

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**Probing Marital Conflicts within the context of migrant families
from Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in Durban, KwaZulu-
Natal Province**

By

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Declaration

I, Beatrice Umubyeyi, hereby declare that the dissertation entitled: **Probing marital conflicts within the context of migrant families from Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal Province** is the result of my own investigation and research:

- I. This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other University or Tertiary Institution.

- II. This dissertation does not contain other persons, data, pictures, graphs or other information unless specifically acknowledged and referenced as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then;
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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to God and my beloved sons, Johan Nduhura and Dominique Byishimo.

Abstract

This study is based on marital conflict among migrant families from the Democratic Republic of Congo living in Durban, South Africa. It aims to explore and examine the extent of marital conflicts among these migrant families, investigate the root causes of marital conflicts among them and examine whether there is any relationship between marital conflict and migration. Additionally, this study aims to investigate if there are any existing approaches to marital conflicts resolution among Congolese migrant families and if so, to identify them as well as examine their functions and effectiveness.

The theoretical framework within which this study is constructed includes the theories of Social Constructionism, Symbolic Interactionism, and Conflict Transformation. This study utilises a qualitative approach; 20 men and 20 women married, divorced and separated Congolese migrants participated in the initial questionnaires. Respondents in this study were identified through two selected Congolese migrant Churches. In-depth personal interviews were conducted with 8 men and 8 women volunteers from those participated in the questionnaires and with two church leaders and church Counsellors from where participants were selected. The target group for this study were men and women married, divorced or separated, from Congolese migrant community living in Durban. Respondents in these categories are selected because of their own experiences in marriage. The research has used a random and judgmental sampling method.

After examining the extent of marital conflict among migrant families from the DRC living in Durban, the findings show that marital conflict among these families is prevalent. The findings from this study also demonstrate that there are a number of root causes and factors that results in marital conflict among them. These include family life stress, unemployment, lack of communication between couples, changing behaviour of one or both partners, the influence of relatives or friends and lack of social support. It was also revealed that other factors such as the absence of one partner, emotional and financial deprivation of one partner and alcohol abuse also contributed to marital conflict among migrant families from DRC living in Durban.

In examining whether there is a relationship between marital conflict and migration among Congolese migrant families in Durban, the majority of the study participants agreed that there is a close relationship between marital conflict and migration. Several indicators were identified and these include the change of behaviour by one or both partners in the host country, family life stress, unemployment. With regards to whether there are any approaches to marital conflict resolution among these families, the findings from this study show that there are several approaches to marital conflict resolution. Negotiation and mediation however were considered to be the key approaches in solving marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

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Abbreviation

DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DMC	Durban Mission Church
CL	Church Leader
CC	Church Counsellor
PF	Participant Female
PM	Participant Male
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees.
WCC	Worship Centre Church
SA	South Africa
SAPS	South African Policy Services

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Preamble

This study sets out to probe domestic conflicts within the context of migrant families from Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) living in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal province, South Africa. The first section of the introductory chapter provides the background of the study, and highlights debates around domestic conflict in the face of migration. The second section explicates the research problem and itemizes key questions addressed in the research. This section focuses on challenges faced by the families in the midst of migration, highlights the negative impact of domestic conflict on the family setup and calls for intervention if a migrant family has to be protected and sustained.

Section three comprises the aims and objectives of the study. Section four discusses the significance of the study. This section highlights the contribution of the study to extant literature and therefore to knowledge of the subject area; it and sheds light on intervention measures and how these would reduce domestic conflict emanating from migration. It is hoped that this research will provide guidelines for policy makers as well as organisations which seek resolutions to family conflict with special focus on migrant families.

Section five provides the motivation of the study. Here the researcher emphasizes the gravity of domestic conflict in the context of migration, thereby demonstrating the need for the current study. Section six notes the limitations of the study. Finally, the plan or structure of the study is presented, including the sequence in which chapters occur and brief outlines of the content of each chapter.

1.2. Background to the Study

Domestic conflicts are becoming increasingly prevalent in many African societies and these take root and are embedded in cultural life (Anifowose, Olaoba, Yesufu and Oyedolapo, 2010; Bacallao, Smokowski and Rose, 2008). With increased migration, families are struggling to adjust to the host country's life style, while maintaining family cultural values and norms (Clark and Autry, 2004; Hyman, Guruge and Mason, 2008) and this creates tension and frustration at the family level, thereby increasing domestic conflicts (Anifowose, Olaoba, Oyedolapo and Yesufu, 2010).

Increased migration patterns around the globe mean that, "migration has a profound impact on the lives of individual and couples," (Hyman, Guruge and Mason, 2008: 149-150). Studies conducted in the field of migration and domestic conflicts show a close relationship between both migration and domestic conflicts. Agbaw (2009) conducted research among African immigrants in the United States and revealed that many African family immigrants in the United States face challenges as they raise their children in the Diaspora. According to Agbaw (2009:9-10), this is because many African families "prefer to distance themselves from the American culture". Agbaw (2009) explains that parents often perceive American culture as being individualistic and materialistic. This creates tensions and misunderstanding between parents and children and in some instances can disturb the entire family structure and norms. Family rules and values that are effective in the country of origin prove to be less applicable to the culture and circumstances of the host country (Richter, 2008). Where the transitional phase of moving from a country of origin to a host country is not effectively managed, the whole process can progressively escalate into major domestic crises, and in some instances, to violence and divorce among couples (Agbaw, 2009:9).

Hyman, Guruge and Mason (2008) conducted a study on married, divorced and separated Newcomer Ethiopian immigrants in Toronto with specific reference to the impact of migration changes on marital relationships. Their research uncovered "high rates of marital conflict, divorce and intimate partner violence in the migrants and refugee

community.” As new economic and social responsibilities emerge, this also affects the “distribution of power within the family, leading to greater authority and participation in household decision-making and control over resources” (Hyman, Guruge and Mason, 2008:150). An outcome of new economic and social responsibilities in the context of migration is a shift in gender roles and expectations.

Mahrdad (2002:280) argues that economic circumstances shape family life: “where men’s earnings may be insufficient, men have less possibility to fulfill their duties as heads of the family and therefore, their wives do not accept them as heads of the family”. When such an acknowledgement is lacking, men use violence to control their wives (Mahrdad, 2002; Elisabeth, 2010:175).

In the country of origin, extended family has great influence and control on family structure and gender responsibilities. In the separation from extended family as result of migration, the role of a woman may also change and lead to greater “freedom and autonomy of women” (Graeme, 2002:20). As the migrant women feel that they are moving away from the immediate traditional and often patriarchal control, this may generate behavioural changes which may increase tension and conflicts because men still hold onto their positions of control (Graeme, 2002:20-29).

In the country of origin, conflicts are settled through extended family structures. The head of the family initiates the process for resolving domestic conflict by playing the role of facilitator. He talks to both sides, listens to their concerns, uses his wisdom to convince each side to stop fighting and advises them on how to resolve their differences (Olaoba, Anifowose, Yesufu and Oyedolapo, 2010:37). In the event of any difficulties, he calls on a clan meeting, led by the head of the clan, to play the role of reconciling conflicting parties (Maria and Ndibwa, 2013).

The elders, who are the experts in conflict resolution and peacemaking, are invited to play a mediatory role by putting an end to marital conflict and reconciling both conflicting parties. These key personalities use different methods to resolve marital conflict. Methods include mediation, dialogue and reconciliation for peace building (Maria and Ndibwa, 2013). Dialogue, mediation and reconciliation methods of resolving marital

conflict were found to be successful. They help the mediator to listen to and provide opportunities to meet the needs of all parties, and adequately address their interests so that each party is satisfied with the outcome (Maria and Ndibwa, 2013; Anifowose, Yesufu, Olaoba and Oyedolapo, 2010:37-42).

Separated from their extended families, migrant families develop new methods of dealing with daily challenges, including conflicts. One of the approaches, which families develop, is to increase migrant networks. Networks are sets of social ties formed on the basis of kinship, friendship, and common origin. As such, they are a source of support in times of difficulties and uncertainties. When migrant networks are well-developed, they put a destination job within easy reach of most community members, making it a reliable economic resource and assisting families to resolve and stabilize their social and economic lives. (Curran and Saguy, 2001).

A study conducted by Wallis and Price (2003) in the field of domestic conflicts, indicates that the extent of domestic conflicts in South Africa is widespread. According to Umubyeyi and Harris (2012), domestic conflict among Congolese migrants in South Africa is also widespread in households where the ordinary stresses of family life are compounded by economic hardship and isolation from extended family networks.

While domestic conflict encompasses different areas of the family, this study limits its focus to marital conflicts. It explores the extent of marital conflicts and the root causes of these conflicts among Congolese migrants living in Durban. The study also explores and examines whether there is any relationship between migration and marital conflict among these Congolese migrants. Approaches to marital conflict resolution among Congolese migrant families are explored and discussed in more detail.

1.3. Research problem and key questions addressed in the research

International and regional migrations are increasing and bringing about changes in the migrating individual and couples (Emilio, Parrado, Chenoa, Flippen and McQuiston,

2005). During the process of moving from a country of origin and adjusting to a new country of adoption with a different cultural background, some couples may adapt to new forms of changes while others will not. Relocation from known and understood cultural practices in a country of origin to unknown and imperfectly understood cultural practices in a host country brings about changes in relationships which affect the balance of power between wife and husband. Family rules and values that were effective in the country of origin may prove to be less appropriate in the new culture and circumstances. The whole process can progressively escalate into major relationship crises between couples (Agbaw, 2009).

Studies conducted in the field of migration show that migration can increase the level of domestic conflict (Hyman et al, 2008: 149-150; Agbaw, 2009). Migration creates a situation where gender roles change: the man takes on the woman's traditional roles and responsibilities or vice versa. Economic circumstances shape family life and if cultural understanding from the country of origin is not reconciled with that of new country of migration, this will lead to marital conflicts and violence, as married couples struggle to hold on to the culture of origin while adapting to new cultural circumstances (Mahrdad, 2002). Shift in "man's roles and responsibilities" means changes in marital relationships, which can result in conflict. If conflict is not adequately managed, it can lead to violence and divorce for married couples (Hyman et al, 2008:150).

In the country of origin, extended family remains a reliable source of recourse in times of uncertainty. In the event of marital conflict, the role of extended family in marital conflict has proved to be effective. With migration, the role of extended family is diminishing and this makes families vulnerable to domestic conflict as they lack social and economic support.

In the face of migration, families encounter challenges as they struggle to adjust to local conditions of the host country while continuing to maintain the values and norms of their countries of origin. These create tensions among members of the family which, in some instances can result in conflicts and if not properly managed, to violence and divorce for married couples. Understanding marital conflicts within the context of migration is

paramount and deserves special attention. This is what this study is trying to achieve. The research investigates the following questions:

1. What is the extent of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families living in Durban?
2. What are the root causes of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families living in Durban?
3. Is there any relationship between marital conflicts and migration among Congolese migrant families living in Durban?
4. Are there any existing approaches to marital conflict resolution among Congolese migrant families? If so, what are these and how do they function in the context of the Congolese family structure locally?

1.4. Objectives of the study.

1. To establish the extent of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.
2. To uncover the root causes of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.
3. To determine whether there are any connections between marital conflicts and migration among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.
4. To establish if there are any existing approaches to marital conflicts resolution among Congolese migrant families. If any, what are these and how do they function.

1.5. The Significance of the Study

Literature on migration and domestic conflicts show a number of factors causing marital conflicts among migrant couples. For instance, migration crisis can lead to identity crises among immigrants. Additionally, the culture shock that migration creates can lead to

great strain and stress. Migration creates frustration and family members will come into conflict with one another (Richter, 2008). Migration creates an imbalance between a man and a woman which affects their marriage (Hyman et al, 2008). Economic conditions can also aggravate marital conflict (International Dialogue on migration, 2014).

Marital conflicts have been found to have social, psychological and educational effects on the children of divorced parents. Divorced spouses also experience loneliness, stress and strain which can affect their psychological being and economic state (Hakizimana, et al, 2014:64). In view of these negative effects, the current research is important because firstly, it provides empirical evidence of the root causes of marital conflicts within the context of migration; secondly, it provides a number of approaches to such conflicts and thirdly, it suggests ways of ensuring marital stability so as to avoid breakages of marital relationships among migrant communities worldwide.

This study is significant because it seeks to examine marital conflicts in a transnational context, which has been a much neglected domain. A number of scholars have written on migration and family within the context of migrants in South Africa; however the existing studies have not extended their focus to marital conflict among migrants' families (see, for instance, Muthuki, 2010; Kihato, 2010; Ojong and Muthuki, 2010).

Kiwanuka (2010) conducted a study among foreign women from Zimbabwe, Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, Swaziland, Nigeria, Congo and Eritrea who are in exchange-based relationships with local South African men in Johannesburg. The study demonstrated high relationship between migration and intimate partner violence (Kiwanuka, 2010: 172-175).

The findings of Kiwanuka's study reveal that women's intimate partner violence is embedded in their immigrant status; it is also inherent in exclusionary immigration policies that limit access to services and other support. Lack of documentation heightens dependency on the perpetrator and severely restrains some migrant women's options to respond to intimate partner violence due to their need to obtain South African Identity Book and other means of livelihood to enable them to secure their stay in South Africa in order to undertake different economic activities and better their welfare. This

disempowered condition does not only apply to female migrants: it also indirectly applies to male migrants. For example, it especially affects a cohabitation relationship through reciprocity from their partners in terms of household chores that would otherwise need to be paid for. Differing expectations and misuse of power in such relationships may at times result in violence in a bid to enforce compliance when one partner is more dependent than the other (Kiwauka, 2010:164-177).

This study is significant because it intends to investigate the root causes of marital conflict among migrants' families who have the same status, same opportunities to access to services and other support in South Africa.

While a number of studies have been conducted in the field of migration and its impact on migrant individuals, and solutions to problems as result of migration have been suggested, there has been insufficient effort to understand and provide solutions to marital conflicts within the context of migrant families. The findings from this study will assist in identifying the extent and root causes of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families and provide strategies through which migrant families can be assisted in dealing with marital conflicts. The findings will also help ensure that any proposals to assist migrants' community solve challenges, including marital conflicts, are appropriate and relevant to migrants' situations, needs and aspirations. In addition, the findings from this study will add and provide recent information for researchers in the field of migration and marital conflicts in particular.

The current research helps close an extant gap in knowledge. It highlights possible areas of collaboration between different stakeholders working on migration and family in particular, and it suggests the best practice could be achieved. Given the possible negative consequences of marital conflicts on the family, it is crucial that planners, designers and policy-makers involve themselves in mitigating efforts. To this end, it therefore critical that a study of this nature be carried out so as to explore and investigate the existing situation and formulate appropriate strategies in responding to challenges faced by migrant communities and family in particular.

Moreover, apart from contributing to knowledge and policymaking, this research will be very useful to human rights, legal, public and development practitioners as well as community leaders of Congolese migrants.

To this end, this study is significant in that it seeks to explore the extent of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families' living in Durban and the root causes of such conflicts. The study also explores and examines whether there is a relationship between migration and marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families living in Durban and approaches used to marital conflict resolution in Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

1.6. Motivation for the Study

Marital conflicts are becoming challenges to family development. Migration can also increase the level of marital conflicts leading to a situation where the family becomes vulnerable to poverty. There are numerous impacts of marital conflicts on the family. Where parents are in conflict, psychological state of the children and that of the conflicting parties is affected (Mechanic and Hansell, 1989). To this end, my major reason for choosing this topic is based on the fact that the extent of domestic conflicts in South Africa is widespread (Dissel and Ngubeni, 2003). It might be expected that marital conflict among Congolese migrant families in South Africa is also widespread where ordinary stresses of family life are compounded by economic hardship and isolation from extended family networks (Umubyeyi and Harris, 2012).

It is worth noting that the majority of Congolese migrant families living in Durban are refugees who fled their home country as result of war, and who therefore arrived in the host country suffering from war-related trauma. In addition to an already traumatized condition, they have to face the challenge of relocating to a foreign country with limited social and economic support. The majority of Congolese lack formal employment and have to rely on informal employment such as car guard or hair dressing for survival (Baruti, 2006; Muthuki, 2010).

There are many reasons to believe that marital conflicts may be on the increase in families which have to struggle to adjust to local conditions of the host country while continuing to maintain values and norms of their country of origin. Understanding marital conflicts within the context of migration among Congolese migrant families is paramount and deserves special attention.

While there are no studies conducted on the divorce rate among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. Congolese migrant couples in South Africa and Durban, popular discussions point to a prevalence of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families. This study attempts to shed light on these assumptions, and proposes ways in which marital conflicts can be resolved for sustainable peace.

Personally, being a migrant and part of the Congolese migrant community, I am interested in understanding the extent of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families living in Durban and the root causes of such conflicts and whether there any existing approaches to marital conflict resolution.

1.7 Scope and limitation of the study

The limitation of the study relates to the sampling technique used. The target group for this study comprises 20 men and 20 women from Congolese migrant community in Durban, who are married, separated or divorced. The study includes face to face in-depth interviews with 8 men and 8 women volunteers from initial questionnaires. Respondents in these categories are selected because of their own marriage-related experiences.

The current research is not intended to be exhaustive and therefore, could not be generalized; nor is the selected target group necessarily representative of the entire population of Congolese migrants living in Durban. The selected participants are a sample intended to show the root causes of marital conflicts within the context of Congolese migrant families living in Durban. Most importantly, the research is intended to explicate approaches used in transforming marital conflicts into peaceful familial

relationships. The study was conducted in their local languages which are Kiswahili and French, meaning that the translation into English may not be completely accurate. That said, the researcher endeavored to keep the meaning intact while conveying their thoughts and ideas according to English-speaking norms.

1.8. Structure of the thesis and Chapter descriptions.

Chapter One: Introduction

This Chapter focuses on background of the study, the research problems, and key questions addressed in the research, the research objectives, significance of the study and limitations.

Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

The chapter starts by offering an understanding of conflict and conflict resolution in the broader context. Here violence and its different forms and conflict resolution are briefly discussed and their relevance to the study discussed. The concept of peace and its components are discussed in more detail. Ways of dealing with conflict are highlighted. This section is followed by a review of existing literature on domestic conflict; the roots causes of marital conflict and its impacts on the family and society as a whole. Also what is considered in this chapter is the relationship between migration and marital conflict and different approaches used in solving marital conflict in the face of migration.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology and Theoretical Framework

This chapter is divided into two major parts. Part one presents the research methodology and includes research design used in the study, followed by the study location, the sample selection and data collection methods. The chapter again provides the methods used in analysis, followed by the discussion of the validity and reliability of the data collected. The

researcher's personal field experience is included and ethical considerations are enumerated.

Part two provides the theoretical framework according to which this study is constructed. Here, the following theories are considered in light of their relevance to the study: Social Constructionism, Symbolic Interactionism, and Conflict Transformation.

Chapter Four: Presentation of Population Study

This chapter provides an in-depth understanding of migrants from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) living in Durban. It takes into account their migration history in South Africa, as well as their economic and social conditions in Durban. At the end of this chapter, researcher concludes the chapter by reviewing existing studies on Congolese migrants in Durban.

Chapter Five: Extent of Marital Conflict among Migrant Families from DRC Living in Durban.

This chapter begins by presenting the demographic information of the participants and includes the duration of the respondents, their gender, age, level of education and employment status.

The main focus of this chapter is to explore and examine the extent of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. This is analysed from participant's point of view in regard to the research objectives (as outlined earlier in this introductory chapter). The findings in chapter five are a reflection and views of data collected from 40 respondents constituted by both men and women who participated in initial questionnaires. In addition, the views and perceptions of 16 volunteers who participated in in-depth interviews are also presented in this chapter. Additionally, key informants, mainly church leaders and counsellors from both churches where participants were selected, are presented, analysed and discussed in more detail. Due to the question of anonymity and confidentiality, participants are identified by Pseudonym and which is followed by an abbreviation of gender of the participants and the interview number. For instance, participant one and female is represented by pseudonym followed by code PF

(female respondent), followed by interview number and the year of interview (PF1, 2016) and male respondent is represented by pseudonym followed by code PM (male respondent), followed by interview number and the year of interview (PM1, 2016). The Church leader is represented pseudonym followed by code CL (Church Leader), followed by interview number and the year of interview (CL1, 2016) and Church counselor is represented pseudonym followed Code CC (Church Counsellor, followed by interview number and the year of interview (CC1, 2016). Direct quotes from the participants are provided from each question.

Chapter Six: Relationship between Marital Conflict and Migration among Migrant Families from DRC Living in Durban

This chapter presents the findings from initial questionnaires conducted with 40 respondents, in-depth interviews with 16 volunteers and personal interviews with church leaders and counselors.

The findings from initial questionnaires are presented in form of graphs and analysed. In addition, in-depth and personal interviews are presented, analysed and discussed in more detail, supported by direct statements from the participants.

Chapter Seven: Approaches to Marital Conflict Resolution among DRC's Migrant Families Living in Durban.

The aim of this chapter is to explore and examine the existing approaches to marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. Here, the aim of the questions is to find out whether there are any approaches to marital conflict resolution and if so, how they function, how effective they are, and what suggestions can be made to better address marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

In this chapter, the findings from initial questionnaires conducted with 40 respondents, in-depth interviews with 16 volunteers and personal interviews with church leaders and counselors are presented. The chapter starts by presenting the findings from initial questionnaires, followed by the findings from in-depth interviews with volunteers and personal interviews with church leaders and church counselors.

Due to the question of anonymity and confidentiality, participants are identified by Pseudonym and which is followed by an abbreviation of gender of the participants and the interview number. For instance, participant one and female is represented by pseudonym followed by code PF (female respondent), followed by interview number and the year of interview (PF1, 2016) and male respondent is represented by pseudonym followed by code PM (male respondent), followed by interview number and the year of interview (PM1, 2016). The Church leader is represented pseudonym followed by code CL (Church Leader), followed by interview number and the year of interview (CL1, 2016) and Church counselor is represented pseudonym followed Code CC(Church Counsellor, followed by interview number and the year of interview (CC1, 2016). Direct quotes from the participants are provided from each question.

Chapter Eight: Discussions of the findings.

The chapter discuss the findings from three major themes divided into three chapters. It will start by discussing the findings on the extent of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban, followed by a discussion of the findings on the relationship between migration and marital conflict among Congolese migrant living in Durban and lastly approaches to marital conflict with specific focus to Congolese families living in Durban.

Chapter Nine: Conclusions and Recommendations.

The chapter draws the conclusion and gives recommendations of the study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2. 0. Introduction

The aims of this study are to explore and examine the extent of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families living in Durban; to investigate the root causes of marital conflicts among Congolese migrants' families living in Durban; to examine whether there is any relationship between marital conflicts and migration among Congolese migrant families in Durban and finally to investigate if there are any existing approaches to marital conflicts resolution among Congolese migrant families and if any what are these and how they function.

Worldwide, there is growing concern about the growing level of marital conflict and its serious impact on the functioning and sustainability of the family and society as a whole (Bacallao, Smokowsk and Rose, 2008). Studies conducted in the field of marital conflict demonstrate that it has spread out more in recent years as a result of a number of factors which include migration, the exacerbation of poverty within the household, and a culture of globalised modernisation that changes family and community structures. As mentioned above, this is source of concern in many countries. It is also worth noting that it is a major concern in South Africa. (Agbaw, 2009; Bandall, 2010).

Central themes of this chapter are: domestic conflict in the broad context, causes of domestic conflict with specific focus on marital conflict in the face of migration, the relationship between migration and domestic conflict with particular focus on marital conflict in the context of migration and lastly, different approaches to marital conflict in the face of migration. While these themes remain central to this study, it is worth noting that concepts such as peace and violence with their different components deserve special attention: hence, this chapter starts by offering an understanding of conflict and conflict resolution in the broader context. Here, the concept of violence in its different forms are briefly discussed and their relevance to the study shown. The concept of peace and its components also are discussed, and different approaches to conflict resolution are highlighted.

2.1. Understanding Conflict

The term conflict remains one of the most contested and complex concepts. Circumstances and life experiences vary between individuals and societies. Hence, perceptions and interpretations of conflict differ according to individual and societal contexts. In other words, our construction and understanding of the meaning of conflict are shaped by many factors in our lives and these factors, in turn, are informed by our socio-economic conditions. Key factors are itemised as follows: firstly, in different societies and communities worldwide, each has its own unique history and character. Secondly, each person is born either male or female. Thirdly, each person is born into particular way of life, and in that sense we may say that each individual has different life experiences and views. Lastly, each person has his/her own values, which guide her/his own thinking and own behaviour which motivate each and every individual to take certain actions and reject others.

When we live together in the family, we find that family members have different perspectives on things and different ways of reacting (Fisher et al, 2003). Differences in points of view are inevitable and (as explained below) can be enriching. People see social and political situations differently and respond to these in different ways. Differences in perspectives and goals are found to be one of the problems bringing conflict to communities and families around the globe, which only will be resolved when all have the same intentions. In societies, people often want different things from the same situation. Sometimes these goals clash or are incompatible which in turn can lead to a closed or open conflict. Putting conflict in the context of marital conflict, one would argue that in a family, as in any other social organisation, there are always competing needs and expectations and these are viewed in different lights by wife and husband. To this end, Fisher et al (2003:4) argue that conflict can be defined as a “relationship between two or more parties (individuals or groups) who have, or think they have, incompatible goals”. In addition, conflict is a fact of life, inevitable and often creative. Edelman and Crain (1993:5) advance that conflict occurs when two or more people diverged understanding about something. In other words, conflict occurs when two people cannot agree on the actions that one person takes or that he or she doesn't want the other to take. In addition to above

definitions, Bush and Folger state that conflict can also exist because of a true or apparent incompatibility of parties' needs or interests (Bush and Folger, 1994: 56).

For Isenhardt and Spangle (2000: 3) conflict is perceived as a divergence of one's interest, or belief that involved parties' aspirations and needs cannot be achieved simultaneously. Human beings have diverse and conflicting needs and in satisfying and fulfilling their needs, interactions with other human beings have to occur; when one's needs are not met, conflict is inevitable. Citing researchers such as Humans (1995) and Thibaut and Kelley (1959), and analysing conflict from market point of view, Isenhardt and Spangle (2000: 3) contend- that people make choices based on self-interest. During interactions, they weigh the rewards and costs of specific courses of action. When people perceive that their costs are too high and rewards are too low, they will anticipate resistance. When attempts to reach desired goals are resisted, this can lead to conflict and if not properly managed, it can lead to violence.

Deborah and Pamela (2009) and Chetknow-Yanoov (1997) define conflict as a state of human interaction which arises when there are incompatible goals, issues or contradictions. However, conflict cannot automatically be perceived as a negative phenomenon; it can also be positive and healthy as learning and growing experience. Consequently, conflict also has its negative aspect. Where we can only disagree with each other about something, we can also hurt feelings and fracture relationships.

The divergence of needs and aspirations can lead to disputes and if such disputes are not handled with care, they can lead to violence. In the face of marital conflicts, both men and women have expectations and needs, whether material or non-material. If such expectations and needs are not fulfilled, this can lead to conflict and in some instances, to violence. In the next section, the concepts of violence and peace are discussed in more detail, beginning with violence and its different forms.

2.2. Concepts of Violence and Peace

2.2. 1. Violence

In this subsection, the concept of violence is discussed. Here, attention is paid to the multiple forms of violence which include direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence. First, let us begin by understanding what violence means. According to Kent (1993), violence is harming or hurting others who are perceived to have opposing views in the pursuit of one's interests. Violence can involve different forms of action such as words, attitudes or structures that cause physical, psychological, social or environmental damage, and prevent people from reaching their full human potential (Fisher et al., 2003: 4). Nora (2004:70) states that "violence is 'an act carried out with the intention or perceived intention of causing physical pain or injury to another person". While the physical pain can range from slight pain, such as a slap to a murder, it can be divided into two categories, namely, 'normal' violence and abusive violence. 'Normal' violence comprises the commonplace slaps pushes, shoves, and spankings that are frequently considered normal or acceptable. Abusive violence comprises acts that have high potential for injuring the other person; they include punches, kicks, bites, chokings, beatings, shootings or attempted shootings and stabbings or attempted stabbings (Nora, 2004:70).

Those who use violence as a way of achieving their own interests and objectives justify their actions on the basis that the opposing party has gone out of the norm and has to be brought back to order. Thus, violence is used as means of correction. For instance, violence between a wife and a husband is justified on the ground that a woman or a man has not lived up to expectation from the other party and therefore violence is used as means of enforcing compliance.

There are four basic kinds of violence: direct physical violence, economic violence, political violence and cultural violence (Galtung, 1990; Galtung, 2000). In the next subsections, I discuss three concepts of violence which are: Direct Violence, Structural Violence and Cultural Violence.

2.2.2. Direct violence

Direct violence refers to physical or verbal abuse, or threat of abuse by one party to another. Domestic violence is an example of such violence. Direct violence can also include actions such as the use of physical violence inherent in certain actions such as killing or torture, rape and sexual assault, and beatings. Direct violence also incorporates verbal violence, such as humiliation or put downs; these are also common in marital and familial conflict. Galtung (1990: 291) presents direct violence as the “avoidable impairment of fundamental human needs or life which makes it impossible or difficult for people to meet their needs or achieve their full potential. Threat to use force is also recognized as violence”.

2.2.3. Structural violence

Galtung (1990:17) views “structural violence” as a pattern of interaction between different individuals whereby people are enacting roles without reflecting on what they do because “everybody does it” and “we always did it that way”. In other words, structural violence comprises deliberate actions, policies and structures that cause human suffering, death and harm.

Kent (1993: 382) defines structural violence as harm imposed by some people on others indirectly, through the social system, as they pursue their own preferences and protect their own interests. Structural violence sheds light on how structural imbalances among members of a society are systematically designed and implemented. This process involves exclusion and denying some people basic human needs such as material and non-material needs. Proponents of structural violence perceive such violence as the avoidable disparity between the potential ability to fulfil basic needs and their actual human needs fulfilment. Structural violence relies on an unequal share of power to dictate the distribution of resources which Galtung (1990) and Kent (1993) designate as the pivotal causal factor of these avoidable structural inequalities.

The notion of structural violence was first coined by Peace theorist Galtung (1990) and Galtung (2000), following his fieldwork experience in Rhodesia (subsequently renamed Zimbabwe). He sees structural violence as a pattern of interaction where people are enacting roles without reflecting on what they do because “everybody does it” and “we always did it that way” (Galtung, 2000). Kent (1993: 382) defines structural violence as “harm imposed by some people on others indirectly, through the social system, as they pursue their own preferences”. Confortini (2006) argues that patriarchy is one example of structural violence. He explains that patriarchy is a vertical structure, with men at the top and women at the bottom of a given community or society. Patriarchy – which is expressed in many other forms of violence - is legitimized by cultural justifications.

Kent classifies economic, political and cultural violence as forms of structural and indirect violence as opposed to physical violence, which is direct violence. Kurtz; Nyberg; Van Den Tillaart and Mills (2008: 55) describe structural violence as occurring when people are excluded. They are placed in a position on the margins of a dominant culture because of their sexual status, race and/or economic position within the society. The limited power that they hold is “constantly challenged and contested”. Gender based violence is another example of structural violence occurring between men and women during their power struggles in which where men continuously try to demonstrate their superiority to women. Gender violence often is linked to patriarchy in the private sphere, where a man feels that a woman’s place is in the kitchen cooking and taking care of the children and the family as a whole. Violence occurs when the notion is challenged. Gender-based and patriarchal structural violence mostly are informed by cultures and societies where men are given power, control and hierarchical superiority over women. Globally, most cultures attribute more importance and value to men than women.

For Harris and Lewis (1999: 29-36), structural violence “describes the structures which maintain the dominance of one group over another group or partner over another partner often a majority, at the periphery”. Galtung (2004: 3) defines structure violence as a structure that harms people in the sense of depriving them of basic needs and rights to achieve full potential. A number of scholars make a clear distinction between direct violence and structural violence. For instance: Confortini (2006:336) states that “when a husband beats his wife there is clear case of personal

violence, but when one million husbands keep one million wives in ignorance there is structural violence”.

Christie, Wagner and Winter (2001:16) summarize the distinction between direct violence and structural violence as in the table below:

Direct Violence	Structural Violence
Kills people directly	Kills people indirectly
Kills quickly	Kills slowly
Somatic harm	Somatic deprivation
Dramatic	Commonplace
Personal	Impersonal
Acute insult to well-being	Chronic insult to well-being
Intermittent	Continuous
Subject-action-object observable	Subject-action-object unobservable
Intentional and immoral	Unintentional and amoral
Episodes may be prevented	Inertia may be mitigated

For the purposes of this study, it is important to understand how the process of deprivation and marginalization can lead to conflict. Here, social and economic deprivation of migrants in South Africa are points of departure in understanding how social or economic marginalization can affect and sustain gender based conflict and violence in vulnerable migrant communities in which most members are poor and destitute.

2.2.4. Cultural violence

Cultural violence, as defined by Galtung (1990), are those visible and no visible aspects of culture, “the symbolic sphere of our existence, which are used to justify, excuse or legitimize direct or structural violence. Cultural violence is based on the prevailing attitudes and beliefs that we have been taught since our childhood and that surround us in daily life about the power and necessity of violence”. Gender based violence, marginalisation against women and against minorities’ example of cultural violence which we inherit from our childhood form part of cultural violence, because it denies people of their human rights and the potential to fulfil their human needs.

Cultural violence may be expressed in different forms: first in beliefs and attitudes, then in speech and afterwards in structures and laws. Hoegberg (1999) advances that cultural violence refers not only to violence between people of different cultures, but can also refer to violence that is encouraged by the beliefs and traditions of given culture and practiced upon its own members. Kumar (1994) sees culture as consisting of “language, ideas, beliefs, customs, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, and works of art, rituals, ceremonies, and so on”. We may discover a number of different definitions of culture, ranging from “learned behaviour” to ideas in the mind, “a logical construct”, “a statistical fiction”, “a psychic defence mechanism” and so on.

Accordingly, cultural violence has different characteristics and can be differently manifested in historical communities. Cultural violence is based on the existing attitudes and beliefs in many cultures around the globe about power and the necessity for violence that have been taught since long ago and that surround us in daily life.

For example: historically, many societies have and continue to promote that men must be the heads of households and providers for their families. It is the prerogative of men to be financially successful, physically strong, protective and clever. Woman who are financially successful, clever and educated are experienced by men as making them feel as though they are not “real men”. This can result in a man responding violently in order to regain power over a woman. These were the criteria by which masculinity historically was measured and in some cultures, the criteria still apply. (American Psychiatric Association, 2005). Women were expected to

take orders from men and this gives men the right to subordinate and violate the rights of women in households (American Psychiatric Association, 2005). Gregor and Martial (1994:43) argue that “Culture provides meaning for our existence and influences our action”. Referring to the concept of peace, Nagler (1994:2) advances that non-violence is “as it were, a better keyword than peace itself”. For him, the way to “revive the movement toward peace is by conscious attention to culture, because culture is prior: our cultural assumptions determine our political decisions. Culture, defined as the encoding of people’s values and their way of interpreting the world, has traditionally been the preserve of privileged spokespersons”. While the concept of conflict is key to this study, it nonetheless is important to understand the concept of peace and its different forms.

2.3. The Concept of Peace

Peace is defined by Sathiparsad and Gray (1998:181) as “a sense of calm or tranquillity when one feels at peace with oneself and others”. In this sense, it means that when there is peace in communities, societies, individuals or groups, there is harmony; people are not involved in conflict. Peace is divided into two categories which include negative and positive peace.

2.3.1 Negative peace

According to Galtung (2000) made a distinction between negative peace and positive peace by asserting that *negative peace* is the absence of direct violence, which can occur when a conflict is successfully managed. Therefore, *positive peace* “involves the building of structures, processes and procedures which provide economic, social and political justice” (Sharp, 2003: 13). Peace goes with “freedom and justice”. For example, to stalk a woman’s every move to prevent even causal social contact, control her or intimidate her into submission does not mean that peace exists, especially when it violates a human need for freedom.

2.3.2. Positive peace

Positive peace is the absence of all kinds of violence – psychological, physical, economic, political and cultural violence (Kent, 1993: 379). For Miller and King (2005: 42), positive peace is defined as the building of peace and non-exploitive social structures with a substantial component of justice and human rights. Harris and Lewis (1999: 29-36) argue that positive peace is an opposite of structural violence. In this sense, they maintain that positive peace involves a culture of peace consisting of values, attitudes, behaviours and ways of life based on non-violence and respect for fundamental rights and freedom of every person.

2.4. Ways of Dealing with Conflict

Different approaches have been developed in dealing with violent and non-violent conflict and these include conflict management, conflict resolution and conflict transformation. In this section, the two first approaches are discussed; the third approach will be discussed in the chapter on theory.

2.4.1. Conflict management

For Best (2006: 95) conflict management is the positive and constructive handling of differences and divergences rather than advocating methods for removing conflict. Bloomfield and Reilly (2006) advance that managing conflict focuses on how to deal with it in a constructive way, how to design a practical, achievable, co-operative system for the constructive management of difference. Conflict management is very important in the process of resolving conflict because it is directed towards the future. Importantly the question is not punishment of the offender for actions done in the past, but compensation as a starting point for reconciliation. Reconciliation is important and central to the restoration of social harmony of conflicting parties and the community in general. The aim of the reconciliation is not to punish, an action which

would be viewed as harming the group or an individual for a second time, but to bring together the victim and the offender, so they can reflect collectively on the wrong done and move forward together (Bloomfield and Reilly, 2006:18-22).

2.4.2. Conflict resolution

Conflict resolution is a direction through which two or more parties find a peaceful solution to a disagreement among them and find a collective agreement in moving forward. The disagreement may be personal, financial, political, or emotional. When a dispute occurs, often the best course of action is negotiation to resolve the disagreement and find mutual consent between conflicting parties (Work Group for Community Health and Development, 2014). Bloomfield and Reilly (2006) explain how conflict resolution suggests the ending or removal of a conflict occurring between two parties or in the communities, because of its negative phenomenon and impact on their family and whole society. Kent (1993) adds that when conflict is negative in the way of violence, conflict should be resolved, ended and eradicated. Violence takes different features and its actions can be categorized in different ways (Kent, 1993:381). Violence can appear in actions, words, attitudes, structures, physical, psychological, social, or environmental damage and prevent people from reaching their full human potential (see Fisher et al., 2003:4).

2.5. Components of Conflict Resolution

There are seven components of conflict resolution: communication, negotiation, collaboration, conciliation, mediation, arbitration and adjudication.

a) Communication

Communication is the process used to share or exchange information between individuals, families, groups and communities. This process is also used by individuals, groups and parties in conflict situations in order to resolve their differences. Parties in the conflict use this process

in interacting and relating to each other. Communication means that parties in a conflict situation can still talk about their differences. As noted by Best (2006: 17), communication is an important component of peace building. It also has become a key strategy of conflict management. Most of the nonviolent methods of conflict management such as collaboration, negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, and adjudication are largely dependent on effective communication.

b) Negotiation

Fisher et al (2000:115) state that negotiation is a “structure process of dialogue between conflicting parties about issues in which their opinions differ”. Normally this process of negotiation is taken by the conflicting parties without involvement of a third party. Anifowose, Olaoba, Yesufu and Durojaye (2010) define negotiation as “a process of reaching an agreed mode of operation”. It is a process of bargaining to determine relationship coping strategies. For Miller (2003: 25) negotiation is “communication, usually governed by pre-established procedures, between representatives of parties involved in a conflict or dispute”. The goal of negotiation, according to Mayer (2000: 142), “is an interaction in which people who are in the conflict try to meet their needs by reaching an agreement through joint decision making”. Fisher et al (2000: 116) add that the purpose of negotiation is “to clarify the issues and try to come to an agreement on how to settle differences”. According to Kelther (1987 in Isenhardt and Spangle, 2000), who argues that negotiation is a “peaceful procedure which reconciles and/or compromises differences and which depends on good faith and flexibility”. Negotiation is process chosen by both conflicting parties to manage problems (Isenhardt and Spangle, 2000: 45). Negotiation has different phases to reach an agreement between conflicting parties. Some of these phases include: making contact with other sides; agreeing on the process for the negotiations such as the issues to be discussed; meeting in a spirit of cooperation and respect, and sharing views on the situation.

Through exchanging points of view, parties in a conflict identify shared problems and interests (Fisher et al, 2000; Isenhardt and Spangle, 2000:45). Mayer (2000:142) advances that negotiation is “an interaction in which people try to meet their needs or accomplish their goals by reaching an agreement with others who are trying to get their own needs met”. For conflict

to be resolved in traditional African communities, certain elements of negotiation between the parties to the conflict must be present. The first important element in this process is that negotiation must be smooth for all parties so that the level of communication and understanding between both parties in the conflict flows in the same direction. For instance: listening to the other side of opinion; presenting your views as an addition to, not in opposition to what the other side is saying; focussing on the customs and norms of the community, and so on (Anifowose et al, 2010; Fisher et al, 2000).

c) Collaboration

Isenhardt and Spangle (2000:45) assert that collaboration process means “the way people work together with one another in a mutually beneficial manner”. Collaborating also means working together on a number of identified common issues which intensify communication and activities between them. That is, parties work together on their own to resolve their problems through “integrative negotiation” or sharing other activities. Through this process, trust, confidence and mutual respect are built. Wilmot and Hocker (1998) advance that in collaborative approaches “negotiation requires ongoing back –and- forth use of reflective listening and assertion skills by one or both parties. Management of conflict through effective negotiation requires listening to the other party; indicating that you understand his or her concerns; expressing your feelings; stating your points in a firm but friendly manner; linking your points to points expressed by the other party; and working toward a joint resolution that builds on ideas of both parties and addresses all concerns” (Wilmot and Hocker, 1998:194).

d) Conciliation

Conciliation is considered to be a method of conflict resolution between two parties involved in the conflict. This process may also be relevant in other more traditional situations to resolve conflict such as family conflict resolution, social services departments. For Miller (2003: 6-7), it is “voluntary referral of a conflict to a neutral external party in the form of an unofficial commission which either suggests a non-binding settlement or conducts explorations to

facilitate more structures of techniques of conflict resolution. The latter can include confidential discussion, with the disputants or assistance during a pre-negotiation phase”.

Conciliation is not a new idea: historically, it has been used in many societies where parties in the conflict seek a third party who is seen as both wise and impartial and on whom they can rely to work out an agreement or resolve problems unresolved by both parties in the conflict. This mechanism assists them to formulate an agreement which might be acceptable to both parties in the conflict (see Ogus, Jones-Lee, Cole and McCarthy, 1990: 58). Marital conciliation is defined as “method assisting the parties to deal with the established breakdown of their marriage, whether resulting in divorce or separation, by reaching agreement or giving consents or reducing the area of conflict” (Robinson and Parkinson, 1985: 360).

With regard to family conflict, this method of conciliation is a brief intervention of a third party which focuses on a particular issues of family conflict, where there is pressure from inside and outside the structure for decision to be made within a legal context. The conciliator communicates separately with parties and provides assistance from a neutral standpoint (see Best, 2003: 107). Conciliation method may be successful when both parties in the conflict agree to involve themselves in the process and when the person acting as conciliator acts neutrally and non-judgmentally and does not have power to enforce any agreements reached. The major purpose of conciliation is to reduce tension between parties in a conflict situation.

e) Mediation

Fisher (2000:117) argues that “... when two individuals have a disagreement and a third person such as family member or friend intervenes to help them clarify the problem and talk about it rather than fighting over it, this is mediation”. Isenhardt and Spangle (2000:71) state that “when problem solving or negotiations break down, disputants frequently seek the help of a third party to help them resolve their differences”. Mediation is assistance by a third party where the parties to a conflict admit that they have a problem which they are both committed to solving. The mediator manages a negotiation process, but does not impose a solution on the parties (Best, 2006: 107). The third party may be voluntarily approached by both parties in the conflict to play the mediatory role or, in some circumstances; laws or systems (Fisher et al. 2000:117) may

impose mediators). Godongs (2006: 130) argues that mediation is a form of negotiation in which a neutral third party has a role to help the parties in solving their differences.

The success of mediation depends on the conflicting parties' willingness to accept the mediator's role as a person who can assist them to resolve the problems, as well the willingness of both parties in the conflict to share information that might lead to an equally beneficial agreement. Mediation process aims to transform people's situation by helping them to move from conflict to effective interaction which enables an agreement (Isenhardt and Spangle, 2000:73). Brand-Facobsen and Facobsen (2005:52) advance that the role of mediator is to serve as medium, helping to facilitate dialogue and to bring the parties to the conflict to a resolution. The resolution to the problem must be one that comes from the conflicting parties themselves.

