

**A QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING BLACK WOMEN'S
PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACT OF WOMEN'S CHANGING SOCIO-
ECONOMIC STATUS ON INTIMATE HETEROSEXUAL
RELATIONSHIPS**

by

Precious Sedumedi (206514800)

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ABSTRACT

This study explored Black women's perceptions of the impact of women's changing socio-economic status on their intimate relationships. The study used the theoretical resources of social constructionism and feminism. Seven Black women (African, 'Coloured', and Indian) were recruited from a banking and an academic institution using convenience non-probability sampling technique. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data which was analysed using thematic analysis. The study found that participants viewed the change in women's socio-economic status and roles as rendering some women more vulnerable to abuse. The participants reported that women's shift in socio-economic status imposes a threat to masculinity leaving some men feeling intimidated, insecure, and emasculated. Most men were seen as responding to their feelings of intimidation by leaving their partners for a less financially independent woman, or by abusing their current partners. Some men were considered to use domestic violence to exert their power and control over women, express their authority, as well as police and maintain the boundaries of femininity and masculinity. Analysis indicated that for a number of reasons women continue to remain vulnerable to experiencing domestic violence irrespective of their socio-economic status.

It was also evident in the study that some working women find themselves in a dilemma of choosing between their careers and family. Some self-reliant wives were seen as having to forfeit senior occupational ranks due to the expectation that their husbands would be disapproving and unsupportive. The respondents stated that other financially stable women are reluctant to marry because they fear being controlled, losing their sense of autonomy, and the ability to make their own decisions without seeking their husbands' approval. However, it also revealed in this study that women's changing financial status was seen as entitling them with power and control of their sexuality. As the result, women seem to perceive men as being under pressure to be romantic and satisfy their partners' sexual needs so as to maintain the relationship. This study highlights an important area for further research as it is likely that the shift in Black women's socio-economic status will continue to impact and shape heterosexual relationships in particular ways.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence is a serious social problem that affects women across different racial, cultural, and class backgrounds. There is no single or complete definition of domestic violence due to the different theoretical orientations brought to bear on the phenomenon. Furthermore, women who have survived domestic violence draw on different perceptions and meanings to make sense of and articulate their individual experiences. The Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 section one defines domestic violence as physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, psychological, economic abuse; intimidation; harassment; stalking; damage to property; entry into the complainant's residence without consent where the parties do not share the same residence; or any other controlling or abusive behaviour towards a complainant where such conduct harms or may cause imminent harm to the safety, health, or well-being of the complainant. In addition to the definition outlined by the Domestic Violence Act, Shipway (2006) defined domestic violence as a violent behaviour that occurs within a domestic domain between a married or co-habiting couple, and also other members of the family. The phenomenon is seen as co-occurring with abusive behaviours (Barkhuizen & Pretorius, 2005) such as physical, emotional, verbal, and economic abuse (Nordien, Alpaslan, & Pretorius, 2003). The abusive behaviours have serious consequences on the victim and can affect the victim's cognitive, psychological, and emotional well-being (*ibid.*).

Both the conceptualisation and acts of domestic violence have been found to be perpetuated by socio-cultural and gendered roles, heterosexual values, and religious beliefs (Dobash & Dobash, 1992). A central factor concerns socio-inequality between the two genders, manifested most explicitly in women's socio-economic status and financial dependence on men (Buckenham, 1999; MacMillan & Gartner, 1999).

In 1994, South Africa adopted a Constitution of Rights that aims to protect the rights of all South African citizens including the political, civil, and socio-economic rights of women. The most important of these rights include, the right to equality; the right to human dignity; the right to freedom and security of the person which includes the right to

be free from all forms of violence from either the public or private sources; the right to have access to adequate housing; the right to have access to health care, food, water, and social security; and the right to have access to the courts.

Since then great strides have been made to alleviate socio-inequality between males and females, as well as to combat domestic violence (Morrell, 2001). More specifically the outcome of the Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 is evident in the social, legal, and economic domains. The Act aims to eradicate domestic violence by acknowledging that it is a crime on humanity and a violation of women's rights. It aims to protect women's rights in various ways including, permitting the court of law to issue the complainant with a protection order against the perpetrator; as well as assisting and informing the complainants of their rights. The Act, hence, aims to ensure that women have equal social rights in relation to their male counterparts.

There have been numerous strategies aimed at bringing about change in women's socio-economic and political identity, as well as various factors that have resulted in or worked towards increasing the number of Black¹ women in the work-force such as Affirmative Action, globalisation, and feminism. As the result of Affirmative Action, globalisation, feminism, and the emergence of new behavioural and attitude styles in men, an increasing number of women are beginning to participate in the economic sector. According to the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, Affirmative Action strategies are designed to ensure that suitably qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunities, and are equitably represented in all occupational categories and levels in the work-force. In 2005, Statistics S.A. found that 49.9% of women participated in the labour sector compared to 2001 where the figure was 49.4%. Although this is a slightly small difference, the figures are significant enough to indicate that more women are being included in a sector from which they were previously excluded. Furthermore, the Act stated that Affirmative Action measures that are implemented by a designated employer, must include methods to identify and eliminate unfair

¹ In this project, the term 'Black' is used to represent the previously disenfranchised majority, which during apartheid were classified as the distinct racial groups of 'African', 'Coloured', and 'Indian'.

discrimination which adversely affect people from designated groups (Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998). Globalisation is defined as a greater interconnection of people around the world (Eitzen & Zinn, 2009). Globalisation is a process whereby goods, information, people, money, communication, fashion and other forms of culture move across national boundaries (*ibid.*). This process has also played a pivotal role in creating more job opportunities across the world through promoting worldwide economic development (Snowdon, 2007). South Africa has witnessed an occurrence of feminisation of the labour force post-apartheid, whereby a relatively increasing number of women have been in demand and “pushed” into the labour market (Casale & Posel, 2002, p. 1). The feminist movement over the last 30 years has also played a role in the empowerment of women (Prajapati & Sweden, 2008). Its primary goal has been to ensure gender equality by dispersing power dynamics that are used to preserve social opportunities for males in a patriarchal society (Kiguwa, 2004). Feminism is discussed in further detail in chapter two.

Some males also seem to become active in promoting gender equality by deviating from patriarchal norms and dominant socio-gendered stereotypes (Morrell, 2001). These men appear to be adopting the image of the “new man” (p. 4) who is seen as supportive of the liberation of women, as well as women’s access to have equal socio-economic, and political opportunities in relation to men (Morrell, 2001). The new man trope therefore illustrates that not all men are governed by patriarchal principles, and that masculinity is fluid and changeable, and not fixed as it was previously illustrated (*ibid.*).

Despite various gender policies that aim to protect women’s rights and create equal social opportunities, as well as a slight change in some men’s attitudes and behaviours, gender-based violence continues to dominate our society (Ntlama, 2003). Garcia-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise, and Watts (2006) estimated that between 15-75% of women globally experienced intimate partner violence. Abrahams, Jewkes, Laubscher, and Hoffman (2006) found that 42.3% of women in Cape Town were abused by their partners, and 31.8% of women in Eastern Cape experienced intimate partner violence (Jewkes, Nduna, Levin, Jama, Dunkle, Khuzwayo, Koss, & Duwury, 2006). Gupta,

Silverman, Hemenway, Acevedo-Garcia, Stein, and Williams (2008) reported that 27.5% of male participants in their study admitted to physically abusing their partners. In 1997, Statistics S.A. found that 25-60% of women were battered by their partners. This indicates that more than half of women were experiencing domestic violence post-apartheid. Furthermore, during 2003-2004 a total of 52 733 cases of rape nationally were reported to the South African Police Service (Combrinck, 2005). The incidents of rape have left many women feeling fearful, unsafe, and 'cheated' of their rights, freedom, and a sense of belonging (Dosekun, 2007). It is important to note that the abovementioned statistics on domestic violence and rape are an unreliable indicator of the actual prevalence of the phenomenon. This is because domestic violence is less likely to be reported by victims, or recorded by social welfare, and law enforcement agencies, due to a number of factors including that it is still treated as a phenomenon restricted to the private domain (Statistics S.A., 1997).

Advancement in women's rights and financial status therefore seems to be inadequate in protecting women from experiencing domestic violence (Ntlama, 2003). Women's rapid social upward mobility seems to precipitate and perpetuate domestic violence because it disconcerts masculinity, especially the financial provision aspect (Jeftha, 2006). Some men seem to feel 'robbed' of their duty as the head of the domestic environment due to women's participation in the economic domain (Morrell, 2002). These men think that women's involvement in the labour market has resulted in an increasing number of males unemployed (Ichou, 2008). Most unemployed men therefore seem to feel loss of authority in the household, diminished sense of respect, emasculated, frustrated, and irritated (*ibid.*). Some of these men have been seen to respond to their feelings of emasculation by employing domestic violence which is used to assert and protect their masculinity (*ibid.*). This indicates that money in a patriarchal society symbolises power, hence, males' employment plays an important role in constructing masculinity (Ichou, 2008; Silberschmidt, 1999).

The notion of an 'independent woman' is also relative, with its meaning changing from context to context. Independence has been described as an individual's ability to claim

power and control of her life, and stands in opposition to ‘dependence’ which denotes a reliance on others for support, approval, and reassurance (Chantler, 2006). As such independence indicates strength, autonomy, agency, and assertiveness (Chantler, 2006). Chantler (2006) asserted that Western culture considers an individual to either be independent (which is desired by society) or dependent (which is undesired by society). The opposing relationship between independence and dependence seems to restrict an individual from being inter-dependent (Chantler, 2006). Inter-dependence is a reciprocal relationship amongst members of the community and it is a common practice amongst most indigenous cultures (Nwoye, 2006). The notion of ‘independence’ has been criticised for privileging Whites, heterosexuals, abled-bodied individuals, and middle-class males, while oppressing and marginalising the ‘othered’ groups (Chantler, 2006). The ‘othered’ includes the disabled-bodies, indigenous cultures, and people from different racial, sexual orientation, and class backgrounds (*ibid.*).

The Western views of the self also seem to differ from the indigenous perceptions of the self (the African self) (Nwoye, 2006). The worldviews of the African self are oriented to the collective and does not focus on individualism like the Western self (*ibid.*). It is important to acknowledge that the dominant construction of ‘The West’ and ‘Africa’ as homogenous, distinct categories that are in a binary relationship is problematic. This perception ignores the diversity and fragmentation within and between ‘The West’ and ‘Africa’ (Frankish, Ndlovu, & Clark, 2009, under review). Furthermore, it fails to take into account the role that social, economic, political, cultural, religious, and linguistic entities play in constructing and defining ‘Africa’ and ‘The West’ (*ibid.*). The abovementioned entities intersect with each other in producing an intricate and entangled matrix (*ibid.*). The multifaceted networks within this ‘matrix’ that produce and perpetuate the differences and similarities between ‘Africa’ and ‘The West’ need to be acknowledged, by acknowledging colonial histories and the impact on identities across the world, but particularly in our continent. This highlights the complexity of the construction of a self (whether African or Western) and the need for a closer scrutiny of the widespread simplistic portrayals of these identity constructs. These meanings in society are not produced through people acting in isolation, instead through language and

interacting with each other in a system that is governed by a permeable culture (Burr, 1995; Kiguwa, 2006; Mkhize, 2004). According to Mkhize (2004), “the psychological needs and experiences of people in developing societies should not be explained solely with reference to conceptual categories and philosophical systems imported from the West” (p. 31). Instead, the complexity of the African self, their needs and experiences should be understood through recognition and acknowledgement of the dynamic interpenetration of various worldviews (ibid.).

Cultures are constantly influencing and changing each other, hence, indicating that culture is not static but is flexible (Clark, 2006; Swartz, 1998). Globalisation (defined on page four) is considered to play a significant role in producing worldwide changes that are increasingly remoulding the lives of people globally (Eitzen & Zinn, 2009). This process is perceived to not only have economic, but also socio-political and cultural implications. Manfred (2009) in his argument of cultural homogenization and hybridization stated that, although society seems to be witnessing a rise of an increasing homogenized popular culture, there are some countries which attempt to resist cultural imperialism. These include the banning of satellite dishes in Iran, as well as the French imposition of tariffs and quotas on imported film and television (ibid.). Manfred (2009) argued that globalisation does not seem to be producing cultural sameness but “hybridity” (p. 148). Cultural hybridity is characterised by “cultural borrowing” (p. 148) in a complex interaction between the global and local cultures, and is visible in fashion, music, dance, film, food, and language (Manfred, 2009). This suggest that most societies in the contemporary context do not possess an “authentic” and “self-contained” culture (ibid., p. 150), but that various cultures are influencing each other.

Most Black women seem to find themselves in a double-bind situation during this hybridization of cultures. Black women were considered inferior by the Western culture due to their indigenous cultural values (Nwoye, 2006), and now most Black women are perceived by their community as selfish, insensitive, cold, and manipulative (Parks-Stamm, 2008) because they are diverging from ‘ubuntu’ values by striving for independence. However, Parks-Stamm (2008) asserted that society seems to be

accepting and less disparaging of ‘independent women’ who are seen as “communally-oriented” (p. 9) and use their proficiency to empower, as well as support their community members. This seems to suggest that Black women who strive for independence are not ridiculed by their community provided that they maintain and adhere to ‘ubuntu’ values.

Ironically, although the Western society endeavours towards the notion of ‘independence’, some American women who strive for ‘independence’ seem to also find themselves in a double-bind situation. Most of these women received enormous media attention in the early 1950’s, and were viewed with suspicion and considered to pose a threat to the dominant notion of manhood (Steinzig, 1998). This is because these ‘independent women’ indicated that women are capable of providing for themselves, hence, ‘do not need a man’ (Steinzig, 1998). This suggests that the construal of ‘independence’ is problematised when masculinity is at risk as the result of women claiming autonomy, power, and control.

There have been numerous studies conducted to research domestic violence. Quantitative studies and studies that focused on fiscally dependent women’s experiences on domestic violence, have suggested gendered economic disparity significantly contributes to woman abuse. This current study is important because it focuses on Black women’s perceptions of the impact that women’s upward social mobility poses on their intimate heterosexual relationships. The concept ‘perceptions’ in this particular research is drawn on in its broad sense, referring to an individual’s views and opinions on a particular phenomenon. In this study, it refers to Black women’s views on the impact that women’s general upward socio-economic shift has had on their intimate heterosexual relationships in the contemporary South African context. The notion of ‘perceptions’ in this study is informed by a social constructionist theoretical framework, which posits that people’s perceptions and behaviour the meaning that they attribute to phenomena are socio-culturally and historically specific (Burr, 1995). These views and meanings are actively produced by language and reproduced through social interaction (ibid.). Furthermore, these perceptions are not static but are fluid and change across time and different socio-cultural contexts (Burr, 1995; Kiguwa, 2006). The results of this study therefore

contribute to the understanding and conceptualisation of Black women's economic status and the challenges they encounter in their relationships.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

There have been many studies conducted both locally and internationally that have explored the multifaceted dynamics of gender relations and heterosexual relationships. These studies have many different emphases and nuances. However, domestic violence is common and prominent in most studies on gender relations and intimate heterosexual relationships. In this regard, the predominant focus of most quantitative studies both locally and internationally was the determinants of domestic violence, examining the types and severity of domestic violence, and the relationship between socio-economic status, gender, and domestic abuse. Qualitative studies focused on women's perceptions and experiences of domestic violence, as well as the influence of broader social factors such as culture and poverty on woman abuse.

This literature review intertwines a theoretical review with a thematic review linked to the topic. Regarding the theoretical review, it first outlines two dominant theoretical perspectives on this study's topic, i.e. learning theories and family violence theory. It then goes on to outline social constructionist theory as a broad theoretical framework. This study draws more specifically on mainstream feminist theory as it provides useful theoretical and methodological resources to explore the power dynamics between men and women.

2.2. Essentialist views of gender difference

There are various theoretical perspectives that aim to understand and explain gender differences as well as the phenomenon of domestic violence. Essentialist perspectives have long been powerful and pervasive in shaping how people think about men and women, as well as violence. This perspective postulates that gender differences are an essence, innate, hence, immutable (Mahalingam, 2003). Essentialism considers masculinity to be innate qualities that distinguish males from females (Greig, Kimmel, & Lang, 2000). These innate qualities include males being perceived as innately hard, aggressive, strong, competent, decisive, productive, and warriors, whilst females are

perceived as soft, passive, weak, inferior, incompetent, indecisive, reproductive, nurturing and caring (*ibid.*). The above innate qualities or sex differences are regarded to be embedded in the biological mechanisms of individuals such as genes, blood, different hormonal level, and brain size (Feldman, 2002). Essentialism therefore seems to perpetuate gender inequality because some people adhere to its perspectives, and think that men are ‘naturally’ competent, decisive etcetera in relation to women (*ibid.*).

