employment repairing refrigerators. Clara was also unemployed. However, she had been employed in the Congo before coming to South Africa. At present with another resident of the shelter she was operating a portable telephone stand with small food items for sale. When in her Congo community, she used the services of the church to find employment opportunities, also in the informal sector. The section on questions about her family and education were answer with resistance and were very confusing for the interviewer. This may be due to her refugee status, and reluctance to give out information.

She became impatient and appeared to use language as a way to express her reluctance to answer. This information was therefore, vague and/or nonexistent for certain sections. In the Congo, Clara obtained a 'hostess' diploma through a university communication course. However, what this actually meant was unclear, and any probing resulted curt hostile answers. Questions about her family were ignored. However, she indicated violence and abuse were not part of her life until her relationship with her partner.

3. Cultural beliefs:

Discussion on cultural beliefs and identification of self were at the end of the interview, and Clara by this time appeared to be enjoying the experience of expressing and discussing her opinions. Therefore, the answers were more informative. Clara felt the role of a woman in her culture was to get married, have children, and to take control of the whole house. She stated that her main role was in the care of her children and educating them. Clara expressed her belief in parents teaching their children 'how to live'.

Church was important, along with working together with the husband as partners, and possible employment outside the home. The church was a source of comfort and support for her. In expressing the role of the man, the Clara's gave expresses only the role of a man but her feelings about her present situation. Clara expanded on her beliefs about how a woman and man must

work together in partnership without abuse. These beliefs appeared to have a firm foundation in her Catholic upbringing. Clara stated that a woman must follow, and because she was married to the man she must obey. She continued in a loud and firm voice to explain that this did not mean that he could abuse the woman because there must be respect between the two. He must also obey the woman: 'because you him, you are the same, you see'. The man did not have the right to abuse.

Although they were not married, Clara believed in marriage and loyalty to her partner. When asked how decisions are made between them, she stated that she tells him what she plans, and if he agrees, she does it, but if he does not agree then she will 'do my best to get it'. Clara stated that in her culture in the Congo, when people were married and they had a disagreement they went to their families. The families met and talked about the problems between the couple. Her partner helped with some household chores and with childcare. The members of the Congo community tried to help when he was abusive.

Clara did not see herself as 'a battered woman' but she did see herself as both a victim and survivor. When asked about her hope, desires, and ambitions for the future, Clara wanted to leave South Africa, and go to Belgium. She had a cousin living there, and she wanted to continue her education and have her children educated in a French country. However, in order to accomplish this she had to first earn the money to get her papers and passport.

4. Abuse experienced:

Although Clara did not identify herself as an abused woman, she had from the information given during the interview experienced all the forms of abuse identified as associated with domestic violence in differing degrees of severity and frequency. Her focus was on protecting her unborn child. However, refugee women traveling without the protection of their male relatives were at risk of being forced into prostitution, and being exploited and abused. Survival for her children and herself was Clara's first priority. If this means living with a man who was abusive but whom she felt loved her and the children, than this may be the only option she felt was available to her at this point in time.

Physical abuse:

For Clara the beatings started when she first moved in with her partner. She stated that he was a very jealous man who becomes violent when he felt that he was loosing control over where she was, what she was doing, and to whom she was talking to. He had a reputation as a 'bad man' in the Congo community. He pulled at her clothing and her hair, pushes her to the floor, and slaps her. He punched her in the face and in areas that are covered by clothing. He was very jealous of her beauty and attempted to make her less attractive to other males. He did not harm her son but beat her when her son was present and had continued to beat her while pregnant. Clara had not had serious physical injuries as a consequence of the beating, 'no, only bruises' but she feared for the safety of her unborn child if she remained in the environment.

Economic abuse:

Clara stated she had not been able to work since living with her partner because of his extreme jealousy. She was dependent on him for financial support. She stated that 'the money for himself', and she had to ask others for money, food, and clothing. He prevented her from using the money he earned as she felt necessary for their needs. This was a topic that Clara resisted, giving only one word or very short responses. However, in another section she stated that if he did not agree to her plans, she would do what it took to get her way. He had threatened to evict her from the room they rent when she disobeyed him.

Sexual abuse:

Sexual abuse for Clara was in the form of forced, violent sexual intercourse and unwanted touching and kissing. Her partner sometimes refused to use a condom but Clara had never seen him with another woman since they came together.

Psychological abuse:

In discussing the emotional, psychological, and verbal abuse, Clara continued to be somewhat resistant and gave one-word answers or very short ones. Her partner would sometimes belittle and be critical by degrading, insulting, and making fun of her approach to child rearing and mothering skills, her housekeeping, and her performance of her duties as his partner. He would

also reprimand and belittle her on her dress, appearance, and her education and knowledge. He would swear and call her names, and yell at her.

Clara's partner would also use intimidation, humiliation and threats to control her behaviour. He sometimes threatened her life, to harm her and to destroy her belongings, but he never threaten to harm her son. He sometimes locked her in her home. He tried to limit her movement outside the home, 'all the time', and gave her time limits for the length of time she could be away from the room. He would interrogate her on return to their home:

> 'He doesn't want me to go. You see if he said you must do this, if you go out it is for twenty minutes. If you go more than that he is going to beat you. He is jealous. He beating you because he is jealous'.

Clara's partner used tactics of domination such as maintaining his role as 'the master of the castle', defining their roles within the relationship, treating her as his servant, and making all the major decisions affecting their lives on his own without consulting her. However, Clara resisted by using her own definitions of cultural roles in their home. Although he did not like it, he did not however, try to prevent her from seeing her female friends.

Clara's partner utilized maneuvers designed to appeal to and manipulate her love for him by threatening to commit suicide. Clara describes this behaviour as 'he is just sick'. He would sulk and refuse to talk to gain her attention. He also promised that he would stop the beatings, and give her false hope that he would change. Clara's partner went to counseling at her request. However, he never shifted the responsibility for the abuse to her or made light of it. They experienced alternating periods of loving, caring, and thoughtfulness with episodes of severe physical beatings. Clara's partner excused his behaviour as a result of his jealousy. Clara referred to this extreme 'jealousy' throughout the interview with some pleasure as how he demonstrates his love for her.

5. Responses to the abuse:

Clara attempted to stop the physical abuse by calling out to other people for help, by asking him to forgive her, or by just keeping quiet. She did whatever she felt was necessary at the time to try

to stop his violence towards her. By hitting back Clara stated he would hurt her more, to resist would intensify the beating. Clara stated that the police were called a number of times, but he had never charged. In her attempt to find a solution she had turned to her church to rid their relationship of the ''bad spirit in this house'. Yet, she also told him that she was doing this in attempting to identify the lengths to which she was forced to go since he was not taking responsibility for changing his own behaviour. The leaving strategies were also used to give her time-out space and to show her displeasure in his violent controlling behaviour.

Clara stated that her feelings towards him have changed with the violent behaviour but:

> 'Sometimes I still love him because he has big affection for my son. I feel that love sometimes is love. He loves me. You can feel it'.

Clara expressed her despondency to the situation both verbally and non-verbally. She stated that she had difficulty in understanding her partner's behaviour. However, she felt that he also did not understand her ways: 'so we just stay together'.

6. Staying/leaving decisions:

With Clara the use of leaving and returning actions appeared to be an ongoing strategy in attempting to force a change of behaviour in her partner. Clara's partner attempted to restrict and put time limits on the amount of time she is away from their home. Clara in turn challenged these restrictions by going and coming as she pleases. Clara stated that sometimes she acted accordingly to his wishes while at other times she purposely stayed away, not telling him where she is. She would stay away two or three days, usually after a beating to escape the violence in a time-out ploy. She had at one point used the services of a shelter, not the present one. Clara contributed his extreme jealousy as the motivation for his behaviour. She stated that he had tried counselling, his family and friends had tried talking to him, and the police and church had been involved but nothing has changed. She was unsure if she still loves him, although her feelings for him had shifted some with the continued beatings.

The present situation in leaving, Clara sough assistance because of her fear for the safety of her unborn child. Clara explained that she felt it was no longer safe since she was pregnant, and that she decided to leave. Clara told her problem to the priest in the Jesuit refuge, and he arranged for

her to be interviewed by the shelter organization, leading to her admission in the shelter. She planed to remain in the shelter until the baby is born.

However, Clara had strong view about staying in a shelter. She saw it as not real life, and to be used only when there were no other choices. Her partner wanted her to return to him, and this information was relayed to her through her friends pleased her. There was a strong possibility she would return to the relationship. Although Clara's admission to the shelter was a planned and arranged one, she was both escaping the violence not for herself but for the protection and sake of her unborn child, and to also expressing her dissatisfaction with her partner's violent behaviour. She was essentially saying to him that she must leave him in order to safeguard their child. From what Clara reported she utilizes whatever community resources and services she found appropriated for her needs in attempting to change her partner's violent behaviour and to keep her children and herself safe.

7. Empowerment/agency:

Clara had used a shelter facility once before, and in her leaving actions had gone to friends, her 'Congo sisters', and the church in the past. However, Clara gave the impression that she was fully aware of the resources available to her through a shelter stay and the community, and would use those she felt necessary for her needs. She also indicated that her objectives behind her admission were different from the other women, and that she was in control of her life, doing exactly what was required for her and her children's survival. The safety of the unborn child was important at this time so she removed herself from the dangerous environment.

When living with her partner, she would leave when the beatings occurred, going back on her terms. She was constantly demonstrating and telling her partner she was unhappy with the situation. She tells him: 'there is a bad spirit in this house'. However, at the same time she indicated that she was pleased that he wanted her back again. Until now Clara had tolerated the beatings for herself. Research indicates that with children in the household the abuse increases

both in severity and frequency. Owing to Clara's feeling that she had control of the situation, her desire to return to the Congo community, and her continued feelings for this man, the indications are that she will likely return to the relationship after the birth of the child.

Clara remains at the stage of coping with the abuse. This situation will remain until Clara acknowledges the damaging aspects of the abuse, deciding that the abuse was too much or directly involves her children. In this case the shelter may have represented the first step, giving Clara the knowledge of how to take the next steps either to remove herself and the children or to find ways of getting through to her partner. Clara presented herself during the interview as a very strong and intelligent woman with high level of self-confidence, and problem-solving skills to negotiate and control her life. Clara also gave the impression that she is constantly in survival mode, perhaps stemming from her status as a refugee.

DORA:

1. Presentation:

Dora presented as a reluctant, shy, self-conscious petite young white woman. Evidence of physical abuse was present in two very large faint yellowish coloured bruises: one on the cheekbone on the left side of the face, and one around the right eye. The social worker made the introductions, and encouraged Dora to participate by telling her it would be therapeutic for her to be able to once again retell her story. Initially Dora was resistant and hesitant. However, once the personal history was completed she relaxed somewhat, giving more spontaneous and fuller answers. Yet she held herself very rigidly throughout the interview, and there was little eye contact, she kept her focus on the floor in front of her. There were topics that she through her nonverbal behaviour indicated were one's she would not explore such as her father. There were long pauses before she answered some questions. She often repeated the question in the interviewer's words before continuing in her own words, as if it was a test situation or to give herself time to think about the answer before committing herself on tape.

