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“This is how real men do things you know.”

Perpetrators Perceptions of Intimate Partner Violence.

A research project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (Psychology) in the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, March 2017.

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Supervised by Professor Brett Bowman

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ii. Abstract

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a pervasive problem affecting many women in South Africa and worldwide. Due to the many consequences that victims of IPV experience, it is increasingly seen as a public health concern. Despite interventions targeted at reducing the rates of IPV, it still remains prevalent in South African communities. Research has mainly explored IPV from the victims' perspective and only in recent years has there been a marked interest in perpetrators of IPV. This study explores an identified gap in literature which examines the experiences and actions of male perpetrators of IPV.

In-depth interviews were conducted with five men who were a part of a perpetrator reintegration programme at a Non-Governmental Organisation in Johannesburg. The data was analysed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis in an attempt to better understand their reported individual experiences. The study found that there was little consensus amongst perpetrators of IPV regarding the nature and causes of violence. IPV is normalised by many perpetrators. It is embedded in a context of patriarchy which emphasizes male dominance over the household, the finances and the women and children. Men and women are socialized into the context of patriarchy. Through the research, it was found that perpetrators view their actions as a response to something their partner did wrong or did not do, thus the act is seen as justified, the use of blame and minimization of the act were common responses when asked about experiences of IPV. Traditional customs such as Lobola allowed men to believe that they owned their wives, and through this had dominance and control over the relationship. This was viewed by participants as a right to discipline and punish one's partner.

Keywords: Intimate Partner Violence, Violence, Perpetrators, Ecological Framework, Masculinity.

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1. Introduction

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is the most common form of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). IPV is a violation of human rights and is a public health concern, with the majority of cases being perpetrated against women (Shai & Sikweyiya, 2015).

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) has received a lot of attention from government, Non-Governmental Organisations and academia in attempts to reduce its prevalence rates. Despite innumerable efforts to reduce the rates of IPV, it remains extremely high. For many years both research and interventions have targeted the phenomena by addressing IPV by focusing on the victim. Research has examined the victims' role in the violence and reasons for staying or returning to an abusive relationship, to name a few. Many services provided by government and Non-Governmental Organisations are reactionary in nature (Shai & Sikweyiya, 2015). The bulk of interventions have been designed around keeping victims safe and empowering them in order to remove themselves from the abusive situation. The focus has been on enforcing laws or on restorative justice and providing care and support to the victim (Shai & Sikweyiya, 2015). Many of these services are secondary prevention and come into effect once the violence has occurred. While such interventions have been successful, it does not change the behaviour of the perpetrator who often continues to abuse the victim (Rothman, Butchart & Cerda, 2003). Hence the identified need is for these services to be in conjunction with interventions for perpetrators of IPV. In recent years, there has been a shift in interventions from focusing on the victims to focusing on the perpetrators of IPV. The focus is on addressing men's role in perpetrating violence and examining masculinity and gender related social norms that are implicit in violence (Jewkes, Flood & Lang, 2015). If rates of IPV are to decrease, one needs to understand the how and the why of IPV; there needs to be a greater understanding of the abusive behaviour and related constructs. Interventions should focus on primary prevention with an emphasis on work with men and boys as well as women and girls to address social norms on gender relations which have been found to be crucial contributors to IPV (Jewkes et al., 2015). The WHO has identified IPV interventions that are successful as those that tackle institutional cultures, broader social norms, policies and laws (Abrahams et al., 2009).

1.1 Rationale

Despite having a constitution in place that protects women from violence and abuse, as well as policies and programmes designed to prevent violence against women, IPV rates remain high. Responsibility is vested with the victim to remove themselves from the abusive situation, to seek protection orders and to become empowered (Lau, 2008). Focusing attention on the victim does not allow one to deal with the complexities of IPV and the abusive behaviour of the perpetrator is left unresolved (Lau, 2008). Violence against women is often labelled a 'women's problem' and interventions are targeted at identifying what the victim should do differently. In addition to these interventions, IPV needs to be examined from the perpetrators perspective. This research is aimed at contributing to the literature on IPV and at understanding the phenomena by providing an 'in the moment' account of the violent encounter. There needs to be an understanding of how men understand violence in an attempt to stop men's violence towards women (Hearn, 1998).

IPV prevention practices have been evolving from approaches that target women as victims to approaches that transform relations, norms and systems that subsequently sustain gender inequality and violence (Jewkes et al., 2015). Inequality and patriarchy have been found to be risk factors of violence (Seedat, Van Niekerk, Jewkes, Suffla & Ratele, 2009). This study is aimed at exploring understandings of the causes and complexities of IPV. It aims to examine perpetrators' accounts of why they perpetrated the violence, as these relate to their understanding of violence itself. Society often justifies violence due to the uneven distribution of rights, obligations and responsibilities (Bowman, Stevens, Eagle & Matzopoulos, 2015). Morality for victims and perpetrators differs, if perpetrators legitimize the violent acts, behaviour change may be unlikely. Research needs to examine the thought process that occurs in the context of the violent encounter, as well as the perpetrators reasoning or justification for the act. Behavioural change is not likely to occur if there is no acknowledgement of wrong doing. Through this, a discussion regarding social norms in relation to gender is likely to occur, in conjunction with violence being legitimized in society. In addition to this, the research places IPV as embedded within the ecological framework; it acknowledges the multiple causal factors contributing to IPV as well as the need to address IPV at these levels for change to occur. Interventions should address gender socialization

and power relations, abuse in childhood, mental health issues, and poverty (Fulu, Jewkes, Roselli &Garcia-Moreno, 2012). The research aims to provide men's subjective experience of violence towards their intimate partners by focusing on the reported experience of the violent encounter. Increasingly the need to address IPV through working with boys and men and through a multi-sectorial approach has been identified. The study attempts to contribute to this growing body of knowledge.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

In order to address the concerns above, the study explored the way in which perpetrators of IPV make meaning of their experiences of and actions related to violence. An analysis of the individual experiences sheds light on the view of violence as well as related constructs.

This study is organized around five chapters, including the introduction which is chapter one. The remaining four chapters include the literature review, the methodology, the analysis and discussion and the conclusion. The following chapter, chapter two reviews the relevant literature on perpetrators of IPV and outlines the theoretical perspective used to make sense of participant's responses. It begins by defining violence as this is the broader context within which IPV is located. The research then narrows the focus of violence to IPV, due to the prevalence and consequences within South Africa. IPV is located as embedded within the ecological framework to identify multiple risk factors contributing to it. Interventions targeted at IPV need to address the interconnectedness of the individual, the family, the culture and the society. The review continues with a discussion on masculinity as a construct contributing to IPV and then places an emphasis on hegemonic masculinity. The literature review concludes with a discussion on perpetrators of IPV, highlighting studies that have been conducted previously and the need to focus on perpetrators' experiences and understanding.

Chapter three presents the research process. Beginning with the research question, it then discusses the interpretive paradigm within which the research is located. The steps taken to recruit participants, the data analysis procedures and techniques and ethical considerations are discussed. Important for this research is the interpretive framework within which the analysis is located. This allows for the individuals to account for their experiences and

actions and attempts to understand IPV from their perspective. The chapter concludes with some reflective considerations on the part of the researcher.

The fourth chapter begins the analysis and discussion of the research findings. It focuses on important concepts that emerged from the data, based on perpetrators experiences and actions. There are three parts to the reported experiences that are discusses in depth. The first is the perpetrators justification for the violent act in which participants language was embedded in the use of blame and the language of denial when giving accounts of the event. Within their talk, patriarchy and masculinity were brought to the fore, this is the second theme discussed in the analysis. Finally, the idea of owning ones partner, which links to culture and patriarchy, was discussed. To conclude the research report, a discussion on the limitations of the research and recommendations for future research is presented.

2. Literature Review

The following section commences with a review of the relevant literature regarding IPV and its related constructs. The literature review begins with a definition of violence and the typology of violence. This is used to demonstrate the various forms of violence that are enacted upon individuals as well as the nature of the violence. The review then discusses Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Violence Against Women (VAW) as these are forms of violence directed at women. The review focuses on IPV and its related constructs. It unpacks the ecological model in an attempt to examine the risk factors of perpetrating or being a victim of IPV and attempts to highlight how each of the levels are interconnected. There is a focus on masculinity and hegemonic masculinity as it has been discussed in various research studies as being strongly linked to IPV. The review concludes with a discussion on perpetrators of IPV and previous research conducted to justify the purpose of the current research.

GBV refers to violence directed at an individual due to their gender identity and is used to perpetuate the unequal position of women in society. GBV can be perpetrated societally, culturally or interpersonally. VAW is a subcategory of GBV and is directed specifically at women, and takes place in various forms. Arguably the most pervasive form of VAW is IPV. IPV being the focus of the research is defined and discussed within the South African context.

2.1 Violence

There are variations of the definition of violence found in the literature; for the purpose of this research the WHO definition of violence is used. The WHO definition of violence is the most widely used definition of violence within the public health sphere.
The World Health Organisation defines violence as:

> "The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation" (WHO, 2002, p.5).

The definition of violence is broad and includes both physical violence and non-physical violence including threats. Therefore, violence is not only evident in incidents where there is physical injury but also includes psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation, all of which are less visible forms of violence and are forms of violence which may go unnoticed. Violence is no longer seen as merely ones use of physical force over another. The inclusion of the word power and the phrase 'use of physical force' broadens the nature of the violent act and expands the understanding of violence to include those acts that result from a relationship of power, including threats and intimidation. It includes incidents where power is used overtly over another person or group of people who are therefore seen as less powerful and have less control. The definition encompasses neglect or acts of omission, physical, sexual and psychological abuse as well as suicide and self-abusive acts (Rutherford, Zwi, Grove & Butchart, 2007; WHO, 2002).

2.2 Typology of Violence

Based on the WHO (2002) definition of violence it is evident that various forms of violence may be enacted against and by individuals, groups, communities and countries. At this point it is essential to distinguish between the various forms of violence. Violence may be further categorised as self-directed violence, interpersonal violence and collective violence.

2.2.1 **Self-directed violence**

Self-directed violence includes suicidal thoughts or actions and forms of self-harm (Bowman et al., 2014; Rutherford et al., 2007). This includes both fatal suicidal behaviour and non-fatal suicidal behaviour. Fatal suicidal behaviour refers to suicidal acts that result in death, whereas non-fatal suicidal behaviour includes attempted suicide, para-suicide and self- harm; suicidal behaviour that does not result in death (Rutherford et al., 2007).

2.2.2 **Interpersonal violence**

Interpersonal violence includes acts of violence and intimidation that occur between family members, between intimate partners or between individuals who may or may not know one another (Rutherford et al., 2007). Interpersonal violence is further divided into two categories; family and intimate partner violence which includes violence that takes place between family members and intimate partners, usually, though not exclusively, taking

place at home (WHO, 2002). Community violence includes violence between individuals who are unrelated, or who may or may not know each other, and most often takes place outside the home (WHO, 2002). Family violence is often interconnected with suicide, crime, drug and alcohol abuse sometimes emanating from intergenerational trauma and intergenerational violence (Rutherford et al., 2007). The historical context of violence needs to be emphasised at the level of interpersonal violence, speaking to violence that is passed down from previous generations embedded in race, class, gender and space. The next category of violence is collective violence.

2.2.3 **Collective violence**

Collective violence emphasises violence committed by larger groups or individuals or by the state (WHO, 2002). It may be motivated by political, economic and social factors (Bowman et al., 2014). It is committed to advance a particular social agenda, including war, terrorism, violent political conflict and organised violent crimes such as gang warfare. It may include all categories of violence, be these physical, sexual, psychological, or those characterized by neglect or discrimination (Rutherford et al., 2007). Within these three categories, the nature of the act can be physical, sexual, psychological, deprivation or neglectful. This emphasizes how numerous forms of violence can be perpetrated on various levels and how they are often interrelated including the nature of the act, the space in which the violence took place and the relationship between perpetrator and victim, being one of power and control of power. While violence can take place on an interpersonal and collective level, violence can also be directed at particular people or groups of people. Violence against women is violence that is directed at women and it can occur through gender-based violence and intimate partner violence. This review discusses gender-based violence and violence against women more broadly, and then focuses more specifically on intimate partner violence in South Africa.