Gender theorists and feminists have rejected the essentialist views and stressed that it is perpetuating the dichotomous relationship between masculinity and femininity, as well as legitimising and concealing the power dynamics between the two genders (Greig *et al.*, 2000; Trawick, 1990 in Mahalingam, 2003). Essentialist views have been critiqued as masking these power dynamics and in so doing, legitimizing social hierarchies along the dimensions of gender and race (Grosz, 1994; Fuss, 1989). Long (1990) asserted that gender differences are not biologically defined, but are socially constructed and acquired through social interaction.

2.3. Heterosexual gender roles and relations

Dominant hegemonic (heterosexual) gender roles permeate every aspect of our everyday lives and our identities in the world. The world of formal employment (and even notions of ‘work’) is impacted by these constructions of gender, of masculinity and femininity. Research by Statistics S.A (2005) suggests that males continue to dominate the labour market in relation to females. A Labour force survey conducted in South Africa over a five year period from September 2001 to September 2005 indicated that more women are being employed (a slight increase of 0.5%) and that unemployment rates amongst women had declined by 2.1% in this time. The gendered division of labour has a significant impact on gender relations in public and private domains. The employment patterns of women in the work-force are influenced by a range of factors, both overtly political as well as socio-cultural. According to Hakim (1991), women who choose domestic responsibilities over occupational commitments prefer working part-time and appear to be satisfied with low-level and poorly paid employment compared to women who are career-driven. However, issues of women’s employment patterns cannot be discussed

without taking into account historical, political, and socio-cultural influence. Feminists (discussed in-depth later) stressed that a patriarchal institution deliberately preserves employment that lacks job security, has low income and career prospects for women (Crompton & Harris, 1998). The processes of labour inequality are not solely associated with gender, but also intricately intersect with other structures of subordination (Mills, 2003).

Women have been construed as naturally caring, with nurturance and care constructed as feminine qualities (Nicholson, 1997). Even when women have entered the formal workplace, they have done so within a feminised job market, taking on mainly service sector jobs that still perpetuate the stereotype that women are natural carers of others (*ibid.*). The construction of women as having or needing to have these feminised traits has maintained arguments that have legitimated the woman's place as being in the domestic, child-rearing domain of the home – a space of informal, unrecognised, unpaid labour (Dobash & Dobash, 1992).

The notion of being a 'breadwinner' is deeply enmeshed in socio-cultural relations and economic structures, and it is used to promote gendered division of labour (Connell, 1995). For instance, Adams and Govender (2008) in a study about adolescent males' subscription to dominant masculine norms found that, 61% of participants in their study stated that their fathers are the main financial providers in the household, compared to 27% of participants who stated that their mothers are the main financial providers. However, due to the movements that aim for gender equality in the work-place, the dichotomous relationship between female and male workers seems to be changing. This has resulted in some men being unemployed, feeling trapped in their "youth" (p. 6), and thinking that society does not recognise them as 'men' (Baker & Ricardo, 2005). It is ironic that some unemployed men see themselves as having a status of a 'minor' because historically it has been women who have been culturally represented as "childlike" (p. 189), and this representation was used to exclude women from participating in the public sphere (Boonzaier, 2008). However, some women seem to be also negatively affected by the shift in the orthodox construction of masculinity. For instance, Walker (2005) in a

study that looked at men's behaviour post1994 found that some men think that other women are upset that their boyfriends in the contemporary South African context are struggling to financially provide for them. This seems to suggest that although a patriarchal society explicitly benefits men, some women also subtly benefited from their male partner's socio-economic achievement.

Notions of labour also play a significant role in maintaining socio-gendered roles and constructing their identities (Smuts, 2006). Males' employment and their ability to financially provide for their family seem to affirm their masculinity, and fabricate their sense of self-worth, self-esteem, and dignity (Augustine, 2002). For instance, most adolescent boys in Jeftha's (2006) study that looked at the construction of masculinity and risk-taking behaviour among adolescent boys in seven schools in the Western Cape stated that, a "real man" (p. 62) is a man who is employed and does "real work" (p. 60) which includes working with his hands and sweating. Furthermore, the participants in this particular study by Jeftha (2006) reported that a "real man" has to be the main breadwinner and the head of the household. This seems to allude to hegemonic masculinity which is a construal of men as competitive, decisive, competent, dominant, the 'head of the household', and most importantly financial providers in the domestic realm (Kordvani, 2002). These men also have been seen to feel angry and frustrated when their partners are not physically and emotionally available to them due to work obligations (Augustine, 2002). This is because women in a patriarchal society are considered to be males' 'objects' and one of their duties is to fulfil and satisfy men's needs (Connell, 2002). Women's participation in the labour force, hence, is seen as rendering women less available to their male partners, and less available to fulfil their domestic duties. Some males think that working wives who fail to fulfil their domestic duties deserve to be battered by their husbands (Jeftha, 2006). The physical violence is used to discipline and teach women a lesson (Augustine, 2002; Wood & Jewkes, 2001), as well as ensure that they fulfil their socially prescribed duties (Schur, 2007). Violence is often the repercussion of women challenging dominant socio-gendered roles (Reddy, 2004), and aims to ensure that they do not diverge from patriarchal norms irrespective of their economic status (Dobash & Dobash, 1979).

2.3.1 Learning gender roles: Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory has been powerful in shaping understandings of gender roles and relations. Broadly, it posits that socio-gendered roles and behaviour are learned from parents, peers, and most commonly the media. Bandura (1977) stated that children learn appropriate behaviour through observation and imitation. Archer and Lloyd (2002) reported that children's acquired gender beliefs played a significant role in guiding their interaction in the social environment. The children's development of gender identity enables to select and imitate behaviour that applies to their sex. Although children have been found to imitate behaviour displayed by people of their own sex, Archer and Lloyd (2002) also revealed that other children imitate behaviour that they perceive as gender-appropriate irrespective of the sex of the person exhibiting it.

Gender-appropriate actions are subsequently positively reinforced by parents, peers, or teachers which results in repetition of the behaviour (Bandura, 1977; Burr, 1998). Girls in a patriarchal society are taught from childhood by observing their mothers that their role is to be nurturing and fulfilling female domestic duties (Connell, 1987, 1995; Dobash & Dobash, 1979). In contrast, boys are taught from observing their fathers to be breadwinners of the domestic domain (Connell, 1987, 1995; Dobash & Dobash, 1979). This means that children learn from childhood how they are expected to behave in their private sphere. Furthermore, boys are encouraged to play with toys that enhance their spatial skills such as building blocks and construction kits, whilst girls are given dolls and kitchen items.

Social learning theory has been criticised for failing to acknowledge individual agency, and for depicting individuals as passively responding to the socialising agents in their surrounding environment (Boonzaier & De la Rey, 2006). Furthermore, this theory has been critiqued for not incorporating any understanding of broader contextual factors such as culture, history, economics and power in shaping how children grow into adults.

2.3.2 The impact of gendered economic disparity: Family Violence Theory

Family violence theory advocates that abuse is perpetuated by various social factors including socio-economic inequality and unemployment. This is because the economic inequity creates feelings of jealousy, tension and frustration amongst the couple (O'Neill, 1998 in Boonzaier, 2003). The National Family Violence Survey (1975-1985, as cited in Anderson, 1997) indicated that high occurrence of domestic violence was among unemployed, low economic income, and uneducated couples. Cunradi, Todd, Duke, and Ames (2009) in a study that investigated the contribution of male unemployment and each partner's drinking problem to risk for male-to-female partner violence and female-to-male partner violence found that, domestic violence seems to be prominent amongst unemployed males than males earning a low income in relation to their spouse. Benson, Fox, DeMaris, and Van Wyk (2003) in a study that examined the effects of neighbourhood economic disadvantages and individual economic distress on intimate violence against women reported that, this is because unemployed males experience have more opportunity to interact negatively with their spouse compared to working men, and also have more economic distress (Cunradi *et al.*, 2009). A study by McCloskey's (1996) investigated the relationship between wife abuse and the couples' income and occupational status. It reported that some economically dependent husbands battered their wives because of the economic disparity between the partners. Governed by patriarchal principles, some of these men find themselves in crisis and under pressure to fulfil their financial provider gendered role. Failure to fulfil this domestic duty induces feelings of unconscious frustration and anxiety which are released by battering their wives (McCloskey, 1996).

Furthermore, Barkhuizen and Pretorius (2005) in a study that focused on professional women's experiences of emotional abuse within marriage or co-habiting relationships found that, 11 South African professional women in their study were emotionally and verbally abused by their husbands because of their educational, occupational, and economic achievements. Some of the women who occupied high occupational positions in a study by Patel, Govender, Paruk, and Ramgoon (2006) that looked at working mothers, family-work conflict, and job performance also reported that, their occupational

and economic status seemed to perpetuate problems in their marriage. These women stated that their husbands resented their independence and fiscal status (*ibid.*). The wives' economic status seems to intimidate husbands thus inducing tension in the relationship (Boonzaier, 2005), which results in physical violence, financial abuse, the husband committing extra-marital affairs (Bhowon & Munbauhal, 2005), and feeling distrustful as well as suspicious that his wife is committing adultery with her male colleagues (Ichou, 2008; Kim & Motsei, 2002). However, it is important to acknowledge that there are other factors that perpetuate woman abuse in the household besides economic disparity, such as alcohol abuse to name just one (Boonzaier, 2005; Cunradi *et al.*, 2009).

The findings obtained from Barkhuizen and Pretorius's (2005) differed from other studies conducted in South Africa and internationally that combined qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Kim, Watts, Hargreaves, Ndhlovu, Phetla, Morison, Busza, Porter, and Pronyk (2007) in a study that focused on understanding the impact of a microfinance-based intervention on women's empowerment and the reduction of intimate partner violence in South Africa reported that, women who live in poverty and are economically dependent seem to be at risk of experiencing intimate partner violence compared to women who are financially independent. Fiscally stable women are less vulnerable to experiencing abuse because they have self-confidence and the courage to leave their violent partners (Kim *et al.*, 2007). In line with Kim *et al.* (2007), a study conducted in Bangladesh found that women's educational and improving economical status protects women from domestic violence because it creates an egalitarian relationship in the domestic domain (Bates, Schuler, Islam, & Islam, 2004; Koenig, Ahmed, Hossain, & Mozumber, 2003; Lane, 2003). These women have been seen to have control of their income, as well as freedom of speech and movement (Bates *et al.*, 2004; Koenig *et al.*, 2003; Lane, 2003). The strengths of the aforementioned studies are that the sample size was large, and they combined quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. Furthermore, a re-survey and re-interviews were conducted in a study by Kim *et al.* (2007) after a two year period to assess for change in women's experiences of abuse. The

nature of the studies thus ensured reliability and validity, as well as dependability and transferability of the findings.

While family violence theory makes a useful contribution to understanding the links between women's socioeconomic shift and heterosexual gendered relations, it is also limited in the extent to which it incorporates an understanding of broader factors such as power and ideology

2.3.3 Broader factors impacting gender/ power: Social Constructionism and Feminism

Social constructionism is an approach that aims to explore and understand how knowledge and meaning are produced, reproduced, and maintained in society (Kiguwa, 2006). The approach argues that gendered identities are not biological and hardwired, instead are embedded in society and informed by socio-political, cultural, and historical processes (ibid.). This approach advocates that society is socially constructed in that people construct norms, discourses, and knowledge which guide their behaviour (Burr, 1995; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). Burr (1995) argued that 'societal knowledge' is fabricated through everyday social interaction. Language plays an important role in constructing, transporting, and maintaining this 'knowledge' (Burr, 1995; Kiguwa, 2006). People in a patriarchal system internalise this 'knowledge' and regard it as the ultimate "truth" (p. 4) which varies historically and cross-culturally (Burr, 1995). This indicates that language is more than just simply something that we speak (Burr, 1995; Kiguwa, 2006). But that language is at the core of an intricately interweaved matrix of resources from which we draw to relate to each other, understand events that are happening in our social environment, and describe the world (Burman, 1991; Clark, 2006). It is therefore crucial for people to realise that language actively creates and re-creates the world we live in by producing concepts and categories, which consist of various discursive meanings that people acquire through social relations (Burr, 1995; Clark, 2006; Kiguwa, 2006). These discursive meanings are not rigid and unitary, but are constantly shifting and changing across time and various socio-cultural and political contexts (Burman, 1991). Language therefore is a powerful form of social action which contributes in the

positioning of people in society according to appropriate socio-culturally defined categories (Kiguwa, 2006).

Institutions such as legal, medical, religious, educational, media and cultural institutions play a significant role in reproducing meanings attributed to dominant socio-gendered roles through the use of language and social interaction with relevant genders (Connell, 2002; Morrell, 2001). The mass media seems to transport and maintain these meanings by displaying visual images, and movie characters that fulfil the desired and socially appropriate perception of masculinity and femininity (Connell, 2002). For instance, girls are portrayed as desirous, attractive, submissive, and nurturers, whilst boys are displayed as tough, dominant, and breadwinners (ibid.). Furthermore, schools play a role in perpetuating the constructions of masculinity by engaging boys in competitive sports that require and display toughness (ibid.).

2.3.3.1 'Ownership of women's bodies': Sexuality and cultural practices

Women's bodies are politicised. Connell (1987) referred to this as "sexual politics" (p. 16), which means that women's bodies are politicised and imbued with discourses that are used to oppress and exploit women and privilege men (Connell, 1995; Dobash & Dobash, 1992). However, sexual politics does not seem to refer solely to women's bodies being oppressed and exploited in the economic domain, but also through sexuality and cultural practices, such as ilobolo payment and marriage.

South Africa consists of diverse cultural beliefs and practices that play a significant role in regulating our behaviour, as well as our understanding of ourselves and society (Clark, 2006). That is, most of our behaviour is an enactment of socially constructed cultural representations in which culture, race, and gender have been intricately interweaved (De la Rey, 1992). This means that culture is not as simplistic as it is revealed in society. It is therefore problematic to exclusively perceive, understand, and categorise 'culture' as a set of specific acts and events which are only one manifestation of cultural inscriptions (Clark, 2006). This kind of dominant understanding of culture conceals the pivotal role of culture as a system of meaning which produces and govern our behaviour and

perceptions of the world around us (*ibid.*). Although culture has positive aspects such as informing people of their identity, as well as providing them with a sense of belonging and stability, various cultural practices are used to justify abhorrent practices (Bunch, 1997). It is therefore important to recognise and acknowledge that power and violence are deeply embedded in cultures around the world, and yet sometimes so over determined that they are almost invisible (*ibid.*). For example, ilobolo (bride price) seems to play an important role in Nguni cultural practices while entitling men with power and control over women (Shope, 2006), as well as maintaining domestic violence (Jeftha, 2006; Mair, 1969). This is because ilobolo is construed to sanction men with a sense of ownership of their wives (Kim & Motsei, 2002). A study conducted by Jewkes, Penn-Kekana, Levin, Retsaka, and Schrieber (1999) that looked at violence against women in three South African provinces revealed that, some people in Eastern Cape (81.5%), Mpumalanga (75.6%), and Northern Province (84.2%) believed that it is culturally acceptable that a man owned his wife if he has paid ilobolo, and he is entitled to having sexual intercourse with her at his will. This seems to portray women's bodies as males' 'possession' and sexual 'objects' which are accessed and used by men as desired (Boonzaier, 2008; Mankayi & Shefer, 2005; Wood & Jewkes, 2001). These men also expect their wives to be submissive and subordinate to their instructions, failure to comply often results in physical abuse (Jeftha, 2006; Mair, 1969). The husband's abusive behaviour is normalised within such communities, and it is considered to be the husband's responsibility to discipline his wife if she is disobedient (Jeftha, 2006; Mair, 1969). Hence, ilobolo seems to maintain women's oppression and sanctions men with power. However, other women see ilobolo as protecting women from abhorrent incidents because they think that it persuades men to appreciate and consider their wives as precious (Kim & Motsei, 2002). Some women in a study by Shope (2006) that looked at the contradictory meanings of ilobolo and the internal power struggles that emerged over its interpretation and practices, considered ilobolo to be a cultural practice that unites two families. Ilobolo therefore seems to have benefits and disadvantages, and some people including women value this cultural practice.

