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THE EFFECT OF MIGRATION ON URBAN MIGRANT WOMEN'S PERCEPTIONS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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A thesis submitted for the partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, in Forced Migration, Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Witwatersrand

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Dedication

To Mrs. Vicky Mugambwa and Dr. G.W. Mugambwa, for your love and all the sacrifices you made for my education.

Acknowledgement

My sincere appreciation goes to my supervisor Dr. Ingrid Palmary. Your invaluable support, guidance and exceptional supervision enabled me to complete this study.

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Declaration

This work is submitted for the Masters degree in Forced Migration Studies in the Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences — University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

I declare that this thesis is my own work, and has not been submitted for any other degree in any other university.

Signature: _____ On the _____

Monica Kiwanuka

Abstract

This qualitative study conducted in Johannesburg and Pretoria, explores the effect of migration on domestic violence. Drawing on the social constructionist and feminist theory, the study investigates how migrant women understand and explain the effect of migration on domestic violence. Participants were identified using purposive and snowball techniques and narratives of fifteen migrant women were employed in data collection using a semi-structured interview guide. Data for this study was analysed using a combination of content, narrative and discourse analysis.

Analysis of the data revealed that the context in which domestic violence is experienced greatly shaped how urban migrant women understood and explained domestic violence. Participants explained the meaning and effect of migration on domestic violence mainly drawing on discourses related to their experiences of migration. In addition, their definitions of domestic violence differed from the classical definitions that group domestic violence in categories; given that they drew on actual experiences in the context of migration as opposed to their home country to explain what domestic violence meant and how migration affected it.

Further analysis, shows that broader factors in the context of migration including migrant women's legal status, xenophobia, poverty, unemployment as well as immigration policies, intersected broadly with gender and unequal power relationships to increase migrant women's vulnerability to domestic violence. Migrant women in this case, drew mainly on such migration related discourses to explain reasons that they felt led to increased domestic violence and to show how and why they endured domestic violence for survival in the absence of love for their spouses.

Factors including being migrants, women's legal status, xenophobia, lack of networks, dependency caused by poverty and high crime rates in South Africa were also seen by migrant women as heightening their fear of public violence leading to the tolerance and preference of private violence as the only available option.

Migrant women also idealised their home country as safer from domestic violence to show the negative consequences of migration on women and how it increases domestic violence. In doing so, they drew on the discourse of culture which they understood as tied to place to explain its role in prohibiting and minimising domestic violence, and to justify not using available services for responding to domestic violence in South Africa. In employing such discourses, they intended to show how services for responding to domestic violence in the host country[1] were culturally inappropriate for migrant women and the attachments they held towards their home country and culture.

[1] This refers to South Africa where migrant women sought or are seeking asylum.

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Structure of the Research Report

This report is divided into four chapters. The introductory chapter outlines the context, aim and significance of the study. The study methodology is presented in this chapter and highlights the design of the study, data collection strategies, and challenges encountered as well as how the data was analysed. A section of the ethics followed in the study is also included here.

The second chapter covers literature related to the effect of migration and domestic violence that places the study in a broader context. The literature reviewed looks at how various researchers have defined domestic violence and how migrant women understand and explain it. It also looks at migrant women's responses and factors that have been found to contribute to domestic violence during migration.

The third Chapter is a presentation and analysis based on three main findings of the study. It looks at how migrant women understand and explain domestic violence in an immigration context, the immigration context and domestic violence, and the links between home and culture.

The fourth and final chapter presents the summary and main conclusions of the study. It includes a sample of the interview schedule used and the references.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTION

A growing body of literature focusing on narrative approaches examines women's perceptions of domestic violence utilising such methodologies (Riessman 1993, Elliot 2005, Lieblich et al 1998, Boonzaier 2006, Boonzaier and De la Rey 2004, Wood, 2001, Towns and Adam 2001). This thesis contributes to this body of feminist literature that employs narratives by exploring how urban migrant women[2] make meaning of domestic violence in an immigration context.

Women consist of a large percentage of migrants today and their movement is increasing (Deutsche Bank 2003). In many cases, domestic violence has been documented to increase in immigration contexts (Ahmad et al 2004, Erez 2001, and Midlarsky et al 2006). This effect has been attributed to social, cultural and gender norms, cultural values that promote patriarchy, immigration laws that affect urban migrant women's legal status and way of life as well as the effects of the new context in which migrant women find themselves (Gill 2004, Menjivar & Salcido 2002, Abraham 1998, Erez and Hartley 2003, Morash et al, 2007, Liao 2006, Rhee 1997). What is less clear is the extent to which migrant urban women consider migration to affect domestic violence and how they understand and explain this effect.

[2] In this study, this is referred to as participants of the study who include women who have received or are seeking asylum in South Africa irrespective of legal status.

I was particularly drawn to this study because of my interest and seven years of work on programs for preventing and responding to domestic violence among refugees in refugee settlements in Uganda and returnee populations in Southern Sudan. My stay in Johannesburg also influenced me to know more about urban migrant women.

Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following central question: *How do urban migrant women understand and explain the effect of migration on domestic violence?*

To answer the above question, I focused on the sub-questions below:

- What factors do migrant women believe contribute to domestic violence in the host country?
- To what extent do urban migrant women perceive migration as a factor contributing to domestic violence?
- Do urban migrant women think that they are experiencing more or less domestic violence and how have the sources of violence or prohibitions on it changed?
- How do specific factors related to migration contribute to urban migrant women's perceptions of domestic violence?

1.1 Significance of the Study

Although various studies have examined how female refugees and migrants make sense of domestic violence, how they define violence, understand its nature and impact in various circumstances, the ways in which they justify and minimise violence and the significance they

give to domestic violence — it seems that the extent to which these studies consider migration to be a contributing factor to domestic violence remains under-researched.

Previous findings indicate that migrant women's perceptions of domestic violence are more influenced by socio-cultural gender norms and values as these largely determine women's understanding and responses towards domestic violence (Gill 2004, Rhee 1997, Abraham 1998, 2000; Yoshihama 2001, Bui & Morash 1999, Ahmad et al 2004, Dasgupta 2000). These past studies also indicate that factors related to the host country and women's status as migrants shape and determine their responses to domestic violence. These factors include policies related to migration, institutional barriers, lack of language skills of the host country and the economic dependency of women (Wachholz 2000, Menjivar & Salcido 2002, Raj & Silverman 2002, Nayaran 1995, Erez 2000, Min 2001, Bauer, et al 2000).

Unlike some of the above studies, which seek to explain domestic violence based on an observer's perspective, this study engages with urban migrant women's subjective understanding of the effects of migration on domestic violence. This study highlights immigration specific factors that migrant women think facilitate the occurrence of domestic violence. In this way, findings reflect accounts of those who have experienced and seen both worlds of migration and domestic violence and aim to put to the fore women's views and experiences which link with the aims of feminist research (Hartsock 1997, Bograd 1988, Mooney 2000).

Finally, previous studies on migration and domestic violence have been conducted mostly among South and East Asians, Mexicans and Central American migrant populations (Raj & Silverman 2002) and less in Africa. This study attempts to address the paucity of literature in this area as well.

1.2 Research Design and Methodology

This study takes the form of a qualitative descriptive case study and draws upon a social constructionist paradigm. It aims to explore urban migrant women's perceptions and explanations of the effect of migration on domestic violence. Qualitative research is an umbrella term encompassing several techniques (Silverman 1993) which describe and analyse people's "individual and collective actions, beliefs thoughts and perceptions" (Macmillan et al 2006: 315). The qualitative approach was chosen due to its advantage of offering insight into human behaviour — the social and cultural contexts of human activities that cannot be understood without reference to the meanings and experiences attached thereto (Guba & Lincoln 1998). In relation to this study, the emphasis therefore is on the centrality of the meanings migrant women attach to domestic violence arising out of their experiences of domestic violence in the context of migration. This is in line with feminist research methodologies (Mooney 2000, Bograd 1988).

The use of qualitative methods in this research enabled me not only to capture in-depth and detailed information provided by the participants of the study (Patton 2002), but also reflect on the co-construction of meanings that participants and I (as the inquirer) attach to the relationship between migration and domestic violence. This is in line with the feminist theory and qualitative research methods that place the researcher as central to the research process (Kirkwood 1993, Mooney 2000) and the understanding of women's experiences as situated within a particular time and place (Hartsock 1997).

Although the qualitative approach does not allow a generalisation of data, it is the preferred tenet of this study as it enabled migrant women to explain the effects of migration on domestic violence from their own standpoint. Unlike quantitative research approaches which sacrifice detail and "fit women's experiences into predefined commonsensical categories" (Bograd 1988: 21), the combination of qualitative methods was important in understanding migrant women's subjective experiences as they relate to the context of migration (Gaskell 2000, Mooney 2000). This study adopted a case-study-design as it investigated a contemporary phenomenon in its setting or context (Yin, 2002) and utilised individuals as the units of analysis. The study also made use of the social constructionist paradigm. This emphasises the ways that people construct knowledge based on how they categorise their world. This knowledge is created through contexts which people are in as well their interactions within such environment (Burr 1995). This would mean that migrant women's understanding of domestic violence in a migration context is based on their world-view and interpretation of what they consider as reality, where the environment and the series of actions therein have a significant role in influencing such understanding.

This paradigm also focuses on how a sense of social order is created through talk and interaction (Elliot 2005). Choosing the constructionist approach was therefore based on the idea that social occurrences do not have a pre-determined reality but rather, are socially constructed and can be understood as "a system of meanings and practices that construct reality" (Terre Blanche et al 1999:151). In this case, migrant women's understandings of the effect of migration on domestic violence could be based on their subjectivity. In emphasising subjectivity, the concept of language is seen as "central to the process of constructing reality for language enables us to think

about, and give voice and meaning to our experiences and to understand it in particular ways" (Weedon 1987:32).

The study also employed narrative techniques in acquiring information from the participants. Narratives can be defined as a discourse with a clear sequential order that connect events in a meaningful way for a definite audience (Elliot, 2005**)**. The verbal accounts expressed through stories by migrant women in this study about their lived reality during the immigration context, thus provided 'in depth details and insight into cultural and social meanings within which their personal narratives were embedded" (Patton 2002:116).

The use of the narrative approach in this study was also based on the premise that stories and their open-ended nature present the best means from which one can learn about an individual's experiences and perceptions (Lieblich et al 1998, Gergen 1997). It was also based on the theory that people narrate particular experiences in their lives often where there has been a "breach between ideal and real, self and society" as is the case of the participants of this study, whose migration experiences turned out differently from what they expected and had planned (Riessman 1993: 3). Wood (2001:3) explains this view in this way:

> When our lives run smoothly and are untarnished by inconsistencies or chaos we feel no urgency to locate a narrative that imposes coherence. However when our experience does not make sense, when chaos intrudes in our lives, we are compelled to find some way to generate coherence –or the illusion of it.

1.2.1 Participants of the Study

The participants in this study were urban adult African migrant women who had experienced or were experiencing domestic violence in South Africa. I interviewed four refugees, five asylum

seekers, five undocumented migrants and one woman with a temporary residence permit. Their ages ranged between 20 and 40. Five respondents were from Zimbabwe, four from Democratic Republic of Congo, two from Burundi, while one respondent came from Ethiopia, Kenya, Swaziland and Nigeria respectively. Almost half of the respondents at the time of the interview were married or had relationships with men from their countries of origin, while the rest had relationships with South African Men.

In relation to marital status, five of them were married and four were divorced while the remaining five were single, three of them separated from their partners and two were still with their partners. All respondents were low income earners: five of them were employed in domestic work and four in petty trade, while six of them were unemployed. These participants constituted the primary focus of the study because of their migrant status, experience of intimate partner violence in their host communities and their presence in South Africa for a considerable amount of time. A minimum of two years was deemed a sufficient time for women to relate and compare the nature of domestic violence in their countries of origin with that in the country of asylum.

The study population also consisted of a combination of participants who had been or were accessing domestic violence response services with the organisations that identified them as well as those who had never accessed such services before. In selecting these participants, I was not concerned with their status or their nationality but rather sought the breadth of their experiences and the perceptions they drew on in explaining the effect of migration on domestic violence.

1.2.2 Sample

The fifteen urban migrant women who participated in the study were identified using purposive and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling was best suited for this study owing to its advantages of use with people who are knowledgeable and in a position to identify the required participants for the study (Vureen et al 2000). These included POWA (People Opposing Women Abuse), MAC (Mthwakazi Art and Culture) and UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) who had knowledge of and or had worked with the particular first respondents that I required for the study on which the subsequent snowball was based. Twelve participants were identified from Johannesburg while three were from Pretoria.

Snowball sampling was also suited for this study because it is appropriate in identifying populations that are not easily identifiable or accessible. It enabled me to identify a hidden population of survivors of domestic violence who consisted of migrant women in an urban area. Some were anxious about the risk of being identified owing to their lack of basic legal documents, stigma and attendant trauma from surviving and re-telling experiences of domestic violence**.**

Being new in Johannesburg and given the nature of respondents, I would not have been in a position to identify the specific respondents for the study easily without the application of the above techniques. These organisations also added to the level of trust of the participants had in me since they recommended and introduced me to them as a student researcher.

1.2.3 Challenges in the Sampling Process

Originally, the Johannesburg inner city had been identified as the study area given that it is accessible to me, and the organisations that were envisaged to link and help me identify the first respondents are located there. However, during the actual time of identification of the first respondents, these two organisations were not able to assist me in accessing the specific migrant women of my interest. One organisation informed me of their lack of access to migrant women with experiences of intimate partner violence, while the other indicated difficulties in separating migrants from non-migrants since they did not capture one's legal status in their records. Other organisations I contacted indicated that they needed to seek consent from the women before I could interview them, but did not get back to me after that. I later learned about some women's reluctance to visit such organisations.

This experience made me to start imagining that many migrant women may be in a similar situation of inability to identify organisations that offer support for women experiencing domestic violence and this could greatly have an impact on their perceptions of NGO services in the area as well as their coping mechanisms. Secondly, I kept wondering why there were so few migrant women accessing available services among the many agencies. This led me to ask general questions on this issue which had originally not been planned for in order to get an insight of exactly what would be the issues related to access to services for migrant women. I later learnt that some women who experienced domestic violence feared visiting such organisations due to the perception that it required them to show their legal status papers which

some did not have, while others did not know that such services existed for both migrant and South African women.

Some participants also indicated their fear that organisations supporting abused women would separate them from their partners by putting them into shelters instead of mediating between them and their husbands or partners, which they believed their culture demands**.** I also learnt that some of them who accessed such services and could speak the South African languages disguised themselves as South Africans for fear of being identified as migrants. In my view, these experiences pointed more to the existing xenophobia in South Africa as well as significant problems in service provision for migrant women experiencing domestic violence. The above findings during this exercise influenced me to include some questions on access to domestic violence services by migrant women and their coping mechanisms to gain further insights into this issue.

In sum, these factors as heard from some respondents, their friends and some staff working in the organisations I interacted with, could have contributed to the problem of the invisibility of migrant women from the agencies I had thought to acquire participants from. I therefore had to change the plan as follows:

I identified three organisations: two in Johannesburg inner city namely POWA[3] (People Opposing Women Abuse), MAC[4] (Mthwakazi Art and Culture), working with forced migrants to offer assistance with legal documentation and building livelihoods for survival through vocational training and one in Pretoria namely UNHCR[5] (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) who assisted with the identification of the initial respondents. The reason I had to move to Pretoria, which was not originally in the plan, was that during the data collection process the snowball from the first two organisations ended with three respondents remaining to completion and time for completing the research process had run out due to the obstacles explained above.

I found the process of identifying respondents in an urban area a difficult one. I kept on thinking that if I had been in a camp-based setting where I had worked previously, it would have been easier as migrants would be in one place. Additionally, I would know the specific areas or agencies which would make the whole process of accessing participants much easier. However, I learned that in future I would need to get to know all the dynamics related to my study populations early enough in order to plan better and minimise such difficulties.