2.3 Gender-Based Violence

GBV is a widely recognized public health concern due to its long-term impact on women's health and the rates of morbidity and mortality associated with it (Dunkley et al., 2004).

GBV can be defined as:

> "any interpersonal, organizational or politically-oriented violation perpetrated against people due to their gender identity, sexual orientation or location in the

> hierarchy of male-dominated social systems such as families, military organizations or the labor force" (Sathiparsad, 2005, pp. 79-80).

This definition is broad and includes violence committed interpersonally, by organizations and politically. GBV is both a human rights and public health issue, having many long-term consequences (Mopani & Sibanda, 2015). This form of violence may include, women being discriminated against in the workplace, not being allowed to work or not being promoted to managerial positions in companies. According to Sathiparsad (2005) GBV is expressed interpersonally, it is frequently explained and legitimized by the norms of a society concerning male and female roles. These societal norms influence the attitudes that males and females take into any interaction and are embodied and enacted. Cultural norms and expectations support different types of violence. Traditional beliefs that men have a right to control or discipline women through physical means make women vulnerable to GBV (WHO, 2009). GBV is rooted in gender power inequalities and exploits socially constructed distinctions between men and women (Mopani & Sibanda, 2015). In South Africa gender is a system of classification that frequently fosters power imbalances and facilitates women's risk of sexual assault and sexually transmitted infections (Strebel et al., 2006). Men and boys may also be victims of GBV, however according to statistics women and girls are more frequently victims of GBV. A study conducted by Jewkes, Dunkley, Induna & Shai (2010) explored IPV, relationship power inequity and the incidence of HIV infection amongst young South African women. The study found a strong correlation between women who experience IPV and high gender inequality within relationships increased the risk of HIV infection.

GBV is a broad, overarching term used to define violence expressed between parties in a form that oppresses and discriminates against individuals based on ones' gender, most specifically against women. Gender-based violence is a term that recognizes that violence occurs within the context of women's and girl's subordinate status in society and serves to maintain this unequal balance of power (Rutherford et al., 2007). GBV is normalised through structural inequalities embedded in patriarchy, the tolerance of violence, militarized masculinity, disrupted community and family life and the culture specific forms of abuse (Rutherford et al., 2007; Bowman et al., 2015).

From the definition above it is evident that GBV is broad and includes various forms of violence perpetrated against women and at different levels such as interpersonal, community and societal. Various discussions centered on violence targeted at women tend to use GBV and VAW simultaneously. It is essential to distinguish between these two terms.

2.4 Violence Against Women

VAW is a form of GBV that specifies violence targeted specifically at women (Mopani & Sibanda, 2015). The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) defines VAW as:

> "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women and girls, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life"

Therefore, VAW can be seen as a subcategory of GBV. VAW is common globally; however there are some geographical or culturally specific forms. Culture, tradition and religion have an influence on forms of VAW. Culturally males are often placed in powerful positions in relation to women and this is perpetuated by practices such as Lobola, *Ukuthwala*, female genital mutilation and Sharia law (CSVR, 2016).

Africa has some of the highest rates of physical and sexual IPV and non-partner violence in the world, with 45,6% of women experiencing one or more episodes of violence in their lifetime, compared to the global average of 35% (Mpani & Nsibande, 2015). A study conducted by the Medical Research Council (MRC) in three provinces of South Africa, found that one in four women in the general population have experienced physical violence at some point in their lives (Mpani & Nsibande, 2015). Another study conducted in four provinces in South Africa found that a large proportion of men (Gauteng 78%, Limpopo, 48%, Western Cape 35% and Kwa-Zulu Natal 41%) admitted to committing some form of violence against women within their lifetime (Mpani & Nsibande, 2015). Studies conducted in South Africa have shown that between 20% and 68% of women aged 15- 49 years have experienced physical or sexual abuse or both, from a male intimate partner (Fulu et al., 2013).

VAW is a universal phenomenon, perpetrators of the violence are often known to their victims (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005). The most pervasive form of VAW is abuse by ones' intimate partner. Intimate partner violence describes physical violence directed against a woman by a current or ex-husband or boyfriend. IPV includes physical, sexual and emotional abuse by a current or former partner or spouse and can occur in heterosexual or same sex relationships (Shai & Sikweyiya, 2015). IPV is characterised by behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm (Gass, Stein, Williams & Seedat, 2011). The following section will focus primarily on IPV as it is a pervasive form of abuse affecting many women in South Africa and is the primary object of inquiry for the research.

2.5 Intimate Partner Violence

IPV is the most prevalent form of GBV with major health concerns as well as social and economic costs for government, communities and individuals (Fulu et al., 2012). IPV refers to the physical, sexual or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse. Although women can be violent towards their male partners and violence may be found in male-male and female-female partnerships, it has been found that the overwhelming burden of partner violence around the world is borne by women at the hands of men (Rutherford et al., 2007). IPV refers to any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm to those in the relationship. IPV includes acts of physical aggression such as hitting, beating and kicking. It also includes psychological abuse such as intimidating, constant belittling and humiliating. Furthermore, IPV can be perpetrated in the form of sexual coercion.

IPV is often seen as the result of male oppression of women within a patriarchal system in which men are the primary perpetrators and women the victims (McPhail, Busch, Kulkarni & Rice, 2007). IPV is rooted in constructions of masculinity that legitimize the use of violence to control and punish women (Abrahams et al., 2009). It has been found that rates of IPV increase in settings in which the use of violence is normalised (Jewkes, 2002). According to Jewkes (2002) the causes of IPV are complex, however two important factors are, the unequal position of women in a particular relationship (and in society) and the normative use of violence in conflict. Women's subordinate position in relation to men has been

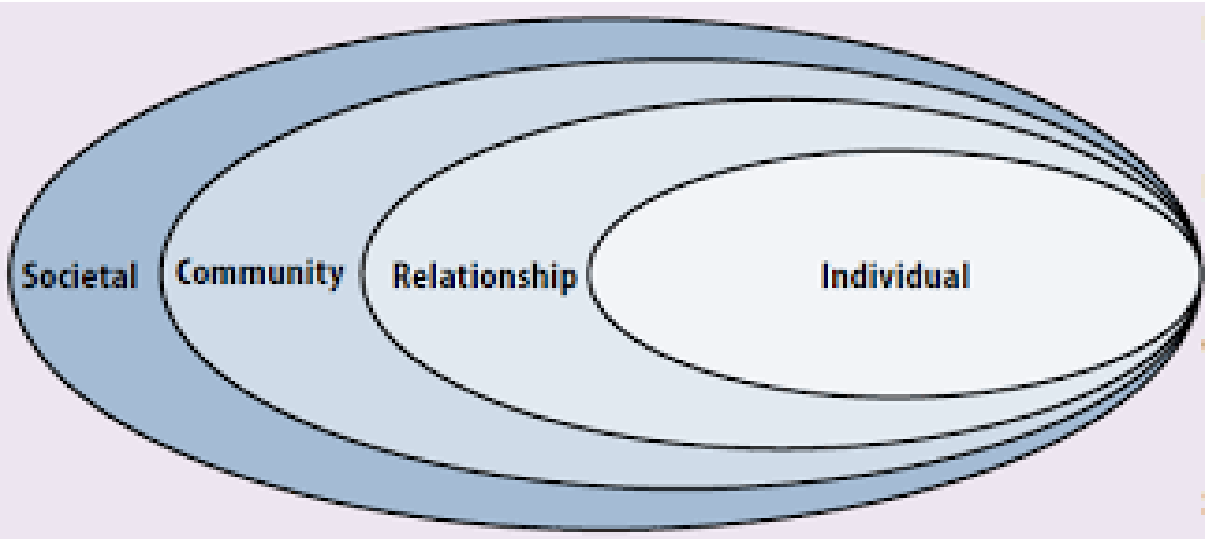
proven to be a contributing factor for IPV. The second point Jewkes (2002) refers to is the normalised use of violence in conflict. According to Hamber (2000) this is due to the history of violence within South Africa, the structural violence deployed by the state through inequalities, repression and politicized forms of social existence have resulted in the socially sanctioned use of violence to solve problems.

While data on the full extent of IPV is unavailable due to underreporting, it is evident that rates remain relatively high. The lifetime prevalence of experiencing IPV is estimated to be between 15% and 71% amongst women worldwide (Gass et al., 2010). South Africa is reported to have the highest rates of IPV in the world. A national representative study found a 19% lifetime prevalence of women being a victim of IPV and 27.5% of men reported perpetrating IPV in their current or most recent relationships (Gass et al., 2010). IPV is the most common form of violence experienced by South African women. One in eight women (13.8%) reported an incident of violence by their intimate partners (Vetten, 2014).

There has been an increased understanding that systemic and structural support for men's violence against women needs to be addressed (Jewkes et al., 2015). Although there have been many models used to explain IPV, the ecological model is used within this research (Figure 1). Many factors have been proven to play a causal role within IPV. The ecological model accounts for the complexities of IPV. An ecological approach conceptualizes violence as a multifaceted phenomenon grounded in the interaction between different levels of an ecosystem (Heise, 1998). An ecological approach assists in understanding the intersections between factors relating to an individual, their peers, household, relationship and broader community (Jewkes et al., 2015). IPV results from the confluence of individual, relationship, societal and political factors, driven by persistent patriarchal norms that promote the use of violence in resolving conflict (Shai & Sikweyiya, 2015). IPV does not occur in a vacuum, thus the conceptualisation of IPV, as well as interventions need to be done with due consideration given to various interrelated factors and contexts.

According to the body of research, it is clear that IPV occurs through factors taking place at various levels and is not caused by a single factor. The multi-level and interconnectedness of the model is essential in an attempt to understand IPV. A comprehensive approach to IPV must integrate the continuum of factors contributing to it ranging from socio-structural to individual factors. Figure 1 below illustrates the factors.

Fig 1: Ecological Model Proposed by the World Health Organisation



2.6 Ecological Framework

IPV is recognized as a public health concern, many institutions are considering how to address violence in a preventative way. By applying a public health approach to IPV, risk factors of violence as well as effective interventions have been developed (Bowman et al., 2015). This allows for the recognition of an ecological approach to understanding human life, rather than being individually focused (Bowman et al., 2015). Researchers and practitioners are increasingly using an ecological framework to understand the interplay of personal, situational and sociocultural factors that contribute to IPV (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005). The ecological framework as a tool for analysing the causes of violence suggests that there is no single factor that can explain why violence occurs. Individuals do not live in isolation; they are affected by the broader system which they are a part of. Bronfenbrenner's ecological model suggests that in order to understand human development the ecological system in which one develops needs to be taken into account. In examining human development or growth, interactions at various levels and how these levels or subsystems work interchangeably need to be considered; human development occurs between human organisms and the changing immediate environment in which they live as well as the larger social context (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Socio-cultural tolerance of violence, militarized masculinity, disrupted community and family life, individual level biological and personality related risk factors are nodes in the complex causal pathways that

lead to IPV (Matzopoulos, Myers, Bowman & Mathews, 2008). Violence cannot be attributed to a single factor; its causes are complex and occur at different levels (Krug, Mercy, Dahlberg & Zwi, 2002).

In this model, violence against women results from the interaction of factors at different levels of the social environment. According to Mathews, Jewkes and Abrahams (2011) at a structural level gender identity is seen as socially constructed within a context of unequal power relations between men and women. This all takes place within the social context within which the individual is placed, each of these levels will be discussed below.

2.6.1 **Individual level risk of IPV**

The first point of the ecological model examines the individual. This includes factors such as the biological and personal history that every individual brings to the relationship (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005; Heise, Ellsberg & Gottmoeller, 2002). These factors include demographic characteristics such as age, education, income, mental health, substance abuse, or a history of experiencing, witnessing or engaging in violent behaviour (Krug et al., 2002). An example of this is age and sex which are biological risk factors, indicating that young males are at greater risk for being both perpetrators and victims of violence (Matzopoulos et al., 2008). Children are affected by the dynamics of their parents' relationship, the practices of their teachers and the behaviour of their peers (Boxer et al., 2013).

Jewkes, Levin & Penn-Kekana (2002) note that an important theory of domestic violence causation relates to the inter-generational cycle of violence. Many researchers describe intimate partner violence as a learned social behaviour for both men and women. If someone is predisposed at an individual level and is then brought up in a household where they witness violence and abuse and this violence becomes normalised it is likely that violence will then be enacted at a later stage in one's life as either victim or perpetrator. This links to the second circle which incorporates family and relationships.