2. Biographical information:

Dora was a 29 year old married woman. When asked about her ethnicity she stated that she was 'African, a white African'. She speaks Afrikaans and English languages. She had one daughter, four years old, who was living with Dora's mother while Dora was in the shelter. Dora's answer to the question asking if she was employed was to say she was a stay at home mother. Dora went to collage after matric to study business administration, and received her diploma. However, she never worked in the area. She contributed her inability to get a job to affirmative action combined with the difficulty of obtaining employment. Dora received a disability pension because of epilepsy. She stated her epilepsy was controlled but sometimes the stress and physical abuse she experienced in her marriage caused her to have seizures.

Her family members awee located in the city. She had a number of sisters and her mother. However, although she had contact with them, she appeared to have little support for her situation through them. She had not told her sisters that her husband was abusive. She felt that they would not understand since they were married to 'younger' men while she was married to a much older man. Dora's mother refused to get involved when Dora told her about the beatings; again Dora felt it was because her husband was older than her mother. Therefore, Dora justified

her family's inability to interfere or give support in her claims of abuse. Her mother worked in the production department of the local television station. She refused to talk about her father. Her husband's family, she thought lived in Durban but there was very little contact with them.

Dora stated that her mother was verbally and physically abusive towards her when she was living with her" 'she hit me very bad'. Dora explained that her mother was a very 'passionate person', and that she would never come and say she was sorry or discuss the occurrences of abuse. Dora stated that she had to deal with her frustrations and anger regarding her mother's behaviour towards her on her own by writing letters to her friends. She never had the option of talking directly about it to her mother. When Dora was asked if she experienced abusive behaviour while in a dating relationship, she stated no.

Dora was 22 when she married her then 54-year old husband. This was her first serious relationship. They met through the Salvation Army church, which they both attended. They dated for eight months before getting married, and have been married for seven years. They lived in a rented garden cottage. Her mother and the captain of their Salvation Army church were against the relationship and ultimate marriage. The captain told her that her future husband was much older than the ten years he led her to believe and that he was an alcoholic. Her mother felt he was a liar. Dora stated that she did not believe them and had at that time confidence in her husband that he was telling her the truth: 'I believed that he was honest towards me'.

However, Dora had since found out that he was much older with thirty-two years between them and that he had been married three times before, and had four other children. He had started drinking alcohol again, confirming all that was told to her before the marriage. She was very bitter, and felt that he had wasted her life. She was planning to divorce him, and exhibited a tremendous amount of anger in the tone of her voice and in her body posture when talking directly about his behaviour:

> 'He is 61 years old and he actually throw away me life. He never took me out.
> He never treated me like he should treat a woman'.

Dora does not identify herself as 'a battered wife' or a victim. However, she does identify herself as a survivor. Dora expressed her hopes, desires, and ambitions for the future as being successful, a good role model for her daughter, finding employment, and getting married again to give her daughter a father. However, she did not want more children because her daughter has had enough trauma and change in her life. Dora felt she must not do anything that may unsettle her further.

3. Cultural beliefs:

In the discussion on cultural beliefs concerning the roles of men and women, Dora stated that 'the role of woman is to be a good wife and to be a good mother for her children'. Dora felt she should have married a pastor:

> 'But I that is when I said I should marry a pastor because they make children and build on to it. My husband was sex obsessed. Where, ha, I gave him what he wants because he made me feel like a whore. But now what I thought was important was to be a mother for (*name of daughter*)'.

She had changed her focus to being a mother rather than on the man she married and being forced to fulfill his sexual demands on her, making her feel like a whore. The role of the man was very briefly stated to that of a hunter, and to 'treat his wife love and respect'.

Dora explained how she would have desired her marriage to be, like an Afrikaans Boer union. Marriage, marriage bonds, and loyalty to family were important to Dora. She felt that a wife should obey and listen to her husband. However, she did not believe that such practices lead to violence in a relationship, and that the marriage vows could be broken when one felt they should have not married the man in the first place or when you had lost faith in him.

Religion was a major component of Dora's life. It was a source of healing and support. Dora did not think that cultural values had changed. Her husband did not help with household chores or childcare, this was her role as a 'good mother and good wife'. In her community, intrusion into the affairs between a man and his wife were not appropriate because those were very private matters. Dora once again referred to the age difference as being especially sanctioned against interference. Dora's cultural beliefs and the emphasis on the privacy of relations between a man

and his wife, and her preoccupation with her own situation will prevent her from becoming an active community participant in wife abuse. Dora gave the impression that her main objective was to get her life back again, forgetting this time, and moving on. It had been difficult for her to share her experiences with others.

4. Abuse experienced:

Dora had identified all the forms of abuse in her marriage. A number of factors had increased Dora's vulnerability to abuse. Dora's inexperience with heterosexual relationships, and her preoccupation with the limits imposed on her because she married an older respectable man were some of the factors. The experience with abusive behaviour from her mother and their inability to deal with the abuse also contributed to her present situation in her ability to cope with the abuse. Finally, her cultural beliefs of privacy and being a good mother and wife were instrumental in her vulnerability to abuse.

Physical abuse:

Dora experienced her first physical beating one year after their marriage. She described the abuse as: 'I had a blue-eye'. Dora contributed her husband's abusive behaviour to his alcoholism and her confronting him with his drinking and lying to her. When he was drinking the violence was severe and frequent. At first her husband would punch her with his fist in the ribs and other places where it would not be seen. He used only his fists, and he would kick her, knock her down, push and shove her against the wall or into furniture, and slap her. Dora reported that she had problems with pregnancies, and had a miscarriage. She experienced no serious injuries but did have soreness and bruising. Dora stated that her husband did not try to damage her face, only 'talk into my face'. However, during the interview it was noted that Dora had the lingering evidence of two very large bruises on her face.

Economic abuse:

Dora was a housewife during her marriage. She appeared to take her role as a stay-at-home mother very seriously. Dora had a medical pension because of her epilepsy. Her husband would simply refuse to pay for things especially for her daughter so that she either used her pension money or one of her sisters or her mother would buy the items that the child needed. He would

make her feel guilty if she spent money on her daughter rather than the house. However, he would use what he earned to support his need for alcohol. He also prevented her from getting employment because of his jealousy in which he would accuse her of going out to meet someone not going to work. He also used the threat of eviction from their home.

Sexual abuse:

Sexual abuse for Dora did not involve forced or unwanted sexual intercourse or touching. However, her husband expressed dissatisfaction with her sexual performance and their sexual relationship in a degrading manner, which specifically accused her as being the problem. He forced her to watch sexual acts on the television and to act in a sexual manner. Dora's husband used condoms. Dora stated that his theory was that a woman was: 'a chef in the kitchen and a whore in the bed'. Her virginity was an importance issue for him before they got married. Dora explained that her husband had a particular demand of her, which made her feel uncomfortable, and she stated it eventually began to feel like abuse. If she refused, he threatened her, and she stated 'he knew I would always do it'. Dora was not allowed to take a bath alone. She had to bathe with him. She also was not allowed to dress or undress without him there.

Psychological abuse:

The emotional, psychological, and verbal abuse that Dora experienced targeted her autonomy and self-esteem. This was her first serious relationship and her husband exploited her inexperience to maintain control. Her husband used criticism, belittlement, humiliation, ridicule, and made fun of her in core areas of her existence as a human being and her identity as a woman. He attacked her ability as a mother, wife, homemaker, and her appearance, calling her a useless and unloving wife. Dora's husband called her names: 'he said I was wearing shit, I am a cow'. He would tell their daughter that 'your mother is mad'. He accused her of paying more attention to and doing more for their daughter and others than she did for him. Dora's husband degraded and insulted her family. He would intimidate and humiliate her in public by telling her what and how to do things.

When asked if her husband insulted or made fun of her friends, Dora answered that she did not have any friends. This she explained was because of her husband's age, and because they had been asked to leave the Salvation Arm. On account of her husband starting to drink again, he was forced to give up his uniform. Dora stated she had friends in the Salvation Arm but she no longer was able to see them. Dora's husband reinforced her isolation by not allowing her to make friends with the neighbours. While he was at work, she had to stay in the house and be a housewife, 'it was like a job'. He would come home some lunchtimes and different times after his working day to check that she was in the house and working. He also attempted to block her communication with others.

Dora's husband tried to manipulate her by making her question her interpretation of events. He told her she was crazy. He attempted to make out that everything she said about the abuse were lies, and to shift the responsibility for the abuse to her. Dora's husband used tactics of domination by controlling the household as his domain, his castle. He treated her as a servant. He controlled Dora's activities in the house, and he would sometimes lock her in the house. Dora stated that he attempted to interrogate her after she had been with her family members:

> 'He would come with lots of questions, like where, when, and what. When my mother was there, which I didn't want him to know, he would try to investigate every single statement. I made sure I know about my mother coming'.

Dora's husband also utilized maneuvers designed to appeal and manipulate her love. He did promise to never beat her again. They experienced periods of loving, caring, and respect alternating with episodes of abuse. He also used tactics of sulking and not talking to get her attention. Dora's husband used his jealousy of her to justify his actions. However, he never apologized for his behaviour.

5. Responses to the abuse:

Dora stated that her reaction to the physical abuse was very emotional, and physical in the sense that it caused her to have seizures. She reported crying when she was alone, and feeling very depressed but that she never felt suicidal because she had her daughter. She described having dreams in which her husband was a monster coming at her. Dora reported trying different ways

to avoid the physical violence such as being quiet, walking away from him, or yelling at him. However, she also stated that he did not like it if she was quiet, resulting in her getting beaten badly. Yet, resisting by yelling back at him would sometimes stop him.

Dora reported that her feelings towards him had changed with the violence. She reported no longer trusting or loving him has she had in the beginning. Dora stated that she was unaware of where she could obtain assistance:

6. Staying/leaving decisions:

In her seven years of marriage, Dora has left her husband once after a severe beating. A neighbour helped her to go to a shelter after hearing her story. Dora and her daughter stayed in the shelter for three months. However, she felt she was forced to return to her husband because her daughter did not adjust to the shelter life.

In the present situation, the leaving decision was made as a result of their daughter being taken into protective custody by the Child Protection Unit. Dora's husband beat their daughter, and the school called in the CPU to investigate. This resulted in the child being removed from the home and the father being charged. Dora remained with her husband while she made plans through the social worker at CPU to be admitted into the shelter. With Dora the objective was not to attempt to change her husband's behaviour but to escape the violence permanently. She feared for the safety of her daughter and herself. Dora had begun to question his behaviour in other areas of their life together beyond the physical abuse. Dora explains the event in the following way:

> 'This time my husband was beating my little girl so badly that the school phoned CPU. And they came and arrested my husband. In the time my little girl is staying with my sister. My husband said to me "you have to chose, it is either me or your family", and he wanted an affidavit from me. But I didn't want to give him an affidavit. I said I would give him one. I would support him, just to keep my playing cards open because I was planning to move out. I didn't want to give him an affidavit because he hit (*daughter's name*) with a stick more than a year ago and it was very risky. She was crying and vomiting, and she sat in the corner of her room that night, too afraid to eat because if she would vomit and my husband would hit her again'.