[3] Is engaged in the eradication of violence against women to enhance women's quality of life, through services such as research, lobbying, advocacy, empowerment of women, counselling, community education and training, as well as psychological and social support to abused women

[4] Works with forced migrants, to offer assistance with legal documentation and building of livelihoods for survival through vocational training.

[5] Lead agency for the coordination and protection of refugees in South Africa

1.2.4 Sampling Procedure

POWA and MAC assisted me with the identification of the first five respondents on which the snowball was based. These and subsequent respondents were selected based on their willingness to participate in the study after an explanation of what the study was about. The purpose of selecting the first five respondents from the two different organisations was to ensure diversity of social networks (Landau & Jacobsen 2003). After the purposive sampling was done, snowball sampling was undertaken in which each successive participant was identified by the preceding respondent who had been interviewed.

This is how the 15 respondents were identified. POWA purposely helped to identify three respondents. Of the three, one respondent identified an additional respondent who also identified the last successive respondent from this agency. MAC also identified two respondents, each of whom identified two respondents producing six respondents from this agency. UNHCR identified one respondent through one active community member who identified one additional respondent who in turn identified the last respondent in this group making the total three from this agency.

1.2.5 Data Collection

A pilot test was conducted with two foreign students residing at the university to provide the opportunity to discover any problems with the questionnaire wording and understanding of concepts. As a result, a few words in the questionnaire were changed in order to increase the level of understanding amongst the actual participants of the study. As an example, the word domestic violence was changed to conflicts or problems with your partner or husband and the word refugee to migrant was changed as it was realised not all women would refer to themselves as refugees.

The actual data collection was done using a semi-structured interview guided with open-ended questions and administered through face-to-face narrative interviews (see appendix). They lasted approximately an hour for each respondent. Open-ended, in depth response questions enabled me to understand domestic violence from the standpoint of the participants without predetermining their point of view as is done in quantitative surveys (Strauss and Corbin 1990). The open-ended interviews were advantageous for this study because they yielded 'in-depth responses' from urban migrant women as regards to their perceptions on the effect of migration on domestic violence (Patton 2002:4).

All participants with exception of two were able to speak and understand English and were thus interviewed in English. The two participants preferred the translation to be done by the people who identified them to participate in the study because they did not want their stories to be heard

by other 'strangers[6]'. This reduced the confidentiality of participants' information but the fact that they were also known and trusted the interpreters made it easier. Prior to the interview, issues of confidentiality and interviewing skills and translation were discussed with the translators. We went through the questions again to make sure we had a similar understanding and interpretation of the questions to be asked.

One issue came up during the interviewing process that I had not envisaged before hand. Five of the participants broke down and cried in the middle of the interview. I kept on shifting between two positions ─ one of the researcher who wanted information for the study and the other of the counsellor and social worker who was concerned about the impact of re-telling traumatic incidences on the study participants. Because of my background as a social worker, I found it hard to just ignore why they were crying and simply continue with the interview. It would be as if I was only been interested in the information and not concerned about them as individuals. So, I had to ask if they wanted to talk about what made them cry before I could provide some basic emotional support. I also had to be certain they wanted to continue with the interviews before I could proceed.

Once the interview process was over, I thanked the participants and asked them whether they felt like having any additional counselling, which was available for those interviewed at POWA or provided by me. Among those that expressed the need to talk about their feelings at that time with me, I provided emotional support and basic counselling after the interview. Prior to the study, I had identified possible sources and referral areas around Johannesburg where survivors

[6] Any one else besides the interviewer whom the participants did not know.

of violence could receive assistance. These proved useful for the referral of seven of the respondents who needed information where they could access such services to attend to their specific problems after the interview. Although others did not want to use these services, they took the information to share with other migrant women in their locality.

I found the stories revealed by the women quite stressful. This kept me postponing the transcribing of the data, since I did not feel like listening to the same stories over again; eventually I managed to transcribe the data.

1.2.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using a combination of content, discourse and narrative analysis techniques (Parker 1992, 1999; Terre Blanche et al 1999, Riessman 1993, Elliot 2005). The latter two approaches were also used to complement the weaknesses of meanings inherent in content analysis. Although these two approaches differ in terms of strategies of data analysis, discourse analysis typically focusing on text and narrative analysis on the story and how it is told, they complement each other and use similar strategies in constructing meaning from texts. These strategies include a focus on language in the interpretation of meaning and how it influences reality as well as attention to the context in shaping knowledge.

According to Denzin & Lincoln (1994), content analysis is used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within texts or sets of texts. The content in this case refers to words, meanings, themes and or ideas relayed by participants in the study to describe their perceptions of the effect of migration on domestic violence. In developing the coding system, my emphasis

lay on examining data for emerging themes. In this case, interviews were analysed paragraph by paragraph identifying and writing down the codes on margins of the copy of the data set. Codes were compared and a list of main codes was developed after which detailed analysis was conducted on the codes identified. Categories were formed from the coded topics to reduce the codes.

The emphasis at this stage involved identifying, coding, categorising, classifying and labelling the primary themes and patterns of data to determine significant information bearing urban migrant women's understanding and explanations of the effect of migration on domestic violence (Patton 2002; Macmillan et al 2006). Data was analysed inductively, ensuring that themes emerged naturally from the data. This enabled the breaking up the linear sequence of data collected to join and compare sections of text that appeared to belong together.

The second level of data analysis was done using discourse analysis, which draws largely from the social constructionist approaches. Terre Blanche et al (1999: 156) point out that "Discourses are broad patterns of talk and systems of statements that are taken up in particular speeches and conversations". The importance of using discourse analysis is that it provides the means through which different ways of talking about reality over others can be assessed. It also focuses on language as a means for understanding reality. In using discourse analysis, I therefore drew on three aspects of language (Parker 1999) namely contradictions, constructions and practice. In using the three aspects, I identified contradictions in the texts, examined the different meanings and how they the texts were constructed.

In doing the analysis, the selected texts were read and re -read to identify the subjects the discourse refers to including "binary positions, the recurrent themes phrases and metaphors used" as well as the topics that women talked about in the text and how the participants presented themselves (Terre Blanche 1999:158; see also Parker 1992). The other stage involved identifying discourses and narratives that migrant women drew upon to explain the effect of migration on domestic violence.

The final stage of analysis emphasised the narrative analysis form, which focused on the stories women told. The approach "looks at the participant's story and analyses how it is put together, the linguistic and cultural resources drawn on and how it persuades the listener of authenticity" (Riessman 1993:1). The narrative analysis also enables participant's understanding and interpretations of their story (Overcash 2003). In this case, this approach was useful in analysing migrant women's narratives and the various discourses they drew on to explain the effect of migration on domestic violence. Unlike discourse analysis, the narratives focus on telling about experience rather than an examination of text and content of language used. These experiences are taken as the truth, which in this case represented how the participants of the study viewed their lived reality (Riessman 1993).

In analysing this data, I repeatedly read and listened to the interviews and how language was used in order to get an understanding of what respondents said and to understand how and why the story was structured the way it is (Riessman 1993, Elliot 2005). I selected specific parts of the story relevant to the themes identified for interpretation, which I focused on during analysis (Riessman 1993).

Drawing on Lieblich, I took a categorical perspective of the story given that I was primarily interested in migrant women's understanding of the effect of migration on domestic violence. Lieblich et al (1998:110-113) explain that "Categorical content reading focuses on the content of the narratives (themes or perspectives cutting across selected subtexts) as manifested in separate parts of the story". In line with this, the stories were broken down and sections belonging to a defined category were collected from the entire story. The sections chosen to be analysed and written about and from which conclusions were drawn were linked to the research questions and what I thought was relevant based on my background as well as the constructionist and the feminist perspectives on which the study was based. My experience in data collection in an urban setting and background while working on gender-based violence prevention programs as well as my training as a social worker influenced to some extent, how I collected the data, the questions I asked and the outcomes of data.

1.2.7 Ethical Issues

Prior to data collection, approval for the research had been secured from the human research ethics committee of the university and permission was requested from the agencies that helped me to identify the first respondents**.** The organisations, which helped me to identify the first respondents, set up the dates of the interviews with the first respondents at their offices. Eleven of the respondents were interviewed at the respective offices of the agencies with the exception of four who preferred to be interviewed at their friends' homes. Before the interviews could begin, I explained the purpose and objectives of the study and verbally requested interviewees consent to participate in the study and to use the tape recorder. The tape recorder was used for

the twelve participants who agreed to its use. The use of a tape recorder was advantageous in that I was able to pay full attention to the respondent instead of pausing to take notes.

The participants were also informed of the kind of questions that were going to be asked in order to ensure that if they consented to participate in the study and that they were fully aware of the nature of the study (WHO 1999). The respondents were also informed that their participation was voluntary and they had a choice between agreeing to continue with the interview or not to answer any question they felt uncomfortable with at any stage (Ellsberg and Heise 2005).

The identity of the participants in the study was protected using pseudonyms instead of their real names and they were not subjected to signing consent forms as an indicator of their acceptance to participate the study, since this would further compromise their anonymity. Therefore, only women who consented verbally to participate were interviewed. I also assured them of confidentiality, emphasising that the information about data collected from them with tape recorders and written text would not be made public in a way that could be linked to a specific individual.

After the interview was over, I reimbursed the participants for travel expenses incurred since they were coming from different and far places from where interviews were conducted. Although I am aware that this may not be recommended in some circumstances, I needed to interview them in a safe place, free from risks of experiencing more abuse from their partners at home in case they heard what was being discussed. I also wanted a place which ensured privacy and was

free of interruptions with home responsibilities. In this case, the places I found needed them to travel from their homes.

The recorded information was transcribed verbatim after the interviews in order to preserve information and additional meanings expressed by the respondents, which would later be used during analysis. Notes were taken for the three respondents who declined to the use of the tape recorder and after the interviews, they were re-written in detail.

1.2.8 Limitations and Risks of the Study

Efforts were taken to identify the different perceptions among participants; therefore, this study did not disaggregate participants according to nationality or socio-cultural context. This could have obscured disparities of perceptions of the effect of migration on domestic violence based on ethnic and cultural backgrounds of the participants (Yoshihama 2001).

Although, I wanted to know more about migrant women's access to domestic violence, response services and the factors promoting or limiting their access to such services, this part of the study, which was added later, was not fully developed.

Given that this study elicits migrant women's perceptions of the effect of migration on domestic violence and investigates only problematic issues affecting migrant women. The findings of this study may pose a risk of pathologising all migrant women as victims of male violence, thereby

enforcing the idea that they are without agency and universally vulnerable. This however, is not the purpose of this study, since not all women and migrant women in particular are vulnerable to male violence. As it were, vulnerability varies depending on an individual's capacity to absorb and respond to external and internal shocks, available networks, environments they are in and specific factors that they may be vulnerable to among other things.

In addition, such a representation may also lead migrant women to be viewed according to what Mohanty refers to as "a homogeneous group of weak, powerless and exploited victims of male violence;" an aspect that may mask their differences and strength and also promote the idea of "universal male conspiracy" of violence against women which in actual sense is non existent. Male violence as she later adds, needs to be understood "within specific societies" and contexts in which it is experienced (1988:56-8).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section is divided into segments that look at definitions of domestic violence, highlighting how the concept has been understood by researchers. It then explores migrant women's perceptions and explanations of various issues related to domestic violence how this affects women's responses in an immigration context. The literature also explores factors that have been identified by studies as contributing to domestic violence in an immigration context and how these heighten the risk of women experiencing domestic violence during migration.

2.1 Defining Domestic Violence

There has been a lack of agreement among researchers on what domestic violence means or should consist of (Crowell et al 1996, Saltzman 2004, Krug et al 2002, Gill 2004). This has resulted in many different interpretations of what it is and what it constitutes. Intimate partner violence according to Krug et al refer to

> Any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological, economic or sexual harm ….. Such behaviours include acts of physical aggression – such as slapping, hitting, kicking and beating. They also include psychological abuse which includes acts such as intimidation, constant belittling and humiliating. Sexual violence includes among others acts of forced intercourse and other forms of sexual coercion. It has also been said to include various controlling behaviours – such as isolating a person from their family and friends, monitoring their movements, and restricting their access to information or assistance' (2002:89).

Saltzman citing Saltzman and Fanslow et al *(*1999) in a bid to come up with a uniform definition breaks domestic violence into two concepts: intimate partner to include current or former spouses, same or opposite-sex partners regardless of whether they are living together, boyfriends/girlfriends, and dating partners. She defines violence "as physical violence, sexual violence, threat of physical or sexual violence, and psychological/emotional abuse that occurs in the context of prior physical or sexual violence or threats of such violence" (2004:822).

Saltzman and Krug's definition, although encompassing most of the types of and nature of intimate partner violence, do not mention economic abuse which in certain circumstances is identified as a form of abuse women experience. Along this line, Gill (2004) in the study of domestic violence among South Asian migrant women, also notes the lack of inclusion of how minority ethnic women define domestic violence.

According to Abraham (1998:221), working on marital violence in the south Asian immigrant context refers to domestic violence as marital violence which includes "any form of coercion, power and control, physical, economic, sexual, verbal, or mental abuse perpetrated on a woman by her spouse or extended kin arising from the social relations that are created within the context

of marriage" Bui and Morash (1999) in their exploratory study among Vietnamese immigrant women, on the other hand, refer to domestic violence as violence against wives, as wife abuse, and as wife beating in this study. These definitions could be taken to relate domestic violence to the context of the home where most violence is perpetrated, and the perception that the victims are typically married women or women living with partners in the same place. This may not necessarily be the case given that domestic violence affects girls and women who are unmarried and who do not stay with their partners. Interchanging the terms 'family violence and spouse abuse' to mean domestic violence as in Bui and Morash's (1999) study, has been noted to have a likelihood of "creating confusions, conflicting and overlapping definitions in the study of violence against women" (Crowell et al 1996:11). Gill (2004) in expounding on these issues, notes that violence in the home may even mean violence undertaken by any member of the family towards another which indicates the need to specifically indicate specific categories of people involved in the violence. In addition to this, the exclusion of specific forms of domestic violence may not only neglect meanings respondents attach to domestic violence, but also may lead to failure to include specific categories of persons at risk of gender violence in planned interventions Therefore attempts at a universal definition ignore how the understanding of domestic violence may be shaped by the context and meaning women attached to such an act and may result in a failure to address real domestic violence problems women experience.

2.2 Migrant Women's Understanding of Domestic Violence

Gill (2004) focused on experiences of domestic violence among South Asian migrant women, and found that that although women had an understanding of domestic violence they did not have a name for domestic violence and thus had to use various terms to define it. The lack of a name has been said to make domestic violence invisible and, as such, may likely lead to the problem not being known and addressed (Kelly 1998). However, it is important to note that it is not only the lack of a name that hides domestic violence; it depends on the nature of legitimisation or condemnation of domestic violence in a particular community that determines whether it will be visible and acted upon or remains hidden.

There is certainly extensive evidence for the claim that migrant women minimise and justify violence directed at them by their partners. Gill (2004) found that some South Asian migrant women minimised the nature of the violence, which she argues, is an attempt to forget the effects. Minimising and forgetting the effects of domestic violence has been explained by other research as a coping strategy that abused women employ to deal with domestic violence (Kelly 1988). On the other hand, some respondents in Gill's study explained that the abuse they experienced was minor and they thus saw no reason to seek medical or other help. For South Asian migrant women to seek help the injury had to consist of broken bones or it had to be excessive physical abuse. (Gill, 2004; Midlarsky et al 2006). This explanation reflects the role socialisation plays in influencing how domestic violence is understood differently in terms of what it consists of and what the minor and severe forms of it are (Sokoloff and Dupont 2005).