Marriage has been described as an important institution of patriarchy within which men exert power and control over women, as well as regard women as their 'possession' (Dryden, 1999; Kordvani, 2002). The ways in which patriarchal ideologies inform the institution of marriage differs depending on the specific historical, socio-political and cultural context. For example, in Middle Eastern countries, there are general gendered expectations that women be virgins at the time of their marriage. Women who are not virgins are stigmatised as "second hand goods" (p. 6), hence, unworthy of marriage (Kordvani, 2002). Kordvani (2002) reported that Muslim women who have committed an extra-marital affair are also considered to be a shame to their husbands and families. These women are subjected to honour-killing by their husbands or male family members. Honour-killing is sporadically committed in the Middle East and South Asia, and it is used to restore males' dignity, societal respect, and masculinity (Kordvani, 2002). This indicates that women's sexuality in a patriarchal society is silenced and restricted (Shefer & Foster, 2001). Women lack language to positively acknowledge and express their sexual needs, hence, are unable to be assertive and in control of their sexuality (*ibid.*). Ironically, a patriarchal society seems to accept and praise men who commit extra-marital affairs and have multiple sexual partners (Boonzaier, 2008; Sedumedi, 2006; Wood & Jewkes, 2001). These men are considered to be 'isoka' (meaning you are a man because you have multiple sexual partners) (Sedumedi, 2006). Oppenheimer (2007) stated that extra-marital affairs are one of the most difficult hurdles that most married couples experience. An "emotional gap" where one of the spouses emotionally distances him/herself from the other contributes in precipitating and perpetuating extra-marital affairs (Oppenheimer, 2007, p. 181). Oppenheimer (2007) accentuated that most cheating spouses seem to be engulfed with feelings of loneliness and abandonment which perpetuates adultery. It is therefore important for a couple to find quality time to spend with each other irrespective of their work-schedule, so as to maintain a good relationship.

Parents also seem to possess power, control, and a sense of ownership of their daughters during marriage negotiations. Reddi (2007) in a study focusing on cultural marriage practices and domestic violence against women in South Africa and India found that, most marriages in an Indian community are arranged by the parents of the bride and groom. The bride is presented to the prospective groom and his family for "scrutiny",

and if they “approve” of her, dowry negotiations as well as payment commence (Reddi, 2007, p. 514). Similar results were obtained by Sedumedi (2006) where some participants stated that daughters are expected to be compliant with their parents’ decision as well as marriage procedures, and failure to comply has serious repercussions such as being rejected by the family. This marriage process is also supported and maintained by the Shafii Islamic law which entitles the father or paternal grandfather with the privilege to consent to his daughter’s marriage, whilst the daughter remains ‘silenced’ (Kandiyoti, 1991). Although most mothers also remain ‘silenced’ during marriage and dowry negotiations, several mothers support dowry because they believe it ensures their daughters’ security and well-being in marriage (Bates *et al.*, 2004). The above discussion seems to suggest that women’s bodies are commercialised and owned by their parents, husbands, as well as family in-laws.

2.3.3.2 The role of religion in gender constructions and relations

Organised religion is also another social aspect that informs the construction of masculinity and femininity. Most Christian biblical scripts (Burris & Jackson, 1999) as well as Islamic scripts (Kandiyoti, 1991) seem to suggest that women are inferior and should be submissive to men. A significant number of people believe and internalise this knowledge and use it to develop their identities, meanings of the world, and govern their behaviour (Kiguwa, 2006). For instance, several male participants in Augustine’s (2002) study that focused on the social construction of the South African male identity reported that, it is stated in the Christian bible that women are created from a man’s rib therefore are inferior to men. This script seems to suggest that women are men’s ‘property’, hence, are ‘owned’ by men (Burris & Jackson, 1999). Similarly, some Islamic adherents consider Islamic texts that restrict women’s socio-gendered role to the domestic domain as an honour to women (Kandiyoti, 1991). This suggests that Muslim women will continue to be oppressed irrespective of their changing socio-political rights and economic status, until the theological foundations of misogynistic and androcentric tendencies in Islamic principles are challenged and changed (Hassan, 1991). The aforesaid issues indicate that negative ideas and attitudes about women are deeply rooted in theological belief systems amongst various other systems (Hassan, 1991). Religious

texts therefore should be read “with suspicion” so as to become aware of the power dynamics, as well as to gain insight about “ourselves, our own prejudices and blind spots” (Jacobs, 2007, p. 232).

2.3.3.3 ‘Race’, class and gender

Women’s or men’s experiences of oppression cannot be considered without an interrogation of the various axes of race, class, gender and sexuality that produce and shape identity in any particular context. In this regard it can be argued that historically Black South African women have had different experiences of oppression when compared to White women (Motsemme, 2003). Historically, Black women have endured multiple, interrelated and multifaceted experiences of oppression in the racist, patriarchal South African society (ibid.). This has often been called “triple oppression”, referring to an interlinked matrix of race, gender and class oppression which have to be concurrently challenged for the oppression to be overcome (Motsemme, 2003). Women’s oppression can only be eliminated once people recognise that a patriarchal society aims to serve the needs of people belonging to the socio-culturally defined dominant group, so that ‘traditional’ patriarchal principles can be contested and transformed (Johnson, 2009). Social constructionism posits that “one is not born masculine, but acquires and enacts masculinity, and so becomes a man” (Connell, 2002, p. 4). Likewise, “one is not born a woman, but becomes a woman” (Simone de Beauvoir, n.d. in Connell, 2002, p. 4). This suggests that masculinity and femininity are socially constructed and instilled in individuals through language, and are socially reinforced (Connell, 2002; Morrell, 2001). The constructions of masculinity and femininity therefore seem to indicate that gender is not hardwired but socially constructed, as well as socio-culturally and religiously defined. Hopkins, Kahani-Hopkins, and Reicher (2006) reported that identities are important in a patriarchal society because they shape who we are, the positions we maintain in relation to others, and determine how we should behave. In line with Hopkins et al. (2006), Connell (1995) stated that socio-gendered roles are used to create gender order which determines and ensures that people behave accordingly. People who contest and diverge from the gender order are at risk of experiencing serious societal repercussions including violence (Connell, 1995).

Feminism falls under the broad framework of social constructionism because it perceives socio-gendered roles and power dynamics as socially constructed (Dobash & Dobash, 1992). There are various approaches within mainstream feminism some of which include radical feminism, post-structuralist feminism, liberal feminism, and Marxist feminism (Kiguwa, 2004). Radical feminism considers patriarchy as a primary cause of women's oppression which exists in a capitalist and socialist society, as well as in the institutions of family and marriage (Kiguwa, 2004). Post-structuralist feminism is concerned with the ways in which women experience gender and oppression (*ibid.*). Furthermore, post-structuralist uses particular notions of language, discourse, social processes and institutions to understand gendered power relations and identify strategies that aim for change (Kiguwa, 2004). Liberal feminism is an approach to feminism that states that there is no fundamental difference between men and women, and that a patriarchal system precipitates and perpetuates women's oppression by reserving most social opportunities for men (Kiguwa, 2004). This approach stresses that men and women should have equal social opportunities and rights, as well as be permitted to compete for limited resources without women being at risk of experiencing domestic violence (Dobash & Dobash, 1992). Liberal feminists have played an important role in improving the quality of women's lives in the South African context through the establishment of gender equity laws (Kiguwa, 2004). In striving for women to be "freed from oppressive restrictions imposed by sex", and the aims of "self-determination and autonomy" (Dobash & Dobash, 1992, p. 24), liberal feminism has advocated that women should have equal employment opportunities and equal wages to their male counterparts.

In line with the above approaches, Marxism feminism perceives women oppression as deeply rooted in capitalism (Burr, 1998). Prior to industrialisation, the family satisfied their basic needs through domestic production (such as growing food, weaving fabrics and trading items that were in excess of their own needs) (*ibid.*). However, men exchanged their labour for a wage to a capitalist employer with the expansion of industrial revolution (*ibid.*). Most of the men received an income that was adequate to support their family's needs. In contrast, a capitalist institution was exploitative to and

oppressive of women as it offered them flexible and cheap secondary labour without job security (Burr, 1998). Women seem to be entrapped in a double-bind situation in such a system because their cheap labour is required by capitalist, while their husbands need their services in the household (*ibid.*). This indicates that women are exploited in the public and private domain, and their services are taken for granted in both domains.

Feminist theory perceives an individual as a socio-cultural and political subject, and suggests that a patriarchal society is structured in a way that it privileges certain social groups such as Whites, males, middle-class, and heterosexuals (MacKinnon, 1991 in Callaghan & Clark, 2006). Gender in a patriarchal society seems to be embedded in power, and appears to play a significant role in providing men with social privileges in relation to women (Greig *et al.*, 2000). This gender discrimination seems to entitle men with power and control over women because it perpetuates women's economic dependence on men (Boonzaier, 2008). Some men therefore expect their partners to be submissive to their instructions since they are providing them with money (Barnett, Miller-Perrini, & Perrini, 1997). Although men are privileged by gender, not all men have equal access to social opportunities. Men's social privileges in general are discriminated by race, sexuality, age, class (Greig *et al.*, 2000) and transnational migration where most migrants are oppressed as well as marginalised due to their ethnicity among other factors (Crompton & Harris, 1998). The economic domain in a patriarchal system therefore appears to consist of various gendered power dynamics. These power dynamics are challenged by women gaining access to social privileges, such as job opportunities that were reserved for men (Dobash & Dobash, 1992). This change seems to leave some men feeling that "their space is invaded and their power is usurped" (Augustine, 2002, p. 107). Furthermore, men's power and control over women seems to be usurped by women gaining agency, independence, and control of their lives (Augustine, 2002; Dallos & Dallos, 1997; Kim *et al.*, 2007) which could possibly lead to abuse (Anderson, 1997; Bograd, 1988; Boonzaier, 2005, 2008; Callaghan & Clark, 2006; Dobash & Dobash, 1979, 1992; Kordvani, 2002; MacMillan & Gartner, 1999; Okumu, 2004; Saunders, 1988).

2.4 Conclusion

The review of literature has broadly indicated that women are vulnerable to experiencing domestic violence irrespective of their socio-economic status. The critique of traditional theories such as social learning theory was based on the recognition that gender relations are produced in a network of factors across various dimensions such as race, class, gender, religion, culture, institutions of marriage to name just a few. These socially constructed categories are not fixed or act as separate entities, instead are intertwined, fluid, permeable, and play an important role in defining identities. Identities of masculinity and femininity are constructed through the use of language which produces knowledge, and this knowledge is reproduced through everyday social interaction (Burr, 1995; Kiguwa, 2006). People use this knowledge to create meanings which play an important role in guiding their behaviour, and also how they perceive as well as understand the world around them (Burr, 1995). This study drew on feminist theory to explore the change in the power dynamics between men and women as the result of women's changing fiscal status.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This study focused on Black women's perceptions of the impact that women's shift in the socio-economic status poses on their intimate heterosexual relationships. A qualitative research methodology is appropriate for this study because the researcher was interested in exploring the participants' perceptions, meanings, and understandings of the challenges that fiscally stable women encounter in their relationships with their intimate heterosexual partners, as well as the positioning of financially autonomous women in a patriarchal society.

3.1 Research Procedure

3.1.1 Selection of Participants

Seven Black women (four Africans, two 'Coloureds', and one Indian) aged 25-48 years old, who are formally employed and professionals were selected for the study. Five women were selected from a banking institution, and two were selected from an academic institution. A bank and academic institution were used as participant selection sites due to ease of access for the researcher. Furthermore, employees within these sites (both male and female) often represent a broad demographic range in terms of race, class, age and educational qualifications. These organisations were therefore pertinent to this particular study because of this diversity. In addition, it was posited that due to the possibility of these institutions adhering more formally to the legal requirements of Affirmative Action, the chances of women's employment and subsequent upward mobility within the organisational structures of these institutions would be probable. The participants salaries varied from R6 000 to R15 000 per month. The biographical information of the participants is outlined below:

- BB is African, she is 34 years old, unmarried, and her male partner resides in another province. She stated that she is happy unmarried and regards marriage as complicated. BB is a lecturer at an academic institution and has two children (seven and 14 years old).

- KK is 'Coloured', she is 48 years old and is a divorcee. KK stated that she has been twice divorced due to marital and family in-law problems. She is a lecturer at an academic institution and has one child (23 years old) from her first marriage.
- SD is 'Coloured', she is 45 years old and happily married for 20 years. She has two children (10 and 15 years old). SD is a supervisor at a banking institution and her husband is a business-man.
- SM is African, she is 32 years old and is unmarried. She reported that her male partner is a manager and is working and living in another province. SM stated that she thinks marriage is restrictive, hence, she prefers being unmarried. She is a financial advisor at a banking institution and has one child, 8 years old.
- SA is Indian, she is 30 years old and happily married. SA reported that she married when she was in her early 20's. She is a teller at a banking institution and has one child, seven years old.
- MA is African, she is 25 years old and dating her male partner of two years. MA does not have children and resides with her parents in a township. She is a teller at a banking institution.
- TB is African, she is 25 years old and dating her male partner of six years whom she is hoping to marry. TB does not have children and is living with her parents who are very supportive and proud that she is empowering herself. The participant reported that she is a teller at a banking institution and is studying a business course because she is an aspiring business-woman.

This study focused on Black women due to their current, relatively rapid upward social mobility as the result of various reasons mentioned. An increasing number of Black women in the contemporary society are provided an opportunity to endeavour for independence, financial stability, and are beginning to fit a trope of a 'successful

woman'. Furthermore, the researcher is interested in validating Black women's voices and providing them an opportunity to express their opinions, feelings, and experiences because they represent a historically silenced and marginalised group.

3.1.2 Sampling Technique and Procedure

This study adopted convenience non-probability sampling technique. The sampling technique was convenient to the researcher and in fulfilling the aim of the study. This is because the researcher was able to select individuals of various racial and socio-cultural backgrounds, as well as who occupy different ranks in the institutions. The researcher wrote a letter to the supervisor of the banking institution to ask for permission to interview some of the staff members. The supervisor of the banking institution was kindly asked to participate in the study. The staff members were randomly approached, informed about the study, and kindly asked to participate – this is arbitrary selection. Originally six staff members were arbitrarily recruited for the study, and one staff member withdrew due to family and work obligations. The two participants from the academic institution were also arbitrarily approached, informed of the study, ensured of confidentiality and anonymity, and benevolently asked to participate in the study.

3.1.3 Data Collection

The study used seven individual interviews for data collection. The individual interviews proceeded for approximately an hour and were held during the participants' lunchtime at their work place. The interviews were semi-structured (see appendix two for the interview schedule), included open-ended questions, and were conducted in English. The advantage of open-ended questions is that they provide the participants an opportunity to adequately express their thoughts and perceptions (Kumar, 2005).

3.1.4 Data Processing and Analysis

The individual interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed using the transcription notation system designed by Atkinson and Heritage (1984) (see appendix one for the transcription notation symbols). Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. Thematic analysis is a method used for identifying, analysing, and reporting themes

within the data (Arosen, 1994; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Ezzy, 2002). Furthermore, thematic analysis enables the researcher to organise and describe the data in rich detail (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor, and Tindall (1994) reported that “thematic analysis is a coherent way of organising and reading interview material in relation to specific research questions” (p. 57). The data is organised under themes which emerged during analysis (Banister *et al.*, 1994). The following thematic analysis phases outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) were employed in the analysis of the data: familiarising yourself with the data; generating initial codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes; and finally producing a scholarly report. Ezzy (2002) reported that coding in thematic analysis involves a process of identifying themes that are in the data. The marginal notations enable and assist the researcher to notice emerging themes, as well as the similarities and differences in the themes, hence, facilitate adequate understanding of the data (*ibid.*).

Similar to any other qualitative analytic method, thematic analysis has advantages and potential pitfalls. Braun and Clarke (2006) reported that thematic analysis is independent of theory and epistemology, and can be applied across a range of theoretical and epistemological approaches. Thematic analysis, therefore, seems to be a flexible and useful qualitative analytic method that provides the researcher with rich and detailed analysis of the data (*ibid.*). Theory emerges from the coding process through the development of themes and categories in which the themes are arranged and intensively analysed, explored, and re-visited (Ezzy, 2002). This is one of the reasons thematic analysis was employed in this study.