However, past attempts to leave her husband had failed. Her husband appeared to have too much influence for her to challenge his power, which she contributed to his age. He controlled her access to the neighbours since one helped her in the past, and her family and church did not wish to get involved. Dora reported that she was not aware that the police could assist her in such situations. Dora felt that her husband would not force her to return but would 'try to make my life hell'. Dora was seeking a divorce.

7. Empowerment/agency:

Dora has been in a shelter once before for three month, which was the only time she has left her abusive husband pervious to this stay. For her this shelter stay was an opportunity to take control of her life and to access resources and knowledge not previously available to her, and therefore giving her the possibility to influence decisions concerning her life. She had gained knowledge of a safe place in times of need, where staff would believe and assist her. Dora had found the counselling beneficial. Her motivation appeared at this time to be due to her anger, which had led her to self-preservation and an awareness of her own value and abilities. She was looking forward to creating a new life for herself and her daughter. Dora was also aware of the resources she needs to acquire in order to move beyond the abuse such as a job and housing. However, like Beth, Dora was also hindered in her inability to negotiate access to these resources, and felt her life had been put on hold while she was in the shelter, putting at risk her ability to control the outcome.

Dora indirectly allowed control over the abuse to be taken by others by facilitating the involvement of the school and the Child Protection Unit. However, this may have been due to the cultural and religious restraints she had placed on herself, and those placed on her by others. These factors were, therefore, not allowing her to take direct control of the situation.

The people within her surrounding environment where not supportive. Dora knew the attitude of the Salvation Army would be to preserve the marriage. Her husband was also much older, who she defined as a respectable businessman, causing her to feel she would not be believed in her accusations of abuse. Her mother refused to get involved. She felt her sisters would not understand since she was married to a much older man. Her husband controlled her contact with

others in her neighbourhood. She was not employed outside the home. Her complete isolation left her few options in taking control.

Dora's concern for her daughter during her first shelter stay forced her to return to her husband. This time the daughter was not with her. Although this had caused some problems for her, it also gave her the opportunity to explore her own functioning skills and to take control of what was happening. She had filed for divorce through the shelter's parent organization's lawyer. Dora was attempting to study while in the shelter to upgrade her employment skills. Yet she remained pre-occupied with having her life 'put on hold'.

In utilizing Kirkwood's steps to empowerment, Dora had moved from just coping with the abuse to acknowledging the damage it was doing to her and her daughter. However, she appeared to be stalled in the survival mode and moved back into the victim status, not moving towards acquiring employment and alternative housing. Yet she was pursuing a divorce.

CODING FORMAT FOR PHYSICAL ABUSE (a) **Appendix II - 3**

PYSICAL ABUSE	#1	#2	#3	#4	TOTALS
Arm twisted	No	Yes	No	No	1
Attacked / threatened with:			No	No, fists only	
Stick		Yes			1
Knife	Yes	No			1
Scissors	Yes				1
Fork	Yes				1
Belt					0
Gun					
Metal rod		Yes – iron rod			1
Other	Broken bottle	Axe			
Burnt / scalded	No	Yes hospital	No	No	1
Hurt by abuser:					
Children	No	Yes broken arm	No	Yes her daughter	2
Family members	No	No	No	No	0
Friends	No	No	No	No	0
Kicked	No	Yes	No	Yes	2
Clothes yanked	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	3
Injured to: disfigure/ make less attractive	Yes	Yes	No, later did say it yes	No	3
Hair pulled	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	3
Injuries:			None		
Broken bones	Broken ribs	Yes			2
Concussion	Yes	Yes			2
Hearing loss	Yes	Yes			2
Abrasions, cuts, Bruises	Yes	Yes	Yes, bruises	bruising on face	4
Broken teeth	No	No			
Soreness no Bruises	No	Yes		Yes	2
Stains / sprains	No	Yes			1
Internal injuries	Yes	Yes			2
Bleeding	Yes	Yes			2
Dislocations of bones					0
Knocked down	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
Problems with pregnancy due to the abuse	Yes – stabbed coma 3m		Fear for child pregnant with now	Yes	3
Miscarriage				Yes	1
Injury to unborn child					0
Pushed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
Shoved against walls / furniture	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
Punched	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
Slapped	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
Strangled	Yes	Yes	No	No	2
Choked	Yes	Yes	No	No	2
Suffocated		Yes			1
Strategically placed blows to hide the evidence of abuse	No – though her beautiful- punched in face to make not beautiful	Just beatings all over	Yes	Yes	2

CODING FORMAT FOR ECONOMIC ABUSE (b) **Appendix II - 3**

ECONOMIC ABUSE	# 1	# 2	# 3	# 4	TOTALS
WOMAN: Employed	Yes	No	No–self emp street vendor	No	1
Fired or asked to leave employment because:					
Partner's behaviour	No				0
Too much sick time	Yes				1
Forced to be main or only supporter of the family	Yes				1
Forced to ask others for money/food/cloths	Yes		Yes	No, but would not buy things for daughter, wait for others to do so	2
Given inadequate allowance ∴		Yes	Yes	No	2
Restrict activities Outside home	Yes				1
Little food	Yes	Yes	No	No	2
Unable to dress attractively	Yes				1
Must perform certain chores / activities for money for self/children	No		No	No	0
Misuse of family income by partner	Yes – alcohol / other women	Refused to give her any	Money only for himself	Yes, alcoholic	4
Overdraws your bank account	Yes				1
Takes money without your permission	Yes			No	1
Forced to hand over your money to him	Yes			No	1
Withdraws from your bank account	Yes			No	1
Prevented from using family income as you want	Yes		Yes	Yes, made her feel bad if used for daughter or house	3
Prevented from earning an income	No – needed her to work		Yes – very jealous	Did not like it, jealous	2
Hassling you at your work place	No – but would wait for her outside her place of work				1
Threatening towards your coworkers	No				0
Threatened to evict you from your home	Yes – did so reason for being in shelter		Yes	Yes	3
Is your partner employed	Unsteady work but did not support her and children – she did	Yes – full-time but gives little to her and the children	Yes, repairs refrigerators, not steady work	Full-time	

CODING FORMAT FOR SEXUAL ABUSE © **Appendix II - 3**

SEXUAL ABUSE	# 1	# 2	# 3	# 4	TOTALS
Express dissatisfaction with your sexual relationship / performance in insulting & degrading way	Yes	Yes, forced to have sex when she did not enjoy it	No	Yes	3
Forced to have private parts touched	No	No	No	No	0
Forced to touch abuser's private parts	No	No	No	No	0
Forced to watch others engaged in sexual acts	Yes	No	No	Yes, that on TV	2
Forced to do what was seen in videos, books	Yes	No	No	Yes, that seen on TV	2
Forced to behave sexually while abuser watched	No	No	No	No	0
Forced to have oral or anal sex	No	No	No	No	4
Forced to have violent, abusive, deviant, or erotic sex	Yes, violent	Yes, very violent	Yes, violent	No	3
Refused to use condom when sexually active outside relationship	Used condoms – did have sex with other women	Not use condoms – did have sex with other women	Sometimes refused to use – never see him with other women	Used condoms	1 – refused 3 used
Sex without consent/ forced	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	3
Unwanted kissing / touching	Yes	No	yes	No	2
				Important to him that she was a virgin when married – although he had three former marriages & 4 children – he denied this	
				Never allowed to bath without him – always had to dress / undress in his presence – he threatened her – she felt like it was abuse	

CODING FORMAT FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE (d) **Appendix II -3**

PSYCHOLOGICAL / EMOTIONAL ABUSE	# 1	# 2	# 3	# 4	TOTALS
Abuser threatens to commit suicide	Yes	Yes	Yes, he is just sick	No	3
Acts like 'master of castle'	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
Accused you of paying more attention to & doing more for others than him	Yes	Yes	No	Yes, to our daughter	3
Being the one to define roles for 'men / women'	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, said wife chief/whore	4
Belittled you approach in child rearing / housekeeping	Yes	Yes	Yes, Sometimes	Yes, said not loving wife	4
Criticized your mothering skills	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
Criticized your looks / appearance	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	3
Criticized your wifely duties	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
Degraded / insulted you	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	3
Degraded / insulted your friends	Yes	No	No	No, I have no friends	1
Degraded / insulted your family	Yes	No	No	Yes	2
Dirty looks in attempting to intimidate you	Yes	Yes	No	No	2
Giving false hope of change	Yes, always	Yes	Yes	Yes, but it was up to me	4
Harassed you over phone	No	Yes	No	No	1
Insulting towards you	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
Humiliating you	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
Making fun of your abilities	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
Investigating / interrogating you	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, lots of questions	4
Check up on you	Yes	Yes, make sure he knows what going on	Yes, come looking for me	Yes, come home at lunch time	4
Following you	Yes, waits for her outside her work place	Yes	No	No	2
Intimidating	Yes	?	Yes	Yes	3
Threatened your life	Yes (did stab her / 3m in coma)	Yes (evidence of some very severe injuries	Yes, sometimes	No	3
Locked in or out of your home	Yes, outside	No	Yes, sometimes	Yes, in	3
Makes all big decisions without your input	Yes	Yes	Yes, he just decided	No, I did	3
Limits your movements outside the home	Yes	No	Yes, all the time	Yes, had to stay in house	3

	# 1	# 2	# 3	# 4	TOTALS
Prevents communication with others	No	No	No	Yes	1
Prevents doing / reading / watching TV	Yes	No	No	No	1
Shows false remorse for his actions	No	Yes	No	No, never apologized	1
Shifts responsibility to you for the abuse	No	No (later said he went to family/friends with his side of events)	No	Yes	3
Says the abuse never happened / makes light of	Culturally not seen as abuse	Yes	No	Yes, that I was lying	2
Periods of loving/respect/caring alt. with abuse	No, never loving, always abusive	Yes	Yes	Yes	3
Ridiculed you	Yes		No	Yes	2
Reprimand / scold you in private / public	Yes	Yes, say I am wrong all time	Yes	Yes	4
Belittle your dress / body / appearance / education / knowledge / employment skills	Yes	No	Yes	Yes, did not like way I dressed, jealous	3
Sleep deprivation	No	No	No	No	0
Sulks / refuses to talk	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
Swears / name calling / yells at you	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, said 'I was wearing shit, I am a cow	4
Tells you that you are worthless / fat / lazy / ugly / nothing / stupid / crazy / possessed	Yes, lazy, worthless, stupid, crazy	Yes, stupid, crazy	Yes	Yes, that I am crazy	4
∴ no-one else would want you	Yes	Yes	Yes	Fear that someone would	3
Threatened to harm you in public	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
Humiliates you in public	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
Threatened to harm / kill / take you children	Yes, later did say that he threatened to kill both her and the baby if she did not take him back	Yes	No	No, however had beaten their daughter on two occasions	3
Threatened to destroy your belongings	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	3
Treats you as a servant	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
Uses jealousy to justify his actions	Yes	Yes	Yes, very	Yes	4

Appendix II – 4

Summary of different possible similar and individual causes found in the interview data:

Similar causes:

Psychological causes	▪ Immature poor communication skills between partners in which violence was used as a powerful coercion tool and a process to resolve conflict ▪ Undermining of women's self-confidence, self-esteem by male partners ▪ Women experiencing feelings of guilt, shame, embarrassment, and/or responsibility leading to further isolation ▪ Fear * ▪ Learned behaviour leading to silence to prevent beatings ▪ Men's use of women's core identity as woman/wife/mother to attack them through criticism, humiliation, belittlement, ridicule, name-calling, and making fun of their lack of skills and knowledge
social-psychological causes	▪ High level of tolerance for physical abuse by the women and in the social environment with low risk of intervention, therefore men beat their partners because they can * ▪ no attempts to hide evidence of beatings, instead the evidence appears to take on a badge of ownership* ▪ forced isolation and privacy of family environment ▪ access to resources controlled by males and used as controlling lever ▪ extreme jealousy and possessiveness, involving autonomy-limiting behaviours and/or tight vigilance on women's activities was exploited as an illustration of love and reasons for the violence by both partners ▪ dependency on male partner for housing and financial support ▪ poor knowledge and use of informal and formal social support networks * ▪ presence of children ▪ urban, nuclear family setting with female isolated from extended family ▪ influence of male partners' extended families more evident
social-cultural causes	▪ predominance of patriarchy ideology: male supreme authority / right to physically punish female partners / subordinate role of women – treated as property or possession / women subjected to expectations of male partner / women's belief in roles and family structures defining 'good wife and mother' / tactics of domination used by the male partners ▪ conflict over sex and children ▪ trust and belief in romantic love and religious sanction of marriage – used by male partners to keep the women in the relationship ▪ unemployment or low wages of male partner ▪ poverty * ▪ social conditions which promote violence against women – cultural of violence, high tolerance for violence, inability or reluctance of women to use legal/police resources and ineffectiveness of police

Individual causes:

psychological causes	▪ individual pathology: depression, shyness, withdrawal, low self-esteem, insecurity, anxiety, hopelessness, suicidal, and/or dependency ▪ experience with abuse in formative years causing vulnerability later ▪ child in position of danger ▪ male partner suffering from alcoholism ▪ fear of abandonment in male partner causing inability to control aggression and rage ▪ sole financial provider for family a source of self-confidence and self-esteem but also instrumental in the continued abuse
social-psychological causes	▪ youth and inexperience with older male partner ▪ for older women years invested in the relationship and the problems of starting over ▪ ability to provide accommodation may be tied to husband's continued demands and abuse ▪ husband able to force his wife to live with him through threats to kill her and their children
social-cultural causes	▪ poor education opportunities for black women, leading to poor employment prospects * ▪ status of migrant worker and refugee leading to vulnerability *

Summary table of responses to the abuse:

Shared responses:

Lempert's stages	▪ women's responses consistent with Lempert's stages ▪ attempted to satisfy their partners' demands and expectations ▪ used cognitive, dissociation, subordination, nonconfrontational, nonthreatening, and problem-solving strategies ▪ experiencing weakened sense of identity and self-esteem, and loss of personal control and power ▪ beginning to rethink and question taking on the blame and responsibility for the abuse ▪ beginning to acknowledge the abuse as abuse and the harm it has done to self and children ▪ few African traditional strategies identified ▪ significant difference: abuse not keep invisible instead evidence of beatings FEAR – big component ▪ isolation and lack of knowledge of resources available resulted in major problem in moving into third stage ▪ underscored was the importance of how people react to disclosure
staying/leaving patterns	▪ used as a negotiating strategy ▪ theoretical explanations applicable: learned helplessness (1), cycle of violence (3), cost/benefit ratio (3), normalizing violence (all)
paradigmatic shift	▪ identified in all interviews

Individual responses:

response to the abuse	▪ suicidal ▪ open and public about the abuse ▪ internalizing the blame ▪ used of collective strength and negative activity strategies.

Abuse experienced:

Shared experiences	▪ women experienced to differing degrees all forms of abuse identified in research on domestic violence, but identified mainly with the physical abuse and to some extent with sexual abuse rather than the economic or psychological abuse* ▪ once the severe physical abuse co-occurs with other forms of abuse recognized by the woman, the cost/benefit ratio became unbalanced and the leaving process became inevitable*
Individual experiences	▪ severe physical abuse unchecked for two women ▪ type of sexual abuse significant for one woman

Summary table of social construction:

of domestic violence	▪ part of cultural norms and practices ▪ part of private sphere of family life ▪ acceptable way to settle family disputes ▪ low risk of social intervention ▪ women did not express need to punish men but expressed their wish for the men to stop the violence and treat them with respect and as an equal partner ▪ constructed as physical violence * ▪ implicated but not directly stated that men were the offenders and women the victims

of abused woman	▪ actual words good wife/victim/survivor not used but verbalized and described in actions ▪ wavered back and forth between different images and actions of good wife/victim/survivor ▪ marriage and romantic love important but when love and trust removed from the equation and combined with increased physical abuse leaving action conceivable as possible solution

APPENDIX III

1. Discursive positions for domestic violence and supporting text found in the interview data
2. Interpretations of these discursive positions

Appendix III - 1

Discursive positions for domestic violence and supporting text found in the interview data

Discursive positions:	Supporting interview text:
1. Women's problem:	**Women:** ❑ Many problems. This man was making on me many problems. He beat me, everything ❑ Because he still wants me *(she was the one who had to leave)* ❑ That man was giving me a problem everyday ❑ So what want me, what want me to do *(talking about partner not changing with help from everyone)* ❑ The fights, the violence too much for woman ❑ Beating a pregnant woman, no, it is not with him ❑ I was explaining to him *(Jesuit priest)* all my problems ❑ He *(Jesuit priest)* tell me 'this man is fighting, I think you have problems, you want safe away from hitting you ❑ It was up to me to make the changes, not him **Manager:** ❑ Sometimes the women are in such an abusive relationship that their lives are at stake for them to avoid death, there is a place for them in the shelter ❑ she might be at risk ❑ if she is in an abusive relationship and she needs a shelter ❑ some clients manipulate ❑ you can see that she is the cause of it all and she is experiencing difficulty
2. Men's responsibility:	**Women:** ❑ he was not working, he was drinking and spending money ❑ but he went for counselling, he can't change, said you will never change ❑ we called the police, never change, everyone come, talk to him, never change ❑ he suppose to be work and build my house ❑ he must do what a man must do, respecting a woman. Treating her like, ah, a special human being ❑ does his duty, getting food, taking care of children, everything that a man can do he must do it cause it his duty ❑ when he married someone mustn't just do and beat the woman ❑ must give more respect to his wife ❑ because you respect him, him too, he too must obey to you because you him, you are the same, you see ❑ the role of the man is to be the hunter, and to treat his wife with love and respect ❑ then your husband must treat you with respect there must not be any violence ❑ In his culture they believed in beating women, to discipline them ❑ he beat me, everything ❑ He did not see it as abuse because I refused to have sex ❑ He wouldn't stop beating me ❑ Fight, fight very time fight and beat me

	Manager: ❑ sometimes clients can be manipulated
3. Social phenomenon:	**Women:** ❑ I was silent. I was not allowed to talk about it *(the abuse)* ❑ Not to talk about it *(the abuse)* outside with it ❑ *(violence in marriage)* it's very private, especially with the age difference **Manager:** ❑ a police station phones up. They have a client and you find out that she is not for shelter but is destitute ❑ women and children are abused ❑ no cost *(for sheltering)* ❑ that will be for outreach because the department is funding us *(social services)* ❑ because they expect the social worker to see clients. Previously they would see a client once during the week. They think this is not enough ❑ before they can fund us they need to come and visit us and check that things are running according to. They audit reports, thing like that. They make recommendations based on that *(social services)* ❑ I am attending the network shelter meeting and also a forum ❑ In the network shelter meeting with regard to the problems that we experience in shelters by all agents ❑ And with regard to the forum, all stakeholders including clinics, agencies, churches, any organization, where we talk about our safety issues ❑ Well we have donors form the private sector, the government is also funding the shelter and then we also receive donations from different people ❑ Because one of the health department is the requirement from us is that they are to get three meals a day ❑ And in terms of financial conditions the need to help in terms of the skills and finance

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Appendix III - 2

Interpretations of discursive positions for domestic violence found in the interview data

Discursive Positions	Meanings Identified	Actions Available
1. Women's Problem:	**1. As women's problem:** 'making on me many problems', 'me a problem', 'all my problems', 'I think you have problems'; **2. As the violence being too overwhelming and life threatening:** 'violence too much', 'lives at stake', 'at risk', 'needs shelter; **3. As making it women's responsibility to adapt and find solutions:** 'me to make the changes', 'want me do', 'leave', 'want safe away', 'manipulated'; **4. As having provoked the violence:** 'she is the cause'.	▪ Leaving if the violence is life threatening ▪ Finding solutions ▪ Changing her behaviour to adapt to the violence ▪ To stop provoking the violence
2. Men's Responsibility:	**1. As failure to meet his obligations as husband/ Partner:** 'suppose to be working and build my house', 'must give respect', 'does his duty'; 2. **As a need for his accountability:** 'he was not Working, he was drinking and spending money', 'most not be any violence', 'mustn't just do and beat the woman', 'went for counselling, he can't change'; 3. **As a choice to use violence:** 'he beat me, Everything', 'he wouldn't stop beating me', 'he Was beating me, fighting me, insulting me, abusing me, threatening me like I don't know'; **4. As acceptable and necessary cultural Practice:** 'in his culture they believed in Beating women to discipline them', 'he did not See it as abuse because I refused to have sex'.	▪ The need to improve his behaviour towards his partner as viewed by the women ▪ Being able to justify his behaviour as pertaining to cultural norms and practices ▪ Having the ability to chose to use violence or not ▪ Having the choice to be accountable or not ❖ Significant is the absent of identifying the need to punish men for their violent behaviours ❖ Immediate and life-threatening reprimands
3. Social Phenomenon:	**1. Women as victims: '**women and children are Abused'; **2. As keeping the violence hidden and women silent:** 'I am silent, I was not allowed to talk about it (*the abuse*)'; 'not talk about it (the abuse) outside with it', 'it's (violence in marriage) private, especially with the age difference', 'I was scared, scared that no one would believe me'. **3. As a problem of physical abuse:** 'he beat me', 'I have a blue-eye', 'he wouldn't stop beating me', 'I was hit badly', 'my husband stabbed me in back', 'very violent, here is scare of axe **4. As a shelter fact:** a service for intervention, a Community institution, a funding problem	▪ Need to identify other forms of abuse/ violence within the social context ▪ Facilitating women's ability to be heard and listened to ▪ Deterrents for abusive behaviour ▪ Sheltering important ▪ Funding for sheltering ❖ Significant: throughout interviews the implication that men are the offender and women the victims was noted but never directly stated ❖ Physical abuse central to the focus of discussion, leaving other forms of abuse to be initiated by the interviewer

APPENDIX IV

1. Discursive positions for abused women as found in the interview data with supporting text
2. Interpretations of discursive positions

Appendix IV - 1

Discursive positions for abused women as found in the interview data with supporting text