This means that the mediator needs to facilitate the conflicting parties' efforts to find their own solution without making their decisions for them. Analysing this method of conflict resolution and peace building, one can conclude that mediation has long been accepted and found to be one of the dominant approaches to conflict resolution by peace researchers and practitioners. This method has been practiced in different settings such as in the families, workplace, within states and so on. Mediation method of conflict resolution has been used with the aim of resolving conflicts between parties in the conflict and bringing parties together, transforming their conflict to peace (Brand-Facobsen and Facobsen, 2005:51).

f) Arbitration

Arbitration, according to Anifowose et al. (2010), is defined as the "enabling will and power to decide and determine a course of action to decision making". Arbitration is the use of assistance of a third party in conflict, which listens to all sides and hears the evidence from both parties, and offers a decision to end their disagreements (Best, 2006: 108). According to Fisher et al (2000) Arbitrators 'listen to all sides of an argument and then decide what the solution should be". The decision offered by the third person, usually called an award, which is expected to be necessary (Best, 2006: 108). Arbitration is in-between "mediation" and "adjudication". Arbitration differs from mediation in "the sense that the mediator does not provide any decision in mediation process. On the other side, it differs from adjudication in the sense that it is done outside the courts of law, and its enforcement process differ from those of court judgments".

One example of arbitration: many African cultures have people called traditional leaders or elders who are respected as trustworthy and who have the authority to intervene in conflict in their communities. These elders approach both conflicting parties, listen to their concerns and their respective witnesses, and then decide who is right or wrong and what each party in the conflict should do.

g) Adjudication

Adjudication is defined as the process of reaching and concluding decision on the issues in order to resolve conflict between two parties (Anifowose et al, 2010). Adjudication can be chosen by both parties by taking the matter to the legal system. Adjudication is a non-violent approach to conflict resolution, involving the use of the courts and litigation process. For instance: two parties in a conflict can use this method as a process to resolve their conflict by taking his/her case to a state court of law, or to the traditional customary level of adjudication. When the parties in the conflict take their case to a court of law, both the parties may be represented in the court and each party may present their views on the issue. At the end of the process, the court gives a judgment and provide direction in solving the conflict. In this context, the judgment is legally binding on both parties and is enforceable by law enforcement agencies of the state.

According to Anifowose et al (2010), adjudication was one of the methods of conflict resolution in traditional African societies. Anifowose et al (2010) add that in African tradition, adjudication was not so much a matter of pronouncing judgment and pronouncing which party was in the wrong; rather, it was the kind of judgement intended to provide a corrective and restorative solution. In other words, it was a process of helping to restore peace and harmony to the conflicting parties and to society as a whole.

2.6. Domestic Conflict

Domestic conflict can be defined as a situation whereby individuals in the family are involved in disagreement over an issue. A conflict, as a state of disagreement may lead to crisis or violence. When conflict leads to violence, it becomes domestic violence (also called domestic abuse, spousal abuse, intimate partner violence, battering or family violence), defined by Bendall as a “pattern of behaviour which involves disagreement, violence or other abuse by one person against another in a domestic setting, such as in marriage or cohabitation” (Bandall, 2010: 5).

According to Malek (2013), domestic conflicts are conflicts that occur within a family-between husband and wives, parents and children, between siblings, or with extended families (Grand Parents, Aunts, Uncles, etc.). American Psychiatric Association (2005) states that domestic conflict as violence occurs when one intimate partner uses verbal violence, physical violence, coercion, intimidation, isolation and emotional, sexual and economic abuse to maintain power and control over an intimate partner. They further advance that it is both a crime and a serious family matter. There is no precise and concise definition of the concept of domestic conflict as it is a multidimensional concept, hence different people and societies describe it differently.

Accordingly, Campbell (2001) and American Psychiatric Association (2005:17) point out that in most cases, the description of domestic conflict varies depending on the context in which the term is being used. Campbell further defines domestic conflict as “a pattern of assaultive behaviours that include verbal, sexual, physical and psychological attacks as well as economic coercion”. At the same time, domestic conflict is traditionally defined as physical, psychological or verbal violence inflicting pain on another person (Moser, 2004). Physical abuse or violence is the most common act of violence such as assault, marital rape, restraining or forcing a partner to indulge in drugs (The Advocates, 2010).

Marital conflict therefore, exists when one partner threatens another partner by using manipulative aggressive and violent behaviour to control his/her partner. Valente (1995) argues that a batterer may abuse his victim by controlling her behaviour. For instance, a husband may stalk his wife and watch her every move to prevent even casual social contact and may also control her financial assets so that she may not access them.

In exploring different types of domestic conflict and violence, let us briefly look at a few which are very common in societies. These are: physical abuse, economic abuse, sexual abuse and psychological abuse. Firstly, physical abuse can be seen as the use of physical violence by one partner against another (for instance, beating, yelling at your partner, etc.). In many countries men use these types of violence as means of controlling their partner. Physical abuse has been linked with culture for a long time (Kim and Emery, 2003). Culture has promoted men as heads of households and that women may only take orders. In other words, men have the right to subordinate and violate women (American Psychiatric Association, 2005). This assertion is supported by the findings of a study conducted in South Africa. American Psychiatric Association (2005) states that 25 percent of women in South Africa have been physically abused and greatly disadvantaged, especially those who live in rural areas where gender role stereotypes are practised (Vetten, 2005).

2.7. Extent of Domestic Conflict in Developed and Developing countries

Domestic conflict is widespread in households, but the extent of domestic conflict differs from one country to the next (Krug, Mercy, Dahlberg and Zwi, 2002). There are many factors which influence the differing extent of domestic conflict. Among these factors are: culture, religion, level of education, and economic conditions (Dawes and Richer, 2005; Mahrdad, 2002; Ho, Wu, 2014; Firmin and Castle, 2008). Numerous studies show that domestic conflict is prevalent in many countries, both developed and developing. Studies conducted by Lee (2015); Stutzman, Miller, Hollist and Falceto (2009) show that a number of family households in different nations worldwide experience domestic conflict. Similarly, Mahrdad, 2002, Ywu, 2014, Firmin and Castle, 2008, show that, despite some progress that has been made in developed and developing countries to fight and eliminate domestic conflict and violence in the household, domestic conflict is still high in many nations. In countries such as USA, Italy, Korea, African, Europeans and Asian countries, domestic conflict is prevalent (Straus, 2010; Lamb and Bougher, 2009; Drachman, Young, Hee and Paulino, 1996). For instance, in the USA, a sample of 1000 households has been surveyed and the results of the study demonstrate that domestic conflict exists within the families (Straus, 2010). Epstein, Chen and Kamjou (2005) state that

USA couples had greater consensus on the standard for maintaining adherence to the boundaries of their relationships than couples from developing countries.

In Italy, a study conducted by Ferro and Vignoli (2007) indicates that marital instability is very high in the society. The findings demonstrate that there are a number of factors influencing marital instability in Italy. For instance, women with high socio-economic status become a pivotal aspect that destabilizes marriages, as well as high standards of education, qualified occupational activities, and greater independence from the roles of mother and wife. Findings demonstrate that women born in more recent decades run a higher risk of marital instability (Ferro and Vignoli, 2007).

Naved, Bhuiya, Azim and Persson (2006) summarise the literatures from 15 societies around the world and group them into four levels. The findings conclude that South Asia falls in the high category of spousal physical abuse against women. The study states that many studies from South Asia show that 40 % of women reported physical abuse by their husband. The result from seven Indian cities revealed that 40 % of the women witnessed at least one form of physical abuse. In Pakistan, 35 % of the women in rural Punjab, and 55 % in highly developed peri-urban sites reported being beaten by their husbands. In Sri Lanka, 32 % of physical abuse against women was reported. Accordingly, studies conducted in the field of domestic conflict in developing and developed countries demonstrated that marital conflict is prevalent among these nations (Naved, Bhuiya, Azim and Persson, 2006; Luke, Schuler, Mai, Thien, and Minh, 2007; Naved and Persson, 2005; Jewkes, Levine and Kekana, 2003; Forste and Flake, 2006; Emery and Kim, 2003; Kwon, Rueter, Lee, Koh and Wha Ok, 2003).

For instance, the findings of a study conducted among Vietnamese families show that 37% of married women have been hit by their husbands. This study reveals that husbands with lower resources or status than their wives are more likely to have abused them (Luke, Schuler, Mai, Thien, and Minh, 2007). The results from the study demonstrate that violence in marital relationships is socially acceptable behaviour by Vietnamese men whose objective is to encourage their wives from transgressing their traditional roles. This has been shown in the findings where 80.4% of women and 62.6% of men reported that in some situations, violence against women is justified. The situations were identified by both men and women as:

disrespecting or talking back to a husband or his family, disobeying a husband or being unfaithful to him (Luke, Schuler, Mai, Thien, and Minh, 2007).

A study conducted by Naved and Persson (2005) in Bangladesh reveals that 40 % of urban and 42 % of rural women reported to have experienced physical abuse by their male partners. This study shows that research conducted in varying and widely settings has shown higher level of wife abuse by husbands who had either been beaten themselves as children or witnessed their mothers being beaten by their father. This may occur as a result of the lack of emotional development or simply as a consequence of learning physical strategies to cope with conflict (Naved and Persson, 2005). Naved et al. (2006) advances that a total of 4051 households in Bangladesh (2105 in the city and 1946 in the rural area) were investigated and that findings indicated that in both the study sites, about two-fifths of the women reported being physically abused by their husbands. 19 percent of the women in both sites experienced severe physical violence such as being kicked, dragged, beaten up or injured by a weapon or some other tool. The study adds that many abused women seek help from informal networks such as relatives, friends and neighbours and when informal contacts fail to provide help, abused women sought help from formal services (Naved et al, 2006:2922).

A study conducted by Forste and Flake (2006) among five Latin American Countries (Colombia, The Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua and Peru) demonstrated that domestic violence is prevalent in these countries. Research shows that each year, between 16 and 39% of Latina women are physically abused by their partners. The percentage could be much higher, as some women deny, minimize and underreport abuse (Forste and Flake, 2006:19). The findings of this study advance that there are many factors influencing the use of violence among the five countries cited above. For example: family size (family size might be an important factor influencing abuse because of the high fertility rate); alcohol use (this means that alcohol has negative effects on people's perceptions and judgment which interact with a complex set of social and psychological factors to result in violence in certain cases); economic status (this means that families who are poor are more likely to experience violence than families who are not); decision-making power, regardless of whether the man or woman dominated the decision-making (the study demonstrated that outbreaks of violence are most prevalent among non-

egalitarian couples), education (the study demonstrated that educational attainment of men or women influences the use of violence (Forste and Flake, 2006).

For instance, women who have more education than their partners have a high risk of abuse because gender roles require that husbands have more education than their wives. Accordingly, men with higher levels of education than their wives are also more likely to become violent, which means that men with higher levels of education possess more resources, which means they have ability to use force (Forste and Flake, 2006: 24).

Kim and Emery (2003) conducted a study among South Koreans. The study indicated that marital conflict among South Korean families is widespread. Findings from 1200 male and female participants, showed the percentage of the participants who had either suffered or perpetrated by marital conflict and violence. The study indicated that 50.5% and 61.0% witness both marital conflict and violence in their families. Moreover, 40 cases have been reported of battering-related spousal murder. Accordingly, domestic violence in South Korean families remains a serious problem (Kim and Emery, 2003: 199). This study stated that there are a number of factors affecting the use of violence in South Korea. These factors include economic status, marital power structure and norm consensus (meaning that couples with low spousal norm consensus are an important cause of domestic violence). Choi and Ting (2008) indicated that according to traditional gender norms in most societies, men are considered the one to provide role in terms of resources contribution in household and dominant power in terms of power distribution, therefore, in the families which women brings in more resources than her husband (Female provider) in this regards couples experience more verbal aggression and violence when the husband thinks that he has less power in his family. This supported by the argument of Boonzaier (2005) in the study conducted with 15 men and their female partners in South Africa. One respondent argued that:

I must also mention the fact that I do get more pay than him because in that, also I feel this has an effect on our relationship. I think he feels that, I'm superior or whatever . . . because I'm now earning more money.

The study conducted by Kim and Emery (2003) showed that South Korea has a strong tradition of the patriarchal family. Within the household, the husband is considered to be the head /

breadwinner of the family and has great authority to make decision a about all matters. The role of a woman is to concentrate on the home and be obedient to her husband. Therefore, when a woman breaks this traditional norm or neglects her responsibilities within the family structure, the husband's use of violence to correct her behaviour is considered to be legitimate (Kim and Emery, 2003:200-201).

Another study conducted among 236 Korean married couples following the economic crisis, indicated that there are family financial difficulties affect marital relationships. The findings from the study demonstrated that families with high level of economic difficulties may become frustrated, angry and emotional distressed. This emotional distress may increase marital conflict which in turn, may reduce marital satisfaction (Kwon, Rueter, Lee, Koh and Wha Ok, 2003:317-223).

2.8. Domestic Conflict in the Context of South Africa.

The South African Police Services report (2008) indicates that domestic violence is the most common and widespread human rights abuse in South Africa. Every day women are murdered, physically and sexually assaulted by their partners. Domestic violence has serious effects in most South African households and continues to affect them on a daily basis. Although there is a Domestic Violence Act in South Africa to protect the victims from violence at the hands of their abusers, domestic conflict and violence occurs in all parts of the country. According to Bandall (2010) South Africa has one of the highest case of family violence in the world. The victims of domestic violence are amongst the most vulnerable members of the society. Domestic conflict and violence occurs in many forms and may be committed in wide range of domestic relationships. The remedies currently available to the victims of domestic violence have proved to be ineffective. "The constitution of South Africa, in particular the right to equality and freedom and security of a person and the international commitments and obligations of the state towards ending violence/conflict in the family in its all forms" (Gazette, 1998).

In previous decades, South Africa has treated domestic conflict and violence as private matters. Even today, South Africa is still receiving high violence reports from different households. The prevalence of a norm of male dominance is associated with ongoing violence against women (Bandall, 2010). The Department of Justice has estimated that one out of four women have been subjected to domestic violence by their partners. In 1995, National Conference on Women Abuse and Domestic Violence reported that roughly 30 percent of all cases of violence reported to the South African Police Services are domestic in nature (Bandall, 2010). The South African Police Service also estimated that 80 percent of women living in rural areas are victims of domestic violence (Vetten, 1999). Abraham, Jewkes, Hoffman and Laubsher (2004) point out that although women commit some abuses, domestic violence is most commonly perpetrated by men against women and cuts across class, age, religion and ethnicity.

According to the Commission for Gender Equality, domestic violence in South Africa is prevalent amongst all racial and socio-economic grouping, but tends to be more severe amongst black communities, which are also plagued by other social problems such as crime, unemployment and poverty and the loss of civil identity (Kubeka, 2004). Statistics show that in Soweto, South Africa, between November 2001 and April 2002 prevalence of physical/ sexual partner violence was as follows: 55, 5%, adult sexual assault by non-partners; 7,9%; child sexual assault 8,0% and first intercourse 7,3% (Dunle et al. 2004).

Jewkes et al. (2002) advance that in a country of approximately 40 million people; as many as five women are estimated to be killed each week by an intimate partner. The study indicated that the use of violence is often regarded as 'normal' and inevitable. Ideas about gender which legitimate the use of force by men are considered culturally acceptable among South African societies. Studies have shown that when assessing domestic conflict, especially based on gender violence, the result demonstrated that both men and women are victims, although evidence shows that women are affected most (Campbell, 2001). To illustrate this point, Campbell adds that women are more likely to use violence against men in self-defence. Additionally, men are also more likely to use economic and sexual violence against women than women against men (Jewkes, Levin and Kekan, 2002). Furthermore, research suggests that it is not only partners who are the victims of violence: in many cases, children and other relatives also are the victims. The victims suffer in different ways: sometimes they end up being

homeless and vulnerable to poverty. Victims sometimes end up committing suicide and they lose trust and faith in man (Campbell, 2001; Bandall, 2010; Smith, 1989).

2.9. Domestic Conflict in the context of the DRC

There is limited number of studies conducted in the area of domestic conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, most of the existing studies focus on sexual violence against women. The few existing studies show that domestic conflict in DRC is prevalent. For instance, a study conducted by Tlapek (2014) investigating women's status and intimate partner violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo, using a sample of 1,821 married or cohabiting women between the ages of 15 and 49, the results showed that 68.2% of those respondents who participated in the study indicated that they have experienced at least one of the three types of intimate partner violence.

Here, violence includes physical, emotional and economic violence. DRC like any other developing country where patriarchy is the order of societal functioning, women are subjected to different forms of violence and this violence are also condoned by the society and seem to be acceptable for man to use violence against their partner.

Kohli, Perrin, Mpanano, Banywesize, Mirindi and Glass (2015:279) state that "an attitude of acceptance toward spousal violence was associated with increased risk for physical and emotional intimate partner violence. Women who were the only wife of their husband were half as likely to experience intimate partner violence compared with women whose husbands had other wives or women who did not know their husbands' marital status". In addition to cultural influence, other factors such as the use of alcohol was associated with nearly doubled risk for both physical and sexual of intimate partner violence. The study's results indicate that intimate partner violence occurs frequently and is justified as acceptable by many women in the DRC (Kohli, et al, 2015: 280).

Domestic conflict is widely prevalent in DRC as started in the research conducted by Matundu and Faray-kele (2010). This study, add that, "there are no known official statistics, provided by either the DRC government or local institutions, on the national extent of domestic conflict"

(Matundu and Faray-kele, 2010: 6). Furthermore, study conducted by Kohli et al(2015) add that marital conflict among Congolese families was “linked to husband’s alcohol consumption, household economic instability, male desire to maintain his position as head of family and perceived respect of husband by wife” (Kohli et al, 2015: 280). In addition to marital conflict among Congolese families back home, the study indicates that this has negative consequences on their children, such as lack of proper parental guidance and lack of safety and stability that could result to child’s upbringing and in late violence towards their partners (Kohli et al, 2015).

In DRC, like in any other country of Africa, masculinity is defined by financial independence; this means that man is seen as the guarantor of financial security in the household and in the broader community. Masculinity is reinforced by cultural practice through chief. A study conducted by Barker and Ricardo, highlights how manhood is mandated through social structures and how is viewed as social requirement for achieving manhood in Africa. Being a man is some level of financial independence, employment or income generation and this is core to how manhood is conceptualized and conceived in the DRC, not only in the context of migration, but also in the country of origin (Barker and Ricardo, 2005). These norms are maintained in rhetoric and socialisation regardless of the economic and social realities that pervade everyday life, often making such roles impossible to maintain. Men’s sense of failure often results in unhealthy outlets for asserting masculinity. Women’s increasing ability to exert economic influence and make choices based on their own needs can be seen as an additional threat to masculinity (Barker and Ricardo, 2005).

In DRC and in recent years, the meaning of manhood is changing due to changing economic and political challenges the country is undergoing. The rising level of unemployment, political war and all forms of social disintegration, men are losing control over women. Men still feel entitled to sentiments of dominance and control while the changing social economic and political environment remain a challenge, as result the role of a woman in household in decision making is increasing and this suggest that, women’s increased decision making power can lead to an increase in violence by men (Matundu and Faray-kele(2010).

Treating violence against women as a ‘natural’ or ‘understandable’ affect of male disempowerment risks excusing it (Lwambo, 2013:50). Just as men’s lives are marked by contradictions between social realities and idealized masculinities, Congolese women

experience conflict between cultural expectations and their actual roles in society. Idealised femininity is defined as mothering and caring, as well as subordinate, dependent, and sexually available. Women struggle to adhere to these ideals while at the same time acting as breadwinners (Lwambo, 2013:53).

Women by changing their economic and educational status motivates many of them to demand more rights within the household and within society, while men hold on to their position as head of the household. The following statement from a young motorbike chauffeur in Sake in North Eastern part of DRC, I quote: *“Men and women cannot be equal. For example, when a woman has studied and works and both bring home the salary, it is difficult for the woman to respect the man. The tradition that places woman below us helps us . . . to stay strong. Men would be damned if women were equal. Women could leave men, and they would not serve us”*.

According to this man, gender balance is perceived to be a threat to annihilate manhood. This means that the “less women depend on men economically; the more men seek to preserve female subordination by reverting to the concept” of ‘tradition’. This means that men must “stay strong’ and women must stay subservient. Maintenance of gendered hierarchies and thus, male privilege is at the base of men’s reluctance to engage in housework, childcare, or fieldwork” (Lwambo, 2013:54).

2.10. Cycle of gender conflict

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is increasingly being recognized as a public health problem and associated with injuries and a wide range of other mental and physical health problem (Heise, Ellsberg and Gottemoeller, 1999). In South Africa in 1998 an Act was formulated to strengthen and protect the victims of domestic violence, mostly women and children at that time. The Act stipulated various conditions to be addressed and challenged. The intention of the Act was to afford protection from domestic violence by creating obligations on law enforcement bodies, such as the South African Police Service (SAPS), to protect victims as far as possible (Frederick and Sanger, 2014:3).

Domestic violence and conflict is underreported according to Bandall (2010) who argues that domestic violence is often concealed by the victims. It is not discussed openly because women are afraid to speak out about what is actually happening within their families; they are afraid to report violence because of what their partners will do if they find out, and they feel too ashamed to let the community know what is going on in their families.

Other reasons for not reporting domestic conflict is that victims are afraid of other people's reactions; hence they stay silent and remain in an abusive home in order to maintain the appearance of a happy household. In some cases, the perpetrator is the breadwinner of the family. Smith (1989) and Choi and Ting (2008) argue that sometimes victims of domestic conflict do not report it because trying to leave the abusers will expose them to retribution and danger. Moreover, traditional African families contribute to a conspiracy of silence about domestic conflict by condemning a victim for reporting her partner to law enforcement agencies as it is viewed as a private matter that should not be discussed outside the immediate family. Whether the victim is a woman or a man, she or he therefore suffers this hardship in silence (Bendall, 2010). The fact that domestic violence is under reported leads to the cycle of violence.

2.11. Marital conflict vs domestic conflict

In this section, I explain how marital conflict is defined and distinguished from domestic conflict. Firstly, marital conflict is defined as “physical, psychological, verbal and/or sexual abuse, used to dominate and control an intimate partner” (Han, Kim and Tyson, 2010). Physical abuse includes biting, yelling, choking, and pushing, stalking, intimidation and damage to property (Han et al, 2010; Bandall, 2010). Merry (2009) advances that marital conflict is “psychological and verbal violence includes insult, humiliation, name-calling, driving by a person's house, threatening with knife or gun, harassment and calling out insulting words”, for instance telling a women that she is fat and useless and other forms of verbal assault that affect one's self-esteem.

Marital conflict is distinguished from domestic conflict in the sense that domestic conflict is any act of abuse and violence that takes place at home to anyone. In other words, it means that

any act of abuse and violence can happen to the children at home, to parents and other members of the family (Merry, 2009).

Similarly, Bandall (2010) advances that domestic conflict at home does not only happen to women and men but can happen to anyone in the family. Moreover, according to Smith (1989) domestic conflict or violence is any crime committed in an intimate relationship which is characterized by acts of violence, power, and coercion in order to try and control the other person's behaviour at home. Smith (1989) and Bendall (2010) further contend that both females and males can be both victims and perpetrators of domestic conflict.

A study conducted by Han et al (2010) reports that all the forms of behaviour cited above are experienced by families worldwide, including migrant families from a variety of cultures (Han et al, 2010:370). Studies conducted on marital conflicts show that more women are victims of physical abuse than men. The findings from these studies also demonstrate that women are significantly more likely to report being victims of physical abuse than men (Kiwauka, 2010; Han et al, 2010:371; Arias and Corso, 2005; Espin, 2010). Espin adds that immigrant women often experience higher incidences of interpersonal violence than non-immigrant women because their relationships are often marked by severe distress due to previous trauma and the stress of relocation, isolation from families (Espin, 2010: 7). This information is supported by findings from a study conducted in the United States among immigrant families which shows that 95% of victims of domestic conflicts are women (Espin, 2010:8). This will further be discussed in the section on the relationship between marital conflict and migration.

2.12. Migration dynamics and family structure and function in Africa

Migration remains critical across the African continent, however, migration in Africa is not new phenomenon. At the center of historical and current human migrations in Africa, can be attributed to both political and economic factors. The growing level of regional interconnection of people and goods such as trade social, political and economic conditions prevailing around the continent there is a growing trend on migration. Historically, in the context of colonial and expansionist capitalist system that created inequalities within and between countries resulted

to massive migration and forced labour migration [Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), 2006 Report].

In addition, the deterioration in and shortage of land forced rural people to migrate to urban areas in search of work. Forced labour migration gave new way to free migration of individuals and their families in search of better and more secure living conditions elsewhere (Adepoju, 2000, in Rukema, 2010). In some instance, like in the case of Francophone West Africa, colonial economic activities and legislation affecting forced labour migration, sparked internal and cross-border clandestine migration of an unskilled labour force required for infrastructural development, mainly in transport network and plantation agriculture for sugar cane, cocoa, and peanuts (Adepoju, 2000).

This means that the growing levels of poverty intertwined with social, environmental and political instability faced by the regions as well as associated with armed conflict may have been the driving force of significant migration flows in recent years in many countries across the world and Africa in particular (Adepoju, 2000).

While migration remains one of the biggest across the world, its impact on the family functioning and structure is of real concern. A study conducted by (Wahyuni, 2005) revealed that “the incidence of migration of one or more members of the family will influence the way the family functions and the way it distributes its roles within itself”. This means that the absence of family members or lack of family support influence family structure and its functioning, in both hosting and country of origin (Hugo, 1987).

The effect of migration on the family from the country of origin it can be understood in three four major areas, which include emotional, psychological and economic. Members of the family left behind have to experience emotional detachment which means have to find ways to deal with emotions as result of the departure of one or more members of the family. Emotional distress not only affect the emotional side of the family left behind but migrating members of the family has also to face similar stress, in this case not only dealing with emotion, but deal with new social and economic circumstances one find himself under. In addition, separation with one or more members of the family has an economic implication, mainly support from one or more migrating members of the family is no longer available and this result in both the family from the

country of origin and migrating members of the family experiencing economic challenges (International Organization for Migration, 2014:5).

In the case of forced migration which is more prevalent in developing countries and Africa in particular because of the social, economic and political conditions, in the case of forced migration, parent often leave behind their children owing to either restrictive policies and or conditions under which parent have to travel to the country of the destination. This situation forces parent to leave behind their children relatives or other members of their communities. While there no much research conducted in this field to see how the departure of parents to a different country may affect children left behind to be taken care of by members of the family or other members of the communities. Few available studies, have demonstrated that the separation of the children from their parents has “profoundly negative emotional effects, generating significant behavioral change, and feelings of loss, sadness, abandonment, anger and rejection” (International Organization for Migration, 2014:5).

In the other side, the long term separation of parent and children has health negative outcomes, because the levels of preventive care are lower when one parent is absent from the household. The absence of a parent may result in many forms of psychological deprivation. Some national surveys indicate that the absence of both parents or just of the mother likens the frequency of depression symptoms in children. Parents’ departure also represents a risk factor for deviant behaviour among children left behind. Sometimes, even a temporary migration may have an impact similar to that of the loss of a parent, either through family break-up or death (International Day of Families, 2010).

2.13. Migration and marital conflict

Numerous studies have demonstrated that there is close relationship between migration and marital conflict. However, there are two contradictory arguments on migration and marital conflicts. Some scholars support the argument that migration negatively affects and increases tensions among families and couples (Lee, 2015, Agbaw, 2009, Ana et al, 1996).

Scholars, who support the argument that migration has negative effects on migrating families and couples, argue that migration can increase tensions among married couples in the sense that it increases tension and stressful situations in migrant families. They believe that relocating to a new country comes with many challenges, for example, learning new a language, finding secure employment and adjusting to a new culture. In this regard, migrant couples are expected to experience more marital conflict than non-migrant couples (Hartman and Hartman, 1986:131; Lee, 2015; Agbaw, 2009; Ana et al, 1996).

On the other hand, Hartman and Hartman (1986) cite research conducted among immigrant Jewish families in Israel. The study found that in cases where migrant couples are isolated from extended family and other support networks, they compensate by increasing “family solidarity and interdependence” (Hartman and Hartman, 1986). For example, migrant couples tend to share “decision-making”, they come together and assist each other, so that when they faced with difficulties involved in relocating to a foreign country, couples make extra efforts to resolve these problems together. (Hartman and Hartman, 1986:132-134).

Guruge, Shirpak, Hyman, Zanchetta, Gastaldo and Sidani (2010) provide evidence in support of both the above points of view. They argue that migration to a new country creates a major life change that can probably directly and indirectly affect the health of a given couple. They further advance that migration changes can both negatively and positively affect marital relationships. From their perspectives, they argue that migration changes in the negative way, when the migrants come as family units and due to changes in gender roles have been shown with migration differ from their country of origin, migration can impact to their marital relationships. Guruge (2007) adds that changes in gender roles have been associated with increased in stress, marital conflict, marital discord and risk of abuse. On the other hand, Guruge (2007) argues that migration can also cause change in a positive way. For example, if couples were not united in their country of origin, migration creates new opportunities to renegotiate and rebuild couple relations. There are a number of factors influencing rebuilding new relationships among migrant families who weren't united

in their country of origin. These factors include: adjustment in the new country, isolation from extended family, increase in intimacy and mutual reliance (Guruge, 2007); (Guruge, Hyman and Mason, 2008).

2.14. Factors affecting marital conflicts

Literature on migration and marital conflict show that numerous family changes take place due to migration. There are a number of factors that lead to marital conflict. A few studies on migration and marital conflict examine a number of factors leading to marital conflict and these include cultural background:

2.14.1. Cultural background

Richter (2008) argues that as people move from the country of origin to a foreign country, they begin to develop new family life. Many family rules and values that were effective in the country of origin may prove to be less appropriate in the culture and circumstances in the country of adoption. Migration from one country to another with differing cultural conditions, for instance: Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to South Africa (SA) involves a greater risk of what Richter (2008:40) called “Migration crisis”, which can be seen as a result of culture shock.

A study conducted by Nancy Foner summarizes research on how an immigrant family's cultural background, social and economic circumstances in the new country, and the legal system, social influence, such as the availability of close kin and a balanced sex ratio can create integration or biculturalism for migrant individuals and couples. The findings of the study demonstrate that these help create an integrated or bicultural migrant family while continuing to maintain traditional family cultural background from home country (Foner, 1997). Foner adds that although traditions change over time in the country of origin, the migrant may continue to think that such customs are timeless, and interpret the present based upon the remembered past. Such cultural understandings are critical in reinforcing traditional family values and behaviors (Foner, 1997). Migrants in the host country continue to influence and reinforce their traditional culture by going back to marry spouses from their home countries. DeLaet (1999) states that even when there are sufficient numbers of women available for marriage, a migrant man may seek a marital partner from the home country because he wants a traditional wife, not one who exemplifies Western values (DeLaet, 1999).

Baltas and Steptoe (2000) suggests that the degree of integration of the young migrant and migrant women of a given migrant group in the host society is very high compared to the integration of men migrant. This study indicates that integration of women migrants and young migrants into a host country significantly informs their attitudes to the cultural traditions of their country of origin, and that changes in cultural attitudes can impact on the family relationship.

Baltas and Steptoe (2000) advance that the degree to which a culture of origin differs from a host culture leads to change in the beliefs and behaviour of migrants. Cultural conflict may arise when original and host cultures have mismatched behaviour and attitudes (Baltas and Steptoe, 2000:174). Migration crisis can lead to identity crisis. Culture shock that migration creates, can lead to great strain and stress. Migrant families in a new situation in which values, norms, experiences and roles are questioned, will experience frustration and family members will come into conflict with one another (Richter, 2008). Here, the strengths and weaknesses of the families' coping mechanisms are significant. Many families will prove to be adaptive in both cultures and will not show any change, while others will undergo changes affecting the distribution of rules and norms that may involve every member of the family (Hyman, Guruge and Mason, 2008). Such cultural understandings are critical in reinforcing traditional family values and behaviour. For instance: "the absence of an appropriate close kin, such as a grandmother, to take care of the children and do housework, when the wife is doing small jobs for a family to survive, results in a non-traditional patterns of the husband assisting the wife in such activities". An imbalance of man to woman may cause marital conflict (Hyman, Guruge and Mason, 2008:150).

Lamb and Bougher (2009) conducted a study on Mexican adolescents in the United States of America (USA) to see how migration has affected adolescents. The study revealed that these adolescents adopted drinking and smoking behaviours. This increased parents' stress in addition to the already existing economic burdens they had to endure. Another study conducted on Chinese boys and girls in the USA found both girls and boys had increased acculturation. This increased behavioural and peer problems on the part of the children. Frustrated parents had to emphasize certain conservative traditions, such as family obligations and respect for authority and this led to cultural conflicts (Lamb and Bougher, 2009).

Hartman and Hartman advance that migration impacts negatively on marital conflicts in terms of questions related to outside environment such as economic circumstances and migrants' traditional cultural background, rather than in terms of questions related to internal family affairs (Hartman and Hartman, 1986:137).

A study conducted by Bacalloa et al (2008:300) shows how assimilation theorists posit that individuals lose cultural identity as they discover themselves with the dominant cultural group, whereas alternation theorists hold that "individuals retain cultural identity while establishing a positive relationship with dominant culture". Domestic conflict or marital conflict among migrants should increase as one of the partners or family members turn away from their familial culture of origin in adjusting to the host culture norms and behaviours, while other member of the family resist that change.

2.14.2. Culture, gender stereotypes, poverty, social, education and political conditions in which a person lived, and the way a person is brought up.

A number of studies conducted in the field of domestic conflict and violence demonstrate that there are a number of factors influencing domestic conflict such as: culture, gender stereotypes, poverty, social and political conditions in which a person lived, the way person is brought up and personal factors (Naved and Persson, 2005; Bandall, 2010). According Naved and Persson, (2005) culture is one of the major influences in keeping and maintaining domestic conflict and violence alive. Such behaviour is also characterised by male domination either in decision making or in public participation. For instance, various African traditional systems consider that male domination is supported by culture. Additional, gender stereotyping also adds to domestic violence. Gender stereotypes often fuel domestic violence for instance, where you may find assumptions that "women get beaten up and they ask for it". Such stereotypes support gender violence and give men the notion that beating up women is alright as long as she is your wife; they even regard it as a family matter (Bandall, 2010). Naved and Persson (2005) advance that individual factors also contribute to domestic conflict. They indicate that these factors include a woman's relatively low level of education. They argue that since most girls enter marriages arranged for them when they are in their teens, their status as young wives are usually low. Most

of them begin their marriages in their husband's family's home. Consistent with their low status, younger women are more likely to be abused (Naved and Persson, 2005:290; Schuler et al, 1996). Keen and Vale (1997) suggest that poverty is a compounding factor in domestic conflict cases which places women at greater risk due to the associated stress factors affecting their home life.

Gunne (2014) argues that causes of domestic conflict in the South African context could be attributable to apartheid which caused widespread violence and anger. He also suggests another factor, namely, the way a man or woman is brought up, or socially constructed to behave can generate violence. For instance, if a man has been brought up to believe that a woman should not step out of line or question his authority as a man (Gunne, 2014).

2.14.3. Traditional gender roles

A study conducted in the field of migration and marital conflict demonstrates that migration changed and is continuing to change gender roles, and this brings tension and frustration in the family structure and contributes to domestic conflict, as families struggle to adapt to the new situations (Fisher, 2013: 839). In the country of origin, men occupied a traditional role of breadwinner and enjoyed its related status as head of the household within a traditional, hierarchical family structure. Therefore, due to changes experienced in the country of migration such as changes in gender roles, unemployment, or alternatively, employment in positions of much lower status than those for which they were qualified and held in their home country, there may be negative impacts on relationships between men and women. Both men and women cited in this study reflected on these changes and their impact (Fisher, 2013: 839). The change in gender labour roles and responsibilities creates change in the power relationships within the marriage. When women work outside the home or migrant women work two jobs, their employment status causes their absence from home. In cases where their husbands hold a part-time job or are unemployed, men are expected to share household responsibility such as cooking, taking care of the children and doing other household tasks (Bui and Marosh, 2008; Suare-Orozco, 2001). Change in gender roles participation increases the burden on both wife and

husband. Until both find new ways of dealing with such a burden, the power relationship within the marriage will necessarily be affected. Men will try to maintain their position of authority and control over women. This struggle for power will lead to conflict and in some instances, to violence (Suarez-Orozco, 2001).

2.14.4. Economic conditions

Economic conditions can also aggravate marital conflict. It is commonly believed that economic circumstances can affect the way families or couples manage their relationships. Numerous studies argue that low levels of social-economic status affect many household families in their relationships (Gershoff, 2002). International Dialogue on Migration (2014) argues that unemployment affects marriage negatively and increases the risk of divorce. Migrants are often unemployed and have a lower income, and the majority of those who come from the Third World are refugees. Congolese migrant families might also be expected to be one of the migrant groups with the highest unemployment levels. A study conducted by Mahrdad (2002) among Iranian migrant groups in Sweden demonstrates that migrant couples with children, in which the husband lacks employment, run a greater risk of divorce than families in which the husband is gainfully employed. Crouch and Behl (2001) add that there is an increased risk of marital conflict associated with stress created by low socio-economic status, as well as stress associated with increased levels of depression in the family.

Another study, conducted among Pakistani migrant women in Canada, demonstrates that many immigrants experience challenges. The study adds that many immigrants experience “poor job opportunities”. These challenges of “lack of social support, isolation” faced by migrants in the host country, shape the way they may adjust to the new social and cultural environment, and this may result in marital conflict (Ho, Yin, Wu, 2014:662). This study shows that unemployment is one of the major factors which increase the anxiety of immigrants in the new country even when wives and husbands have good relationships (Ho, Yin, and Wu, 2014: 663). Chen and Liu (2006) advance that women whose families are mired in poverty have higher levels of depression, marital discord and greater amount of marital dissolution than those who are not mired in poverty.

To cope with challenges which are a result of migration, a family has two main strategies. One is to rely on extended family, if available. If no extended family exists in the host country, then the second is to create a new social network. Suarez and Orozco (2001) and Martin (2003) demonstrate the importance of assistance from family members for ensuring economic viability in time of difficulties or uncertainty. When extended family members are not available, substitute networks are created. Johnson (1998:250), adds that the pattern of “sharing, shifted from performance of tasks by several members of the household to husband and wife sharing the tasks” is more helpful. Newcomers form households of all unrelated individuals or of related individuals, who view each other as a family. They also marry to create kinship ties that are helpful in difficulties (such as financial shortages and family conflicts). They form kin networks of reciprocal help, such as sharing resources. (Kibria, 1993). These strategies not only are helpful to family economic burdens, but also minimize risk of marital conflicts (Kibria, 1993).

2.14.5. Children’s behaviour

Another factor influencing the occurrence of marital conflict among migrant couples is children’ behaviour. To elaborate: parents with children who are dealing with children’ behaviour in the new country, while wishing to keep the norms and values of their country of origin can create misunderstandings between children and parents, which in turn places more burdens on parents and increases the level of stress. Children may learn behaviour in the new country which is quite different from the behaviour in their country of origin. Parents-children conflict increases as adolescents turn away from their familial culture of origin in order to assimilate a host country’s culture, norms and behaviours (Bacallao, Smokowski and Rose, 2008).

2.14.6. Work and marital conflict

Studies suggest that work is associated with marital conflicts. In many African and European traditional cultures, men are perceived as breadwinners and women as housewives (Drachman, Hee and Paulino, 1996:632). Consequently, it is often difficult if women obtain jobs and work

longer hours than men. This affects their relationships in the sense of a shift in what Drachman et al, (1996) call “culturally acceptable gender-role” where a woman is expected to take care of the family, such as cooking, and all other tasks related to the household, and a man’s role is that of breadwinner and authority in the family. A shift of this nature may result in divorce. (Drachman et al, 1996:632-634). Moreover, if both a woman and a man are working, this also may affect their relationship in the sense that a woman will continue to invest her time in both work and taking care of the family herself, while a man invests his time in the former task, not the latter task. This has been shown in research conducted by Ryu (2015).

Men and women allocate different salience to work and family roles. When men and women are equally involved in work and family roles, women make efforts in both roles (given that societal expectations make women more sensitive to family role) whereas men make more time for work role. The more salient a particular role is to an individual, the more likely he or she is to invest time and energy in it (Ryu, 2015). This will cause more disagreements because women may try to divide their time equally between work and family roles without receiving adequate assistance with family tasks from her husband (Ryu, 2015). Furthermore, literature on work and marital conflict demonstrates that when man or woman affected by conflict at work place, in some instances it affects their mental health which, in turn, results in marital conflicts. This is supported by findings from a study conducted by Santos, Bohon and Sosa (1998). The study demonstrates that “interpersonal conflicts with co-workers and job dissatisfaction affect Mexican immigrants’ marital relationships”; therefore, it is not surprising that conflict in work relationships was associated with increased with mental health distress, which in turn affects negatively the married couples (Santos, Bohon and Sosa, 1998: 502).

2.14.7. Social status and marital conflicts

Studies have revealed a close relationship between social status and marital conflicts. Social status has been found to be one of the significant stress factors among migrants which affect marital relationships. In addition to social status as indicated in a study conducted by Drachman et al. (1996), migrants with illegal status felt stress and experienced mental health difficulties,

resulting in more marital conflicts than their legal counterparts (Drachman et al. 1996:633). Illegal status exposes migrants to psychological strain in as much as they fear deportation, discrimination and persecution. Research by Santos, Bohon and Sanchez-Sosa (1998: 503) support the findings noted above.

2.14.8. Social Support

Literature indicates that there is a correlation between marital conflict and social support. Lee (2015), in examining relationships between marital conflict and social support, argues that where there is lack of social support among migrant families, it leads to marital conflict. Traditional roles and functioning among members of the migrant family, such as social support between husband and wife, is questioned and marital conflict occurs (Rhee, 1997). For instance, where migrant women are “expected to maintain the submissive role of traditional wives and to take care of the overall domestic tasks”, this often increase tensions and “emotional conflict in the process of adjusting in the new environment” (Lee, 2015:316). A number of studies demonstrate that social support plays an important role among migrant families, for instance, where members of the family, relatives and friends support each other as husband support his wife and vice versa (Lee, 2015 ; Rhee, 1996). Social support among members of the family assists the family to reduce occurrences of conflict between themselves.

2.14.9. Migration: role and status of women

A number of studies demonstrate that there is a close relationship between role and status of women. Nwabunike and Tenkorang (2015) state that in many African cultures, socio-cultural norms construct the behaviours of ‘a good man’ or ‘a good woman’. We may find that different cultures construct men and women differently, and that some cultures legitimise the abuse of women. In many African cultures, including the Congolese culture, gender roles are clearly defined and male domination and control are maintained and exercised through, for instance, traditional values, beliefs, and customs (Nwabunike and Tenkorang, 2015). However, scholars

have shown that migration impacts on the role and status of women in a number of ways. Mobility of women causes changes in their role and status. For instance, it increases female empowerment, especially when the mobility involves moves from rural to urban areas or overseas. The mobility of women empowers them by providing freedom and autonomy which, in turn, enables equality which can affect their relationships with their husbands if their cultural context in the host country is different to the cultural context of their countries of origin (Nwabinke and Tenkorang, 2015). That said, migrant women interpret their empowerment differently (Hyman, Guruge and Mason, 2008).

Hyman, Guruge and Mason (2008) state that even though migration improves the status of women, it may not change their relative position within the family. In many traditional cultures, women are expected to conform to a status inferior to their husbands' status. If they do not conform, men resort to violence as a strategy to assert their power and position within their families. (Hyman, Guruge and Mason, 2008).

Coming from a country where cultural norms of masculinities, femininities, and gender arrangements differ from the norms in the host country creates tension among couples. Where men inflict violence on their wives, their actions will continue to be acceptable as a normal response of a husband and head of the family to his wife's inappropriate behaviour, disobedience or disrespect. Bui and Morash (2008:195) point out that in many traditional culture "women are expected to conform to an inferior status and socially constructed femininity, and when they do not, they often encounter cultural acceptance of the idea that it is a man's right to punish his wife".

Postmus (2015: 379), adds that if the cultural norm includes a strong belief in patriarchal system where in a husband has total authority and dominion over his wife, the abuse, whether it's psychological, physical, sexual, or financial, may be seen as a normal part of that family.