2.6.2 **Family level risk of IPV**

The second level represents the family and immediate relationships, it represents the immediate environment within which violence takes place (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005). The

intergenerational cycle of violence has been documented in many settings. The sons of women who are beaten are more likely to beat their intimate partners and often have been beaten themselves as children. The daughters of women who are beaten are more likely to be beaten as adults. Women who are beaten in childhood by parents are also more likely to be abused by their intimate partners as adults. Jewkes (2002) elaborates that experiences of violence in the home in childhood teach children that violence is normal in certain settings. Violence becomes normalised for children who witness abuse in the home or who are physically punished in childhood, it is seen as a form of punishment and a way to deal with conflict situations (Jewkes et al., 2002). According to Matzopaulos et al. (2008) these risks begin in early childhood family relationships, a study conducted in three municipalities in the Western Cape found that a quarter of the men who had witnessed the abuse of their mothers were three times more likely than other men to abuse their intimate partners. South African research suggests that the exposure of boys and girls to neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse in childhood is very common (Pinheiro, 2006, as cited in Mathews, Jewkes & Abrahams 2011; Jewkes et al., 2006). Various studies have shown that exposure to childhood trauma has been found to be associated with subsequent aggressive behaviour, particularly rape and intimate partner violence perpetration (Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell & Dunkle, 2009). Some theorists note that experiences of violence in childhood, particularly sexual violence, have been identified as risk factors for experiencing violence in adulthood, a phenomenon known as re-victimisation (Dunkle et al., 2004). Aggressiveness and violent behaviour within the family communicates the appropriateness of such behaviour and serves as a model for learning violent behaviour (Lau, 2009). Within the family and relationship context it is essential to consider the immediate relationship wherein the abuse takes place. Circumstances in which the woman, but not her partner, is working increases the risk of IPV as violence is often associated with inequality (Jewkes, 2002). Family level violence is often influenced by community violence in terms of determining morality and the justification of violence. The third level of the ecological model is community level risk factors.

2.6.3 **Community level risk of IPV**

The third level represents the institutions and social structures, both formal and informal, in which relationships are embedded such as neighbourhoods, the workplace, social network

and peer groups. Exo-system or community level factors are often the by-products of changes taking place in the larger social environment (Heise, 1998). Risk factors at this level include a family having a large number of children, a mother having a child at a young age, a low level of family cohesion, single parent households and low economic status (Matzopoulos, Bowman, Mathews & Myer, 2010). Violence being condoned and legitimized at a community level increases the rates of being a perpetrator of IPV.

A study conducted by Kim and Motsei (2002) examined the attitudes and experiences of GBV amongst PHC nurses in rural South Africa. It consisted of focus group discussions with male and female nurses, there were single sex and mixed sex groups. The study showed that throughout the focus groups, women (in both mixed and single sex groups) defined VAW or GBV as including physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse, whereas the males in the group mentioned physical abuse and rape. Amongst the men, references to physical abuse were frequently described using terms such as 'discipline' or 'punishment' (Kim & Motsei, 2002). This study highlighted the different interpretations of violent acts, with women seeing GBV as including acts that are visible and invisible, linking to the WHO definition of violence. Men on the other hand viewed violence as physical abuse or rape. There was a discrepancy between the understandings of violence. Therefore, if a male is punished for abusing his partner and does not see the act as violent, or views it as deserving, it may be challenging for behavioural change to occur as violence is seen as expected and the norm. Individuals' interpretation of violence is influenced by the norms of their community.

In discussing when they felt it was justified to beat a woman, there was a consensus among men that 'when they don't listen' or 'when they stand for their rights, they must get beaten'. Female nurses indicated that a man who is known to be beating his wife is often regarded with approval as one who 'knows how to discipline' or 'he's keeping order in his home. He is a right man'. This is one example of the way VAW is embedded in cultural norms and values and how these serve to condone and reinforce abusive practices against partners (Kim & Motsei, 2002). Although the understanding of violent acts differs between men and women it appears that there is a consensus on the causes of violence. With both men and women seeing violence as being warranted in particular cases. In this case, even

with the correct laws in place, VAW will not be eradicated as it is not seen as a problem and as shown in this study it was justified to beat a woman and in some cases the women are seen as deserving. The study conducted by Kim and Motsei (2002) is an example of violence being socially normalised. There is a need to empower women economically, socially and individually as well as reflect on their roles in male gender socialisation (Jewkes et al., 2015).

IPV occurs in the family, where power dynamics and gender meanings are constructed and where gender ideologies are put into practice (Bui & Morash, 2008). This research was aimed at understanding the meaning making of men who had perpetrated violence against their partners. It aimed to examine how these men understand violence, what acts they deemed as violent and whether they viewed their acts as violent. Ideological views that are enacted at the community and interpersonal level are formed at the societal level. Societal level risk factors include the broad overarching beliefs that are filtered down to different communities through societal expectations, cultural beliefs and ideological views.

2.6.4 **Societal level risk of IPV**

The fourth level is the economic and social environment, including cultural norms. Societal level risk factors operate through their influence on the previous levels. Male supremacy, as a societal factor, may influence the organisation of power within community institutions, as well as the decision-making authority in intimate relationships (Heise, 1998).

Societal level risk factors are those that create an acceptable climate for violence. Societal factors include cultural norms that view violence as an acceptable way of resolving conflict; norms that entrench male dominance over women and children (WHO, 2002). Furthermore, societal factors include health, educational, economic and social policies that maintain high levels of economic and social inequalities (WHO, 2002). They interact with individuals who are predisposed to violence at an individual or relational level.

South Africa has high rates of unemployment and inequality, over a third of the population is unemployed (Seedat et al., 2009), making it hard to maintain masculine social ideals. Where there are high rates of inequality there is likely to be anger and frustration, and violence may be used to gain power and influence over others (Seedat et al., 2009). As a result of this, men enact their power over women in order to maintain their masculine social

identities (Jewkes, 2002). It has been found that income inequality, low economic development and high levels of gender inequality are strong predictors for high rates of violence (Seedat et al., 2009). Factors such as patriarchy are situated within societal structures, patriarchy comprises of a structure in which men have more power and privilege over women and an ideology that legitimizes this (Lau, 2009). Male violence against women is then seen as the use of power and control to assert values of male privilege, entitlement and dominance over women (Hearn, 1999). Societal level risks are the backdrop of the individual and community levels (Boxer et al., 2013). For example, with respect to the current study, the ideology of patriarchy is embedded within society, heeding cultural values and identities that are shared and enacted by members of society.

An example of the interplay between various levels of the ecological system could be as follows; a man who was abused as a child and had a strong need to be in control, who existed in a society in which maleness is defined by one's ability to respond aggressively to conflict, and where 'good' women are supposed to be submissive. He then loses his job and his wife, after she became more empowered through participating in a community group decided to get a job. This has the potential to lead to power struggles, conflict and violence in the relationship (Heise, 1998). It could be hypothesized that the man would have not become violent had he not lost his job and been threatened by his wife's autonomy. Alternatively given the individual and societal level risks the man may have been violent without the community level risk (Heise, 1998). The causes of IPV may stem from different levels of the ecological system, or an interplay of various levels. The ecological model assists researchers and practitioners in understanding the interplay of the various levels and the possible risk factors.

2.7 Critique of Ecological Framework

The ecological framework described above links with various factors such as the intergenerational cycle of violence, viewing violence in one's home or being abused as a child. It also links to cultural norms which play a large role in South African society regarding the status of men and women. It is important to note that, as with anything, there are shortcomings to the ecological model. The factors influencing IPV are often found to

operate at several, if not all levels (Lazarus, Tonsing, Ratele & Van Niekerk, 2009). The process of allocation to levels is subjective and conceals the effect of each factor on the next, as well as the interrelationship of these factors (Lazarus et al., 2009). For example, poverty is seen as a community level risk factor, however it may have an impact at the individual level through its impact on male identity, at a relationship level through its impact on conflict over resources or status within the relationship and at a community level through its impact on shared ideas of successful manhood (Lazarus et al., 2009).

While the model distinguishes between risk factors at the various levels, it does not account for how the different levels interact to produce violence. The model does not emphasize the cyclical or interrelated nature of the different levels. It does not elaborate on aspects such as race, class and gender and how these intersect on the perpetration of IPV. The relationship between violence and a range of social asymmetries represented by social categories needs to be clarified (Bowman et al., 2015). The mechanism by which risk translates into action is not clear, and it may be useful to examine the violent encounter rather than risk (Bowman et al., 2015).

There are many theories used to understand IPV, often patriarchal privilege and the oppression of women is viewed as the primary cause of violence against women (McPhail et al., 2007). Meanings of gender and of violence may change overtime, dependent on the time and the social construction of these constructs at the time of analysis. Masculinity and femininity can be understood as context-specific social relations and interactions in which we make ourselves (Connell, 2001). At this point it is important to unpack masculinity as a construct and the fluid, changing meaning of the term, as well as its relation to IPV.

2.8 Masculinity

Masculinity is a term that has multiple and changing meanings depending on the historic context. Masculinity and femininity are constructs individuals are categorized into according to their identity. According to Connell (1995) gender can be defined as the way in which bodily structures and the processes of human reproduction, categorizes practice at all levels of social organization from identities to symbolic rituals, to large scale institutions. Gender is not something which is fixed, but rather something that is done, or accomplished, being a

man is something that emerges in human interaction and is co-constructed (Connel, 1995). Gender can be understood as something individuals do rather than something that they are (Fleming, Gruskin, Rojo & Dworkin, 2015).

Individuals occupy the masculine position and performing it affects the way individuals experience their bodies, their sense of self and how they project that self to others (Schippers, 2007). In that sense masculinity, could be seen as an identifiable set of practices that occur across space and over time and are taken up and enacted collectively by groups, communities and societies (Schippers, 2007). Masculine characters are not given; they emerge from the gender regimes found in different cultures and historical periods (Wetherell & Edley, 1999). Masculinity involves the process of making and remaking of identity and meaning (Kenway & Fitzclarence, 2010). Multiple masculinities exist within a society, but dominance and control over women are often apart of male attributes and behaviours that are recognized as shared social ideals (Jewkes et al., 2015). A man who exemplifies masculine social ideals can be seen as one who embodies physical strength, is adventurousness, displays emotional neutrality, is certain, has control, practices assertiveness, is self-reliant, practices individuality and is competitive and at the same time distances himself from traits that are in opposition to these (Kenway & Fitzclarence, 2010).

A predominant theory regarding causes of intimate partner violence links to masculinity and power. Moore (1994) argued that experiences of male identity are bound up with experiences of power. Whilst both men and women hold power, this power is expressed at differing levels and to differing degrees. IPV often occurs in contexts in which men subscribe to traditional and patriarchal views of male power and supremacy, traditional gender roles and the view that violence is an acceptable way of resolving conflict (Kenway & Fitzclarence, 2010). Challenges to one's power are perceived as threats to one's masculine identity. Moore (1994) argues that intimate partner violence occurs when male self-representations and social evaluations are threatened by the behaviour of others; in this case their female partners. For example, if a man is unable to provide for and take care of his wife, which is considered to be part of his role, he may feel as though his identity is being threatened and would then have to enact his masculinity in other ways that show his power and control. An inability to meet social expectations of successful manhood may trigger a crisis of male identity and IPV is a way of resolving this crisis (Jewkes et al., 2009). It is hypothesized that this desire to express ones' power is often carried out in a physical way.

Research has identified a strong link between violence and poverty. Men living in poverty are unable to live up to ideals of successful manhood, because of this; they resort to violence (Jewkes et al., 2009). Bourgeois (1996) wrote about life in the New York slums and described how young men felt pressurized by models of masculinity and family by the older generation. They were trapped in slums in which there was little employment and neither model of masculine success was attainable. Ideals of masculinity were then reshaped to emphasize control over women, substance use, participation in crime and xenophobia or racism (Jewkes et al., 2009; Jewkes, 2002). Violence should not be seen as a breakdown of social order but as a sign of struggle for the maintenance of certain fantasies of identity and power, specifically those based on ideas of male superiority over women (Moore, 1994). This argument is linked to masculinity and male's feelings of power and dominance in society and the home. If this perceived power is compromised men will act out violently to assert their position. Thus, violence is not only an expression of male powerlessness over women, but is linked to male vulnerability and expectations of manhood that are unattainable (Jewkes, 2002).