Discursive positions:	Supporting interview text:
1. Good wife:	**Women:** ❑ I did not finish my education ❑ His parents did not like me. They were against the marriage. His culture is different ❑ I am not working I am a mother, so am at home ❑ Children: this one, there is another a boy Six children One and *(pats her abdomen)* ❑ I have a four year old girl. She is very precious to me ❑ I believed that he was honest towards me ❑ He said you have to look after the marriage ❑ He would say to me 'a woman doesn't ask a man where he was' ❑ Because I would tell her *(daughter)* I love her very much, where mommy goes you go, Jesus loves you very much ❑ Stay in house, be a servant, wait for husband ❑ I was responsible for the children ❑ I believe in marriage ❑ I didn't have the right to say no to him. I wasn't allowed to talk back, he told me do this, do that, I must do ❑ He made all the decisions ❑ I must shut up ❑ He helping me with child but not with household chores ❑ You get married. You have children. Take control of the whole house, looking after the children, giving them a good education and then go to church ❑ Work also, helping also the husband ❑ Because I know a woman follow. You get married you must obey that doesn't mean he must abuse you ❑ The role of woman is to be a good wife and to be a good mother for her children ❑ he just said the wife is a chef in the kitchen and a whore in the bed ❑ I was not allowed to have any loveships at all, before the marriage. You had to be a virgin ❑ He just said I was not a loving wife ❑ He said I was a useless wife ❑ He would tell *(daughter)* 'your mother is mad' ❑ While he was at work, I had to be in the house and it was like a job **Manager:** ❑ For example a woman is unable to tell her partner that she does not like what he is doing. For her to complain everyday this is seen as disrespectful to her husband
2. Victim: **(battered wife)**	**Women:** ❑ not give me money ❑ he actually throw away my life ❑ he did not want me to have friends ❑ I was feeling angry, felt useless and hateful ❑ First beating was three weeks after first child born ❑ He did not see it as abuse because I refused to have sex ❑ He wouldn't stop beating me ❑ Fight, fight very time fight and beat me ❑ He beat me ❑ I feel cross but nothing can I do because he beat me ❑ He was beating me, fighting me, insulting me, abusing me, threatening me like I

	don't know ❑ So I was just under him, must be scared, I must be only under him ❑ He doesn't want me to go. If you go out it is for twenty minutes. If you go more than that he is going to beat you ❑ The abuse started after on year of marriage ❑ I had a blue-eye ❑ No, he would blame me ❑ Me confronting him with his drinking, it got more violent ❑ I felt bad because my daughter saw it ❑ I got very emotional, talking, felt like killing myself, I tried ❑ Me I can't talk, I stay quiet, cry every time ❑ Because every time I be worried ❑ I suffer ❑ No one to help because my parents is gone, I am one, no family in *(name of city)* ❑ I can just say forgive me for what or I can just keep quiet because I don't want him to hit me more. He hits more ❑ Sometimes you can feel, know it is too much, now what to do ❑ I was scared, scared that no one would believe me because he was such a businessman. Every one sees him as respectable man and a husband but indoors he was this psychopath. ❑ So I had to chose very carefully who I would talk, someone would think I was taking advantage and didn't appreciate ❑ Yes, I would dream of him coming at me. He looked like a monster ❑ *(depressed)* yes, very much ❑ I am afraid I will be attacked from behind ❑ I was quiet, I just walked away but that was something that he could not stand ❑ I was just hit badly ❑ My husband stabbed me in back ❑ Ah, husband, suffer, it's not right ❑ My husband was sex obsessed. Where ha, I gave him what he wants because he made me feel like a whore ❑ He thought me to be beautiful so he was always punching me in the face so I would not be beautiful ❑ Very, very violent, here is scare of axe, twelve stitches from this man, beat me with iron ❑ He would hit me with fist. He would hit me on my ribs and in place where there wouldn't be able to see the evidence ❑ A miscarriage, yes, problems with pregnancies ❑ I did not finish my education, I though maybe if I got married I could get away from my mother ❑ He is working in city waters. I don't know where he puts money because not give me money ❑ Money for himself ❑ Don't like to make him use condom because he don't talk like this because he beat me when I say no ❑ I was never allowed to bath alone. I always had to bath with him. I had to get dressed in front of him and it felt like abuse. I didn't feel comfortable at night but he threaten me. He knew I would always do it ❑ He tell me wrong ver time, it's me, I was wrong when I am talking its me, I am wrong ❑ He would tell me what to do, how to do things ❑ He would humiliate me in public ❑ He would come with lots of questions, like where, when and what ❑ He wouldn't let me go to the neighbours in the block of flats to talk to them ❑ He would come home at lunch time and he would come after work *(to check that she was in the house)* ❑ He always tried to make out that everything was lies, I was telling ❑ He said I am wearing shit, I am a cow, that I am crazy

	Manager: ❑ She might be at risk ❑ They don't get much ❑ You find that some of them are not interested in anything ❑ Sometimes the women are in such an abusive relationship that their lives are at stake, for them to avoid death ❑ They become dependent to the extent of not wanting to make any effort of anything Sometimes clients can be manipulated and some clients manipulate
3. Survivor:	**Women:** ❑ we are separated ❑ I am separated now. I am waiting for divorce ❑ After divorce I have share of house because I am in communal property ❑ He never treated me like he should treat a woman ❑ This time was difficult. It's too much difficult because he beat me like iron axe that why I say not come back ❑ That I am thinking about that this baby. I care just for that. I want to spare this baby without any problems ❑ I leave with friends, I am going but I am tired, I am crying, full of blood. I am going. Don't know where I am going ❑ I asked to help but no help me ❑ I go to social worker, help me because now I am stay here ❑ Just too much, fights and I was not feel safe because I am pregnant ❑ It was not safe because I am pregnant that is why I decided to leave ❑ I was talking with someone ❑ I am worried but I don't think he will fight ❑ I leave him. He busy looking for me all over and when he find me he ask me just to come back ❑ He wouldn't force me to come back but he will try to make my life hell ❑ This time my husband was beating my little girl so badly that the school phoned CPU and they came and arrested my husband ❑ He wanted an affidavit from me but I didn't want to give him an affidavit. I said I would give him one, I would support him, just to keep my playing cards open because I was planning to move out ❑ I feel right to be my woman for children, for mother of children, ah I feel right ❑ If I finish this divorce, I am leaving this man. I am stay with my children ❑ Marriage is not right for me now, I not like it ❑ *(for future)* I want to get my education, my matric ❑ *(for future)* I want to be work, and build my house, it is important for in my life, job, and busy my own house ❑ *(for future)* to go to Belgium, I want to go there and study, finish my school. I wish to learn in French country to go with my kids ❑ *(for future)* I would like to be successful. I would like to be a good role model for my little girl. I am looking for a job **Manager:** ❑ knowing where to go and what to do, finding her own place ❑ managing to find her independence rather than moving back to their partner ❑ she got the support she needed ❑ if there is any information they think is important they will **come** and give to others and share
4. Romantic love:	**Women:** ❑ because he still wants me ❑ he was a very jealous man

	❑ when I moved in with him and he is very jealous ❑ when he started slapping me around the love stopped ❑ me yes I loved him but I loved ❑ not now I finished to love him ❑ some times I still love him because he has big affection for my son ❑ I feel that love sometimes is love ❑ He loves me, you can feel it, you can say it. This man loves me ❑ When I think about that *(his love for her son)* I just forgive him ❑ I didn't trust him, I couldn't love him as much as in the beginning ❑ When you feel you should never marry this man. When you don't feel that you have faith in him ❑ I saw this marriage it is not right, it is not right for everybody ❑ Never loving or caring, always abusive ❑ That's why he make me like this so jealous *(points to scars)* ❑ He was very jealous of the way I dressed ❑ *(for future)* married ❑ *(for future)* in a few years, I would get married again **Manager:** ❑
5. Divergent cultural ideology:	Women: ❑ if you were married in my country if you are fighting you go to your families. Both families would meet and they would talk about ❑ I trying to call people, neighbours ❑ I can go somewhere hiding, somewhere he wouldn't know ❑ I can be in church for three days, praying because can see there is a bad spirit in this house. I was praying stop hitting me to be happy ❑ In my culture the women are independent ❑ I was taught by my father to get an education and to get a life of my own ❑ He does not have the right *(to use violence).* You get married, that is I give all my life to you, you give all your life to me so you have to see a good understanding of both ❑ *(violence)* culturally not seen as abuse **Manager:** ❑
6. Situational / Contextual factors:	**Women:** ❑ With his father's parents *(son in Zimbabwe)* ❑ I am from the Congo, alone ❑ Unfortunately affirmative action started and it was not easy to get a job *(white South African)* ❑ I am African, a white African **Manager:** ❑ With women coming from different areas considering their current styles of operating, sharing one house it is a difficult problem

Appendix IV - 2

Interpretations of discursive positions

Discursive Positions	Meanings Identified	Actions Available
1. Good Wife:	**1. as patriarchal and religious ideologies of woman, wife, and mother:** nurturing, caring, happy family, subordinate, recognizing male authority. **2. failure of woman to be 'good wife':** 'he just said I was not a loving wife', 'he said I was a useless wife'. ❖ This very core identity of women is used by the men to reinforce a perception of failure and need for control	▪ Strive to fulfill this role until it is no longer possible to tolerate and live with the physical abuse ▪ Obedient, serving, loving, supportive, respectful, not question ▪ Take responsibility for change and to prevent violence ▪ Maintain the privacy by keeping silent ▪ Dependent on partner/husband ▪ Take on the guilt of failure ▪ Religious person
2. Victim: **(battered wife)**	**1. as victims of physical abuse:** 'he beat me', 'if you go more than that he is going to beat you', 'I had a blue-eye', 'he wouldn't stop beating me', 'I was hit badly', 'my husband stabbed me in back', 'he though me to be beautiful so he was always punching me in the face so I would not be beautiful', 'very, very violent, here is scare of axe, twelve stitches from this man, beat me with iron', 'he would hit me with fists', 'she might be at risk', 'sometimes the woman are in such an abusive relationship that their lives are at stake, for them to avoid death'. **2. as victims of economic abuse:** 'not give me money', 'I don't know where he puts money because not give me money', 'money for himself', 'they don't get much'. **3. as victims of sexual abuse:** 'he did not see it as abuse because I refused to have sex', 'my husband was sex obsessed, I gave him what he wants because he made me feel like a whore', 'don't like to make him use condom because he beat me when I say no', 'I was never allowed to bath alone, I always had to bath with him', 'I had to get dressed in front of him and it felt like abuse, I didn't feel comfortable at night but he threaten me'. **4. as victims of psychological/emotional abuse:** 'he was insulting me, threatening me', **'**he tell me wrong every time, it's me, I was wrong when I am talking its me', 'he would tell me what to do, how to do things', 'he would humiliate me in public',	▪ Feeling of fear, anxiety ▪ Remaining silent ▪ Feeling anger ▪ Feeling helplessness ▪ Internalizing the lack of control over her life ▪ To defuse the pending violence ▪ Leaving & returning ▪ Calls others for help ▪ Makes excuses for his behaviour ▪ Negotiate for nonviolent relationship ❖ Women concentrated on the physical abuse