Migration may change status of women from their origin and this may affect the way women behaving in the destination country compared to the home country (Hugo, 2002; Williams, 1990). However, Fokkema and de Haas (2010) advance that migration of women also has some positive impact on the family and contributes to the progress of the family. Firstly, they point out that migration strengthens women's positions within their families; secondly, they argue that migrant women may have improved the economic status of their families by

contributing income earned in their host country without experiencing any increase in their own overall status as a result (Fokkema and de Hass, 2010; Hugo, 2002).

2.15. Negative consequences of marital conflicts in the family.

A number of studies conducted on migration and marital conflicts show that marital conflicts impact negatively on conflicting parties and on their children.

2.15.1. Negative effects of marital conflicts on couples.

Studies conducted on the field of marital conflicts show that marital conflict has negative impact on the health of every member of the family including the victim, abuser and children (Lee, 2015; Han et al, 2010). Findings demonstrate that as the level of marital conflict increases among couples it increases the level of depression among couples and self-esteem decreases. Coyne and Downey (1991), O'Leary and Smith (1991), Beach et al. (1998) and McLeod (1994) argue that marital conflict has profound implications for individual well-being, depression, and is linked with eating disorders and anxiety disorders. Fincham and Beach (1999), and Han et al, (2010) state that marital conflict is related to psychological outcomes in victims: it increases the symptoms of depression, post-traumatic stress, poor physical health and specific illnesses such as cancer, cardiac disease and chronic pain. Burman and Margolin (1992); Han et al. (2010) add that marital conflict has negative effects on family health, such as physical disability in both men and women who are victims of marital conflict, greater mental illness, interpersonal dysfunction such as problems with social and family functioning.

Fincham and Beach (1999) point out that marital conflict has negative impact on family health. Marital conflict is associated with important family outcomes, including poorer parenting, poorer child adjustment and problematic attachment to parents, conflict between siblings (Erel and Burman, 1995; Brody et al, 1994; Owen and Cox, 1997). Herman (1992) advances that marital

conflict creates trauma symptoms exhibited by battered woman or men. She hypothesizes that many battered women/ men suffer from complex traumatic symptoms, including depression, anxiety, idealization of the perpetrator, and dissociation of the chronic nature of the trauma (Beach et al, 1998). Herman advances that abused women/men live in fear, unable to predict when the next attack will come. She/he may become isolated from friends and family and increasingly dependent on her/his abuser. In this circumstance, it can be very hard to make sense of what is happening and over time her/his self-esteem may be worn down. There is mounting evidence that domestic conflict/violence has long term negative consequences for the survivors, even after the abuse has ended (Herman, 1992).

Marital conflict can translate into lower health status, lower quality of life and higher utilization of health services (Campbell et al, 2002). When a person is treated as a slave or mocked in his/her home, she/he is experiencing emotional abuse. Emotional abuse refers to abuse of a person's morals and self-esteem. This is parallel to psychological abuse which involves intimidation or threats (Advocates, 2010). Psychological abuse creates fear in the victim. Prohibiting a person from remunerative employment makes her/him financially dependent on the sole provider: this is known as economic abuse. (Advocate, 2010).

Examining the relationship between marital conflict and its impact, Heavey et al (1995) argue that marital conflict has longer-term effects for the couple. The study demonstrates that marital conflict creates long-term evidence that negative communication behaviour leads to crisis of confidence in the behaviour model of marital discord among couples (Heavey et al, 1995; Heavey et al, 1993). In addition to these negative effects of marital conflict on couples, other studies have found that it increases negative behaviour which decreases marital satisfaction for both spouses, which in turn creates divorce and separation. (Heavey et al, 1993; and Noller et al, 1994)

A number of studies agree that poor marital relations are more likely to affect migrant families' lives negatively and may impact on their adaptation process in the new country (Hyman et al, 2008; Ho, Yin and Wu, 2014). On the other hand, if migrant couples are well organized and have emotional support, if husband wife assist each other and have mutual reliance, they adjust more easily into a new society. In a difficult situation such as unemployment and poverty, a good relationship between wife and husband can "buffer the effects of stressful acculturation"

(Ho, Yin, and Wu, 2014:663). It is important to note that good marital relationships contribute to the wellbeing of migrant couples. They feel more confident about coping with all changes they may face in the host country and to hope for a better future in the new society. Ho, Yi and Wu (2014: 664) demonstrate that unemployment and isolation from their extended families are some of the factors affecting the marital relationships of migrant couples. They note that many migrants arriving in the new country were shocked by the hard living conditions and loss of social support, and thus often have difficulty making the transition to a new situation. (Ho, Yi and Wu, 2014:664). However, it is important to recognize that social support among migrant families is a key predictor of their ability to adapt to the new situation and their hope of having sustainable marital peace.

2.15.2. Negative effects of marital conflicts on children

Marital conflicts can impact negatively on the mental and physical well-being and physically on children and can affect children psychologically. It is likely that conflict between father and mother affect children in the sense that mother or father can direct her/his anger on children. (Corrine et al., 2008:2). Marital conflict has effects on child development. Studies conducted in the field of marital conflict demonstrate that marital conflict increases the probability of children's disorders associated with marital disagreement, including negative effects on cognitive, social, academic even psychological functioning of children raised in a family where both parents are active in the conflict. (Cummings and Davies, 2002). Kubeka (2008) advances that children raised in a broken home or in a conflict-ridden family where conflict emanates from both their parents, children may suffer from post-traumatic stress which results in loss of control and feelings of powerlessness. Lee (1995) adds that children who grow up in conflict-ridden homes may subsequently suffer lower quality of intimate relationships as adults. Moreover, there exists a correlation between family violence and violent adolescent behaviour. The persistence of domestic conflict in their lives may lead them to believe that violence in relationships is a necessary norm. Therefore, they do not interpret conflict in interpersonal relationships as inappropriate; instead, they view it as an expected occurrence. It is possible for a male or female child who frequently has been exposed to family violence in her/his formative years to become a perpetrator of violence when he/she is an adult or parent. Therefore, the cycle of

violence persists (Kubeka, 2008). Accordingly, children who live in a family where both parents use physical violence will probably use violence on other children in the areas. A number of scholars argue that these children are susceptible to internalizing and externalizing behaviours associated with psychological problems (Durrant, 2005; Han et al, 2010; Bair-Merritt, Blackstone and Feudrner, 2006). Additionally, in later life when they become parents, they are likely to use violence on spouses (Durrant, 2005:73). This argument from Durrant is supported by Santos, Bohon and Sanchez-Sosa, (1998) and Nwabunike and Tenkorang (2015) who argue that a child who grows up in a violent family will likely become habituated to violent relationships and when she/ he is an adult and becomes a parent, will be inclined not only to be directly involved in conflict with his or her partner but also will subject his or her children to violence. This probability is congruent with “attachment theory”, because the child is product of the family and learns from his/her parents’ behaviour. Good and bad behaviours are learnt from the family. Conflictual interpersonal adult relationships are associated with negative parent-child or wife-husband relationships (Santos, Bohon and Sanchez-Sosa, 1998:494-497; Edwards, 2004 and Cangelosi, 2004).

A study conducted by Cummings and Davies reveals that marital conflict affects family functioning, including parenting (Cummings & Davies, 2002). Nwabunike and Tenkorang (2015) argue that domestic conflict in the context of married couples occurs in all cultures and contexts, irrespective of social, economic, religious, ethnic, or racial background. They add that marital conflict in many cultures and societies remains underreported owing to fear of reporting to authorities due to its sensitive nature, or fear of bringing shame to their families and communities. Some scholars demonstrate that a number of the domestic survivors turn to informal supports such as family member or friends (Nwabuke and Tenkorang, 2015; Postmus, 2015).

2.16. Approaches to Marital Conflict Resolution in the Context of Migration

In the context of traditions in African countries, which do not necessarily apply to all global countries, the conflicts are settled through extended family structures. The head of the family initiates the process for resolving domestic conflict, by playing the role of facilitator. He talks to both sides, listens to their concerns and uses his wisdom to convince each side to stop

fighting and advises them on how to resolve their differences (Anifowose, Olaoba, Yesufu, Oyedolapo, 2010:37). Separated from extended family, migrant families develop new methods of dealing with daily challenges, including conflicts. One of the approaches which families develop is to increase migrant networks. Networks are sets of social ties formed on the basis of kinship, friendship, and common origin. These become the source of reliance in times of difficulties.

Migrants use different methods of dealing with family conflict in the host country; these include the method of sharing of tasks by several members of the household; additionally, assistance of family members are used by migrants as an important source of economic viability, especially for families who have limited financial resources. These methods are found to be helpful in reducing family conflicts and in uniting all family members. (Johnson, 1998). Another method used by migrants in the host country as a solution to difficulties is creating social networks. This method is used by migrants by marrying to create relationship based on kinship ties that are helpful in time of financial difficulties. It includes sponsoring lose family members, even distant and less known ones, to ascertain that kin are available to help out in the future; and forming kin networks in which in-laws are treated as substitutes for siblings or parents. "Reciprocal help, inherent in kin-based households, is expected in these variant households" (Kibria, 1993:5).

Hugo (2002) advances that migrants create social networks between the host country and their country of origin by maintaining a flow of communication with their extended family back home. Social networks between countries created by migrants assist them in resolving their family conflict. Social networks with extended family members back home advise them on how to resolve conflict between them in the host country. These networks are influenced by migrants themselves and can be "carried back home by the migrants themselves when they return periodically or permanently to their country of origin, or they can flow back to their country of origin through letters, phone calls and other means" Hugo (2002). Most migrants establish these networks, which play an increasingly important role in bringing about change among migrant families and their communities in host countries. (Hugo, 2002).

2.17. Conclusion

Marital conflict is a global issue and has a long history in all nations. This chapter demonstrated that marital conflict is considered a family matter and many societies consider violence as an acceptable aspect of cultural tradition to correct one partner's behaviour. Marital conflict has been defined and investigated by a number of scholars. An accumulation of evidence from a number of studies demonstrated that marital conflict has negative effects on the whole family including children and couples themselves. Studies show that migration is a complex and contested topic. On the one hand, migration has negative effects on the migrant families and couples. On the other hand, migration increases solidarity and harmony among migrant families and couples. The chapter has shown that there are key factors influencing marital conflict in families, particularly migrant families, and has described a number of methods used by migrants to solve marital conflict.

Chapter Three. Research Methodology and Theoretical framework.

3.1. Introduction

This chapter is divided into two major parts. Part one presents the research methodology. The chapter firstly provides research design that has been used in the study, followed by the study location, the sample selection and data collection methods. The chapter explains how data was analyzed and presented, discusses validity and reliability of the data collected, and highlights ethical considerations. Data analysis procedure is discussed as well. Researcher's field experience is also presented and discussed.

Part two provides the theoretical framework through which this study is constructed. This section discusses the following theories: Social Constructionism, Symbolic Interactionism, and Conflict Transformation.

3. 2. Research Design

Kothari (2004) argues that research design is the glue that holds all the elements of a research problem together. It explains how research is planned; the stages to follow while conducting the research project and how research aims will be achieved. According to Mouton (1996) the research design serves to plan, structure and execute the research to maximise the validity of the findings.

In nature, this is a qualitative study, employing an interpretive approach. The key focus of qualitative approach was employed in data collection and analysis. Neuman (2000: 207) explains qualitative research methods as: "Any social science research that produces results that are not obtained by statistical procedures or other methods of quantification. Some of the data may be quantified, but the analysis is qualitative. It can refer to research about people's lives, their stories, and behaviour and it can also used to examine organisations, relationships, and social movements".

According Du Plooy-Cilliers (2014), qualitative data is a collection of open ended data, analysis of text, pictures, representation of information either in figures or tables or both and it differs from the traditional quantitative approaches. Qualitative methods are important in having access to critical information drawn from participants' experiencing and understanding of the phenomena under study. This also builds a deep understanding of the knowledge on the subjective realities faced by the participants from their own perspectives (Brannen, 2005; Plano Clark and Wang, 2010). Dawson (2002) argues that central to qualitative research is to explore and examine "behaviour, attitudes and experiences using methods such as survey and interviews and also attempts in getting and in-depth views" of participants.

Qualitative approach was used in this study because it explores opinions and views. This means that "perceptions and understandings come from experience, objective actions or behaviours and from the context in which this occurs" (Ulin *et al*, 2002).

In this context, a qualitative interpretative method is critical, because it offers a systematic, controlled, valid and rigorous establishment of associations of methods that allow the accurate prediction of outcomes under a particular set of conditions and which is unique to particular group of people and culture (Kumar 2004:16). Fox and Bayat (2007) argue that interpretative method, the researcher is interested more on the side of subjective experiences of the participant, and study aims to get in-depth understanding of individual perception and the phenomenon meaning. Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al* (2014) make clear that interpretive method as a study of experiences and personal actions of individuals is based on a phenomenon and its purpose meaning.

In this study, the qualitative interpretative method assisted me as the researcher to grasp a clear picture and understand more fully the interpretation of experiences and variations in participants' responses from their own context and experiences (Ulin, *et al*, 2002). Congolese migrant families being a unit of study, their experiences and context under which they live provides space to interrogate how social and economic situations have shaped marital relationship and the meaning attached to this through participants' own

experience and words. Because there is a need to understand attitudes, feelings, meaning, variations and interpretations of individual or collective social action, it was critical to consider a qualitative interpretative approach to examine why the observed patterns exist and the interpretations and implications attached to these (Babbie and Mouton, 2001).

Like any other qualitative study, the aim of this study was not only to explore and examine in some depth Congolese migrant families living in Durban of their understanding, perceptions and interpretation of marital conflict in the context of migration, it also to “elicit what Geertz” (1973) refers to as “thick descriptions” of actions and events in individuals’ lives. A qualitative approach relies on depth, as it seeks to describe and understand rather than explaining human behaviour (Babbie, 2007). Again, because this was a qualitative study, I engaged with a smaller representative sample in order to elicit richer data and to gain depth of participants’ responses to different issues related to the topic, rather than running the study through the entire community of Congolese migrant families in Durban.

The qualitative approach is relevant to the study because it allows the researcher to understand and capture more deeply the interpretation and experiences of selected respondents on marital conflict and their views about the extent of marital conflict, its root causes and approaches to marital conflict resolution. The objectives of the study were explored and analysed in the framework of participants’ experiences and their point of views and in their own socio and economic setting as migrants.

3. 3. Sampling Methods

Sampling is usually a technique employed in research to minimize costs such as time and money. Sampling as a technique is considered to be a representative group of individuals selected from an entire population upon which report can be made and conclusion drawn. In this context, participants in qualitative research are “not chosen because they meet statistical requirements, but because their characteristics add to and enrich the structure and character of what is being studied” (Polkinghorne, 2005:140). “Those individuals who can provide the most insight into an experience are generally those who have had experience and who can provide rich information”. For this reason, this study selected

participants who were either married, not married but living together as a couple, or divorced men or women who have experience with regard to marital relationships and have clear understanding of marital conflict dynamics.

Importantly, participants share similar socio and economic conditions: firstly, as migrants and secondly, because they all share the same country of origin. While the conclusion cannot be drawn as to whether participants share common understanding and views with regard to marital conflict, there are many reasons to believe that their socio and economic circumstances and cultural background might have an influence on their understanding and perceptions of marital conflict and this is evident in the research analysis. In addition, participants speak the same languages, that is, mainly Kiswahili and French which are the common languages spoken by all the participants and in which the interviews were conducted.

3.4. Selected Sample

A sample is a small division of a particular population that has been chosen to be studied. Sample is believed to be a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are drawn for measurement. “It also refers to an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common” (Bless et. al, 2013).

The target group for this study were men and women married, divorced or separated, from Congolese migrant community living in Durban. Respondents in these categories are selected because of their own experiences in marriage. This study used a random and judgmental sampling method for data collection. Babbie and Mouton (2004) contents that a random and judgmental sampling technique looks at the nature of the research and its aims and draws conclusion. In addition, this sampling method helps the researcher to use his/her judgment. Sandelowski (1995:181) advises researchers to “select cases that will best enable him/her to answer the research question (s) and meet his/her objectives”.

This method is relevant to the study because it gives equal opportunity to all participants who fall within the criteria of the study (Bunemann and Williams, 2008).

Respondents' involved 20 men and 20 women, married, divorced or separated, from Congolese migrant families. Equal representation of men and women was considered as a means to avoid biased findings by allowing an equal proportion of the voices of men and women to be heard. The voices of men and women are reflected in the final results of this study. Respondents in this study were identified through two Churches. The two Churches (Durban Mission Church and Worship Centre Church (DMC and WCC) were selected from six Churches visited by the researcher. These Churches were selected because of the large number of DRC men and women among the congregants. As participation was voluntary, the number of participants from each Church was determined by the availability and willingness of the participant.

As already mentioned, participants in all categories were chosen based on the criteria above and because they could provide richness to the study: firstly, because they all part of the Congolese migrants' community, secondly, because they are married, divorced or separated. While economic status was not one of the criteria utilised in selecting the participants, there are many reasons to believe that most of the Congolese migrant community share common economic activity inasmuch as they rely on informal economy and lesser paying jobs such as Car guarding and hair dressing (Baruti, 2005, Rukema, 2011 and Muthuki, 2010).

3.5. Data Collection Methods

This section discusses procedures and methods used in data collection, namely, questionnaires and in-depth individual interviews. As Brewer and Hunter (1989) argue, multiple research methods provide rich opportunities for cross-validating and cross-fertilising research procedures and findings.

i. Questionnaires method

The questionnaire is a data-gathering tool that brings out respondents' answers to the printed questions, either open-ended; close-ended or a combination of both, presented in a specific order (De Vos, 1998).

Questionnaire played an important role in retrieving primary data. The collection of data using questionnaire was conducted by distributing sheets of questions to the participants for them to answer in writing. Questionnaires were distributed to 20 men and 20 women, married, divorced and separated volunteers from Congolese migrant families living in Durban. The survey questionnaire is a quick, anonymous method of data collection. Questionnaires may present information that interviewees would not feel free to talk about face to face. A questionnaire does not cost much and it also saves time for a researcher: she is able to distribute surveys and collect responses in much less time than it takes to conduct individual interviews (De Vos, 1998). Most of the questionnaires were close ended questions but with a space where respondents could add comments or other information. Thus, the questionnaire was designed to collect information from Congolese migrant families living in Durban on exploring the extent of marital conflicts and the root causes of such conflicts; explore and examine whether there is a relationship between migration and marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families living in Durban and explore any existing approaches to marital conflict resolution. Questionnaire method is not sufficient method in yield fully reliable results. Face to face individual interview method was utilised to add depth and to enrich the data.

ii. In-depth interviews

An interview is an interactive process used to conduct the research. This interactive method is between the researcher and the respondents. In-depth interviews are an essential method in qualitative research in order to understand how participants view their worlds. Rossman and Rallis (1998) argue that interviewees construct meaning. This method involves not only listening and recording participants' views but also the way in which the interview progress plays an important role in the interpretation of the data collected. An in-depth interview is the most preferred method of this thesis, as it allows the participant to reflect and allows for interaction between the researcher and participant. The questions are open ended, allowing for a natural flow of conversation between participant and researcher and allow the researcher to guide the interview to stay on the

topic, but not stick to a strict interview schedule, only allowing for a more in-depth interview strategy. In this study face to face in-depth interviews involved 8 men and 8 women volunteers selected from initial questionnaires. In- depth interviews were advantageous to enrich the study and researcher. It also helped the researcher to probe for additional information where necessary. In addition, interviews were conducted with people who are involved in assisting or advising individuals who experience marital conflict, such as leaders from two selected Churches, two counsellors within these Churches. In-depth interviews with participants in this category helped to understand respondents' views with regard to marital conflict in the context of migration, not only as member of the migrant community from Democratic Republic of Congo, but as people who deal with challenges of marital conflict. Participants in these two categories provided rich information, first as themselves as married, divorced or separated and secondly as people who help others facing marital conflict challenges.

Carefully formulated and sequenced questions based on the purpose of the study were used to illicit a wide range of responses from specific individual who are involved in assisting or advising individuals experiencing marital conflict, such as leaders from two selected Churches and two counsellors within these Churches. This helped me to confirm the reliability of the data from the questionnaires. Open face to face interview schedules were used to gain detailed picture of participants' beliefs, attitudes, perceptions or accounts of the issue. Open questions gave the participants the opportunity to introduce all issues thought about the research topic.

This researcher conducted face to face interviews at the places and times convenient to the participants. Interview lasted for approximately thirty to forty minutes (30-40 minutes) with each participant. Researcher use audio recorder to conduct face to face interviews. This is a method of qualitative research in which the researcher asks open-ended questions orally and records the respondents' answers (Sarah & Burkard, 2009). Researcher recorded the interviews using a digital recorder after obtaining permission from the respondents. A digital recorder is useful for data collection: it enabled me to collect general amounts of data not only by questioning and listening but also by observing non-verbal cues from my respondents. It is important to note that before

recording during the interview I presented to them the informed consent forms, and I explained to them the importance of research recording for the purposes of transcription. When they agreed, they signed the form and their views were recorded.

The interviews and initial questionnaire were conducted in French and Swahili to facilitate those who experience some difficulties in understanding and responding in English and thereafter translated into English for data presentation.

Interview questions and questionnaire were translated from Swahili and French to English by a professional translator. My position as a researcher was therefore crucial because this research is essentially important to me and structured by my subjectivity. As a member of Congolese migrant community in Durban, I share a common background with the community and the research process therefore involved self- reflexivity on my part. Hence the study granted me more understanding on emerging reality as I reflected on my personal philosophy in interpreting the findings.

Reay (1996: 60) argues that “reflexivity is a continual consideration of the ways in which the researcher’s social identity and his/her values affect the data gathered and how social world produced”. My identity as migrant and married gave me an opportunity to analyse data from an insider perspective. My insider standpoint contributed to establishing reality as viewed by the participants. In other words, I participated as a co-producer of meaning.

Research is inherently structured by the subjectivity of the researcher. It is the researcher who shapes the research through his or her curiosities representing his or her worldview. Critical framework goes beyond providing deep understanding of what is being researched by also addressing to social issues (Reay, 1996: 62).

iii. Documentary review

The study used both secondary and primary data sources of information. As far as primary data sources are concerned, I conducted interviews with different informants; I also used questionnaires. With regard to secondary data sources, this researcher consulted various documents such as books, journals, newspaper reports, obtainable through the library and on-line research, and perused related researches conducted by other researchers in

a similar field. The secondary sources provided qualitative data as well as the theoretical framework (Slade, 1997).

3. 6. Data Analysis

The focus here, according to (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999), is to interpret the data collected and presenting the findings in language appropriate to the consensus of the specialist area of the researcher.

“Analysis is systematic, sequential, verifiable and continuous; it requires time but is not jeopardized by delay. It should entertain alternative explanations and is improved by feedback” (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The basis of my analysis was to go through transcripts, tape records, notes and memory. In order to come to the conclusion of data analysis, data were codified and thematically analysed. The words, the context through data were collected, the internal consistency, frequency of comments by the participants, extensiveness of comments, as well as what was not said but expressed through gestures were considered in the final writing of this study.

In this study, data analysis was interpretive by its nature of thematic analytic methods. This method was used to explore and understand patterns of shared views and understanding among Congolese migrants who participated in this, and any variability in those patterns. Since this is a qualitative study using an interpretative approach, it is assumed that meanings, attitudes and perceptions of those who participated in the study were derived from their own life experiences, and that reality is subjective to their own conditions and circumstances rather than objective. This also means that participants’ perceptions of experiences in some instances may differ from those of the interviewer.

Taking into account the above, it means that this approach has critical implications for research analysis. To this end thematic content analysis was therefore seen relevant and appropriate to this study. Although the steps outlined by theorists largely overlap, the five steps outlined by Terre Blanche *et al* (2006) was primarily used for data analysis in this study.

When analysing the transcripts of interviews, the social context was considered. “Thematic analysis focuses on searching within transcripts for the emergence of patterns of shared understanding and themes”. Additionally, since this was an interpretive study, this researcher assumed that “reality is subjective rather than objective, and that meanings and perceptions of participants are derived from experiences” (Ulin *et al*, 2002).

The first stage of data analysis involved going through each transcribed interview, reading and developing an intimate relationship with the data. This means that I become more familiar with the data and the content to be analysed. The analysis commenced right from when interviews were planned and participants identified. This means that before data analysis began, the researcher had already a preliminary understanding about the phenomena being explored and has made preliminary conclusion of the research problem (Terre Blanche *et al*, 2006). This was followed by immersion in reading and rereading transcribed texts of interviews and looking for emerging themes and developing tentative explanations. “This stage also involved noting the quality of the transcripts, including the portrayed neutrality in asking questions and responding to participants’ answers, and the richness of detail in the field notes” (Ulin *et al*, 2002).

Secondly, themes were identified. This process was done using the same words, style, or terms used by participants from their own words. These words were again used to establish connections and “infer general rules or classes from specific occurrences. Themes emerged from the text, rather than the researcher beginning with predetermined themes and fitting text to these themes. The identification of themes was more than simply summarizing content” (Terre Blanche *et al*, 2006). Subsequently, identified information to be relevant to this theme were displayed in detail, and then it was reduced to its essential focus. Next step was to have each theme and examined in an attempt to discover the underlying core meanings and feelings of the participants. Finally, an overall evaluation and interpretation was done, assessing the emergent themes and how they related to each other (Ulin *et al*, 2002).

In the third stage, elaboration occurred: data was divided into themes, “events and discussions no longer appeared in linear sequence”. Common topics and sub topics which were expressed in several ways, were grouped together under a single theme.

Elaboration then occurred as each theme was studied and considered in more detail. This allowed for the subtler nuances to emerge (Terre Blanche *et al*, 2006).

The final stage in data analysis comprised putting together the interpretation of the data, and checking it. (Terre Blanche *et al*, 2006). This interpretation was reviewed, and identified weaknesses attended to. The researcher's personal role in the entire process was also reviewed and considered.

3. 7. The Validity and Reliability of the Data

This research determined the validity and reliability of the data as follows: After seeking the views of research participants, the researcher estimated the relevance of the methodological tools to the objectives of the study. After judgment and assessment, revisions were done accordingly. The researcher examined instruments used to collect data and reviewed researcher observation in order to establish its validity. In regard to the reliability of the instruments, questionnaires were distributed and responded by 20 men and 20 women. Revisions of in-depth personal interviews were continuously executed until it became clear to the researcher that 8 men and 8 women respondents volunteered similar responses. To ensure the reliability of this finding, the consistency of the responses to each question was measured. Reliability is defined by Sullivan (2001) as concerned with the consistency, stability and repeatability of the informants. Reliability is also concerned with the investigator's ability to collect and record information accurately. The reliability of the research tools refers to the extent to which the responses of the questions can produce consistent the same results if used repeatedly over time on the same persons. Brink (2006) states that validity refers to where an instrument measures accurately what it is intended to measure given the context in which is applied. In this study, the report is based on the responses of participants in relation to the objectives of the study and research questions.

Reliability provides more evidence of validity since a reliable measure may be a valid one (Sullivan, 2001). To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, the researcher avoided

any kind of bias which could occur when conducting interviews, describing and interpreting situations.

As Silverman (2006) stated, credibility is important for any type of research. Many measures were taken to ensure the validity of this research. Firstly, I sought the services of two research assistants who worked with me to avoid my personal views and biases. Secondly, multiple methods were combined in collection and analysis of data to ensure higher credibility and accuracy rather than just relying on one method. Thirdly, and importantly, I allowed my understanding to be confirmed and amended by those whose opinions, experiences and views I studied. As such, “the participants remained part of the process, that is, from the field work to the analysis of data” (Silverman, 2000, 2006).

3.8. Field Research Experience

Preliminary visits to the study areas, mainly Churches from which participants were selected, was the first step undertaken. This stage of the research was crucial in establishing and maintaining trust and rapport. It began when I arranged a private meeting with one of the junior Church leaders from the DMC in the inner city of Durban and who is a graduate student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I approached the junior Church leader and explained to him my research objectives and sought his help to meet a senior Church leader who subsequently agreed to meet with me. During the meeting with the senior Church leader, discussions around my research were held and he was able to provide me with more information on his experience in dealing with marital conflict, firstly as Church leader and secondly, as a member of the migrant community from DRC living in Durban. Discussion with the church leader broadened my understanding of the research objectives and questions. At the end of the meeting with the church leader from Durban Mission Church, I sought his permission and assistance to liaise on my behalf with members of his congregation, which he did. I was invited to participate in one of their sessions where I was able to present my research objectives and invite interested congregants to participate in the research process.

After the presentation of my research objectives to the congregants, many of them committed to participate in the research process. The visit to DMC was followed by another visit to WCC (Worship Centre Church) where the researcher made direct contact with a senior Church leader who agreed to facilitate conducting interviews with and collecting data from members of his congregation. Meeting with Church leaders from both Churches opened an avenue for me to enter into direct contact with the participants. As in any research process, negotiating access to participants was a tricky process: it required personal engagement with individuals as well as awareness of group dynamics. Some of the participants during the facilitation of church leaders committed to participation in the study. However, they subsequently showed unwillingness to participate. Most of the people who were unwilling participated cited lack of time; others considered that the research dealt with private family issues which should not be discussed with a person outside the family. Sometimes, some of the participants would agree to a meeting but would not show up.

To facilitate the process, I approached two members of the Congolese migrant community who then became my research assistants. Research assistants played a crucial role in the process of data collection. They set up meetings with participants, some of whom were able to honour their commitment whereas others declined at the last minute. Those who committed themselves to the interviews seemed to have an expectation of some form of monetary reward for participating in the research. Since the researcher was aware of such expectations from her previous Masters research, most of the interviews were conducted at places of residence of the participants while other were conducted in places convenient to participants. The researcher assured participants that the interviews were not about their private and personal experiences with regard to marital conflict but their perceptions and understanding of the research problem. However, it is noteworthy that at the end of the interviews, participants were happy to have expressed their views with regard to marital conflict, and in one case, a participant indicated that she felt relieved of a problem she had not previously spoken about and which kept disturbing her mind.

Data collection and interview process gave this researcher a new perspective on socio and economic dynamics among Congolese migrant families. Firstly, it appeared that

social networks play an important role. Those who were willing to participate in the research were the ones who motivated their friends and relatives to participate in the research process. Secondly, participants presented economic hardship as being of one of the factors that prevents people from spending time on something which does not bring in an income, such as participating in the research. A direct quote from one participant reads: “You know; people are stressed with life. Every second counts money. You cannot expect someone to spend one hour talking to you and then live with nothing. Life is difficult out here”.

In addition, money was a challenge to me as a researcher who was not remuneratively employed. I had to rely on my family for research expenses such as paying research assistants, making telephone calls and transport. Despite all the challenges, data collection and interviews were conducted as planned.

3. 9. Ethical Considerations

Raniga (2000) argues that the researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of the research participants. The proposed study was approved by the Higher Degrees Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The consent of the participants was sought at every level of this study which included: face to face in-depth interviews and questionnaires, as well as use of voice recorder during interviews, of course with the permission of the individuals participating in the interviews. The participants were assured of confidentiality and were assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. The questionnaires and interviews data on the voice recorder were transcribed and locked in my personal computer using a password. Pseudonyms were used to encode the transcribed information and any evidence which revealed personal identity was disguised to ensure anonymity.

The research was conducted in a way which ensured that none of the respondents were harmed or suffered adverse consequences from research participation. . Respondents were not forced to respond. The research was conducted with respect to ethical values,

moral expectation, and rules governing the conduct of a research especially in areas of data collection.

In addition, this researcher informed the participants of counselling services available through the Churches should they experience interviews as traumatic. Furthermore, the researcher offered details about the Advice Desk of Abused Women (and Men), should they not wish to seek counselling from the Church. (The Advice Desk is based at Westville campus UKZN).

3. 10. Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the context, methodology of the research. It has discussed the research design that guides the qualitative approach, including questionnaires and in-depth individual interviews, location of the study, data analysis method, what they are, why they were chosen and how they were to be applied. Validity and reliability of the research and ethical considerations were also addressed in the above section of this chapter.

Part ii: Theoretical Framework

3. ii. Introduction

This section provides a theoretical framework through which this study is constructed. Theories considered include Social Constructionism, Symbolic Interactionism, and Conflict Transformation. Social Constructionism and Symbolic Interactionism are intertwined and form part of interpretive theory. I begin by discussing interpretive theory, followed by Social Constructionism and Symbolic Interactionism and how they are both interlinked with interpretive Theory. Their theoretical relevance to this study is discussed

in more detail. Conflict Transformation Theory and its relevance to this study is also presented and discussed.

3. ii. 1. Interpretive Theory

Interpretive Theory can be defined as a Meta theoretical discourse that claims that there is no single objective view of reality that can be discovered. From the interpretive perspective, the social world consists of multiple realities and these realities are subjective and depend on the social, political, environmental or economic position of a person or a group. Therefore, a person or a group becomes an agent who acts in their own world in light of their subjective position (Braithwaite and Baxter, 2006).

This means that the world we inhabit manufactures realities and transfers these realities to individuals who in turn become the custodians of such realities and act upon them. An individual or a group of people have the power to interpret and make use of these realities to suit their needs and preferences. We all have choices to make with regard to ourselves and others and we have obligations and expectations. The choices we make are viewed in light of our upbringing and experiences. What is considered to be negative or positive and how it is evaluated varies from individual to individual and from culture to culture, whether the culture is collective or individual. Every person has explicit and implicit cultural standards of his or her own, albeit changing and rarely completely or clearly structured (Braithwaite and Baxter, 2006). The way we interpret the world and its realities is partly dependent on our positions as members of a socio-cultural collective. . The way we act or express our desires and interact with others is a manifestation of our interpretation of the world we have created. If life, action, is the pursuit of goals, then social life, interaction, is the exchange of value. We all have individual and collective values and these are in constant conflict: hence, the choices we make about ourselves and others will always have conflicting outcomes (Galtung, 2007). Interpretation of one's' reality can be influenced by interaction of interconnected forces which are in nature economic, political, social and environmental. Man being at the centre of this interconnectedness becomes a major player in shaping and reshaping such reality and interprets it through various meaning and symbols (Braithwaite and Baxter, 2006). To

clearly understand interpretative theory, it is important to understand how the social world is constructed; hence Social Constructionism and Symbolic Interactionism are keys, because they are embedded in Interpretive Theory. The next two sections discuss Social Constructionism and Symbolic Interactionism theories. Social Constructionism and Symbolic Interactionism Theories focus on how people create meaning through social and culture worlds (McCann, 2006). The purpose of using these two methods in the study is to explore the reality of a particular social and cultural context of a community.

In this study, Interpretive Theory helps understand how men and women among DRC's migrant families living in Durban construct and reconstruct the meaning of marital conflict and its resolution in the context of migration. There are many reasons to believe that the way Congolese migrant families living in Durban interpret marital conflict and the choices they make in solving such conflict have individual and cultural relevance. Here, culture is major determinant in shaping and reshaping the meaning of marital conflict, its causes, and approaches to its resolution in the context of migration. Social Constructionism and Symbolic Interactionism provide deep understanding of how the social world is constructed, and of the role that culturally embedded symbols can play in shaping and reshaping individual interpretation of social realities.

3. .1.1 Social Constructionism

From social Constructionism's point of view, is that the perceptions of people about the world do not reflect ultimate reality and cannot be generalised. In most of instances, people construct theories and concepts about the world that reflect their social contexts (see Lakey and Cohen, 2000:30). Similarly, Cooper and Burningham (1999:46) argue that "all knowledge must in some sense be a social construction. No knowledge has fallen out of the sky with a label attached pronouncing 'absolute truth'". McCann (2006) states that people are constructed in an interconnectedness of objectivity and subjectivity. Houston (2001) argues that how we view the social world will shape our response to it. Creswell (2014) adds that Social Constructionism holds a view that people investigate to understand the world under which they work and live, and influenced by their experiences

develop subjective meaning. This is supported by Du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014:23) in their argument that “human beings cannot be studied like objects in natural sciences due to the fact that human beings change all the time and their environment for which they live change and continuously influencing them”.

Social Constructionism “links our narratives or (beliefs) about ourselves and the world to our actions” (Huston, 2001:847). Huston further contends that emphasizing the role of “human agency” in constituting the social world is to underscore the role of discourse in shaping human experience. Social Constructionism in the social and psychological sciences can be seen as response to: 1) the internal and external critiques of positivism and its subsequent demise as the “driving force” behind the natural and human sciences; 2) the failure of “hermeneutics to account for the role of power in shaping meaning and interpretation” (Huston, 2001:846).

Miller and Karthryn (1999:55) state that Social Constructionism is an approach to knowledge that emphasizes how individuals’ and groups’ senses of reality are built up, sustained and changed as people interpret aspects of their lives and experiences. This approach also stresses the “importance of language in reality constructing processes, including the self-constitutive and political implications of people’s language use. Knowledge is not, from this perspective”, an epiphenomenon of “larger forces, such as autonomous social structures, which exist separately from individuals and groups’ interpretive activities. Rather, knowledge exerts great influence over them”.

Social Constructionism treats persons’ senses of social structure as inextricably linked to their knowledge of and experiences in everyday life worlds, as well as the language they use to describe their experiences. Miller and Karthryn (1999:67) point out that Social Constructionism is based on a number of sociological analyses of constructed reality in everyday life, including analysis of ecologies of knowledge. These ecologies consist of socially organized conditions for knowing reality, and of the ways in which different orientations to knowledge are arranged, expressed, and evaluated within different social settings.

Mackay (1997) defines Social Constructionism as a series of ideas having some kind of family resemblance. Mackay (1997) asserts that social beings create social phenomena through social practice. Social Constructionism can be grouped around a number of relating to knowledge. He adds that society is not viewed as a pre-existent domain, but rather, is the product of people engaging with one another, where such interactions become externalized, objectified and then internalized (Mackay, 1997). The mind is actively involved in this process and individual perspectives, perceptions and experiences play a major role in constructing one's reality (Lahey and Cohen, 2000:30). Here, individual is not a passive recipient of a set of meanings, but an active, resourceful and reflective participant in the construction of meaning (McCann, 2006).

Burr (1995) states that social constructionism can be viewed as a genus linking a range of diverse theorists. This broad family resemblance can be gathered around a number of epistemological (relating to knowledge) and ontological (relating to existence) assumptions. Durkheim (1964) adds that the idea of constructionism is that the social world, as we know it, is socially manufactured through human interaction and language. According to Berger and Luckman (1984), Constructionists argue that "our understanding of the social world is historically and culturally specific. In other words, our way of understanding the world is more or less contingent upon time and setting". As Garfinkel (1984) observes, events are dependent on the context in which they occur for their meaning. Constructionists argue against the notion that there are essential structures within society (or the individual). According to McCann Constructionism links our narratives (or beliefs) about ourselves and the world to our actions. Fundamentally, how we view the social world will shape our response to it (McCann, 2006).

According to Regan (1993), Social Constructionism is "reinterpretation of tradition". The focus on diverse social practice is a call for critical reflection on the meaning of tradition. Social Constructionism and its understanding firstly has different implications for how we conceptualize an issue more broadly; secondly, how we respond to the invocation of tradition to justify the regulation of family rests on the notion that genuine reason is necessarily situated which attempts to deal with the exigencies of human experience (Reagan, 1993).

Tradition, therefore, cannot be justified simply by universal propositions abstracted from a particular setting. Rather, social constructionists try to evaluate how well tradition has rendered experience intelligible and what kinds of lives it has enabled individuals to live within particular historical circumstances (Reagan, 1993).

Social Constructionists argue that nothing exists in social world unless it has been introduced into that world by human societies through constructive acts. Social construction of meaning is linked to symbols which have a social origin, character and convention, and within various cultures, these conventional meanings provide guidance and mechanisms for human behaviour. Social Constructionism does not only define and construct social world realities, but also involves the way humans relate to each other and expectations they have toward each other (Morash, 2008). Contextualising Social Constructionism theory in this study, one would argue that the way marital relationships and conflicts are constructed are social in nature and change overtime as result of different factors. Applying Social Constructionism theory in the context of migration. For instance, coming from a country where cultural construction of masculinities, femininities, and gender arrangements differ from those of host country, there will be a shift in perception about how masculinity, femininity and gender arrangements are constituted. Such a shift might bring about a shift in the interpretation and management of a given couple's relationship. As Bui and Morash (2008:195) point out, in many traditional cultures "women are expected to conform to an inferior status and socially constructed femininity, and when they do not, they often encounter cultural acceptance of the idea that it is a man's right to punish his wife". Postmus (2015: 379), adds that if the cultural norm includes a strong belief in patriarchal system in which a husband has total authority and dominion over his wife, abuse of wife by husband, whether it's psychological, physical, sexual, or financial, may be seen as a normal part of that couple's family life.

3. ii.1. 2. Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic Interactionism is an important Interpretive Theoretical perspective from which to examine society and individual's actions and behaviour within their social cultural world.

According to Snow (2001:367) there are two core principles: “People act toward things, including each other, on the basis of the meanings they have for them; (1) meanings are derived through social interaction with others; and (2) these meanings are managed and transformed through an interpretive process that people use to make sense of and handle the objects that constitute their social world”. Strictly speaking, Symbolic Interactionism is viewed as part of social psychology. Its prominence grew out of the desire to understand “society, particularly the role culture plays in human behaviour and the place of the individual in society” (McCann 2006:175). George Herber Mead who is considered the father of Symbolic Interactionism, contends that through this journey one develops a defined view of the world, one’s social construction of reality, which he terms “one’s generalised other of society and their identity of self within that society” (McCann, 2006:172-180).

Given that marital conflict is a social phenomenon, there are many reasons to believe that the way in which it is interpreted and expressed is influenced by ones’ upbringing and personal experiences. We are born and grow in different societies that define and portray marital relation and conflict in a unique way which is culturally relevant to particular societies and individuals. Men and women being the products of the society, their understanding of social relation and marital relation and the way it is symbolised is embedded and expressed through culture and therefore, both men and women act as social agents (McCann, 2006).

Forte (2009) defines Symbolic Interactionism as a theory that “focuses on the symbolic and the interactive together as they are experienced in everyday life. He adds that it looks at how the meanings attached to symbols appear during social interaction and how people use these shared and conventional meanings to do things together. Applied Interactionists are interested in how members of groups and organizations redefine objects and events, create new meanings, alter their plans of action, and change the direction and quality of their lives”.

From Symbolic Interactionism’s point of view, individuals build up an understanding of how the world operates through interactions with others. Of particular significance is the orientation of others within the subcultural units in which they live out their lives within a

segmented portion of the whole of society. Each portion carries with it a set of norms, rules, and conventions which have been developed over a period of time, and which help define situations and the roles of those in them from the perspective of what is usually socially and culturally acceptable (McCann, 2006).

Forte (2009:92) suggests that "like all of human experience, science is a conversation that takes place over time in which accounts of what is, what has occurred and what is true of the past and present are negotiated through symbolic interaction". Because there is a need to understand people's perceptions about the world and how, in their own context, they construct reality through cultural settings, interpretative, constructive and symbolic theories help this researcher to understand how participants in this study construct the reality around marital conflict, its causes, and approaches used in resolving marital conflict within the context of Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

From the perspectives of Symbolic Interactionism and Social Constructionism, "human beings have symbolically, socially and culturally constructed their understandings and meanings through their interactions with others, as they live out their lives within society and as they carry out roles, sometimes designated roles which have specific characteristics associated with certain circumstances, situations and environments" (Regan ,1993). From the view point of both theories, constructed meaning is lived reality which guides actions and behavior. This study sets out to explore participants' lived realities in the natural setting of their social-cultural environment, and within the related contexts of migration and marital conflict.

Positioning this research project within Social Constructionism and Symbolic Interaction enables a particular focus on the context in which the research takes place. The purpose of this study is to explore the reality of a particular social and cultural context. From a Symbolic Interactionism and Social Constructionism perspective there are a number of factors one has to bear in mind when one is exploring participants' perceptions and understanding of marital conflict within the context of migration These includes historical, cultural, economic and social context, the basis on which marital norms and conventions are negotiated and renewed in the context of migration. The historical, cultural, economic and social development of DRC's migrant families in Durban and the emerging new

culture in the host country results in new forms of marital renegotiation. Marital relationships and arrangements (whether current or previous) provide a platform from which the objectives of this study can be explored. In other words, Symbolic Interactionism and Social Constructionism provide a conceptual framework through which meanings and perceptions of research participants can be understood (Crotty, 1988:7).