A study conducted by Langa (2010) looked at how young men negotiate the idea of masculinity. Langa (2010) found that young men's views on masculinity were fluid and changing depending on the situation in which they found themselves. Langa (2010) also noted that the nature of masculinity was influenced by the socio-historical political context. Masculinity is not static, but is historically and spatially situated and is constantly evolving (Kenway & Fitzclarence, 2010). The idealized form of masculinity at a particular point in history is referred to as hegemonic masculinity.

2.8.1 Hegemonic Masculinity

There are many different ways of being a man within society. Showing dominance and control over women is part of male attributes and behaviour which is recognized as a shared social ideal (Jewkes et al., 2015). The most legitimate and acclaimed version of manhood is known as hegemonic masculinity and the dominance of this masculinity over others is not imposed, but accepted by men and women as the norm (Jewkes et al., 2015).

Hegemonic masculinity according to Connell (1987) refers to the most dominant form of masculinity in a given era and is hierarchically defined in relation to marginalized and subordinated masculinities and in relation to women. Dworkin, Hatcher, Colvin & Peacock (2012) notes that while only a minority of men may enact the norms and practices of hegemonic masculinity, this idealized version of masculinity still helps to shape practice, beliefs and social action amongst hegemonic, marginalised and subordinated men. Hegemonic masculinity embodies the most honoured way of being a man; it requires other men to position themselves in relation to it and legitimizes the global subordination of women to men (Connel & Messerschmidt, 2005). While hegemonic masculinity emphasizes male dominance over women, it is also male dominance over other males. Subordinate masculinity is the opposite of hegemonic masculinity and is repressed and oppressed by it, any relation to the 'feminine' puts a man in this category and makes him vulnerable to violence (Kenway & Fitzclarence, 2010). Ratele (2008) argues that masculinities are better seen as created at both the social and psychological levels, something males do and establish in ongoing activity in relation to females, to other males, but also in relation to their own lives. Connell (1995) defined hegemonic masculinity as the legitimacy of patriarchy which guarantees the dominant position of men and the subordination of women. Violence is not necessarily a part of masculinity; however, they are often linked. Women are expected to fall under men's control and a way of achieving this is through physical or sexual forces and threats (Jewkes et al., 2015). Men will perpetrate violence against women in an effort to gain, maintain or avoid losing status and power (Fleming et al., 2005).

Recent interventions aimed at reducing IPV explore the way men see themselves as men and resulting gender practices including the use of violence, sexual and other behaviour towards women (Jewkes et al., 2015). Interventions that address masculinity and the influences of gender norms and the system of inequality have been proven to be most successful (Jewkes et al., 2015).

While there are many theories regarding IPV, its causes and consequences this research explores IPV within the ecological framework, with an emphasis on masculinity. There needs to be a focus on the multiple risk factors of IPV within different levels of the ecological

system (Jewkes et al., 2015). The following section concludes the literature review and focuses on perpetrators of IPV.

2.9 Perpetrators of IPV

The literature on perpetrators and victims of violence seems to be developing independently of each other and commonly provides one-sided accounts. Historically research has focused on victims of IPV, and over the past few years there has been a shift in focus to perpetrators. Research conducted by Boonzaier and de la Rey (2004) aimed to explore how both partners in a violent heterosexual relationship understand and attach meaning to their experiences. In-depth interviews were conducted with five couples. The analysis shows that women's and men's talk about violence is linked to broader socio-cultural mechanisms that construct female abuse as a serious social problem in South Africa. Boonzaier and de la Rey (2004) noted that researchers have found that men typically justify, minimize or deny their own violence against female partners. They frequently describe violence as a loss of control, temporary insanity and accumulated frustration. Other reasons men offer for their violence relate to external factors, such as the behaviour or personalities of their partners, alcohol and jealousy. Boonzaier and de la Rey (2004) state that these discourses of blame, denial and minimization employed at the individual and societal levels, frequently legitimize male violence against women. These discourses minimize the violent act and still place blame on the victim. This research attempts to move away from victim blaming and minimizing the act and aims to focus on the perpetrators and their violent encounter, attempting to understand the 'in the moment' violent act as reflecting a more encompassing position on violence itself.

Research on violence perpetrated against women has been conducted for numerous years. According the Garcia-Moreno et al. (2005) studies conducted in both industrialized and developing countries have found that there are common reasons men use to justify abusing their partners. Some of these include, women not obeying the men, arguing back, not having food ready on time, not caring adequately for the children or home, questioning the man about money or girlfriends, going somewhere without the man's permission, refusing to have sex and the man suspecting the women of infidelity. Lau's (2008) study on male perpetrators of intimate partner violence attempted to examine men's subjective experience

of their violence towards their intimate partners as well as how men talk about their violence in an attempt to establish credibility of their actions. The study found that men's accounts of their violent actions were clustered around violence being regarded as an instrumental response, the perpetrators form of exercising power and control over ones partner. Violence was an act of having control over another or losing control. There was a continuum of love and violence with participants comparing emotions of anger to that of love. Evident in the responses was a sense of changing identities, the self that was being interviewed was different to the violent self; participants positioned themselves as being changed men. And finally dissociation, justification and confessions, with participants distancing themselves from the violence, or using justification in which they reflected discourses on a social and cultural level to explain their violent acts. According to Lau (2008) the justification of violence is the enactment of hegemonic masculinity ideals which are associated with power and control. Power is understood in different ways including as a physical force, as relational and positional in which men hold the position of power and as exercised in relation to discourses.

A study conducted by Dworkin et al. (2012) explored the impact of a gender-transformative programme (One Man Can) and looked to understanding how the workshops impacted on the men's ideas of masculinity, gender norms and perceptions of women's rights. They reported changes in perception which in turn, impacted their attitudes and behaviours related to relationship power, gendered divisions of labour and masculinity. Rather than view men as reproducing a fixed notion of hegemonic masculinity or as opposed to change, Barker and Ricardo (2003, as cited in Dworkin et al., 2012) found that non-violent and gender equitable relationships can be nurtured when men are assisted and provided with the space for self-reflection and to rehearse new ideas and behaviours. This programme created an environment which provided men with a space to re-evaluate their understandings of violence and identify new ways of dealing with situations in which they would generally act out violently. These two studies by Boonzaier & de la Rey (2004) and Dworkin et al. (2012) speak to different aspects. With the study conducted by Boonzaier & de la Rey (2004) included both males and females in the relationship and identified the differing ways in which men and women talk about violence within the relationship. The study conducted by Dworkin et al. (2012) looked solely at men and identified how interventions may have influenced their views and opinions regarding IPV. Furthermore, the

study examined societal level influences on one's relationship. The new understanding of masculinity based on those who had been through the One Man Can programme could be seen as learnt views, whereas the first study examined beliefs without an intervention and beliefs without exploration into new ideas. Interventions that seek to transform gender norms and promote gender equitable relations between men and women are termed 'gender transformative' (Jewkes et al., 2015). The studies discussed above as well as the current study are based in the context of gender transformative programmes.

Stevens (2008) looked at the narratives of men involved in homicidal encounters. The study focused on power, masculinity and violence. The study made reference to male honour, status and power, the normalisation of violence and defense against emasculation. These were similar to some ideas which were likely to emerge in the discussion of IPV perpetration and the causes. The study focused on perpetrators of homicide while this research will focus on perpetrators of IPV, results may emerge regarding the meaning of violence and where it stems from including aspects of normalisation, power and defense against emasculation.

While research regarding perpetrators of IPV is emerging, there is a gap in the literature regarding how perpetrators of IPV make meaning of the concept of violence. The research emerges out of the literature presented and aims to connect the missing links. In the literature, the difference in reporting rates of IPV amongst perpetrators and victims was illustrated; this could be due to different understandings of violence. IPV has been studied in multiple ways; the ecological framework has been used to provide a holistic overview of the factors that could influence the perpetrators understanding of IPV.

Given the overview of research related to IPV it is evident that more research needs to be done to examine the meaning making of perpetrators of IPV. The continued prevalence of domestic violence despite numerous interventions indicates that both research and interventions have been too focused on the female as a victim of abuse notes Lau (2008), hence the need for a shift in perspective to examine the perpetrator.

As gender is socially constructed it would be beneficial to examine the way men make sense of gender as well as violence. The bulk of research on IPV has examined violence from the victim's perspective, without examining the perpetrators perspective. By examining the perpetrator, the violent act is better conceptualized as a complex interaction of meaning

systems that intersect in complicated ways during a violent event. The current research attempts to explore accounts of 'in the moment' violent encounters between perpetrators of IPV and victims. It examines perpetrators experiences of and their understanding of IPV.

3. Methods

3.1 Research Question

The purpose of the research was to obtain accounts of perpetrators experiences of IPV. As each experience differs, the research question remained open ended and allowed perpetrators to respond based on their experiences. The research question aimed to explore perpetrators personal experiences of IPV, as well as the 'in the moment' account of IPV.

Given that, the question that informed the research was "How do perpetrators of IPV make meaning of their experiences of IPV?"

The following section will outline the research process used to answer the research question beginning with the research design, participants involved in the study, the procedures, details regarding data collection and the method of data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The research was qualitative in nature. According to Fossey, Harvey, McDermott and Davidson (2002) qualitative research describes and explains individual's experiences, behaviours, interactions and social contexts without quantification. This approach assisted in providing rich, in-depth data on how perpetrators of IPV make meaning of their experiences and actions regarding acts of IPV. It allowed for an analysis of the life worlds as well as perpetrators accounts of their experiences of being a perpetrator of IPV. Qualitative research focuses on language as a means of exploring processes of communication and interaction within social groups; the description and interpretation of subjective meanings of situations and theory building through discovering patterns (Fossey et al., 2002).

This research is based within the interpretive paradigm. Interpretive methodologies focus on understanding and accounting for the meaning of human experiences and actions (Fossey et al., 2002). Participants are seen as social beings who create meaning and constantly engage in making sense of their world (Fossey et al., 2002). Participants are embedded in the context of fluid social interactions in which meanings are assigned. The

research participants are embedded in many contexts and are a part of and engaging in different contexts which contribute to their understanding or account of an incident or event. Hence, IPA examines individual's experiences and attempts to analyse the individual based on the context in which they are embedded. In understanding the individual one needs to consider the interplay of the various contexts within which one is embedded and attempts to understand the individual as one who creates meaning from these interactions.

This qualitative interpretative study will assist in understanding how perpetrators of IPV make meaning of IPV. This will be done through analysing perpetrators accounts of their experiences. The reported meanings that the participants assign to their experiences and actions within IPV will be subject to analysis. Through this a conclusion will be made as to how they make sense of their actions regarding IPV. As a researcher, it cannot be assumed that one can understand the exact reasoning of the violent encounter, however one can attempt to get as close as possible to the encounter through the reports provided.

3.3 Participants

A purposive sampling strategy was used, which includes participants based on desired characteristics they may have and those who are likely to produce information that is relevant to the research. It is about gaining information in which one is able to learn a great deal about issues that are central to the purpose of the research, which Patton (2002) termed information rich cases. The research was aimed at understanding perpetrators reports and accounts of violent encounters and participants were chosen based on desire to discuss their experiences of being a perpetrator of IPV.

The participants of the study consisted of men who have completed the training programme at ADAPT aimed at perpetrators of IPV. The selection criteria for those who partook in the study was that participants had to be over the age of 18 years old. Participants had to have completed a perpetrator reintegration programme at ADAPT and importantly participants had to self-identify as being a perpetrator of IPV.

Five men participated in the study, a small sample size permits greater inquiry into and understanding of the phenomena being studied (Patton, 2002). All the participants had been through the perpetrator programme at ADAPT in Alexandra. Four of the men lived in

Alexandra and one lived in the East Rand. In terms of race, one of the participants was White and four were Black South Africans. All the men self-identified as perpetrators of IPV or as being a perpetrator of IPV at some point in their lives. Three of the men were referred to the programme and two joined willingly due to a reported interest in the area.