	'he said I am wearing shit, I am a cow, that I am crazy, 'he always tried to make out that everything was lies, I was telling', 'he would come with lots of questions, like where, when and what', 'he wouldn't let me go to the neighbours to talk'.	
3. Survivor: (turning point) ❖ Important in feminist ideology for women to take on the role of survivor, indicating shift which enables the woman to go beyond the abusive relationship to reestablish herself as a human being worthy of love and self-autonomy	**1. Recognizing the behaviour as abusive and the consequences of the abuse:** 'he never treated me like he should treat a woman', 'this time my husband was beating my little girl', 'I want to spare this baby', 'just too much', 'full of blood'. **2. Being able to ask for help:** 'I leave with friends', 'I was talking to someone'. **3. Being able to plan her leaving and future:** 'I was planning to move out', 'I want to get my education', 'I want to be work and build my house', 'to go to Belgium, I want to go there to study', 'I would like to be successful'. **4. Finding a new purpose in life as a mother:** 'stay with my children', 'be a good role model for my little girl, and I would like to give her the best'.	▪ left the relationship ▪ admission to shelter ▪ seeking alternative housing ▪ seeking employment ▪ seeking separation and/or divorce ▪ attending counselling in shelter ▪ utilizing self-preservation skills ▪ able to regain a sense of self and self-worth ▪ working towards independent self ❖ actual word survivor not used in interview data but words representing a different and new focus are present indicating a shift in direction ❖ the women waver back and forth between images of victim and survivor in their verbalizations and described actions
4. Romantic Love:	**1. shift in feelings for partner/husband:** 'when he started slapping me around the love stopped', 'me, yes, I loved him but I loved', 'sometimes I still love him', 'he loves me, you can feel it, you can say it, this man loves me', 'I don't trust him, I couldn't love him as much as in the beginning', 'never loving or caring, always abusive', 'I saw this marriage it is not right, it is not right for everybody', 'he still wants me', 'now I finished to love him' **2. jealousy used to explain the abusive behaviour by both men and women:** 'he was a very jealous man', 'when I moved in with him and he is very jealous', 'that's why he make like this so jealous (*points to scars*)', 'he was very jealous of the way I dressed'. **3. marriage and love remains important to the women:** two of the women want to remarry in the future, one continues to negotiate for a nonviolent relationship with present partner,	▪ emotional attachment and commitment decreasing ▪ feels hurt and betrayed ▪ seeking separation and/or divorce ▪ ready to give up the guilt for the deterioration of the relationship ▪ disillusioned ❖ the removal of the element of romantic love in the relationship has allowed for a leaving action. A high level of physical violence was tolerated until the erosion of love and trust occurred, leaving became a possible solution for all the women

	and one expressed a desire never to marry again	
5.Divergent Cultural Ideology:	**1. as different ways to respond to the violence:** 'if you are fighting you go to your families, both families would meet and they would talk about', 'I can go into hiding', 'praying because can see there is a bad spirit in this house'. **2. as a different position for women:** 'in my culture the women are independent', 'I was taught by my father to get an education and to get a life of my own'. **as contradicting attitudes to violence:** 'he does not have the right (to use violence)', 'you get married, that is I give all my life to you, you give all your life to me so you have a good understanding of both' versus violence culturally not seen as abuse**.**	▪ Indicates the women are aware and believe different paths that should be available to them but not necessarily useful or possible in this context ▪ Actively challenging, resisting, and negotiating within the cultural norms and practices surrounding the home environment ▪ Use of passive and disengagement strategies ▪ Observe men's behaviour and design responses to avoid violence

APPENDIX V

1. Summary table on how the women reported their experiences in the shelter
2. Discursive positions found for sheltering and supportive text found in the interview data
3. Similarities and differences found between the shelter in this study and western style shelters

Appendix V – 1

Summary table on the women's reported experiences in the shelter

	AMY	BETH	CLARA	DORA
Safe place, free from the violence	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive
Emergency accommodation	Positive	Positive	Positive	Planned admission
Made the leaving process easier	Positive, yes	Positive, yes	Positive, yes	Positive, yes
Counselling	Positive difference	Positive difference	Marginal difference	Positive difference
Children with behavioural problems requiring couselling	Yes, child and mother receiving counselling in shelter	Yes, but behaviour improved away from the abuse	Yes, however, question if getting couselling in shelter	Yes, however daughter not at shelter and is seen by CPU
Legal assistance	Not needed	Yes, needed	Not needed	Yes, needed
Medical assistance	Yes	Not needed	Yes, due to pregnancy	Already in place
Financial aid	Not needed, employed	Yes	No	Not needed, has pension
Help with job search / CV	Not needed, has job	Yes	Not required	Yes, but indicated not sufficient for her needs
Information	Yes, on continuing education	Yes, pleased with HIV course	Not needed	Wants more on job skills
Able to share abusive experience	Not with other residents but with staff	Yes, found it helpful with both staff / residents	Yes	Expressed her need to be cautious
Problems with communal living	None	Lack of privacy	Yes, cultural differences	Yes, with food and racism
Problems with house rules / chores	No	No	No	No
Is the shelter cultural relevant	Yes	Yes	Yes, tolerance with only temporary	Questionable
Anti-male prejudice present	No	No	Yes	No
Is it exchanging one prison for another	No	No	No	Yes, but due to personal situation
Concerned about conflict in shelter	Encouraged to speak up by staff	Is able to express her concerns	Appears to hold herself back from	Yes. Experiences racism
Privacy / confidentiality maintained	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Improvements in shelter for own needs	Wished to continue with counselling	Anxious about where will go	None, temporary place to stay	Concerned about finding employment

Appendix V - 2

Discursive positions found for sheltering in the interview data with the supportive text

Discursive positions:	**Supporting interview text:**
1. Shelters as a safe place to escape the violence:	**Women:** ❑ Getting place to stay ❑ Feel safe, yes, yes ❑ Yea, a safe place ❑ If you have a problem, you can live here, to stay, to feel safe ❑ I am feeling fair, no one disturbing me, no more fights, I am eating, sleeping well ❑ I went to the crèche and asked her for help and she took me here ❑ It made it easier **Manager:** ❑ We do take in emergency cases ❑ Sometimes they need a shelter at that point in time ❑ She might be at risk so we do take emergency cases ❑ We tell them when we are screening they must keep the location confidential but shame they don't keep the shelter location confidential ❑ They *(male partner)* will track down their partners when they come out of work or they will track down their partners when the children are visiting ❑ There is a need for shelters, sometimes the women are in such an abusive relationship that their lives are at stake, for them to avoid death, there is a place for them in the shelter
2. Shelters as a place of empowerment / a transforming environment:	Women: ❑ I am not a very forceful person. They help me to say no to something I don't like. I talk about it if something happens now. ❑ They ask us. Have to talk ❑ I want to continue with counselling. I still can come back when I need to talk ❑ Your problems, talking about things ❑ I would like to be a place where they would help you find a job ❑ How to cope without my child ❑ There is more information *(speaking of her church refugee center)* than here now *(the shelter)* ❑ We learn about HIV aids, now I have certificate for HIV. ❑ All things for you, counselling, talking about things ❑ Nothing I can do, not choice where I go ❑ I am just very frustrated because I need to get a job, a roof over my head where *(daughter)* can also come and stay ❑ I get counselling and it helps ❑ I am very frustrated at this moment, I do need a job, I need to be stimulated and to be busy Manager: ❑ What is the reason for her to seek shelter, and than to concentrate on the future

	❑ For those that are employed at least we ask them to put in fifty rands a month, just for them to infuse in them a sense of responsibility ❑ With new model that we have started implementing , expecting us to outreach the programme to schools, teachers and the children. And the police with regards to violence ❑ So they can counsel the clients if they want to talk, at least they are there and they are able to give support ❑ Because there is nothing but hopefully soon there will be something, something that will keep them busy in terms of skills development ❑ They are all expected to clean and they are all expected to cook at the end of the day ❑ In terms of job training we don't have, I hope in the future ❑ In the future if we get funding ❑ Welfare support if they need it ❑ We have a lawyer at the main office ❑ Maybe empowering in the sense of through individual or group counselling that is how we empower women ❑ We empower that woman to see it is OK to do such a thing ❑ The financial conditions the need to help in terms of the skills and finance ❑ *(In the balance between doing too much and too little)* I don't understand. How do you do too much as a social worker I must help, I need to intervene ❑ so through individual counselling we empowerment that woman to see it is OK to do such a thing. It is not a problem ❑ the women may be depressed and you might find they want to talk and they do not have that opportunity
3. Shelters as a safe place to share:	**Women:** ❑ When I am going to group sessions, sharing problems ❑ I feel alright express how feel, if not right, you talk ❑ I am careful to who I talk to but that is how it is ❑ Sometimes you can find some things about women because most of them are disappointed. They don't like the abuse **Manager:** ❑ Our policy is that the shelter is to be confidential ❑ When women coming from different areas considering their current styles of operating, sharing one house it is a difficult problem ❑ If there is any information they think is important they will **come** and give to others and share
4. Shelters as a place with or without problems:	**Women:** ❑ It is difficult, not easy ❑ I don't like that life, shelter ❑ I feel alone. I don't talk with people from my country ❑ I am free to cook. I am free to do what ❑ I am cooking according to my culture. They are according to their culture. I get used to it. ❑ No problems, the right rules ❑ Food disappears. Its everyone's food but some of the mothers eat all the food and in the meantime there is not food ❑ I am the only white person. I am experiencing racism. They don't want me in some areas of the house. They don't want to share the house with me. **Manager:** ❑ If there is conflict between let's say a housemother or a client, as a house manager I am called in and most intervene ❑ If there is conflict then they *(housemothers)* nee to record all the incidents during that month ❑ There is a roster made by the housemothers for the women. They change

	❑ between cleaning and cooking ❑ They *(women)* do buy these things and they cook for themselves but there are those who are mean enough without giving to the others and there are those who share ❑ That was the other thing that makes them to fight because they don't get much Conflict is dealt with as it arises. It can be dealt with individually or through the house meetings or through special sessions with those involved
5. Shelter as a short-term solution:	**Women:** ❑ Shelter is a temporary time, you have to know this and you leave, and others they come because they also have problems ❑ I accept that this is not my house ❑ After three months you go, where you go I don't know **Manager:** ❑ Three to six months ❑ When they come we tell them it is for one month. Through interview and assessment that will tell us if the person needs to stay longer ❑ We do extend their stay due to certain circumstances ❑ Twelve out of forty-four have returned to their partners *(previous years statistics)* ❑ Once they have had three months here, they can not come back
6. Shelter as a place requiring 'good clients':	**Women:** ❑ **Manager:** ❑ Sometimes they think she is for the shelter and you find out that she is not for shelter but is destitute ❑ If she is in an abusive relationship and she needs shelter then we will have to shelter her ❑ The mentally ill and suicidal we preferably refer elsewhere, because really and truly we don't have the facilities ❑ And then with regard to HIV and AIDS, that one we do as long as clients disclose their status. We don't discriminate against them ❑ Those of alcoholic and drug dependency, yes we do shelter them and refer them to SAADC ❑ And the male children over 12 we do, our aim is not to separate families ❑ You find that some of them are not interested in anything ❑ Some are moving from one shelter to another. But what can you do. At the end of the day we need to provide a service, they are in need of shelter, they are being abused ❑ Especially those who stay for a long time they become dependent to the extent of not wanting to make any effort of anything. They know they have a supper, a bed. You know if it is could but what can you do
7. How do you measure success in sheltering	**Women:** ❑