The study sets out to examine this construction of reality, which is closely aligned with Mead's notion of generalized other, and then to examine the congruency between participants' construction of reality and what one could call the conventional reality, as defined by social and economic conditions under which Congolese migrant families in Durban live. . Within this context, there are continual shifts in marital relationships due to economic and social conditions of participants. This continual shift corresponds to the non-static nature of Social construction of reality. As such, it enables the researcher to uncover perceptions of lived realities of participants which are congruent with the purpose and context of this study.

3. ii. 2. Conflict Transformation Theory

Conflict Transformation tries to build and restore a good relationship between two parties in conflict, or build one if there wasn't one there (Fisher et al., 2003:7). Lederach (1995) argues that social conflict started by two persons engaged in relationships and the transformation of such conflict will involve the need to change and transform the mind set of both parties involved in the conflict. In similar vein, Best argues that conflict transformation goes beyond conflict resolution because it builds longer lasting relationships and it takes conflict away from violence and takes it toward development (Best, 2006).

Conflict Transformation Theory helps us understand how a conflicting relationship between individuals and groups can be transformed from hostile to peaceful relationships.

Theorists such as Burton (1990), Lederach (2003) and Fisher et al (2000) argue that Conflict Transformation theory is important in addressing the issue of conflict. Conflict

Transformation theory focuses on change and the processes of the conflict rather than an explanation about why conflict occurs. Conflict Transformation theory focuses on changing relationship of conflicting parties, changing expectations and shifting environment in which they exist, as well as building and rebuilding the relationship between conflicting parties to create an enabling environment for forgiveness and reconciliation (see Isenhart & Spangle, 2000; Galtung, 1998:32).

Wallenstein (1991) adds that solutions may not actually represent resolution. Resolution of conflict in some situations may actually extend the inequality or injustices that exist. In this context Lederach (2003) and (2005) and Best (2005) believe that Conflict Transformation goes beyond Conflict Resolution by building longer and more lasting relationships between conflicting parties. These processes involve the changing of attitudes of conflicting parties and creating trust. Maill (2004) considers Conflict Transformation as mechanism of changing conflicting parties' relationships and the conditions that created the conflict. He believes that if conditions that led to conflict are addressed and the relationship between conflicting parties is harmonized then lasting peace is possible. Fisher et al (2000) argue that the goal of Conflict Transformation theory is to improve longer-term relationships and attitudes among conflicting parties and to develop processes and systems that promote empowerment justice, peace, forgiveness, reconciliation, recognition and respect among conflicting parties.

The inclusion of Conflict Transformation theory in this project aims at the restoration of order and harmony of the community. Cooperation between conflicting parties in the future has to be guaranteed. Exploring approaches to transforming marital conflict is one of the objectives of this study. In situations of violent conflict like that of marital conflict, transformation – or the lack of it – often can provide the key to better understanding the protracted character of marital conflict. It can also provide a perspective that leads one to address the underlying factors of the conflict and to explore approaches to transform situations of social violence. For instance, when a man or a woman in a marital relationship chooses to use violence as means of asserting their respective authority or desires, transformative approach leaves space to understand the deep-rooted causes that give rise to marital struggles, mainly where socio-economic factors fuel violence. A

study conducted by Bandal (2010) in the field of domestic conflicts, indicates that the extent of domestic conflicts in South Africa is widespread. It might be expected that domestic conflict among DRC's migrants in South Africa is also widespread in households where the ordinary stresses of family life are compounded by economic hardship and isolation from extended family networks (Umubyeyi and Harris, 2012). Transformation process not only considers the behavior of involved parties in the conflict, but also addresses factors that influence conflict itself. Here, the social and economic situations of parties involved in the conflict has to be considered if sustainable peace is to be achieved. In the context of this Durban-based study, transformational theory will assist in understanding approaches used by DRC's migrant families in solving marital conflict and how such approaches help in transforming conflict into positive or constructive relationships.

4. ii.3. Conclusion

This chapter defined and discussed theoretical framework through which this study is conducted. It explained that both Social Constructionism and Symbolic Constructionism are embedded in interpretive theory. Both Social Constructionism and Symbolic Constructionism Theories have shown how the social world is constructed and interpreted and how it affects one's interpretation of realities and actions. A central tenet of these theories is that the world which we inhabit comprises our experiences which motivate our actions, construct our relationships with others and inform our perceptions of ourselves. The chapter further explains that relationships between migrant couples are influenced by, for instance, social, environmental, economic and political conditions under which they live.

In addition, the chapter highlights Conflict Transformation theory's emphasis on building and restoring good relations between two parties in conflict, or building a good relationship if it did not previously exist. In this study, Transformative Theory is important as it helps to understand the approaches of Congolese migrants living in Durban to solving and transforming marital conflict in the context of migration.

Chapter Four: Presentation of Population Study

4.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on Congolese migrants living in Durban, taking into account their migration history in South Africa and their economic and social conditions in Durban. Migration history of Congolese to South Africa is an important aspect of this study because it provides information on factors that influenced their migration to South Africa. In addition, understanding economic conditions is significant given their effect on social relationships which, in some instances, leads to conflict. Additionally, social conditions will provide updated information about Durban-based Congolese migrants, with a particular focus on social networks and their role in marital conflict resolution.

4.2. Historical background of Congolese (DRC) migrants in South Africa

The history of Congolese migrating to South Africa is not new; however, in recent years the number has drastically increased as result of a combination of factors such as human security concerns in the political, economic and social spheres. Congolese migration to South Africa is divided into different waves. According to Sharghi (2000:41) few migrants from DRC arrived in South Africa between 1990 and 1992. The second wave comprised those who arrived in 1993 and the third wave occurred in 1997. The number increased in 1998 when a second war erupted which brought an end to the government of Laurent Desire Kabila and this was followed by a large wave of migrants from DRC to South Africa, and particularly to Durban (Dunia, 2014). It is important to note that from 1998 to the present day, the number of migrants – particularly to Durban has increased (Dunia, 2014; Baruti, 2006).

While there are no official statistical data of Congolese migrants living in South Africa generally, and Durban in particular, personal observation points to the fact that their

number is high. This was evident when I was conducting interviews for this study. There are well established Churches dominated by Congolese. Moreover, most dwellings in the inner city of Durban are occupied by migrants from DRC. In addition, due to the number of wars, rebellions, inter-ethnic conflicts, massive human rights violations, social and political instability in the Great Lakes Region and particularly in Democratic Republic of Congo, the number of Congolese migrants in Durban is likely to be high.

It is noteworthy that factors influencing Congolese to migrate to South Africa can be understood in the context of pull and push factors. Firstly, the economic conditions to which Congolese are subjected constitute a major reason to leave the country and seek shelter in South Africa. The level of unemployment in DRC is 80%. The lack of infrastructure and government's inability to create conditions conducive to growth and productivity pushes many Congolese to migrate elsewhere in search of economic opportunities. (Sharghi, 2000). This was evident during the interviews. While a question about employment in home country was not formally included in the research questions, informal conversations revealed that 90% of respondents were unemployed in DRC.

Secondly, political conditions caused by protracted civil and political conflict for over 20 years, accompanied by Human Rights violations, which has cost millions of lives, resulted in many Congolese fleeing the country and seeking refuge in secure countries, South Africa among them. Where there is continual unrest and resultant human rights violations, people's reason to move to foreign countries is to seek refuge in safe places. Consequently, the majority of participants in this study are regarded as refugees. Political instability, cyclical ethnic violence, a bad economy and social conflict are part of the daily lives of DRC's people. The factors described above are the push factors which drive people from their home country to seek refuge in a place where they can get peace and security for themselves and their families. Many Congolese migrate to neighbouring countries such as Angola, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Congo Brazzaville (also known as the Republic of the Congo), and particularly to South Africa (Baruti, 2006; Sharghi, 2000:36-43).

Although economic, social and political conditions in country of origin were push factors for many Congolese migrants to leave the country, the choice to make South Africa their

country of destination was purely on economic grounds. Congolese migrants to South Africa are motivated by its economic status on the African continent and the way it is portrayed in the media (Rukema, 2010). South Africa is seen as a country with a sound economy and a democracy which is considered to be at an advanced stage. Notwithstanding, South Africa's reputation for high crime levels and little tolerance for foreigners, migrants still considered the country a land of economic opportunities, with a sound democracy (Rukema, 2010; Baruti, 2006; Dunia, 2014; Sharghi, 2000).

For Congolese migrants, like any other migrants, relocation to South Africa is fuelled by the need to find a life for themselves and the families they left behind. In coming to South Africa, their expectation was that they would be given support by the South African government (Inaka, 2014). They also "expected to be housed and taken care of by the UN High Commission for Refugees" (UNCHR). This however turned out not to be the case as study of Congolese migrants revealed. Most of the Congolese migrants are without legal documentation, thus increasing the likelihood of their falling into the hands of migration law enforcers. Some end up in prison for months or years without trial, or risk being deported back to their home countries (Rukema, 2010).

4.3. Economic and Social Conditions of Migrants from DRC in Durban

Social and economic conditions are key in determining the resilience of individual and community in changing environments. Most Congolese migrants are destitute and lacking economic and social support. Economic conditions are often linked to one job, one occupation, one form of employment as the means of support and survival for oneself or one's household. In the context of migration, the availability and lack of economic opportunity may define how migrant individual or community adjust to the new and changing environment. The role of social support with specific focus on social network is key. Social network is a set of daily interactions between human beings, built on kinship and friendships, involving sharing of resources, physical and non-physical, or labour resources which can help individual or group of people withstand any change and help

them adjust to sudden changes in living conditions. In this section, the economic and social conditions of migrant families from DRC living in Durban are discussed in detail.

4.3.1. Economic condition of Congolese migrants in Durban

Migrants from DRC who have relocated to South Africa, including those who have settled in Durban, create a number of specific economic survival techniques. (Dunia, 2014: 9).

Informal organisations play an important role as means of survival. The major economic activities of Congolese migrants is in informal sector, such as street vending and hair dressing. Their informal businesses are located in Durban's inner city. On every street corner, one can find Congolese engaged in income-generating activities. (Baruti, 2006; Rukema, 2010). Most participants in the present research indicated that they earn incomes in informal sector businesses. Other respondents revealed that they worked as car guards and security guards.

It is noteworthy that most Congolese migrants came from their home country with formal education. Some migrants with higher degrees in different fields managed to secure formal employment; some have become well established entrepreneurs with sound records. Yet it is generally true that, given their economic activities in informal spheres of business, most Congolese migrants have to face numerous challenges, including institutional and social exclusion (Baruti, 2005; Rukema, 2010).

For instance, those working in informal sector have to face the challenge of obtaining vending permits from local government. In some instances, in order to obtain such permit they have to pass through a local South African friend or bribe local government officials. (Rukema, 2010). Police harassment is also a common experience for migrants working in informal sector: they are accused of dirtying the city; they also are accused of using informal businesses as a cover for conducting illegal businesses such as selling drugs (Rukema, 2010). This makes it hard for migrants in general and Congolese in particular

to make a living in conditions which increase their vulnerability to harassment or to accusations of committing crimes.

The above conditions are particularly difficult to endure for migrants, such as the Congolese, who have had to deal with trauma of war and economic hardship in their home countries. Therefore, it stands to reason that their economic conditions in South Africa places more strain on families and might affect how couple interact. While this is still to be discussed in the chapter of findings, during the interviews it was evident that most marital conflicts are the result of economic hardship and lack of social support. While there are no statistics available, unemployment among Congolese migrants is rife to the point that many have started returning to DRC or other migrating to other countries in Africa. (Researcher's personal experience). The economic condition faced by foreign migrants living in Durban, and of the Congolese in particular, deserve particular attention to see what impact this might have in future on the family and its sustainability. This calls for the review of policies and measures that block migrants and Congolese in particular from reaching their full potential and recover from trauma as result of war they had to endure for over 20 years.

4.3.2. Social condition of Congolese migrants in Durban

Congolese migrants in South Africa experience different challenges when moving to and staying in South Africa. Moving from a French speaking country to an English speaking country with different value system to that of the DRC where basic activities of life follow patterns that are different from English patterns, poses dilemmas for Congolese migrants and makes it difficult for their effective and rapid integration (Morris and Bouillon, 2001:19). Language barriers not only affect their integration, but also affect their economic condition, such as seeking employment. They have to undergo language training. English programme specifically to support foreigners who are entering South Africa and unable to speak English. This organisation provides English lessons free of charge to foreign migrants.

The xenophobic attitudes to and attacks against African foreign migrants and Congolese migrants in particular are also identified as barriers to full integration of Congolese

migrants. Outbreaks of xenophobic violence are mostly prevalent in townships where migrants due to their economic situation are able to afford rental costs. As a result of xenophobic attitudes, they are forced to settle in the city where living conditions are very expensive and unaffordable which might place more stress and strain on already difficult existing living conditions (Rukema, 2010; Baruti, 2006).

In addition, while some Congolese migrants have relatives, friends or someone they know on whom to rely while in South Africa, some are less fortunate. In the latter case, they have to rely on charity from good Samaritans and organisations such as churches, mosques or other established charity organisation. Studies conducted by Rukema (2010) and Sharghi (2000) have shown that churches and mosques play a critical role in supporting migrants and Congolese migrants in particular. This was also evident during the interviews where most of the participants expressed gratitude for the support received from local churches, mosques and local organisations. In fieldwork conducted by Sharghi (2000:62) it is noted that: “the Muslim Agency provided five out of ten of the interviewees with two to three weeks of hospitality, but after that period there were no more assistance available except for one person who is a Muslim himself. A similar situation was experienced with the Ark, although the duration of stay in their dormitory was not beyond three weeks and received no other assistance beside food and shelter”.

In addition, social networks among Congolese migrants play a vital role in their integration into South African society. For instance, a study conducted among migrants and refugees from DRC in South Africa, particularly in Durban, indicates that there is strong solidarity amongst Congolese refugees and migrants. On arrival, most newcomers found accommodation with other Congolese migrants and refugees belonging either to the same tribe or different tribes who came during the earlier waves of migration in South Africa (Ntamulenga, 2012:43). Assistance from social network is vital for survival, both immediate and with regard to job seeking. It is not just people from home that are crucial but also other groups and organisations assist refugees from DRC to find ways to survive and get jobs. Notably, the Muslim community, and Diakonia Centre in the Refugee Department are particularly helpful (Baruti, 2006: 31; Dunia, 2014).

Congolese migrants living in Durban are organised in different associations for mutual support. People from the same region or the same ethnic group form mutual support associations. It is a requirement for members of the association of a given ethnic group to make contributions which will assist other members of the association when such assistance is needed. The contributions also help new arrivals to integrate and find jobs and shelter. (Dunia, 2014; Rukema, 2010; Baruti, 2006). Social networks among Congolese migrants are not limited to people who live in the same city or province of South Africa, but extends to other cities, such as Johannesburg, and to other provinces in South Africa, as well as to other countries around the world (Baruti, 2006).

The role of social network is not only to provide assistance in time of economic need and information for jobs opportunities, but is also to solve disputes and conflict when they arise. Congolese migrants in Durban have established structures through which conflicts are resolved. These conflicts mostly are associated with ethnic and regional affiliation. The role of the elders in disputes and conflict resolution is paramount. When a conflict occurs, community elders are the first to be consulted about how the conflict can be settled (Baruti, 2005). In addition, relatives and friends assist in restoring relationships and solving conflicts. Church leaders are considered to be a reliable source of help by Congolese migrants in times of distress who seek comfort through prayers and counselling. They also play role of mediation and reconciliation where there are misunderstandings or conflicts between individuals or couples. This was evident during the research interviews: a majority of the respondents indicated that Church is a source of spiritual comfort, mediation and reconciliation.

The importance of social networks to migrants is also demonstrated by Maya-Jariego and Armitage (2007) in their study of immigrants in Seville and Cadiz (Spain). Their research shows how social networks create a “sense of community”. Another study conducted by Griffiths (2000:218-302) among Somalian refugees and asylum seekers in Canada, shows that refugee and migrants’ associations and social networks play an important role in providing support to members and re-building community unity. Social networks assist

them to adjust to economic and social conditions, as well as overcome social exclusion in the host country.

This researcher agrees with Rukema's (2010) assertion that the role of social networks among Congolese migrants in Durban is to assist them to create and develop ways of adjusting and adapting to local conditions, and to settle in South Africa. In sum, there are many reasons to believe that social networks play a critical role, and that there is a need to strengthen social ties among Congolese migrants to enable them to overcome their economic and social challenges.

4.4. Conclusion

Migration both in Africa and around the globe has a wide variety of fundamental and triggers factors. In the case of Congolese migrants in South Africa generally and Durban in particular, the main factors that influenced their migration are mostly economic and political (internal instability due to chronic conflict) in their country of origin. Thus, for migrants from DRC, South Africa was perceived as a land of safety with opportunities to improve their and their families' chances in life. Studies conducted in this field show that after their arrival in South Africa, their hopes of opportunity to earn a better living were not fully realised and for others, life turned out to be difficult and miserable. They have encountered a number of challenges, including xenophobic attitudes from the locals, especially Black South African communities. They also derive little support from the government. On the contrary, some Home Affairs officials demand bribes to legitimise their stay in the country. It has further been noted by a number of scholars in this field that due to difficulties associated with their relocation from their home country and conditions prevalent in South Africa, Congolese migrants in Durban have had to develop strong support social networks and they are also forced to develop survival strategies.

Chapter Five: Extent of marital conflict Among Congolese Migrant Families Living in Durban.

5.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the extent of marital conflict among migrant families from DRC living in Durban. This is analyzed from research participants' points of views in regard to the research objectives (see Chapter One). The findings in this chapter reflect the views articulated by 40 respondents in initial questionnaires. In addition, the views and perceptions of 16 volunteers who participated in in-depth interviews are presented in this chapter. Furthermore, views of key informants, mainly church leaders and counselors from both churches are presented and analyzed in this chapter.

Due to the question of anonymity and confidentiality, participants are identified by Pseudonym and which is followed by an abbreviation of gender of the participants and the interview number. For instance, participant one and married /divorced or separated female is represented by pseudonym followed by code P (participant), followed by interview number and the year of interview (P1, 2016) and married/ divorced or separated male respondent is represented by pseudonym followed by code P(participant), followed by interview number and the year of interview (P1, 2016). The Church leader is represented pseudonym followed by code CL (Church Leader), followed by interview number and the year of interview (CL1, 2016) and Church counselor is represented pseudonym followed Code CC (Church Counsellor, followed by interview number and the year of interview (CC1, 2016). Direct quotes from the participants are provided from the responses to each question.

5.2. Demographic Information of participants

This section provides demographic information of the respondents and includes their duration of stay in South Africa, age of the respondents, number of their dependents, their employment status and the level of education. Variables such as duration of stay in South

Africa is key in determining the level of cultural interconnection from the country of origin to the host country and how this might have affected respondent's interpretation of marital relationship, and their interpretation of marital conflict in the face of migration. Moreover, variables such as age can also determine the way that respondents experience marital relationships, marital conflict and possible approaches they may be aware of or have used in solving marital conflict. As discussed in chapter two, factors such as the number of dependents, economic status, and employment and education level can help reduce or increase the level of stress. Therefore, these variables are worth discussing in this section.

Chart 5.1. Respondents' duration of stay in South Africa

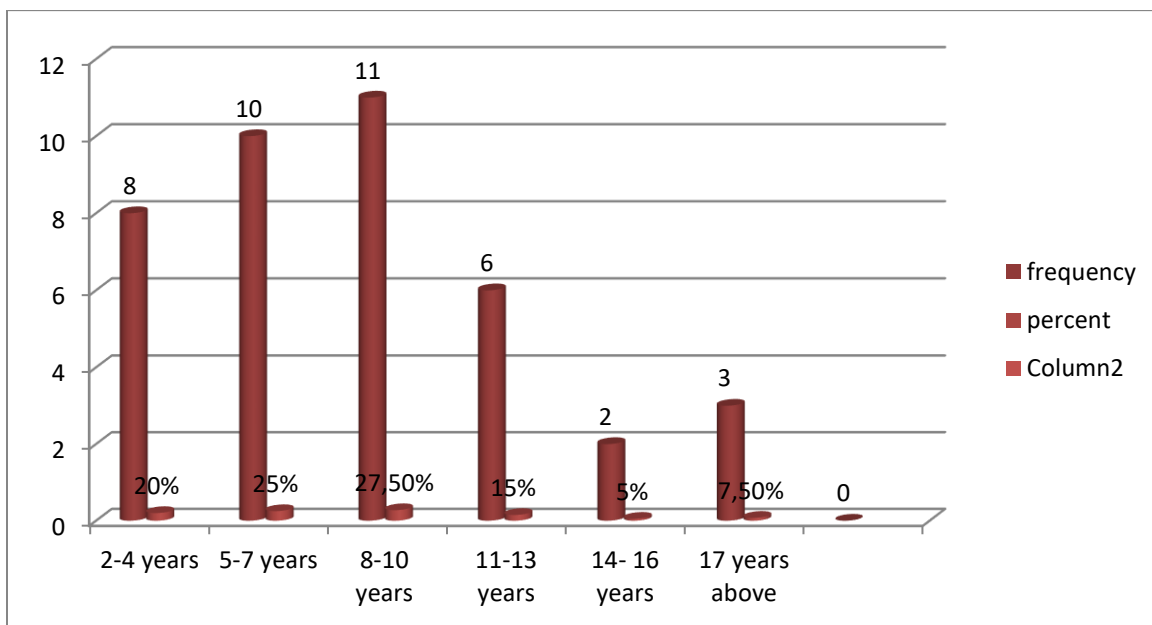
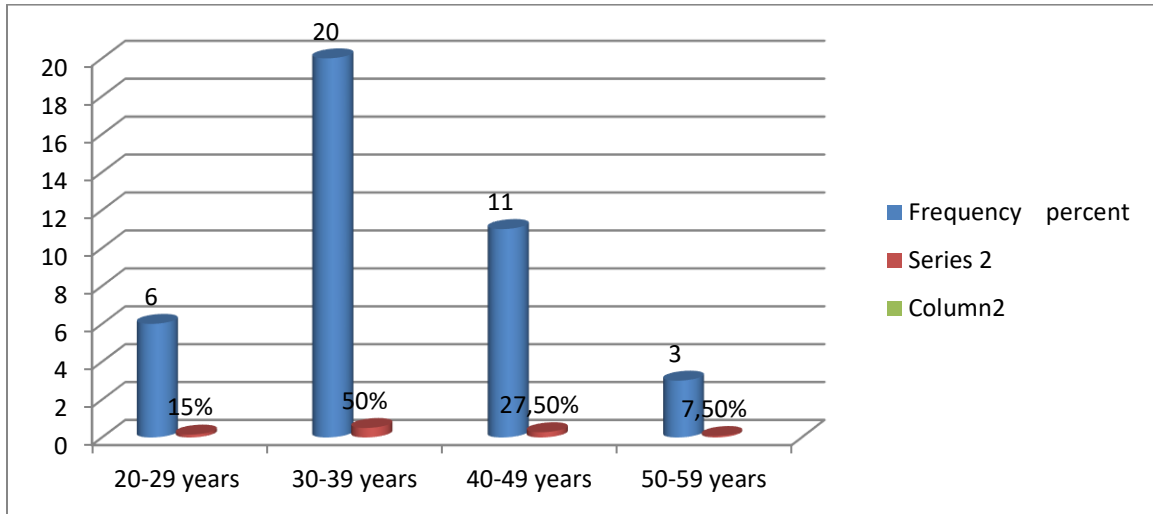


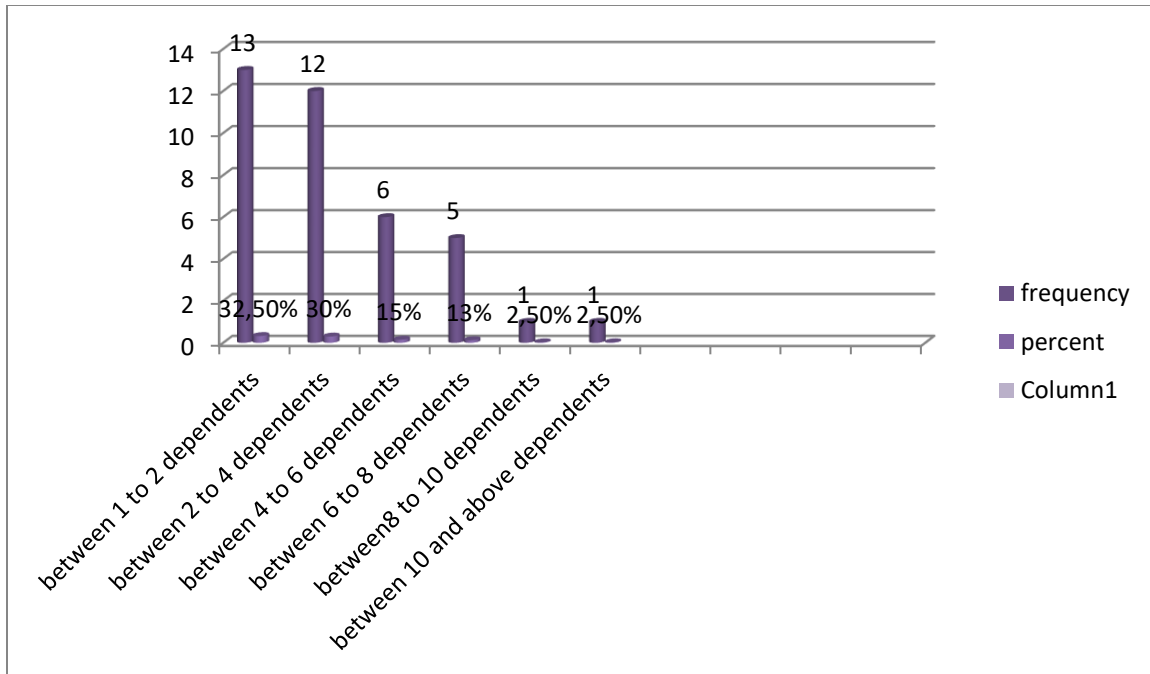
Chart above indicates that 27.5% of the respondents have lived in South Africa for between 8 and 10 years, followed by 25% of participants who have resided in South Africa for between 5-7 years; 20% of participants have stayed in South Africa for between 2-4 years.

Chart 5.2. Age category of respondent



The chart 6.2. Shows that 50% of respondents in the study were aged between 30-39 years old, followed by 27.5% aged between 40-49 years, with 15% aged between 20-29 years.

Chart 5.3. Number of dependents of respondents



The chart above shows that 32.5% of respondents have between 1 to 2 dependents; followed by 30% of those who have 2 to 4 dependents and 15% who have 4 to 6 dependents. From the figures above, the average number of dependents among the respondents is low. While the number of dependents is not the only factor determining the level of stress which may result in marital conflict, it assists one to understand whether this helps reduce the level of marital conflict or whether there are other factors determining marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

Examining the number of respondents' dependents, there are many reasons to believe that the ratio of dependents per respondent is low compared to the norm in the country of origin where the average per woman is 6.6 children (Guy, 2013-2014). While the objective of this study is not to measure the number of dependents in Congolese families, the figure above sheds light on a shift in birth rate attendant on migration. The shift in birth rate might be a determining factor of cultural change or a way of adapting to new economic conditions that require decrease in number of dependents in order to reduce economic burdens on couples. While children are considered as assets in country of origin, in foreign country, due to economic hardship, children are considered as burdens rather than assets. Here, the meaning of family is reconstructed and shaped by new social and economic circumstances. As argued by Braithwaite and Baxter (2006),

interpretation of one's' reality can be influenced by interaction between interconnected forces which are in nature economic, political, social and environmental. Man being at the centre of this interconnectedness becomes a major player in shaping and reshaping such reality and interprets it through various meanings and symbols. The reduction in number of children among Congolese families living in Durban should be regarded as a coping mechanism.

A reduction in the number of dependents emerged during personal interviews. Participants believed that due to difficult economic conditions, most migrant families opted to have fewer children as a way to cope with their economic condition. One statement reads:

It is very hard to have many children under this condition we living. How can you have many children you cannot support and no one to assist you to take care of them? Back home, when you have many children, you do not worry how they will grow. If you have nothing to give them, you can send some to their grandmother and relatives, but here, it just you and your GOD (Chantal married female, P2, 2016).

Chart 5. 4. The level of education of respondents

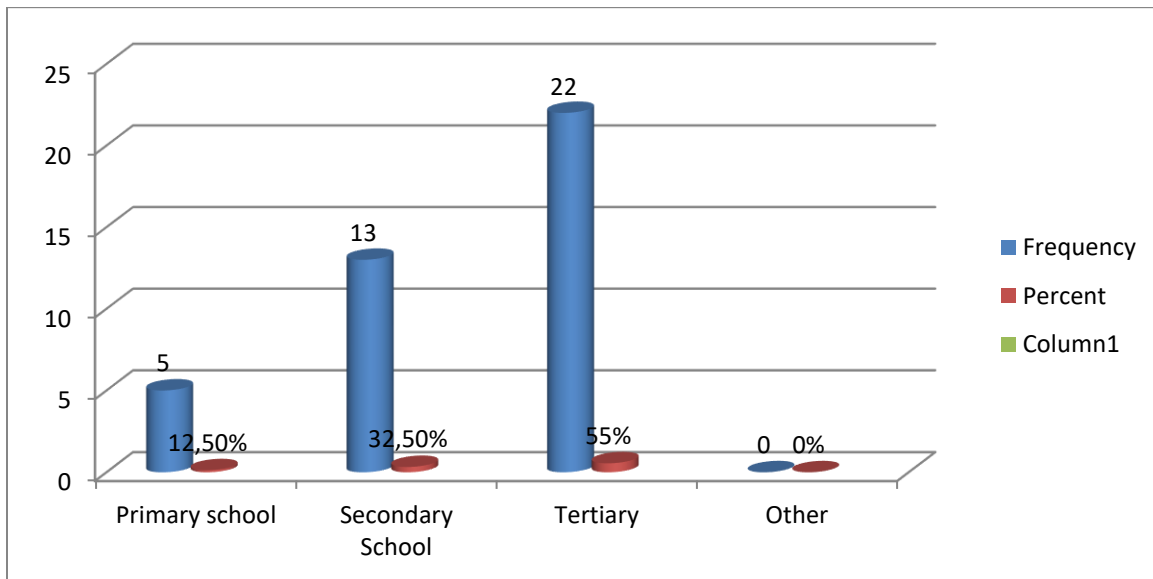
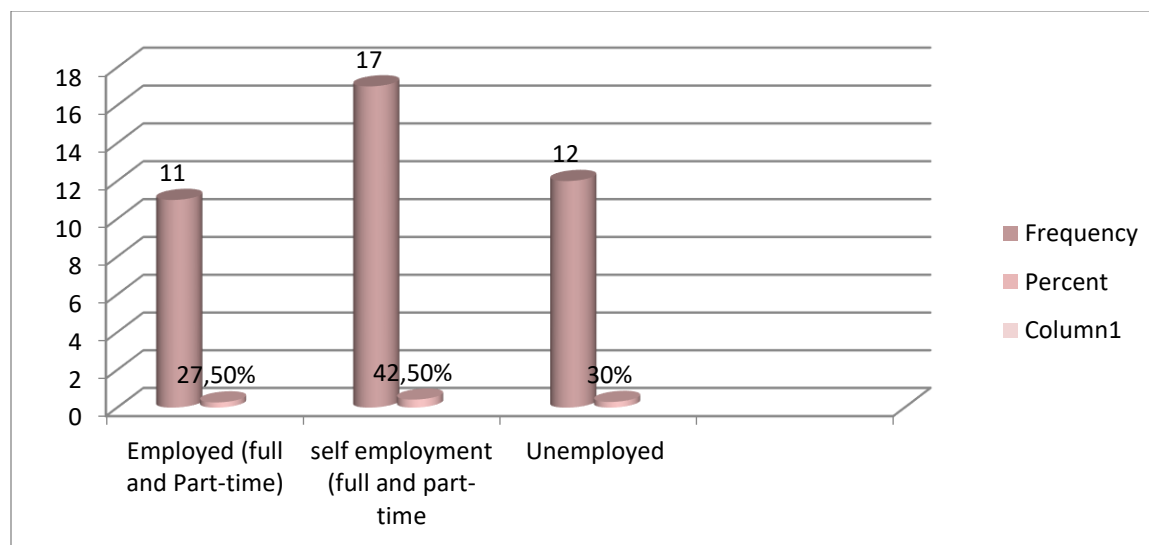


Chart 6.4 shows that 55% of respondents in this study have tertiary as their highest education level, followed by 32.5% with secondary school as their highest level, and 12.5% with only primary level of education. In general, the level of education among respondents was high among the majority of the respondents. The sample suggests that a majority of Congolese migrants, like other migrant communities mainly from the African continent, are highly educated. It is worth noting that the level of education among migrant families from DRC reflects the education level in the country of origin where 64% of women and 88% of men aged between 15 and 49 are literate (Guy, 2014).

Chart 5.5. Employment status of respondents

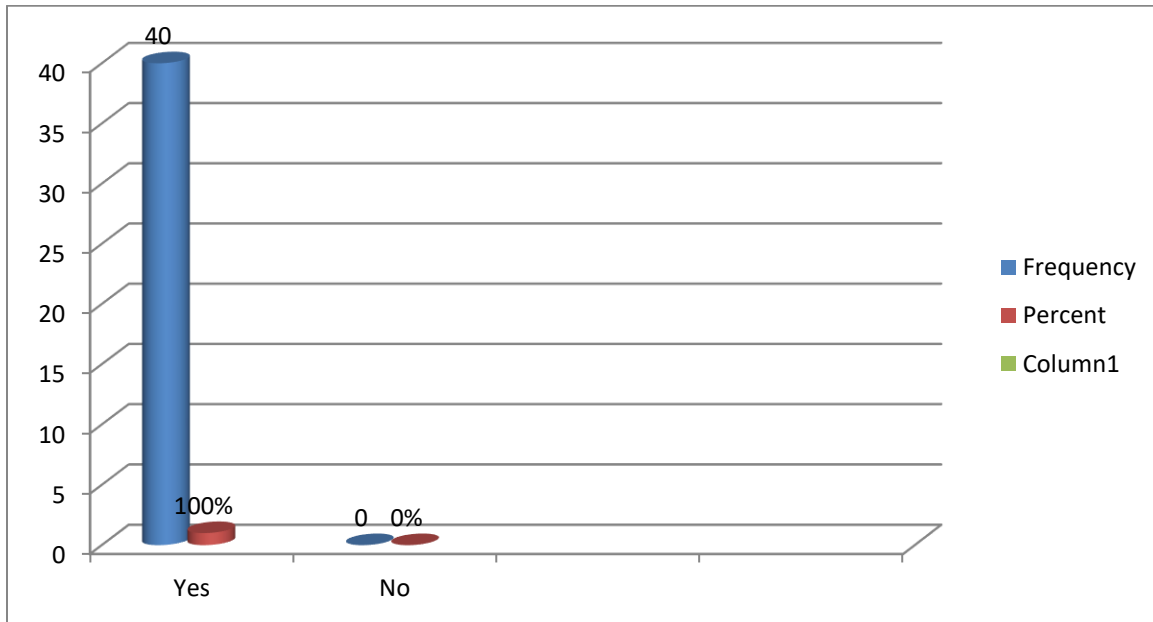


The chart above shows that a large number of respondents were self-employed representing 42.50% of all participants in this study; 30% of respondents were unemployed, while 27.50% were employed on full or part-time basis. The figures above indicate that self-employment remains key to the economic survival of DRC's migrant community. Unemployment among Congolese migrant exceeds the national average of unemployment in South Africa. An employment condition among Congolese migrants in Durban is well documented (Baruti, 2005, Rukema, 2010 and Dunia, 2012). While the aim of this study is not to explore the nature of self-employment and employment among Congolese migrants in Durban, studies cited above have shown that the majority of Congolese who are self-employed work as hair dressers, street vendors and other forms

of informal trading. Those who are formally employed are mainly in low paying jobs, such as security guards and car guards. The findings of studies cited above were confirmed in personal interviews conducted by this researcher. It was revealed that most participants, mainly those who claimed to be employed, work as car guard, security guards and other low paying jobs. As discussed earlier, despite high level of education among Congolese migrants, their employment status, and the legal process makes it difficult for them access work congruent with their educational qualifications. It thus is instructive to emphasize that unemployment or work that earns a minimal wage can determine individual behavior and interaction between a wife and her husband. For instance, working as car guard or security guard requires long working hours with very little earnings to compensate time that one should have spent with his/her family which might increase the level of marital stress. The lengthy absence of one partner in case of security guard where one partner work during the day and the other one during night, may lead to emotional deprivation and, if not adequately managed by both partners, can lead to conflict. As one of the participants put it:

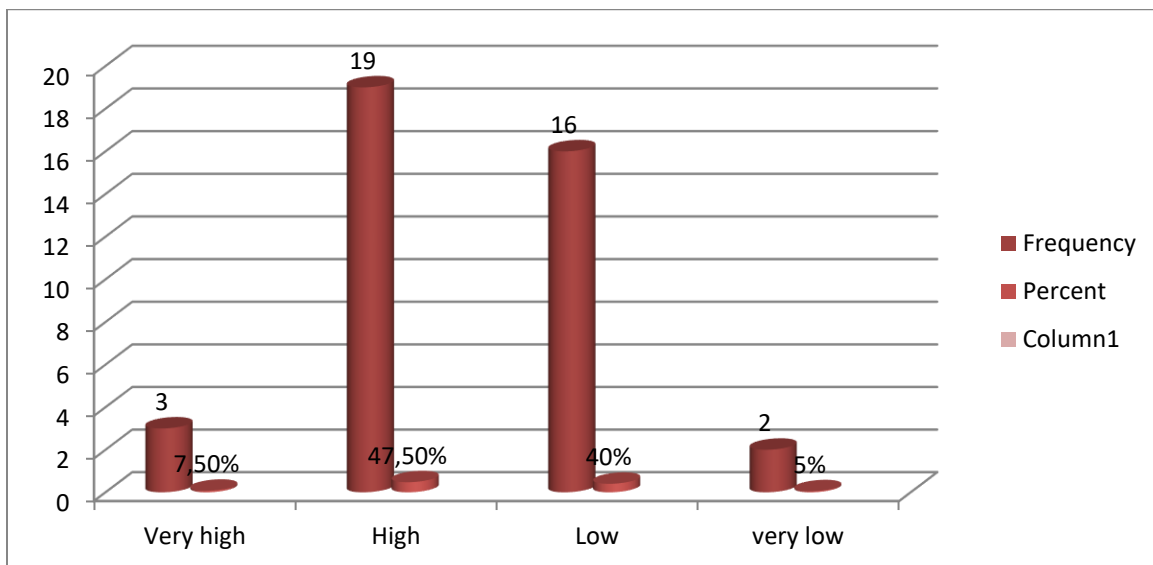
The kind of job refugees undertake is very difficult one. You will find a man working as security guard and his wife selling on the street or other forms of job which do not allow meeting as man and woman and enjoying life as married couple. A man can work during night and a woman during the day and when one comes, another is gone to work, they can even have two weeks or months without meeting each other as wife and husband and this creates conflict and mistrust between the couple (Joseline married female, P3, 2016).

Chart 5.6. Marital conflicts among Congolese migrant in Durban



In response to the question on whether there is marital conflict among Congolese migrants in Durban, 100% of respondents agreed that marital conflict is prevalent.

Chart 5.7. Extent of marital conflict among Congolese migrants in Durban



The chart above demonstrates the extent of marital conflict. The findings indicate that 47.5% of respondents believe that it is high, followed by 40% of respondents who believe it is low, while 7, 50% of respondents believe marital conflict is very high; lastly, 5% believe that marital conflict is very low. Despite varying views of the respondents as indicated above, the overall responses show that marital conflict indeed is prevalent.

Linking the figures above on the extent of marital conflict to the views provided through in-depth interviews with selected volunteers and personal interviews with church leaders and counsellors shows that there is a close relationship between the responses from participants in these three categories. The findings from in-depth interviews with selected volunteers show that marital conflict is prevalent and many justifying factors have been provided. Among these is the increased level of divorce and physical violence witnessed among Congolese migrant couples. Normally in the country of origin, divorce is uncommon and is considered as a source of shame to the extended family, the community and the couple. No one dares to talk about divorce despite unhappy relationships partners may be experiencing. The culture and religion, which is predominantly Christian, forbid married couple from divorcing. However, this has not been the case among Congolese migrant families in a foreign country. In response to the extent of marital conflict, a participant stated that:

There is marital conflict among Congolese migrant in Durban. I can justify this by the fact that according to the conflict I saw from other families from DRC's and I heard from my friends, there are marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families in Durban. This means that, when you realize from the experience we had in marriage, there is no family without any kind of mistakes but the difference is that some couples know how to deal with their difference before anyone even their children hears that, while others are not, that is when you hear from their friends or their church members saying that you know something is not good to that family and so on. In summary, I agree that conflict is there but some couples they find the way to come together after their conflict (John married male, P1, 2016).

Additionally, another key informant indicated that marital conflict view may be prevalent among the broader Congolese community but in his view, it is difficult to measure its extent. Speaking about his experience as church leader, he explained that to prevent such conflict from happening, the church has put in place measures which provide men and women with a platform to discuss issue that may affect their family relationship and provide support to avoid marital conflict. The following quote reads:

I cannot specify the level of conflict among Congolese migrants living in Durban because many families are not attending this Church but from the congregants in this church the conflict is not high because we tried to assist the families by having a meeting with them. In our Church Agenda we had one day per month for a meeting on how they can live in harmony as Christian couples, we share with them different alternative ways in handling marital and family's conflict (Fidele, married, CL1, 2016).

In response to the extent of marital conflict among this community, all the participants agreed that marital conflict is prevalent among migrant families from the DRC living in Durban. It is worth noting that Church Leaders and Church Counsellors spoke from their own experience of the situation. They encounter, on a daily basis, people dealing with marital challenges and other emotional challenges as result of social isolation from the extended families. A church leader affirmed that:

Yes, there is marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. The conflict occurs because of different reasons. The conflict happens everywhere, conflict is part of everyday life, we can't avoid it but we can manage it. Specially where two person share responsibilities and it is possible to believe that conflict can happen due to the fact that each person need to achieve his/her own interest. Their interest may differ where at the end of this creates misunderstanding. For this reason, I can conclude that wife and husband coming from different background and each couple has responsibilities to attend to the needs of other and share some responsibilities as needed. Therefore, when each and every couple has not satisfied it is need; this will bring some conflict within

their relationships. From my responsibilities as church leader, I can say that I experience issue related to marriages within my congregants and I attend to this by advising the couples on how to resolve their differences (Fidele, CL1, 2016).

In regard to the extent of marital conflict, another respondent supported the above argument.

Yes, there is an extreme marital conflict among Congolese migrant families. These are in different forms but not all of them are not disclosed or documented. Many couples in and out have always experience mutual understanding problems. The handling of problems is not well managed. There is always unfinished conflict. There are currently many broken homes and others that on the verge of collapsing due to conflict that are not well managed (Albert married male CL2, 2016).

Counsellors from both churches affirm that there is marital conflict among the Congolese community.

Husbands have abandoned their wives and children, wife have abandoned their husband and in few cases their children just because of conflicts between the two parties. Many children have been negatively affected by the conflict between partners. Many families are as well divided because of non-endurance, intolerance, impatience and ineffective management of differences in many migrant homes. There is in some cases silence deaths of many partners just because they cannot release or expose the marginalization or spiritual, emotional and physical abuses that they are going through since they are afraid because of “lack of trust” and “confidentiality risk” (Aimee, CC 1, 2016).

It is instructive to note that a number of studies conducted in this field argue that marital conflict in many cultures and societies remains underreported and fear of reporting it is due to its sensitive nature or fear of bringing shame to their families and communities (Nwabuke and Tenkorang, 2015; Postmus, 2015). The findings of other studies were confirmed by the current study. This researcher observed during the interviews that a

number of woman were not freely expressing their views on the issue of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

Interestingly, a few of the interview participants asserted that the high level of marital conflict experienced among Congolese migrant families in Durban is no different from marital conflict elsewhere, including in the country of origin. They believed that marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban should be seen in the broader context. One of these participants remarked that:

We cannot deny the presence of marital conflict among Congolese community living in Durban. Marital conflict is not unique to them; it happens everywhere; even back from my country we have families that have always conflict. Husband and wife do not understand each other. Even here in South Africa, there is too much conflict in the families. Yes, marital conflict is there, we cannot deny that (Emerrence married female P1, 2016).