Similarly, in Siddiqui et al's (2008) study on Pakistani women, focusing on domestic violence and access to refugee protection; findings, show that Pakistani women internalised their partner's acts of domestic violence as their own fault, and kept domestic violence within the family in order to be recognised as good wives as their cultural norms dictate. Among the Latina and Asian migrant women studied by Bauer et al, in the study on barriers to health care, the need to keep the family together was seen as more valued than individual problems experienced. In this case, women rarely sought help related to domestic violence from police or health service providers in a bid to maintain family cohesion (Bauer et al 2000). Since women are expected to be the torchbearers of culture (Yuval Davis 1997), migrant women in this position carried on a culture of keeping domestic violence private to maintain family honour (to be seen as good wives) even though they may not have necessarily condoned the violence. Therefore, the women had to make sacrifices sometimes with their own lives to protect the name of the family.

Women in abusive relationships have also been presented as putting conjugal rights of the man and other culturally considered gender roles on top on the lists for justification of domestic violence. According to Yashioka and Choi (2005 cited in Midlarsky et al 2006), Chinese immigrant women justified being beaten when they denied their husbands sex, when they cheated on them or when they were disobedient. Women's justification of abuse is seen to reinforce societal gender norms of inequality that place women in a subordinate position to men and are embedded in stronger beliefs of patriarchy. Krug et al (2002) argues that such norms that support a man's right to sex contribute to women's justification of domestic violence and their inability to talk about it sometimes.

In terms of justification of abuse, Alcalde (2006), Gill (2004) and Rhee (1997) argue that migrant women in abusive relationships make excuses for their partners. Some of the studies reviewed also provide these examples. Among South Asian migrant women, domestic violence was justified and normalised because they considered their husbands to be frustrated and stressed due to immigration stresses (Mehrotra 1999). Similarly, research showed that Korean migrant women believed that violence may help the man contain his anger and, in justifying abuse, the husband would be spared of embarrassment from the family relations such as his mother in-law (Rhee 1997). The women also felt that violence was due to stress which men could not cope with. In the study on cultural beliefs among Arab immigrant women, Ras (2007) concludes that the justification of domestic violence is based on the need for women to rationalise the violence and be able to cope with and tolerate it. Literature, however, has disagreed with claims of stress and its relationship to domestic violence, noting that if this were valid, then the abuse would not be targeted only to the partner but to any other person (Horley 2002). Regardless of stress, women's responsibility for family cohesion and discourse of culture are central narrative resources drawn on to legitimise domestic violence in the literature.

Similarly cultural values and norms have been said to be among factors that shape migrant women's understanding and responses to domestic violence in the host community (Bui and Morash 1999, Liao 2006, Bauer et al 2000). A review of studies indicated, for instance, that Pakistani migrant women in the United Kingdom and Chinese migrant women in the United States (Siddiqui et al 2008, Yick 1997), viewed marital rape as normal. Amongst the Chinese, immigrants, forced sex in private by one's husband was not considered as violence because it did not happen in public**.** Since in some communities culture dictates that women belong to the man

once married and the fact that men were culturally considered to hold power over women's sexuality, the above acts were understood as normal (Siddiqui et al 2008, Midlarsky et al 2006).

Looking at Latina migrant women, violence between couples was also not considered to exist as it was taken to be part of everyday issues women had to deal with. Sexual violence was the only form of violence known to these women (Bauer et al 2000). Boonzaier (2006) however argues that what an event means to an individual is a result of how they interpret it. In this case, the meanings could have been derived from women's socialisation that particular acts of violence with exception of sexual violence are okay. On the other hand, the women may have had strong acceptance of patriarchal norms that influenced their understanding of domestic violence.

A related finding in Gill's (2004) study found that some of the respondents did not talk about acts of domestic violence like their husband strangling them, since such acts according to them did not fit into what they considered domestic violence. Among Somali migrant women in the United States, domestic violence was understood as only physical and occurring between all family members. It was also deemed acceptable in cases when maintaining family structures were considered (Pan et al 2006). In this case, both ways of explaining domestic violence reflect that an individual's understanding of events or domestic violence are relative, and can be influenced by their culture and or situational context women may find themselves in (Burr 1995, Rhee 1997). Yoshihama (2001), however, argues that among immigrant populations, the home culture combines with the social cultural context to influence experiences and responses as well as women's perceptions of domestic violence.

In the literature reviewed, migrant women also understood domestic violence as a private matter greatly depicted as influenced by cultures from their countries of origin. According to Rhee (1997), in a quantitative study that examined the prevalence of wife abuse among Korean immigrant families; domestic violence was considered private due to the need to avoid stigma in case of disclosure to strangers and close friends. While among the Pakistani women, it is the need to maintain "dignity against perceived humiliation and disgrace of exposing private matters to service organisations" (Siddiqui et al 2008: 146-7), among the Chinese migrant women and Asian migrant women, it is seen as a violation of family privacy and fear to bring shame into the family and community (Midlarsky et al 2006, Bauer et al 2000). Understanding domestic violence as a private matter has links to the acceptance of domestic violence by the community in which women live and reflect practices of male domination and female subservience. According to Siddiqui et al (2008), the consideration of domestic violence as a private matter by state agencies also adds to its legitimisation and furthers its prevalence in such circumstances. Besides culture as an influence to maintaining domestic violence as a private matter, Vietnamese women maintain that domestic violence is a private matter in order to protect their husbands who have not acquired citizenship from deportation and risk arrest if such information is revealed (Bui and Morash 1999).

Migrant women's understanding of domestic violence in the above studies therefore seems to be drawn mainly from cultural norms women are socialised into as well as community beliefs of what domestic violence is; that seem to influence women's legitimisation of domestic violence. Their understanding of domestic violence therefore differs from how this has been defined by

scholars and researchers in that the focus is more on the cultural understanding than the categorisation of different types of domestic violence.

2.3 Migrant Women's Responses to Domestic violence

The way migrant women understand and explain domestic violence is often reflected in the way they respond to it and the consequences of such responses. This section covers previous research on how migrant women respond in terms of seeking help for domestic violence in service organisations and or reporting abuse as well how their perceptions of such services frame their responses to domestic violence. Most studies show that women are reluctant to disclose abuse. Research findings reveal that migrant women, as opposed to non-migrant women, are most likely not to report cases of domestic violence due to a combination of cultural beliefs and gender roles from the country of origin, as well as contextual factors such as immigration laws that they are exposed to in an immigration context (Bui and Morash 1999, Erez and Hartely 2003).

The nature of understanding domestic violence has also been noted to have a bigger influence on how women deal with the effects of domestic violence in a migration context. Some may report domestic violence according to what they think it constitutes, leaving out incidences they do not consider as domestic violence, while others may just ignore it. Ahmad et al (2004:264) in their study, which investigated the relationship between South Asian patriarchal beliefs and perceptions of spouse abuse, found that "if a woman does not perceive a situation as abusive she is unlikely to seek help". The fear of blame and or the need to remain loyal to their partners and

the family are presented as part of the cultural restrictions, which women identified for not seeking outside help.

In addition, Rasool et al's (2002) findings reiterated a socialised ideal perception of domestic violence as being a demonstration of love. According to Pan et al (2006), Somali migrant women in the United States also felt that being beaten by husbands made them feel loved and the lack of it meant not being loved. If this is the understanding, then it is unlikely that they may report it. Therefore, beliefs influencing understandings of domestic violence and the prescribed gender roles such as that of being a good obedient wife, as well as being in a new context where all one knows are the same family members who hold similar beliefs and cultures seem to influence how women understand and explain domestic violence. The attitudes of blaming women, the stigma attached to domestic violence and the fear of suffering more harm, dishonour or humiliation, silence women about abuse and may underpin how they perceive migration as an effect of domestic violence and how they respond to domestic violence.

Yoshihama's (2001), Rhee's (1997), and Menjivar's (2002) findings indicate that migrant women who come from societies where domestic abuse is largely accepted as a 'normal' and or 'private' aspect of gender relations and where police do not respond to domestic violence or mistreated women when they reported domestic violence (Bauer et al 2000, Walcholz 2000) are unlikely to seek help from police or access other services in the host country. This is because they would consider it to be similar to the country of origin. As much as this could hold true in some circumstances, this argument suggests that women's knowledge and meanings they attach to domestic violence are static and cannot change in a new environment. Yet literature indicates

that knowledge is time bound and cannot be taken as a one for all description of human nature. In addition, the meanings we attach to situations change with different people and situations (Burr 1995:41). In this case migrant women's perceptions of the police could change in a different setting. Iikaracan's (1996) findings in his study among Turkish Immigrant women in Germany support this view indicating that despite all the difficulties related to being a migrant, when migrant women were in an environment that did not condone violence and where mainstream services functioned, they made use of services to minimise domestic violence.

The legal status of undocumented migrant women has also been cited by many studies as acting as an impediment to seeking help for abuse. Migrant women without documentation and those with dependent immigration status are reported as unable to seek assistance or report domestic violence due to the fear of arrest and deportation, and divorce by husbands. Husbands' threats of deportation to ensure wives do not seek assistance or report domestic violence have also been emphasised. The dependency on the husband due to inadequate financial support resulting from lack of legal status and other support networks has also been emphasised in the literature (see Bauer et al 2000, Erez 2000, Bui and Morash 1999, Nayaran 1995, Abraham 1998).

In South Africa, the lack of confidence among the police and secondary victimisation issues were also stated by women in the national survey on sexual violence as factors that prevented them from seeking assistance from the police (Rasool et al 2002). According to Wachholz (2000), migrant women's reasons for not seeking police intervention included relating with the persons they feared (police officers) and did not trust, since they believed the police had power over them. In the United Kingdom, a study conducted by Burman and Chantler highlighted

minority women's fear to "compromise their confidentiality if they sought help from culturally specific services, as well as encountering racism" (2002:351) from formal organisations providing services as factors that limited their access to services for domestic violence.

Finally, several studies have reiterated the issue of lack of knowledge of the language spoken as a barrier among migrant women in reporting and accessing other services and seeking help (Bauer et al 2000, Erez 2000, Raj and Silverman, 2002, Bui and Morash 1999, Abraham 1998). In these studies the inability to speak the local language (mainly English), affected women's ability to access health care when in need of responses to domestic violence injuries. The issues of lack of awareness of laws, rights and available services have also been stressed in the above studies. Yoshihama notes that Japanese migrant women were unable to access shelters because they could not communicate in the local language. They therefore decided to "endure and keep the feelings inside" (2001:311). The inability to acquire psychosocial assistance may thus affect women's ability to deal with the violence or keep them traumatised. The issue of lack of culturally adapted services that respond to domestic violence in the host country has also been noted in the literature as an effect of seeking services that respond to domestic violence. According to Huisman (1996, cited in Raj and Silverman 2002), among migrant Asian women the use of hotlines and shelters were found to be culturally inappropriate and at times required money which women did not have. Additionally, some women were said to be denied services at the shelters due to their inability to provide proof of citizenship (Jang et al 1990, cited in Raj and Silverman, 2002), and or sufficient space, or if the woman's residence status was dependent on the man, consistent with Iikaracan's (1996) findings.

Generally, a combination of cultural and legal restrictions, as well the immigration context, are shown to compound migrant women's ability to seek services that respond to domestic violence and acted as a means through which women were also kept in abusive relationships. In this case, such disadvantages highlight enhanced vulnerability to domestic violence in the host country.

2.4 Factors that lead to Domestic Violence in the Host Country

This segment tries to capture various linkages between migration and domestic violence as presented in the literature reviewed. This is in relation to both perceived and experienced factors that are considered to affect domestic violence and increase its occurrence during migration.

The relationship between migration and domestic violence has been examined from various angles by researchers and anthropologists. Several studies indicate that domestic violence increases among migrant women while in host countries (UNFPA 2006, Ahmad et al 2004, Raj and Silverman 2002, Bhattacharjee 1997, Matsuoka and Sorenson 1999). Among migrants, a complex interaction of culture, immigration laws and structural forces have been seen to combine and further exacerbate migrant women's vulnerability to domestic violence (Menjivar and Salcido 2002, Raj and Silverman 2002, Erez 2001, Bui and Morash 1999, UNFPA 2006).

However, the review of case studies of different experiences of migrant women, points out that the nature of domestic violence among migrant women and those in the host country are similar in many ways. They differ in how migrant women understand their vulnerabilities as rooted in their immigrant status, which may include lack of legal documentation, family and support

networks and the inability to communicate in the common language. These, among other factors, exacerbate their already vulnerable position (Menjivar and Salcido 2002). Raj and Silverman (2002) and Bui and Morash (1999) add that being caught between two cultures, theirs and that of a new country, and being in an environment where they are seen as alien increases migrant women's vulnerability to domestic violence.

According to Menjivar and Salcido (2002), the power dynamics for migrant couples in the host country changes particularly when women find work before their partners or when they have to work outside of the home when they previously did not. This change in gender roles challenges the power relationship of the man as the breadwinner and female as housewife, which then places women at risk of abuse as they became more independent. Menjivar and Salcido (2002) further note that the man's authority is threatened when he is without a job or with a part time employment. The cultural construct that men must provide for their wives and families play a significant role in influencing domestic violence among migrants. Echoing this, the Human Rights Watch (2000) observed that the construction of masculinity puts pressure on men to provide for their families financially. Yet, in such circumstances that prevail when people migrate, many have been reported as unable to find employment due to language difficulties and lack of adequate job opportunities as well as preference for white-collar jobs (Rhee 1997, Min 2001). Men in such a situation are therefore confronted with a grim situation of downward occupational mobility in the labour market. This is perceived as challenging the traditional role of men as providers and consequently may lead to domestic violence (Human Rights Watch, 2000).

Several theories have been advanced to examine the links between poverty and domestic violence. Felson and Messner (2000) argue that men may use violence when they lack other resources to control their partners' behaviour. Sattopima's (2004) findings, in her study on violence against Burundian refugee women in the Tanzanian camps indicated that women attributed domestic violence to the artificial environment of refugee camps, resulting from the husband's inability to assume normal cultural, social and economic roles. However, other studies that explored issues of violence and poverty had different explanations. Boonzaier (2006) argues that poverty alone may not facilitate domestic violence, but is likely to interact with the "lack of resources, poor living conditions, lack of services, opportunities and economic and political factors to increase men's tendency towards violence" (Boonzaier 2006: 138). According to Morash et al (2007), the need to maintain male privilege in the midst of such problems may contribute to such violence in the home. Either way, the significant issue in this argument is that when there are not enough finances in migrant families, as is often the case because of factors already reviewed here, the stress ultimately leads to domestic violence.

In addition to the above, among Korean immigrants Rhee (1997) noted that insufficient income earned by husbands makes it necessary for many women to seek employment immediately after their arrival. Given that, women adapt easily to occupational changes than men means that they are able to acquire jobs much easier than their husbands (Remmenick 2005). In contributing to household income, the cultural prestige of the man is perceived as being trampled upon as the man sees the woman as wanting to rub shoulders with her provider, and threatening traditional gender ideologies, which is likely to result into domestic violence (Min 2001, Boonzaier& De la Rey 2004 and Morash 2007).

Some women have been noted to adapt more easily than men to new norms and values in the immigration context. Min (2001) notes that this led to increased rates of divorce among Korean migrants and contributed to marital disputes. Raj and Silverman (2002), in their article on the roles of culture context and legal immigrant status on domestic violence, note that unwillingness to conform to cultural gender roles due to acculturation in the new environment may also increase exposure to domestic violence. However, Dasgupta's (2000) findings indicate that some South Asian migrant women were forced by their husbands to adapt to the American ways of how women should look, such as acquiring a small body and their dressing style, a failure of which led to more violence through the controlling of food intake and other means of violence against women. Therefore, influences in the norms and values of countries of origin as well as those in the host community that men felt women should adapt to, were seen as a basis and justification for abuse of migrant women.