	Manager: ❑ Seeing a woman leaving the shelter and knowing where to go and what to do, finding her own place, and managing to find her independence rather than moving back to their partner ❑ But most of the times are not like that because sometimes clients can be manipulated and some clients manipulate ❑ When they leave the shelter you will never know where they go, you will not know their whereabouts, I really and truly don't know ❑ Have I done something wrong as a social worker and manager or is it the person ❑ Those who manage to discover their own legs that is how I measure where she got the support she needed

Appendix V - 3

Similarities and differences found between the shelter studied and western style shelters

Similarities to western style shelters:	Differences to western style shelters:
▪ Safety – a place free from abuse and violence	▪ Shelter services not as widely known in the community, therefore, referrals made through other community services rather than self-referral
▪ Basic needs for survival, shelter, food, and support are met	▪ Increased government controls as a result of requiring increased government funding
▪ Referral process similar	▪ Flexible, evolving process meeting social needs of the community, not a rigid feminist or therapeutic ideology
▪ Children stay with the mother when possible	▪ Individual counselling as the main therapeutic objective rather than combined with compulsory group sessions
▪ Staffed by professionally trained staff	▪ Fewer restrictions
▪ Professional counselling for mother and child	▪ Race, socioeconomic, and ethnic diversity catered for
▪ Funding through government and nongovernment agencies	▪ Little emphasis on 'good client' instead allowing the women to decide what their needs are, and admitting any woman in danger whether or not she is ready to leave the abusive relationship
▪ Funding problems	▪ 'Time out' or 'cooling down' acceptable reasons for admission to shelter.
▪ House rules similar.	
▪ Safety problems	

APPENDIX VI

1. Follow-up questionnaire
2. Interpretation of questionnaire data

FOLLOW–UP QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Participant,

Your assistance in this research has been very valuable. Research into violence against women points to you and your experience as the voice of expertise. It is essential that we find ways to eliminate the silence surrounding such violence. Therefore, it becomes important for you to have the opportunity to express how you feel the interview may have influenced or affected your understanding of yourself and the abuse. I am especially interested in whether or not you were able to discuss those issues most important to your life experiences, and if by talking about the abuse and your struggle, the process was beneficial for you.

Please answer these questions about one week after the interview. Included is extra paper if you need it to complete the questions, and an envelope. If you need to contact me regarding the interview or this questionnaire, or wish feedback on the research, please do so at 888-6441. Thank you for both your time and the sharing of your personal story.

1. Have you in the last week thought about the things we discussed in the interview? How often? (please mark one):

   …… not at all …… once or twice
   …… several times ……. about once a day
   ……. more than once a day
   ……. None of the above, instead I would describe it as: ……

2. Were there any events or feelings, which you have never shared before but were able to do so during this interview?

   If so, what was different in allowing you to talk this time?

   How did it feel to talk about these things (stressful/relief)?

3. Our discussion was about some very painful and personal aspects of your life. How did you feel about talking to a stranger of such experiences and feelings? Can you explain?

4. Has the interview changed how you think about your experiences with abuse from the way you felt before? If there was a change, please explain why.

5. Did you have the space to talk about those experiences and their effects which were important to you? Is there anything you wish to add?

6. Do you have any ideas on how to improve the process for future interviews (other topics, ways to make the person feel more comfortable)?

Interpretation of questionnaire data

In following Kirkwood's (1997) example, a short questionnaire was given to each of the women in order to access potential change through the narrative process. The women were asked to complete the questionnaire one-week after the interview. Three questionnaires were completed and returned to the researcher. However, the researcher was unable to secure the fourth questionnaire.

QUESTIONS:

1. Have you in the last week thought about the things we discussed in the interview? How often?

The women were given a number of options to check in indicating how often they thought about the things discussed during the interview. Two of the women checked the option 'several times' and one woman checked 'once or twice'.

2. **Were there any events or feelings, which you have never shared before but were able to do so during the interview? If so, what was different in allowing you to talk this time? How did it feel to talk about these things (stressful / relief).**

All the women indicated that no new information was given during the interview, and that there was no difference in how they talked about their experience during this interview. The third part to the question gave two options: stressful / relief. Amy checked stressful and Dora underlined relief. Clara wrote under the third part of the question: 'It's just about to relief'.

3. **Our discussion was about some very painful and personal aspects of your life. How did you feel about talking to a stranger of such experiences and feelings? Can you explain?**

This question was answer very differently by each of the women, therefore, their words are quoted as written by them:

Amy: 'It was very stressful, because its no easy to talk about it. I was trying to forget some of the things, because I can still feel the pain and that useless feeling, I always felt if I think about what was happening. Anyway its easy talking to a stranger'.

Clara: 'Both of us as woman; for me it's was so easy to be opened'.

Dora: 'Relieved, since it is out of my system again'

4. **Has the interview changed how you think about your experience with abuse from the way you felt before? If there was a change, please explain why.**

Two of the women answered this question with 'no'. However, Clara's answer presented an engaging response, which could be interpreted that she herself questions that a feeling of relief in telling of her experiences had occurred:

Clara: 'according to your questions, I was more relief'.

5. **Did you have the space to talk about those experiences and their effects, which were important to you? Is there anything you wish to add?**

The answers given here indicated the poor construction of the question. For two of the women it was difficult to determine what they answered 'no' to. However, it was likely the last part of the question was answered with a 'no', since no to the first part of the question would require clarification. Dora answered with a 'yes and no' for the two parts, indicating that she had space to talk about events which were important to her, and she did not wish to add anything more.

6. **Do you have any ideas on how to improve the process for future interviews (other topics, ways to make the person feel more comfortable)?**

Amy did not answer this question. Dora answered with a 'no'. However, Clara answered in the following manner:

'Bring for us something better'.

Each of the women was given extra paper if needed to answer the questions. Both Amy and Dora returned the paper unused. However, Clara used two of the sheets to write the following statements, one on each sheet of paper:

On the first sheet of paper:

'I thank you so much for help moral'.

On the second sheet of paper:

'After you publish you book, will you be able to think about us? How?'

Each of the women was given their own copy of the interview guideline. Clara returned her copy with some of the items answered in writing beside the question. Yet the answers corresponded to the one's she gave on the recorded version.

APPENDIX VII

1. Application of the ecological model utilizing data for each of the women interviewed: Amy, Beth, Clara, and Dora

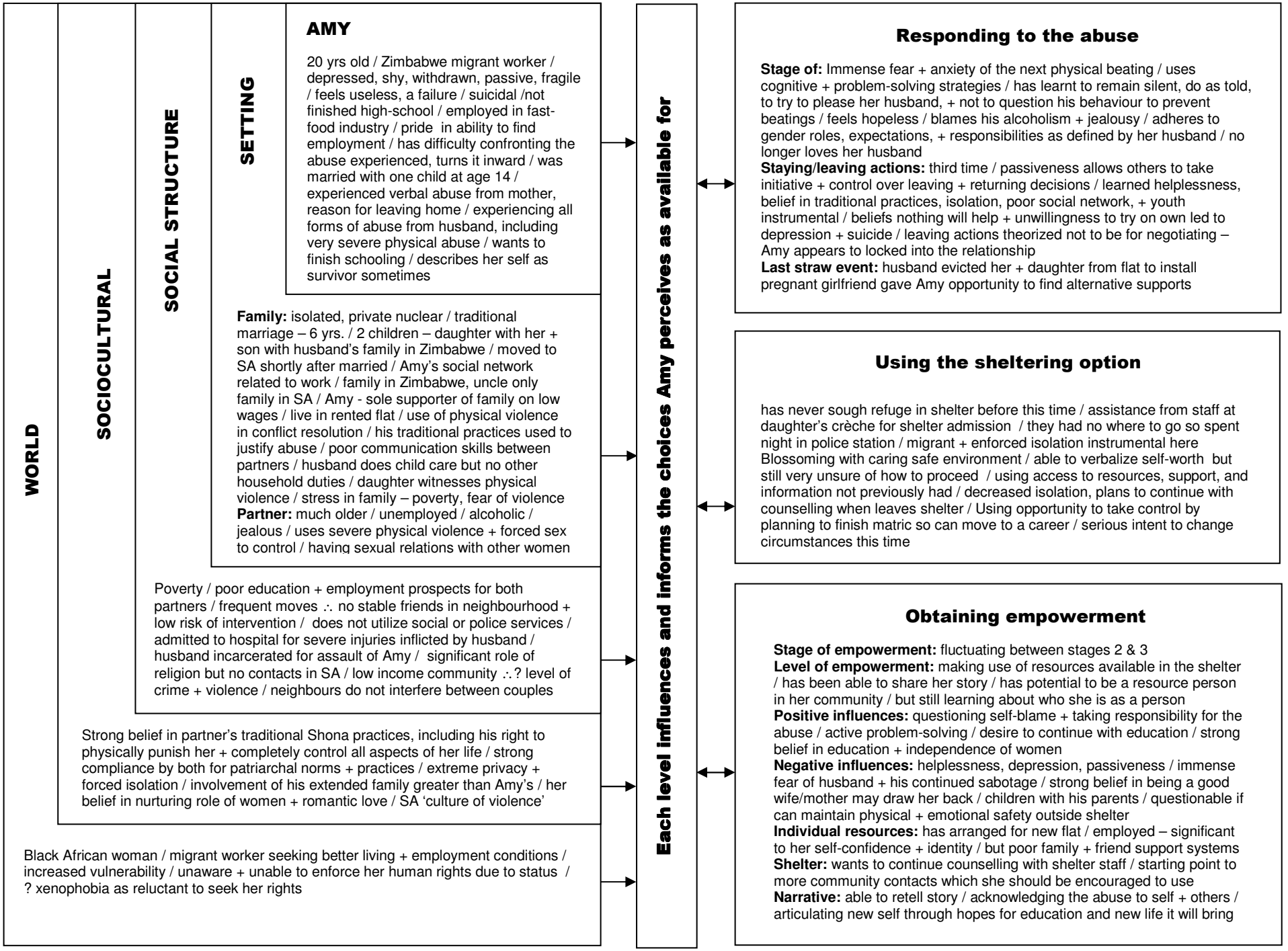


FIGURE 4.4.1 Ecological Model to Illustrate Factors Influencing the Decision Process for Amy