In addition, there were a few men and women participants who indicated their uncertainty that there is marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. They argued that any misunderstanding between couples is not synonymous with marital conflict. One respondent indicated that perceptions of familial relationships are shaped by religious beliefs when she said that: *“as Christian families we make sure that our relationship is peaceful in everything that we do”* (Chantal married female, PF2, 2016). Other respondents who took a similar viewpoint to Chantal’s added that from their own experiences in their relationships with their partners they did not experience any marital conflict and they do not know what is going on with other Congolese migrant families’ outside their own. What seemed to be one of their main preoccupations was to focus on building the lives of their families rather than concentrating on what may bring them apart. As one respondent explained:

Because this days, the life is not easy outside here, many of us we don’t care about knowing what is going on in our community, from Monday to Saturday I go to do my business, unless you hear from other people saying that in that family, husband or wife are divorce/separated. No. I am not sure if there is marital conflict among Congolese migrant in Durban. Because I don’t have any family member

or a friend whom I know has marital conflict in his or her relationship. From Monday to Saturday, I focus on searching how my family can survive and go to church on Sunday and when the Church ends I run to do my other business, so I do not know what is going on outside with marital issues among Congolese migrant families here in Durban (Pauline married female, P4, 2016).

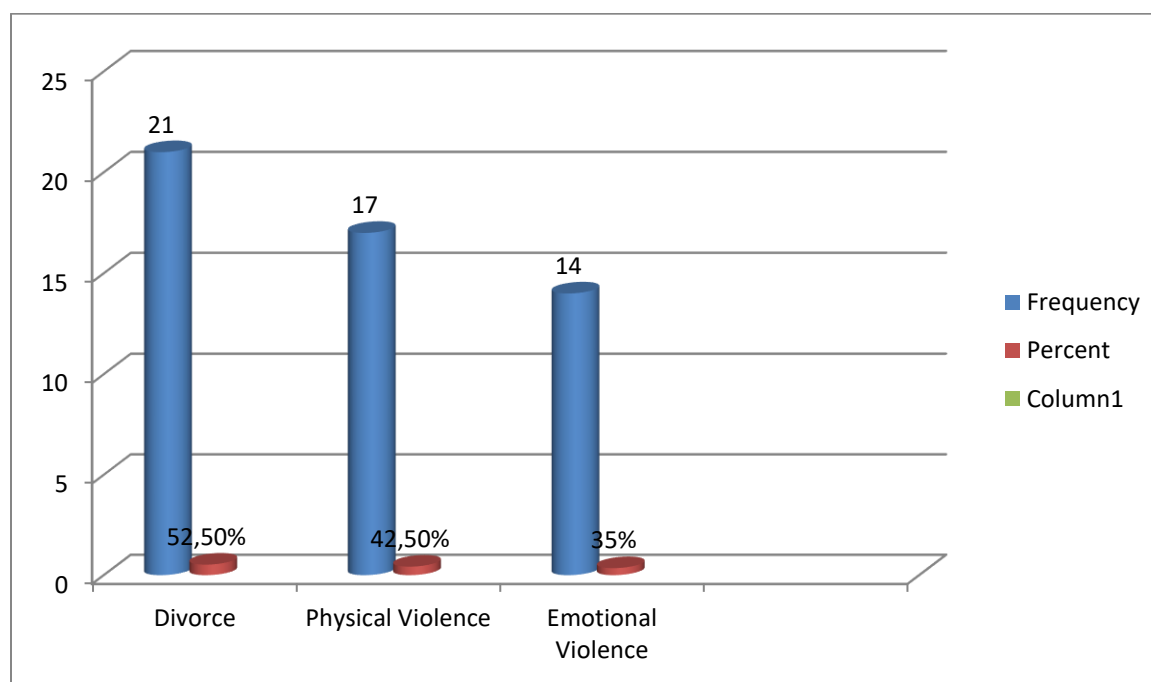
When this researcher contrasted information gathered about the extent of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families from the DRC living in Durban, it was notable that marital conflict among male and females is acknowledged, and openly talked about. However, the extent of marital conflict they themselves experienced was not discussed. Instead, they would refer to other people they know and avoid mentioning whether they have personally experienced it or have a direct knowledge of it. A statement from a female participant illustrates this approach:

Yes, marital conflict is there, but I and my husband never had conflict. Yes, we disagree, but it does not go to the point of calling it a marital conflict. Sometimes we hear case of violence and divorce happened in our community. You know, you cannot just say you have conflict with your husband. In our culture we are taught by our family not to speak about what is happening in your own family. You even speak to your close family member or a friend when it has gone to a point you no longer able to manage it (Josephine married female, P3, 2016).

On the other hand, men seemed to be more open in sharing their personal experiences with regard to marital conflict in their families and among friends or relatives. As Katy (2009) argues, men from most of cultures are reluctant and feel ashamed to talk openly whether they are abused or are experiencing marital challenges. In this current study, most of the men who openly spoke about marital conflict from own experience expressed frustration and disappointment with regard to the behavior of their female counterparts. For instance, in one of the interviews, I met with a Congolese man, married to a South African woman, who expressed his views in the following way:

Madam, I think you are also married and I hope what I am going to tell you are not new in your ears. I think you also experience disagreement with your husband, but what I am going to tell you about the extent of marital conflict among Congolese community is a reality. Personally I am married to a South African woman. I came here and was hoping to go to Europe, but things did not work well as I planned. Then I decided to stay and marry the woman I will stay with. I have one kid with her. But honestly speaking, things are not good. We cannot understand each other. Even in other Congolese families is like that. I am not saying because she is a South African, but it happens even to my fellow Congolese (Alexandre married male, P3, 2016).

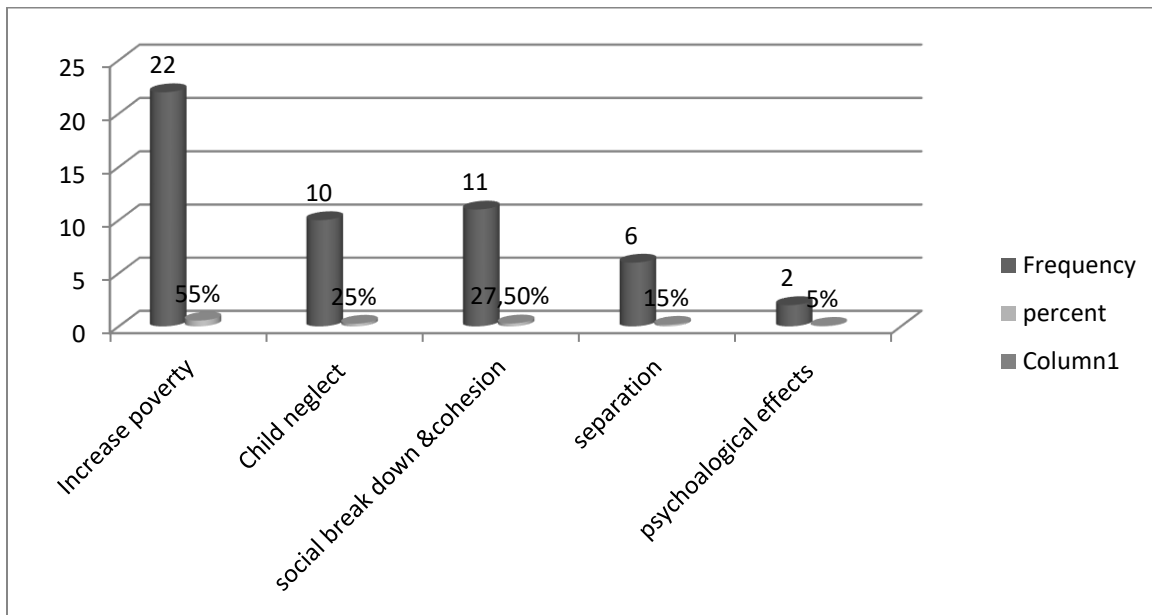
Chart 5.8. The results of marital conflict



The extent of marital conflicts among Congolese migrants living in Durban was demonstrated by high level of divorce. 52.5% of the respondents indicated that divorce is high. Popular discourse indicates that the level of divorce among Congolese migrant is increasing day by day, meaning that there might be many influencing factors (as discussed in chapter six). In addition, physical violence was also identified as an indicator

of the extent of marital conflict and 42.5% of the respondents indicated that physical violence is prevalent among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. 35% indicated that emotional violence is also another indicator of the extent of marital conflict. These will further be explored and examined in the results from individual interviews.

Chart 5.9. Consequences of marital conflict among Congolese migrants in Durban



Exploring the consequences of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban, the findings showed that 55% of the respondents believed that it increases the level of poverty among Congolese migrant families, followed by 27.5% who indicated that marital conflict results in social break down and destroys cohesion in the family. 25% of the respondents believed that marital conflict result in negative consequences such child neglect, and 15% of respondents indicated that marital conflict result into separation among couples, while 5% believed that marital conflict can result in negative psychological effects for conflicting couples.

This researcher was interested in understanding what factors underwrite marital conflict and its consequences among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. Among the factors highlighted by the participants are the growing level of divorce and many reported incidences of physical and emotional abuse. The majority of the participants agreed that marital conflict increases the level of

divorce. Child neglect has also been identified as part of the consequences of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. (This was also revealed by a study I conducted during the course of my Master's degree which examined non-violent parenting among refugee mothers in Durban, where I discovered that child neglect and abuse to be prevalent among refugee community).

There are many negative results coming from marital conflicts. Some of these results are: division among couples; secondly some couples divorced; husband beats his wife as results from the conflicts and other violence affects (Chantal, PF2, 2016).

Another respondent stated that:

Yes, any type of conflict has negative results, so which also means that, where there is no Unit, nothing can work. Poverty increased because of the lack of support, they appear social breakdown and cohesion, process of socialization may be lacking. There are many results of marital conflict among Congolese migrant's families in Durban (Alpha married male, P4, 2016).

In response to the question concerning the negative consequences of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban, most participants agreed that marital conflict has negative consequences for the couples and their families. Negative impacts of marital conflict all depends on how it has been managed or handled by the couples themselves. Here, participants believed that when husband and wife cannot manage their conflict by working together to find a common solution, it can cause longer term impacts. For example, if one of the partners holds on to his/her position on marital conflict, this can result in serious negative consequences for the family in long term. In addition to the consequences discussed earlier on, participants believed that children adopt the behavior of parents in conflictual relationships. Some participants argued that marital conflict has many negative consequences for couples, their children and other members of the family. When this researcher probed for respondents' elaborations of additional negative consequences, participants explained that when the couples are in conflict, it affects their psychological state. If one or both of the partners suffers from psychological effects, then the way he or she takes care of the family changes and the needs of the children are affected in the process. As demonstrated in a study conducted by Cummings and Davies, marital conflict affects family functioning, including how parents bring up their children (Cummings & Davies, 2002).

Other negative consequences of marital conflict provided by participants are that it creates anger, stress and hatred, and that children become the centre of such conflict. As one participant stated:

Many of the parents especially mothers, because, mother is the one who is very close to her children many times. When there is a conflict between wife and husband, she becomes stressed. One of my friend from DRC told me that because of too much stress caused by his husband she ends up pouring all her anger to her children, when a child asks her something when she is feeling stressed because of his father, she end up beating her for nothing instead of giving her what she is asking for (Carine divorced female, P5, 2016).

Another negative consequence identified by participants was that marital conflict can lead to a situation where couples will no longer care about their relationships. One partner does what he/she want without consulting anyone in the family, and neglects his/ her family responsibilities. This, in most of instances, leads to divorce or separation. It is important to acknowledge that where wife and husband come together as married couple they also bring their respective extended families together, and when there is a misunderstanding between a married couples, this can also affect the relationships between extended families. It can affect even friends. As one respondent put it:

Marital conflict has different consequences on couple themselves, on children, extended families and the community in general. You know, when there is a conflict in a family everyone is concerned. Children are not happy with the relation of their parents, in laws are also very worried of marital conflict happening. You know us Congolese, if you marry a wife, she is not a wife for the husband, and she is a wife of a community and the extended family, because her contribution is above the household. I can say that most of the conflict happening in the married couples, has the source from financial means and is the man as head of the family in charge of providing for his family. Therefore, when the wife asks him and is not in position of proving and there follow a miscommunication in the process, then the husband gets angry and the result from that is to beat his wife. Secondly, the children are not feeling comfortable in the house, some of them run away from home and go to the

fathers or mothers' friends, and this is what is happening even in Congolese families here in South Africa (Emmerence married female, P1, 2016).

5.10. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to explore and examine the extent of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. This was analyzed from participants' points of view in regard to the objectives as outlined in Chapter One. The findings from this chapter have shown that marital conflict among Congolese migrant families is prevalent and has wider negative consequences for the family and for the broader Congolese migrant community living in Durban. According to the findings, marital conflict among Congolese migrant families is measured by growing level of divorce, by physical and emotional abuse, and by child neglect.

Chapter Six: Marital Conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban and its Relation to Migration

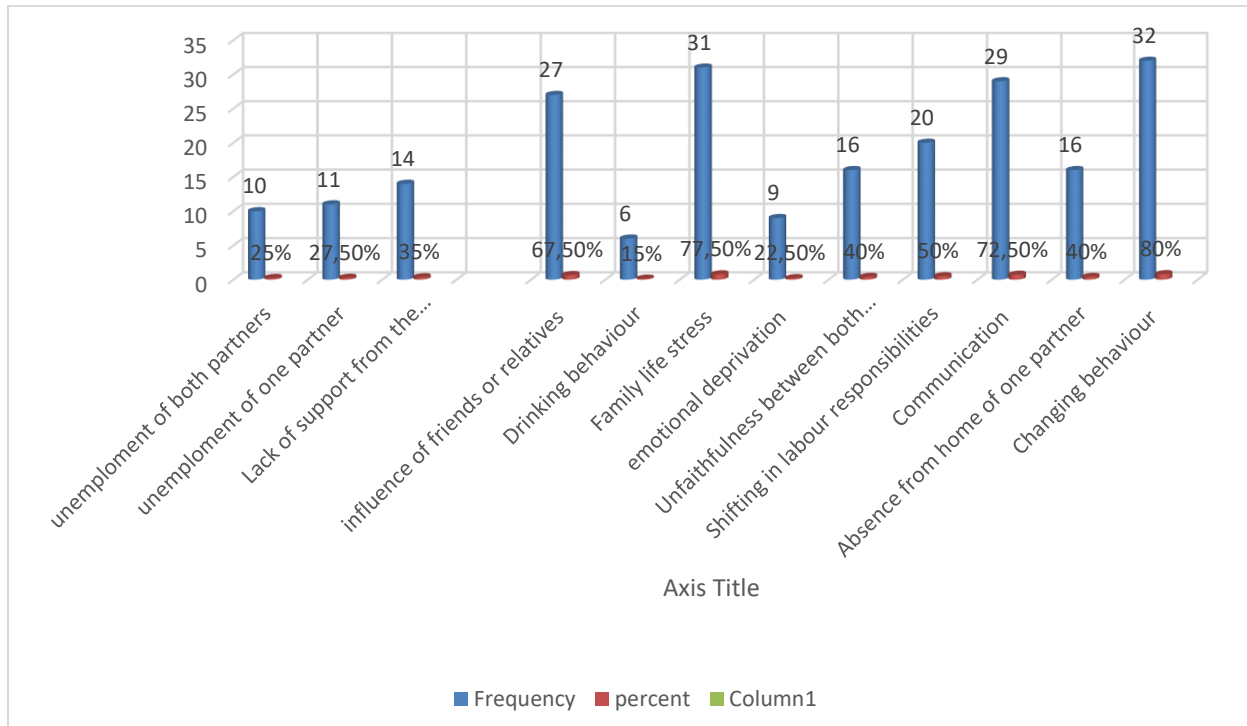
6.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to examine whether there is any relationship between marital conflicts and migration among Congolese migrant families living in Durban and if so, to investigate the connections between migrant situations and marital conflict.

In order to achieve the objective of this chapter, the findings from initial questionnaires conducted with 40 respondents, in-depth interviews with 16 volunteers and personal interviews with church leaders and counselors are the point of departure.

The findings from initial questionnaires are presented in form of graphs then interpreted, analyzed and discussed. In addition, in-depth and personal interviews are analysed and direct statements from the participants are presented and cross checked with initial questionnaires. Due to the question of anonymity and confidentiality, participants are identified by a pseudonym, then a code which is followed by an abbreviation of gender of the participants, the interview number and year of interviews. For instance, pseudonym plus code of participant married female (P) followed by the interview number and year of interview and male respondent is represented by pseudonym plus code of participant married male (P) followed by interview number and year of interview; Church leader is represented by Pseudonym plus code (CL) followed by interview number and year of interview and Church Counselor is represented by Pseudonym plus code (CC) followed by interview number and year of interview. Direct quotes from the participants are provided from each question.

Chart 6.1. The root causes of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families in Durban



The aim of this question was to explore and examine the root causes of marital conflict among Congolese migrants living in Durban. Changing behavior and family stress was ranked at the top as causes of marital conflict; next in the ranking was lack of communication, followed by the influence of friends and relatives. Ranked fourth was women taking on men’s labour responsibilities, followed by the absence from home of one partner which was given equal weight with unfaithfulness between both partners. Next in the ranking list was lack of support from extended family, followed by unemployment of one partner, followed by unemployment of both partners. Emotional deprivation from both or one partners was cited as a cause and lastly, drinking behaviour was identified as another root cause of marital conflict.

6.1.1. Family stress as the root cause of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

As demonstrated in the chart above, participants identified family stress as the main root cause of marital conflict. In response to the above views this research utilised in-depth interviews to unpack what family stress means to Congolese migrant families living in Durban, and how it contributes to marital conflict. The findings demonstrated that family stress was defined as a number of combined factors, including economic conditions, social isolation and lack of emotional support. As seen in chapter five, the majority of migrants from DRC who participated in the study are not employed and are facing economic challenges. In addition, the majority of them lack social support, this means that limited economic opportunities combined with the lack of social support place most of Congolese migrant families in positions of vulnerability and stress which, in most cases, can result in misunderstandings and in some instances, lead to conflict between couple.

This was evident during in-depth interviews with 16 volunteers, church leaders and counsellors. During the interviews with participants in these three categories, all respondents agreed that the economic conditions to which Congolese migrant families are very difficult ones, which inflict too much stress on families. Social isolation was also identified by the respondents as one of the major factors contributing to family stress. It was widely agreed by the participants that while family stress is not unique to Congolese migrant families living in Durban who had experienced family stress in their country of origin. Nonetheless, they pointed out that in DRC, stress would have been eased by extended family members through financial or emotional support, but that this is not the case among migrant families whose extended families have remained in the country of origin. This point of view is illustrated by the following statement:

In our community everyone is stressed. The head of the house is stressed, the wife is stressed, and children are stressed. You know the economic condition of refugees here in South Africa is very bad. You can wake up and you do not know where to get bread. From 20th of every month the head start to get hot. You do not know where to get the rent. It is not like those people who are employed and you know month end you will get paid and pay rent, but for us nothing. When you are stressed, your husband is stressed and

children are stressed, what else do you expect? What will follow will just be conflict, mother fighting with her husband, and father fighting with children all because of the stress (Josephine married female, P3, 2016).

Another statement from participant reads as follows:

As you know, majority of Congolese here in Durban, have no jobs. You see like me, I have six children. I do not have a job. I only sell the “Kitenge” door to door. Sometimes, I cannot make even R50 per day, sometimes I come back home empty handed. How can I feed and send to school all these children. In addition, my wife is just doing lousy job. She earns very little. What is problematic with woman, she will not understand that I am also struggling as she does. She will think that I make more money than she does, she thinks that I am taking money to other women and when I explain to her, she does not understand and I end up by being angry then we start fighting (John married male, P1, 2016).

As indicated in the above section on the demographic information of the respondents families from DRC currently living in Durban are faced with numerous economic challenges caused by a high level of unemployment and limited access to job opportunities due their social and economic status. As indicated in the chart above and as documented in chapter two, lack of economic and financial opportunities place migrant couples under stress and pressure. This results in situations of finger pointing and if not managed well, may turn into marital conflict (Crouch and Behl (2001; Gershoff, 2002).

A number of studies conducted in the field of marital conflict and migration have demonstrated that unemployment is one of the major factors which increases the anxiety of immigrants in the new country even when wives and husbands have good relationships (Ho, Yin, and Wu, 2014: 663; Chen and Liu 2006; International Dialogue on Migration, 2014).

6.1.2. Lack of communication between couple as a cause of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

Lack of proper channels of communication was highlighted as one of the root causes of marital conflict among Congolese families living in Durban.

When this researcher analysed respondents' opinions about how miscommunication can lead to marital conflict, she found that there were opposing views. On the one hand, blame was mostly attributed to women for not behaving correctly in regard to communication with their partners. In the country of origin, according to the participants, a woman is not expected to question a man: whenever a man speaks, a woman has to listen and obey. In the host country, this behavioural norm seems to have changed. On the other hand, women also blamed men for losing their sense of responsibility which has led many of the women to respect their partners less. In the statement below, a male respondent expresses his view that:

Congolese women of South Africa are lost. They do not respect their husband; they talk to us like were talking to their children. They no longer have respect. They see how South African women behave toward their husband and they also want to be having the same. In my home country, a woman cannot talk to her husband anyhow. She must respect her husband, but women here in South Africa are lost (Claude divorced male, P2, 2016).

By contrast, a female participant articulated her perspective:

I still view my husband as head of our house and I look up on him as role model. I cannot talk to my husband anyhow. In my culture, woman cannot talk to her husband anyhow, but I can tell you, most of Congolese men here in South Africa have become irresponsible. If someone does not respect himself, what do you expect from your partner? (Josephine married female, P3, 2016).

In addition to the views expressed by both men and women who participated in this study with regard to miscommunication as a cause of marital conflict, Church leaders and counsellors strongly concurred that miscommunication to be at the centre of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. Participants were expressing their views based on daily experience. It is worth repeating that Church plays a very critical role in the life of Congolese migrant community: it is seen as source of comfort. In the words of one church leader:

Almost, every week, we face question of conflict in refugees' families. Today, you will hear that is happening in that family. Wife or husband will come to see church leader complaining about one another. In some cases, one partner will blame the other partner for not taking one's opinion into consideration. In actual fact when you look at all of these, you will only find out what is there is the miscommunication. Yes, we understand that the majority of refugee are facing very difficult situation. No jobs, no one to assist and when they faced with all these problems, then the blame begins (Fidele, CL1, 2016).

As Sullivan (2007: 131) asserts, nonviolent communication (NVC) means the way we speak but starts inside ourselves. Nonviolent communication is critical because it is a major alternative to marital conflict and any other forms of conflict. Communication teaches partners how to interact with each other nonviolently and the language they can use in order to build good relationships and convey constructive messages. As Sathiparsad and Gray (1998: 191) argue, the way we communicate is a strategy of interaction with others which has long lasting effects in our lives.

6.1.3. Changing behaviour of one partner as cause of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

In response to the issue of change and learning new behaviour, there was a blame game between men and women who participated in this study. Most of the men blamed women for adopting the behaviour of South African women which they consider to be unacceptable from the perspective

of their own culture. Some men blamed women for their way of dressing and method of communicating with their husbands or partners. An illustration of this reaction reads as follows:

For me first I can say that the root causes of marital conflict are being exposed and learning new culture, which are not appropriate in my view. Let me say on the part of man, man learn knew behavior. For example: a man is supposed to take the responsibilities as man in the house in my view, if the man does not up hold his responsibilities, then it can cause too much conflict with his wife. Second on the part of a woman, woman, if she does not behave in a manner she supposed to behave as a woman that will cause problems. More, because of the culture we have been exposed to. For example: many women they tend to behave if they were men, so that lacking respect, from my experience and what makes me cross with my partner, is when she is not being so fast in doing things, and that makes me upset, so there are many reasons for others (Alexis married male, P6, 2016).

Edelman and Crain (1993:5) advance that conflict happens when two people disagree about something. In other words, conflict occurs when two people cannot agree on the actions that one person takes or that he or she doesn't want the other to take. In similar vein, Bush and Folger (1994:56) state that conflict can also exist because of a true or apparent incompatibility of parties' needs or interests. Analysing marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families living in Durban, the findings of the current research demonstrate that in home country, women are expected to dress in a particular way which is unique to their culture and the region. But when they arrive in South Africa, they adapt to the style of clothing worn by South African women. This adaptation is perceived by Congolese men to be culturally unacceptable. This creates tension between couples when men impose their preferred dress code on their wives and when there is resistance from the women. This creates misunderstandings which, if not properly managed, can lead to conflict and in some instances to violence. Another illustration of male respondents' reactions reads as follows:

Congolese women in South Africa are lost. You see, you can see a married women walking on the street in a mini-skirt. I cannot accept this for my wife.

A respected woman belonging to a respected man cannot dress anyhow. Make up is another problem, you will see a woman and how she makes up, and it is very bad. For me, if she does not listen, better she goes back to her parents (Boniface married male, P7, 2016).

Conversely, female respondents argued that men have changed their behaviour by having many girlfriends and being unfaithful to their wives. Most of the women who participated in this study contended that Congolese men prefer South African to Congolese women, thus creating an atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion between couples. According to a woman respondent:

Sister, many families are breaking down. You can think that wife and husband are living together, but in reality are not. You can find a man with his own bed and a woman with her own, but both living in the same house, because of mistrust. Congolese men undermine women from their country and they say that most of women from the DRC are not beautiful and they prefer to have South African girls and they say are easy to get, you will find a married man with too many girlfriends and that causes many problems for many families and that why you see many divorces happening now (Emmerence married female, P1, 20016).

The emerging new form of culture and behaviour of both men and women among Congolese community can be perceived as what Richter (2008) called “migration crisis” which can be seen as a result of culture shock. Richter argues that as result of migration, many family rules and values that were perceived to be effective in the country of origin may prove to be less effective in the culture and circumstances in the country of adoption. Migration from one country to another with differing cultural conditions, for instance: from DRC to South Africa (SA) involves risk and has the potential to create tensions and misunderstandings which can lead to conflict.

Bacallos et al (2008), shows how assimilation theorists posited that “individuals lose cultural identity as they discover themselves with the dominant cultural group”. Baltas and Steptoe (2000) advance that migrants face in contact with different cultures, one from country of origin and host culture, leads to change in the beliefs and behaviour of migrants. Foner (1997). adds that, although traditions

change over time in the country of origin, the migrant may continue to think that such customs are timeless, and interpret the present based upon the remembered past. Such cultural understandings are critical in reinforcing traditional family values and behaviors (Foner, 1997). Migrants in the host country continue to influence and reinforce their traditional culture by going back to marry spouses from their home countries. This study points out that even when there are sufficient numbers of women, a man may seek a marital partner from the home country because he wants a traditional wife, not one who exemplifies Western values (DeLaet, 1999).

This was apparent from Congolese migrant families living in Durban and who participated in this study. Apart from one of the participants who is married to a South African woman, most of the couples were both DRC's nationals. The choice of marrying a Congolese man or woman was to maintain the culture. As in many African cultures, marrying from one's ethnic group was also common among the participants. While this was not the aim of this study, interviews revealed that most of the participants were married to person from own ethnic group.

Culture sharing was seen as one of the ways of managing cultural differences, but some of the participants believed that it does not work for many of migrant families from DRC living in Durban. What was revealed during the interviews was that there was an intertribal marriage between the participants which is not the norm in their country of origin. In DRC, intertribal marriages are not common; people choose to marry man or woman from their own class or tribe. This researcher was interested to find out whether inter-ethnic cultural differences might also lead to marital conflict, in response, the majority of the respondents agreed that it may also cause marital conflict because of cultural clash between the couple.

6.1.4. Influence of friends or relatives as a cause of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

In addition to the factors affecting marital conflict provided above, the influence of friends or relatives was also indicated as one of the root causes of marital conflict. According to the participants, despite being in foreign country, they have formed friendships with local people as well as people from the country of origin. These friends play an important role in daily life of the participants such as job and

other forms of support. It is also important to note that every respondent has a relative living in South Africa and that they keep in regular contact with extended families back home; thus, relatives and these continue to play an important role in couple relationships. Explaining how friends and relatives can influence marital conflict, participants argued that it is a result of their bad advice to one partner which is not be well received by the other partner. As a respondent puts it:

We have good and bad friends and some of them are not happy of how we live with our family. If you are not careful and seek advice from anyone, some of them will destroy your family hoping them assisting you to build it. What you cannot repair with your partner, no one else can repair it for you. This is happening in many Congolese families and is what is destroying many families (Patrice married male, P5, 2016).

A Church leader who participated in the study remarked that:

Influence from friends or relatives is also one of the causes of marital conflict, where one of the partner listen to the people from outsider about how she/he is not good, the negatives sides which has not proof, bra bra. From many stories she/ he hears from outside, then one start to accuse each other about what she/he hears from friend or relatives and this end up by marital conflict between both partners. Other cause is the unfaithfulness between both partners (Fidele, CL1, 2016).

Conflict about power in relationships has been identified as one of the causes of marital conflict. When migrating to South Africa, Congolese migrants, like any other migrants, hope for better future for themselves and the families they have left in the DRC. Families in the DRC see migrant relatives, male and female, as sources of support and therefore, they are expected to send remittances to their families back home. While this is a familial obligation for a woman as well as a man, men perceive themselves as having more power and control than women, and therefore as entitled to

make decisions about how financial means are managed, including sending money to relatives or extended families back home.

According to the participants, a man as the head of the household and allocator of the resources prefers to send money to his family rather than to his wife's family and this creates resentment in the part of the wife which leads to conflict. According to a respondent:

For me the root cause of marital conflict is the misunderstanding within the couples and when it comes to supporting woman's family. This means that when we come from home we left husband's family and wife's family behind and both families need some support from us. When husband's family call on us for financial support, most of the husbands don't see any problems. He calls wife then they talk how they can resolve that problem which need for us to send money, so that the problem can be resolved. But when it comes to woman's family in need of some financial support, this comes a big problem, that is when the husband start counting the needs and expenses and other quick expenses we need to resolve financially, etc... as a woman when you realize this excuse and more expenses provided when such issue for not supporting your family, you feel that something is wrong somewhere with your husband and more you feel anger more you feel disappointed with your relationship and marital conflict starts from there (Caroline married female, P6, 2016).

6.1.5. Lack of social support as a cause of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

Lack of social support from extended families has been identified as another cause of marital conflict. As demonstrated by responses of participants, when a couple have no support from members of extended families, the woman suffers and this induces stress. The communication between her and husband starts changing in the wrong way. The end result is marital conflict. Two direct quotes from the participants illustrate this point:

For me the root causes of marital conflict is lack of financial means and isolation from extended family. Because, we get used back home to be with our aunties,

sisters, mothers, fathers whenever we need any assistance from them for free we received it but here everyone is in his/her own. Even to get someone for free to assist you to take care of baby when you going somewhere for 20 minutes you can't get her/ him. So, from these stresses, causes family conflict between Congolese wives and their husbands (Pauline married female, P4, 2016).

Another statement from participant reads:

The causes of marital conflict differ from one family to another. Isolation from extended family network is one of the causes of marital conflicts, where many migrants from DRC do not have support from their extended family such as aunties, sisters to assist for instance a woman for the house chores, therefore because of family stresses, this result to marital conflict. The other cause of marital conflict is lack of financial means; this affects the happiness of the couples because they have more stress of how they will survive. From this reason indicated above, communication starts to change in a different direction where husband talk to his wife and because of too much stress of family life, she may misunderstand him, then conflict start from there (Fidele, CL1, 2016).

As demonstrated in the literature, there is a relationship between marital conflict and social support. Where there is lack of social support this increases marital conflict among couples. The number of studies conducted in this field demonstrate that social support plays an important role among migrant's families: where members of the family, relatives and friends support each other this reduces the level of marital conflict among couples (Lee, 2015; Rhee, 1996). Furthermore, unfaithfulness among couples was also identified by respondents in addition to other causes of marital conflict discussed above.

According to one of the participants:

Unfaithfulness is also one of the causes of marital conflict, where one of the partner being unfaithful to the other partner, where he/she started cheating on her/him, then one start to accuse each other about what she/he did and this is end up by marital conflict between both partners (Joseline married female, P3, 2016).

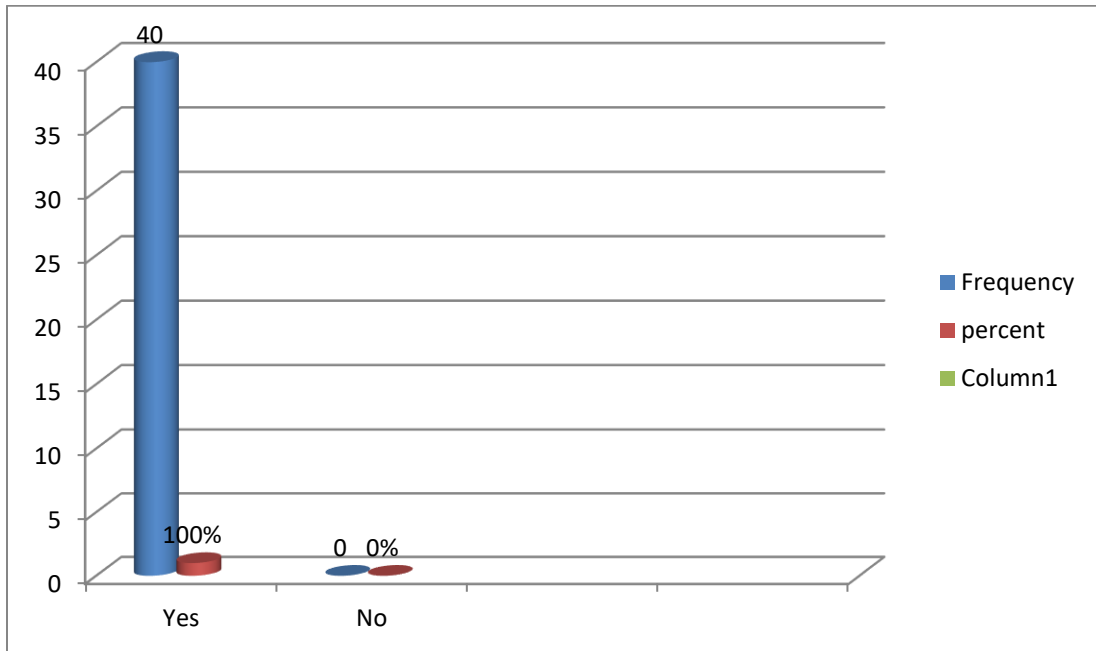
Other factors were cited by interview respondents as causing marital conflict. These were: culture of intolerance, lack of commitment to one another and impatience. For example, two of the respondents stated that:

Causes of marital conflicts vary from economic, social, spiritual, physical and others... Many people marry for wrong reasons. Marriage is not only companionship and sex, but rather a platform to glorify GOD. When God is not at the centre of a marriage and self-centred reasons form the basis of marriage, there is a higher risk of a sudden collapse. It is like a three-pillar house that has lost one. Most marriages are built on a wrong foundation. The concept of "Marriage" is most of the time ill-conceived. Rather than being a covenant union for the purpose of committing to each other in companionship and friendship, full provision, sexual privileges, children, and protection; many marriages are considered as "dictatorship" where only one part (most of the time man) has the final decision in all matters (Paulin, CC2, 2016).

The following is a supporting statement from Church leader participant:

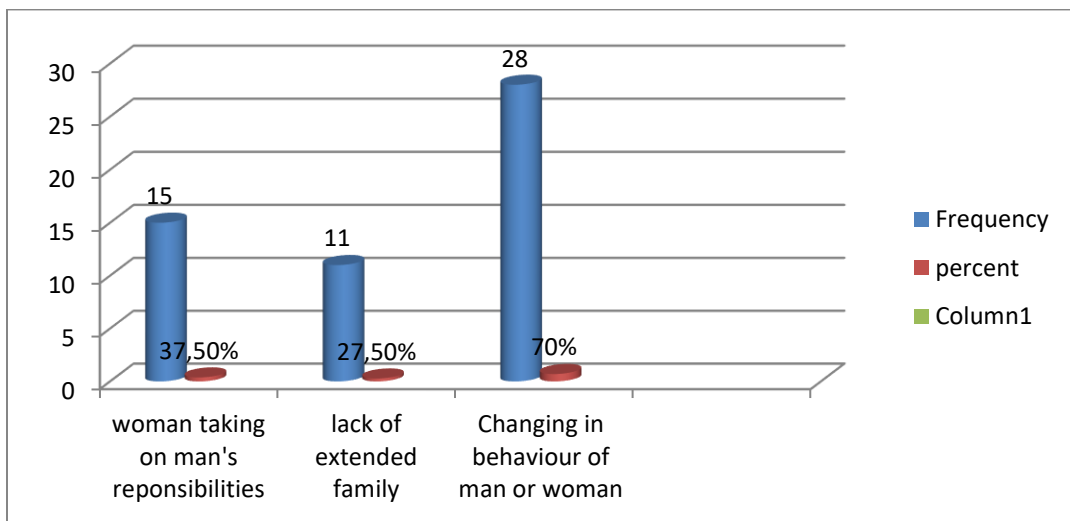
We have noticed intolerance and lack of patience among many migrant couples (the principle of "I am a human as well, I can also make a mistake" is not applicable in many marriages), couples cannot manage their personal differences, decision making is on-sided (depending on the person who seem stronger than the other- in most case financially), Lack of proper communication channel, Lack of happiness. Meeting each other's sexual needs and inability to compromise are some of the common causes of conflict as well (Albert, CL2, 2016).

Chart 6.2. Marital conflict and its relation to migration



The above chart represents participants' views on marital conflict and its relation to migration. Respondents strongly agreed that, for various reasons, marital conflict and migration are closely related.

Chart 6.3. Reasons why marital conflict and migration are related.



The aim of the above question was to explore and examine how the causes of marital conflict have relationship with migration. 70% of participant responses reveal that changes in the behaviour of men or women are believed to be the major sources of marital conflict. There are linkages between the views of 40 respondents to initial questionnaires, the views of 16 volunteers who participated in the in-depth interviews, and the views of Church leaders and Church counselors respectively. They believed that, there are behavioural changes in both men and women compare attendant on moving from DRC to South Africa. They all agreed that the culture to which they are exposed in South Africa is different from the culture of their home country and some have adopted this form of new culture. They argued that clash of the two cultures has caused many problems, and contributed to marital conflict. Changes in the behaviour of men and women are illustrated by many factors. For instance, as discussed earlier, women are blamed for adopting dress codes which go against the cultural values of the home country. On the other hand, men are accused by women of neglecting their responsibilities as the head of the household. For example, a respondent assert that:

Yes, migration can affect. Because when you migrate, you expose to new cultures. You find people try to adapt to cultures of the hosting country, changing behaviour and also economic conditions to which migrants' community are expose to, exclusions, lack of opportunities, so all those things create the situations where they affect the way of interacting within couples. Women no longer behave the way they supposed to and when you talk to a woman why you behaving that way, she will tell you to mind your business, which was not a case in DRC. A woman cannot just talk to her husband if she was talking to a small boy. On the other side we as men, we are also adopting things which are not good, we are no longer responsible because no one sees you. Back home you were afraid to do wrong things because so or so will see you. You see these kinds of jobs, we are doing here, and you cannot do them when you are home, but here you can do everything because no one can see you and what happens for other forms of behaviours (Alphonse married male, P8, 2016).

Church Leaders and Church Counsellors are in agreement that changes in behaviour of both men and women are among the factors that link migration to marital conflict. Church leaders and counsellors all assert that there is a noticeable change in how women behave: for example, in their way of dressing and in their way of communicating with their husbands or partners. Responses to questions revealed that most of the respondents had come to South Africa unmarried. They had come to South Africa for different reasons: on meeting, they had decided to marry and live together. It is worth noting that in their culture of origin, no woman can live with a man unless she is officially married to him and the marriage has been approved by the extended family and the church. Most respondents had got married in South Africa and their marriages had not been recognised by the customs and traditions pertaining in DRC. Participants identified this as a source of marital conflict attendant on migration.

The above arguments from participants support the view that migration can increase marital conflict among married couples in as much as it increases tensions and stressful situations. As demonstrated in the dissertation's literature review, scholars agree that there is a correlation between marital conflict and migration. Those who support this argument believe that adjusting in the new country comes with many challenges for the migrant couples and families (Hartman and Hartman, 1986:131; Lee, 2015; Agbaw, 2009; Ana et al, 1996).

In addition, the economic condition of Congolese migrant families has been identified as a migration-related factor leading to marital conflict. During the interviews, most of the participants expressed their disappointment with regard to the economic conditions under which they live. In most instances, respondents blamed their partners. Women were blamed for turning to prostitution and other forms of unfaithfulness as result of poverty and exclusion. It is worth noting that unemployment among Congolese migrant community living in Durban is rife. While men can undertake different forms of employment, even the risky ones, women are not able to do so without being blamed. The following excerpt from an interview demonstrates the relationship between marital conflict and migration:

You know, when people have problem, they can do anything in order to survive. Being in a foreign country and especially in South Africa, everything is closed for us foreigners, you cannot put anything on the street, and you need the permit. Life is very difficult out there. Back home, people who are working are very few, but

they survive. If you have nothing to feed your family, you can call upon your sister or uncle then can assist you or you can send children to them when things are not going well, but here, you are on your own. You do it yourself or you die. That why you hear some of the women are selling their body, which is strange in my country, but they have no other choice. This is South Africa (Chantal married female, P2, 2016).

Views of Church leaders and Church counsellors alike confirmed that migration, economic hardship and a high rate of unemployment contribute to marital conflict in Congolese migrant families. On the other hand, they argued that the problem of unemployment is rife in DRC as well as in South Africa. Not only migrants face economic challenges; South Africans also have been negatively by a high rate of unemployment. However, it should be emphasised that migrants face an additional challenge of institutional restrictions. It should also be noted that most of migrants from DRC living in Durban are refugees and face major economic exclusions.

Yes, marital conflict has relationship with migration because many Congolese migrants face many challenges in the hosting country due to migration. Among these challenges faced by migrant families from DRC include how to survive, getting Jobs is not easy for them as result of their documents, this affect the relationship of families (Fidele, CL1, 2016).

On surveying the results fieldwork, this research calculated the following percentages among 40 respondents' views about marital conflict caused by migration: a woman taking on a man's responsibilities had been identified by 37,50% of respondents as the cause of marital conflict among migrant couples. Lack of extended family support was cited by 27, 50% as a cause. With regard to the first view outlined above: it was supported by 16 volunteer interview participants from 40 respondents and by Church Leaders and Church Counsellors who participated in the study. On the evidence available to this research, it can be concluded that the change in gender roles and responsibilities is major cause of marital conflict which is attributed to migration. Here, it is important to acknowledge that in DRC, women are admitted to some forms of employment and excluded from

others. By contrast, in South Africa, women can undertake any kinds of job. Given the unemployment among Congolese migrants, men sometimes do not secure employment which can result in their depending on their wives. However, even though a man can depend on his wife for the economic survival of the household, he will still display a tendency to control and manage his wife's income without her consent. As one respondent state:

Unemployment is serious among our community. Men are not taking up their responsibilities, not because they do not want to do so, but because they cannot find jobs. But when their wives have something to do and take care of their families, man will not give the wife the chance to manage the household as they can. Men will want to manage and sometimes dictate what to be done and this cause conflict (Aimee, CC1, 2016).

Every person has explicit and implicit cultural standards, of his-her own, although changing and rarely completely clearly structured (Braithwaite and Baxter, 2006). The way we interpret the world and its realities is partly dependent on us as individuals and as members of the collective. The way we act or express our desires and interact with other is the manifestation of our interpretation of the world we have created. If life, action, is the pursuit of goals, then social life, interaction, is the exchange of value. We all have individual and collective values and these are in constant conflict; the choices we make about ourselves and others will always have conflicting outcome (Galtung, 2007). Interpretation of one's' reality can be influenced by interaction of interconnected forces which are in nature economic, political, social and environmental. Man being at the centre of this interconnectedness becomes a major player in shaping and reshaping such reality and interprets it through various meaning and symbols (Braithwaite and Baxter, 2006).