Braun and Clarke (2006) identified potential pitfalls that could be encountered in conducting thematic analysis. They advised these pitfalls should be avoided so as to produce good analytic results. These potential pitfalls include: the researcher paraphrasing the content of the data, hence, failing to analyse the data; the researcher using questions from the interview schedule as themes that emerged during data analysis; and the data extract failing to support the analytic commentary. Despite the potential pitfalls, thematic analysis was suited for this study because it allowed this researcher to

analyse and interpret the participants' perceptions and experiences without the influence of other theories. Thematic analysis also encouraged this researcher not to have a fixed and rigid mindset, in order to discover and explore new occurring issues and problems that were not anticipated earlier in the study (Ezzy, 2002). Moreover, thematic analysis appears to have benefited the participants because it allowed their voices to maintain power in the study.

3.1.5 Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity is very important in every study irrespective of its research nature. Reliability and validity do not just apply to quantitative research, but they also apply to qualitative research whereby they are referred to as dependability and transferability (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). Transferability is the extent to which research findings are transferable to other contexts (*ibid.*). Transferability of a study is achieved by producing detailed and rich description of contexts, hence giving the reader detailed structures of meaning which develop in a specific context (*ibid.*). Dependability refers to the degree to which the researcher can convince the reader that the results of the study did occur (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). According to Durrheim and Wassenaar (2002), dependability can be achieved through rich and detailed descriptions that indicate how certain actions and opinions are rooted in and develop out of contextual interaction. Achieving dependability and transferability is important as it increases credibility of the study. In this research project the researcher attempted to increase credibility of the study by probing, clarifying, paraphrasing, summarising, and reflecting as part of prompt respondent validation (Okun, 2002). The aforementioned counselling techniques enabled the researcher to correctly and accurately interpret the participants' utterances (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002).

3.1.6 Ethical Clearance and Consideration

This current study was granted ethical clearance by the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (see appendix four for the copy of ethical certificate). For the purpose of ethical consideration, a letter asking for permission was sent to the supervisor of a banking institution. The letter sought permission to interview five staff members from a banking

institution. A letter asking for permission was not sent to the academic institution, and the two participants were individually approached. The two participants recruited from an academic institution, and the five respondents from a banking institution were provided a letter of consent in which their permission was sought. The participants were informed of the following: the nature of the study; each interview would proceed for approximately an hour; and that an audio recorder would be used during the interview for transcription purposes. The participants were also guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. Finally, the participants were informed that they were entitled to withdraw from the study whenever they felt uncomfortable and their input would not be used in the study.

The benefits of the study are long-term because the obtained knowledge contributes to the existing body of knowledge on domestic violence.

3.1.7 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is defined as the explicit recognition and examination of the researcher's role in and also her possible influence on the research process (Banister et al., 1994). Reflexivity is important in qualitative research because the production of knowledge is not objective and fixed, but is subjective as it is produced through language and a process of social interaction (Burr, 1995; Kiguwa, 2006). A qualitative researcher does not maintain a "neutral" (p. 13) position in the research process, but her presence and interaction with the participants affects the subject as well as the phenomenon being studied, and also the way she interprets and understands the research data (Banister et al., 1994). Eagle, Hayes, and Sibanda (2002) stated that the researcher's demographic and personal characteristics play an important role during the interview process and in eliciting research data. Subjectivity is crucial in qualitative research because it guides the whole research process starting with choosing the topic of study, formulating hypothesis, selecting methodologies, and interpreting data (Ratner, 2002). Clark (2007) reported that it is important for the researcher to critically reflect on her thoughts and experience of the research process, rather than merely describing her experience and positioning in the process. It is therefore vital for qualitative researchers to become aware of their own values and interpretation, as well as the influence and the role they play in the study.

Furthermore, qualitative researchers have to become aware and reflective of the effect that the research poses on them. This is because “the way in which we theorise a problem affects the way we examine it, and the ways we explore a problem affect the explanation we give” (Banister et al., 1994, p. 13).

The notion of reflexivity have been criticised because they do not adhere to the dominant positivist paradigm which assert that objectivity is crucial in a research project (Clark, 2007). Feminists who reject the positivist paradigm believe that knowledge is political, and argued that the concept of objectivity precipitates and perpetuates the binary as well as power relation between the researchers versus participants, ‘knowers’ versus ‘known’, and objectivity versus subjectivity (Ramazagnolu, 1992). Feminism asserted that subjectivity eliminates the hierarchal power relation between the researcher and participants, and enables the respondents to become collaborators in the research project through reciprocal sharing of knowledge (Stanely, 1990).

All of the participants in this particular study appeared to be enthusiastic and determined to help me achieve and succeed in my research. They seemed to be proud that I was studying a Masters degree at a young age, hence, they became more determined to sufficiently contribute in the study. This is because within the Black community, post-graduate studies are associated with people of an older age group. However, an increasing number of the youth are striving to achieve educationally, occupationally, and economically due to the rapid changes that are occurring in society. The two younger participants reported that I inspired them to strive to achieve their ambitions. The participants also had a therapeutic effect on me by helping me gain insight into my personal affairs. They assisted me to realise that my former partner was emotionally and psychologically abusive because he felt threatened by my educational and socio-economic status. My participants’ voices enabled me to finally find the courage to leave the relationship after 15 attempts of leaving and returning to the adverse relationship. It was therefore important for me to be reflective of my personal experiences and the impact the study posed on me so as to adequately analyse and interpret the data. I hope that this study will help other women experiencing abuse the same way it helped me.

3.2 Motivation for Study

Domestic violence is an extensively researched phenomenon, yet many women continue to experience abuse and find themselves trapped in an abusive relationship irrespective of their educational and economic status. This study is important because it has a personal meaning to the researcher. Furthermore, it focused on Black women because they represent a historically silenced group, hence, this research aimed to provide them an opportunity to talk about their perceptions, as well as express their opinions about this adverse issue. Black women's rapid social upward mobility, their experience of triple oppression, and their views on the power dynamics that occur within intimate heterosexual relationships also make their perceptions pertinent to research.

3.3 Research Questions

This study focused on Black women's perceptions of the effects that women's strive for financial independence has on their intimate heterosexual relationships. Below are some of the questions explored in the study:

- What are Black women's perceptions of the relationship between domestic violence and women's changing socio-economic status?
- How do Black women's changing socio-gendered roles influence their experience of domestic violence?
- What relationship challenges do economically independent women encounter in the domestic domain?
- What are women's perceptions of how men perceive financially stable women?

The results from the data analysis are broadly presented below, listing the core issues that the participants raised as well as the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the research data.

3.3.1 Results

The participants raised various issues which reflected their perceptions and attitudes towards the topic of women's socio-economic status and the occurrence of domestic violence. Listed below are the common issues raised in the interviews:

3.3.1.1 Main Issues Raised

1. Women 'making their mark' in the economic domain
 - Disadvantages of being excluded from the labour force
 - Advantages of participating in the labour force
2. Societal upbringing of men and women in a patriarchal society
 - Self-reliant women unsettling socio-gendered roles of masculinity and femininity
 - Societal perceptions of working women
3. Women's economic status as imposing a threat to masculinity
 - Women's economic independence threatening males' positive self-esteem as a man
 - Men seeking women of a low socio-economic status: For the sake of their wounded self-esteem
4. Sources of domestic violence
 - Financial pressure inducing feelings of frustration
 - Men's feelings of insecurities and intimidation
 - Influence of alcohol
 - Societal influence
5. The influence of socio-cultural factors on economically independent women
 - The role of culture and religion towards working women
 - Women's economic status influencing ilobolo negotiations and payment

6. Working women's perceptions and experiences of marriage
 - Mixed feelings about marriage
 - Pressured to be married so as to fulfil heterosexual expectations of womanhood
7. Economically independent women's perceptions and experiences of motherhood
 - Working women's relationship with their children
 - Being able to financially provide for their children
 - Becoming a role model for their children
8. Working women's relationship with their partners in the home
 - Males' support and domestic expectations of their self-reliant partners
 - Sexuality: 'Women taking control and men under pressure'
9. Coping mechanisms that are used by working women and mothers to cope against their changing socio-economic status and gendered roles
 - Assistance by daughters and domestic assistants
 - Time management and multi-tasking
 - Depending on substances: Alcohol and drugs
10. Reasons for remaining in an abusive relationship
 - For the sake of the children
 - Fear of being harmed by their partners
 - Fear of engaging in another abusive relationship and re-victimised
 - Fear of being humiliated and stigmatised by society
 - 'Pay-back time': Self-reliant women feeling obliged to their partners
 - Hope that the domestic situation will change
 - 'I love him too much to leave him'
 - Economically independent women: Low self-efficacy

The various core themes and sub-themes that emerged in the study during data analysis are listed below.

3.3.1.2 Themes and Sub-themes

1. Societal adherence to dominant socio-gendered roles
 - Societal perceptions of economically independent women
2. Women's shift in the socio-economic status as unsettling masculinity
 - Women's independent socio-economic status as imposing a threat to masculinity
 - Males intimidated by their partners' male colleagues
 - Males' response to feelings of intimidation
3. Working women's perceptions and experiences of marriage and motherhood
 - Self-reliant women's ambiguity about marriage
 - Economically independent women and notions of motherhood
4. Working women: Implications within the domestic domain
 - Domestic duties and role of working women
 - 'He has to satisfy me sexually, otherwise he is out': Men under pressure
5. Coping mechanisms adopted by working women and mothers to cope against their 'dual roles'
 - Accepting support and assistance
 - Maladaptive coping mechanisms
6. Reasons for remaining in an abusive relationship
 - Economically independent women lacking self-efficacy
 - For the sake of the children
 - The role of fear and intimidation
 - Constructions of love

- Feelings of obligation

These themes and sub-themes are discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses themes and sub-themes that emerged in the study using thematic analytic method identified in chapter three. The discussion encompasses participants' responses, and it is also interwoven with theory and results from other studies. The discussed results aim to answer the research questions stated in the preceding chapter. Some of the themes discussed in this chapter overlap with the discussion in the literature review.

4.1 Societal adherence to dominant socio-gendered roles

Societal adherence to dominant socio-gendered roles is one of the important themes that emerged in the study. This broad theme serves as a basis for and informs other themes, as it covers the diverse ways in which men and women end up thinking of themselves and behaving in the world. Several participants reported that 'traditional' socio-gendered roles seem to be changing due to the changes in the socio-economic and political domains. According to the participants, some people seem to struggle accepting and adjusting to these changes. This section explores how society perceives women who endeavour for independence.

4.1.1 Societal perceptions of economically independent women

The participants posited that societal perceptions of economically independent women seem to be informed by multiple social factors. Perceptions of working women appear to be strongly informed by assumptions of a fundamental difference between men and women. Most of the time this difference is considered to be a biological difference, and of course biological discourses are very powerful and influential. Several participants reported that there are some men who seem to be unsupportive of women's participation in the work-force, because they think that women are innately incompetent and incapable of adequately performing in the economic domain. The respondents stated that these men seem to think that women cannot be firm and assertive due to their tender and affectionate nature, hence, they can easily be manipulated by male colleagues.

MA: And of course, sex would count, you know, the different kind of sex between men and women, like she is a female, she is soft, you know. Men have that idea of 'I can soften her up by doing this, I can do this, and then she can see that I can do this, and or she will just melt' (laugh). You know, they have that idea that women are too soft you know, it is just easy to tempt her just anything, do anything, but we are really tough, actually we are just understanding, that is all, so they take advantage of it. So it is like, 'she is a woman, she will understand' (laugh).

MA seems to adopt a common though sometimes tacit explanation in accounting for some of the men's perceptions of working women. MA describes men's construal of females as innately emotional, caring, and unassertive in relation to males. The notion of 'softness' is used to connote both emotional pliability, gullibility ("easy to tempt"), and also easy to manipulate (Greig *et al.*, 2000). Women are therefore seen as incapable of adequately performing in the economic domain because the domain is construed to require dominance, assertiveness, roughness, as well as inherent 'hardness' and 'coldness' all of which are regarded as male qualities (Kordvani, 2002). However, MA's statement "*we are really tough, actually we are just understanding, that is all*", seems to indicate that women are not weak, 'soft', and 'easy to tempt', but that they are just more understanding and sympathetic and men take that for advantage. It is also apparent from MA's quote ("*and of course, sex would count, you know, the different kind of sex between men and women*") that essentialism and discourses of sex, differentiate men and women as well as contribute in informing people's perceptions and behaviour. Essentialist views play a significant role in precipitating socio-gendered differences, as well as maintaining discrimination of women (Feldman, 2002). Contesting the essentialist perspective, Feldman (2002) argued that if women were innately incapable of performing in the labour force, then a significant number of women would not be successful and competent in the domain.

Age differences seem to also contribute to the societal perceptions' of women's social upward mobility. According to the participants, younger generation males seem to acknowledge women's strive for success and financial stability, while older generation males (such as males in their 50's), seem to experience difficulty accepting women's endeavour to be financially independent because of the way they are socialised.

SM: I think it depends as well with the age group, because the youngsters - they know that we can be equal, and the wife can actually earn more and achieve more than him. But the older people, like the 50's, they don't accept that because maybe of the way they grew up. Maybe they grew up knowing the wife to be economically dependent, and the husband being the provider.

SM makes a central comparison of generational differences between men. She implies that older males' views of women's socio-economic status differ from that of younger generation males due to societal influence. Older generation men seem to be more strongly informed by patriarchal principles and dominant socio-gendered roles. In agreement with the above quote, Ichou (2008) reported that most of the older generation males in her study contested women's endeavour for financial stability. The older generation is against women's upward social mobility because they regard women as inferior, and believe that women would become disrespectful to men if they became financially reliant (*ibid.*). However, as indicated by SM contemporary generation males seem to acknowledge women's financial independence. Most of the younger generation seem to be pro gender equality, and believe that women should be permitted to partake in the employment force, as well as financially contribute in the household (Ichou, 2008). The generational difference is because the younger generation is more strongly influenced by various factors, such as parents, peers, colleagues, mass media, cultural factors, as well as the changes in the legislature and the educational system (Feldman, 2002; Morrell, 2001).

While there are negative societal perceptions of financially independent women, there are also positive perceptions. Several participants reported that there are other financially dependent women who admire and are inspired by fiscally independent women. The participants stated that self-reliant women seem to serve as role models for economically dependent women, and motivate them to strive for independence and prosperity so that they can attain power and control in their lives, and be less vulnerable to domestic abuse.

SM: It is from the people I socialise and associate with. It is from the people I look up to. That is what made me say, 'that is what I would want to do'. Because when you are economically independent you become protected from many things such as, in some situations violence and abuse. Your husband does not have

power over you, because he knows you are your own individual, so you have power in the home.

SM discusses that she was motivated and inspired to become financially independent by people in her social environment that she socialises and associates with, as well as admires. This seems to be apparent in her quote, “*it is from the people I socialise and associate with*”. Economically stable women who are successfully partaking in an economic sector which was previously dominated by men, therefore, seem to serve as role models for other aspiring women who have not yet achieved fiscal stability (Feldman, 2002). These women illustrate that women are capable of achieving their ambitions, as well as sufficiently perform in what is regarded as the ‘male dominated domain’.

Furthermore, SM’s statement suggests that financial independence empowers and protects women against domestic violence. This is because as illustrated by SM, “*your husband does not have power over you, because he knows you are your own individual*”. The notion of “*your own individual*” seems to allude to a sense of autonomy. An autonomous woman is seen to have a well defined identity, an established self-esteem, and does not need other people’s approval and reassurance (McBride, 1990). Moreover, the quote could also be related to Rozmarin’s (2005) concept of the emerging “I” (p. 5). Rozmarin (2005) explained that “I” is in control of her life, she is her own agent, and she makes her own initiative, as well as takes responsibility to achieve her goals. This seems to insinuate that an independent woman maintains some amount of “*power in the home*”. Various researchers have supported the point that women’s economic independence provides them with power in the domestic domain, hence, protects them from abuse (Augustine, 2002; Dallos & Dallos, 1997). Most reliant women seem to be forced to be subservient and subordinate, and fear asserting themselves (Dallos & Dallos, 1997). These women do not seem to regard themselves as their “*own individual*”, instead perceived themselves as ‘owned’ by their partners. It is significant to acknowledge that women’s financial stability is not the sole factor that protects them from abuse, but that a shift in the law system which encourages and permits abused women to obtain a

protection order against their partner also plays a vital role in this matter (DeJong, Burgess-Proctor, & Elis, 2008).