Another factor that fuels domestic violence among the immigrants was traced to the isolation from the support system of relatives, friends, and neighbours who could have assisted them at home and whose absence make women more vulnerable to abuse in an immigration context. According to the Human Rights Watch (2000), extended networks acted as deterrents to abuse among Burundian refugee women while they were still at home. Abraham (1998) adds to this by noting that among South Asian women, the lack of family and social networks made women feel powerless and thus vulnerable to abuse as their source of support and help with abuse or stress was out of reach. The disruption of the extended family support network and lack of employment of men among Hispanic families in the United States was also identified and documented to lead to domestic (Kantor et al 1994).

Among urban migrant women, women's' social and economic dependency on their partners has been related to several interrelated factors. Nayaran (1995) notes the lack of familiarity with the new environment and absence of support networks. Morash et al (2007) identifies husbands' refusal of women to work and to acquire training to improve their skills as well as limitations to acquire jobs due to their lack of legal documentation and economic support networks as factors fostering dependency of women and forcing them to remain and tolerate abusive relations. Literature indicates contradicting issues about women's agency in such circumstances, while some of it notes that dependent women are unable to leave abusive relationships due to their inability to acquire alternatives given the interrelated limiting factors (Morash et al 2007), Other literature indicates that women have agency even in the face of violence as they make plans to leave the abuser. In her study of African, Caribbean, Irish, Jewish, and South Asian women in the United Kingdom, Chantler notes that women "made arrangements to escape with children, they acquired official documents without the husbands knowledge as well as bought plane tickets using credit cards being owned for some time to escape " (2006:31).

Immigration laws of the host country have also been indirectly noted for escalating domestic violence among migrants. Immigrant women's continued exposure to violence has been linked to the lack of independent legal status for both documented and undocumented immigrant women (Coomaraswamy 2000). Menjivar and Salcido (2002) argue that migrant women's quandary is compounded by the fact that they may only have citizenship through marriage thus making them unable to leave abusive relationships for fear of loss of citizenship. This may be the case in situations when migrant women get married to men who are citizens of the country. The lack of citizenship may force women to resort to marriage as a means of acquiring citizenship or finding

alternative survival strategies. In a study of refugee women in Canada, MacLeod et al (1990) indicate that the lack of legal status among immigrant women experiencing abuse lead to fear to report domestic violence to police or criminal justice systems in the host country. Findings also indicate that women whose immigration status depends on the partner may be more tolerant of domestic violence due to the fear of deportation and are at more risk of abuse than other women are in general. Mail order brides and women who come as spouses are among those in this category that were found to be more vulnerable to abuse given that some husbands use threats to prevent women from reporting abuse to remain subservient or to get them not to leave (Nayaran 1995:100, Abraham 2000, 1998, Bauer et al 2000). Migrant women's risk of deportation is therefore seen to provide perpetrators who have legal citizenship with more power to control women, in the absence of women's lack of income or their families and support networks to turn to (Raj and Silverman 2002, Erez 2001).

Negative attitudes towards domestic violence by the police and their failure to intervene and arrest the perpetrators were identified by Sattopima (2004) as influencing the increase of domestic violence among migrants. The Human Rights Watch (2002) study on domestic violence among Burundian refugees in Tanzanian refugee camps also identified that attitudes and practices of the police and other service providers towards domestic violence sometimes influenced refugee women to perceive domestic violence as normal. Among the Pakistani community, the police were reported to pass on cases of domestic violence to the traditional courts without handling them. This was seen as sanctioning domestic violence as normal, which could likely lead to its escalation in such a community (Siddiqui 2008). Midlarsky et al (2006);

however, notes that some cases taken to traditional courts among South Asian migrant women were dismissed due to the acceptance of that particular form of violence in the community.

2.5 Conclusions and Critique of Reviewed Literature

The literature reviewed has shown that domestic violence in an immigration context is fostered by a combination of multiple interrelated factors. This makes it difficult for one to isolate a specific contributing factor to violence. Culture, which is portrayed through socialisation of men's power, resulting into control and dominance over women; is represented as static during migration, an aspect which literature reflects as playing a bigger role in increasing domestic violence among migrant women and influencing their understanding and responses to domestic violence.. However, as elaborated above, culture alone is inadequate to explain domestic violence in an immigration context. Rather, it is interrelated with contextual, social, legal, and economic barriers through which domestic violence is experienced and perpetrated.

The review of literature also represents a gap in studies conducted in Africa as it is basically focused on South Asian communities and their cultures. This makes it unclear how such findings could be relevant for women from different cultures for example in Africa. Similarly, insufficient attention in the literature reviewed above is paid to the role of the context in shaping the understanding of domestic violence during migration an aspect this study will look at in detail. The literature also covers less of what women themselves emphasise as the main effects and meanings of domestic violence as well as the discourses they draw in explaining such effects in the context of migration.

2.5.1 Methodological Issues

Studies reviewed above show that different methodologies are used in assessing the nature understanding, responses to and experiences of intimate partner violence among immigrant women. Qualitative methods including face to face and telephone interviews, focus group discussion techniques are common. One would not dispute the use of several methods, particularly given that the causes and contributing factors of intimate partner violence among migrant women are also complex.

2.5.2 Sample Selection

Several limitations exist in the selection of the study sample in some of the reviewed studies to the extent that one would question the representativeness of the samples included. In the study conducted by (Bui and Morash 1999; Rasool 2004; Walcholz 2000; and Gill 2004) there was a tendency to include in the sample only abused migrant women who were accessing services at shelters, resource and or advocacy centers leaving out those not accessing services. Much as such a technique eased the identification of participants; such a sample may not have been representative of migrant women not seeking help yet in most cases they have been known to constitute the majority of survivors. Inclusion of a sample of women from the general community not accessing such services would have enhanced the representativeness of the results.

In addition, Ahmad et al (2004), investigating the relationship between South Asian immigrant women's patriarchal beliefs and perceptions of spouse abuse; used telephone directories in identification of participants. This technique made it easy to identify participants based on their nationality and areas of location. However, potential participants without telephone lines such as the homeless and women in shelters or other institutions were left out (Smith 1999). Such a

selection seemed biased towards a sample of a specific category of women (those able to afford telephones in their homes) thus not representing the different categories of South Asian women in the location of interest.

2.5.3 Data Collection

Most of the studies reviewed, mainly relied on qualitative methods of data collection thereby increasing the understanding to the nuances of the phenomenon being studied (Patton 2002). However these two studies Bauer 2000; Morash et al 2007, relied only on the use of focus group discussions. Although focus group discussions elicit a range of responses and ideas from participants and are quick means to collect information from participants (Wilkinson 2004); the sole use of focus group interviews without triangulating with other data collection techniques in these studies posed a limitation of the inability to capture the subjective experiences and or perceptions on intimate partner violence from the individuals stand point. In addition the individual differences that may have existed within the participants of the study might have not been captured during analysis as information was collected at a group level (Ellsberg and Heise 2005). Methodological Triangulation as used in Rasool et al (2004) study where focus group interviews were complemented by a survey, and or face to face case study interviews could have added more weight to the findings in terms of a deeper understanding of intimate partner violence among migrant women and the associated risks and consequences from different angles.

Finally, a related study examined domestic violence in the Vietnamese American family and factors associated with it. Despite having such rich and detailed data acquired by the use of in depth face to face interviews and a telephone survey, Bui and Morash's (1999) study mainly used quantitative statistical methods in their analysis. Although findings were able to be

generalized, the quantitative analysis method may have only provided superficial results which limit the understanding of intricate issues underlying domestic violence in the family's studied (Ellsberg and Heise 2005). As an example, physical and emotional abuse was analyzed by the use of Conflict Tactic Scales which obscured meanings participants attached to experiences of domestic violence as emphasis was mainly on measuring nature of acts of physical and emotional violence.

Despite the above issues, all the studies in the literature reviewed, employed the language understood by the participants in data collection which enhanced understanding of the questions asked and responses by both the participants and interviewers.

CHAPTER THREE

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

3.0 Introduction

In this analysis section, the main findings of the study indicate that, the migration context played a major role in influencing the understanding of the effect of migration on domestic violence. Domestic violence was understood to have increased by migration through intersections of unequal power relations and broader migration related factors. Findings show that the context influenced urban migrant women's understanding of domestic violence as the meanings from which they drew their explanations were linked directly to the discourses related to experiences of migration. Findings also reveal that participants drew on the interrelated specific migration-related discourses including poverty their legal status, the fear of public violence, and xenophobia to explain their perceptions of the effect of migration on domestic violence.

Further analysis indicated that enduring domestic violence during migration is not necessarily influenced by love but by need for survival and the fear of existing public violence.

Among discourses drawn on, urban migrant women also used the discourse of culture to contest domestic violence arising from reversal of gender roles, and to explain how culture can be protective of domestic violence. This discourse was also used to justify the non-utilization of available domestic violence services in South Africa and to romanticize cultural ways of resolving domestic violence in their home country.

3.1 Understanding of Domestic Violence in the Context of Migration

This section presents how domestic violence and / or intimate partner violence is defined, understood and explained by migrant women in the context of migration. The findings indicate that migrant women's understanding of domestic violence is mostly influenced by the migration context, from which participants drew on to explain the meanings they attach to domestic violence.

In their narratives of the story of migration, participants indicated that they migrated due to a combination of reasons which included finding jobs to support their children and elderly parents, escaping from war and conflict with people in power, escaping from domestic violence, as well as joining husbands who had temporarily or permanently migrated to South Africa. Although women explained these as personal reasons at times, for them, it seemed to become difficult to separate political from personal reasons given that their personal reasons for migration could have been precipitated by political reasons ─ war or economic crises in countries of origin.

The increased exposure to domestic violence was among the many challenges that the participants identified in this study. The domestic violence discourse, however, did not feature early in the narratives of migrant women. It occurred suddenly and changed the flow of the narratives of a happy beginning during migration with their partners to include several interrelated incidences of domestic violence and its effects on women until the end of their story. In relation to this change, most of the participants especially those who had been married to the same persons before migration indicated that they did not know and could not explain what made

their husbands change and become violent. Participant's narratives of the migration trajectory therefore is reflected to be that of a short time of happiness with sudden changes and a long time of suffering brought about by domestic violence expressed through men's domination and control, combined with their immigration status and factors in the new environment they were living in. This trend mainly determines how they later perceived and explained domestic violence in an immigration context.

Perceptions of which actions can be defined as domestic violence vary greatly according to the social context and language that migrant women use to explain the phenomenon. Language as interpreted from the feminist poststructuralist view "facilitates our ways of thinking, speaking and giving meaning to the world around us" (Weedon 1987:32). In relation to this study, the language women used portrayed their thoughts and the meanings they attached to domestic violence in the context of migration. There have been several debates that centre on women's perceptions of domestic violence in various studies. Whereas Menjivar and Salcido (2002) argue that cultural values, norms held by migrant women about their countries of origin determine perceptions and responses to domestic violence, Yoshihama (2001) argues that this also depends on the partners' characteristics and the situational context.

The findings in this study indicate that most participants understood and explained domestic violence based on personal incidences and experiences related to their immigration status in South Africa. The above findings corroborate the findings from the national survey of violence against women in South Africa which indicate that "survivors of violence rarely think in terms of

definitions like researchers but rather find it easier to talk about comprehensive definitions than theoretical concepts" (Rasool 2002: 29-30).

In selectively emphasising the experiences of domestic violence in South Africa and playing down those acts of domestic violence experienced in their home country, participants may have concentrated on only those incidences that they considered to make sense to their experiences at this given point in time given that "human agency determines what gets included or excluded in a narrative" (Riessman 1993:1). They might also have left out actions they thought did not constitute domestic violence in an immigration context because meanings change depending on context, social cultural factors and the people one interacts with (Burr 1995, Weedon 1999). Related to this, the following are examples of how participants typically defined domestic violence based on what they experienced:

> When he is beating me, following me where I stay after divorcing him, threatening me, taking away my kids from me, it is when a man does something that hurts you intentionally (Gorreti 37 years, divorced).

> It involves beating a woman, sleeping outside home with other women and you do not know where he is. It is generally mistreating a powerless person. When a man sees that you are weak powerless and or poor he takes advantage of you and says and does bad things…bad things…to you that hurt your spirit and make you feel useless and humiliated (Lillian 20 years, married).

> ….It involves taking advantage of a person in a desperate situation, a person you consider powerless, and at your mercy (Jackie 25 years, single).

> It is when someone controls you and makes your life hard because you can not fight back; he determines what you do where you go without your consent. When he takes your money by force threatens to kill you beat you in front of people… (Cindy, 30 single).

As seen from the above extracts, participants defined and presented domestic violence in terms of physical and psychological abuse mainly consisting of beating and feeling hurt. These findings relate to Adames et al (2005) and Gill (2004) studies. Their findings also indicated that immigrant women mostly explained domestic violence in terms of physical aspects; although, they also mentioned verbal and emotional violence as in this study. However, unlike in Gills' study on South Asian women's experiences of domestic violence where women "uncovered meaning of domestic violence through language as they told their stories, and use of many words" (2004:470) participants in this study clearly explained domestic violence using the exact words related to their experiences and not using categories to represent their experiences.

In addition and in contrast to Adames et al's (2005) findings, most participants in this study did not categorise domestic violence as being physical, verbal, psychological and sexual. This was with the exception of three participants who had higher education than the rest. The focus on physical violence may have derived from the fact that they physically experienced sexual and psychological violence in their bodies and can explain this much easier as it forms part of their lived experiences ─ this to them was a significant marker of reality (Harding 1987). Physical violence being the most "obvious type of violence and most spoken about in society," as Rasool et al (2002: 28) indicate, this may not necessarily make women claim that they experienced domestic violence without attaching meaning and experience of their lived reality (Elliot 2005).

In the above accounts, participants' understandings of domestic violence also included men using the immigration context-based problems to abuse a woman who is powerless, weak, unable to fight back, poor and in a desperate situation. Using such definitions, migrant women

positioned themselves as vulnerable to abuse and unable to resist it owing to the conditions migration has exposed them to. In doing so, they drew on the discourse of global sisterhood of oppression of women that Mohanty (1988) refers to as one which "universalises all women as powerless, who defend themselves against violence and men as perpetrators of violence who are more powerful" to justify their levels of vulnerability and reasons they felt were responsible for their experiences of domestic violence.

The two excerpts below highlight participants' views of reasons they think account for domestic violence:

> Okay, I was helpless and I had no one, I was defenceless, so they had power over me. So I had to be submissive to them in order to survive…here I had nothing that was mine…I was depending on other people for survival. They knew that I had no one and they took advantage. That was the major thing. They all knew that for sure… (Jackie 25 years single).

> …As I said earlier, men er er…they take advantage of women who are desperate. And who can not defend themselves, like me , I can not run back home, I do not have an Identity document, no job**,** I can not even feed myself (Lillian 20 years married).

This finding suggests that migrant women draw their perceptions of domestic violence from how they were treated by their partners as well as how they viewed themselves in relation to the situation they were in as migrants. They also drew on patriarchal and essentialist discourses that present women as weak compared to men and thus unable to resist abuse. The reference to being defenceless seems to point to the inability to survive on their own or the lack of alternatives to get out of an abusive relationship, which is seen as giving power to their partners to abuse them. In constructing themselves as such, women in these situations saw abuse as inevitable and represented themselves as entirely without agency. This representation is clearly seen in the

second extract depicting feelings of helplessness brought about by their immigration status and the related hardships they encountered during this time. Their understanding of domestic violence therefore moves beyond the classical definitions of domestic violence by researchers to include the understanding of their position as migrant women in relation to their barterers and the environment they are exposed to and how women traditionally are viewed in relation to men.

However, the immigration context was not always seen to compromise women's agency in this way. The context in which domestic violence was experienced is one other factor that women considered to have an impact on their understanding of domestic violence. In this study, three of the participants indicated that they started resisting domestic violence largely by drawing on the human rights discourses prevalent in the host country. According to Burr, "our knowledge and understanding of the world is a product of our social processes" (1995:4) Therefore, given the high levels of the human rights discourse directed at the prevention of domestic violence in South Africa as well as significant public debates on gender violence (Vetten 2000), migrant women begun to understand and explain domestic violence drawing on such existing discourses that could possibly have not been the way that domestic violence was addressed and understood in their home country. The discussion with Gorreti (37 years divorced) expounds on this:

> He was preparing to chase me. He realised he could not handle me anymore because I learnt my rights…
> **Monica**: So you learnt your rights when you are here in South Africa**.**
> **Gorreti** .Yes when I came here, I was only 22 years, I was young, so all these years I started learning. I started talking in 2002. I told him you cannot treat me humiliate me like that. You cannot beat me like this. Prior to this, he would do what he likes with me, I was like his property.