3.3.1 **The ADAPT programme**

The participants were all recruited through an organisation in Alexandra called Agisanang Domestic Abuse Prevention and Training (ADAPT). ADAPT focuses on Gender-Based Violence awareness and training. In 1997 ADAPT became the first organisation in South Africa working with men to eradicate Gender-Based Violence. The programme requires men to take responsibility for their violence and start looking for alternatives to dealing with conflict. It includes men in conversations aimed at finding solutions to GBV, increasing their understanding of the roots of violence in the home and in society. It provides a circle of healing for men and focuses on the prevention of violence and providing positive role models to the community.

3.4 Procedure

Before proceeding with the research, ethical concerns were taken into consideration. An ethical clearance certificate (Appendix A) was provided by the Human Research Ethics Committee which ensured that the research was ethically sound. The researcher contacted the organisation and secured a time and place to meet the director and discuss the research topic. Upon obtaining consent, the director then put the researcher in contact with the Social Worker who coordinated the men's programme. The Social Worker assisted with the logistics. Initially a list of participants who were part of the perpetrator programme at ADAPT was sent by the Social Worker to the researcher for the researcher to contact prospective participants for interviews. Once participants were contacted and agreed to take part in the study, a time and place was allocated to conduct the interview. Interviews were conducted at the ADAPT offices in a quiet office space.

Written, informed consent to participate and to be audio recorded was obtained from the participants before commencing with the interviews. Participants were informed that they were at liberty to refrain from answering questions that were too sensitive in nature, or to

withdraw from the study at any time. Participants were required to read the participant information sheet (Appendix B) and informed consent form (Appendix C) before participating in the research. There was an additional consent to record the interview; participants were provided with a consent form for audio recording (Appendix D). Due to the sensitive nature of the research contact details for counselling services were provided on the participant information sheet and the social worker was available to debrief the participants if there was a need.

Each interview was between forty-five minutes and an hour. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher. The researcher was the only person who had access to the recordings and transcripts. Anonymity was guaranteed; the researcher ensured that the identity of the participants would not be revealed outside of the research context (Lewis, 2003). Confidentiality was also ensured and no identifying information of participants was presented in the report either through direct reference to their names or indirect reference such as contextual information (Lewis, 2003).

3.5 Data Collection

The method of data collection was in-depth semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews were selected as the method of data collection as it allows the researcher to have an idea of the area of interest and some questions to pursue. The participants are viewed as key informants who should be allowed the maximum opportunity to tell their story. This data collection technique also allowed the researcher to co-constitute the psychological world of the participant (Smith & Osborn, 2008). An interview guide (Appendix E) was used to explore particular topics, while remaining flexible enough to allow for discussion, the researcher is guided by the schedule rather than dictated to by it (Smith & Osborn, 2008). This method of data collection allowed participants to reflect on their experiences and actions and provide accounts of these, as opposed to the researcher asking predetermined questions which may not allow for flexibility of responses. It allowed space for the researcher to establish rapport with the participant (Smith & Osborn, 2008). The researcher was free to probe interest areas that arose, and the interview followed the participants' interests and concerns regarding the topic (Smith & Osborn, 2008). In terms of IPA, it enabled the researcher to probe into the particular lived experiences of each participant, it allowed for a glimpse into each participant's life world.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data gathered through the semi-structured interviews was analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Fossey et al., (2002) notes that phenomenological researchers study participants 'life worlds', they are interested in the way people experience their world, what it is like for them and focus on how best to understand their experiences. The individuals 'life world' is a product of the social, cultural and historical context as well as their individual subjectivity. Phenomenology is a philosophical approach to the study of experience, with an interest in the experience of what being human is like (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). Phenomenology attempts to get as close to an individual's experience as possible. It involves examining how someone might come to know their experiences of a phenomena and identify the essential qualities of an experience. According to Husserl, one of the founding philosophers of phenomenology, in everyday life people are busily engaged in activities in the world and take for granted their experiences in the world (Smith et al., 2009). From a phenomenological standpoint, a person needs to disengage from the activity and attend to the experience of it (Smith et al., 2009). It allows one to reflect on experiences and actions.

According to Smith and Osborn (2008) IPA is concerned with the individual as a cognitive, linguistic, affective and physical being and assumes a chain of connection between peoples talk and their thinking and emotional state. IPA involves a highly detailed and intense analysis of the accounts produced by a small number of participants (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006). Smith and Osborn (2008) note that as a researcher doing IPA it is important to remember that people often struggle to express what they are thinking and feeling, there may be reasons why they do not self-disclose and the researcher should interpret people's mental and emotional state from what they say. This was evident in the interviews conducted, in some cases participants struggled to express themselves due to language barriers. In other cases, they struggled to express themselves due to the difficult nature of reflecting on what they had done, in an environment which does not condone their actions and expects them to think and act in a particular way. Within an interview context morality becomes apparent, "morality represents itself within the dominant discourses of a society

as to how citizens should behave in line with certain religious, social and legal dictates" (Hyden & McCarthy, 1994, p. 545).

Meaning is central to IPA and the aim is to try and understand the content and the complexity of these meanings rather than measure their frequencies (Smith & Osborn, 2008). The aim is to understand the participant's accounts of their actions while being aware of the environment they are embedded in, as well as the context of the interview and the different discourses that brings. In IPA focus is directed towards participant's attempts to make sense of their experiences (Smith et al., 2009).

The process of analysing data using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis consisted of four steps. The first step involved reading and re-reading the data. This allowed the researcher to become immersed in it (Smith et al., 2009). The second step included taking notes of anything of interest in the transcript and beginning to understand specific ways in which participants talk about, understand and think about an issue (Smith et al., 2009). The third step involved developing themes. Themes are not selected exclusively on the basis of frequency in the data, but according to Smith and Osborn (2008) factors including the richness of the particular passage that highlight the themes help illuminate aspects taken into account. And the final step included searching for connections across the themes (Smith et al., 2009). Themes were translated into a narrative that described the participants and careful consideration was taken to distinguish between what the participants said and the researcher's interpretation of it (Smith & Osborn, 2008).

One should be able to learn about important themes in the analysis, but also the life world of the participants who have told their stories (Smith, 2004). It is also noted that delving deeper into the particular takes us closer to the universal (Warnock, 1987, as cited in Smith, 2004) while we are focusing on particular life worlds and experiences of five men, one is positioned to think about how other individuals might deal with a particular situation.

There are two aims an IPA researcher must keep in mind. The first aim is to try and understand the participants' world and describe what it is like, which leads to a focus on participants' experiences (Larkin et al., 2006). It is important to be aware that access to experience is partial and complex; the analytic process cannot ever achieve a first-person account (Larkin et al., 2006). However, the account is constructed by participant and

researcher. Therefore, the objective is to achieve a coherent third person and psychologically informed description which gets as close to the participants view as possible (Larkin et al., 2006). The second aim is to develop a more interpretative analysis which positions the initial description in relation to a wider social, cultural and theoretical context (Larkin et al., 2006). Taking the individuals experience and placing it within a social and cultural context.

It is essential to maintain a rigorous approach throughout the research. Qualitative research aims to do so by ensuring that the focus is on the research participants and emphasizes the subjective meaning, actions and contexts of participants (Fossey et al., 2002). This is essential to ensure that the participants perspective has been authentically represented and interpretations are made from information gathered – authenticity (Fossey et al., 2002). There needs to be concern for methodological rigour which includes criteria concerned with good practice in the conduct of the research, as well as interpretive rigour which is related to trustworthiness of interpretations made (Fossey et al., 2002). In terms of methodological rigour the researcher needs to ensure congruence, responsiveness to social context, appropriateness, adequacy and transparency. And in terms of interpretive rigour, authenticity, coherence, reciprocity, typicality and permeability of the researchers' intentions, engagement and interpretations need to be ensured (Fossey et al., 2002).

3.7 Reflexivity

Within the analysis and throughout the research process it is important to remain reflexive as a researcher both in conducting and interpreting the interviews. More specifically it is essential to acknowledge my role as a female researcher interviewing men who are perpetrators of IPV, different gender roles are embodied by interviewer and interviewee. Interviewers bring their own views on gender to the interview setting and this is believed to influence levels of discourses (Jewkes et al., 2002). As a qualitative researcher, it is impossible to exclude biases from the analysis and these biases are valuable. However, these need to be acknowledged and the researcher needs to be aware of the interactions of gendering that are played out in the interview, as these can be used as powerful analytic tools.

Being a female, I am in the same position as the women who are the victims of IPV and could be a victim of IPV. Patton (2002) states that reflexivity is a way of emphasising the importance of self-awareness, political and cultural consciousness and ownership of one's own perspective. I ensured that I identified personal views, opinions and prejudices that are my own and monitored them throughout the process and was conscious as not to let these influence the interviews and analysis of data. Although IPA focuses on the text, there is still a reader doing the reading, influenced by their biographical presence, notes Smith (2004). While I focused on the data that was presented, my interpretations of the text may have been influenced by my context.

The men who were involved in the interviews could be assumed to have particular views regarding females and their position in society in relation to males. The participants may have engaged with me in a flirtatious way, which was included in the analysis and I examined this in relation to how these men see women in general and did not see it as offensive. The act in itself is a form of data that was analysed. While conducting the interviews, I was aware of my position as a female, as well as being much younger than the participants.

There was one participant who referred to me as *sweetie* throughout the interview and at times would ask very direct and intrusive questions. While it went unnoticed at the time, in transcribing the interview this became evident. These acts angered me creating feelings of violation by the interaction with this participant. Listening to accounts of abuse can provoke overwhelming feelings of powerlessness (Jewkes et al., 2002). The feeling of powerlessness experienced by myself may be interpreted as similar to the feelings of powerlessness experienced by victims of IPV.

In analysing the data, it is important that interpretations are made from the data and that all claims can be supported by evidence. It is important to be aware of all feelings and reactions that may arise in the collection and analysis of data. I ensured that interpretations are based on what was said in the interviews, and rechecked the analysis and compared it to the data to ensure this.

4. Analysis and Discussion

The study sought to explore how men understand violence within their intimate relationships. It explored how men make meaning of their experiences and actions regarding violence directed towards their partners. Each participant took part in a semi-structured interview. The aim of the interview was to explore the ways in which perpetrators of IPV make meaning of their experiences of IPV. While each participants' experience differs, there are commonalities between the experiences that can be used in different settings when discussing perpetrators of IPV. Many of the responses corresponded with the body of literature that constructs patriarchal values as the bedrock of IPV. Themes organised around blame, denial, power, culture and witnessing abuse in one's childhood emerged as significant anchors in the analysis.

Throughout this analysis, it became evident that there is little consensus amongst participants regarding the nature of abuse and concerning their understanding of violence. However, the analysis does provide valuable insight into perpetrators accounts of abuse. While many themes emerged within the analysis, the researcher has focused on three of these themes as they provide valuable insight into perpetrators accounts and are viewed as most insightful. The following section focuses on dominant themes that emerged within the data with an emphasis on the life worlds of the participants and their experiences as social, cultural and historical beings. This discussion is based on the participant's world views and how they make meaning of their experiences as perpetrators of violence.

The first theme explored perpetrators forms of justification for the violence, participants used the language of blame and denial in accounting for their violent acts. In addition to this certain acts were viewed as more violent than others. The second theme explored the power of manhood in which men are viewed as more powerful based on their status as 'men' and they have control over their partners who are deemed as having less control and are expected to be submissive. And finally, theme three examines the tensions of ownership in which topics such as women becoming a man's property are discussed, as well as the different types of relationships and how power and control may be experienced within these relationships.

A study conducted by Lau (2008) clustered the experiences of violence around five central themes: (i) violence as 'being out of control', (ii) violence as 'having control' over another, (iii) the continuum of love and violence, (iv) violence versus emotionality and (v) the violent self as 'not me' (Lau, 2008). The current research echoed some of the themes found in the study conducted by Lau as well as other previous research conducted, which found contradictory experiences of violence.

4.1 Justification of the act

The first theme that will be discussed is participants' justification of the act of violence towards their intimate partner. Upon analysing the data, it was found that when asked about a violent encounter, or whether they have been violent towards their partners, perpetrators often provide justification for the violence. Denial and minimization of the act of abuse are dominant themes in previous research conducted on perpetrators of IPV. Research suggests that men often deny or minimize their violent acts, as well as hold their partners responsible for provoking the incident (Catlett, Toews & Walilko, 2010). This places violence as a response to provocation by ones' partner, and in doing so, shifts responsibility for the act. Thus, the perpetrator is not wholly responsible for the violence, but the responsibility is shared between victim and perpetrator.