The above discussed sub-theme indicated that some women perceive men as having distinct perceptions of women's endeavour for fiscal independence and self-reliance. These women seem to think that older generation males are seen as unsupportive of the change in women's socio-economic status because they are governed by patriarchal beliefs that 'a woman's place is in the house' (Kehler, 2001). However, contemporary generation men are reported to acknowledge women's strive for independence due to reasons discussed. While there are negative perceptions of independent women, there are also positive perceptions. Economically independent women seem to inspire other women to become autonomous so that they could be protected from various adverse situations. However, the next theme discusses that women's financial stability does not protect them from violence, instead leaves most women vulnerable to further experiences of abuse.

4.2 Women's shift in the socio-economic status as unsettling masculinity

Masculinity in the contemporary society appears to be delicate and intimidated by multiple social factors. The participants reported that most men seem to be threatened by working women who are capable of financially providing for themselves. Other participants stated that some men are also intimidated by their partners' male colleagues, as presented below:

4.2.1 Women's independent socio-economic status as imposing a threat to masculinity

A patriarchal society instils in boys a belief that a 'real man' is one who protects and financially provides for his family (Jeftha, 2006; Kehler, 2001; Morrell, 2001). The notions of a 'protector' and a 'breadwinner' thus play an important role in the construction of masculinity. According to the participants in the current study, the change in women's socio-economic status unsettles the financial provision role ascribed to men in the domestic environment.

BB: these are the men who don't think that 'my wife should go out there and earn more than me', and also they still need the feeling that they could provide, it is failure on their part. They don't see themselves as, 'I am a man', so it is not just that we are looking at how they were brought up, so it is who they are, they were brought up as providers, so their authority, their identity is being threatened.

BB's quote appears to be an attempt at articulating the concept and construction of hegemonic masculinity. BB discusses that men whose wives are earning more than them and bringing home the 'bacon' feel that they are "*failures*", and "*do not see themselves as, 'I am a man'*". This suggests that hegemonic masculinity in a patriarchal society is achieved through employment, as well as being the main financial provider in the domestic realm (Baker & Ricardo, 2005; Boonzaier, 2005; Ichou, 2008). Hegemonic masculinity therefore seems to be threatened and affected by the changes occurring in the economic domain. This is apparent in BB's quote, "*they were brought up as providers, so their authority, their identity is being threatened*". Women's participation in formal employment seems to significantly impact on males' employment rate, resulting in an increasing number of men being unemployed and feeling emasculated (Ichou, 2008). High rates of male unemployment as well as poverty pose serious social effects in South Africa such as crime and HIV/AIDS. Increasing rates of crime in South Africa has been associated with unemployment and poverty (Ferim, 2008; Ichou, 2008). Most men who are unemployed or earning a low income are likely to be involved in criminal activities to financially provide for their families, as well as regain their manhood (Ichou, 2008). However, crime should not just be associated with poverty and unemployment (Herbig, 2008). Some people with low self control have been found to commit crime when an opportunity that warrants immediate gratification with relatively low risk presents itself (Brown, Esbenson, & Greis, 2001). It is apparent from the discussion that unemployment status as well as feelings of insecurity fosters various social problems.

4.2.2 Males intimidated by their partners' male colleagues

Some males who are less economically stable seem to be intimidated by males who fit the trope of a 'successful man'. The participants reported that there are some men who seem to be intimidated by the occupational and economic status of their partners' male

colleagues. According to the participants, some of these men seem to have a perception and fear that their wives might leave them for financially stable men.

SM: Maybe they feel threatened. Maybe they fear that 'you will meet another man who is of the same level as you', and he is not even close to him in terms of qualifications, intelligence, and also salary. So, then he feels threatened, he does not know what kind of man you are associating with in the meetings and things like that. It is almost as if he is continuously comparing himself to other men that the wife is associating with. And maybe because of his status and qualifications, he feels inferior and unworthy.

SM describes the role played by other males with whom women work with, men who are perceived by the women's partners to fit the trope of being 'successful and wealthy men'. She illustrates that these men feel threatened because they think they are going to be compared to other men on three dimensions, education, intellectual, and financial. Hence, they appear to be fearful and concerned that their partners might leave them for another man who is seen to be of a higher and better status. The males' feelings of insecurity seem to be perpetuated and reinforced by the societal perception that most women are attracted to economically independent men (Fernandez, 2002). Several researchers have found evidence that some independent women are attracted to financially stable men, because they think that these men can provide them with better financial security compared to men who are earning a low income (Cramer, Lipinski, Meteer, & Houska, 2008). However, it is important to recognise the complexity between women 'being attracted to' or 'choosing' independent men. There are some young women who choose to be in cross-generational relationships with older men, because they think that the men would adequately provide for them monetarily compared to men their age (Longfield, Glick, Waithaka, & Berman, 2004).

Moreover, SM described that men are continuously comparing themselves to other men. Self-comparison is beneficial because it enables one to assess his/her level of achievement, as well as motivate him/herself to endeavour for success (Papalia & Olds, 1988). However, as indicated by SM self-comparison also has disadvantages such as inducing feelings of inferiority and unworthiness, particularly when one perceives

him/herself as deficient in status and qualifications. In line with SM, Ichou (2008) reported that some men seem to feel intimidated, belittled, and inadequate when they compare themselves to men who are seen as adequately providing for their family. Some of these men therefore tend to respond to their feelings with abuse. This is discussed under the following sub-theme.

4.2.3 Males' response to feelings of intimidation

Men have varying responses to their feelings of intimidation induced by the change in women's monetary status. Several participants stated that some men tend to leave their current relationship with the financially independent woman, and engage in a relationship with a woman who is less economically stable. The respondents asserted that the new relationship with the fiscally dependent woman does not seem to be based on love, but serves to restore and maintain masculinity, and it is also another way men abuse and oppress women.

BB: Some people have actually experienced things, you know, where the husband is so threatened, that he would rather have another relationship with a very low income type of person, just for them to maintain that power, and they are in power there, they get whatever, and they would try to draw back that sense of authority, 'I am a man and I will (make you feel better)'. But still that is another form of abuse, because that woman is actually not getting the love from the man, he is just inserting his authority, his own power. So, it is a chain that fabricates abuse in a different way.

BB's quote indicates that some men feel manly when they are earning more than their partners and financially providing for them. BB illustrates that some men think that it is their responsibility as a man to make their partners "*feel better*". Although this quote is a little complex, it could be construed in a patriarchal society as a man's ability to satisfy his partner's financial needs while she remains dependent on him. This construal is disconcerted when a man is in an intimate relationship with a woman who can fiscally provide for herself. As the result, some men feel threatened hence leave the relationship and engage in another relationship with a "*very low income type of person*". However, BB stated that the new relationship does not portray love, but is used by the man to regain his "*sense of authority*". Most dependent women are seen to re-establish men's authority

(Dobash & Dobash, 1979; MacMillan & Gartner, 1999) by being timid, unassertive, and passive (Dallos & Dallos, 1997).

Although BB did not mention it in her quote, some men do not leave their self-reliant partners instead they stay in the relationship and psychologically, emotionally, and financially abuse them. Other men control their partners' finance by demanding their salary statements as well as bank cards, and expect their partners to ask for money to fulfil personal and domestic necessities (Barkhuizen & Pretorius, 2005). Men therefore seem to employ various tactics to maintain power when they are in a relationship with a self-reliant woman.

Other men employ violence in response to their feelings of intimidation. Several participants reported that some men who feel threatened and frustrated by their partners' high economic status seem to use domestic violence.

SD: she earns more than him, she earns too much, making him feel inferior that could also cause domestic violence because he is frustrated, he gets irritated.

SD illustrates that feelings of inferiority, frustration, and irritation play a significant role in inducing and perpetuating domestic violence. SD discusses that domestic violence may be caused by the difference in the couple's income status whereby the woman earns more than her partner. Domestic violence mentioned in the quote could denote to emotional, psychological, financial, sexual, and spiritual abuse, not only physical abuse. Increasing rate of abuse has been significantly associated with males' feelings of worthlessness, inferiority, irritation, and frustration induced by their inadequate economic status (Augustine, 2002). Violence and various abusive behaviours have been found to be used by some men as a means of releasing these feelings of frustration, irritation, and anxiety (Ichou, 2008).

Men employ violence for various reasons not only to release their feelings of frustration. Several participants stressed that most men seem to use violence as a way of restoring

their sense of personal value, manhood, dominance, and ensure that women remain submissive irrespective of their financial status.

SM: I think that, he would use violence out of feelings of insecurity, but to also still feel like a man in the home. It is almost like he wants his wife to know where her place is, although she is economically independent.

SM's statement indicates that violence is employed by most insecure men as a means of regaining their manhood. SM also discusses that violence is used by men in the domestic domain to ensure that women know and remain in their socially rightful "place". A 'woman's place' in a patriarchal society is construed as that of submissiveness and subordination irrespective of her fiscal status (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Morrell, 2001). This 'place' is informed by socio-cultural, sexist, and religious beliefs and practices (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). Most men therefore use violence to preserve a man's and a woman's place in the public and domestic domain (Britton, 2006; Johnson, 2007); dominate women; and assert their masculinity (Kordvani, 2002). Women's economic independence, therefore, does not seem to change the construal of a 'woman's place' in a patriarchal society.

While some men are intimidated and frustrated by their partners' financial independence, the participants also reported that other men seem to be frustrated by their wives' unemployment and inadequate monetary status. For instance, several participants asserted that some men seem to feel financial strain and frustration because their partners are either unemployed, or inadequately contributing financially in the domestic domain.

KK: Domestic violence could be that, the wife is not working, putting pressure on the husband. So, in terms of that he could get frustrated which then in terms of that, it could be a contributing factor where the husband could get frustrated because either the woman is not playing her role by working, and earning a salary, that kind of thing. So, this obviously this puts a pressure on him because he needs to work harder, bring in more money to accommodate the needs of the family. He could be irritated from her not working and bringing in anything.

KK's quote is contradictory to the previous participants' statements, which indicated that some men feel frustrated and irritated by their partners' fiscal stability and high wage. KK discusses that there are some men who feel frustrated by their wives' unemployment and inadequate economic status. This indicates that most women in a patriarchal society are placed in a difficult social position where they are entrapped in a double-bind situation which exposes them to abuse (Dobash & Dobash, 1992). This therefore seems to indicate that most women will always be the cause of men's feelings of frustration, as well as the target of their partners' abusive behaviour irrespective of their economic status (Barkhuizen & Pretorius, 2005).

As discussed in the aforementioned sub-themes, women's improving financial status exposes them to further experiences of violence because it upsets the construal of hegemonic masculinity. Most working women appear to be aware of the negative influence that their monetary status has on masculinity, and also their vulnerability to experiencing domestic violence (Barkhuizen & Pretorius, 2005). Women's endeavour for fiscal independence and their vulnerability to experiencing domestic abuse seems to contribute to their ambiguity about marriage and motherhood. Working women's perceptions and experiences of marriage are discussed below.

4.3 Working women's perceptions and experiences of marriage and motherhood

A patriarchal society places women in a quandary position regarding their decision to partake in formal employment, get married, and have children. Working women have varying perceptions and experiences of marriage and motherhood. Various participants stated that while there are a majority of women who seem to have a desire to get married and have children, there are some women who seem to be reluctant to get married and have children. This is due to various reasons including their perceptions of marriage as oppressive and their construal of motherhood, which are discussed under the following sub-themes.

4.3.1 Self-reliant women's ambiguity about marriage

Women's perceptions and experiences of marriage differ according to socio-cultural, economic and political context. Several participants reported that a majority of self-reliant women seem to be reluctant to get married for multiple reasons. They first want to strive for independence; have power and control over their lives; and have an ability to make their own decisions without consulting their partners. The participants stated that some women therefore are reluctant to marry because they fear that their partners might expect them to be subservient, which may hinder their career goals.

SA: so they don't marry because they want to be independent, because they don't want to be ruled by somebody, somebody dictating 'you should, you shouldn't, this is when, this is how'.

SM: What I would say is that most people they would prefer to be on their own to avoid issues like that. So if they want to go buy a car, 'I just go buy a car. I don't have to go get permission from somebody'. I think that most women they prefer to be on their own because being married also has its consequences. When you are married, you still don't have power and control over your own life, because you still have to report a lot of things to your husband, you can't do anything that you want to do, when you want to do it. So even if you are earning, you continuously have to consult your husband and tell him what you want to do, and see if he agrees or not.

SA's and SM's statements illustrate the shift in women's perceptions of marriage. They indicate that most women in the contemporary society seem to prefer being unmarried because they want to have power and control of their lives and decisions, as well as pursue their independence status. In contrast, older generation women were eager to marry for financial security, procreation and having a family which are considered to establish and affirm a woman's identity (Van Berkel & De Graaf, 1998). The above distinction indicates a generational shift in the perception of marriage which could be due to multiple reasons, including women's attempt to avoid domestic violence; their endeavour for fiscal independence; and an increasing number of partners co-habiting hence choosing to delay marriage (Oppenheimer, 1997). It is apparent from the above quotes that SA and SM have negative perceptions of marriage. They seem to perceive marriage as an institution that perpetuates woman's oppression while entitling men with

ownership of their wives, as well as power and dominance. This is reflected in their quotes respectively, “*ruled by somebody, somebody dictating ‘you should, you shouldn’t, this is when, this is how’*”, and “*when you are married, you still don’t have power and control over your own life, because you still have to report a lot of things to your husband, you can’t do anything that you want to do, when you want to do it.*” The notion of ‘dictatorship’ seems to be common in marital relationships where the wife is earning more than her husband. In such relationships, women’s independent economic status seems to induce marital problems (Patel *et al.*, 2006), in which husbands dictate their wives’ lives, as well as monitor and control their wives’ finances and movements (Barkhuizen & Pretorius, 2005). In this regard marriage thus induces loss of independence, personal identity, privacy, and social network in some women’s lives, while in others it brings joy and fulfilment (Richardson, 1993). As evident in SM’s quote, marriage therefore appears to entrap economically independent women in a double-bind situation in which their husbands persist to maintain authority over them.

There are other women who feel pressured to get married. Various participants asserted that some autonomous women seem to be pressured to get married, so that they can be perceived by society as normal women having a husband and children. In addition, the respondents stressed that most of these relationships are based on convenience rather than love and commitment.

SM: You know, they are just getting married, so that they can also be married and look like a normal woman in society who has a husband and a family. It is not that they want to get married, but it is more of, ‘I want to be seen as married’. So, they are getting married for the wrong reasons, not out of love.

SM indicates that some self-reliant women get married so that they can fulfil heterosexual expectations of womanhood. This is apparent in SM’s quote that, some women marry so that they “*look like a normal woman in society who has a husband and a family.*” This is because marriage and bearing children are two most important factors in a patriarchal society which indicates and affirms womanhood (Vilakazi, 1962). These women therefore seem to be pressured to get married in order to conform to heterosexual

standards and avoid being stigmatised (Mair, 1969; Muthuki, 2004). As illustrated by SM, their need to marry is not based on love but strongly influenced by social pressure (*“it is more of, I want to be seen as married”*). Men also seem to experience similar social pressures that coerce them to marry. Most men in a patriarchal community are perceived with suspicion and considered to be irresponsible and perhaps homosexuals if they are not married (Baker & Ricardo, 2005). This is because their behaviour of being unmarried deviates from heterosexual norms and expectations, hence, it is considered to be eccentric and abnormal (*ibid.*).

It is evident from the aforementioned sub-theme that economically independent heterosexual women find themselves trapped in a dilemma regarding issues of marriage. Some financially stable heterosexual women are reluctant to marry as a means of avoiding fulfilling socio-culturally defined expectations of ‘being a wife’ in a patriarchal society, which includes being subordinate and submissive to the husband’s instructions (Oppenheimer, 1997). These women choose not to marry so that they can maintain their sense of autonomy, power, and control of their lives. On the contrary, some women seem to get married in order to fulfil dominant heterosexual expectations of womanhood and avoid being rebuked. Most heterosexual people, hence, seem to be under pressure to prove to society that they are ‘straight’ (Baker & Ricardo, 2005) and “*normal*” through matrimony and having a family.