When asked what she thinks contributed to the conflict in the home, Gorreti further explains in this way:

> I think because he realised I refused and resisted to be mistreated, I would not allow to be mistreated and I had learnt my rights which he did not like. He wanted the old submissive woman who came from Congo.

In the new context, women's narratives that make sense of the world change due to new experiences, people and the institutional talk they encounter in this environment. According to Berns et al (2007:253), institutional talk — referring to the discourses used by institutions, groups and organisations "enables survivors of gender violence to interpret their own experiences, which may lead them to identify themselves as victims". Therefore, in a new context where domestic violence is framed differently in this case by human rights advocates, media, agencies, as well as fellow women, migrant women's understanding of domestic violence is seen to have changed from being acceptable and normal to being contested. Thus, women drew on the rights-based discourse to resist and contest domestic violence as they now felt it was against their human rights. However, far from simply celebrating the South African Human Rights discourse; women also understood the South African environment to influence their partner's violence in such a way that such resistance only produced more abuse. Minor as it was, the migration context in this case served as an opening for women to learn their rights and contest the status quo.

Migrant women also perceived domestic violence in the study to be learned by their partners from the rampant acts of domestic violence existing in the South African community, from the new city environment and through the influence of other migrant friends who influenced their partners to take alcohol and drugs. According to Jewkes "South African society is very violent…all forms of interpersonal violence are very common" (2002:1604b). Based on this and their observations of high rates of domestic violence practiced in South Africa, they could have

believed that their husbands learnt to become violent from what they saw being done in the new environment. In this case, women derived their understanding from a kind of social learning theory in order to explain their partner's violence and the recent violence they experienced (Finn 1986). Accounts of Lillian, Stella and Chantal who migrated to join their husbands bring out this view:

> …He has learnt South African men's behaviours of beating women and disrespecting women… (Lilian 20 years married)
>
> **Monica**: So are you saying that men in your country do not beat women?
>
> Lillian: They do, but here it is worse. Every woman is beaten, these people here enjoy beating their women, and it is their hobby. He also has influence from friends…who have been spoilt by the big city, they have taught him to smoke Daga,[weed] that thing is bad for him, when he takes it he changes and comes and beats me even when I keep away from him… but when he doesn't take at least he understands.
>
> My husband was this saint. the nicest man you have. have never. seen… I can not tell you. All the five years we were married. he never mistreated me in anyway I can consider as violent. He …he treated me like a bride everyday….but after living… living er in this country… he started becoming violent… I mean he started seeing and practicing what the South African men in the neighbourhood did…beating insulting and mistreating their women as if they were not human beings (Stella 32 years married).
>
> This new place has changed him completely. He drinks heavily, he smokes, we are having conflicts and less money than we used to have at home… the exposure to new things, new life of the city has made him change his behaviour and wants to behave as if he is not Congolese (Chantal 28 years married).

An analysis of the three accounts indicates that the respondents understood domestic violence as learned from the new environment in South Africa, since it was not extreme before migration as suggested in their narratives. The participants also portray their partners with double identities of a good person (non-violent) while in their countries of origin and that of a changed person (violent person) whose violence they blamed on the effects of the new environment, but not the

actors. Stella's reference to her partner as a 'saint' draws on the biblical understanding of the exceptional holiness of a saint; she associates this with him while in her home country, in order to paint a picture of him as a good person who could not possibly have been abusive without any other influence. Chantal's account, in addition, seems to depict the role culture plays in shaping acceptable behaviour — the lack of which results in her partner becoming violent. Their narratives relating to the effect of the new environment seem to suggest that their former environments were violence-free or there was some kind of control; this inhibited men's violence towards their wives that is missing in the city they migrated to. Further discussions on how they the romanticised home and culture will be dealt with later in the report.

In keeping with the emphasis women placed on the external influences, domestic violence was seen to occur due to other factors that participants attributed to forces beyond their partner's control. Migrant women in this study, who were living with their husbands prior to migration, explained that they did not know what had changed their husbands to become abusive. The violence was attributed to the stress of the new environments, witchcraft, peer influence, alcoholism and the lack of a family to intervene in the problems, among others. Ferraro and Johnson (1983) in the study that investigated women's experiences of battering indicate that abused women place domestic violence beyond their perpetrators control when trying to make sense of it. In this case, occurring events in the context of migration influenced migrant women's knowledge of causes of domestic violence in South Africa. Women associated domestic violence with current incidents and behaviours their husband learned while in South Africa compared with how they used to behave or treat them in their home country.

Two of the women in the study also noted how migration leads to new and unexpected challenges that trigger domestic violence among immigrant families. Eliana and Sophie, who are both refugees and had partners who were refugees, felt that their husbands or partners abused them because their partner's stress and hardships translated into violence onto the migrant women. Sophie felt that her husband was frustrated because life in the city is more expensive than at home. She adds that they had to pay for everything as compared to home where food was cheap and accommodation was free and they could live on a little money. Sophie observed that:

> All this things make him crazy and he ends up angry and mistreats me (Sophie 26 years married).

> He himself the migration stress is affecting him so he transferred his outside frustration on me. It is worse if you are a refugee woman because the man has his own frustrations of being a refugee he ends up transferring his own frustrations on you. He will abuse you to the end (Eliana 40 years old and single).

Eliana held the same perception of her partner who is a migrant as well. These participants drew on the family violence approach that locates domestic violence as emanating from the "external stress factors affecting the family and as a learned behaviour" (Abraham 1998:218), to explain their partner's violence towards them. Participants seemed to remove the blame of domestic violence from their spouses thereby justifying the abuse and implying that their partners may not have abused them in the absence of such migration stress. Boonzaier (2001) citing Eisikovits and Buchbinder (1999) argues that women, at times, use this to invalidate the perpetrator as non-violent and present themselves not as victims, an aspect that participants in this study could have intended to portray. However, they could also have been aiming at portraying how the environment that migrants are faced with is stressful for men as well.

Participants, (Eliana, Martha, and Susan), resisted the ideology of male benevolent leadership that their partners used to justify their abusive actions. Eliana and Martha revealed that their partners started choosing for them people to talk to and not to talk to, and places to go to and not to go to, claiming it was for the women's own good: Martha's narratives brings this out,

> …He chooses for me friends. When I talk with people, he does not know he beats me up. Sometime he stops me from leaving home…so a man will always try. He puts it like he is protecting you. but he is protecting his love. But in a way it is jealousy. He doesn't want his woman to be taken away from him. In that way he will be stopping you to be free. He would tell you baby do not do this; do not mix with that one. In that way I would tell him that he is controlling me . so in that way we may get a conflict (Martha 26 year's unmarried).

In relation to such acts, participants perceived domestic violence as related to men's protection of their own interests. Hence, men were limiting their freedom. Furthermore, both participants noted that their attempts to express the need for freedom and their dislike of 'over-protection' instead resulted in domestic violence. In this case, Martha, Eliana and Susan did not understand jealousy as an expression of love as Towns and Adams (2001) findings indicate, but an aspect used by their partners to limit their freedom and from whose resistance domestic violence arose.

Finally, migrant women's narratives revealed that they explained domestic violence by extending it to other perpetrators besides their husbands or partners who abused them. In their explanations, mothers-in-law and sisters-in-law who insulted and beat them up are among those that Gorreti, Susan and Harriet included as perpetrators while explaining domestic violence incidences in South Africa. This could have been due to the belief that a woman marries into a family not necessarily to a chosen man who becomes the future husband. As Harriet notes:

> One day his mother came and told him that we do not marry people, who speak Swahili, they marry those who speak Lingala. I asked him why he did not tell me that before. But he continued saying that he didn't

> know. I kept on feeling like an outcast. Eventually the mother started harassing me so that I can leave the sons place. You know marriage is not only for two people, it would involve the other relatives of the man. I could have gone, because I now had three children and my sister did not have money to care for us, so I stayed and persevered **(**Harriet 22 years divorced).

In this case, their understanding of domestic violence reflected the violent actions that they experienced that were more or less, like what they experienced from their partners. In relation to this view Abraham (1998), referring to South Asian immigrant women, notes why extended kin are among perpetrators of domestic violence:

> Because marriage is an alliance of two families and the extended kin are often the partners in perpetration of domestic violence either through silence or active involvement. It is within the marriage that patriarchal control is exercised over a woman based on her multiple subordinate statutes as wife, daughter- in –law, sister-in – law, and mother (1998:221).

Marrying into a family traditionally therefore gives power to the extended kin to 'discipline' a woman as representatives of the husband. In this case, understanding domestic violence to include other people than the husband could have been derived from women's cultural understanding of being married into a family and not to a specific person. It could also have been derived from the similarity of the nature of violence they were exposed to by their in-laws to that of their intimate partner as well as their perceptions on why the violence occurred and their cultural understanding of marriage. In cases where these seem to be related to their partner's actions, survivors may not likely separate the different perpetrators but group them in the same category. Therefore, the participants did not view domestic violence as confined to one specific intimate person as the classical definition among western scholars seems to conceptualise it.

As seen above, the women had different understandings of what constituted domestic violence in the immigration context. This implies that women's understanding of domestic violence varied with the way and the context within which domestic violence was experienced and interpreted (Burr 1995, Saltzmann 2002). In this case, their understanding and explanations of domestic violence were strongly shaped by the context they were in. Given that meanings can never be 'fixed' but change with interactions and context (Gergen 1973, Burr 1985), the changed understanding of domestic violence in a different social context of migration may have influenced the meanings that migrant women attached to domestic violence. This made them define and understand domestic violence differently than they did while in their home countries. These findings to some extent relate to Adames (2005) findings in their study of immigrant Latina's conceptualisation of intimate partner violence. In this study, women perceived intimate partner violence more of a "collective experience originating from gender inequality and rooted in external factors including cultural norms and stresses related to migration as well as learned from their experiences and or witnessing experiences of others" (2005:353-4).

3.2 The Immigration Context and Links with Domestic Violence

The previous chapter has shown that urban migrant women defined domestic violence in an immigration context differently from scholars and researchers and their understanding is seen as influenced by the migration context and the related experiences there in. This section builds on the previous chapter to explore how migrant women related their experiences of domestic violence to their specific immigration status and their perceptions of this effect.

In an immigration context, gender has been said to interact with factors including immigration laws, racism, economic hardships, cultural dislocation, language skills, lack of family and social networks and the lack of access to services for responding to domestic violence to aggravate levels of domestic violence among migrant women (Kentor et al 1994, Bui and Morash 1999, Korelora et al 2003, Menjivar and Salcido 2002, Raj and Silverman 2002).

Similarly, this study identified interrelated and complex factors related to migration that the women believed affected domestic violence. In the findings, all migrant women felt that migration increased the levels of domestic violence. Only two, (where one) felt that migration reduced domestic violence, and the other thought the effect was the same because she suffered in a similar way. The single women in particular indicated they had never experienced domestic violence due to their marital status. In this case, they conceptualised domestic violence to occur only among married persons. Among those who were married while at home and still had their husbands after migration, believed that the fear of being divorced because home was near, their culture, the protective environment of family and religious institutions prevented or minimised

men's violence. The few who experienced 'acts of domestic violence' while in their home country considered them 'normal and negligible problems' that they explained as shouting at them when gender roles were not performed. The husband's jealousy, as well as when he spent the night away from home were additional factors that were categorised as normal acts by the women. According to the majority of the women in this study domestic violence meant beating and since this did not occur while at home, some of the participants used this understanding to explain that they had not experienced domestic violence.

Among the main factors migrant women perceived as having an effect on domestic violence in an immigration context was dependency on their husbands and or intimate partners. In their responses, they felt that this was due to the rampant poverty they suffered due to either failing to acquire jobs because of lack of documentation or information, the refusal of employers to recognise their asylum seeker permits as valid documentation for employment, isolation and threats by their partners and general lack of resources. The participants felt that their partners made use of these immigration context-based factors embedded in their immigration status to behave violently because of the increased power the men had over the migrant women in terms of resources, legal, education and social status. According to Bui and Morash (1999), resources and basic skills that migrant men come with give them an advantage over women who lack such in an immigration context. In this case, this gives them a different class and power as compared to migrant women, which, if misused, results in domestic violence.

In this study, migrant women felt that their exposure to domestic violence was a result of their dependency on men. This they linked to the immigration laws and status that limited those

without recognised legal status to work or be employed and to report abuse. In relation to this, participants felt that domestic violence in an immigration context was a result of having 'nothing' — where nothing was defined as having no one else to help them and being financially dependent on their partners as well as being in a new environment they knew little about. The women felt these factors combined to exacerbate their already vulnerable position as women. The excerpts from the participants illustrate this and other issues clearly:

> If your man discovers that you do not have papers… er you become more vulnerable because he knows you can not access employment, you can not feed yourself, you can not return to your home country and you do not have money. This makes his control as head of the home even much stronger you can not escape this power and control when you are on the disadvantaged side, and in a country that you are a foreigner your only option is to obey and be a good wife while bleeding inside (Cindy 30 years single).

> I think that because both of us are poor because of being without identity documents and therefore no jobs, and the issue of poverty while here is the main reason we fight. When he goes out to his girl friends who have money, he looks down upon me because I am poor. However, he is also poor; I do not see the difference between the two of us. At home, we would have found other survival means. He would not do that. I wish I had money. . Perhaps he would like me as he used to. However, before we were home. I still did not have money. I do not understand why this is coming up here. He is not fair…When a man sees that you are weak and powerless and or poor he takes advantage of you …he will treat you like he wishes, like his cow. But if you have your money he can not do that, at least not as much as when you have nothing (Lilian 20 years married).

> Being a refugee is a problem, being a woman is a problem, surviving is a problem, you know…men can survive and they can not allow themselves to be abused. But we women are naturally weak and need someone to depend on. Many (migrant) women are crying on the street, they take all abuse as okay. So they become a prey of the new environment because they are strangers. Many women are weak and do not have strength, men abuse them as a result and take everything as okay. Because women are not empowered, they have no power over the man so they treat them as property. They say as long as I provide food, clothing what do you want?. At home, I was not that kind of woman, I was so strong and outspoken. But here as a refugee, you do not have finance, as a refugee it's not easy to find a job. Even there is no one to assist you; even if the institutions are assisting they also do not give you enough. To escape that poverty, you have no choice, it is not easy, you end up being abused and because you have no choice. It is so hard to be a refugee and a woman. You will be taken advantage of, other people will rape you. Because of this situation, I

> turned into some submissive woman. I am strong now because my eyes are open… but throughout am… I am a strong girl fighting for life and grabbing life (Eliana 40 years single).
>
> Many women are experiencing similar things and problems due to the vulnerability issue of being poor and from a foreign country. They are beaten, humiliated sexually abused but they remain silent because of the triple problem of poverty, being a woman, and an asylum seeker… **(**Jackie 25 years single).

Participants drew on the economic discourse and their immigration status to justify their dependency on their husbands as well as the reasons why they are abused. Lilian however, perceived her husband's abuse to be a result of their change in location and not because she was dependent on him. At home she was still poor but there was no abuse. In her use of the analogy of being treated like a cow, Lillian tries to show how women in such circumstances may have no say as they are construed as property. In addition to this, Cindy considers the issue of women's lack of legal documentation as one factor which men employ to abuse women. In cases where women's low socio-economic status is combined with immigration laws that prohibit undocumented migrants from working, the situation of women may become worse as they can neither leave abusive relationships since they have to economically depend on their partners for survival in a foreign environment nor find employment or go back home due to their lack of legal papers as Lilian and Cindy indicate.