Incidents of violence are often described as a 'loss of control' or a response to provocation, something that is seemingly out of the perpetrators control or which he is not responsible for. Men's talk about violence is embedded within neutralized strategies that deny, excuse, justify or rationalize acts of violence (Hearn, 1998). The analysis will unpack perpetrators forms of justification for the act through analysing their accounts of the use of denial when asked about the violent encounter. Furthermore, it examines blame, within which perpetrators shift the cause of the violence to the victim. Within this theme there is evidence of perpetrators distancing different parts of themselves.

4.1.1 <u>The Language of Denial</u>

Research conducted by Catlett et al. (2010) found that the participants who partook in the study started the interviews by denying that they are been abusive. This was evident in the current research with participants initially denying that they were violent and only later

admitting that they had been abusive towards their partners.

Participant 5: Extract 1

I: Can you tell me about an incident or event that happened that led to you being referred to the perpetrator programme at ADAPT?

P: Nothing of that nature did happen to me, although I did experience a guy doing that in my neighbourhood and I referred him to the programme.

I: Ok, so you weren't…

P: Well not necessarily, honestly speaking I was the one on the receiving end of male perpetration. But not me. I want to as be honest as possible.

I: So, you didn't, you were never abusive in any of your relationships?

P5: No, no, no. even though I was once, but not physically. It was, it was a…. I'd rather not say it now or talk about it because it was a very minor thing. It was verbal, which leads to emotional abuse and emotional abuse it goes deep, it goes deep to the core of your conscious, to the deep core of your you know nerves and all that. It touches deep, coz ya. You know verbally, whatever that you might say it might have the, I'm not lightening the effect of the physical abuse, but I'm saying verbal abuse, it's very, very… the worst form of abuse.

The above extract shows participant 5 beginning by saying that he was not abusive in his relationships and then admitting to being violent once. He begins by externalizing violence and placing himself in a desirable light by mentioning that he referred someone to the programme at ADAPT. He then goes on to report on the differing types of violent encounters, which illustrates some of the content of the ADAPT programme. This participant begins by mentioning that what he did was a minor act; he goes on to highlight verbal and emotional abuse which he reports as the worst forms of abuse. It appears as if this participant goes through stages before acknowledging that he was abusive. He begins by saying no, and then goes on to say that he was abusive, but not physically. In this way, he is admitting that he has done wrong, but the form of abuse he enacted is not as severe as other forms of abuse. Participant 5 says that what he did was minor, mentioning the form of abuse, which was verbal, he then unpacks verbal abuse as the worst form of

abuse. This participant appears to be grappling with the idea of being a perpetrator or having done wrong. This could be due to guilt regarding his actions, or issues of morality.

Participant 1: Extract 2

> *P1: Ya seeing that I thought it was fine, and I once, that is why now I was very strict with my wife to say, you don't have friends, you don't go out of the house without telling me you see. If you want to spend money you have to inform me that you are spending so much, you are taking so much, things like that, and so I thought it's the right thing to do.*
> *I: It's the way?*
> *P1: You see, it's the way to go. Going to prison helped me a lot, because I think I was still going to continue to make mistakes. Because I even went to an extent of… hitting my wife with a fist, and her eye was swollen.*

Participant 1 talks about the violent acts as unacknowledged or viewed as nonviolent at the time of the encounter, 'he thought it was fine'. Participants may also shift from denial to minimization, 'it was just a little push' (Catlett et al., 2010). The above participant reports on his experiences of controlling and manipulating his wife. He reports on being emotionally and verbally abusive towards her for many years, which is viewed as a more acceptable form of abuse. Much later in the interview mentioning that he hit her with a fist which for him was the turning point. Participant 1 mentions that what upset him most was that she was no longer beautiful; this speaks to this participant's experience of being a perpetrator. At the time of the incident participant 1 was not remorseful of his behaviour however, what was of concern at the time was that he had 'damaged' his property. He did not realise that he had been wrong through her tears and pleas for him to stop, but only once she was bruised and was no longer beautiful. For this participant, he could not understand why, years later, she was not over the abuse. He had forgotten about the abuse since being released from prison and enquired as to how long the researcher thought his wife will take to accept it. While this indicates an acknowledgment of the violence, there is no understanding of the psychological and emotional trauma the abuse may have had on the victim. This participant views the violent encounter as a separate incident(s) which took

place and it is separate from him as an individual and once he repented for his act the incident should have be forgotten. The impact of the violence and the meaning the violence holds for the victim is not acknowledged. This in its own could be viewed as dominating and controlling behaviour over ones partner.

It has been found that perpetrators often distance themselves from the event, presenting two 'selves', the violent self who committed the violent act (in the past) as well as the nonviolent self, who is the self being interviewed (Hearn, 1998). This is evident in participant 5 extract 1 as well, in which he appeared to struggle to verbalize that he had been abusive, as he is now embodying a 'new' self. This separation of self allows one to explain, justify and rationalize the violent act (Hearn, 1998). Men's narratives often illustrate how they had transformed, they resist the negative labels, such as 'perpetrator' and attempt to maintain a positive sense of self despite what has transpired in the past (Boonzaier, 2008). This is evident in the participants distancing themselves from the violent event and often struggling to discuss it. This was echoed by participants referring to themselves as affirmed or reformed men. The distancing of the selves allows perpetrators to speak about the violent encounter(s) while not viewing themselves as violent.

Participant 1: Extract 3

I: Did you say that you are affirmed?

P1: Yes.

I: What did you mean by that?

P1: Affirmed in terms of understanding right and wrong, knowing that violence is not the way to go. Whatever form of violence is not the way to go, you see. And you cannot justify being violent. It's unjustifiable. You see even me if I walk in the street and see people arguing. I stand and try to understand as to what are they arguing about, you see. You may find that what they are arguing about it not even worth arguing.

I: So, you would say that you are affirmed not a perpetrator?

P1: Ya I'm not a perpetrator anymore.

4.1.2 The Use of Blame

Participants negotiated their identity of being a 'changed man', which provided distance from the violent self. Attention to the narrative revealed ways in which men attempted to establish credibility in their accounts of violence, agreeing to talk and employing strategies such as dissociations, justifications and confessions (Lau, 2008). In addition to this the research found that participants placed responsibility of the act on to the victim or societal level influences such as witnessing abuse within the home or community.

Participant: Extract 4

> *I: Can you think back to the first time you witnessed violence against a woman?*
> *P1: The first time I witnessed it. Uuuh… I'm trying to remember. Oh, it's my brother, it's my elder brother. My elder brother's wife left home and went to stay with a certain guy somewhere and my elder brother heard about that and she went to that place and found that his wife is there, his washing the dishes in the morning, she was in her gown. And he pulled her into the streets and walked her back home, kicking, screaming you see, during the day, in the morning. And I was still at school, I think I was doing grade 7. Can you see that it was somebody who's very close to me in the family doing that? And I thought she was doing the right thing.*
> *I: You thought he was doing the right thing?*
> *P1: Ya, because she married this woman and the next thing this woman goes out and spend the night in another man's house. You see and so I thought he's doing the right thing. And you know during our time, as you heard that I'm 52, women were powerless. They were very much powerless and there were no platforms to address women issues, abuse things like that, I thought it's the, sort of a life style for men to behave in that manner.*

The above participant reports believing that what his brother did was correct. This passage links two themes. One being the intergenerational transfer of violence, in which violence is witnessed in the home or one is a victim of violence in childhood and violence is then learnt as a tool to resolve conflict. Violence is something that is inadvertently taught from a young age. Individuals then resort to violence later in life. The second theme is the use of denialist language, in which participants

justify violent encounters based on the partner's actions.

Responses by participants were provided in such a way that participants spoke of reasons as to why they were violent. Their experiences of the violent encounters may be viewed as reactions to behaviours or beliefs. Men's violence is often depicted as a result of provocation by their female partners (Boonzaier, 2008). When violence is constructed as reciprocal, both partners have some responsibility for it (Boonzaier, 2008). Therefore, the perpetrator is not viewed as 'all bad' but is able to justify the act of violence and be rid of the guilt. This links again to the idea of the split self in which one is able to speak about the violence that occurred in the past as something that is separate from themselves in the present. The self that is being interviewed cannot take complete responsibility for the act, thus places blame on something else.

4.2 The Power of Manhood

In order to understand IPV it is important to examine the ways in which cultures construct beliefs, expectations and norms about gender and family, the meaning of violent acts cannot be understood outside of this context (Vandello & Cohen, 2008). A dominant theme that was reported was the 'power of manhood'. This theme emerged out of discourses of patriarchy and masculinity which are societally based factors and are embodied at an individual level. Previous research conducted on perpetrators of violence found that men often discuss violence as an enforcement of the patriarchal masculinity narrative (Boonzaier, 2008). Men's talk of their violence is underpinned by discourses of male dominance and entitlement (Boonzaier, 2008). The core concept of patriarchy is a system of male domination and female subordination (Hunnicutt, 2009). It is a system in which males dominate females both structurally and ideologically (Hunnicutt, 2009). The theme of power and manhood will examine participants' responses that were embedded in the ideology that men are powerful, based on the fact that they are men. It will examine patriarchy as a construct contributing to this belief as well as male dominance within relationships.

4.2.1 The Culture of Patriarchy

Participant 4, extract 5

I: What sort of… how were you being abusive to other people?

P4: Uhm… sometimes being angry, uuuuh, bullying, uh, cannot be told my girls, I'm a guy, I'm a man so I'll see women as commodities, I see women as the weaker people. So I will be able to treat them as I please, I think because of, I'm a guy. So ya that's how I would say, abusive behaviour was through that. And maybe personally, growing up, raised by a single parent, you have your own challenges, you have your own anger. So interacting with other people, you will also be violent because you also have your own anger so ya.

I: And how has your views changed since being in the programme?

P4: Uuhhhm. Since being in the programme, that's why I'm saying, now I'm working as an activist. I'm trying to help guys to talk to their frustrations coz I think everyone has frustrations, everyone has hidden agendas, hidden issues that push them to being angry and becomes perpetrators. And also, the culture that we grew from, talking to patriarchy, looking at patriarchy, you know we are always on top as guys, we are always taught that we are superior, ladies and children are inferior, people who are weak are inferior. So, I'm working towards changing that mind-set to say, as people we are equal, and also looking at the law to say there's policies, there's law, there's constitution that we need to follow. And we are always the ones that are always getting into trouble because of the mind-set that we have taught and the behaviour that we have learnt, so we need to change that behaviour and start treating other people as equals.

The above participant views patriarchy as linked with becoming a perpetrator. Mentioning that men are taught that they are superior and women are inferior, men grew up believing this distinction. Hegemonic masculine characteristics gain significance when placed in comparison to the 'inferior' qualities in women (Schippers, 2007).

The idea of men being superior and women inferior appears to be an ideological view that is embodied and enacted by the older generation and is passed down to the younger

generation. These beliefs are not learnt through what is being told by parents but are learnt based on observing others such as family members, elders and community members. Men's talk on violence is founded on the idea of men's right to use violence to correct women's behaviour in the context of a relationship. This reflects their social positioning within the heteropatriarchal context in which men are esteemed as the head of the home the authoritarian, disciplinarian and women are perceived as the caregivers and nurturers (Hear, 1998). Similarly, a study conducted by Wood (2004) on male felon's accounts of IPV reported that participants believed that it is a man's right to use violence to control women. In this study participants recalled experiences from their family that a man has a right to assault his wife, often through observing ones father (Wood, 2004).

Patriarchy is referred to as something that is invisible and is often the norm and therefore goes unchallenged by many. Participant 4 reports getting in trouble because of a mind-set that is taught, there is a sense of not taking responsibility for one's actions. He reports on patriarchy as a view that is imposed onto them as men, without knowledge or consent. Research has found that participants are often only able to provide post hoc representations of what they think, but not how they process information in specific contexts (Eckardt & Crane, 2014). Such processes operate at an implicit level, largely outside of conscious awareness (Eckardt & Crane, 2014). In the current research participants often spoke about patriarchy as something that led to the violent encounter, but with which they had no control over. This patriarchal ideology operates at an unconscious level and, as mentioned by some participants, they only become aware of its presence with knowledge. They are only able to provide these posts hoc accounts due to new information and a different way of thinking that they have learnt.