4.3.2 Economically independent women and notions of motherhood

In a patriarchal society motherhood is generally construed as a natural instinct, with most women seen as wanting to have and nurture children (Basow, 1992). Participants in this research acknowledged that although some economically independent women seem to be reluctant about marriage, most of them are interested in having children because they want to experience pregnancy and giving. Other participants stated that some financially stable women seem to have a desire to have a child because of loneliness.

MA: Loneliness (laugh). You know, you naturally want to have something, you want to have someone, even if you don’t have a man, but you have a child, you have someone to talk to because if you are rich and you have everything, most of

the time you stay at work and you are working and then you go home to an empty house and it is like, okay 'my life it is just boring, it just sucks'. You want to have that, even if you have everything, you want to have that natural feeling of being pregnant, you know having that big stomach, it is kind of nice (laugh), at least I think it is. Ja, even if you are not planning to get married to that guy, at least you have something growing in you, you have that bond, something growing in you, some women just want to have that bond. Some women just like being pregnant, 'it does not matter whether I am married, or he wants to leave me, I just want to have a child'. You know, they want that bond, they want to experience what others experience, and they think that they can just share something with their children you know, have some kind of responsibility at home besides work.

MA illustrates that women's need and desire to be pregnant and become mothers is biological and natural ("you naturally want to have something, you want to have someone you want to have that natural feeling of being pregnant"). MA also discusses that a child seems to bring personal fulfilment, wholeness, a sense of responsibility, and entertainment in a woman's life ("loneliness but you have a child, you have someone to talk to most of the time you stay at work and then you go home to an empty house and it is like, okay 'my life it is just boring, it just sucks'..... they can just share something with their children, have some kind of responsibility at home besides work"). As indicated by MA, motherhood is significant in most working women's lives. These women seem to want to have children for various reasons which include: a sense of security and belonging by proving to themselves and others that they are like "other women"; they want to feel a sense of importance and maturity of being a "real woman"; and they also want to feel that their lives are meaningful and worthwhile (Richardson, 1993, p. 1). Ironically, women's need to have children seems to be similar to men's need to have a woman in their lives. Children provide women with a sense of greater meaning, growth, and joy, hence, establishes their womanhood and motherhood (Arendell, 2000), whilst women provide men with a sense of importance, completion ('my other half'), as well as dominance, therefore, establishes their manhood (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). This indicates that women need children to accomplish their femininity, the same way men need women to achieve their masculinity.

However, various feminists argued that women's perception of motherhood is not only biologically influenced, but also socio-culturally informed (Allen, 2005; O'Reilly, 2004).

Allen (2005) asserted that bearing and rearing children is considered to affirm women's femininity, and symbolises normalcy in a patriarchal society. As the result, most women are pressured to become mothers so as to fulfil another important requirement of heterosexuality, and avoid being rebuked and degraded by society (Holmes, 1997). Holmes (1997) stressed that most women who do not have children are often stigmatised in a patriarchal society and considered to be failures, selfish, narcissistic, and emotionally cold. Various feminists one of them including O'Reilly (2004), have contested this perception and coined the term "childfree" (p. 4) which aims to validate and support women's decisions of not having children.

Employment of mothers has been a highly debatable issue across the years by the media, the public, and academia. As stated by the participants, this is because some working mothers seem to neglect their children and fail to provide them with adequate love, attention, and support due to their demanding work responsibilities.

KK: I think that it is going to have a negative impact on kids. Because they need you, and if possible, they need both of you. But sometimes they cannot help it. But if the mother is there, I find them in most cases to be more comfortable than with the father. An economically independent woman who is always out of town, does not have enough time to be a mother to her children, she therefore might neglect her children's needs.

KK highlights the importance of a mother's involvement in her children's life and development. Many of the views of what is important for and detrimental to children in their early years are based on developmental theories which stress the importance of the infant-mother relationship in shaping the personality and future optimal development of the child, for example as outlined in Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969) and the notion of Good-enough mothering (Winnicott, 1965).

The theories have been powerful in shaping popular and lay opinions about childhood and motherhood, as evident in the statement by KK: "*it [women's employment] is going to have a negative impact on kids*". This suggests that KK also thinks that working place their children's development at risk by partaking in paid labour. The result is that within a

patriarchal society motherhood and women's formal employment are seen as being incompatible (Nentwich, 2008; Richardson, 1993).

According to the respondents, most working mothers who neglect their children seem to feel guilty, therefore, replace love with money and materialistic items as a way of symbolising their love for their children.

MA: But the parents, the mother does not realise that, she just thinks that the youth of today is just about money. 'If you give them money they will be okay', but actually you just need that love, you actually do. So, the relationship is becoming more about money, more about material, and less emotional because you spend most of your time at work, you don't have the time to just sit and just give yourself to your children, because you give yourself to your work place.

SA: But they are buying the love. They are buying love, they are not they are not giving it to them physically, but they are trying to buy into that child's world, because they feel guilty.

These quotes foreground the feeling of guilt which is one of the various feelings that most working mothers experience as the result of spending inadequate quality time with their children. MA illustrates that most working mothers focus most of their attention to their work obligations, hence, deprive their children of love and attention. These mothers feel guilty and see themselves as failures because they are failing to fulfil their socially expected motherhood role of being a nurturer and self-sacrificing (Muthuki, 2004). As the result, they attempt to compensate for this internalised 'deficit', using material possessions and money in an attempt to prove to themselves and to society that they are 'good' mothers (Muthuki, 2004), and thus avoiding being perceived by society as "bad" mothers (Holmes, 1997, p. 2). The abovementioned issues illustrate the enormous social pressures and demand that most working mothers experience in a patriarchal society.

The preceding sub-theme indicates that most working mothers are placed in a dilemma of choosing between working or 'staying at home', and nurturing their children as prescribed by patriarchal norms. The role of bearing and nurturing children seems to play an important role in restricting women's movement in the domestic domain (Dobash &

Dobash, 1992). Women who attempt to challenge this socio-gendered role by striving for financial independence encounter great challenges, especially when they have to fulfil and balance their occupational duties and maternal role. Additional challenges that working women encounter involves balancing their occupational and domestic duties. This is discussed in the following theme.

4.4 Working women: Implications within the domestic domain

Women's participation in the economic sector seems to impose an enormous amount of strain in some relationships, particularly in relationships in which men strongly and consciously adhere to patriarchal standards (Kehler, 2001). For instance, most of the participants reported that their partners were unsupportive regarding the sharing of the domestic duties. However, the participants asserted that women's financial independence seems to enable most women to reclaim power and control over their sexuality. Working women's sexuality, as well as their role and duties in the domestic domain are discussed in this theme.

4.4.1 Domestic duties and role of working women

Although there are some husbands who are supportive of their working wives, there are other husbands who are unreasonable, unsupportive and have high domestic expectations of their wives (Dryden, 1999). For instance, most participants asserted that some husbands seem to expect their wives to perform all the female socially constructed domestic duties, even if their wives arrive home late and fatigued from work. This suggest that most 'dual-career wives' (wives who participate in the work-force and fulfil the responsibility of domestic duties) seem to have a stressful and demanding role to fulfil especially with inadequate spousal support (Guelzow *et al.*, 1991).

TB: Obviously, irrespective of your hectic business routine, your husband will still expect you to do the domestic duties such as cleaning, so you need to have a day where you can do a thorough cleaning of your home, it is very tiring.

As indicated by TB, most women are in a dilemma in which they are expected to perform both occupationally and domestically, with husbands still expecting wives to fulfil their

domestic duties despite their wives' work-load. TB illustrates that working wives need to adequately organise their time in order to fulfil their domestic responsibilities. Some husbands refuse to share the female prescribed domestic duties because they perceive the tasks as demeaning and unimportant (Dryden, 1999). In line with TB and Dryden (1999), Coltrane (2000) reported that there seems to be an insignificant change in the sharing of domestic duties despite the fact that an increasing number of women are beginning to participate in the economic domain, and also financially contribute in the household. This indicates that some husbands have a perception that it is their wives' added responsibility if they choose to participate in the economic sector. Most of these husbands therefore do not appear to be sympathetic and supportive of their wives. However, Koenig *et al.* (2003) reported that women's participation in the labour force seems to create gender equality regarding sharing of domestic duties. Some husbands also seem to appreciate their wives' economic contribution in the household because they see it as reducing their financial responsibilities (*ibid.*).

Some working wives who receive inadequate spousal support are placed in a dilemma of choosing between their career and family. Most participants stated these women seem to forfeit committing themselves to occupational duties that require demanding working hours, because they are concerned that their spouses would disapprove of the work-schedule.

SM: I cannot deny that, but I cannot agree with it as well. Because if you talk to some people, maybe let us say there is a senior position being advertised, and if you encourage them to apply they will say 'no, I will not have time to do that thing'. If you ask them why because you have a husband, he can help you pick up the kids, the response you get is very shocked. 'NO HE WILL NOT SUPPORT ME, HE WILL NOT ALLOW ME TO make late hours and things like that'. So now they are not making their own decisions. But every decision they make is controlled and influenced by their husbands.

SM illustrates the control that some men continue to maintain over women irrespective of women's shift in the work-force. SM indicates that there are some independent wives who are fearful of their spouses, and only engage in activities including occupational opportunities that are permitted by their husbands. As discussed by SM, these women

therefore do not seem to have power to make their own decisions, “*but every decision they make is controlled and influenced by their husbands*”. Although several researchers have reported that women’s economic independence seems to entitle them with power and control (Koenig *et al.*, 2003), this is contradictory to SM’s perception. In agreement with SM, other working women also seem to be reluctant to commit themselves to a demanding work-schedule because they fear their unsupportive and abusive husbands (Dryden, 1999). This indicates the adverse domestic situation that some working wives experience in which they do not have the freedom to empower themselves, but they always have to await their husbands to make decisions regarding their lives.

In contrast, there are other husbands who are supportive of their self-reliant wives, and admire women striving for independence and financial stability (Bates *et al.*, 2004; Koenig *et al.*, 2003; Lane, 2003). Several participants reported that men who do not adopt patriarchal values seem to be supportive of their wives. The participants asserted that these husbands seem to realise that their wives’ economic income assists in the domestic domain and improves their lifestyle.

SD: I mean the men realises that, ‘if we did not earn the way we are earning now, or your wife did not work and earn as much, you would be back in the old days’. ‘You would be back to how your mom and dad lived’, and really who wants to live that way, surely! I mean the social standing is changing, and everybody is trying to live the good life.

SD’s quote demonstrates that there are some men who are understanding and supportive of their wives. SD illustrates that these men realise that the “*social standing is changing*”, and that their wives’ economic contribution in the household enables them to “*live the good life*”. These men appear to be shifting from the ‘traditional’ societal perception of manhood and encourage gender equality in the domestic domain. The aforementioned issues seem to indicate the construction of the “new man” (Morrell, 1998, p. 7). The new man deviates from the patriarchal norms and the notion of a “real man” (p. 7) who is portrayed as assertive, dominant, and the sole decision-maker in the domestic domain (Morrell, 1998). The new man therefore seems to progress with the socio-cultural, economical, and political changes. However, he has been rejected, criticised, and made to

feel worthless not only by various men but also some women. These women have criticised him for inadequately performing female prescribed domestic tasks (Dryden, 1999). This seems to indicate that men in the contemporary society also find themselves in a double-bind situation. For instance, the 'real man' is blamed by women for various social problems (women's oppression and abuse etcetera), and the 'new man' who aims to assist women in their struggle for equality is rejected and criticised by some of these women.

4.4.2 'He has to satisfy me sexually, otherwise he is out': Men under pressure

Sexuality, power and control cannot be separated from the politics of gendered identity and issues of masculinity and femininity. Sex is a less researched topic because most people in a patriarchal society seem uncomfortable talking about it, due to socio-cultural and gendered discourses attached to the phenomenon (De la Rey & Friedman, 1996). For instance, women who talk about their sexual experiences are often considered to be 'loose' (*ibid.*). Most heterosexual men in a patriarchal community are construed to have power and control over sexual intercourse in most intimate relationships, whilst women are subservient (Schur, 2007; Wood & Jewkes, 2001). However, the respondents reported that an increasing number of men in the contemporary society do not seem to have as much control over sex in the relationship, compared to the social context when women were financially dependent. The participants asserted that instead an increasing number of economically independent women appear to need men for sexual gratification. The respondents reported that most of these women terminate the relationship if their partners fail to satisfy them sexually. Most men, therefore, seem to be under pressure to be romantic and satisfy their partners' sexual needs so as to maintain the relationship.

MA: I mean a man wants to be like in charge of a woman in whatever way, you know. If he says he wants sex, he wants sex. But, he can't like rule, he can't control you, okay now he wants that feeling of 'I can control this person', like he wants to hear you say, 'baby I need money', he knows okay, 'she is going to come to me when she needs money, and she is going to come to me when she needs this and that'. 'Right now SHE HAS EVERYTHING, what am I giving her just – sex' (laugh), and if that is not good, then the guy has to bounce (laugh), he has to go because that is the only thing the woman needs.

MA illustrates an important association between money, power, control, and sex. MA discusses the amount of power and control most men want to possess over women and also sex (*"I mean a man wants to be like in charge of a woman in whatever way If he says he wants sex, he wants sex"*). This quote seems to indicate that most men expect and 'demand' women to fulfil their sexual needs. As indicated by MA, most men seem to use women's fiscal dependence to claim control of women's sexuality (*"I can control this person, like he wants to hear you say, 'baby I need money', he knows okay, 'she is going to come to me when she needs money'"*). Sex and money are two of the most important social factors that are associated with power, and construct masculinity in a patriarchal system (Mankayi & Shefer, 2005; Rogers, Bidwell, & Wilson, 2005; Wood & Jewkes, 2001). These are the two areas in which most men maintain power over women, therefore, perpetuating male dominance and women's oppression (Dallos & Dallos, 1997). For instance, men in a patriarchal society are perceived to have biological and hardwired sexual urges and desires, and it is considered to be a woman's responsibility to fulfil and satisfy their sexual needs (Boonzaier, 2008; Dallos & Dallos, 1997; Mankayi & Shefer, 2005; Schur, 2007). Furthermore, men are considered to constantly think about and need sex preferably with multiple sexual partners (Mankayi & Shefer, 2005). Mankayi & Shefer (2005) termed this as "male obsession" (p. 69) with sex. In this conceptualisation, women's bodies are seen as 'objects' of males' 'possession' which are used for male sexual gratification, and thereafter 'devalued' and "disposed", and the next 'body' is used (Mankayi & Shefer, 2005, p. 70). Male obsession with sex is regarded to play a significant role in perpetuating HIV/AIDS through risky sexual acts with multiple partners (*ibid.*). Moreover, it also seems to play a role in perpetuating men's believe that they 'own' women's bodies, and that it is their 'right' to sexually force themselves on women who refuse to have sex with them (Dallos & Dallos, 1997; Wood & Jewkes, 2001). This seems to be in line with MA's statement in which she illustrated that most men seem to want to be in charge and in control of women's bodies for their sexual gratification. Most men therefore seem to use sex to claim power over women, as well as to enhance their ego and manhood (Mankayi & Shefer, 2005).

However, MA also indicated that men's sexuality is under threat as an increasing number of women are becoming fiscally independent (“*now SHE HAS EVERYTHING, what am I giving her just – sex’, and if that is not good, then the guy has to bounce*”). This seems to indicate that the change in women's economic status is empowering women and enabling them to have control of their sexuality (Dallos & Dallos, 1997). As the result, most men seem to have ambivalent feelings regarding women's sexuality. They seem to see women's bodies as ‘objects’ that can give them sexual gratification and also emasculate them (Mankayi & Shefer, 2005). This appears to cultivate a shift in men's perception of sex whereby more men are conforming to women's construal of sex which is associated with sexual pleasure, love, emotion, and security (Mankayi & Shefer, 2005).

There are other problems which most economically stable women encounter in their intimate relationships. Some of these problems are related to extra-marital affairs. Several participants reported that some independent wives seem to become extensively preoccupied with their occupational commitments, hence, neglect and provide their husbands with inadequate love, support, and attention. The participants stated this tempts some husbands to seek love and attention from other women, which in most occasions results in an extra-marital affair.

MA: And also that is why most of the men cheat actually, they cheat because they don't get that quality time, that support that they find when they go outside. They find that woman who is going to speak to them. Sometimes you just need a friend, someone who is going to be there just to talk to you, you don't have to do anything just to talk, and they find that outside. And then they feel that ‘this person is treating me so good’ you know, even though their wife could give them that. But just because she does not have the time, and it does not come to mind that, ‘he is my husband, he needs this, no he knows me we have been together for this amount of time, its fine’. So they just take that for granted, but sometimes you just need to talk, that is all you need to do.