Various studies conducted on this issue indicate that the lack of legal documentation and women's legal dependence on their partners based on the 'green card attraction, and the mail order bride system' (where this refers to women, migrant men order from their countries of origin without having met them) (Menjivar and Salcido 2002:906. Erez 2001, Abraham 1998, Morash et al 2007, Raj and Silverman 2002, Anderson, 1993), increase migrant women's isolation and vulnerability to domestic violence as well as enhancing men's control and

dominance over their spouses. In these studies, men who are citizens and married to women who are migrants have been mostly identified to be abusive, which is not a similar finding of this study where analysis revealed that men who are migrants and have the same status as their partners abused them in the same way as those who are citizens.

Although the above participants blamed it on the social context, this sat alongside the discourse of essential weakness where the women constructed themselves as being made powerless by factors including gender inequality, lack of family and social networks, immigration laws and the broader structural forces in the migration environment which Cindy refers to as 'being on the disadvantaged side in a foreign country'. She depicts such powerlessness as 'bleeding inside'; possibly referring to the emotional effect consequences of domestic violence have on migrant women and the lack of agency, which the rest of the participants attributed to immigration factors. The use of such discourse enables Eliana, for example, to justify her current state of submissiveness and loss of self-confidence. The rest of the participants use it to explain why they think they experienced domestic violence and could not leave such relationships and therefore portray problems with the protection of migrant women.

In addition to the above, using a discourse of women's biological vulnerability, Eliana, Lilian, and Jackie, construct themselves as naturally weaker than men. They may have used this to justify their inability to resist physically their abusive partners, and to explain why domestic violence occurs among women. Yet on the other hand, Eliana presents herself as stronger while in her home country and in a position of resisting such abuse. Therefore, in managing competing

discourses of migration and essential womanhood, women may present themselves with double identities and capabilities depending on the contexts in which they are.

The reversal of gender roles and responsibilities was another factor that participants (Sophie, Lillian, Gorreti, Rehema) saw as one of the issues related to the migration context that exposed these married participants to domestic violence. There was a contradiction in their understanding of the impact women's work has on domestic violence. Some of the migrant women said they experienced domestic violence both in periods when they were able to work and earn income as well as when they were unemployed and dependent. Therefore being employed or unemployed was understood by participants to legitimise domestic violence. Sophie a Congolese refugee who gained employment before her husband, revealed that she was better off before the husband came but life changed after he joined her.

> During this time, he started quarrelling on a daily basis, that I was proud because I had money; I come late and expected him to keep the house. Eventually he started beating me saying that I do not respect him anymore because I know I have a job and I can do what I liked. I explained to him and he did not want to listen. I think he is beating me because I have money now, he tells me that I have got a big head because of money and that's why I want to divorce him because I know I can now take care of my self. He said that if I was not working like at home I would be waiting for him to give me money and would not quarrel with him… at home I was not working, I was a housewife, I had no money and we did not have any problems (Sophie, 28 years married).

The analysis of Sophie's perceptions indicates that, in relation to her economic achievements, her partner strengthened his male privilege and expressed it through acts of violence (Espiritu 1997). Domestic violence, in this case, was understood to stem from gender role reversals between the couple's and the spouse's perception that a woman's lack of money and therefore dependency on a man makes her obedient. In this study, as explained by the respondents, men's

expectation of women's gender roles seemed not to have changed with the movement to a new city environment since the traditional ideologies on women's gender roles did not change with migration (Menjivar and Salcido, 2002). Failure to come to terms with changed situations as in migration and the perception some men had that women are responsible for domestic work and as such cannot provide for the family was described by the women as a factor that contributes to domestic violence in an immigration context.

The above findings on one hand corroborate Min's (2001) findings among Korean immigrant women where changes in gender roles in terms of the woman becoming the breadwinner disrupted gendered practices of the man as provider and resulted in domestic violence. Kocakik et al also noted that "a woman working outside the home is likely to be abused as this is perceived by men as interfering into their territory of masculine identity" (2007:714-715). As such men use violence to resolve "such a crisis because it allows an expression of power that is otherwise denied" (Jewkes; 2002:1424 a).

Gorreti, Sophie, Lilian, and Stella also felt that their husbands only had interest in them when they had jobs and brought something home as opposed to increased exposure to domestic violence when they were unemployed and did not contribute anything. Their accounts below elaborate on the issue:

> We stayed together and we were happy but he was not working and did not have a job, so we used the money I got from my job…When I left the job, the father of the child could not give me any money and started mistreating me. He was beating me abusing me that I was useless, old and ugly, he would not give me food, he would buy his own food and eat alone and his child…When I am here he expects me to work and bring money, but I do not have an Identity document and cant find a job and the same applies to him. At home he would not do such a thing, to expect me to work and bring money, No….I would stay at home,

> do the house work and he would find the money, now if I do not have money or am not working, and everything I do deserves a beating or insults. You see. It is as if it is me who told him to leave home. It is not my problem but he tries to make me the cause of the problems that caused him to leave Zimbabwe (Lilian 20 years married).

> I started realising a change in my husband's attitude towards me, when I did not have a job. He started coming late, ordering me around, complaining about everything I did, what I would wear. Eventually he started beating me, telling me I was like a tick feeding from him and giving nothing in return in terms of money… but this was his work at home. And he did no harass me for it. I wonder now why he expected me to do it now (Stella 32 years married).

Lilian brings out one of the main strength of the use of narratives connecting the sequence of events as they happen and linking such events to what she considers the cause of violence. While challenging such domestic violence she draws on past events while at home to present a linear sequence of how life was in the past up to the changes, which have occurred due to migration.

The extracts above in addition show that the women's partners' gender role expectations seemed to change with location but the need to make women conform to male authority, through exercising supremacy over their wives remained constant. The participants also felt that providing for the home was the role of the man irrespective of the location and that they had their roles as women, which they were still fulfilling. In this case, they drew on the gendered role divisions of men and women to show that despite the changes in locations and circumstances of migration they as women were still productive and useful even though they did not bring money into the family. Hence, they depicted themselves as good people and used the same discourse to challenge their husband's inappropriate behaviours of abusing them when they did not contribute money to the family; a role they still felt was for their husbands.

The reproductive function of female participants also seemed to be emphasised more during migration and is reported by women as also giving rise to domestic violence. Eliana and Annet explained that because their spouses knew their vulnerability during migration, they used their power over them to deny them of their motherly role. On the other hand, while Susan felt as being forced to get pregnant irrespective of her condition of not being able to. Norah felt like she was forced to keep an unwanted pregnancy. Below is Eliana and Annet example of the above issues:

> …The first year I became pregnant he forced me to abort, that he did not want a child at this particular time… I cried so hard. I could not say no, he still did it in his profession without my consent. If I said no he would chase me and I had no one, I could not even take care of the child. In this place everyone is scared of other people no one can even give you shelter… (Eliana 40 years single).

> …He told me to abort and if I did not do it would mean that the child is not his, if it is, I would do what he said. Hmmm no he never beat me that one. Only that he never gave me anything for the child until she died. He told me he does not want to have children with foreigners. I do not know why…. yet he told me he loved me and he did not have a child. I do not know what is wrong with a foreigner. She is a person like other people. Does a child from a foreigner have a different blood from that of a South African? Eh, life can be hard. I really can't understand this world… the one man is beating you for not getting pregnant while the other is neglecting you for getting pregnant and does not want a child (Annet 37 years divorced).

In this account, Eliana shows how the lack of basic survival needs like a home and lack of networks and other means for survival can make migrant women without resources 'agree' to actions of domestic violence they could have avoided under different circumstances. She perceives her inability to make a decision to keep the pregnancy as reinforced by her situation of being poor which makes her feel incapable of even bringing up a child. In the same way, given that her partner was a refugee, she perceived it as migrant men's fear to take on responsibility thereby considering women with children as an additional burden to their immigration status.

On the other hand, Annet also perceived it as a mix of xenophobia and lack of love from her partner and related it to her previous marriage while in her home country where she was abused for not getting pregnant. Her narratives challenge domestic violence resulting from women's biological role as mothers or not being able to get pregnant, which she perceives as something that leads to domestic violence but should not be the case in actual sense. Norah, revealed that she was forced to keep an unwanted pregnancy by her South African boyfriend:

> When I told him that am pregnant but do not want the baby. He beat me up and told me that I must keep the baby. He stopped me from going any where on the presumption that I may abort. He refused me to talk to any one. When I went for antenatal services he battered me and even broke my tooth (Norah 22 years single).

Norah explained that she endured the battering and kept the pregnancy because she felt that she had no alternative for survival apart from being in a relationship with a male citizen who she perceived as taking advantage of her as a foreigner without legal documentation and who could not report to police for fear of deportation. According to Norah's narrative, women should have a choice to have or not have a child instead of being forced and abused because they are women.

The main issues that comes up in the above narratives are that a combination of factors including women's biological role as mothers and their gender roles combined with unequal power relations between men and women, contextual and structural limitations experienced in the new environment, as well as migrant women's perceptions of themselves as vulnerable combined increase exposure to domestic violence and keep them trapped in abusive relationships. The next section builds on this to show women's endurance of domestic violence and the main discourses they drew on to justify this.

3.2.1 For Love or Survival?

Literature that seeks to explain why women remain in abusive relationships, among other reasons tends to emphasise the notion of women's love for their partners as a justification women endure abuse and as a main reason for remaining in abusive relationships. See for example (Towns and Adams 2001, Wood 2001, Boonzaier 2004). In other instances, women have justified abuse and remaining in abusive relationships perceiving it as a sign of love (Rasool et al 2002). This study, however, had contradictory findings which indicated that during migration, migrant women did not perceive domestic violence as a sign of love, which would make them, remain in abusive relationships. It had been only before migration that some of the participants including Gorretti, Chantal, Rehema and Cindy used the 'dark romance' narrative when they perceived domestic violence as their fault and arising due to the lack of fulfilment of gender roles and as well used the 'gender narrative' where they saw men's domination and control as 'normal'(Wood 2001:246).

During migration, women drew on what Wood (2001:244) refers to as the 'new narrative' where they understood domestic violence as 'unacceptable in relationships' but had to endure it due to the lack of alternative solutions and a need for survival in a context where they are entangled with a myriad combined difficulties. Latta and Goodman (2005), in a study conducted among Haitian migrant women argue that such contextual factors made women perceive domestic violence as something they had to bear rather than fight against. In this study, leaving their partners, to most participants, was not an option due to the perceived financial difficulties and

risks in an unfamiliar environment, combined with the fear of an extra burden to care of children that Chantal and Sophie felt they would be faced with.

Contrary from Towns and Adam's (2001) findings where women's solution to their partners' violence was a provision of a 'perfect love' (2001: 568), in this study migrant women's perceptions of the solution to domestic violence was being obedient to the partner, doing what he wants and being submissive so as to continue having a place to stay and a means of survival.

As an example, later replying to whether she talked to anyone about the violence Eliana and others comment this way:

> Haaaa how would I do that when I was locked up… what do you mean, if they told him? I could not stay in his house. So whatever he said I obeyed to protect my self. The only thing I did is to stick there and stick there because I knew no one would help me…If he complained I would keep quiet all the time and listen, he would say, you know why you are poor, because you are stupid. If I answered him, .the way that .he would easily beat me. I avoided the stress and prayed to God. I did my best the way my boyfriend wanted me to. He was a good man; he would buy food, clothes but the rest, no. No but this is not important I wanted air, I wanted to breathe he would lock me in the house and take the key (Eliana 40 years, single).

> I try to do good things so that he can start seeing me differently but this has not helped at all. I have no friends to talk to because I fear to go out because his wife will report me. So I stay in doors. Some times I cry, even when am swollen from the beatings and he sends me to bring him something, from the shops I just obey. I just consider him as a father of my kids only. There is no love any more from me. I have nothing to do until I get a job. (Chantal 28 years married).

> So whatever he does, I ignore him and do what he wants. I think this helps when you ignore and obey he rarely beats you, but sometimes you feel so angry and answer back. And then the trouble begins. I am waiting for him to change, this is the last year, if he does not I will go to my sister, am also trying to find a job to leave him. It is the lack of a job that keeps me here… I need money to support my child (Lilian 20 years married).

Using the feminine constructions of being a good wife, where a good wife to Cindy and Lillian in the excerpt above means obedience and to Eliana and Chantal in addition to this meant doing the good things their spouses want, rather than providing love, was perceived by these participants as means through which domestic violence may be reduced and survival in an immigration context acquired. Eliana's reference to her intention not to leave as 'just stick there and stick there' indicates a lack of choice and then bearing with the situation for the sake of survival. She, however, constructs her partner with a divided personality of a violent and a good man although she sees the good in him as limited to basic needs he provided to her, whereas Chantal and Lillian did not seem to see any good in their partners, but say that, they just kept with them for the sake of children and lack of jobs and or income.

These accounts reflect that women did not take domestic violence to mean love. Therefore, the belief and hope that they will acquire jobs and leave the abusive relationships or to give it time due to the perception that the battering husband will change behaviour, determined why women remained in an abusive relationship. Lillian perceives time to have a transformative factor to domestic violence as opposed to Woods and Adams (2001) findings where participants thought that "giving more love" Bauer et al (2000:575) could change their partners.

In another example, hope and the desire to acquire basic needs they could not access on their own given their migrant status was another reason that participants felt made them remain in abusive relations and not report domestic violence. Specifically, participants say that they consented to such relationships and endured domestic violence only because of survival, where survival according to them meant acquiring a South African identity document but not because

there was ‘love’. Although this was not achieved in the end, from women’s perception, the acquisition of a South African identity document was looked at as something that would end their suffering as migrant women. The extracts below expounds on this.

> He is about 61 and I am now 25 so you can see the difference. So it did not matter that he was old, I needed to live I needed a solution. And the fact that he was going to marry me, I was going to be solid here in South Africa. So it was a great deal because really love was not there to be honest with you it was a matter of survival…I did not realise what was happening until my auntie came. He said we are not going to get married because he does not have money to buy a ring. He was very nasty to my auntie, he changed completely he changed to be another thing that I do not know. That is when I started noticing that big change (Jackie 25 years single).

> This guy was taking advantage because I was not settled , and I was with him because I was not settled, even how we hooked up it is because I had no place to go , no food and most of all I had to attach myself to a south African to help me get papers. That is what I thought at that time but now I know I could have done it by myself. Even from the way we hooked up, he knew he is the only person I trust and depended on and count on. He used to do this because he knew there is nowhere else, I can go and that is why he used to do this (Martha 26years unmarried).

> …I had no alternative being in a foreign place, no job, no one to turn to, no money, women are never friendly when it comes to assist fellow women, so I had to accept this man even if I would not have done so if I were in my country, but I needed him to help me out in terms of survival…that was my only concern. Since he was born here, and had hinted on marrying me and changing my status, I thought he was the perfect person to help me get papers and more especially the life passport a South African identity document… I endured all the abuse in the hope that one day I will get the papers and live my life but day by day, I got only beatings instead. Until I gave up and just live with my problem (Cindy 29 years unmarried).

Migrant women clearly felt that the asylum seeker permit did not provide them with the benefits they would have wanted to be entitled to or to a life. They would have wanted to live and as such opted for a South African identity document. The reference by which Cindy perceived as a ‘life

passport' indicated that its value is life itself or that it gives life and a living to persons like her in the context of migration. Jackie, on the other hand, refers to it as making her solid in South Africa and enables her to have a life. In this case opting for a South African identity document, despite some of the women having asylum seeker permits may point to the way women understand the importance and value of a South African identity book as well as the value a migrant may attach to it. In addition, Jackie's narrative goes to great pains to emphasise the irrelevance of love for her partner as necessary to solve her problem, but emphasises the South African identity document got through marriage to a South African man which she sees as a deal that has the capacity to change her life irrespective of the violence that accompanies it

The participant's narratives also indicate that the need for basic survival has the effect of emphasising the material function of marriage making women to engage in relationships of convenience due to an inability to cope as migrants, which may highly influence how they respond to domestic violence. In this situation, women thought that reporting domestic violence would jeopardise their acquisition of the South African identity document and as such had to endure it quietly. Among those who are undocumented, such a situation may be even worse as they may not be able to access health care or psychosocial services if the need arises due to fear of being reported which they said may result in arrest and or deportation (Bauer et al 2000, UNFPA 2006).