While most of the participants in this research agreed that marital conflict among Congolese families living in Durban has close relationship with migration, some provided another perspective on coping with stress. They believed that migration has rather created a bond between couple due to difficult conditions they have to endure together. They believed that people migrate from their home country not least because of the economically challenging conditions in the country of origin. They migrate in order to better their lives and those they left behind. For many Congolese migrant families, marital conflict is not their first choice to resolve family problems in the host country. Additionally, a few

respondents who were interviewed perceived migration and marital conflict as complex and contradictory as can be seen in the following quotations:

For me I don't see that migration can contribute to marital conflicts, because when people migrate they organize themselves, how they can adapt in the new country, how they can manage the things in the hosting country, such as living life. I can justify this by saying that in my family, I and my partner we do have how we organise ourselves in order to survive in this country. When I and my husband we go to find something to do in order to survive, we send the kids to pre-school and who come first he/she brings them home and take care with the kids. We assist each other in everything and work together because the life here in South Africa is not easy to survive if is only one partner who is doing small job. From my own experience the causes can be from one partner when he/she made mistakes and other partner act on that misbehaviour with no patience of understanding his partner and forgive her/him (Angelique married female, P7, 2016).

A statement from another participant reads:

For me I can say no in one side and yes on the other side. Reasons to say No, it's because when you are married and migrate in certain country we need to know that, the life we get used to live in our country will change in a good manner or bad, then the rule of the family will guide everyone in your family in order to fight together with everything in the new situation, all kind of assistance from each and everyone in the house is needed, so that everything can be fine in peaceful way in the house. Because husband and wife need to know that they left behind all kind of assistance from their extended family and they need to have unit themselves in order to achieve their goal (Alexis married male, P6, 2016)

Drawing on these statements migration can be one of the causes of marital conflict among a number of Congolese migrant families living in Durban, but can also be a uniting factor among other couples.

6.4. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to explore and examine the root causes of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. The chapter also aimed to examine to whether there is any relationship between marital conflicts and migration. In order to achieve the objectives of this chapter and the study as a whole, the findings from initial questionnaires conducted with 40 respondents, in-depth interviews with 16 volunteers and personal interviews with church leaders and counselors were the points of reference. The findings from this chapter show that there is relationship between marital conflict and migration among DRC's migrant families living in Durban.

Chapter Seven. Approaches to Marital Conflict Resolution among Migrants from the DRC Living in Durban

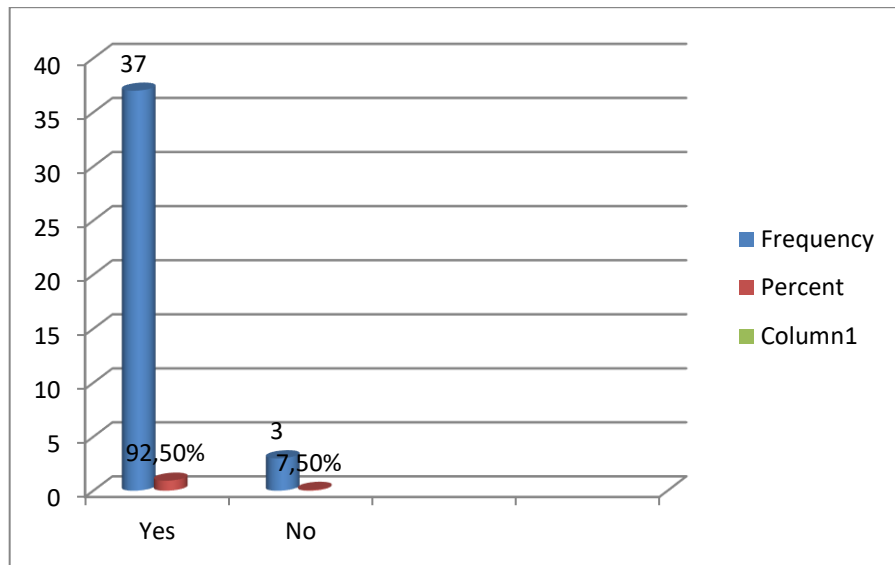
7.1. Introduction

The aims of this study are to explore and examine the extent of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families living in Durban; investigate the root causes of marital conflicts among Congolese migrants' families living in Durban; examine whether there is any relationship between marital conflicts and migration among Congolese migrant families living in Durban and investigate if there are any existing approaches to marital conflicts resolution among Congolese migrant families and if any what are these and how do they function.

This chapter explores and examines the existing approaches to marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. Here the questions is to find out whether there are any approaches to marital conflict resolution and if there are, how they function and how effective they are in addressing marital conflict. Suggestions about what can be done to effectively address marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban are also discussed in this chapter.

This chapter starts by presenting findings from initial questionnaires with 40 respondents, followed by findings from in-depth interviews with 16 volunteers and personal interviews with church leaders and church counselors.

Chart 7.2. Approaches to marital conflict resolution among Congolese migrants in Durban.



As the above chart shows, the findings demonstrated that 92.5% of respondents agreed that there are numerous approaches to marital conflict resolution whereas 7.5% of the respondents were not sure whether such approaches exist. The findings from in-depth interviews and personal interviews concurred with the figure above. Participants in both late categories strongly agreed that there are various approaches to marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

According to a participant:

Yes, there are many ways, we use as refugees in solving issues in families. As you know, our refugee families have many problems and conflict is not an exception, but we try to put in place measure to prevent it from happening or deal with it when it happens (John married male, P1, 2016).

The researcher was interested in understanding more about what participants meant by approaches to marital conflict. Respondents were divided in their views. Some defined approaches from a preventative perspective while others defined approaches as reactions to on-going. Those who defined approaches as preventative measures argued that due to the prevalence of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban, numerous marital conflict prevention programmes have been initiated at the church level. This includes creating platforms where men and women meet and discuss issues affecting the families and relationship in the families. As

discussed in chapter six, the church remains central in the life of DRC's migrant families living in Durban and plays an important role in the resolution and prevention of any conflict or marital conflict that may occur. A respondent describes this approach in the following way:

As they say in French, better prevention than cure. In my church and taking cognizance of what is happening in many families, not only Congolese families, but in many families of refugees, we established programmes to prevent such conflict from happening in our community. Men and women have a platform where they discuss issues that are affecting the families. As you know, many of Congolese are refugees. You know the life of refugees is not easy here. That why people must talk and when people talk to each other, then they understand better the problem and are able to avoid the problem from happening (Albert, CL2, 2016).

This means that knowledge and understand of approaches to marital conflict resolution is shaped by beliefs. As discussed in chapter three, from the interpretive perspective, the social world consists of multiple realities and these realities are subjective and depend on the social, political, environmental or economic position of a person or a group and therefore, a person or a group becomes an agent who acts on their own world in light of their subjective position (Braithwaite and Baxter, 2006).

The world we inhabit manufactures realities and transfers these realities to individuals who in turn become the custodians of such realities and act upon them. Individual or a group of people have the power to interpret and make use of these realities to suit one's need and preferences.

When analysing the views of Congolese migrant families living in Durban a about preventative measures through church programmes, it is evident that their understanding of marital conflict and its prevention is largely influenced by beliefs. As demonstrated in chapter five, the church plays an important role in the heart of Congolese migrant community and wields great influence in shaping the minds and perceptions of congregants on various social issues including family and marital conflict.

According to a respondent:

Yes, marital conflict among Congolese people in Durban is very serious and no one can deny that. Families are broken. Poverty, isolation and exclusion from

South Africans place more burden on the families. About approaches to marital conflict among Congolese migrant families, I can say that it can be divided into two stages. Stage one is where people come together and discuss about what is seen as threat to families. The second stage is to respond to what is already happening. I can say that the two are applied in dealing with marital conflict among Congolese migrant families in Durban. You will find the two stages at community level and at the church level. As you know many Congolese living in Durban are refugees and every person has a relative here and people are grouped into ethnic groups, they meet from time to time and discuss different problems affecting their community and issues of marital conflict are discussed as well. The same applies at the church level (Paulin, CC 2, 2016).

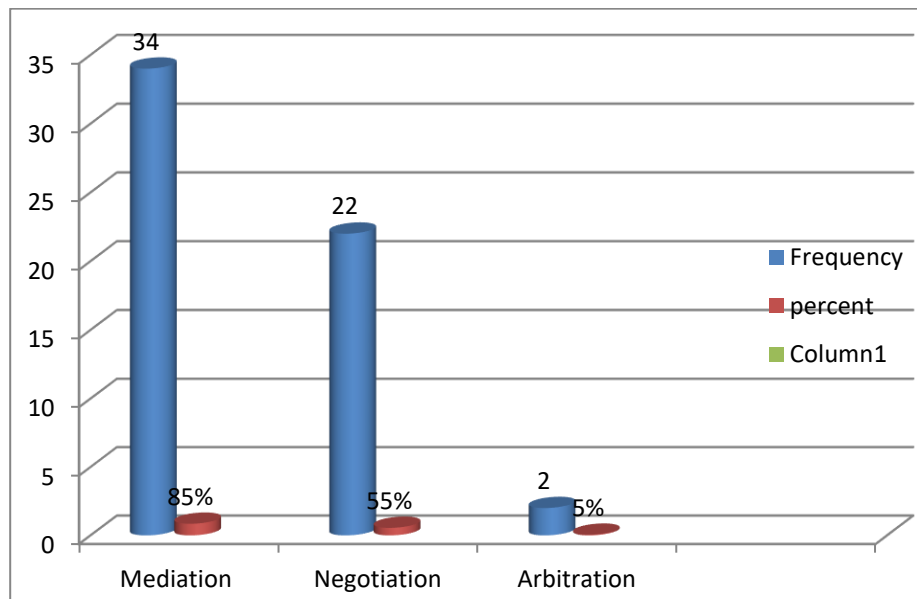
While all participants agreed that there are both preventative and responsive approaches to marital conflict among Congolese families living in Durban, they all, however, believed that despite these existences of approaches using the above measures, they have not been able to reduce the level of marital conflict. They strongly believed that preventive and responsive measures on their own are not enough. If issues affecting Congolese community including economic conditions and social isolation are not addressed, the level of marital conflict will not be adequately reduced. To quote a respondent:

Despite efforts that have been made to prevent conflict in refugee families, we have many problems that make the problem not go away. Among these problem we have high level of poverty and marginalization by the South Africa community and the government and all these if not address measures by Congolese themselves cannot address this problem (Angelique married female, P7, 2016).

As Gunnar (1997) argues: “conflicts by nature do not disappear simply through the invisible hand of God”. There are a number of issues that need to be addressed which are in nature both economic and social. Sustainable approaches to any form of conflict, including marital conflict, need an approach that satisfies the entire needs of human kind. In this regard, (Wallenstein, 2002:8), believes that taking into account both social economic needs of couple leads to a situation where incompatible needs are solved and accept each other’s continued existence as parties and cease

all violent actions against each other (Wallenstein, 2002:8). This process not only reduces the level of violence; it also transforms the conflict so that both parties in the conflict feel satisfied.

Chart 7.3: The methods used in solving marital conflict among Congolese migrants living in Durban.



Concerning the methods used in solving marital conflict resolution among Congolese migrant living in Durban, there were three mixed methods used in solving marital conflict. The predominant method was mediation which was used by 85% of the respondents. Mediation as a method of solving marital conflict was followed by negotiation, a method used by 55 % of the respondents. 2% of the respondents indicated that arbitration is also sometimes used to resolve marital conflict. Additionally, more detailed findings from participants in personal interviews with 16 volunteers also have shown that there are a number of approaches and methods in resolving marital conflict. These include: Mediation was mostly considered as the last option where both partners have not been able to solve their differences on their own.

7.3.1. Mediation as method used in marital conflict resolution

As seen above, mediation was the most utilised approach to dealing with marital conflict. As indicated by Fisher (2000:117) mediation is used when two individuals have a disagreement and a third person such as family member or friend intervenes to help them clarify the problem and talk about it rather than fighting over it. In similar vein, Isenhardt and Spangle (2000:71) state that “when problem solving or negotiations break down, disputants frequently seek the help of a third party to help them resolve their differences”. Mediation is assistance by third party where the parties to a conflict admit that they have a problem which they are both committed to solving, but in which the mediator manages a negotiation process, but does not impose a solution on the parties (Best, 2006: 107).

Examining how the mediation works among Congolese migrant families living in Durban, the findings have shown that there are different levels of mediation and participants had different choice of how is the mediator. Most of the participants indicated that when a marital conflict has reached a deadlock where couple have not been able to solve conflict on their own, they mostly approach a church leader or church counsellor. Church leaders have been indicated as the most trusted people to mediate in marital conflict and this sentiment was shared by both men and women who participated in this study. They all believed that church leaders not only provide support in ending marital conflict, but they also give psychological and emotional support to couples.

A statement reads:

When a wife and her husband are not able to solve their own problem. They need help if they want to continue with their marital relationship. You will find that most of them have already children together and it is difficult to separate. For mediation, as you know, in a foreign country you have no uncle or grandparents to whom you can run to, but the church is there for everyone. In most of cases, if a husband and his wife cannot resolve their differences, they then seek help from a church leader. You know, church leaders are more confidential. They do not only help deal with your conflict problem with your wife or husband, but at the end of the problem they also give psychological and emotional support to both the

wife and the husband. The only problem is when you find that the wife is going to the church while the husband is not going. In that case it becomes a challenge to have a solution to the conflict. Church leader do not only solve the problem, but they also make sure that they make a follow up and always invite couple for meetings and they do home visits and this help the couple to rebuild their relationship and move forward with their lives (John, P1, 2016).

While mediation was identified as the major approach to marital conflict, the researcher was interested in understanding the usefulness of this approach. In response to this question, the findings have shown that mediation is useful in solving marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. Most of the participants indicated that they have been involved or have heard of mediation and how it was useful in solving marital conflict. Mediation process aims to transform people's situation by helping them reduce their conflict through effective interaction and reaching an agreement (Isenhardt and Spangle, 2000:73). Brand-Facobsen and Facobsen (2005:52) advance that the role of mediator is to serve as medium, helping to facilitate dialogue, go between the parties to the conflict and bring them to a resolution. The solution to the problem must be one that comes from the conflicting parties themselves.

On the other hand, participants indicated that while mediation has been useful in settling marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban, it still also faces some challenges. One of the indicated challenges is the acceptance of both parties involved in the conflict to opt for mediation as means to resolve their differences. As Brand-Facobsen and Facobsen, (2005:51) indicate, mediation is possible and effective when the two conflicting parties are willing to participate in the process and the choice of the mediator is agreed upon by conflicting parties.

While mediation proved to be useful in resolving marital conflict among Congolese migrant families, the findings from the study, however, indicated resolution from couple themselves to be useful without the intervention of the third party. They believed in finding their own solution and when they are not able to do so on their own through dialogue, they should seek mediation and counseling from a trusted person: in most of the cases, from friends, members of extended families or church leaders.

Different forms of associations for men or women have been implemented at the church level. As started in the statement below:

You do not deal with the problem when it occurs while you know that it can happen at any time. In our church, we have established organisation and chaired by a church counsellor to deal with social issues including family and marriage in particular. As you know most of our congregants are refugees and are facing many problems. The best solution is to put preventive measures that why we have established these organisation for men or women to discuss family issues (Albert, CL2, 2016).

Another statement reads:

My suggestions are that the couples need to keep their vows seriously, not only to keep them but also to build a real understanding on what makes a marriage successful. Not build in the basis of 50-50 marriage proposition, where this stands on the point of "If you will do your part, I will do mine." This causes the other partner to step back and refuse to do his 50%. Then the battle rages. The 50-50 marriage is not God's way. The husband and wife who start marriage on a 50-50 basis will always be checking to see if the partner is fulfilling his or her 50%. When one partner falls short, bitterness results in the other. The partner who feels cheated will withhold some of his 50% in an attempt to even the score. Things get worse. Even 90%-10% marriages will not work. What I can add is that marriage is one way in, not the way out. Marriage is the God plan to all men and women. God's way in marriage is 100%-100%. Each partner is expected to give his or her partner 100% even if the other partner fails completely. If only one partner in the marriage faithfully gives his 100%, the home cannot be destroyed. God uses right actions and attitudes of the faithful one to straighten out and restore the failing partner (Fidele, CL1, 2016).

Both Church leaders and Church Counsellors add that they are always approached by members of the congregation when there is unresolved misunderstanding between couples. Counselling was

also provided after when couple have undergone the mediation and this is used as means of following up and keeping in contact with the couple in marital conflict, so as to assist them restore their relationship. In support of the view above, the statement reads:

There are many ways you can assist people restore their relationship. One is to bring them together so they can discuss their own problem and find solution, but does not end there, you need to make follow, to see if this conflict does not occur again. We also involve them in prayers and different activities of the church, so they feel reconnected again (Paulin, CC 2, 2016).

7.3.2. Negotiation as method used in marital conflict resolution

Fisher et al (2000:115) assert that negotiation is a structured process of dialogue between conflicting parties about issues on which their opinions differ. Normally this process of negotiation is taken by the conflicting parties without involvement of a third party. Olaoba, Anifowose, Yesufu and Durojaye (2010) define negotiation as “a process of reaching an agreed mode of operation”. This method simply comprises the level of bargaining to determine coping strategies of relationship. For Miller (2003: 25) negotiation is “communication, usually governed by pre-established procedures, between representatives of parties involved in a conflict or dispute”. The goal of negotiation, according to Mayer (2000: 142), is an interaction in which people that is in the conflict try to meet their needs by reaching an agreement through joint decision making”.

Fisher et al (2000: 116) add that the purpose of negotiation is “to clarify the issues and try to come to an agreement on how to settle differences”. Isenhardt and Spangle (2000) quote Kelther (1987), who argues that “negotiation” defined “as a peaceful procedure which reconciles and/or compromises differences and which depends on good faith and flexibility”. Negotiation is process chosen by both conflicting parties to manage problems (Isenhardt and Spangle, 2000: 45).

Examining how negotiation is used in resolving marital conflict among DRC’s families living in Durban, the findings from face to face in-depth interviews show that respondents believed there is a little space for negotiation between wife and husband. Participants believed that while there are social and economic issues affecting the couple, the distribution of gender power between men and

women remains a challenge. In some cases, man does not want to negotiate with woman believing, due to cultural reason, that man has nothing to negotiate with a woman on matters which are perceived to be in control of the man. According to a participant:

As a man, you do not negotiate with a woman in any matters. Our culture do not allow us negotiate with a woman. As a man and as head of the household, you do not ask your wife permission on when and how to do thing. Too much negotiation makes you lose your responsibility as head of the family (Alpha married male, P4, 2016).

On the other hand, women have different position with regard to negotiation. Because of the economic conditions, most women among Congolese migrant couples are economically independent, and therefore they felt that is not very important to negotiate with men on issues concerning economic disputes, mostly about money. As seen in chapter five (above) both men and women as migrants and refugees are excluded from the economic mainstream and all have to find ways to survive, which has led to a situation where women have taken up jobs that were meant for men and have taken up men's responsibilities in the house and beyond. The income-earning capacity of women has put them in a different position with regard to negotiation between men and women on issues affecting their relationship. As a participant argued:

Things have changed. Woman, now can do what man used to do. Men can no longer dictate woman what to do while a woman is no longer dependent on him. Woman can make money as man does. Yes, I agree that negotiating what to be done in the family is crucial, but no one can dictate what to be done, because you believe that your culture has taught you that. You can negotiate with a man on some issues, but other not. That why many families among Congolese migrant families are burning down. Men still believing they can dictate and women are standing on the ground. Women can look after the families and can make money as men do. Negotiating should also be 50%50% (Joseline married female, P3, 2015).

7.3.3. Communication and dialogue

Added to negotiation is communication and dialogue. As noted by Best (2006: 17), communication is essential ingredient of peace building. It has also become a key strategy of conflict management. Most of the nonviolent methods of conflict management such as collaboration, negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, and adjudication, are largely dependent on effective communication. According to Mayer (2000) when two or more people try to initiate voluntary dialogue about meeting their needs, there is a need to communicate. Communication opens space for conflicting parties to hear the views and concerns of the other party so to allow a climate of understanding and late cooperation. Better communication and dialogue can open up avenues for collaboration between couples.

Isenhart and Spangle (2000:45) assert that collaboration process means “the way people work together with one another in a mutually beneficial manner”. Collaborating also means working together on a number of identified common issues, which intensify communication and activities between them. Parties work together on their own, to resolve their problems through “integrative negotiation” or sharing other activities. Through these methods, trust, confidence and mutual respect are built. Wilmot and Hocker (1998:194) advance that collaboration is management of conflict through effective negotiation which requires listening to the other party, indicating that you understand his or her concerns; expressing your feelings; stating your points in a firm but friendly manner; linking your points to points expressed by the other party; and working toward a joint resolution that builds on ideas of both parties and addresses all concerns.

The researcher was interested in understanding how communication or dialogue is used as a method of resolving marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. Findings from the interviews have shown that there is little communication and dialogue among these couples. The researcher further was interested in understanding why there is limited level of communication and dialogue. There were mixed responses to the enquiry. Some of the participants believed that stress associated with living conditions makes it difficult for effective communication and dialogue. Others believed that power struggle between men and women makes it difficult for them to communicate effectively. All 16 interview participants from both selected Churches and both Church leaders and Church Counsellors agreed that the use of dialogue among couples to resolve their

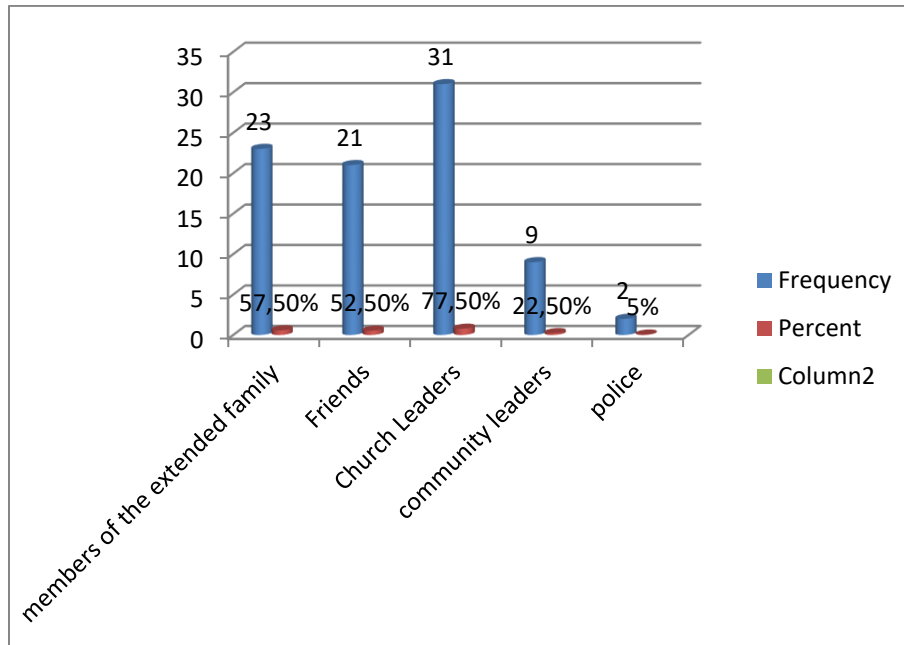
marital conflict assisted them to know what the causes of the problem are and how they can avoid repeating the problem. Whether, the cause is one of the partners committing mistakes or another cause, from their dialogue, partners find common way to resolve such issues and learn how to avoid such issue in the future. In one participant's own words:

The methods I used to resolve problem is to try and do what he asked me to do in order to prevent the conflict to happen the following day. Other method is to come down when I am angry, and communicate with him what happened when I am in the good mood (Caroline, P6, 2016).

7.3.4. Forget about the issues

Additionally, other methods of marital conflict resolution enumerated by a few of participants were: to forget about the issues and move on; not to be strict with the person you love; reconcile with your partner after conflict by asking each other's forgiveness. Other methods provided by participants were to Pray to God to assist them in their marriage; to be patient about all problems occurring in their family and to continue to do good things in order to build harmony between both partners.

Chart 7.4. Persons who intervene in case of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.



In the response to a question about the person who intervenes in cases of marital conflict, the findings demonstrated that for 77.50% of the respondents, church leaders play an important role; for 57.50% respondents, members of the extended family intervened. Friends intervened in the conflict according to 52, 50% respondents; intervention by community leadership was cited by 22.50% respondents; police intervention was cited by 5%.

This brings us back to a common belief that people in a desperate situation look upon the church and church leaders as solution. Furthermore, the majority of Congolese migrants living in Durban are Christian: thus the Christian church plays an important role in the lives of migrant communities in general and Congolese in particular.

7.4.1. Church leader as person who intervenes in the case of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

In the surveys with 40 respondents and personal interviews with 16 volunteers, the findings showed that Church leaders are seen as most trusted persons who can give lasting solution to marital conflict. Not only are they able to provide advice, but according to the participants, they also offer counseling and follow up on progress of marital relationship. According to participants, they believed seeking advice and help from a church leader makes one feel good because of the prayers accompanying the advice. This Researcher was interested to find out what roles are played by Church Leaders and Church Counselors in resolving marital conflict. First question addressed to Church Leaders and Church Counsellors who participated in the interviews was to explore the role played by their churches with specific reference to marital relations and conflict in particular. In response to this question, it was apparent that the prime role of church leaders and counsellors was to preach the gospel with central focus on building families through the word of GOD. Central to this was to have a strong and sustainable marriage by providing spiritual and social guidance about how couple could live in peace and harmony before and during conflict. Love, caring and honesty are emphasised by church leaders as part of their roles and responsibilities toward their congregants. It is important to note that from both churches from which participants were selected, services focusing solely on building families and marriages are established. These services bring together married couples and those who are planning marriage, advising how to undergo skills transfer on becoming a better wife or husband. Here, communication skills and relationship building are brought forward and are centre of discussion. In supporting the above argument, a statement from a participant reads:

My role as Church leader with regard to family conflict we do the best to mediate and solve family conflicts when they occur within the family, couples or child-parents among our congregants. We also advise them how to live in peaceful way before conflict happens in order to prevent marital conflict, parent- child conflict, etc. We insist that each partner must be honest to each other, love each other, family sharing objectives and responsibilities, to avoid things that can break down their relationship. We give more focus on dialogue; because we believe that we do not have to resolve the conflict of everyone, but we have to

assist them resolve their own problem. We advise couples to spend time together love each other, to be accountable to their spouses, share planes, hopes, dreams, and difficulties in order to prevent and manage their conflicts (Fidele, CL1, 2016).

Another statement reads:

I have been in a church leadership as a pastor for almost 10 years now. I am responsible for dealing with family issues, including marriage. This includes social as well as spiritual guidance (Paulin, CL2, 2016).

7.4.2. Godmother and Godfather as the person Intervene in the Marital Conflict Resolution among Congolese Migrant Families Living in Durban.

Apart from seeking help from church leaders most of the participants, all being Christians, explained they all have what they called Godmother and Godfather who may be living in South Africa or back home in DRC: when they face marital challenges, they turn to them. It is important to note that, Congolese migrant families continue to keep in contact with their relatives or friends from home country and when they face challenges, either financial or marital, then turn to them, through telephone or other means such as email and so on. The intervention of church leaders proved to be a major source of reliance as one of the participants affirmed:

For me I can say Yes, there are people who intervene, as Christian I believe that, the marriage is coming from God, that is why when I face the problem in my family, first of all I decide to go and ask for the assistance from the Man of God, my Pastor, and my God Mother, then they advise me how I can go with my marriage. I remember one day we had a small conflict with my husband and I called my God mother first to explain to her what is going on with my husband then after she advised me to discuss with my husband on the issue and when is not resolved I can call her then she will come with our church pastor to discuss with me and my husband as the third persons on the matter. Pastor came and brought us together and asked each and every one of us to explain what the matter is.

Then, we explained and after all, each partner asked forgiveness to each other and the problem was resolved. On other hand, we still in touch with people we left home (Josephine married female, P3, 2016).

Another statement reads:

Yes, there are people who intervene, I can give an example of Pastors, my Godfather and Godmother is assisting us to resolve conflict. Close friends also advise us how to resolve marital conflict when it occurs. From my case I usually approach my Godfather and friends who are experienced in marriage, and then they advised me how to manage or handle the problems when they happen (Boniface married male, P7, 2016).

7.4.3. Friends as the persons who intervene in the case of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

In the responses from both surveys and Interview, the findings show that 22.5% of participants cite friends as the persons who intervene in case of marital conflict. In addition to this, the personal interviews done with all categories who participated in the research indicated that friends also are the persons who intervene in the case of marital conflict. It is worth noting that some members of migrant community from Democratic Republic of Congo living in Durban have established associations and these mostly are organized under the church umbrella where members meet and share different views and problems encountered.

According to a participant:

When people face challenges in their relationship, as you know some of us have no family members to whom you can turn to, but we have made friends through our associations, mainly people from the same church and when things are not going well, you can approach one of the friends who you trust the most and explain to her the situation, then she can advise you on how to deal with that problem. It is good, but you need to know what kind of friend you talking to, other people who intervene is the Church leaders (Emmerence married female, P1, 2016).

Separated from extended family, migrant families develop new methods of dealing with daily challenges, including conflicts. One of the approaches which families develop is to increase migrant networks. As earlier noted, networks are sets of social ties formed on the basis of kinship, friendship, and common origin. These become a source of reliance in times of difficulties and uncertainty. When migrant networks are well-developed, they put a destination job within easy reach of most community members, making it the network a reliable economic resource as well as assisting families in resolving and bringing stability to their social and economic life (Curran and Saguy, 2001).

7.4.4. Members of the extended family and community leaders as persons who intervene in the case of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

The responses from the survey demonstrated that members of the extended family play an important role, with 57.50% of respondents believing that marital conflict resolution is dealt by members of the extended family. It is worth noting that most of Congolese migrant living in Durban has at least one relative or more. During the informal conversations with some respondents, they all indicated having extended family members. On migrating to South Africa, Congolese migrants pass on relevant information to relatives they have left behind: this information helps to facilitate extended family to move to South Africa (Rukema, 2010). While in South Africa, Congolese migrants continue to keep contact with their extended family back home in DRC and the extended family continues to play a critical role in their daily decision making. Community leaders in Durban also play an important role in mediating between wife and husband. Moreover, as indicated earlier on, most of the respondents had one or more members of their ethnic group on whom to rely. It is important to note that here in South Africa, Congolese migrant families have established more social networks that help them deal with different problems including marital conflict. One of these social networks comprises people from the same ethnic group living in South Africa, particularly in Durban. This assists them to resolve different problems including marital conflict. Therefore, each ethnic group's community leaders are also considered as resource in solving marital conflict. As a participant explains:

My husband was the first one to move to South Africa. After two years, I joined him. Few months later his brothers joined us and then my brothers and sisters. Now we a big family. Like many Congolese living in Durban. When there are conflict in the family, people try to find solution everywhere they can. You can ask for help from members of your own family or from friend whom you trust the most. As you know, you do not talk about family matters to anyone you know, but the one you trust. The elders in our community also play very big role. As you know us as Fulero ethnic group, we have meetings and we have also a community leader, when there is a problem, then we try and ask for his intervention (Josephine married female, P3, 2016).

In the country of origin, conflicts are settled through extended family structures. The head of the family initiates the process for resolving domestic conflict by playing the role of facilitator. He talks to both sides, listens to their concerns and uses his wisdom to convince each side to stop fighting and advises them on how to resolve their differences (Olaoba, Anifowose, Yesufu, Oyedolapo, 2010:37). In case of any difficulties, he calls on a clan meeting, which will be led by the head of the clan, to play the role of reconciling conflicting parties (Maria and Ndibwa, 2013).

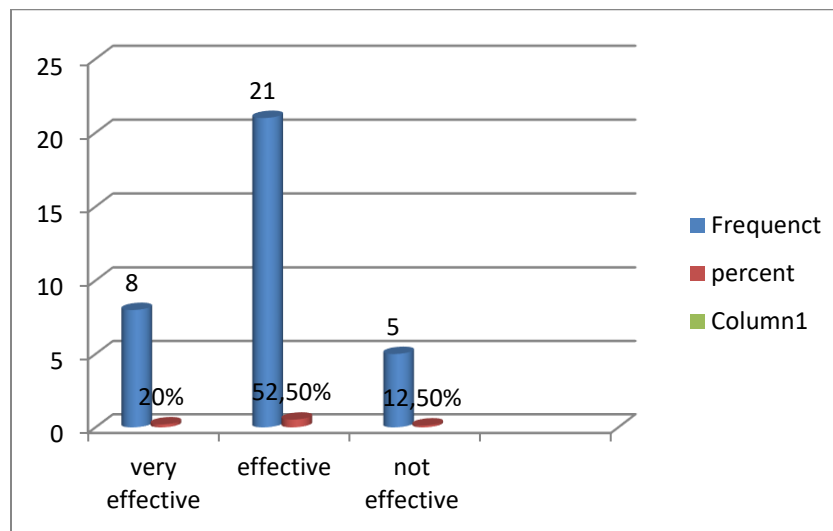
It is worth repeating that the elders who are the experts in conflict resolution and peacemaking are invited and play a mediatory role, by putting an end to marital conflict and reconciling both conflicting parties. These key personalities use different methods to resolve marital conflict. These include mediation, dialogue and reconciliation for peace building (Maria and Ndibwa, 2013). Dialogue, mediation and reconciliation methods to marital conflict resolution were found to be successful, as they help the mediator to listen to and provide opportunities to meet the needs of all parties, and adequately address their interests so that each party is satisfied with the outcome (Maria & Ndibwa, 2013; Olaoba, Anifowose, Yesufu, Oyedolapo, 2010:37-42).

7.4.5. Police as persons who intervene in the case of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

While the current debate in solving marital conflict and violence includes the intervention of the police, this researcher found that her respondents accorded little importance to police intervention. It is not considered as an option in marital conflict resolution. According to one statement:

Some people say, if a man beat you, you have to report to the police. Why report to them. The police cannot make my relation with my husband happy. If we do not agree between us, I better leave him in peace” (Chanta married female, P2, 2016).

Chart 7.5. The effectiveness of marital conflict resolution methods



The above chart presents the number and percentages of responses to questions about the effectiveness of marital conflict resolution methods. 52.5% of the respondents indicated that methods used to resolve marital conflict among Congolese migrant living in Durban are effective; 20% of respondents believed that the marital conflict resolution methods used by Congolese migrant living in Durban are very effective; 12.5 % argued that methods of marital conflict resolution used by Congolese migrant living in Durban are not effective. Despite a large percentage of participants (52.5%) agreeing that methods of resolution are effective, participants in this percentage also agreed

that there are still some shortcomings. They cited the growing level of divorces despite interventions available to married couples. A statement reads:

I can say yes and no. In one side, they work, because they bring the two parties to talk to each other and in some instances conflict are resolved. On the other side, one can say that they do not work given the growing level of divorces and violence that are happening among Congolese refugee community (Alphonse married male, P8, 2016).

In addition, the effectiveness of marital conflict resolution varies between couples. Majority of the participants considered dialogue and negotiation as being the most effective method. They contended that the couple themselves get the message more quickly on the issue and find common resolution to avoid conflict happening in the future. Additionally, a majority of participants argued that when methods used included the intervention and influence of a third party, challenges may occur. For instance, in cases when couples failed to reconcile themselves and called on a third party to intervene, the matter may be resolved for a short period of time, but there is always a risk that the conflict will re-occur. This is illustrated by a statement which reads:

It is not good the family to live in the conflict. I can say the partners are not the angel where they can live in the family without any kind of misunderstanding from each other or one does something wrong. Everybody makes mistakes. So, if we say that each partner who make mistakes or do something wrong to other partner must be punished, it is not good because this creates other problems within their children and problems on the relationship of couples themselves such as divorce or separation among one of the couple. The partner, who made mistakes, must be given opportunity to correct herself/himself through advices from other partner and discuss the issue nonviolently or receive advices even from other family friends. When couples resolve problem without reacting on the mistakes of other partner, they may find the common solution and move on well with their relationship (Alexis married male, P6, 2016).

In addition, both Church leaders and Church counsellors agree that the applied approaches of marital conflict resolution are effective. Examples were given: one of the church leaders gave example of couples who were on the verge of divorce, because the husband was sending money home without

partner's consent, but whose marriages were restored due to the intervention of church leaders. Now the couples are living peacefully. With regard to preventive measures, participants believed that they are more effective. Their given reason was that since those programmes were introduced, they have seen a big decrease in marital conflict and divorce among the congregants.

7.6. Conclusion

This chapter presents analyses and discusses the finding from initial questionnaires from 40 respondents, in-depth interviews conducted with sixteen volunteers from those who participated in the initial questionnaires and key informants that include church leaders and counselors from churches where participants were selected. Moreover, in this chapter, participants were asked for their broad understanding and perception with regard to the effectiveness of marital conflict resolution approaches used among DRC's migrant families living in Durban.

Chapter Eight: Discussion of the findings

8.0. Introduction

The findings of this study are divided into three major themes. Theme one focused on the extent of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban, theme two emphasised the relationship between migration and marital conflict within these families and theme three centred on approaches to marital conflict among this group. The findings from the three major themes are discussed in this chapter. The findings on the extent of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban is first discussed, followed by a discussion of the findings on the relationship between migration and marital conflict among this group. Lastly, approaches to marital conflict with specific focus to Congolese families living in Durban were discussed.

8.1. Extent of marital conflict among Congolese families living in Durban

Studies on marital conflict have shown that there is no common measurement of marital conflict which can be applied throughout. In some societies, the rate of marital conflict may be higher while in others, it may be lower and it varies from community to community (Krug et al, 2002). While there is no global scale of measuring marital conflicts across the world, marital conflicts are common in countries where communities are deprived of resources and daily living is a challenge. This means that developing countries and marginalised communities in either developing or developed countries are at risk of marital conflicts. This does not mean that poor people and marginalised communities are violent, but the hard living conditions under which these individuals live influence the actions they take and their relationship to each other at community and household level (Massey, 1990). There is a similarity between migrants and people living in marginalised communities. Like people living in marginalised communities, migrants often lack social, economic and political support in their host country and are thus prone to marital conflict. Numerous factors lead to marital conflict among migrant communities. One main factor is the daily stress compounded by economic and political marginalisation (Kwon et al, 2003; Brawn and Halley, 2012; Naved and Persson, 2005).

Studies that compared and analysed marital conflicts among families from Asia, Africa and marginalised Native Americans found some similarities among these groups (See Forste and Flake, 2006; Kwon et al 2003; Brawn and Halley, 2012; Naved and Persson, 2005; Straus 2010; Lamb and Bougher, 2009; Drachman et al, 1996). The findings show that the extent of marital conflict among these communities was determined by economic status and social conditions under which these communities live. The findings from these studies also indicate that unemployment level is low in all these communities which mean that they share similar experiences. In this study on marital conflict among Congolese migrant families in Durban, the findings showed that there is no single way of measuring the extent of marital conflict among these families. The study participants had varying views and ways of measuring the extent of marital conflict. Some of the participants measured the extent of marital conflict alongside observed growing levels of divorce among Congolese couples. It is believed that there is a high level of divorce and for some of the participants, this informed their knowledge and measurement of the extent of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families in Durban.

The church leaders on the other hand measured the extent of marital conflict in terms of the growing number of couples visiting them and raising concerns about internal conflict in the household. According to this same source of information, it is believed that there is a high trend of marital related conflicts and this prompted the church to respond by establishing different platforms and channels through which couples are counselled. Additionally a variety of programmes have been designed and established in order to curb the growing trend of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families in Durban. While all the participants agreed that the level of marital conflict is high among Congolese migrant families in Durban, there were different views of what marital conflict means. Some of the participants believed that marital conflict among Congolese migrant families in Durban is not different from other forms of conflict in the broader community. It is worth noting that conflict and marital conflict in South Africa are common. South Africa is known to have high levels of violence and marital conflict is not unique to the migrant community.

In the findings on the extent of marital conflict and how it is measured, it was apparent that it was difficult to separate marital conflict and domestic conflict. Most of the participant equated marital conflict to domestic conflict. According to Merry (2009), it is important to distinguish marital conflict from domestic conflict in order to have a clear picture of the extent of marital conflict in a particular

community or group. Merry (2009) contends that marital conflict is distinguished from domestic conflict in the sense that domestic conflict is any act of abuse and violence that takes place at home to anyone. In other words, it means that any act of abuse and violence can happen to the children at home, to parents and other members of the family. Similarly, Bendall (2010) advances that domestic conflict at home does not only happen to women and men but can happen to anyone in the family. Moreover, according to Smith (1989), domestic conflict or violence is any crime committed in an intimate relationship which is characterized by acts of violence, power, and coercion in order to try and control the other person's behaviour at home. Smith (1989) and Bendall (2010) further contend that both females and males can be both victims and perpetrators of domestic conflict. All these views have gender implications. In the Congolese culture like many cultures in Africa, women are expected not to talk openly on family matters and about issues in their marriage. This was observed during this study. The men were keen and spoke freely on family matters and marital conflict. This is contradictory to other studies which indicate that men do not freely speak about domestic conflict for fear of stigmatisation. As Katy (2009) argues, men from most cultures are reluctant and feel ashamed to talk openly about whether they are abused or are experiencing marital challenges. In this current study, most of the men who openly spoke about marital conflict from their own experiences expressed frustration and disappointment with regard to the behavior of their female counterparts.

As discussed earlier, the extent of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families in Durban is measured in terms of growing level of divorce, physical violence and emotional violence. Normally in DRC, divorce is uncommon and is considered as a source of shame to the extended family, the community and the couple. No one dares to talk about divorce despite unhappy relationships and challenges that the partners may be experiencing. The culture and religion, which is predominantly Christian, forbid married couples from divorcing. This has however not been the case in a foreign country. According to information gathered from the interviews, there is a growing report of physical and emotional violence among Congolese migrant families in Durban and this is the basis of marital conflict measurement for some of the participants.

When the researcher analysed the information gathered about the extent of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families in Durban, it was notable that marital conflict was acknowledged by both males and females and was openly talked about. However, the extent of marital conflict experienced

was not discussed. Instead, they would refer to other people they know and avoid mentioning whether they have personally experienced it or have a direct knowledge of it. Apart from discussions on the extent of marital conflict and its measurement, the researcher also tried to gain knowledge on the consequences of marital conflict. From the migrants' responses, it was obvious that their case was not different from other studies conducted elsewhere around the world. Common trends on the consequences of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families are the growing levels of poverty, social break down and cohesion, child neglect and psychological effects on both the couples, children and even to members of the extended family (John, 2016). Also, a lack of communication often results in the couple pulling apart and thereby unable to fulfill the economic needs of the family. This in turn deepens the level of poverty coupled with discrimination and marginalization from the broader society in the host country. It is critically important that for the family or couple to succeed, there is a need to successfully work together and support each other to fulfill economic needs (Coyne and Downey, 1991)

As discussed earlier on, it was obvious that the level of poverty and unemployment among Congolese migrant families living in South Africa and Durban in particular is high. As seen, the access to formal employment for Congolese migrant is limited. Most of them work in informal sectors such as car guarding and hair dressing. This indicates that poverty among Congolese is rife. Coupled with political, economic and social exclusions, there are many reasons to believe that the level of poverty among Congolese families in Durban is high.

A number of studies agree that poor marital relations are more likely to affect migrant families' lives negatively and may impact on their adaptation process in the new country (Hyman et al, 2008; Ho, Yin and Wu, 2014). On the other hand, if migrant couples are well organized and have emotional support or if husband or wife assist each other and display mutual reliance, they are able to adjust more easily into a new society. In difficult situations such as unemployment and poverty, a good relationship between wife and husband can "buffer the effects of stressful acculturation" (Ho, Yin, and Wu, 2014:663). It is important to note that good marital relationships contribute to the wellbeing of migrant couples. They feel more confident about coping with the changes they may face in the host country and hope for a better future in their new society. Ho, Yi and Wu (2014: 664) demonstrate that unemployment and isolation from their extended families are some of the factors affecting marital relationships of migrant couples. They note that many migrants arriving in a new

country are shocked by the hard living conditions and loss of social support, and thus often have difficulty making the transition to a new situation. (Ho, Yi and Wu, 2014:664). From this, it is apparent that social support among migrant families is a key predictor of migrants' ability to adapt to new situations and have a peaceful and sustainable marital life.