MA's quote seems to blame and focuses most of the attention on working wives for tempting their husbands to commit adultery. It is important for one to recognise that male obsession with sex that was mentioned by Mankayi and Shefer (2005), may also contribute to extra-marital affairs. For instance, some men seem to perceive an extra-

marital affair as an opportunity to satisfy their sexual desires (Chang, 1999), as well as release sexual energy that was insufficiently satisfied by their wives (Finnemore, 1996). This therefore indicates that men should also take responsibility in the occurrence of extra-marital affairs.

It is apparent from the above discussion that women's fiscal independence empowers and entitles them to have control of their sexuality (Dallos & Dallos's, 1997). However, women's financial stability and stressful work-schedule seem to expose them to adverse experiences in their intimate relationship mentioned. This seems to indicate that women will always find themselves in an impasse situation which their financial status cannot help them to escape. The coping mechanisms that working women and mothers employ are discussed in the next theme.

4.5 Coping mechanisms adopted by working women to cope against their 'dual roles'

Coping with and managing both domestic and occupational duties seems to be a very challenging and demanding task that most women are faced with (Skinner, 1980). The participants reported some of the coping mechanisms that are used by various single working women and mothers. These coping mechanisms are discussed in this theme.

Balancing and managing both occupational and family responsibilities does not seem to be a simple task especially for single working mothers. According to the participants, most autonomous mothers employ a domestic assistant to assist with some of their domestic duties, such as cooking and childcare.

SM: That is when we I am one of them. So that is when you have got a maid at home. So when the kids are at home, she is there. Um, you have to face those challenges. Like I have said, I have got a maid at home, so I know that when the kids are back from school, there is someone there. I drop them off at school in the morning when I come to work, but a combie drops them at home in the afternoon, so the maid will then give them lunch. I mean it is hard, you cannot cope, not unless there is someone else, a second person helping you with the kids, like picking up the kids and things that will help. If I have a lot of work at work, I know that there is someone looking after the kids, they ate supper, done their

homework, and are in bed in time and things like that, and so I can carry on with my work. But sometimes that is not the case. I have to leave everything when it is time to get home.

SM discusses the challenges that she and other single working mothers encounter when they have to fulfil both occupational and domestic responsibilities. SM indicates that most single working mothers employ a domestic assistant to alleviate some of their responsibilities, because it becomes challenging for them to cope on their own. This indicates that a patriarchal system makes it difficult for single working mothers to perform both occupational and domestic roles. Most mothers who strive to empower themselves by partaking in the work-force, therefore, employ a domestic assistant to help with some of the domestic duties whilst they focus on their work obligations (Bird & Schnurman, 2005). This is apparent in SM's quote, "*if I have a lot of work at work, I know that there is someone looking after the kids, they ate supper, done their homework, and are in bed in time so I can carry on with my work*". Domestic assistants therefore play an important role in assisting families and single working mothers cope with their occupational and domestic duties.

Other single working mothers accept assistance from other sources. For instance, one respondent reported that she is assisted by her 14 year old daughter whom she shares domestic duties with. According to the participant, her daughter cooks and prepares supper when she arrives home from school, and the respondent is responsible for washing the dishes and cleaning.

BB: Uh, unfortunately that is what I do. I am not home between 8 and 5, when I get at home, okay – my daughter, 14 years old, comes from school, she cooks because she comes home at about 3 o'clock, she cooks supper, she makes sure that there is food to eat, and I wash the dishes, and I clean the house.

BB discusses that her daughter plays an important role in helping her manage her occupational and domestic responsibilities. BB illustrates that she works long hours and her daughter assists her by cooking supper. Other single working women receive assistance from their sons whom they trained to perform basic female prescribed

domestic duties (Bird & Schnurman, 2005), and also from their mothers and family in-laws (Muthuki, 2004). Children and other family members, therefore, also play an important role in enabling most independent women cope with their responsibilities.

There are some working women who adopt maladaptive ways of coping. According to the respondents, some women seem to use drugs as a way of coping with their work and domestic duties, as well as relieving stress.

MA: Ja, it does cause a little bit of strain on her, I mean working, going home at six, seven, and then cooking, making sure that your family has something to eat. That is why you find that some women, some of them they turn to drugs. Some of the rich women but not all of them, they have something that helps them to cope, like they just turn to drugs or whatever means just to relieve that stress. They just do something just to relieve that stress, because it is stressful to be at work, work hard, and come home and cook for the children.

MA illustrates that some working women and mothers use drugs as a means of coping with their work and domestic responsibilities. MA discusses that the drugs seems to help these women and mothers relieve the stress induced by their work and domestic obligations. Other working women and mothers consume excessive amount of alcohol as a means of coping with their stress (Wong *et al.*, 2008). However, some independent mothers seem to employ adaptive coping mechanisms, such as exercising, relaxing, and enjoying recreation activities as a means of relieving stress (Bird & Schnurman, 2005).

The aforesaid theme indicates that various working women and mothers adopt different coping mechanisms. Some working women and mothers seem to be privileged by their financial status which enables them to sufficiently cope with their work and domestic responsibilities, compared to women who are earning a low income. This indicates that class differentiates Black women's experiences. However, the following theme illustrates that some economically independent and dependent women have a shared experience regarding their decision to leave or remain in an abusive relationship.

4.6 Reasons for remaining in an abusive relationship

Leaving an abusive relationship does not seem to be a simple task. Some women experience difficulty and struggle leaving their abusive partners. Several participants reported that there are various reasons that entrap financially stable women in an abusive relationship. For instance, the participants stated that some women remain in an abusive relationship due to low self-efficacy, as well as feelings of love, fear, and obligation. According to the participants, other women remain because their partners threatened their lives and their children's lives. These reasons are discussed in the subsequent sub-themes.

4.6.1 Economically independent women lacking self-efficacy

There are some women who struggle leaving their abusive partners due to lack of self-efficacy, as well as their perception that they will not be able to cope without their partners (Sedumedi, 2006). Self-efficacy is the individual's confidence and belief in her ability to control and cope with, as well as overcome her stressful situation (Bandura, 1992). Several participants reported that there are fiscally stable women who remain in an abusive relationship because they lack self-confidence and self-esteem, and they believe that they are incapable of surviving on their own. According to the participants, the lack of self-confidence seems to be induced by the physical and emotional abuse.

SM: Some economically independent women remain in an abusive relationship because of lack of self-confidence. They don't believe that they are actually capable of surviving on their own, despite the fact that they are earning so much. The lack of self-confidence is mostly caused by the environment that she is living in.

SA: You are independent, you are getting your money, you can live with that money, but yet you still feel you can't do this. You can't do that. They feel that they can't be able to cope, you know, almost like they lack self-esteem, they don't believe in themselves. The low self-esteem is mostly caused by the physical and emotional abuse, you know, the beating and your husband telling you that you are incompetent, and you can't make it on your own.

These quotes highlight the effects that physical and emotional abuse poses on some independent women. SM and SA discusses that physical and emotional abuse diminishes

autonomous women's self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-efficacy resulting in women remaining in the abusive relationship because they think that they cannot cope individually. This is apparent in SM's quote, "*they don't believe that they are actually capable of surviving on their own, despite the fact that they are earning.*" Most abused self-reliant women have this mentality that they cannot "*survive on their own*" because their abusive partners are constantly telling them that "*you are incompetent, and you can't make it on your own*". This seems to indicate that abuse affects and distorts women's cognition and judgment, hence, precipitating negative appraisals (Ozer & Bandura, 1990). As the result, most women seem to believe that they lack the capacity to leave their abusive partners irrespective of their fiscal status (Ozer & Bandura, 1990). Abuse also seems to diminish women's sense of self-worth, personal value, and emotional strength necessary for them to retaliate and leave their abusive partners, hence, entrapping them in the adverse relationship (Ngoma, 2005). However, women seem to respond differently to their abusive situation based on the nature of abuse. For instance, women who experience severe abuse seem to be more fearful and have an extremely diminished self-efficacy, therefore, are likely to remain in an abusive relationship compared to women who experience minor or no abuse (DeMaris & Swinford, 1996). This is because the severity of abuse does not only induce fear in women but also leaves them feeling powerless, hence, believing that they do not have the capability to cope and control their adverse experience (*ibid.*). This is evident in SM's quote, "*the lack of self-confidence is mostly caused by the environment that she is living in.*" Her quote seems to illustrate that the nature of abuse (that is, the severity, duration, and frequency of the abuse) impacts on the woman's self-confidence, thus, determines her reaction to the abuse. The abovementioned discussion indicates that domestic violence has similar detrimental effects in economically independent women as it has in fiscally dependent women. However, DeMaris and Swinford (1996) found that abused women who have self-confidence seem to be able to cope with and leave their abusive partners. Self-efficacy, self-confidence, and self-esteem therefore play an important role in enabling independent women cope with and leave an abusive relationship.

4.6.2 For the sake of the children

The children's well-being also contributes in maintaining self-sufficient women in an abusive relationship (Sedumedi, 2006). Several respondents reported that some financially independent women seem to think that they will be unable to fulfil their children's financial needs, and pay for other domestic necessities. The participants stated that these women therefore succumb to the abuse, learn helplessness, and tolerate their abusive situation.

SD: Some women irrespective of their economic status, basically feel 'where do I go to? What do I do? This is all I basically know', and they become accustomed to it, they become used to it, it is a way of life, and they accept it and they continue. Other women would feel that they would not survive on their own having to look after the children, pay for other responsibilities. So, there is that continuous doubt in themselves, that 'I will not make it on my own, I need my husband'.

SD illustrates that some fiscally stable women find themselves in a quandary situation of deciding to leave or remain in an abusive relationship. SD discusses that these women seem to remain in the adverse relationship and learn helplessness due to their uncertainty about financial survival, securing their children's well-being, and finding shelter. SD also indicates an important similarity between financially stable and dependent women regarding their decision to remain in an abusive relationship. Most financially dependent women commonly remain in a violent relationship because they are concerned about their children's financial needs (Sedumedi, 2006). However, as evident in SD's quote some economically independent women also remain in an abusive relationship for similar reasons. Fiscally stable women seem to feel that they cannot survive on their individual salary, because they are accustomed to combining their salaries with their partners in order to fulfil financial necessities (Barkhuizen & Pretorius, 2005). The children's well-being and finance therefore are two of the various factors that entrap most independent and dependent women in an abusive relationship.

Some economically independent women are reluctant to leave their abusive partners because they are concerned about their children's psychological well-being. Several

participants stated that other women seem to be hesitant to leave their abusive husbands, because of the psychological effect that parental separation and divorce has on children.

SA: As I said, I don't know whether it is the children. They are trying to hold on to their kids, because if they do get divorced, the kids do get split up. 'How is the child going to get affected psychologically'? 'You know mom is not here, your dad is not here'.

SA indicates that some self-reliant women remain in an abusive situation due to the psychological implications that parental separation and divorce poses on children. The psychological implications of parental separation and divorce on children are one of the multiple reasons that retain women in an abusive relationship, as it is revealed in the theme. What becomes apparent from SA's quote is that mothers seem to carry most of the responsibility for their children's well-being. The nurturing, caring, and protecting role of mothers is socio-culturally defined (Arendell, 2000; Glenn, 1994). Women in a patriarchal system acquire the knowledge that motherhood entails compromising one's well-being for the sake of others, particularly their children (*ibid.*). Hence, most women are reluctant to leave their violent partners as a means of protecting their children from experiencing psychological trauma (Barkhuizen & Pretorius, 2005), or being "warped" (p. 27) which is a misperception about children raised by a single parent (Ngoma, 2005). In agreement with SA and the aforesaid studies, Ram and Hou (2005) reported that divorce has psychological implications on children, such as temper tantrums, aggression, anger, and anxiety. However, psychological and emotional consequences of divorce on children are not as intense compared to children with prolonged exposure to abuse (Angless & Shefer, 1997; Emery, 1999). Most children and adolescents with prolonged exposure to abuse are vulnerable to experiencing various psychological disorders namely, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, self-mutilation, suicidal ideations and attempts (Angless & Shefer, 1997; Fishbein *et al.*, 2006). Williams and Dunne-Bryant (2006) accentuated that parents should therefore leave an abusive relationship for the sake of their children. This is because most children are resilient to the psychological effects of abuse and divorce especially when they receive adequate parental support (*ibid.*).

4.6.3 The role of fear and intimidation

There are some husbands who employ extreme measures of ensuring that their wives remain in the abusive relationship. Several participants stated that some husbands seem to threaten the lives of both their children and wives, by warning their wives that they will kill them and the children if they leave. The participants asserted that some of these women seem to remain in the relationship as a way of protecting their lives and their children's lives.

SA: And sometimes they are living under threat, 'if you leave me, I might kill the children, or I might kill you', you know something stupid. But uh, a woman who is abused might take that seriously, 'do I lose my kids? Do I lose my life? Do I wait? What do I do'? So, they just live day by day in that situation, I think.

As indicated by SA, some men use induction of fear and intimidation as a means of retaining women in an abusive relationship. SA discusses that these men threaten the lives of their partners and children, and consequently the women believe the threats hence stay in the violent situation. Other men provoke fear in their partners by physically torturing their pets (Schur, 2007). Most men employ these abusive tactics when they think that their partners are resisting their other forms of intimidation (*ibid.*). Intimidation therefore seems to be one of the contributing factors that maintain some abused women in abusive relationships. However, other aspects of SA's statement ("so, they just live day by day in that situation") seems to portray abused women who remain in an abusive relationship as passive and helpless. SA's statement fails to acknowledge some of the strategies that abused women use to resist their partners' ferocious acts (Chantler, 2006).

Other participants asserted that some abused women seem to be reluctant to leave an abusive relationship, because they fear that they will be involved in another abusive relationship.

KK: Sometimes, you find that other women remain because of fear that they will find the same kind of man. You know, sometimes you find that women who were abused seem to look for the same kind of man who also abuses them. I don't actually know if they look for that, or if it is their fate, it basically seems as if this is what she finds or enjoys.

KK indicates an important link between women with a previous history of abuse and their vulnerability of being re-abused in the future. KK discusses that some of these women remain with their violent partners because they fear engaging in another abusive relationship (*“other women remain because of fear that they will find the same kind of man”*). KK’s statement can be explained from trauma theories which posit that, majority of people who have been traumatised and victimised are most likely to be re-victimised at some point in their lives (Herman, 1994). The re-victimisation is influenced by feelings of guilt, shame, anger, helplessness, and the victims’ unconscious need to reclaim power and control over their lives (Herman, 1994). KK’s quote (*“sometimes you find that women who were abused seem to look for the same kind of man who also abuses them”*), seems to suggest that these abused women consciously seek abusive partners who perpetuate the abuse. Herman (1994) accentuated that abused victims are unconscious of this behaviour. That is, they do not intentionally involve themselves in violent relationships which re-enact their previously abusive experiences (*ibid.*). Herman (1994) explained that most people who are exposed to a prolonged experience of trauma seem to dissociate and lose conscious memory of the traumatic event, hence, increasing their likelihood of re-victimisation. However, Herman’s theory of trauma and memory did not go uncontested. McNally (2005) argued that memory cannot be dissociated or repressed, and that people with prolonged exposure to a traumatic event are most likely to remember it. McNally (2005) stated that although people can forget a traumatic incident for a certain period, a stimulus event will always trigger the memories of their past traumatic event, causing them to remember it. The above argument seems to suggest that abused victims have conscious memory of their adverse events.

4.6.4 Constructions of love

Perceptions of love seem to be one of the multiple factors that entrap women in an abusive relationship. It is important to understand how people construe love so as to understand the reasons that love entraps them in such an adverse situation. Some people seem to construe love as, entailing both pain and ecstasy; conquering all obstacles; and capable of solving any problem including abuse (Lloyd, 1991). This construal of love could be the reason that retains abused women in an abusive relationship. Several

participants reported that some self-sufficient women seem to be reluctant to leave an abusive relationship because they love their partners.

KK: Some of them feel that they love the person too much, and some people have this weird thinking that their partners actually loves her and that is why he is actually doing this to her, that is how he shows that he loves her, you know.