In recent years' women are emerging on the job market and contributing to the economy. IPV is used as a tool to regain some of the power and control that is viewed as lost, due to the man not being the breadwinner. During times of economic uncertainty, unemployment and poverty men often struggle to achieve what is deemed as 'successful' masculinity feelings of emasculation, powerlessness and lack of tolerance for being controlled reinforce men's use of violence and is often pronounced when women are perceived as having a superior status to their partners (Lau, 2008). According to Garcia- Moreno et al. (2005) in

many parts of the world, culture and tradition are given as justifications for practices that perpetuate violence and it is important to deal with these aspects sensitively and respectfully. This again links back to the intergenerational transfer of violence, or 'grooming' of boys to be violent. Violence is a learnt behaviour and is normalised within ones' community or culture.

This discussion on patriarchy is beginning to bring to light the interconnectedness of many of the causes and constructs related to IPV. Patriarchy is an ideological view, created at a societal level; it is further entrenched by cultural views of men and women's position within society and the family. There is an intergenerational transfer of beliefs and values and these often go unchallenged. The idea of patriarchy and men as superior is further enforced when a man's position is threatened through poverty and unemployment. At an individual level patriarchy is enacted through men's position as being dominant in a relationship. This topic will be discussed next.

4.2.2 Male Dominance in Relationships

Masculinity occurs in settings in which individuals prescribe to traditional patriarchal views. This includes the male's rights to control women through violence, the belief that it is legitimate to use physical violence when expectations are not fulfilled as well as resolving interpersonal conflict through violence. When a male's status is threatened, violence is viewed as an appropriate way of restoring order and keeping women in a subservient position (Kenway & Fitzclarence, 2010).

Participant 1, extract 6

> *P1: I think it's because I was making a lot of money and she was unemployed and I was doing everything in the house. And I was… uuhh, I lacked knowledge and information you see. And more so we got involved when we were still very young, just fresh from school. We started at school. You see and so both of us had no experience in terms of relationships you see. But me, I had the power of money and the power of manhood you see. And so that's where I got it wrong. That's where I got it wrong.*

I: Especially that power of manhood.

P1: You see that power of manhood and financial you see, ya things like that.

I: And do you think that's what lead to you controlling her?

P1: Ya that's what lead to me controlling, and love as well and jealousy you see

Participant 1 reports of his violent enactment as being linked to financial control. He had the financial control hence he had the power in the relationship. He reports how he felt as though his wife belonged to him because he was providing for her financially. As well as the fact that he is a male, this is regarded as automatically providing one with power. While they may not have had experience in terms of relationships, he is a male, thus automatically had power in the relationship. Financial power is another way of gaining power in a relationship, where one becomes economically dependent on their partner and is unable to leave. Levinsons's analysis, as cited in the WHO (2005) suggests that abuse often takes place in societies in which men have economic and decision making power in the household. While this is often the case, there are more women entering the job market and becoming economically independent. Thus, IPV may also be a way of regaining power and dominance when a man's position is threatened. The more disenfranchised from positions of dominance men feel, the more likely they are to use violence to reinforce their rightful position (Hunnicutt, 2009). Power which is often enacted through violence is used as an instrument to maintain a man's dominant position in society, but also in his relationships.

Wood (2004) found that the patriarchal view of manhood is evident in accounts of men who feel that they are 'real men' in which case they felt that they were entitled to control relationships and women and use discipline or violence to enforce their entitlement. Furthermore, men who do not embody the ideals of successful manhood use control and violence to force women's deference which gives them some assurance that within their private lives they are perceived as 'real men' (Wood, 2004).

Participant 1, extract 7

P1: And we thought as we were growing up we thought, this is the, this is the way. This is the way, this is the life, this is the lifestyle you see. Men, you don't question whatever a man says or does if you are a woman and you are a child you see.

I: So, seeing that you thought it was fine?

P1: Ya, seeing that I thought it was fine, and I once, that is why now I was very strict with my wife to say, you don't have friends, you don't go out of the house without telling me you see. If you want to spend money you have to inform me that you are spending so much, you are taking so much, things like that, and so I thought it's the right thing to do.

In this passage, there is a link between women and children, similarly to participant 4, extract 5 in which women, children and people who are weak are spoken about synonymously. Those who are seen as 'weak' may also be victims of abuse. Masculinity is not only dominance over women, but links to male honour and strength and if other men do not embody this, they are likely to be victims of abuse. IPV is reinforced by the idea that one party holds more power and strength than another and that position needs to be maintained. The above participant is speaking of the transfer of knowledge or information. Growing up one observes things occurring in a particular way and it is not seen as wrong, and that behaviour is later modelled, linked to the intergenerational transfer of violence, as well as one's morality and belief in what is right and wrong. Society has a culture that relates to violence and cultural norms that are accepting of violence and permit forms of violence (Jewkes et al., 2015). The connection lies in gender and the social values, roles and behaviours considered appropriate and expected of men and women, these are defined and determined by society and reflect social norms (Jewkes et al., 2015).

4.3 Tensions of Ownership

Another dominant theme that emerged out of the data was ownership. Ownership speaks of the relationship between men and women and how men come to 'own' their partners through 'choosing her off the streets' or 'paying' for her through marital negotiations. The idea of ownership and women being men's property is another facet of masculinity (Kenway & Fitzclarence, 2010). The relationship between men and women is often viewed as a transactional one. While women may be valued they are viewed as objects, something to be owned or possessed. Having control over one's partner can manifest in three forms; having ownership, instilling respect and enforcing discipline (Lau, 2008). Instilling respect and

enforcing discipline were discussed earlier. It includes men's use of violence to assert his position as male and as dominant in the relationship, as well as using violence as a form of punishment when tasks are not complete or expectations are not met. Having ownership is an aspect that will be elaborated on.

4.3.1 Owning ones Partner

Participant 1 extract 8

I: That's your understanding of violence, so what can you tell me about intimate partner violence specifically?

P1: Intimate partner violence. Uuuh. If I understand your question clearly, it's the violence that maybe you force things to your partner, see maybe you want sex she has to give you sex, irrespective of how she feels and uuuhhh… what else can I say. Controlling actually, controlling your partner you see because you are a man. You see that power. The power of being a man you see. That power actually, the power of being a man.

I: So did you grow up in Alexandra?

P1: Yes, I grew up in Alex.

I: How do you think the area has contributed to your understanding of being a man. Because a lot of the time you say that it's the power of being a man, men controlling their women so do you think the area you grew up in influenced that?

P1: Ya, society does influence that. Because when you grow up, being a boy you are told not to cry, a man does not cry. And you see that makes one to grow up knowing that he's macho and that does influence a lot. And more so our fathers. Our fathers were *not fortunate because they did not have such forums, they were too cultural you see. They used culture in everything, its culture its culture you see.*

I: And culturally what does it say?

P1: Culturally it says a man is the head of the home. And the women has got no say because the man provides and the man sends people to pay Lobola. It's the man's money, you are buying that women! You see to come to be… your thing. You see, that is culture. And if you want to take another woman, you don't have to discuss with her, it's your pocket that determines you see, if you can afford another woman. She has got no say you see. That's how things were when we were growing up. And we

thought it's the right way. Only to find that when things changes and people with knowledge come and we are involved in forums and workshops, its then it dawns to say, no man, eish, back then things were not done in a proper way you see. And so, this is the better way, because now we can talk to one another, each other about issues irrespective of saying maybe you are a child, you are a woman. You see we need to share ideas you see, and so now it's better.

Participant 1 refers to women becoming your 'thing', something a man comes to own through choosing her and then through Lobola negotiations. Women are not seen as having a say, they are chosen by the man that wants to marry them and the negotiations take place. Culturally men are placed in a position of power in relation to women due to practices such as Lobola, *Ukuthwala* and Sharia Law (CSVR, 2016). This becomes the norm and men and women are socialized into conforming to these cultural and religious practices, many of which implicitly condone and tolerate violence against women (CSVR, 2016). Lobola is a cultural practice in which gifts in the form of money or livestock are provided by the groom's family to the parents of the bride to be. These gifts are provided after negotiations between the two families take place (CSVR, 2016). This practice is often misconstrued and viewed as men's right to control and treat their partners as their property which often results in violence (Ludsin & Vetten, 2005). It is believed that both men and women normalize the violence, believing that once he has payed Lobola it is acceptable for the man to beat his wife (Ludsin & Vetten, 2005). It is against this background that Lobola can be harmful to women (CSVR, 2016). This participant also reports that men can have multiple partners, speaking to polygamy, and women have no say in it. The roles of men and women are designed in a way that women are expected to be submissive in all aspects and there is little chance for them to challenge this due to the interpretation of cultural beliefs as well as women's subordinate status within the relationship.

4.3.2 Women as Objects

The position of women as objects is entrenched in men's talk of violence towards their partners. Masculinity may be performed through men's talk about women as objects or things that they 'open and throw away' (Sathiparsad, 2005). It is also evident in the dialogue

with participant 1 (extract 8) in which he referred to women as becoming 'your thing' something which one comes to own.

Participant 2 Extract 9

I: And was your wife the only women you ever abused?

P2: Ya its only my wife only, but girlfriends, ha I've never. I've never touching them, because I'm not owning them.

I: So, it's because you own your wife?

P2: Yes, that's the only thing. But since when I start realising that it's a wrong thing, I change.

In the extract above we see the participant justifying the abuse because he owned his wife, linking to the idea discussed above in which violence is normalized and accepted due to a man paying Lobola. He states that it is wrong to abuse women but it is not wrong to abuse your wife, because you own her. This echoes the sentiments of participant 1 (in extract 8) who mentioned women coming to be your thing. Women are often made commodities through forms of payment and objectified through 'possession'. Relationship status is deemed as central to definitions of violence and experiences (Lau, 2008). The participants spoke of violence towards their wives as being more acceptable than violence towards a girlfriend. After paying Lobola men believe they are entitled to punish their wives (CSVR, 2016).

Participant 5 extract 10

P: 5 Its painful to see how things are normalised to see how the effect of money leads to domestic violence. You know I just told you in a relationship it's expected that the man pays, men have, I hear men talking in a tavern that 'ya I gave her a thousand bucks to go shopping there at legit or whatever so I'm expecting in return, today, sex' and you'd be like, no, I'd hear that and id be like wait wait no that's wrong if you are giving someone maybe money, you are giving them out of the willingness of your heart and you are giving them because you can see that their clothes are worn off they need to, ya get new and remove the clutter. But for me, this issue of domestic violence needs more attention it's not being attended to as much as I feel it must.

Participant 5 is speaking to the monetary aspect of a relationship, not in the sense of ownership but in terms of reporting on the relationship as a transactional one. Money is used to make amends but also as an exchange for favours. Finances may be used as leverage by men and women who tie sexual submissiveness to economic reward (Fox, Jackson, Hansen, Crewe & Sikkema, 2007). Money as a form of control is used in different ways in marriages and in dating relationships. Within marriage the wife is viewed as an object the husband has come to own and within relationships money is used as leverage. When sex is not forthcoming some men respond by 'taking it' directly or manipulatively (Sathiparsad, 2005). Sexual violence is another common form of IPV, however was not spoken about by the participants involved in the current study. Women are referred to as having little agency and are under the control of men or easily manipulated by them.

5. Conclusion

The research examined perpetrators reports and accounts of IPV in an attempt to gain an in depth understanding of the violent encounter. It is an attempt to better understand perpetrators of IPV and their reasoning for their violent actions.

Throughout this research the interrelated nature of IPV has become evident, causation of IPV is complex and develops in multiple ways. There have been many theories and lenses used to examine IPV, each of which has its own benefits. However, community narratives often fail to represent the lived experience of the individual, while narratives of the individual do not represent the societally based factors impacting on IPV. This research is based on the view that, there are risk factors at each level of the ecological system and each of these needs to be acknowledged and integrated in work to reduce rates of IPV. An analysis of risk factors at one level should not exclude an analysis of risk factors at another level.