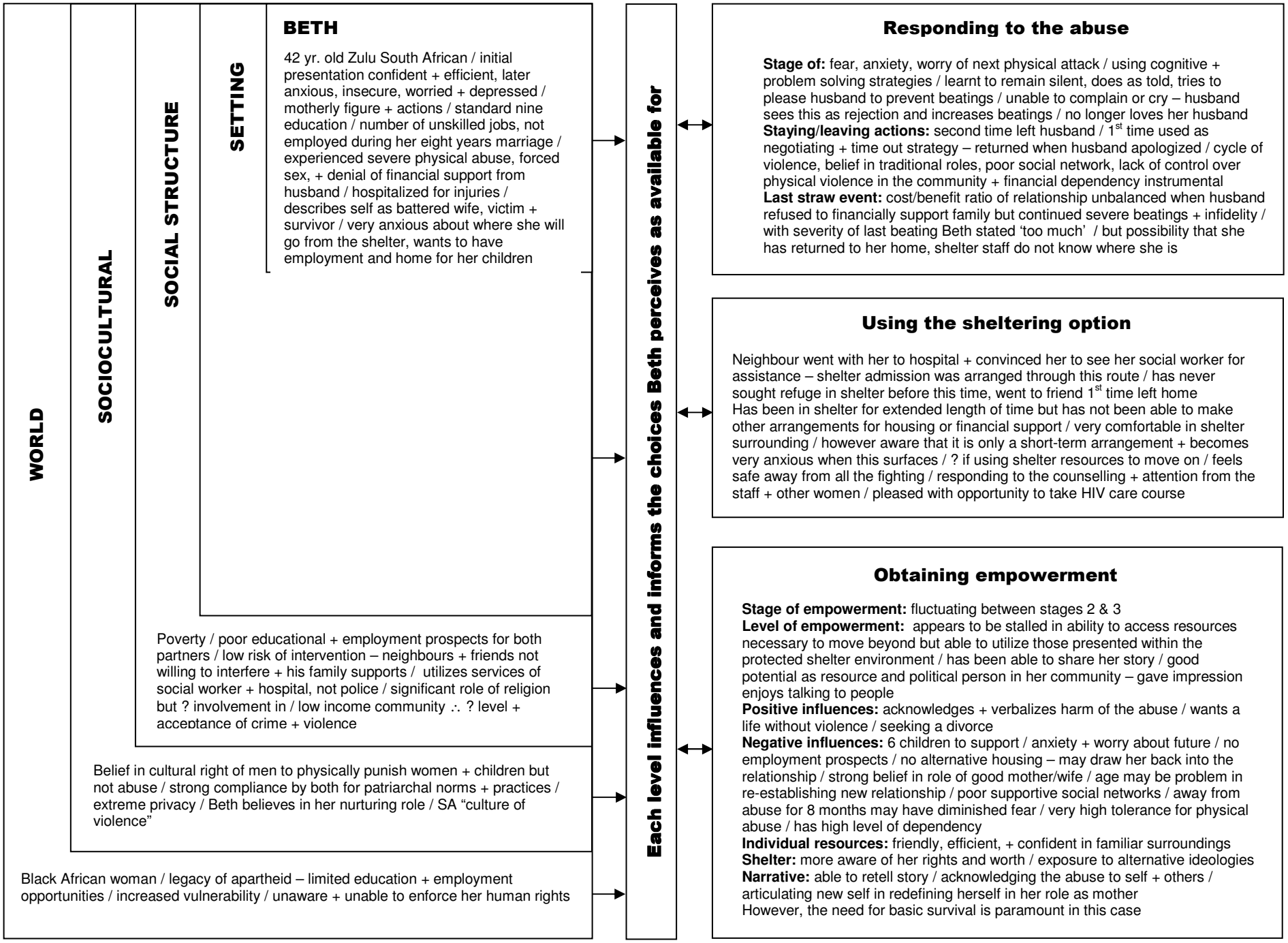


FIGURE 4.4.2 Ecological Model to Illustrate Factors Influencing the Decision Process for Beth

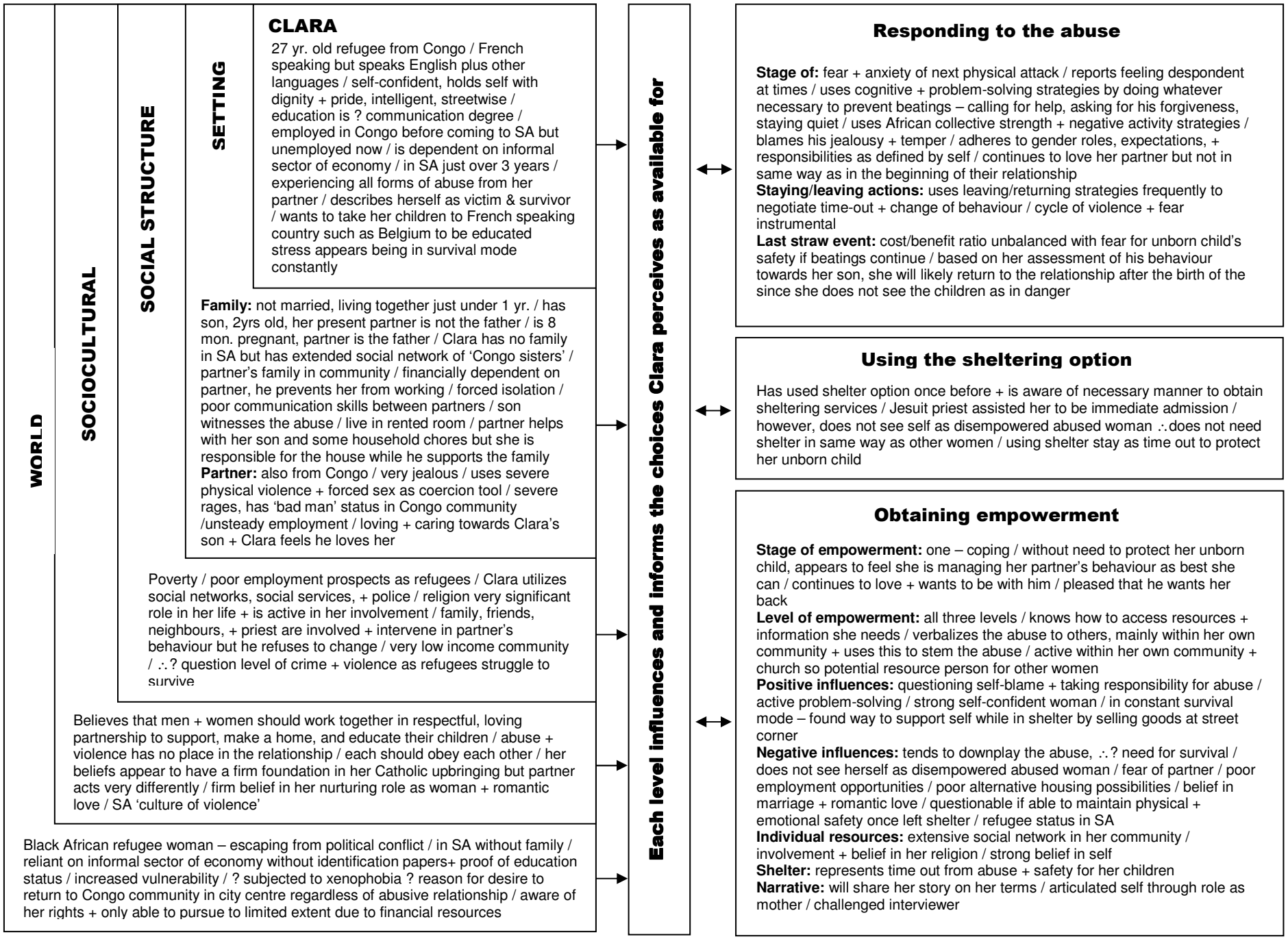


FIGURE 4.4.3 Ecological Model to Illustrate Factors Influencing the Decision Process for Clara

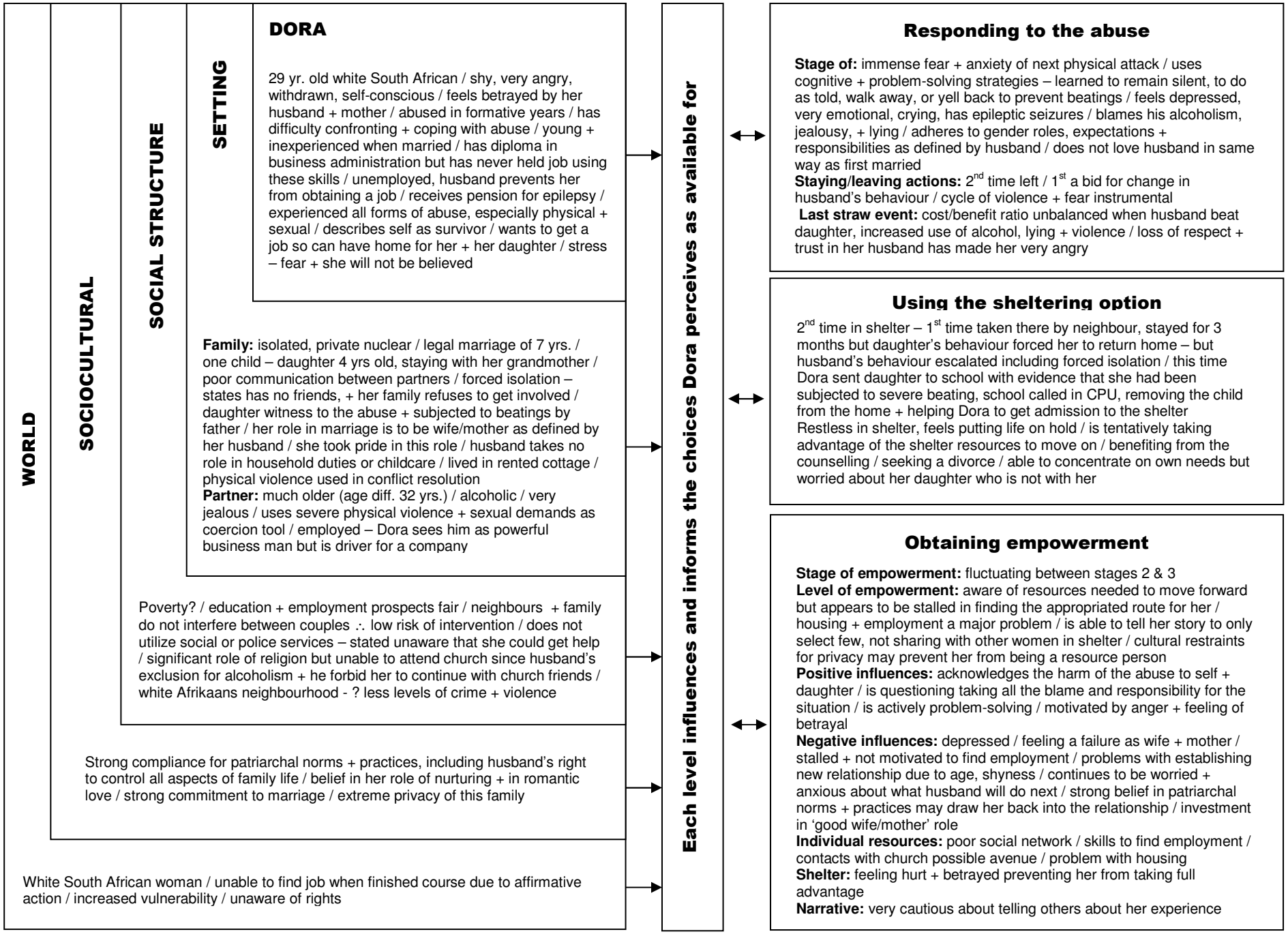


FIGURE 4.4.4 Ecological Model to Illustrate Factors Influencing the Decision Process for Dora

APPENDIX VIII

1. Permission letter from the Human Research Ethics Committee
2. Permission letter from the Graduate Studies Committee
3. Permission letter from the research manager for the shelter parent organization