The accounts also reveal unequal power relations due to the differential legal status of the women and their partners. In all this, participants felt that their partners used their citizenship status to take advantage of them and that their immigration status and social status as women

exposed them to domestic violence because the men were aware they needed the South African identity document and would not do anything, like reporting domestic violence to the police, which would have jeopardised its acquisition.

As seen above, and in earlier examples in an immigration context, the women emphasised that they stayed in abusive relationships and endured domestic violence due to need for survival and not necessarily love for their partners. In this study, all women understood domestic violence as something that was wrong and unacceptable although they did not find a way of escaping it immediately. This finding is different from what some of the literature reviewed focusing on domestic violence and women's perceptions of why they stay emphasises, which states that love for the partner or violent acts from the partner are understood as love by the women and bind women in violent relationships. Such a situation could be a result of the fact that many of these studies are conducted in the west and thus draw on western literature or the fact that literature is from locations where marriage is emphasised as based on love and romance, or and also the fact that literature on these studies may be from locations where migrant women are accorded greater economic security.

3.2.2 Fear of Public Violence and its Effect on Private Violence

The previous section highlighted how most participants felt that they had to obey their partners and be submissive due to their desire for South African status in order to survive. According to them resistance and disobedience meant being denied basic assistance and being exposed to the unknown dangers they were trying to avoid. Migrant women in this study reported intense fear of public violence (Violence by strangers outside of the home). Most of them explained that they had to bear with the abuse as they had no one and nowhere to go implying that they could not go among people and places they did not know due to the perceived threat this seemed to pose.

Women's fear of public violence has been presented in literature from various perspectives. Some literature notes its impact on women's mobility, which further creates unequal access to resources and participation of women in the public spaces as compared to men (Smaoun 2005, cited in UNFPA 2006, Pateman 1989). Women's fear of crime of which domestic violence is one, has also been associated with behaviour socialised from childhood or adolescent periods (Pain 1997), implying that women's fear of crime is related to their socialisation process and therefore constituting it as being learned. However, such arguments may not entirely hold true in places where there are high rates of crime as in South Africa as the study findings later indicate.

Valentine (1992) in addition, associated the fear of crime in public places as compared to private spheres as emanating from the symbolic division of public and private spaces. According to her, women associate public spheres with a lack of safety and believe that they at least need a man's protection (Valentine 1989 cited in Pain 1997). Mooney also sees the problem as resulting from "liberal state designation of the home as private sphere, where there is less state interference in

domestic violence cases as power relations are left unchallenged and in the hands of the man in the home (2000: 28). This study however, goes beyond these observations to look at how the immigration context may enhance urban migrant's women's fear of public violence and how such perceptions could lead to the understanding that private violence is a better option than public violence.

Accordingly, findings in this study point to the fact that being a migrant and factors associated with women's interpretations of the issues within the context they were in, for example, poverty and dependency, xenophobia and high levels of crime heightened their perceptions of fear of public violence as opposed to private violence (domestic violence). In the context such as that of South Africa, where there are high crime rates, including abuse of women, the fear of public violence is likely to be enhanced much more by ones awareness and presence of the high risk of crime than socialisation or the private and public divide as the women explain. Below:

> The same quarrels and humiliation continued again and again. He would complain about every thing, where were you, my dressing, he would say that he was working hard and I was wasting his money. I begged him not to lock me in the house. I lived four years crying suffering, he would insult me everyday, and I would not go out. I have no other choice… I have no choice .I have no choice. But what can I do, I cannot be with other people I do not know may be they have another baggage I do not know. I am trying to find a job but it is difficult but I am trying to remain strong. This is my life. I have to keep with this man instead of being on the street; I would rather be beaten, suffocated abused than staying on the street until the right time comes. If I do not have a relationship with him, he cannot help me, I need basic needs for my school, food, transport, school and he is the only one who can help me (Eliana 40 years single).

> No am scared of going anywhere, even to go to the shops or make a phone call. He told me I will get shot or will be raped if I got outside. So I have always stayed at home and only talked to my one friend, I have. I am so scared of moving among people I do not know, and this place is full of crime and HIV, I do not want to be a victim. I will rather stay here for until I get used (Harriet, 22 divorced).

> He abused me most of the time, but what could I do really, I had no one, no money to cater for myself, I feared to be on my own, what if I was attacked in a strange place, which would take care of me.? So the best way was silence it solves many problems, my mother told me that. So I had to seal my mouth in order to have a shelter and to remain safe or else I would find myself on the street, where people here could even take advantage of me because am a foreigner… since we are not wanted here … if it is back home, I would may be bear because there are friends and relatives around but in such a strange place and known to have all this rape and violence and crime I doubt if I would last a night alive or without being raped. So I thought to myself, this man might be bad but he keeps me safe from many dangers of the outside world. I vowed to bear with all until I found a suitable way to leave… (Rehema 32 years married)

In the above accounts, the women considered the outside environment to be more dangerous than the home where they experienced domestic violence. Bograd attributes this to the exclusive focus on crime as more prevalent on the 'streets which reinforces the idea that the home is safer' (1988: 19). His argument may speak to migrant women's fears of public violence due to the known high rates of crime as they emphasise in their narratives.

Women's repeated reference to the fear of the street, as a the public domain, seems to associate the public space as no space, or as no where, with nothing and no one that could be of help but that could only cause danger to them. Such an understanding is seen as increasing their fear. It is rather surprising to note that women associate the public sphere as more dangerous than the home where violence against women has been documented to be more prevalent (Pain 1997, Rosella 1999, Warrington 2001). An example from Rehema's narrative seems to emphasise such fear given that she was exposed to and feared domestic violence but she ironically felt safer there than out of home — a space she associated with numerous dangers: rape and xenophobic attacks.

Seemingly, this may point to the tendency for people to be more fearful of the unknown or perceived danger and willingness to bear with the already known. Eliana's fears, were linked to what she calls encountering 'other baggage' which, according to her, seemed to link to her current spouse's violence, making her feel that all men were violent such that one would rather stay with what she had than engage with a different person who may be more violent. Women's narratives in this case therefore clearly indicated that they would rather tolerate violence of any kind from their partners than expose themselves to unknown dangers associated with public violence that could be worse for them.

Migrant women in this study, not only attributed their fear to strangers as most literature indicates, but also to being female and migrants and being in an unfamiliar social space known to have a high crime rate. In this case, women saw contextual factors related to migration as playing a role in heightening their fear of public violence because of their status of being migrants and being in a new place as well as being unable to fend for themselves due to the limitations brought about by structural impediments and immigration laws in South Africa, especially for those who are undocumented.

Like previously noted, in this study, the structural difficulties related to poverty and unemployment of migrant women were also perceived by the women to increase their fear of the unknown as they felt they could not leave due to inability to support themselves. Therefore, such factors were seen to combine to increase not only their fear of public violence but also their exposure to domestic violence as women felt they had to bear with all in order not to be thrown out on the 'streets' where they feared violence from strangers in a country with high levels of

crime. Thus, private violence was seen as the solution to inevitable public violence and the related problems they would face as homeless women.

The findings above emphasise that participants constructed the home (private space) as safe yet according to literature the home presents an irony of safety for women since it is where they are routinely assaulted. (Pain 1997, Koskella 1999). They also saw domestic violence within it as tolerable as compared to that in the public sphere, yet it may not be easy to control and or predict the gravity and nature of violence one experiences or is yet to experience (Pain 1997).

3.3 No Place like Home: Links to Home and Culture

The above discussion has shown how migrant women can further be exposed to domestic violence due to the fear of public violence enhanced by their legal status and a set of interrelated factors in the context of migration. This section moves to the aspect of the linkages of migrant women's home and culture and how this was seen to affect how they understood domestic violence during migration.

3.3.1 Culture as a Response to Domestic Violence

Culture "relates to beliefs, practices, norms and behaviours shared by members of a group. It has been defined as a 'social doctrine taken on by a group based on race, gender, class, religion, sexual orientation region or national origin as a unifying phenomenon" (Raj & Silverman 2003:369). There have been considerable debates about whether culture is protective of women or discriminative in the context of domestic violence. Several studies focusing on migrant women some of which are reviewed in this study, have indicated the negative role cultural norms play in facilitating domestic violence, for example, through the lack of disclosure of domestic violence, not seeking services to respond to domestic violence due to self blame, the consideration that it is a private matter, or tolerating abuse as normal aspects of gender relations (Bui and Morash 1999, Abraham 1998, Liao 2006, Erez and Hartley 2003).

Counter arguments have, on the other hand, indicated that some cultural practices and beliefs like that of respect for women may serve as a protective factor against abuse (Raj and Silverman

2002, Sokollof and Dupont 2005). Yick (2000) also notes that among Chinese immigrant communities, potential perpetrators fear to abuse women as the whole community monitors them and severe punishments are put in place for deviation from such norms. On the other hand, Sokollof and Dupont further argue that "culture neither causes domestic violence nor is violence inherent in culture; and as such should not be confused with patriarchy, but patriarchy needs to be looked at in the way it operates in different cultures" (2005:46). These debates pose two problems related to how culture is conceived. The first one imagines culture is static and as such even in a different context; cultures remain unchanged and continue to influence increased exposure to domestic violence. The other issue is that these debates try to find what is good or what is bad about culture in relation to domestic violence, something that may only be answered within a particular context and not in general terms. This study however goes beyond such debates to consider how migrant women mobilised discourses of culture to explain and challenge domestic violence, and to justify various actions they took in responding to domestic violence.

Women in this study drew on the discourse of culture as protective against domestic violence. The women who were married to the same husbands they had while still in their home country, revealed that before migration, their cultures served to prohibit and or minimise domestic violence and to them this was the main reason that led to low exposure to domestic violence while in their home countries. The availability of family, including the extended family, to attend to domestic violence issues in their home countries was viewed by Chantal, Lillian, Stella, Sophie, Marion and Norah to have made men to minimise abuse due to the respect of cultural values set up to prevent abuse.

Likewise, participants felt that the lack of 'family' including parents, extended family members and older brothers or sisters — and such cultural settings in the immigration context, increased domestic violence due to men's knowledge that women had no families to report them to and were not likely to go to the police either.

The women recounted the positive role of their culture and the effects of the lack of it in the examples below:

> At home we had only small problems, like coming late at home. I would talk to my mother or uncle she will call his mother and talk to him. That is how we do in our culture. He would not beat me because he would fear my family because if he did anything to me my family will come. If he did this to me, at home, I will go back … At home my parents and his family are there so he knows he cannot do this. Now here am alone and he knows I have nowhere to go, eh. Where am I going with children here? I know that he knows that if he beats me I can not go anywhere so he can do what he likes (Sophie 26 years married).

> …At home he used to be with his brothers, they would advise him and also his parents now they are not here and he just does what he likes to me. He has become stubborn and does not take my advice either. Since he does not have parents here who he feared at home, I think he feels free to do what ever he likes to me. I think the main reason for abuse is because we are not home, because he never treated me that way at home, In Zimbabwe, he knew my parents were near, and if he mistreated me, I would go back or he would be questioned and warned seriously. So he knows now I can not go back because I am far and I escaped to come here, so he takes advantage (Lillian 20 years married).

> …I do not think he would do this if I was a South African. I would have gone home it would be near. So I think that because home is not close that is why he is mistreating me. He knows that my relatives are not close; if they were close, he would be scared he would not treat me like this. My brothers will beat him (Marion 26 years married).

> He knows already I do not have a family; I do not have anywhere to go that is why he treats me the way he likes. In Congo, they cannot treat you so bad; they feared my family because they were near. He knew if he treats me badly I would go back home… I have no one to help me to talk to him; at home his uncles would talk to him if I reported; now I can not report anywhere. (Chantal 28 years Married).

> .It is a thing I have never seen at home; you do not hit a woman! At home if people find a man hitting a woman they will hit him because there is a saying in my culture that says that a man doesn't fight with a woman. A man does not fight with a woman be it your wife. Even our father when you are a grown up person at home, I believe a father should not fight with his daughter, it is a mother to daughter (Martha 26 years, single).

As seen above, the women drew on cultural ways in their home country of preventing domestic violence, which included talking and advising the husband to change his behaviour, questioning him in case domestic violence occurred, punishing him through beating, and so on. Participants employed the same discourse to explain the absence of such systems in the host country and to justify why they could not report domestic violence or seek assistance from shelters as they saw this as not in line with their cultural way of dealing with domestic violence.

The participants also felt that the proximity of their parents or families to where they lived with their husbands and the actual presence of their family acted as a deterrent to abuse as the husbands would respect and fear the woman's family, and the knowledge that the women would easily divorce them if they were abused was presented as one of the factors that prevented domestic violence. In this case, distance from their families and inability to go back home due to political insecurity was also seen as one of the disadvantages their partners drew on during migration to further abuse them.

In the above accounts, the participants also show how their cultural ways of dealing with domestic violence that they understood as rooted in the roles of the family and community had a major part in preventing domestic violence. In this study, women view the absence of such

systems as leaving them with one alternative to bear with the domestic violence as efforts to contact mothers and elders, as in the case of Gorreti, Chantal and Sophie this only resulted in encouraging them to endure with domestic violence because of children, or to be blamed like Chantal, for the abuse. In this case, such 'help' only reinforced domestic violence.

On the other hand however, women seem to present romanticised narratives of culture in trying to put across the notion that their cultural way of dealing with domestic violence is the best and acceptable than in the host country where they are as migrants, as well as emphasising the aspect of their country of origin as safer from domestic violence than where they are. In doing so, it is interesting to note how little attention is paid to the fact that even with the existence of cultural systems of dealing with domestic violence, in most communities, domestic violence remains relatively commonplace, and at times it is through the same traditional cultural systems that domestic violence is condoned and perpetrated (Siddiqui et al 2008).

In relation to the aspect of being away from their home country, with the exception of two participants, others also acknowledged that the increased exposure to domestic violence was as a result of not being at home and a result of being migrants They also cited the changes in different sources of perpetrators from the husband to include employers, sisters and mothers in law. In emphasising the importance of home in minimising domestic violence, the cultural discourse migrant women drew on to explain this, functioned to emphasise the lack of alternatives after migration. They did this by drawing on the definition of culture as tied to a specific place which is their home country. Eliana and Jackie's narratives provide an example of this:

> If you are at home, maybe the mistreatment will be less because you at least have a family to go to, a friend you grew up with you have a lot of people you know, opportunity to escape. But here as a refugee, you do not have finance, as a refugee, it is not easy to find a job. Even there is no one to assist you, even if the institutions are assisting, they also do not give you enough (Eliana 40 year's Single).

Jackie adds to this as follows:

> When I was home, I had a family I had a home, I did not need a job. You see, at home you have all the weapons, so here I had nothing that was mine, I was I was depending on other people for survival (Jackie 25 years Single).

Idealising home may have worked as a means by which migrant women portrayed the good aspects of their country, which they hoped to return to someday and the lack of protection from domestic violence. Participants thus referred to home (their country of origin) as a better place than the host country in terms of not being seen as the other, and ensuring safety from domestic violence due to the availability of family and support networks (mobilised through culture) that militated against domestic violence. Idealising home in this case may have been fuelled by nostalgia, and inability to return at the present time due to various factors that hampered this.

3.3.2 Utilisation of Domestic Violence Services in South Africa

Looking at the availability and utilisation of services that respond to domestic violence, in South Africa, married women did not feel it was appropriate to report their husbands to police despite the availability of such services due to the consideration that it was culturally not right to do so. The extracts below expound on the issue.