With regards to the consequences of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families in Durban, the study found out that marital conflict among couples increases poverty. Apparently, marital conflict is linked to poverty among Congolese migrant families as families that experience conflict are poorer than those who do not. Numerous studies also demonstrate that as the level of marital conflict increases among couples, it increases the level of depression among couples and self-esteem decreases. It is argued that marital conflict has profound implications for individual well-being, depression, and is linked with eating disorders and anxiety disorders (See Coyne and Downey 1991; O'Leary and Smith, 1991; Beach et al. 1998; McLeod, 1994). Fincham and Beach (1999) and Han et al, (2010) state that marital conflict leads to psychological health problems. They note that it increases the symptoms of depression, post-traumatic stress, poor physical health and specific illnesses such as cancer, cardiac disease and chronic pain. Additionally, marital conflict has negative effects on family health. It can result in physical disability, severe mental illness and interpersonal dysfunction such as problems with social and family functioning (Burman and Margolin 1992; Schmalzing and Sher, 1997; Han et al. 2010). Fincham and Beach (1999) also concurs that marital conflict has negative impact on family health. Studies conducted in the field of marital conflicts invariably show that marital conflict has negative impacts on the health of every member of the family including the victim, abuser and children (Lee, 2015; Han et al, 2010).

In relation to the case of Congolese migrant families living in Durban, the findings have shown that the level of stress is high among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. The major contributing factor to family stress is mostly attributed to lack of economic opportunities. As discussed earlier on, there is a high level of unemployment among migrant communities and Congolese migrants in particular. This means that economic conditions compounded by social isolation and political marginalisation place these people under constant depression. Although this study did not aim to examine whether the depression experienced by many Congolese families affected their health, it was obvious that economic stress resulted in health problems. As one participant stated "life here is very difficult, when you come from searching for ways to make a living and when you come back

home, it is another stress. In the house only fighting, even the children fight all the time. Because of the stress and headache most of time I have paracetamol for headache” (Juliet, 2016).

Marital conflict is associated with negative family outcomes such as poor parenting, poor adjustment of children, problematic attachment of children to parents and conflict between siblings (Erel and Burman, 1995; Brody et al, 1994; Owen and Cox, 1997). Herman (1992) advances that marital conflict creates trauma symptoms exhibited in battered woman or men. She hypothesizes that many battered women/ men suffer from complex traumatic symptoms, including depression, anxiety, idealization of the perpetrator, and dissociation of the chronic nature of the trauma (Herman, 1992). Herman advances that abused women/men live in fear as they are unable to predict when the next attack will come. She/he becomes isolated from friends and family and increasingly dependent on her/his abuser. In this circumstance, it can be very hard to make sense of what is happening and over time, his/her self-esteem may be worn down. There is mounting evidence that domestic conflict/violence has long term negative consequences for the survivors, even after the abuse has ended (Herman, 1992).

Marital conflict can translate into lower health status, lower quality of life and higher utilization of health services (Campbell et al, 2002). When a person is treated as a slave or mocked in his/her home, she/he is experiencing emotional abuse. Emotional abuse refers to abuse of a person’s morals and self-esteem. This is parallel to psychological abuse which involves intimidation or threats (Advocates, 2010). Psychological abuse creates fear in the victim. Prohibiting a person from remunerative employment makes her/him financially dependent on the sole provider and this is known as economic abuse (Advocate, 2010).

In examining the relationship between marital conflict and its impact, Heavey et al, (1993; 1995) argue that marital conflict has longer-term effects for the couple. Their study demonstrates that marital conflict creates long-term evidence that negative communication behaviour leads to crisis of confidence in the behaviour model of marital discord among couples (Heavey et al, 1995; Heavey et al, 1993). In addition to these negative effects of marital conflict on couples, other studies have found that it increases negative behaviour which decreases marital satisfaction for both spouses and in turn creates divorce and separation. (Heavey et al, 1993; and Noller et al, 1994)

Marital conflicts can impact negatively on the mental and physical well-being of children and can affect them psychologically. It is likely that conflict between father and mother affect children in the

sense that mother or father can direct her/his anger on children (Corrine et al., 2008:2). Marital conflict affects child development. Studies conducted in the field of marital conflict demonstrate that marital conflict increases the probability of children's disorders associated with marital disagreement (Cummings and Davies, 2002). It also has negative effects on the cognitive, social, academic and even psychological functioning of children, especially those raised in a family where both parents are active in the conflict (Cummings and Davies, 2002). Kubeka (2008) advances that children raised in a broken home or in a conflict-ridden family where conflict emanates from both parents may suffer from post-traumatic stress which in turn results in loss of control and feelings of powerlessness. Lee (1995) adds that children who grow up in conflict-ridden homes may subsequently experience lower quality of intimate relationships as adults. Moreover, there exists a correlation between family violence and violent adolescent behaviour. The persistence of domestic conflict in children's lives may lead them to believe that violence in relationships is a necessary norm. Therefore, they do not interpret conflict in interpersonal relationships as inappropriate and instead view it as an expected occurrence. It is possible for a male or female child who has frequently been exposed to family violence in her/his formative years to become a perpetrator of violence when he/she is an adult or parent. Therefore, the cycle of violence persists (Kubeka, 2008).

Accordingly, children who live in a family where both parents use physical violence will probably use violence on other children in the areas. A number of scholars argue that these children are susceptible to internalizing and externalizing behaviours associated with psychological problems (Durrant, 2005; Han et al, 2010; Bair-Merritt, Blackstone and Feudrner, 2006). Additionally, in later life when they become parents, they are likely to use violence on spouses (Durrant, 2005:73). This argument from Durrant is supported by Santos, Bohon and Sanchez-Sosa, (1998) and Nwabunike and Tenkorang (2015) who argue that children who grow up in a violent family will likely become habituated to violent relationships. They further argue that when such children become adults, they will be inclined to initiate conflict with their partners and subject their children to violence.

This probability is congruent with the "attachment theory", which states that the child is product of the family and learns from his/her parents' behaviour. Good and bad behaviours are therefore learnt from the family. Conflictual interpersonal adult relationships are associated with negative parent-child or wife-husband relationships (Santos, Bohon and Sanchez-Sosa, 1998:494-497; Edwards, 2004; Cangelosi, 2004). In the context of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in

Durban and its consequences on children, the study participants agreed that marital conflict has consequences on children. They cited the growing level of child neglect in families that experience marital conflict. While there are no studies that indicate how many children of Congolese migrant families in Durban have run away from their families as a result of parent conflict, participants expressed that there might be high levels of children who run away from their families as result of conflict between the parents. It is also hard to measure the level of psychological and emotional stress that children suffer from as result of parental conflicts. According to the study participants, it was obvious that marital conflict among parents contributes to emotional and psychology stress of the children.

A study conducted by Cummings and Davies reveal that marital conflict affects family functioning, including parenting (Cummings & Davies, 2002). Nwabunike and Tenkorang (2015) argue that domestic conflict in the context of married couples occurs in all cultures and contexts, irrespective of social, economic, religious, ethnic, or racial background. They add that marital conflict in many cultures and societies remains underreported owing to fear of reporting to authorities due to its sensitive nature, or fear of bringing shame to their families and communities. Some scholars demonstrate that a number of the domestic survivors turn to informal supports such as family member or friends (Nwabuke and Tenkorang, 2015; Postmus, 2015). With regards to the consequences of marital conflict, the researcher sought to find out whether these are discussed and shared among Congolese migrant families living in Durban and the findings have shown similarities as per studies above. Among Congolese migrant families and according to the findings from this study, it is commonly believed among the participants that family matter remains private and cannot be discussed in the public. The only way family conflict are discussed and shared is through a religious leader. As seen in chapter seven, religious leaders are most trusted and remain the source of recourse for family when faced with family conflict. The church plays a critical role among Congolese migrant families living in Durban, not only in terms of emotional support, but also by assisting couples and families in general to deal with daily challenges.

8.2. Marital Conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban and its Relation to Migration.

This section discusses the findings on marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban and its relation to migration. Numerous studies on the relationship between marital conflict and migration have shown that there are two-mixed arguments in response to the impact of migration on families. Some scholars support the argument that migration negatively affects and increases tensions among families and couples (Lee, 2015, Agbaw, 2009, Ana et al, 1996). Scholars, who support the argument that migration has negative effects on migrating families and couples, argue that migration can increase tensions and stressful situations among married couples and families particularly those that lack economic and social support. In addition, they believe that relocating to a new country comes with many challenges, for example, learning a new language, finding secure employment and adjusting to a new culture. All these pose challenges to couples in making daily decision and interacting with one another. In this regard, migrant couples are expected to experience more marital conflict than non-migrant couples (Hartman and Hartman, 1986:131; Lee, 2015; Agbaw, 2009; Ana et al, 1996).

In this study, it is apparent that the economic condition that Congolese migrant families in Durban have to endure is a major challenge. They have to contend with unemployment in South Africa, which they had also faced in their home country. It is believed that in the DRC, the level of unemployment is 80 percent (Barker and Ricardo, 2005). Despite higher levels of unemployment in their home country, Congolese families rely on support from extended families and friends, whom they do not have access to in South Africa. The findings demonstrate that unemployment among Congolese migrant is not only defined in terms of the lack of financial means, but also the lack of family support in terms of uncertainty. It is worth noting that the level of unemployment among Congolese migrants is not the result of limited level of education, but a result of exclusion embedded in the South African government legislative and institutional structure. As seen in chapter six, the majority of Congolese migrant who participated in this study have formal education, are largely unemployed, and those who claim to work are employed in the informal sector or self-employed. This means that unemployment among Congolese migrant families in Durban is linked with their

migration status and not their level of education. With regard to migration status, mostly of Congolese migrant who participated in this study are asylum seekers and refugees.

Despite Congolese migrant being recognised as legal in South Africa, they have limited access to many opportunities including employment, education and health care (refer to chapter five). While migration has been considered as driving force of marital conflict, it also been shown as a uniting factor rather than a divisive one. For instance, Hartman and Hartman (1986) conducted a study among immigrant Jewish families in Israel. The study found that in cases where migrant couples are isolated from extended family and other support networks, they compensate by increasing “family solidarity and interdependence” (Hartman and Hartman, 1986:137). For example, migrant couples tend to share “decision-making”, and interact more with each other and when faced with difficulties involved in relocating to a foreign country, they make extra efforts to resolve these problems together (Hartman and Hartman, 1986:132-134).

In the case of Congolese migrant families living in Durban and according to the findings from this study, it worth noting that migration does not only increase tension or marital conflict among couples, but in some cases, it brought couples together and enabled family solidarity and interdependence. For instance, a female study participant expressed her gratitude in migrating to South Africa. She expressed that she and her husband had experienced marital conflict in their home country, but since moving to South Africa, they now work together and are able to take care of the family collectively. This case shows that some of the participants have seen migration as being positive despite the economic and social isolation they have to face in South Africa. In the case of this woman, she believed that members of their extended family and friends influenced the behaviour of her husband, and since her husband is no longer with these members of extended family and friends he “can now make decision on his own” (Emmerine married female, 2016).

Guruge et al, (2010) provide evidence in support of both the above points of view. They argue that migration to a new country creates a major life change that can probably directly and indirectly affect the health of a given couple. They further advance that migration changes can both negatively and positively affect marital relationships. From their perspectives, they argue that migration changes can be negative when the migrants come as family units. They also argue that gender roles tend to differs in the migration site from the country of origin and these changes in the gender roles can affect marital relationships. Guruge (2007) adds that changes in gender roles have been associated

with increase in stress, marital conflict, marital discord and risk of abuse. On the other hand, Guruge (2007) argues that migration can also cause positive changes. For example, if couples were not united in their country of origin, migration creates new opportunities to renegotiate and rebuild relations. There are a number of factors that influences rebuilding new relationships among migrant families who were not united in their country of origin. These factors include adjustment in the new country, isolation from extended family, increase in intimacy and mutual reliance (Guruge, 2007; (Guruge, Hyman and Mason, 2008). In addition, communication remains the key in maintaining marital relationship in both the home and host country. As shown in numerous studies, migration can affect communication between couple and if not managed can lead to violence and divorce.

As Sullivan (2007:_131_) asserts, nonviolent communication (NVC) is critical because it is a major alternative to marital conflict and any other forms of conflict. This form of communication teaches partners how to interact with each other nonviolently and the language they can use in order to build good relationships and convey constructive messages. As Sathiparsad and Gray (1998:_191_) argue, the way we communicate is a strategy of interaction with others which has long lasting effects in our lives.

Communication is the process used to share or exchange information between individuals, families, groups and communities. Individuals, groups and parties in conflict situations also use this process in order to resolve their differences. Parties in conflict use this process in interacting and relating to each other. Communication means that parties in a conflict situation can still talk about their differences. As noted by Best (2006: 17), communication is an essential ingredient of peace building. It also has become a key strategy of conflict management. Most of the nonviolent methods of conflict management such as collaboration, negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, and adjudication are largely dependent on effective communication.

In the case of Congolese migrant families in this study, lack of proper channels of communication was highlighted as one of the root causes of marital conflict among them. When the researcher analysed respondents' opinions about how miscommunication can lead to marital conflict, she found that there were opposing views. On the one hand, blame was mostly attributed to women for not communicating appropriately with their partners. In the country of origin, according to the participants, a woman is not expected to question a man. Whenever a man speaks, a woman has to listen and obey. In the host country, this behavioural norm seems to have changed. On the other

hand, women also blamed men for losing their sense of responsibility, which has led many of the women to respect their partners less.

In addition to the views expressed by both men and women who participated in this study with regard to miscommunication as a cause of marital conflict, church leaders and counsellors strongly concurred that miscommunication was at the centre of marital conflict among this community. Participants expressed their views based on daily experience. Church leaders and church counsellors indicated most of the cases they dealt with evolve around miscommunication and personality clash between wife and husband. It is worth reminding that church leaders and counsellors play a critical role in life of migrant communities and Congolese migrants in particular. Church leaders and church counsellors observed a growing level of intolerance and miscommunication among Congolese migrant families living in Durban, which resulted into church leaders establishing platforms where married and non-married men and women come together to discuss exchange ideas.

A further finding of this study reveals that in terms of changes in behaviour patterns of both men and women, change has been more prevalent in women. This has been attributed to migration. In response to the issue of change and learning new behaviour, there was a blame game between the men and women who participated in this study. Most of the men blamed the women for adopting the behaviour of South African women, which they consider unacceptable from the perspective of their own culture. Others blamed the women for their way of new ways of dressing and methods of communicating with their husbands or partners.

Edelman and Crain (1993:5) advance that conflict happens when two people disagree about something. In other words, conflict occurs when two people cannot agree on the actions that one person takes or that he or she does not want the other to take. In similar vein, Bush and Folger (1994:56) state that conflict can also exist because of a true or apparent incompatibility of parties' needs or interests. In analysing marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families living in Durban, the findings demonstrates that in the home country, women are expected to dress in a particular way, that is unique to their culture and region.

However, when they arrive in South Africa, they adapt to the style of clothing worn by South African women. This way of dressing code adaptation is considered by Congolese men to be culturally unacceptable and this lead to tension between couples when men impose dressing code on women.

In most instances, this creates misunderstanding between the couple and when women resist such demands from their husbands, it can lead to physical or emotional violence and in some instance can be the source of serious conflict which can lead to divorce. Conversely, female respondents argue that men have changed their behaviour by having many girlfriends and being unfaithful to their wives. Most of the women who participated in this study contend that Congolese men prefer South African women to Congolese women, thus creating an atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion between couples. The emerging new form of culture and behaviour of both men and women among Congolese community can be perceived as what Richter (2008) called “migration crisis” which can be seen as a result of culture shock. Richter argues that as result of migration, many family rules and values that were perceived to be effective in the country of origin may prove to be less effective in the culture and circumstances in the country of adoption. Migration from one country to another with differing cultural conditions, for instance from DRC to South Africa (SA) involves risks and has the potential to create tensions and misunderstandings which can lead to conflict.

Bacallos et al (2008:300), shows how assimilation theorists posited that “individuals lose cultural identity as they discover themselves with the dominant cultural group. Baltas and Steptoe (2000) advance that when migrants come into contact with different cultures that are different from their cultures; it leads to changes in their beliefs and behaviours. Foner (1997) adds that, although traditions change over time in the country of origin, the migrant may continue to think that such customs are timeless and interpret the present based upon the remembered past. Such cultural understandings are critical in reinforcing traditional family values and behaviors (Foner, 1997). Migrants in the host country continue to influence and reinforce their traditional culture by going back to marry spouses from their home countries. This study points out that even when there are sufficient numbers of women, a man may seek a marital partner from the home country because he wants a traditional wife, not one who exemplifies Western values (DeLaet, 1999). This was apparent from the study participants. Apart from one participant who is married to a South African woman, most of the couples are both DRC nationals. The choice of marrying a Congolese man or woman was to maintain the culture. As in many African cultures, marrying from one’s ethnic group was also common among the participants. While this was not the aim of this study, interviews revealed that most of the participants were married to person from own ethnic group.

Culture sharing was seen as one way of managing cultural differences, but some of the participants believed that it does not work for many migrant families from DRC. What was revealed during the interviews was that there is an intertribal marriage between the participants, which is not the norm in their country of origin. In DRC, intertribal marriages are not common as people mostly choose to marry a man or woman from their own class or tribe. The researcher attempted to find out whether inter-ethnic cultural differences led to marital conflict. In response, the majority of the respondents agreed that it might cause marital conflict because of cultural clashes between the couple.

While most of the participants believed that inter-ethnic marriage is not a bad thing, they argued that marrying a person with different cultural background always comes with challenges. Among indicated challenges, are language, diet and common understanding of raising children. In terms of language, there are five official languages in DRC and these are French, Kiswahili, Lingala, Chiluba and Kikongo. While both partners may understand each other and may all speak the official languages, there are challenges as to which language children should learn and speak. This has emerged as a challenge which results in difference between couples and if not properly managed, can lead to dispute and conflict. This has not been spoken about in the analysis, but is drawn from the researcher's general knowledge and understanding of differences between ethnic groups such as in food intake. The issue of food emerged during the interviews. In one case, a participant stated that some men run away from their wives because they do not take care of them or prepare the kind of food that the men prefer. On the other hand, the influence of friends and relatives has been identified as a major contributing factor to marital conflict among Congolese migrant families in Durban. It is worth noting that friends and relatives can positively or negatively impact couples relationships.

According to the participants, despite being in foreign country, they have formed friendships with local people as well as people from their home country. These friends play an important role in the daily lives of the participants such as job and other forms of support. It is also important to note that every respondent has a relative living in South Africa and that they also keep in regular contact with extended families back home. Thus, relatives and friends continue to play an important role in couples relationships. With regards to how friends and relatives can influence marital conflict, participants state that they can offer bad advice to one partner, which is not well received by the other partner.

In some instances, participants indicated that when people are in a foreign country they try to find people whom they can rely on, trust and seek advice during difficult times such as in times of economic difficulties and family conflicts. During this study and according to views expressed by many participants, it turned out that there is very little trust among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. Some expressed shock and disappointment and felt betrayed by friends whom they thought will advise them well on family matter. Apparently, they were misled by these friends whose advice created conflicts instead of harmony between the couples. For instance, a woman shared that a friend whom she trusted gave her advice which led to marital conflict. She also shared a story of two very close friends. One of them had problem with her husband and sought advice from the other friend. This friend however will report their discussion to the husband concerned and this led to conflict and tension between the couple and the eventual split of the relationship between the two friends.

On the other hand, although many migrants do not have close relatives in Durban, they keep in touch with relatives regardless their location. Participants also indicated that in some instances, friends and relatives can have influence on marital relationship. For example, when couples migrate, those left behind have expectations mostly financial expectations. Whenever these expectations are not met, it is at times blamed on one partner. For instance the husband's family will blame the wife if their financial expectations are not being met. She will be accused of preventing her husband from assisting her husband family. This also applies to a wife's family when financial support expectations are not being met. This creates tension and the inability of the couple to properly manage the conflict. On the other hand, with the growing level of technology including Facebook and other cheap ways of communication, Congolese migrants remain in contact with friends whom have great influence on migrating couple.

Conflict due to power in relationships has been identified as one of the causes of marital conflict. When migrating to South Africa, Congolese migrants, like any other migrants, hope for a better future for themselves and the families they have left in the DRC. Families in the DRC see migrant relatives, male and female, as sources of support and are expected to send remittances to their families back home. While this is a familial obligation for a woman as well as a man, men perceive themselves as having more power and control than women, and therefore feel entitled to make decisions about how financial means are managed, including sending money to relatives or extended families back

home. According to the participants, a man as the head of the household and allocator of the resources prefers to send money to his family rather than to his wife's family and this creates resentment on the part of the wife, which leads to conflict.

Literature indicates that there is a correlation between marital conflict and social support. Lee (2015), in examining relationships between marital conflict and social support, argues that where there is lack of social support among migrant families, marital conflict ensues. Also, when traditional roles and functioning among members of the migrant family, such as social support between husband and wife is questioned, marital conflict occurs (Rhee, 1997). For instance, where migrant women are "expected to maintain the submissive role of traditional wives and to take care of the overall domestic tasks", this often increase tensions and "emotional conflict in the process of adjusting in the new environment" (Lee, 2015:316). A number of studies demonstrate that social support plays an important role among migrant families (Lee, 2015 ; Rhee, 1996). Social support among members of the family assists the family to reduce occurrences of conflict between themselves. Lack of social support from extended families has therefore been identified as one cause of marital conflict. As demonstrated in the participant's responses, couples that have no support from members of extended families are likely to be involved in conflict. However, it is the woman who suffers most in such situations most and this induces stress. The communication between her and husband starts changing in the wrong way.

The above arguments from participants support the view that migration can increase marital conflict among married couples in as much as it can increase tensions and stressful situations. As demonstrated in the dissertation's literature review, scholars agree that there is a correlation between marital conflict and migration. Those who support this argument believe that adjusting in the new country comes with many challenges for the migrant couples and families (Hartman and Hartman, 1986:131; Lee, 2015; Agbaw, 2009; Ana et al, 1996). In addition, the economic condition of Congolese migrant families has been identified as a migration-related factor leading to marital conflict. During the interviews, most of the participants expressed their disappointment with regard to the economic conditions under which they live. In most instances, respondents blamed their partners. Women were blamed for turning to prostitution and other forms of unfaithfulness as a result of poverty and exclusion. It is worth noting that unemployment among the Congolese migrant

community living in Durban is rife. While men can undertake different forms of employment, even the risky ones, women are unable to do so without being blamed.

This study posits that there are many reasons to believe that marital conflict like any other conflict is explicit and implicit. Every person has explicit and implicit cultural standards of his-her own, although changing and rarely completely clearly structured (Braithwaite and Baxter, 2006). The way we interpret the world and its realities is partly dependent on us as individuals and as members of the collective. The way we act or express our desires and interact with other is the manifestation of our interpretation of the world we have created. If life, action, is the pursuit of goals, then social life, interaction, is the exchange of value (Braithwaite and Baxter, 2006). We all have individual and collective values and these are in constant conflict as the choices we make about others and ourselves will always have conflicting outcome (Galtung, 2007). Interpretation of one's' reality can be influenced by interaction of interconnected forces which are in nature, economic, political, social and environmental. Man being at the centre of this interconnectedness becomes a major player in shaping and reshaping such reality and interprets it through various meanings and symbols (Braithwaite and Baxter, 2006).

While most of the participants in this research agreed that marital conflict among Congolese families living in Durban has close relationship with migration, some provided another perspective on coping with stress. They believed that migration has rather created a bond between couples due to difficult conditions they have to endure together. They believed that people migrate from their home country because of the economically challenging conditions in the country of origin and they desire for a better life for themselves and those left behind. For many Congolese migrant families, marital conflict is therefore not their first choice to resolve family problems in the host country. Additionally, a few respondents who were interviewed perceived migration and marital conflict as complex and contradictory.

8.3. Approaches to Marital Conflict Resolution among Migrants from the DRC Living in Durban.

Approaches in solving marital conflict are not different from any other form of conflict. In order to resolve marital conflict, it is important to turn negative conflict to a positive one and this brings us back to the theory of conflict transformation as discussed in chapter four. Marital conflict like any

other conflict must be transformed into harmonious relationship if the family or society has to function and play meaningful roles. As discussed in chapter four, transformation theory is the key.

According to (Fisher et al., 2003:7), the role of conflict transformation is to try and build and restore broken relationship. In other words, it involves building a good relationship between two parties in conflict, or building one if it had not existed. Lederach (1995) argues that social conflict started by two persons engaged in relationships and the transformation of such conflict will involve the need to change and transform the mind-set of both parties involved in the conflict. Similarly, Best argues that conflict transformation goes beyond conflict resolution because it builds longer lasting relationships and it takes conflict away from violence and takes it toward development (Best, 2006). Conflict Transformation Theory helps us understand how a conflicting relationship between individuals and groups can be transformed from hostile to peaceful relationships. Lederach (2003; 2005) and Best (2005) believe that Conflict Transformation goes beyond Conflict Resolution by building longer and more lasting relationships between conflicting parties. These processes involve the changing of attitudes of conflicting parties and creating trust. Maill (2004) considers Conflict Transformation as mechanism of changing conflicting parties' relationships and the conditions that created the conflict. He believes that if conditions that led to conflict are addressed and the relationship between conflicting parties is harmonised, then lasting peace is possible.

While the theory of transformation gained enormous applaud from conflict transformation practitioners and academics, they all however share the same view that its application is complex and differs from community to community. For instance, traditional society differs from modern society in the way conflict is resolved and transformed. On the other hand, conflict transformation practitioners and academics share the view that in both traditional and modern societies, conflict resolution and transformation involves three critical stages and this include mediation, negotiation and arbitration (Olaoba et al, 2010, Fisher et al, 2000, Brand-Facobsen and Facobsen, 2005).

In line with traditions in African countries, which do not necessarily apply to all global countries, the conflicts are settled through extended family structures. The head of the family initiates the process for resolving domestic conflict, by playing the role of facilitator. He talks to both sides, listens to their concerns, uses his wisdom to convince each side to stop fighting, and advises them on how to resolve their differences (Olaoba, Anifowose, Yesufu, Oyedolapo, 2010:37). In the context of Congolese migrant families in Durban, mechanisms have been established to resolve marital

conflict. While marital conflict resolution is settled through extended family structures headed by the head of the family in the country of origin, church leadership has replaced this in the host country. During analysis of the findings, it was apparent that the church as an institution plays a very critical role. There are two major mechanisms established by the church in resolving marital conflict. One is a preventive mechanism and the second is a responsive mechanism. To prevent marital conflict from happening, the church established different platforms at the church level where both men and women are brought together to discuss family issues including marital conflict and how to prevent such conflict from happening. In this context, church leaders and church counsellors play a very critical role in preventing such conflict. Participants indicated that these programmes were very useful in preventing marital conflicts, because these platforms provided couples with necessary skills and understanding of marital relationships and conflict and how to prevent conflict from happening. Although the teaching is about family, it is incorporated with bible teaching. It worth reiterating that the church not only plays the role of maintaining and restoring family relationship, but also restores the emotional and psychological state of the couple on relationship matters as well as economic and social isolation problems that migrant families have to face.

On the other hand, when marital conflict occurred, responsive mechanisms which include mediation by church leaders played an important role in settling the conflict. In examining how the mediation works, the findings show that there are different levels of mediation depending on the level of conflict. Most of the participants indicated that when a marital conflict has reached a deadlock where couples have not been able to solve conflicts on their own, they mostly approach a church leader or church counsellor. Church leaders have been indicated as the most trusted people to mediate in marital conflict and this sentiment was shared by both men and women who participated in this study. They all believed that church leaders not only provide support in ending marital conflict, but they also give psychological and emotional support to couples.

While mediation was identified as the major approach to marital conflict, the researcher was interested in understanding the usefulness of this approach. In response to this question, the findings have shown that mediation is useful in solving marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. Most of the participants indicated that they have been involved or have heard of mediation and how it was useful in solving marital conflict. Mediation process aims to transform people's situation by helping them reduce their conflict through effective interaction and reaching an

agreement (Isenhardt and Spangle, 2000:73). Brand-Facobsen and Facobsen (2005) advance that the role of mediator is to serve as medium, help to facilitate dialogue, serve as a go-between the parties in the conflict and bring them to a resolution. The solution to the problem must be one that comes from the conflicting parties themselves.

On the other hand, participants indicated that while mediation has been useful in settling marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families in Durban, it still also faces some challenges. One of the indicated challenges is the acceptance of both parties involved in the conflict to opt for mediation as means to resolve their differences. As Brand-Facobsen and Facobsen, (2005:51) indicate, mediation is possible and effective when the two conflicting parties are willing to participate in the process and the choice of the mediator is agreed upon by conflicting parties.

While third party mediation proved to be useful in resolving marital conflict among Congolese migrant families, the findings from the study also indicated that resolution by couples themselves are useful without the intervention of the third party. Some couples believe in finding their own solutions and only when they are not able to do so on their own through dialogue, that they seek mediation and counseling from trusted persons such as friends, members of extended families or church leaders. Separated from their extended family, migrant families develop new methods of dealing with daily challenges, including conflicts. One of the approaches that families develop is to increase migrant networks. Networks are sets of social ties based on kinship, friendship, and common origin. These become the source of reliance in times of difficulties.

Migrants use different methods in dealing with family conflicts in the host country. These include the method of sharing of tasks by several members of the household. The assistance of family members serves as an important source of economic viability, especially for families who have limited financial resources. These methods are found to be helpful in reducing family conflicts and in uniting all family members (Johnson, 1998). Another method used by migrants in the host country as a solution to difficulties is creating social networks. This method is used by migrants by marrying to create kinship ties that are helpful if difficult financial times occur. It includes sponsoring relatives, even distant and less known ones, to ensure that relatives are available to help out in the future. In kin networks, in-laws are treated as substitutes for siblings or parents. Reciprocal help is inherent in kin-based households and is expected in these variant households (Kibria, 1993).

Hugo (2002) advances that migrants create social networks between the host country and their country of origin by maintaining a flow of communication with their extended families back home. Social networks between countries created by migrants assist them in resolving their family conflict. Social networks with extended family members in the home country advise them on how to resolve conflicts in the host country. These networks are influenced by migrants themselves and can be carried back home by the migrants when they return periodically or permanently to their country of origin, or they flow back to their country of origin through letters, phone calls and other means. Most migrants establish these networks, which play an increasingly important role in bringing about change among migrant families and their communities in host countries (Hugo, 2002).

In the context of Congolese migrant families living in Durban, it is worth noting that some members of this migrant community have established associations and these mostly are organized under the church umbrella where members meet and share different views and problems encountered. In addition, Congolese migrants continue to keep contact with their extended family back home in DRC and the extended family continues to play a critical role in their daily decision-making. Community leaders in Durban also play an important role in mediating between wife and husband. Moreover, as indicated earlier on, most of the respondents had one or more members of their ethnic group on whom they rely. It is important to note that in South Africa, Congolese migrant families have established more social networks that help them deal with different problems including marital conflict. One of these social networks comprises people from the same ethnic group living in South Africa, particularly in Durban. This assists them to resolve different problems including marital conflict.

8.4. Conclusion

The aims of this chapter was to discuss the three central themes to this study which included the extent of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban, the relationship between marital conflict and migration among Congolese migrant families and approaches to marital conflict among this same group.

In response to the findings as discussed in this chapter, it was apparent that marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban is prevalent and this is measured in terms of the growing

level of intolerance and divorce among Congolese couple, child neglect and emotional and physical violence.

In addition, the findings indicated that there are many reasons to believe that there is a relationship between marital conflict among Congolese migrant families and migration and this is measured in terms of changes in the behaviour of both men and women and the effect of social and economic circumstances on couple's relationship. Finally, it is shown in this discussion that there are approaches in resolving marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban and that the church plays a critical role in solving marital conflict among these families.

Chapter Nine: Conclusion and Recommendations.

9.1. Introduction

The aims of this study were to explore and examine the extent of marital conflicts among migrant families from DRC living in Durban; investigate the root causes of marital conflicts among them; examine whether there is any relationship between marital conflict and migration and investigate if there are any existing approaches to marital conflicts resolution among Congolese migrant families and if any what are these and how do they function and its effectiveness. This chapter provides the Conclusion of the study and recommendations.

9.2. Conclusion

The findings of this study have shown that marital conflict among Congolese migrant families in Durban is prevalent. In response to the above views, there are a number of factors that contribute to marital conflict among migrant families from DRC. This affects their psychological state. When one partners is affected psychologically, the way he/she takes care of the family changes and the needs of the children are also affected in the process. One of the statements from one of the participants reads:

We are experiencing serious problem in our community as DRC's people. Family is now facing serious challenges. There is a clear breakdown in marital relation among Congolese couple. These days, husband or wife no one listens to the other, everyone does things on his own and this result to high level of intolerance among couple and sometimes to physical violence and later to divorce. In our country a divorce is considered as a shame and no one would contemplate divorcing his wife or husband, not matter bad the relationship is, but here, divorce is like going shopping. You will hear here and there stories of divorce (Chantal, 2016).

The findings from this study demonstrate that there are a number of root causes of marital conflict among migrant families from DRC living in Durban. In the response about the root causes of marital

conflict, all participants in the study argued that there are combined factors and predominant ones. These factors are family life stress; unemployment; lack of communication between couples; changing behaviour of one or both partners; the influence of relatives or friends and lack of social support. This does not mean that other factors such as the absence of one partner, emotional and financial deprivation of one partner and drinking are not contributive factors in marital conflict among migrant families from DRC living in Durban.

In examining what family stress means and its contribution to marital conflict among Congolese migrant families in Durban, the findings show that economic conditions, social isolation and the lack of emotional support are at the centre of family stress which leads to marital conflict. As seen in chapter five, the majority of Congolese migrants who participated in the study are self-employed and unemployed. Unemployment among Congolese migrant community is rife and this poses a serious challenge to the wellbeing of the family and couple in particular. In addition, the majority of Congolese migrant families living in Durban lack social support. This was evident during in-depth interviews with 16 volunteers, church leaders and church counsellors. During the interviews with participants in these three categories, they all agreed that the economic condition under which Congolese migrant families are subjected to in South Africa are very difficult ones, which leave families with a lot of stress. Social isolation was also identified by the respondents as a major factor contributing to family stress. It was widely agreed upon by the participants that family stress is not unique to Congolese migrant families living in Durban and that family stress is even experienced in the home country. There is a difference however as family stress in the home country is eased by extended family members through financial or emotional support. This however is lacking among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

Furthermore, as indicated in the demographic information of respondents, self-employment remains the key employment among the Congolese migrant community. Employment condition among Congolese migrant community in Durban is well documented (Baruti, 2006, Rukema, 2010 and Dunia 2012). While the aims of this study did not include exploring the nature of self-employment and employment undertaken by Congolese migrants in Durban, it was revealed during the interviews that most of the participants mainly those who claimed to be employed are predominantly in low paying jobs, such as security guards and car guards. The majority of those who are self-employed work as hair dressers, street vendors or are involved in other forms of informal trading. Those who

claim to be self-employed also face numerous challenges such as complicated bureaucratic process in order to obtain business permits, police harassment and the lack of access to financial support and loans from the banks because of their status.

As demonstrated earlier on in the demographic information of respondents, the majority of Congolese migrants in Durban have a high level of education. However, despite their higher level of education, their employment status and the legal process makes it difficult for them to access decent work. There are many reasons to believe that unemployment and lack of decent work, place more burden and stress on Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

Supporting this argument below is a statement from one of the participant:

There are many causes of marital conflict among Congolese families, but I think the biggest one is the stress of family life in many households. As you know many people are refugees and don't have any work, no one to help, you do all kind of work alone and nothing in return. Communication between wife and husband is also a problem. No one listens to the other. You cannot differentiate who is the head of the household and who is not. But there are many other factors such as unemployment, lack of support from extended family (John PM, 2016).

In examining the comments of the participants as to whether there is any relationship between marital conflict and migration among Congolese migrant families living in Durban, the majority stated that there is a close relationship between marital conflict and migration. Several indicators were identified and these include the changing of behaviour from one or both partners from home country to the host country. During the interviews, most of the participants expressed their disappointment with regards to the economic conditions under which they live in. Men in most instances state that some Congolese migrant women turn to prostitution and other forms of unfaithfulness as a result of poverty and exclusions. It is worth noting that the level of unemployment among Congolese migrant families living in Durban is rife. While the men can undertake different forms of employments, even the risky ones, the women were unable to do the same. It must be noted that it is not only migrants who suffer from unemployment. Many South Africans are unemployed as well. However, migrants from DRC have to deal with economic conditions and institutional restrictions, because of their political and social status in South Africa. Another factor identified was shifting of gender responsibilities. For instance, while this study was being conducted, the researcher met with one of

the female respondent who sold used clothing along the street. She expressed that she was disappointed that she was now responsible for taking care of the household as that was supposed to be the responsibility of her husband. In DRC's culture, like in many cultures in Africa, the man is considered as the provider and when a man falls to live up to this responsibility, this will cause many problems between wife and husband.

With regards to whether there are any approaches to marital conflict resolution among Congolese migrant families living in Durban, the comments from the participants indicated that there are several approaches to marital conflict resolution, but negotiation and mediation were considered to be the key ones. The statement reads:

We all agree that there is conflict and we have to deal with it. We cannot watch our community breaking down. There is a need to intervene. One of the interventions is to have the two parties talk to each other. This is done through mediation by a person trusted by both people who are fighting” (Fidele, CL1, 2016).

With regards to the person who intervenes in solving marital conflict among Congolese migrant families in Durban, the comments from the respondents and most of them indicated that the Church plays an important role, meaning the Church leader or any trusted person within the Church. As indicated early on, the Church remains one of the major activities among the Congolese migrant community in Durban. There are many churches in Durban that has congregants from DRC. This means that the role of the Church is paramount in marital conflict and deserves respect and special acclaim for solving marital conflict among Congolese migrant families in Durban. Members of the extended family also play an important role in mediating between wife and husband. As indicated earlier on, most of the respondents had one or more family member and have established more social networks that help them deal with different problems including marital conflict. Community leaders are also considered as a resource in solving marital conflict. While the current debate in solving marital conflict and violence is directed towards the intervention of the police, this is accorded little importance within Congolese migrant families and is not considered as an option in marital conflict resolution. The statement reads:

Some people say, if a man beat you, you have to report to the police. Why report to them. The police cannot make my relation with my husband happy. If we do not agree between us, I better leave him in peace” (participant female (Chantal, 2016).

In responses to whether the methods used in solving marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban are effective, the comments from the respondents showed that these methods are effective.

9.3. Recommendations

It is shown throughout this study that marital conflict among migrant families from DRC living in Durban is of real concern and requires urgent and special interventions if peaceful and sustainable families are to be achieved not only among the Congolese community but the entire migrant community in South Africa. Multi-approach intervention is necessary. In building more effective and peaceful relationship among Congolese migrant families, there is a need for more training programmes in marital conflict prevention and resolution for couples. As seen in the findings, most of the migrant families from DRC are refugees and face many socio-economic challenges in South Africa. This has been identified as a root cause of marital conflict experienced. There is therefore a need for intervention by public as well as private institutions. More training programs on marital conflict resolution methods for instance, are needed in order to build peaceful family relationships.

Secondly, community-based family support services, which include resources and supportive programmes for counselling and educational services for Congolese migrant families are needed in order to support those in need and those that face conflict in their marriage. In addition to educational services on marital relationship, the South African government support of migrant families is also necessary in the interest of family protection. Examples of these services include assisting the migrant and refugees' families to obtain the basic necessities of life or empowering them to obtain such necessities for themselves. The government should also provide refugees with proper documents to enable them gain access to services.

As demonstrated earlier, Congolese migrant churches plays an important role in the heart of the Congolese migrant community and have a great influence in shaping the mind and perceptions of the community on various social issues including family and marital conflict. They assist in shaping the emotional and spiritual lives of Congolese migrant families. They are however unable to offer financial support because like the migrants, they also face financial constraints and other challenges.

Thus, other issues affecting the Congolese migrant community in Durban are not well addressed such as difficulties in obtaining proper documents to access public and private services such as opening of bank accounts or getting a space for trading activities. This will continue to negatively impact the relationship of married couples in this community. Sustainable approaches to any form of conflict including marital conflict need approaches that satisfy the entire needs of human kind.

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APPENDICES

SECTION A: QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEWS SCHEDULE

Dear Respondent,

My name is Beatrice Umubyeyi I am conducting a research survey for PhD degree in Conflict Transformation and Peace Studies Program at University of KwaZulu-Natal. My student registration number is: 210554096. The aim of this study is to explore the extent of marital conflicts among migrants from Democratic Republic of Congo living in Durban and the root causes of such conflicts. The study will also explore and examine whether there is a relationship between migration and marital conflicts and examine whether there are any approaches to marital conflict resolution among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. I would be grateful if you could spare a moment to answer this questionnaire. Please do not write your name on the questionnaire to ensure confidentiality of your responses. Please omit any questions you do not wish to answer and feel free to add comments or clarifications to any questions. The data collected will be confidential and used only for research purposes. Thank you for your time and effort and you will remain anonymous.

Researcher contact details: Beatrice Umubyeyi

Email address: Umubety2020@yahoo.fr

Phone number: 0845189425

My supervisor: Prof. Maheshvari Naidu. Email address: Naiduu@ukzn.ac.za

Questionnaire

1. Your country of origin.....
2. How long have you been in South Africa.....
3. Your age.....Years
4. The number of dependent on you in South Africa.

Number of dependents on you	Tick the appropriate
Between 1 to 2	
Between 2 to 4	
Between 4 to 6	
Between 4 to 8	
Between 8 to 10	
Between 10 to 12	
Between 12 and above	

5. Your highest level of education

Education	Tick one
Primary school	
Secondary school	
Tertiary	
Other(specify)	

6. Your current employment status

Employment	Tick	
Employed	Part-time	
	Full-time	
Self-employed	Part-time	
	Full-time	
Unemployed		

7. Is there marital conflict among Congolese migrant living in Durban?

Yes	
No	

8. What is the extent of marital conflict among Congolese migrant living in Durban?

Please, tick one

Very high	
High	
Low	
Very low	

9. What are the results of marital conflict among Congolese migrant living in Durban?

Divorce	
Physical violence	

Emotional violence	
Other(specify)	

10. What are the consequences of marital conflict among Congolese migrants living in Durban?

Increase poverty	
Child neglect	
Other(specify)	

11. One or more of the following might be the root causes of marital conflict among DRC's migrant families living in Durban. Please, tick.

Unemployment of both partners	
Unemployment of one partner	
Lack of financial support from the head of household	
Lack of the support of the extended family	
Influence of friends or relatives	
Shifting in labour responsibilities of man or woman different from country of origin	
Communication	
Emotional deprivation	
Family stress	
Employment of both partners	
Drinking behaviour	

Absence from home of one partner	
Religion and cultural beliefs	
Unfaithfulness between both partners	

12. Do you think that the causes of marital conflict have relationship with migration?

Please, tick one.

Yes	
No	

13. If yes, tick one or more of the following answers:

Woman taking on man's responsibilities	
Lack of extended family	
Changing in behaviour of man or woman	
Other (specify)	

14. Are there any approaches to marital conflict

Yes	
No	

15. Who intervene in case of marital conflict among DRC's migrant families living in Durban? Please, tick one or more among the following answers:

Members of the extended family	
Friends	

Church leaders	
Community leaders	
Police	
Judiciary	

16. What are the methods used in solving marital conflict among Congolese migrants in Durban? Please tick one or more among the following methods:

Mediation	
Negotiation	
Arbitration	
Other	

17. How effective is/ are marital conflict resolution methods? Please, tick one.

Very effective	
Effective	
Not effective	

18. Any comments

SWAHILI VERSION

Ndugu Mshiriki ,

Jina langu ni Beatrice Umbyeyi, Mimi nimwanafunzi kwa Chuo kikuu katika Conflict Transformation and Peace Studies Program , Shule la sayansi ya jamii chuo Kikuu cha KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College. Mwanafunzi namba za usajili ni : 210554096 .

Mimi nimechagua kufanya utafiti juu ya uchunguzi wa migogoro katika familia zawahamiaji wakutoka Kongo wanaoishi Durban, KwaZulu -Natal .

Lengo la utafiti huu ni kuchunguza wigo wa migororo katika familia miongoni mwa wahamiaji wa Republika ya Demokrasia ya Congo wanaoishi katika Durban na sababu za msingi za migogoro hiyo . Utafiti huu pia unachunguza kama kuna uhusiano kati ya uhamiaji na migogoro ndani za familia na kuchunguza kama kuna njia yoyote inaotumikishwa kwa utatuzi wa migogoro miongoni mwa familia za wa Kongomani wahamiaji wanaoishi katika Durban .

Kushiriki katika utafiti huu ni muhimu, unaweza wakati wowote kujitenga na mahojiano haya au kuchagua kujibu maswali yoyote ambayo hautaki kujibia . Uchaguzi kutoshiriki katika utafiti huu hakutakuwa na matokeo mabaya kwako.