The results of this study contribute to a growing body of literature regarding perpetrators of IPV. Research and programme evaluations of gender transformative programmes have highlighted the need to target perpetrators in the reduction of IPV. Successful programmes include both perpetrators and victims in the fight to reduce high rates of IPV. In order to assist perpetrators in the most effective way, it is essential to understand what led them to perpetrate the violence. Based on a public health understanding of violence, one needs to understand the contributing factors that lead to IPV and then tackle those factors. If perpetrators justify their acts and do not believe that they have done wrong, it is unlikely that behaviour change will occur.

Many of the findings of this research correspond with similar studies regarding perpetrators of IPV. These conclusions include men being socialized into violence; aggressive behaviours are believed to be learnt within the family, from peers and in the community as well as the cultural context (Lau, 2009). Within this research, it highlights the culture of violence within South Africa in terms of resolving conflict, violence has been viewed as an acceptable way to resolve conflict, instill discipline and enforce punishment. In addition to this the research highlights men's roles within the family. Violence is a way of asserting one's manhood and

authority in multiple contexts. This speaks to another important finding within the study which was the automatic power that comes with being a man. Men are socialized into the ideals of masculinity and patriarchy from a young age.

The culture of patriarchy highlights the superiority of men and inferiority of women. Within this ideology men dominate different spaces including the workforce and household. If women do not do what is expected of them, if a man's status is challenged or if there is conflict within the relationship, violence is believed to be justifiable. Men who are violent towards their partners often adopt rigid, stereotyped views regarding women's expected behaviour and behaviour that does not adhere to this is punished (Lau, 2009). While violence is an expected and acceptable form of asserting ones' masculinity it may also be used when a man feels emasculated or is unable to attain the ideals of hegemonic masculinity. Due to the high rates of unemployment and poverty in South Africa men may feel as if they are unable to meet these expectations and resort to using violence to assert their control and dominance in the relationship. Feelings of powerlessness created by not being able to meet societal expectations of manhood due to poverty, unemployment or lack of education are often used to explain violence (Lau, 2009).

The belief that violence is an appropriate form of punishment leads to men justifying or minimizing the violence, or blaming another for their actions. This research has found that perpetrators often hold their partners responsible or at least partially responsible for the violent acts. The victim is blamed for provoking the perpetrator or doing something to cause the violence. In doing so it places IPV as a 'women's' problem, fitting with the lens from which IPV has been viewed for many years. Understanding the perpetrator takes the blame from the victim and analyses why the perpetrator enacted the violence. The ideals of patriarchy have allowed men to hold less responsibility for their violence. Patriarchy and masculinity allow men to use justifications such as being the head of the household and not being able to control ones' anger, to explain the violence. However, it has made it easier to place responsibility on many external factors which contribute to their violence.

The monetary aspect of relationships has been researched previously, examining the relationship between sex and money and often HIV. Men provide women with money or gifts in exchange for sexual favours. Women who are struggling financially often use sex to

obtain money making them susceptible to violence and abuse. Within this research the transactional aspect of relationships was discussed with regards to tradition. Lobola has been misconstrued as a right to have control over ones' partner. In dating relationships money and gifts are used in exchange for favours. This places women in positions as objects to be bought, obtained and used.

This research has found that IPV is framed by perpetrators in a way that speaks to the violent act in a performative way; men's talk of violence is done in a way that accounts for their violence as well as providing justification. Furthermore, violence in various forms ranging from verbal, emotional and psychological, appear to be carried out without thought or understanding of the complexities of the violence. This was further emphasized by perpetrators seeing the violence as something that has happened in the past and should be forgotten. Not understanding the emotional and psychological trauma that may accompany the violence.

While there are many lenses from which to examine the causes, effects and consequences of IPV, it is essential to look at the discourses in which the acts are embedded, to gain a greater understanding of perpetrators and their meaning making and justification for the act. While programmes aimed at perpetrators of IPV may teach men new behaviours and ways of relating, programmes need to be targeted at the discourses these perpetrators use. It may be easy for one to learn what is being taught and repeat this. However, whether these beliefs are entrenched and will later be enacted is essential to gauge. It has been proven that the causes of IPV are complex and interrelated and each of these causes need to be addressed. In conclusion, it is essential that we understand the interrelated nature if IPV so that a multipronged approach is used to address the issue.

Within the research it became evident that despite having completed a perpetrator reintegration programme, there was still a strongly patriarchal denialist language present as well as a distancing from the violent act. The distancing from the violent act is linked to the idea of the split selves, the violent self and the non-violent self. The non-violent self, who is being interviewed, post intervention, may feel some sense of guilt or wrong doing for their actions based on them being told that the violence was wrong. Therefore within certain contexts they will engage with this idea, while being able to discuss the different types of violence perpetrated against women. However, despite this distancing from the violence,

patriarchal language was still evident. This may be due to the fact that the programme may not be sufficient to change generations of learnt behaviours. While the perpetrator programme creates awareness and introduces new ideas and concepts to the participants of the programme, awareness does not change attitude and habitual behavior. In addition to this the programme may not be adequate in terms of time to internalize the learnings of the programme. Participants go back to the same context with the same influences where they experience patriarchy and its influences on a daily basis, creating little space to integrate their learnings into their daily lives.

Limitations

There was resistance from the perpetrators to participate in the study, for various reasons. The interviews were conducted during the week and some perpetrators were unable to get time off work. While others did not want to be reminded of what they had done, speaking to the splitting of 'selves' as mentioned in the analysis. The resistance from the perpetrators resulted in fewer participants than expected. The involvement of the agency in the recruitment of participants may have influenced the perpetrators perception of the study resulting in fewer participants or possibly influencing the way they approached the interview.

The fact that the participants had recently completed a perpetrators programme influenced their responses to the questions asked. To a large extent, they said what they thought was the appropriate way to respond.

Furthermore, the findings do not account for reasons as to why some men perpetrate violence while others do not.

5.1 Recommendations

While the aims of the research have been met, there remains a lot of work to do to understand and alleviate the rates of IPV. The risk factors identified at each level of the ecological system need to be integrated in any work to reduce rates of IPV. Tackling factors at one of these levels will leave individuals at risk of being influenced by factors at another level.

Successful interventions need to be aimed at challenging notions of masculinity and patriarchy. Discourses such as patriarchy and masculinity should be the foundation of work

with perpetrators of IPV. Individuals who are a part of a perpetrator programme may learn what to say in a rote way; however, their beliefs may not change internally. It will not be sustainable if there is not a fundamental shift in the deeply embedded beliefs.

It is further recommended that future studies aimed at examining perpetrators of IPV look at the intersection of race, class, gender and Socio-economic Status to provide further insight into the complex phenomenon of IPV.

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7. Appendices:

7.1 Appendix A: Ethics Clearance Certificate

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22 April 2015

APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS BY COURSEWORK AND RESEARCH REPORT IN COMMUNITY-BASED COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY

I am pleased to be able to advise you that the readers of the Graduate Studies Committee have approved your proposal entitled ***"Male perpetrators* of *intimate partner violence and the meaning making there* of".** I confirm that Prof Brett Bowman has been appointed as your supervisor in the School of Human and Community Development.

The research report is normally submitted to the Faculty Office by 15 February, if you have started the beginning of the year, and for mid-year the deadline is 31 July. All students are required to RE-REGISTER at the beginning of each year.

You are required to submit 2 bound copies and one unbound copy plus 1 CD in pdf (Adobe) format of your research report to the Faculty Office. The 2 bound copies go to the examiners and are retained by them and the unbound copy is retained by the Faculty Office as back up.

Please note that should you miss the deadline of 15 February or 31 July you will be required to submit an application for extension of time and register for the research report extension. Any candidate who misses the deadline of 15 February will be charged fees for the research report extension.

Kindly keep us informed of any changes of address during the year.

Note: All MA and PhD candidates who intend graduating shortly must meet your E T D requirements at least 6 weeks after your supervisor has received the examiners reports. **A student must remain registered at the Faculty Office until graduation.**

Yours Sincerely

VC Mongwe

Veli Mongwe Postgraduate Division Faculty of Humanities Private Bag X 3, Wits, 2050

7.2 Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050

Tel: (011) 717 4500 Fax: (011) 17 4559

Good day,

My name is Natasha Turton and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a Master's degree in Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. My research will focus on male perpetrators of intimate partner violence and the meaning making thereof. On this basis, I would like to invite you to be a part of my research to further understand the topic.

Participation in this research will involve taking part in individual interviews. All the research will be done by me, at a time that is convenient for you, and at the ADAPT offices. The interviews will be approximately an hour long. With your permission, the interviews will be audio-recorded in order to ensure its accuracy and to make sure nothing is left out. Participation is completely voluntary, and you will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing to participate or not participate in the study. Confidentiality and anonymity will be guaranteed, every effort will be made to ensure the confidentiality of your name and identity. In the handling of data, you will be given a pseudonym, so that your identity is known to only the researcher. No information that could identify you will be included in either the interview transcripts or the research report. The interview material (tapes and transcripts) will not be seen or heard by any person other than my research supervisor and I, and will only be processed by myself. Tapes and transcripts will also be kept in a secure location in the Psychology department, with restricted access by means of password protection. All audio tapes will be destroyed after five years or after publication.

You may refuse to answer questions you would prefer not to, and you may choose to withdraw from the study at any point. The findings of this study will be reported in a research report, which will be submitted to the Psychology department of the University of the Witwatersrand. The findings of this study may also be published in a research journal. A summary of the research findings will be made available to you on request.

You are unlikely to experience any harm in the participation of this research. However, the process will be explained to you and should it be found that you have experienced any distress as a result of your participation in the study, contact details for relevant and free counselling services have been provided on this form. Assistance will also be provided in contacting these services and you will be given a referral letter.

If you choose to participate in the study please complete the Consent Forms, attached. I will contact you within two weeks in order to discuss your participation. Alternatively, I can be contacted via e-mail at natasha_turton@hotmail.com. My supervisor, Professor Brett Bowman, may be contacted via e-mail at brett.bowman@wits.ac.za.

Whilst there are no direct benefits to participating in this study, this research will contribute greatly to an area that otherwise lacks in informative and meaningful information which may then be used to benefit the livelihood of others.

Kind Regards,

Natasha Turton
Masters student in Psychology
Department of Psychology
University of the Witwatersrand

Free Counselling Services –Lifeline - 0861 322 322

7.3 Appendix C: Informed Consent Form (Interview)

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050

Tel: (011) 717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559

I, _____ consent to being interviewed by Natasha Turton, for her study on male perpetrators of intimate partner violence and the meaning making thereof. I understand that:

- Participation in this study is voluntary.
- I may refrain from answering any questions.
- I may withdraw my participation and/or my responses from the study at any time.
- There are no risks or benefits associated with this study.
- All information provided will remain confidential, although I may be quoted in the research report.
- If I am quoted, a pseudonym (Respondent X, Respondent Y etc.) will be used.
- None of my identifiable information will be included in the research report.
- I am aware that the results of the study will be reported in the form of a research report for the partial completion of the degree.
- The research may also be presented at a local/international conference and published in a journal and/or book chapter.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

7.4 Appendix D: Consent Form for Audio Recording

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050

Tel: (011) 717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559

I,_____give my consent for my interview with Natasha Turton to be audio recorded for her study. I understand that:

- The tapes and transcripts will not be seen or heard by anyone other than the researcher and her supervisor.
- The tapes and transcripts will be kept in a safe place.

- No identifying information will be used in the transcripts or the research report.

- Although direct quotes from my interview may be used in the research report, I will be referred to by a pseudonym (Respondent X, Respondent Y etc.)

Signed: _____

Date: _____

7.5 Appendix E: Interview Schedule

The interview will be semi-structured, there will be some possible questions the researcher will ask to provide a frame for the interview, following which the researcher will further explore what the participant is saying.

At the start of the interview the researcher will introduce herself and brief the participant on the research, and then begin the session.

1. Why have you been referred to the perpetrator programme at ADAPT?
2. When was the first time you abused a partner?
3. What are your reasons for abusing your partner?
4. Could you describe an incident that resulted in a fight between you and your partner? (Probe on feelings, thoughts etc.)
5. Could you tell me what you understand by violence?
6. Could you tell me what you understand by IPV?
7. Can you think back to the first time you witnessed violence against a woman and tell me about it? (Probe feelings, thoughts etc.)

The interviews will be concluded by me thanking the participant and offering to answer any questions they may have.