> …Our culture and South African culture is different. It is not easy to take your husband to court (Gorreti 37 years Divorced).

> …He told me that if I call police for him he will show me, he said at home no one calls police for their husband back home... (Sophie 26 years married**)**.

> ..At home the police was the very last option of dealing with domestic violence, what is recommended in our culture is that the problem is reported to his parents and my parents, and if they failed, then the community court of elders will intervene to try and resolve the case communally referring to the cultural values as a guide to talk to the man and also solve problems between a man and a woman (Stella 30 years married).

In light of the above, women understood reporting their husbands to police as something foreign to their culture and one which conflicted with their cultural beliefs and thus was not seen as an appropriate way of dealing with domestic violence. This may explain, among other reasons, why Stella never reported domestic violence, and Gorretti withdrew the case and never reported it again. In trying to link to the idealised way of dealing with domestic violence while in their home country, Sophie tried to look for some elders to help talk to her husband. Gorreti and Rehema on the other hand, believed that it was better to deal with the problem at hand through mediation than the use of the police to arrest the husband, yet he was the breadwinner an aspect given by most participants for not reporting domestic violence.

In the accounts above, women again used a discourse of the cultural way of dealing with domestic violence as a private issue tied to their homeland and as something that should be mediated upon by elders in trying to explain why they did not utilise the services for police in responding to domestic violence. In spite of seeing culture as protective of domestic violence, in this case its use functioned to reduce women's opportunities for being helped to deal with domestic violence.

The fear of retaliation from their partners is also seen to combine with women's beliefs of cultural way of dealing with domestic violence to create more reluctance to utilise the formal services that respond to domestic violence. This corroborates Sattopima's (2004) findings among Burundian women in the Tanzanian refugee camps who did not report domestic violence for fear of increased domestic violence from their husbands. This inability to report domestic violence due to vulnerabilities related to their immigration status was seen by the participants to fuel domestic violence as they considered their partners to know all their limitations and use these to abuse them.

Similarly, participants in the study had mixed feelings about the use of shelters as a remedy to domestic violence. On the one hand women felt that it met their needs to some extent, while on the other hand they thought it was not culturally appropriate in responding to domestic violence. Martha, Susan, and Rehema explained that they found the shelters helpful in enabling them to deal with the effects of domestic violence and be able to cope normally. As Martha explains:

> In the shelter, I was counselled which has reduced on the trauma I had before. Due to constant counselling, I feel strong and confident and I can stand on my own. In the shelter I became conscious that many immigrant women have even bigger problems than mine and have overcome them (Martha 26 years single).

> I am a brand new woman, who feels stronger to face the world with hope and to know I can be able to resist abuse and stand up for what I believe in. I learnt many new things about life, about violence some of which I had taken for granted. (Rehema 32 years married)

The two accounts suggest that shelters were useful in relieving women of the trauma of abuse and enabling them to rediscover themselves and push on with their life. These findings confirm the findings of Wright (2004) in the study on the significance of sheltering in four lives of abused women in South Africa, which indicate that women were empowered, had positive feelings about the shelter and about their lives, and learnt various life skills essential to cope with life's challenges independently.

The above participants also felt that services at the shelters discriminated against black women and favoured white women. The women equated this treatment to xenophobia against migrant women, and drew on this discourse to criticise the nature of services provided at the shelter especially for black foreign women, and to justify why they and other migrant women may have not used them. In justifying this, the women also pointed to the in built limitations such as that of the temporary nature of stay, and inadequate support for women leaving the shelter. Therefore they depicted shelters as not adequate to respond to migrant women's needs especially those who have a lower social economic status and cannot cope on their own the two accounts thus:

> There is something that I have seen at the shelter, even I was told by the social worker that I am the only foreigner who has stayed longer, we had few but they could not stay. There is racism in the shelter; they are too much into white people. They need to treat people equally be it from which heaven you come from. The

> other thing is that foreigners do not know and the few who know they fear because of the whole thing of attitude of South Africans. There is a need to change attitude towards foreigners, the attitudes of dislike hate, so people are able to come for services. If I feel welcomed in your office I will not feel scared to face you or to come and tell you the problem I am experiencing, but if I feel, you are going to embarrass me; you are going to have this attitude towards me. I would feel I better not and I think that is the reason many women do not show up at these organizations (Martha 26 years single).

> Some of the experiences we have witnessed at the shelter do not warrant you to tell anyone that there is such assistance available, because it shows a different face of assistance when I am discriminated because I am black and poor… After I left the shelter, I went back to my husband since I could not .afford to take care of myself without a job and without friends or family to help me out. and the violence continued, but I could not go back to the shelter, the help is temporary and I still have to find where to leave after that, so apart from the immediate help of removing my self from the violence, I still have to go back to the same person and you find he has not changed at all. There should be some permanent programs for solving this accommodation problem for women who have nothing and no family and who do not want to return to their husbands (Rehema 32 years married).

In addition to the above, they also employed static ideas of cultural ways used at home to respond to domestic violence as the only way they felt was appropriate in responding to domestic violence as compared to shelters. The participants felt that to address migrant women's needs, the agencies should institute culturally acceptable measures that resolve conflict in their families, without separating them from their husbands and other family members. Related to this in Latta and Goodman's (2005) study, Haitian migrant women declined to the use of counselling services as they did not see it as part of their culture. The following excerpt below brings out migrant women's perceptions of shelters in this study:

> People told me that I will not leave there for three months, women who are there are stressed they start smoking and learn bad behaviours. I wanted to resolve problems with my husband not to run away (Gorreti 37 years divorced).

> We still want to stay with our husbands despite the problems, because in our culture women have to endure…Marriage needs endurance, for one to win. The thing with shelters is that the man cannot allow you to take the children with you. so If you go to the shelter for that time…the man may even marry another woman and they will mistreat your children …so… you will worry a lot about your children…hmm .Shelters are for different people not us. The men need some punishment. When I am taken away from my children .to leave in a shelter it is as if it is me they are punishing .that is why I prefer the police and the court… but there are problems with this too (Stella 30 years married).

Shelters have had different meanings to different participants in this and other previous studies conducted. In this study, Gorreti associated it with bad behaviours learnt from other women. This was similar to Goodman and Latta's (2005) study among Haitian women where shelters were seen as not safe, dangerous and promoting dangerous behaviours. Indian immigrant women also had the same perceptions although, this was because of the influence of their husbands telling them that shelters were bad (Liao, 2006). According to Stella and Gorreti, use of shelters was seen to be like running away from the husband and the problem of domestic violence therefore she did not view the use of shelters as solving domestic violence, but just postponing it. Additionally shelters were perceived as contributing to migrant women's sense of guilt and self blame as they saw themselves as the creators of problems who had to be removed from their husbands. Alternatively, Chantler's (2006) findings indicate that many women perceived shelters as another place where they were controlled by those managing it, conceiving it as another source of domination apart from their abusive spouses.

In drawing on such discourses, the participants seemed to justify why they did not use the available services to respond to domestic violence and somehow to point out some of the problems associated with such services in relation to specific categories of people like migrant women. Generally, by resisting the available ways of responding to domestic violence apart from

those employed at home, narratives seemed to indicate that women preferred to deal with domestic violence according to their cultural practices than new ways in the migration context. This in one way or another might have enabled them to hold on to ways of dealing with domestic violence, in their home country as a symbol that seemed to reconnect them with their countries of origin in the reality of migration and the lack of such services.

Women's immigration status and the experiences related to the new environment as migrants, as well as the frame of reference to the cultural way of dealing with domestic violence, is seen in this study to influence a number of ways in which women view and respond to services that address domestic violence. However, domestic violence seemed to tie into each of these issues to further limit women's choices and access to help which might further have an effect on women's health and general welfare. The services designed to protect women are somehow seen as the source of their fear. They are seen to act as a barrier for seeking help which further expose them to more risks of domestic violence due to the in built limitations of such systems and services. Moreover, the rigidity to new and different ways of handling domestic violence and the idealisation of the way domestic violence was handled while at home played a major role in how migrant women perceived the effect of migration on their access to services and the way they responded to domestic violence while in South Africa.

CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This qualitative study investigated the effect of migration on urban migrant women's perceptions of domestic violence focusing on urban migrant women living in Johannesburg and Pretoria. Drawing from feminist theory, this research gives preference to women and their perceptions on domestic violence in an immigration context.

In understanding how migrant women make meaning of the effect of migration on domestic violence, this study also draws on the feminist stand point theory which emphasises women's knowledge as socially constructed depending on the specific locations and processes of interaction as well as their subjective understandings. These combine to produce multiple experiences and standpoints of their lived reality during migration (Stanley and Wise 1983, Hekman 1997, Burr 1995, Harding 1987). This study did not aim to find the truth as there can be many constructions of truth (Burr, 1995), but to identify meanings migrant women constructed from the effect of migration on domestic violence.

Existing studies reviewed show that migrant women's understanding of domestic violence is influenced more by social cultural norms and practices. Drawing from social constructionist approach, which privileges meanings as not fixed, but constructed through social processes in the

context one is in, this study's findings indicate that the context in which domestic violence was experienced largely shaped how migrant women understood and explained the effect of migration on domestic violence. Similarly, Latta and Goodman's; (2005) study points out how contextual variables including experiences of police, lack of social service structures, combined with cultural values and experiences of Haitian migrant women to determine their understanding and responses to domestic violence. Therefore, the specific understandings of the effect of migration on domestic violence can be largely understood within the context it occurs and is experienced (Ferraro and Johnson, 2000).

In the study, migrant women mainly drew on discourses from the current contextual experiences of migration to explain their understanding of domestic violence as well as the effect it has on domestic violence. This understanding was seen as changed from how they perceived domestic violence while in their home country as compared to the new context. This concurs with Gergen (1973) and Burr's (1995) claims that the meanings and understanding people attach to events change with situations. However, women at times drew on a discourse of their home country and culture when it was advantageous to draw on such to justify their reluctance to take on new ways of dealing with issues of domestic violence or when they wanted to challenge domestic violence in a new context of migration.

These findings also concur with earlier claims that suggest that unequal gender relations intersect with broader structural factors in the immigration context to increase domestic violence in an immigration context (Raj and Silverman 2002, Latta and Goodman 2005, and UNFPA 2006). However, from a narrative perspective migrant women drew on specific migration-related factors

including poverty and dependency, immigrant women's legal status, the fear of public violence, unemployment, and xenophobia to explain their perceptions of the effect of migration on domestic violence. This is different from the literature reviewed that emphasises social-cultural norms and practices as factors that have an upper hand and those that were drawn on as increasing domestic violence among migrant women The findings in this study therefore suggest that migrant women perceive migration to increase domestic violence to a large extent through the intersections of gender and broader societal forces including among other things immigration laws, unemployment, poverty, migrant women's legal status, and xenophobia which increased their dependency on husbands or partners.

In order to meet their benefits and maintain their power, migrant women explained that their partners used the above immigration related disadvantages to abuse and dominate them. Migrant women's narratives and discourses on perceptions of the effect of migration on domestic violence were thus largely based on such immigration related factors.

In the discourses women drew on in explaining how migration affects domestic violence, culture was utilised in three ways: In the first place, women's explanation of cultural ways of handling domestic violence in their home country enhanced the understanding that culture does not only contribute negatively to domestic violence but at times is a prohibiting factor. Using the discourse on culture, participants were also able to highlight the role of the family in prohibiting domestic violence while women were still in their home country, the lack of which during migration was found to increase domestic violence.

Secondly, the perception or lack of culturally appropriate services of police and shelters was another way that women used culture to explain and justify their decisions for the non-utilisation of available domestic violence services in South Africa. They drew on the same discourse to romanticise cultural ways of resolving domestic violence from their home country as the best way to deal with what was available in the host country. In doing so, they were able to show their attachment to their home land and cultural ways of dealing with domestic violence as well as explaining why their partners drew on the lack of such systems to abuse them. In addition, in-built limitations of the services as well as attitudes of those working in such organisations, determined migrant women's perceptions of the inadequacy of such services for migrants.

Lastly, the use of culture also enabled women to defend themselves against domestic violence, by reinforcing stereotypical traditional gender roles of men and women during migration and challenging domestic violence resulting from such changes and enforced by their partners. They also drew on stereotypes of women as being weaker than men and therefore positioning themselves as more vulnerable during migration as a way of explaining some of the reasons why they think they were abused.

This study contributes to the domestic violence narrative literature that deals with issues of domestic violence and romantic relationships indicating that during migration women may not necessarily remain in abusive relationships due to love but for means of survival brought about by their status as migrants and related factors in the context of migration. Women in this case drew on discourses rooted in the practices of migration policies, to explain their reasons for endurance of and staying in violent relationships.

Previous studies have emphasised mainly that the fear of public violence among women is a result of socialisation, or influence of the media, and the non-interference of violence in the home due to the public and private divide. This study adds to the available literature indicating that among migrant women not only is their fear for public violence heightened by fear of strangers, the unknown or being women, but high levels of crime in the host country, xenophobic attitudes of host community towards foreigners, lack of family and social networks and migrant women's legal status. These are seen to combine with poverty and unemployment in the migration context to increase their fear of public violence and keep them in abusive relationships. Such factors were also seen as influencing their understanding that home was a safer place although it is where most women seem to be more in danger as compared to other locations.

In respect of this, I therefore recognise that the themes that emerged from this study are not universal to all migrant situations but can only be understood in a given context. Therefore, the analysis and reading of these texts are not exhaustive but partial (Palmary, 2006) because there are different possible ways in which these texts and findings can be read and interpreted, depending on methodology and theoretical approach drawn on.

Finally, among issues not covered in depth in this study are the investigation into migrant women's access to services that respond to domestic violence focusing on factors that enhance or prohibit such access, the gendered nature of xenophobia among migrant women, the psychological effects of migration and coping capacities of migrant women, which I recommend that future studies pick up for further in-depth investigation of effects of migration on women.

Semi – Structured Interview guide

Basic questions:

Date of interview, Age, occupation, immigrant status, relationship status, country respondent comes from.

Perceptions on Domestic Violence

1. Please tell me about what made you to leave your home country and come to South Africa.
2. What were the main challenges you faced when you reached South Africa?
3. Has this movement to South Africa had an impact on your marriage and or relationship? If so how?
4. In your opinion, what do you think conflicts between men and women or husbands and wives consist of?
5. Why do you think these occur?

Effect of migration on domestic violence

6. What conflicts have you experienced in your relationship with our husband/partner/ boyfriend –
   a) In your home country
   b) In this country (South Africa).

7. Please tell me whether you think you think that the conflicts you are experiencing with your partner/husband in South Africa are more or less than those you experienced in your Country. Why do you think this is the case?
8. What do you think contributes to conflicts that you experience or have experienced with your partner/husband in South Africa?
9. How have each of the mentioned factors contributed to conflicts you have experienced or are experiencing?
10. To what extent do you think that the conflicts you have experienced or are experiencing with your partner/husband while in South Africa are a result of being a refugee and or migrant Woman? Why do you think so?
11. Do you think this impact is different for other migrant women? Why?

Coping strategies in response to domestic violence

12. During the time, you experience (d) these conflicts with your partner in what ways did or do you cope with these conflicts?
13. In which way did you use to deal with such conflicts in your country of origin? Is this the same or is it different here in South Africa? If different, in which way is it different and what accounts for this difference?
14. When you experience conflicts with your partner/husband do you get any assistance from anyone? If so who assists you? In which ways do they assist you?
15. Do you belong to any social groups or organisations and if yes what is the nature and purpose of these groups or organizations.

16. In which way do you make use of these groups or organisations to deal with consequences of conflicts between you and your partner/husband?
17. If yes please tell me how these have been useful or not useful in minimising the impact of conflicts and or problems you have experienced or are experiencing? if not please tell me the reasons why you do not make use of these services in dealing with consequences of the problems with your partner?
18. Do you think there are other questions I left out that I would have asked you?
19. Do you have any other questions for me

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