Maoni utakayo toa kwa utafiti huu, itakuwa bila majina yako, wala kitu chochote cyakukufahamisha. Nami nitafanya Juhudi zote iwezekanavyo ili kulinda usiri na nia ya maoni yako uliyo toa kwa ajili ya kuhifadhi ma elozo yako umetoa. Taarifa zilizokusanywa katika kupitia utafiti huu ita tumikishwa kwa nia ya masomo. Lakini hii ni kukueleza kwamba usiri wako utasimamiwa.

Tafadhali wala kuandika jina lako kwenye dodoso ili kuhakikisha usiri wa majibu yako. Tafadhali saza maswali yoyote huna unataka kujibu na kujisikia huru kuongeza maoni au

ufafanuzi kwa maswali yoyote. Maswali yaliyo kusanywa yatakuwa ya kutumika tu kwa madhumuni ya utafiti. Asante kwa muda wako.

Maelezo mtafiti wasiliana na: Beatrice Umubyeyi

Barua pepe: Umubety2020@yahoo.fr

Namba ya simu: 0845189425

Msimamizi wangu: Prof. Maheshvari Naidu. Barua pepe: Naiduu@ukzn.ac.za

Maswali haya yanaandikiwa kwa Luga ya Kingereza na Kiswahili. Ukijibu maswali haya, tafadhari, jaza Jibu chini ya luga moja ambao ni rahisi kwako (English wala Kiswahili)

1. Your country of
origin.....

Nchi yako ya asili

2. How long have you been in South Africa.....

Ni kwa muda gani umekuwa katika Afrika Kusini

3. Your age.....Years

Umuri wa miaka yako.....miaka

4. The number of dependent on you in South Africa

Idadi ya watu wanategemea kwako.

Idadi ya watu wanategemea kwako	Taja
Between 1 to 2 (Kati ya 1 - 2)	
Between 2 to 4 (kati ya 2 - 4)	
Between 4 to 6 (kati ya 4-6)	
Between 6 to 8 (kati 6 - 8)	
Between 8 to 10 (kati ya 8-10)	
Between 10 to 12 (kati ya 10-12)	
Between 12 and above (kati ya 12- ...)	

5. Your highest level of education

kiwango chako cha juu cha elimu

Kiwango chako	Taja hapa
Primary school (Shule ya Msingi)	
Secondary school(Shule ya Sekondari)	
Tertiary (Elimu ya Juu/ University)	
Other(specify) yingine taja	

6. Your current employment status

Ajira	Taja	
Employed(Kama unakazi)	Part-time (Sehemu ya muda)	
	Full-time (Wakati wote)	

Self-employed (Kazi binafsi)	Part-time (Sehemu ya muda	
	Full-time (Wakati wote)	
Unemployed (Hakuna kazi)		

7. Is there marital conflict among Congolese migrant living in Durban?

Je, kuna migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa w wahamiaji kutoka DRC wanaoishi katika Durban?

Yes/ Ndiyo	
No/ Hapana	

8. What is the extent of marital conflict among Congolese migrant living in Durban?
Please, tick one

Je, kiasi gani cha migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa wahamiaji wa Kongomani wanaoishi katika Durban ? Tafadhali , Jibu moja

Very high (Juu sana)	
High (Juu)	
Low (Chini)	
Very low (Chini sana)	

9. What are the results of marital conflict among Congolese migrant living in Durban?
Je, kuna matokeo gani ya migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa wahamiaji wakongomani wanaoishi katika Durban ?

Divorce (Talaka)	
------------------	--

Physical violence (Vurugu tofauti nyumbani)	
Emotional violence (ukatili wa kiakili)	
Other(specify) Nyingine, taja	

10. What are the consequences of marital conflict among Congolese migrants living in Durban?

Je, nini matokeo mabaya ya Migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa wahamiajo wa kongomani wanaoishi katika Durban?

Increase poverty (Kuongeza umaskini)	
Child neglect (Mtoto kutelekezwa)	
Other(specify) Nyingine, taja	

11. One or more of the following might be the root causes of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. Please, tick.

Moja wala zaidi yaliofuatayo inaweza kuwa sababu muhimu ya migogoro ya ndoa kati ya famalia wahamiaji wa Kongomani wanaoishi Durban. Tafadhari, Taja za muhimu.

Unemployment of both partners (Ukosefu wa kutokuwa na kazi washirika wote)	
Unemployment of one partner (Ukosefu wa ajira ya mpenzi mmoja)	
Lack of financial support from the head of household (Ukosefu wa msaada kutokea kwa mkuu wa nyumba/ Responsable)	
Lack of the support of the extended family (Ukosefu wa msaada kutokea kwa ndugu na Jamaa)	

Influence of friends or relatives (Ushawishi wa marafiki au ndugu)	
Shifting in labour responsibilities of man or woman differently from country of origin Kubadilika kwa kazi baba anafanya wala mama anafanya katika inchi ya uhamiaji tofauti na nchi ya asili	
Communication Mawasiliano katikati yao	
Emotional deprivation Kunyimwa hisia	
Family stress Msongo wa familia	
Employment of both partners Kuwa nakazi kwa washirika wote/ baba na mama	
Drinking behavior Tabia ya kunywa pombe	
Absence from home of one partner Kukosekana nyumbani ya mpenzi mmoja	
Religion and cultural beliefs Dini na Imana za kitamaduni	
Unfaithfulness between both partners Kutokuwa waaminifu kati ya washirika wote	

12. Do you think that the causes of marital conflict have relationship with migration?
Please, tick one.

Je, Unawaza kwamba matokeo ya Migogoro kati ya wahamiaji wa Kongomani kuwa na uhusiano na uhamiaji? Taja jibu moja kwa haya ya fuatayo.

<i>Yes/ Ndiyo</i>	
<i>No/ hapana</i>	

13. If yes, tick one or more of the following answers:

14. **Kama ndiyo, taja jibu moja wala nyingi yafuatayo**

Woman taking on man's responsibilities Mwanamke kuchukua na kufanya kazi ya wanaume	
Lack of extended family kutoishi tofauti ya ndugu na jamaa	
Changing in behavior of man or woman Kubadilisha tabia kati ya mwanamke wala Mwanaume	
Other (specify) Nyingine, Taja,	

15. Are there any approaches to marital conflict?

Je, kuna mbinu yoyote inatolewa kwa migogoro ya ndoa?

Yes/ Ndiyo	
No/ Hapana	

16. Who intervene in case of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban? Please, tick one or more among the following answers:

Je, ni nani kuingilia kati katika kesi ya migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa familia wa Kongomani wahamiaji wanaoishi katika Durban? Tafadhali, Jibu moja au zaidi miongoni mwa baadhi ya majibu yafuatayo:

Members of the extended family Wajumbe wa ndugu na jamaa	
Friends Marafiki	
Church leaders Viongozi wa Kanisa	
Community leaders Msimamizi wa Jamii	
Police wa polisi	
Judiciary Mahakama	

17. What are the methods used in solving marital conflict among Congolese migrants in Durban? Please tick one or more among the following methods:

Je, kuna kutumiwa mbinu gani katika kutatua migogoro ya ndoa katika wahamiaji wa Kongomani wanaoishi Durban? Tafadhari, taja moja wala nyingi zifuatayo:

Mediation (Upatanishi)	
Negotiation (Majadiliano)	
Arbitration (Usuluhishi)	

Other (Nyingine) Taja	
-----------------------	--

18. How effective is/ are marital conflict resolution methods among Congolese migrants living in Durban? Please, tick one.

Je, nini Ufanisi/Uzuri wa mbinu ya migogoro ya ndoa kati ya wahamiaji wa Kongomani wanaoishi mjini Durban? Tafadhari, Taja maja zifuatayo:

Very effective Nzuri sana	
Effective Nzuri	
Not effective Siyo Nzuri	

19. Any comments

Tafadhari toa Maoni yoyote

20. Would you be interested in joining a discussion to contribute more information in the study?

If Yes, please add your phone number.....

Je, Unaweza kuwa na Haja yakuendelesha kusaidia kutoa habari zaidi? Kama ndiyo,

tafadhari andika number ya Simu yako, nitakupigiya simu.....

FRENCH VERSION

Cher participant,

Je réponds au nom de Béatrice Umubyeyi, Je suis actuellement étudiante de doctorat en Transformation des conflits et études de la paix en sciences social à l'Université de KwaZulu-Natal. Mon numéro d'enregistrement : 210554096.

Je mène une étude de recherche sur : Les conflits conjugaux parmi les immigrants de la République Démocratique du Congo vivant à Durban, Province de KwaZulu-Natal. Le but de cette étude est d'explorer l'ampleur de conflits conjugaux permis les immigrants congolais vivant à Durban et les causes profondes de ces conflits. L'étude permettra également d'explorer et examiner s'il y a une relation entre l'immigration et les conflits conjugaux et examiner s'il y a des méthodes de résolution des conflits conjugaux parmi les familles immigrantes congolaise vivant à Durban.

Vous avez été choisi en tant que participant important dans l'étude. La participation à cette étude est volontaire, vous pouvez à tout moment vous retirer de cette interview ou choisir de ne pas répondre à toutes les questions que vous n'êtes pas à l'aise à répondre. Choix de ne pas participer à cette étude n'aura pas de conséquences négatives.

Je vous serais reconnaissant de bien vouloir réserver un moment pour répondre à ce questionnaire. Veuillez ne pas inscrire votre nom sur le questionnaire pour assurer la confidentialité de vos réponses. Veuillez omettre toutes les questions auxquelles vous ne souhaitez pas répondre et n'hésitez pas à ajouter des commentaires ou des éclaircissements à vos questions. Les données recueillies seront confidentielles et utilisées uniquement à des fins de recherche. Merci de votre temps et de votre effort.

Ces questions est écrit en anglais et français. Si vous répondez à ces questions, S'il vous plaît, remplissez la réponse dans une langue qui sont plus faciles pour vous (Anglais ou Français)

S'il vous plaît, répondez aux questions suivantes :

1. Your country of origin.....

Pays d'origine

2. How long have you been in South Africa.....

Combien de temps avez-vous été en Afrique du Sud

Your age.....Years

Votre age.....ans

3. The number of dependent on you in South Africa

Le nombre de dépendants de vous en Afrique du Sud.....

Nombre de dependants de vous	Cocher
Between 1 to 2 (Entre 1 - 2)	
Between 2 to 4 (Entre 2 - 4)	
Between 4 to 6 (Entre 4-6)	

Between 6 to 8 (Entre 6 - 8)	
Between 8 to 10 (Entre 8-10)	
Between 10 to 12 (Entre10-12)	
Between 12 and above (Entre 12 en plus)	

4. Your highest level of education

kiwango chako cha juu cha elimu

Kiwango chako	Cocher
Primary school (Ecole Primaire)	
Secondary school(Ecole Secondaire)	
Tertiary (Universite)	
Other(specify) Autres (Specifier)	

5. Your current employment status

Votre statut actuel de l'emploi

Emploi	Cocher	
Employed Salarié	Part-time / TEMPS Partiel	
	Full-time / Temps plain	
Self-employed Travailleur indépendant	Part-time / Temps partiel	
	Full-time / Temps Plein	

Unemployed au chômage		

6. Is there marital conflict among Congolese migrant living in Durban?

Y at-il des conflits Conjugal entre les immigrants Congolais vivant à Durban?

Yes/ Oui	
No/ No	

7. What is the extent of marital conflict among Congolese migrant living in Durban?

Please, tick one

Quelle est l'ampleur du conflits Conjugaux entre les Congolais vivant à Durban? S'il vous plaît, cocher une

Very high / très élevé	
High / élevé	
Low / faible	
Very low / très faible	

8. What are the results of marital conflict among Congolese migrant living in Durban?

Quels sont les résultats de conflits conjugaux I entre les Congolais vivant à Durban?

Divorce / Divorce	
Physical violence / Violence Physique	
Emotional violence/ émotionnelle	Violence
Other(specify) / Autres (specifier)	

9. What are the consequences of marital conflict among Congolese migrants living in Durban?

Quelles sont les conséquences d'un conflit Conjugal parmi les migrants congolais vivant à Durban?

Increase poverty / Accroître la pauvreté	
Child neglect / La négligence de l'enfant	
Other(specify) / Autres (Specifier)	

10. One or more of the following might be the root causes of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. Please, tick.

Un ou plusieurs des éléments suivants pourrait être les causes, des conflits conjugaux entre les familles immigrantes congolaises vivant à Durban. S'il vous plaît, cochez

Unemployment of both partners / Le chômage des deux partenaires	
Unemployment of one partner / Le chômage d'un partenaire	
Lack of financial support from the head of household / Le manque de soutien financier de la tête des ménages	

Lack of the support of the extended family / Le manque de soutien de la famille élargie	
Influence of friends or relatives / Influence des amis ou famille	
Shifting in labour responsibilities of man or woman differently from country of origin Déplacement de responsabilités dans le travail de l'homme ou d'une femme différente du pays d'origine	
Communication / Communication	
Emotional deprivation/ Privation émotionnelle	
Family stress / stress de famille	
Employment of both partners / Emploi des deux partenaires	
Drinking behaviour / Comportement à boire	
Absence from home of one partner / Absence de domicile d'un partenaire	
Religion and cultural beliefs / Religion et croyances culturelles	
Unfaithfulness between both partners / Infidélité entre les deux partenaires	

11. Do you think that the causes of marital conflict have relationship with migration?

Please, tick one.

Pensez-vous que les causes des conflits conjugaux sont liées à la migration? Veuillez cocher une case.

Yes/ <i>Oui</i>	
No/ <i>No</i>	

12. If yes, tick one or more of the following answers:

Si oui, cocher une ou plusieurs des réponses suivantes:

Woman taking on man's responsibilities Femme prenant les responsabilités de l'homme	
Lack of extended family Manque de famille élargie	
Changing in behavior of man or woman Changement de comportement de l'homme ou de la femme	
Other (specify) Autres (Spécifier)	

13. Are there any approaches to marital conflict?

Existe-t-il des approches en matière de conflit

Yes/ <i>Oui</i>	
-----------------	--

No/ No	

14. Who intervene in case of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban? Please, tick one or more among the following answers:

Qui intervient en cas de conflit conjugal entre les familles congolaises immigrantes vivant à Durban? Veuillez cocher une ou plusieurs des réponses suivantes:

Members of the extended family / Membres de la famille élargie	
Friends / Amis	
Church leaders / chef d'église	
Community leaders / chef de communauté	
Police	
Judiciary / Judiciaries	

15. What are the methods used in solving marital conflict among Congolese migrants in Durban? Please tick one or more among the following methods:

Quelles sont les méthodes utilisées pour résoudre les conflits conjugaux entre les migrants congolais à Durban? Veuillez cocher une ou plusieurs des méthodes suivantes:

Mediation	
Negotiation	
Arbitration	
Other / Autres	

16. How effective is/ are marital conflict resolution methods among Congolese migrants living in Durban? Please, tick one.

16. Quelle est l'efficacité des méthodes de résolution des conflits conjugaux chez les immigrants congolais vivant à Durban? Veuillez cocher une case.

Very effective / très efficace	
Effective/ Efficace	
Not effective / pas efficace	

17. Any comments

Autres Commentaires

.....
.....
.....
.....

18. Would you be interested in joining a discussion to contribute more information in the study?

If Yes, please add your phone number.....
.....

Seriez-vous intéressé à participer à une discussion pour contribuer davantage à l'étude?
Si oui, veuillez ajouter votre numéro de téléphone

2. Interviews schedule

1. Can you tell me where you coming from?
2. How long have you been in South Africa?
3. What is your current employment status? (Employed/ unemployed, self employed)?
4. From your experience do you think there is marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban? If 'Yes' Explain, how?
5. What levels might have marital conflicts among Congolese migrant living in Durban? Please, tick one and explain how?
 - a) Very high
 - b) High
 - c) Low
 - d) Very low
6. What are the results of marital conflict among Congolese migrants living in Durban?
7. What do you think are the negative effects of marital conflict?
8. What do you think are the root causes of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant living in Durban?
9. Do you think that the causes of marital conflict have relationship with migration?

10. In the case of marital conflict among Congolese migrants living in Durban, who intervene? And what does she/he do?
11. Are there any existing approaches used to marital conflicts resolution among Congolese migrant living in Durban? If so, what are these and how do they function?
12. How effective are marital conflict resolution approaches among Congolese migrant families living in Durban
13. What are your suggestions to prevent and manage marital conflict when occur?
14. Any other comments

FRENCH VERSION

Calendrier des entrevues

1. Pouvez-vous me dire d'où venez- vous ?
2. Depuis combien de temps êtes-vous en Afrique du Sud?
3. Quel est votre statut actuel d'emploi ? (Employés / chômeurs, travailleurs autonomes)
?
4. D'après votre expérience, pensez-vous qu'il existe un conflit conjugal entre les familles congolaises immigrants vivant à Durban ? Si « Oui » Expliquez, comment ?
5. Quels sont les niveaux de conflit conjugal parmi les immigrants congolais vivant à Durban ? Veuillez cocher une case et expliquer comment ?

A) Très élevé
B) Haute
C) Faible
D) Très faible
6. Quels sont les résultats des conflits conjugaux entre les immigrants congolais vivant à Durban?
7. Selon vous, quels sont les effets négatifs des conflits conjugaux?
8. Selon vous, quelles sont les causes profondes des conflits conjugaux chez les immigrants congolais vivant à Durban?
9. Pensez-vous que les causes des conflits conjugaux sont liées à la migration?

10. En cas de conflit conjugal entre immigrants congolais vivant à Durban, qui interviennent? Et qu'est-ce qu'elle fait?

11. Existe-t-il des approches existantes utilisées pour résoudre les conflits conjugaux chez les immigrants congolais vivant à Durban? Si oui, quels sont-ils et comment fonctionnent-ils?

12. Quelle est l'efficacité des approches de résolution des conflits conjugaux chez les familles congolaises immigrants vivant à Durban

13. Quelles sont vos suggestions pour prévenir et gérer les conflits conjugaux?

15. Autres commentaires -----

SWAHILI VERSION

Mahojiano ratiba (kwa washiriki)

1. Je, unaweza kuniambia ambapo wewe kutoka?
2. Ni kwa muda gani umekuwa katika Afrika Kusini?
3. Nini sasa hali yako ajira? (Walioajiriwa / ajira, kujiajiri)?
4. Kutokana na uzoefu yako unadhani kuna migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa familia wahamiaje wakutoka Kongo wanaoishi katika Durban? Kama 'Ndiyo' Fafanua, jinsi gani?
5. Nini ngazi nguvu inaweza kuwa migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa wahamiaji wakutoka Kongo wanaishi katika Durban? Tafadhali, Jibu moja na kueleza jinsi gani?
 - a) Mbinu sana
 - b) Juu
 - c) Chini
 - d) Chini sana
6. ni matokeo gani ya migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa wahamiaji wa Kongo wanaishi katika Durban nini?
7. Unafikiri ni nini matokeo mabaya ya migogoro ya ndoa katika wahamiaji wakutoka Kongo wanaoishi Durban?
8. Unafikiri ni sababu gani kuu ya migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa Kongo wahamiaji wanaoishi katika Durban?
9. Je, unafikiri kwamba vyanzo vya migogoro ya ndoa kuwa na uhusiano na uhamiaji?

10. Katika kesi ya migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa wahamiaji wa Kongo wanaishi katika Durban, nani ambaye kuingilia kati? Na nini yeye anasaidia , tafadhari eleza kwa urefu?
11. Je, kuna mbinu yoyote zilizopo zinatumiwa katika migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa wahamiaji wa kutoka Kongo wanaishi katika Durban? Kama ni ndivyo, taja hizo na jinsi gani zinapo tumika?
12. Je, Jinsi ya ufanisi ni ndoa utatuzi wa migogoro inapokaribia miongoni mwa familia wa Kongomani wahamiaji wanaoishi katika Durban?
13. Je, ni mapendekezo yako ili kuzuia na kusimamia migogoro ya ndoa wakati kutokea?
14. Maoni yoyote mengine

Interviews schedule (for Church Leader)

1. Can you tell me where you coming from?
2. Could briefly describe your role as Church Leader with regard to family's issues?
3. From your experience do you think there is marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban? If 'Yes' Explain, how?
4. To what extent would describe marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban?
5. What do you think to be the causes of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant couple living in Durban?

6. Do you think that the causes of marital conflict have relationship with migration?
7. Are there any existing approaches you use to resolve marital conflicts? If so, what are these and how do they function?
8. What are our suggestions to prevent and manage marital conflict when occur?
9. Any other comments

SWAHILI VERSION

Mahojiano ratiba (kwa Kiongozi wa Kanisa)

1. Je, unaweza kuniambia ambapo kuja kutoka?
2. Je ufupi kuelezea jukumu lako kama Kiongozi wa Kanisa kuhusiana na masuala ya familia?
3. Kutokana na uzoefu yako unadhani kuna migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa familia Kongo wahamiaji wanaoishi katika Durban? Kama 'Ndiyo' Fafanua, jinsi gani?
4. Kwa kiasi gani kuelezea migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa familia Kongo wahamiaji wanaoishi katika Durban?
5. Unafikiri kuwa sababu ya migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa Kongo wahamiaji wanandoa wanaoishi katika Durban?
6. Je, unafikiri kwamba vyanzo vya migogoro ya ndoa kuwa na uhusiano na uhamiaji?
7. Je, kuna mbinu yoyote zilizopo wewe kutumia katika kutatua mizozo katika ndoa? Kama ni hivyo, nini ni haya na jinsi gani wao kazi?
8. mapendekezo yetu ya kuzuia na kusimamia migogoro ya ndoa wakati kutokea nini?
9. Maoni yoyote mengine

FRENCH VERSION

Calendrier des entrevues (pour le Chef de l'Église)

1. Pouvez-vous me dire d'où venez- vous?
2. Pourriez-vous décrire brièvement votre rôle en tant que chef de l'Église en ce qui concerne les problèmes de la famille?
3. D'après votre expérience, pensez-vous qu'il existe des conflits conjugaux entre les familles congolaises migrantes vivant à Durban? Si «Oui» Expliquez, comment?
4. Dans quelle mesure décrirait-on les conflits conjugaux entre les familles congolaises migrantes vivant à Durban?
5. Quelles sont, selon vous, les causes des conflits conjugaux chez les immigrants congolais vivant à Durban?

6. Pensez-vous que les causes des conflits conjugaux ont des liens avec la migration?
7. Existe-t-il des approches existantes que vous utilisez pour résoudre les conflits conjugaux? Si oui, quels sont-ils et comment fonctionnent-ils?
8. Quelles sont vos suggestions pour prévenir et gérer les conflits conjugaux?

9. Autres observations

Interviews schedule (for Church Counsellors)

1. Can you tell me where you coming from?
2. Could briefly describe your role as Church Counsellor with regard to family's issues?
3. From your experience do you encounter marital conflict cases in your functions as church counsellor? If yes, please explain?
4. To what extent would describe marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban?
5. What do you think to be the causes of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant couple living in Durban?
6. Do you think that the causes of marital conflict have relationship with migration?
7. Are there any existing approaches you use to resolve marital conflicts? If so, what are these and how do they function?
8. What are your suggestions to prevent and manage marital conflict when occur?
9. Any other comments?

FRENCH VERSION

Calendrier des entrevues (pour les conseillers d'Église)

1. Pouvez-vous me dire d'où vous venez?
2. Pouvez-vous décrire brièvement votre rôle de conseiller de l'Église en ce qui concerne les problèmes de la famille?
3. D'après votre expérience, rencontrez-vous des cas de conflit conjugal dans vos fonctions de conseiller d'église ? Si oui, veuillez expliquer ?

4. Dans quelle mesure décrirait-on les conflits conjugaux entre les familles congolaises migrantes vivant à Durban ?
5. Quelles sont, selon vous, les causes des conflits conjugaux chez les migrants congolais vivant à Durban ?
6. Pensez-vous que les causes des conflits conjugaux ont des liens avec la migration ?
7. Existe-t-il des approches existantes que vous utilisez pour résoudre les conflits conjugaux ? Si oui, quels sont-ils et comment fonctionnent-ils ?

8. Quelles sont vos suggestions pour prévenir et gérer les conflits conjugaux ?
9. Autres commentaires ?

SWAHILI VERSION

Mahojiano ratiba (kwa Mshauri wa Kanisa)

1. Je, unaweza kuniambia wewe kutoka wapi?
2. Je, ufupi kuelezea jukumu lako kama Mshauri wa kanisa kuhusiana na masuala ya familia?
3. Kutokana na uzoefu wako , Je, wewe kukutana na kesi za ndoa migogoro katika kazi yako kama mshauri wa kanisa? Kama ndiyo, tafadhali kueleza?

4. Kwa kiasi gani kuelezea migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa familia ya wa Kongomani wahamiaji wanaoishi katika Durban?
5. Unafikiri kuwa sababu ya migogoro ya ndoa miongoni mwa wa Kongomani wahamiaji wanandoa wanaoishi katika Durban?
6. Je, unafikiri kwamba vyanzo vya migogoro ya ndoa kuwa na uhusiano na uhamiaji?
7. Je, kuna mbinu yoyote zilizopo wewe kutumia katika kutatua mizozo katika ndoa? Kama ni ndivyo, taja hizo na jinsi gani zinazotumikishwa?

8. Toa mapendekezo yako ili kuzuia na kusimamia migogoro ya ndoa wakati kutokea ?
9. Maoni yoyote nyingine?.

SECTION B. SOME OF THE INTERVIEWS RESPONSES FROM PARTICIPANTS AND KEY INFORMANTS.

Interviews responses from (participant male no 1)

1. Can you tell me where you coming from?

A. I am from Democratic Republic of Congo

2. How long have you been in South Africa?

A. I have been in SA 16 years.

3. What is your current employment status? (Employed/ unemployed, self-employed)?

A. I am employed

4. From your experience do you think there is marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban? If 'Yes' Explain, how?

A. Yes, there is marital conflict among Congolese migrant families. I can justify by people statement whom I interact with indicate that marital conflict is prevalent among Congolese migrant families in Durban. That is from general understanding that the conflict is very high among Congolese Migrant families and this can be justified by the number of divorce I heard among Congolese migrants in Durban.

5. Could you describe the extent of marital conflict among Congolese families' migrants living in Durban?

A. Yes. The conflict what I can see is very high. There is marital conflict among Congolese migrant in Durban. I can justify this by the fact that according to the conflict I saw from other families from Congolese and I heard from my friends, there are marital conflicts among Congolese migrant families in Durban. This means that, when you realize from the experience we had in marriage, there is no family without any kind of mistakes but the difference is that some couples know how to deal with their difference before anyone even their children hears that, while others are not, that is when you hear from their friends or their church members saying that you know something is not good to that family and so on. In summary, I agree that conflict is there but some couples they find the way to come together after their conflict.

6. What are the results of marital conflict among Congolese migrants living in Durban?

Yes, any type of conflict has negative results, so which also, where there is no Unit, nothing can work. One negative result is the poverty because of the lack of support, may be social breakdown, process of socialization may be lacking. There are many results of marital conflict among DRC's migrant's families in Durban.

7. What do you think are the negative effects of marital conflict?

Yes, the negative consequences are overreaching, can be psychological effects where one is affected psychologically as result of conflict. Children also of the couples are affected by the process, what is happening between both parents, this affects psychological states of children. Other negative effects can be on the couples themselves; it creates anger, stress, and hatred. This has also negative consequences on the extended families, where stress from the couples transferred to extended family and comes concerned and it becomes social issues.

8. What do you think are the root causes of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant living in Durban?

As you know, majority of Congolese here in Durban, have no jobs. You see like me, I have six children. I do not have a job. I only sell the “Kitenge” door to door. Sometimes, I cannot make even R50 per day, sometimes I come back home empty handed. How can I feed and send to school all these children. In addition, my wife is just doing lousy job. She earns very little. What is problematic with woman, she will not understand that I am also struggling as she does. She will think that I make more money than she does, she thinks that I am taking money to other women and when I explain to her, she does not understand and I end up by being angry then we start fighting.

9. Do you think that the causes of marital conflict have relationship with migration?

Yes, migration can affect. Because when you migrate, you expose to new cultures. You find people try to adapt to cultures of the hosting country, changing behaviour and also economic conditions to which migrants' community have expose to, exclusions, the lack of opportunities, so all those things create the situations where they affect the way of interacting within couples.

10. In the case of marital conflict among Congolese migrants living in Durban, who intervene? And what does she/he do?

there are people who intervene, such as Church leaders are assisting their congregants to resolve marital conflict, even close friends you can talk to your friend and advise you how to resolve conflict, people you came in the same place also assist the families how to resolve the conflict; also talking to locals to whom you feel they are friends. What person who intervene does, depend to the one person to another, sometimes he/she just advice one party how to behave in a certain particular situation. May also advise and bring both parties together, so they can talk about their differences. That depends to the problem to problem. I cannot say there is a common way they applied across to certain problem.

11. Are there any existing approaches used to marital conflicts resolution among Congolese migrant living in Durban? If so, what are these and how do they function?

As far as I am aware of, I am not sure if there is any existing formal way of approaching this. I think it depend from the individuals to individuals. They are no platforms where, we have to say, when this happens, this is the way they apply to resolve marital conflict. From my own approach, when I have conflict with my partner, dialogue is the first approach I used to resolve the conflict, secondly, is stay a way for a while and discuss about the issues with her after. Other approach I used is to forget about the issues and move on.

12. How effective are marital conflict resolution approaches among Congolese migrant families living in Durban

Yes, these methods are effective for me. Because are worked when I applied them.

13. What are your suggestions to prevent and manage marital conflict when occur?

A. My suggestions, is people to take life easy, married couples to consider each other as important, inspired social issues, social isolations, economic conditions married couples living life cannot be an excuse for couples to come with marital conflict. I think this are some of the important things couples should with of. Because the issues are bringing conflict are not the issues of who does what or who does this. But is thinks comes with the way of thinking.

Interviews responses (from participant female No 1)

1. Can you tell me where you coming from?

A. I am from Democratic Republic of Congo

2. How long have you been in South Africa?

A. 5 years

3. What is your current employment status? (Employed/ unemployed, self-employed)?

A. unemployed

4. From your experience do you think there is marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban? If 'Yes' Explain, how?

A. Yes, there is marital conflict among Congolese migrant in Durban

5. Could you describe the extent of marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban?

Marital conflict is very high. What I can add is that we cannot deny the presence of marital conflict among Congolese community living in Durban. But marital conflict is not unique to them, it happens everywhere; even back from my country we have families that have always conflict. Husband and wife do not understand each other. Even here in South Africa, there is too much conflict in the families. Yes, marital conflict is there, we cannot deny that.

6. What are the results of marital conflict among Congolese migrants living in Durban?

Yes, there many negative results of marital conflict. Some of the Congolese migrant in Durban are divorced

7. What do you think are the negative effects of marital conflict?

Marital conflict has different consequences on couple themselves, on children, extended families and the community in general. You know, when there is a conflict in a family everyone is concerned. Children are not happy with the

relation of their parents, in laws are also very worried of marital conflict happening. You know us Congolese, if you marry a wife, she is not a wife for the husband, and she is a wife of a community and the extended family, because her contribution is above the household. I can say that most of the conflict happening in the married couples has the source from financial means and is the man as head of the family in charge of providing for his family. Therefore, when the wife asks him and is not in position of proving and there follow a miscommunication in the process, then the husband gets angry and the negative result from that is to beat his wife. Secondly, the children are not feeling comfortable in the house, some of them run away from home and go to the fathers or mothers' friends, and this is what is happening even in Congolese families here in South Africa.

8. What do you think are the root causes of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant living in Durban?

What I see is the root cause of marital conflict is misunderstanding one of the partners. Other cause is family stress and other one is changing behavior of DRC' man or woman and learn the new behaviour in this country. Sister, many families are breaking down. You can think that wife and husband are living together, but in reality are not. You can find a man with his own bed and a woman with her own, but both living in the same house, because of mistrust. Congolese men undermine women from their country and they say that most of women from the DRC are not beautiful and they prefer to have South African girls and they say are easy to get, you will find a married man with too many girlfriends and that causes many problems for many families and that why you see many divorces happening now.

9. Do you think that the causes of marital conflict have relationship with migration?

For me I think the causes of marital conflict have relationship with migration. Because you may find many men and women has changed their behaviour, they learn different behaviour comparing to how men and woman were behaving in our home country. What I can add is that when people migrate they feel free, especially the women, they feel that because there are away from the patriarchal, they can do whatever they want, and this bring more conflict between them and their husbands. Men and women learn different behaviour which is not good. And this creates the conflict between the married couples.

10. In the case of marital conflict among Congolese migrants living in Durban, who intervene? And what does she/he do?

Yes, there are people who intervene to assist married couples to resolve the conflict. For instance, the close friends, Pastors assist their married congregants when the conflict occurs among one of the married couples attending their Church. This means that when we face challenges in our relationship, as you know some of us have no family members to whom you can turn to, but we have made friends through our associations, mainly people from the same church and when things are not going well, you can approach one of the friends who you trust the most and explain to her the situation, then she can advise you on how to deal with that problem. It is good, but you need to know what kind of friend you talking to.

11. Are there any existing approaches used to marital conflicts resolution among Congolese migrant living in Durban? If so, what are these and how do they function?

Yes, there are many methods. One I can say is Negotiation, when the conflict occurs between husband and wife in the family, each and every one need to come down and discuss the matters finds the good solution.

12. How effective are marital conflict resolution approaches among Congolese migrant families living in Durban.

The effectiveness of marital conflict resolution, depend to one couple to another. Some couples, they can use their methods and works and others their methods works for sometimes. But what I realized is that the methods which are affective are those used by each couples to resolves their conflict, when the third party intervene sometimes they respect him/ her when she/ he is around , they agreed that everything is coming on normal way for them . But after she/he left conflict started again.

13. What are your suggestions to prevent and manage marital conflict when occur?

My suggestion is that couples need to come together and discuss on the issue and find the solution on the matter both together.

Interview response from (Church Leader No 1)

1. Can you tell me where you coming from?

I am from DRC

2. Could briefly describe your role as Church Leader with regard to family's issues?

My role as Church leader with regard to family conflict we do the best to mediate and solve family conflicts when they occur within the family, couples or child-parents among our congregants. We also advise them how to live in peaceful way before conflict happens in order to prevent marital conflict, parent- child conflict, etc. We insist that each partner must be honest to each other, love each other, family sharing objectives and responsibilities, to avoid things that can break down their relationship. We give more focus on dialogue; because we believe that we do not have to resolve the conflict of everyone, but we have to assist them resolve their own problem. We advise couples to spend time together love each other, to be accountable to their spouses, share planes, hopes, dreams, and difficulties in order to prevent and manage their conflicts.

3. From your experience do you think there is marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban? If 'Yes' Explain, how?

Yes, there is no family without conflict. The conflict occurs with different reasons.

Almost, every week, we face question of conflict in refugees' families. Today, you will hear that is happening in that family. Wife or husband will come to see church leader complaining about one another. In some cases, one partner will blame the other partner for not taking one's opinion into consideration. In actual fact when you look at all of these, you will only find out what is there is the miscommunication. Yes, we understand that the

majority of refugee are facing very difficult situation. No jobs, no one to assist and when they faced with all these problems, then the blame begins.

4. To what extent would describe marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban?

I cannot specify the level of conflict among Congolese migrants living in Durban because many families are not attending this Church but there is marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban. The conflict occurs because of different reasons. The conflict happens everywhere, conflict is part of everyday life, we can't avoid it but we can manage it. Specially where two person share responsibilities and it is possible to believe that conflict can happen due to the fact that each person need to achieve his/her own interest. Their interest may differ where at the end of this creates misunderstanding. For this reason, I can conclude that wife and husband coming from different background and each couple has responsibilities to attend to the needs of other and share some responsibilities as needed. Therefore, when each and every couple has not satisfied it is need; this will bring some conflict within their relationships. From my responsibilities as church leader, I can say that I experience issue related to marriages within my congregants and I attend to this by advising the couples on how to resolve their differences.

What I can add is that the level of marital conflict from the congregants in this church the conflict is not high because we tried to assist the families by having a meeting with them. In our Church Agenda we had one day per month for a meeting on how they can live in harmony as Christian couples, we share with them different alternative ways in handling marital and family's conflict.

5. What do you think to be the causes of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant couple living in Durban?

The causes of marital conflict differ from one family to another. Isolation from extended family network is one of the causes of marital conflicts, where many DRC's do not have support from their extended family such as aunties, sisters to assist for instance a woman for the house chores, therefore because of family stresses, this result to marital conflict. The other cause of marital conflict is lack of financial means; this affects the happiness of the couples because they have more stress of how they will survive. From this reason indicated above, communication starts to change in a different direction where husband talk to his wife and because of too much stress of family life, she may misunderstand him, then conflict start from there.

Influence from friends or relatives is also one of the causes of marital conflict, where one of the partner listen to the people from outsider about how she/he is not good, the negatives sides which has not proof, bra bra. From many stories she/ he hears from outside, then one start to accuse each other about what she/he hears from friend or relatives and this end up by marital conflict between both partners. Other cause is the unfaithfulness between both partners.

6. Do you think that the causes of marital conflict have relationship with migration?

Yes, marital conflict has relationship with migration because many Congolese migrants face many challenges in the hosting country due to migration. Among these challenges faced by Congolese migrant families include how to survive, getting Jobs is not easy for them as result of their documents, this affect the relationship of families.

7. Are there any existing approaches you use to resolve marital conflicts? If so, what are these and how do they function?

Yes, there is a method used to resolve marital conflict among couples approached me. I usually call both husband and wife. Asked each to express what happening or the matter between them and the causes of their differences. After then, I mediate them by showing the negative effect of their conflict on their side and on their children is side. I also advise them how to resolve their issues by asking each other forgiveness and assist her/his partner when she/he fails on responsibilities and share all responsibilities and trust each

other and have time together to pray God to assist them in everything. We advise each partner to fulfil his/her responsibilities 100%, whether the other does or not, in order to keep happy marriage. We also add that a home which is both secure and happy must be built on a real understanding of what makes a marriage successful.

8. What are our suggestions to prevent and manage marital conflict when occur?

My suggestions is that the couples need to keep their vows seriously, not only to keep them but also to build a real understanding on what makes a marriage successful. Not build in the basis of 50-50 marriage proposition, where this stands on the point of "If you will do your part, I will do mine." This causes the other partner to step back and refuse to do his 50%. Then the battle rages. The 50-50 marriage is not God's way. The husband and wife who start marriage on a 50-50 basis will always be checking to see if the partner is fulfilling his or her 50%. When one partner falls short, bitterness results in the other. The partner who feels cheated will withhold some of his 50% in an attempt to even the score. Things get worse. Even 90%-10% marriages will not work. What I can add is that marriage is one way in, not the way out. Marriage is the God plan to all men and women. God's way in marriage is 100%-100%. Each partner is expected to give his or her partner 100% even if the other partner fails completely. If only one partner in the marriage faithfully gives his 100%, the home cannot be destroyed. God uses right actions and attitudes of the faithful one to straighten out and restore the failing partner.

9. Any other comments

First I can say that marriage is one way in, not the way out. Marriage is the God plan to all men and women. God's way in marriage is 100%-100%. Each partner is expected to give his or her 100% even if the other partner fails completely. If only one partner in the marriage faithfully gives his 100%, the home cannot be destroyed. God uses right actions and attitudes of the faithful one to straighten out and restore the failing partner.

Interviews responses from (Church Counselors no1)

1. Can you tell me where you coming from?
 - A. I am from DRC
2. Could briefly describe your role as Church Counsellor with regard to family's issues?
 - A. My role as Church Counsellor is the assist or help advice the couples on their marital issues.
3. From your experience do you encounter marital conflict cases in your functions as church counsellor? If yes, please explain?
 - A. Yes, we come across some number of marital conflicts. I can add that we do have a committee of mothers themselves and fathers themselves for their church organization. Both group of mothers and fathers' members of the church had their meeting one day per week and come together themselves in their prayer meetings and after the prayer they to talk few minutes on how they can build a happy marriage and good families. I also organize one day per month with all mothers and fathers to talk on the issue of marital conflict we faced in our families and found alternatives way to resolve marital conflict.
4. To what extent would describe marital conflict among Congolese migrant families living in Durban?
 - A. Marital conflict among Congolese migrant in Durban from popular discussion is high. In addition to this, Husbands have abandoned their wives and children, wife have abandoned their husband and in few cases their children just because of conflicts between the two parties. Many children have been negatively affected by the conflict between partners. Many families are as well divided because of non-endurance, intolerance, impatience and ineffective management of differences in

many migrant homes. There is in some cases silence deaths of many partners just because they cannot release or expose the marginalization or spiritual, emotional and physical abuses that they are going through since they are afraid because of “lack of trust” and “confidentiality risk”.

5. What do you think to be the causes of marital conflicts among Congolese migrant couple living in Durban?

A. From my own experiences the causes of marital conflict are: Family stress; Shifting in labour responsibilities of man or woman different from country of origin; lack of communication between couples; Unfaithfulness between both partners.

6. Do you think that the causes of marital conflict have relationship with migration?

A. Yes, the causes of marital conflict have relationship with migration, because many migrants have the problem on how to survive. This makes a number of Congolese families do not feel secure and this cause marital conflict.

7. Are there any existing approaches you use to resolve marital conflicts? If so, what are these and how do they function?

Yes, there are a number of methods to marital conflict resolution. These are: mediation, Negotiation. How they function, when we faced this issues, I just call both husband and wife sat together and assist them to advice on how they can resolve their disagreement in a good mood. I always tell them that they need to sit and find the what makes them disagree, what they need to do in order to fulfil the need of each other as a partner and each partner to know her/his responsibilities in the home and what the best to fulfil her/his responsibilities even assist his/her partner when she/ he fails to fulfil his/her own. This will assist them to faithful one to straighten out and restore the failing partner and their marriage will be happy, where there are these things their marriage cannot be destroyed.

8. What are your suggestions to prevent and manage marital conflict when occur?

My suggestions are in Ephesians 5:18-33. Both husband and wife have different instructions and responsibilities assigned to them.

Wife:

a) Submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

1 Peter 3:1. When a man fails to be what he should be in marriage, God deals with him.

b) Wife be patient, long-suffering love will finally win the husband's heart and change her behaviour.

C) Ask your spouse for forgiveness for failing to be the kind of mate that God wants.

d) Start submitting sweetly and lovingly.

Husband:

a) Head of the home. This does not mean that the wife is inferior, as seen from 1 Corinthians 11:3, "The head of Christ is God". Being under authority is not a position of inferiority. Jesus is God and is equal with the Father in all ways, yet in coming to earth as a man and dying for us, He submitted Himself to His father in all things. In this view Jesus submitting to His Father, He did not become inferior. He did all things because His Father wanted it, and He loved His father. Submission is not a mark of inferiority. This is the example on how husband and wife need to be in their relationships).

b) Love your wife enough to die for her. God, after telling wives to submit, severely limits the man's right to do anything that he pleases. God takes away man's right to use his authority irresponsible by telling him, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."

c) Husband be patient, long-suffering love will finally win the wife's heart and change her behaviour.

d) Ask your spouse for forgiveness for failing to be the kind of mate that God wants.

e) Start submitting sweetly and lovingly.



01 December 2015

Mrs Beatrice Umubyeyi (210554096)
School of Social Sciences
Howard College Campus

Dear Mrs Umubyeyi,

Protocol reference number : HSS/1618/015D

Project title: Probing marital conflicts within the context of migrant families from Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal Province

Provisional Approval – Full Committee Reviewed Protocol

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 30 October 2015 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee on 25 November 2015. The protocol has been provisionally approved, subject to the following conditions set out below being addressed:

General

1. Please note that a copy of the data should be stored with the School / Supervisor.


Research Methodology

2. Interview Schedule: Will the same questions be used for the participants, church elders and counsellors?

This approval is granted provisionally and the final clearance for this project will be given once the above mentioned condition has been met. Note that data collection may not proceed until final ethics approval letter has been issued after the remaining conditions have been met and approved by the research ethics committee.

Kindly submit your response to Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair) % Research Office, Westville Campus as soon as possible

Yours faithfully


.....
pp Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

cc Supervisor: Dr Maheshvari Naidu
cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Sabine Marschall
cc School Administrator: Ms Nancy Mudau

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

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