KK discusses an important association between love, abuse, and reluctance to leave an abusive relationship. She illustrates that some people stay in an abusive relationship because of their feelings of love for their partners, and they also think that their partners' abusive behaviour is an expression of their love for them. This seems to be in line with the evidence obtained from this researcher's previous study on domestic violence. Most of the participants in an earlier study by this researcher reported that, they expected their partners to be abusive to them as an indication of their love for them (Sedumedi, 2006). The participants in Sedumedi's (2006) study also stated that they became hesitant of their partners' love when their partners did not batter them. Other abused young women perceive forced sex, and regular slapping or punching to be part of a normal conflict in a relationship which also symbolise love (Power, 2004). Some women in Umtata believe that their partners' jealousy which in most circumstances induces violence is an explicit indication of their partners' love for them (Wood & Jewkes, 2001). This seems to indicate that some abused women enjoy being battered because they associate the physical abuse with an expression of love (Kim & Motsei, 2002). SD's quote and the aforementioned studies indicate that abuse plays a significant role in distorting most abused women's perception of love, hence, perpetuating their reluctance to leave their abusive partners. This is in line with the phenomenon of co-dependency which posits that, abused women remain in an abusive relationship because they derive enjoyment from the abuse (Golden, 1992 in Callaghan & Clark, 2006).

4.6.5 Feelings of obligation

An additional reason that entraps self-reliant women in an abusive relationship is their feelings of obligation to their spouses. Some women feel indebted to their husbands for assisting them in achieving their educational, occupational, and socio-economic status

(Ngoma, 2005). For instance, several participants stated that some women seem to be reluctant to leave an abusive relationship because their husbands assisted them to acquire their educational status. Moreover, the participants reported that some husbands seem to use this to their advantage by continuously reminding their spouses that they assisted in their independence and success.

BB: It depends, some women Let me be honest with you, some women who came into the relationship and they were not as educated, and the man and the man decided to take care of them and helped them to get good education, most of the time you find that they are caught in the dynamic dilemma, and they remain in the relationship because they are always reminded that you were nothing.

BB indicates that some independent women remain in an abusive relationship due to guilt, manipulation, and other abusive tactics. BB discusses that some men seem to manipulate and instil guilt in their partners by constantly reminding them of their prior lack of educational status, hence, maintaining them in the relationship. This is apparent in BB's quote, "*they remain in the relationship because they are always reminded that you were nothing.*" Instillation of guilt which is one of the tactics of emotional and psychological abuse is used by men to debilitate their partners' self-worth, integrity, independence, and agency (Packota, 2000). It also promotes feelings of self-blame especially if deployed in conjunction with other psychological abuse strategies, such as constant criticisms and demeaning behaviour intended to restrain autonomous women in the abusive relationship (Ngoma, 2005; Packota, 2000). Some fiscally stable women therefore seem to remain in a violent relationship in an attempt to avoid hurting and abandoning their partners (Ngoma, 2005). Other women consequently feel obliged to give their husbands control over their salaries because their husbands assisted them to achieve their educational, occupational, and financial status by financing their studies (Kim & Motsei, 2002). The abovementioned discussion indicates some of the other difficulties and challenges that abused women encounter which contribute in their reluctance to leave an adverse relationship.

The preceding sub-themes indicated that most women seem to find themselves entrapped in an abusive relationship irrespective of their economic status. As evident in the sub-

themes, men employ various abusive tactics such as physical violence, intimidation, and instillation of guilt to name just a few, to induce fear and depreciate women's self-efficacy and self-confidence, hence, entrapping their partners in the violent relationship.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

This study drew on social constructionist, feminist framework to explore the relationship between domestic violence and Black women's changing socio-economic status and roles. Thematic analysis revealed that autonomous women were vulnerable to experiencing domestic abuse. This is because their changing and improving economic status threatens dominant conceptualisation of manhood which possibly leads to abuse (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Morrell, 2001). The participants discussed that some men act on their feelings of intimidation by either leaving their partners for less financially stable women; committing extra-marital affairs; or emotionally, financially, and physically abusing their fiscally stable partners. The abusive behaviours tend to assert men's authority, dominance, power, and control over women (Boonzaier, 2008), as well as discipline women and ensure that they remain obedient and subordinate despite their financial status (Augustine, 2002; Wood & Jewkes, 2001).

The findings also showed that some women think that there is a difference in men's perceptions of and response to the change in women's economic status and roles. The respondents revealed that contemporary generation males seem to acknowledge women's endeavour for independence compared to older generation males. This is because the younger generation's views are influenced by various social factors, such as cultural factors, mass media, parents, peers, as well as the changes in the legislature and educational system (Feldman, 2002; Morrell, 2001). Furthermore, the study found that women perceive some men as unsupportive and refuse to assist their 'dual-career wives' with domestic duties due to reasons discussed. As the result, most working wives seem to experience difficulty balancing and fulfilling both occupational and domestic responsibilities. It was indicated in the study that most women are reluctant or delay being married, because they are aware of men's unsupportive and abusive reaction to their independence status. The respondents viewed that some working women prefer being single parents, and cope with their occupational and maternal role by accepting assistance or using drugs. What became apparent from the study is that mothers who earn a high income sufficiently cope with their duties compared to mothers earning a low

salary. This illustrates that Black working women's experiences are differentiated by class which is entangled with race and gender. But most independent and dependent women seem to have a common experience regarding their decision to remain in an abusive relationship. According to the participants, some independent women remain in an abusive relationship due to lack of self-efficacy, for the sake of their children, intimidation, and feelings of fear, love, as well as obligation to their husbands. Goldner *et al.* (1990) accentuated that some of these women employ strategies that aim to oppose their partners' violence.

It is evident from the results that women's economic independence does not protect them from domestic violence, instead renders them to further experiences of abuse (Barkhuizen & Pretorius, 2005). This indicates that women are entrapped in a double-bind situation which exposes them to abuse (Dobash & Dobash, 1992). The inference of this study is that domestic violence continues to persist and remains a serious social problem in South Africa, despite the adoption of the new government policies and the change in men's behaviour and attitude styles. Hence, the rate of woman abuse can be expected to escalate as more women are recruited in the labour market and become independent.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

Selecting a larger sample size and combining qualitative and quantitative research methodologies would have benefited the study, by providing a more detailed conceptualisation of the relationship between woman abuse and the shift in women's socio-economic status and roles. In retrospect the interviews were rationally short possibly because they were constrained to the participants' lunch hour, which is in itself also problematic. Conducting an introductory and concluding focus group sessions would have also benefited the study, by allowing the participants to debate and express their opinions while discussing these issues in a group setting. Comparing the data obtained from the introductory and concluding focus group sessions would have enabled this researcher to evaluate for any changes in the participants' perceptions as the result of participating in the study. This researcher was unable to conduct the focus group sessions due to the participants' work-schedule and other responsibilities.

It is recommended that other studies explore men's views on women's rapid social upward mobility and the possible links to domestic abuse. Working women should be encouraged to enrol in Employee Assistance Programme so that they can be informed and prepared of the hurdles that their occupational responsibilities may pose in their domestic environment, as well as receive counselling regarding work-related issues; dealing with drug and alcohol addiction; and stress management techniques. Furthermore, more support groups need to be designed to support and educate abused women, as well as provide men an opportunity to talk about their experiences and perceptions of abuse.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Transcription Notation

SYMBOLS	SIGNIFICANCE
[Overlapping utterance of participants occurring when the other participant interrupts.
]	End of overlapping utterance.
-	Indicates a short untimed pause within an utterance.
<u>Word</u>	Underling of a word indicates emphasis of the word.
WORD	Upper cased word indicates that it was articulated louder than other words in the same utterance.
.hhh	Inhalation
((act))	Indicates an act that occurred during articulation of an utterance, e.g. cough, sniff, crying, laughing etc.
>word<	An utterance articulated at a quicker pace
()	Inaudible word or phrase within an utterance.
(word)	Soft tone of voice.
(word)	Not clearly audible word.
.....	Incomplete sentence.

Appendix 2: Interview Schedule

- What do you think about the change in women's economic status?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of women's economic status?
- What do men think about women's liberation and strive for economic independence?
- How does the husband think of his financially reliant wife?
- What kind of relationship does the couple have in the domestic environment?
- How does the husband respond to his wife's economic status especially when she is earning more than him – she is bringing home the 'bacon'?
- What is the relationship between economically independent women and domestic violence?
- How do self-reliant women respond to their experience of domestic violence, should they experience such an adverse event?
- What kind of relationship does the economically stable mother have with her children?
- How does she manage to balance work and family responsibilities?

Appendix 3: Transcripts

1. DATA TRANSCRIPTION – BB (African female)

PR: Okay, what are your thoughts on women becoming economically independent?

BB: Eish, obviously I think that it is a wonderful thing, because women have been oppressed in so many ways. Domestic violence is perpetuated by a lot of things, even before women were not economically empowered. But affirmative action is actually helping women to go further so that they could try to survive because things have changed, they are now providers, men are no longer providing for them as much as they did before, women are no more sitting at home, they are now running the household. So, for women to be empowered in terms of the economic status, I think for me it is the most wonderful thing, and it will make us not only the women, but the whole nation benefit. I am sorry, I am not saying that if women are not economically empowered the nation does not benefit, but I am looking at it from a motherly perspective where women produce children and therefore nurture them, and hence for women to get that in terms of being economically and financially stable, don't you think that the more women get that, there more nurturing of the children, and the more power women would have in terms of making decisions, because if you don't have money you don't have power in so many ways, and so your decision-making skills will always be submissive. You cannot even decide what goes on in your own family, because there is always somebody above you. So, their self-esteem kind of changes, you know, and their identity as women changes which also makes a lot of impact on the people they live with, the children that they have, the children that they rear and take care of them, unlike where the woman would have no saying in the house, because the man is saying this. So, the woman in that household would actually advance in that sense, but it would be a threat in one way or the other depending on how they look at each other, depending on how the power dynamics are within the family environment. Um, there are also cultural issues there, what are the expectations on the male and the female person? Where do they come from in terms of their cultural background? I mean other cultures, like my Zulu culture, does not accept women to be above men, you know, to be economically independent and have some form of power in the household over the male figure. The man is considered to be the head of the home, to be the breadwinner, and when that changes, surely trouble will occur. So, there are a lot of things that impact and could perpetrate and make it possible for domestic violence to occur within the relationship.

PR: You mentioned various issues that I feel are very important, the first issue that I want to explore is that one where you said, that depending on how the woman and the man within the household interact, there might be a threat. What kind of threat do you think would occur?

BB: Power dynamics. Because the fact that women are financially stable, are getting a lot of power, and men traditionally, spiritually no matter how you look at it, the way they are build, they have always been associating their gender and identity with masculinity, with power. So, that power the man will feel threatened that it has been removed from him as a man. So, that removes his identity as a man, his power as a man, as the head of

the family. So, yes in a way you will find that a woman who is economically stable and running the household, men are bound to feel threatened, not only because the woman is seen as an individual, but the way people are socialized, that understanding that as a man you provide, and that as a man you are the head in all socially, religiously, culturally So, you know it is very difficult, I presume for a man to kind of say, yes let go of his power, his authority in the household.

PR: I want to focus on the point you raised of children, and the women being able to make better decisions for their children. What kind of relationship or interaction do you think that a highly economically independent woman, who maybe has her own business and is always coming home late, would have with her children and husband?

BB: Yes, I would think that there is less time, obviously, there is less time that she spends. But time spend you can imagine if you spend time with your mother who is exposed to things, who is being out there, who knows and is more enlightened, so the time that you spend together, don't you think that it will be very enriching and – uh what should I call it, quality time that you spend with your parents, who actually know what it is best for you, and who are actually doing that for you, provided that the child also puts the mother's or also her needs in front in terms of mom has to go out there and work for me to benefit, and what are these benefits, for me to get more education, to be independent. That independence is actually represented and modeled by the mother who is going out there irregardless and fending for her children. So, these children can actually see, that it is okay for me to be out there, come back, and spend some time with them. Now another person can never understand how can I say if a person is away from home at 7 and comes back home at 8 that there is quality time. I am looking at a woman, who does not work, who is at home, a house-mother, people have got this understanding that if you are a house-mother you are not working. It is the most exhausting job 24/7, you don't have to children come yes, they see you as a mother figure there, but you have got a lot of errands to run, and a lot of chores to do, which actually takes your mind from a lot of other things. As much as we think that it is not a lot of job, it is a lot of work. So, I am saying that it depends on the woman, how much time she is (prepared) to put away, quality time with the children, whether you are a house-wife or a working woman. Both ways it impacts, because you could be there not working, expecting your husband to bring something home and he does not bring, and yet you labour the whole day for nothing which leads to depression. And you might not be there for your children yet you must be able to sustain them, and think positively, in such circumstances which are very oppressive either way. So, I would rather say, liberate the woman, liberate your mind, you liberate the children. But if you don't do that, then it is a problem.

PR: I understand what you are saying, but I want to focus on, you said that it is how she manages her time and she spends quality time with her children. I am wondering how she is going to balance the working and domestic responsibilities?

BB: Uh, unfortunately that is what I do. I am not home between 8 and 5, when I get at home, okay – my daughter, 14 years old, comes from school, she cooks because she comes home at about 3 o'clock, she cooks supper, she makes sure that there is food to eat,

and I wash the dishes, and I clean the house, we sit and we help the boy with the homework, and that time there is a lot that we talk about, how is her school environment, how the boy's school was, and that time I know very well that I was not there for them and I need to give that time to them, and in between whatever it is that we are doing, we exchange a lot. And to answer your question, making time for your children is important and the fact that you are aware that that needs to happen makes it even more of a challenge between you as an individual to spend time with the children. For instance, everytime I go out I take them along, like the past weekend I went to Johannesburg, I took them with me, okay. I make sure that, I take them with because I have got money with me, I don't have to ask from my husband that I need money, and I know that it is important for the children to go on a holiday. I worked from an environment where we are all packed, we are all working, and when we get more time, I am not exhausted, they are looking forward to spending time, quality time together. We get on quiet well, we feel that there is tension, we need to get some air, we go away on a holiday because I have got the money to do that, and I plan for that. So, either way, indirectly, the dynamic actually forces you to look into how best you are in taking care of my children. And because Precious, I am independent and financially stable, I am able to think clearly and make the right decisions for my children. If it was not for that, I would be staying at home being a wife, and thinking about what the husband is bringing home or not, neglect my children looking at all these frustrations that I am having. So, it could also impact on me, in my thinking abilities if I am not working, if I am not able to do anything, because I know a lot of hopelessness and helplessness is due to, I can't change the situation, I am not good, I don't have money, I can't do anything, I can't buy Precious shoes, I have to wait for Precious's father to give me money so that I can buy Precious a pair of shoes. You know, a mother who knows that if you do well, you get this in this materialistic world our children live in, that when I have the energy to provide for them and move with the times. Those days are gone, where we have to wait for the father to bring you a pair of shoes, the television is telling you that Pep is cheaper, the children are watching mom can't you buy 49.99 per of tekkies, you know. So, that on its own impacts on you, you look at how civilization is growing and think that if you can take women back, I don't think that it would be something that will be quiet right.

PR: I hear what you are saying, it is almost as if you become a role model for your children. You are also basically showing your children that a woman does not have to depend on the father, but she can also do the same things that a man can do. What expectations do you think that a husband would have on his wife?

BB: Well, I would not know because I am not married unfortunately, but if I can just quote from other people's experiences – most of the men who feel that women are stable, they just withdraw financially, they expect women to do everything. You know, they would expect themselves to mostly take care of their cars, and their their whatever it is. Most of the times where men feel vulnerable in terms of women taking away their power, I feel that their anger actually changes into something whereby they abuse women financially, and they totally withdraw themselves from the relationship, and saying that now that you are in power let me see how much you can go, trying to reclaim their authority, their power in that way. That is what I have heard from people who are

financially stable, and from the observations in my own life. I mean, there are men who came there are men that I know who said to me, I mean explicitly that we can't go out with you, we just can't go out with you, and that is only because they think that my financial state is high, they have that perception. So, I think hence, I am saying withdrawal, those who withdraw for me would not take advantage because when they look at me, they feel threatened, they see power, they see themselves not being able to make any decisions in the relationship, you know, and having control in the relationship because men would like to be in control. So, there is no way that they can be themselves if I am financially stable and earning more than them.

PR: That is interesting, what other kinds of conflict do you think might arise within that marriage based on what you are saying, that men are continuously comparing themselves to their independent wives?

BB: Um, okay, if someone is oppressing my position as an authority figure (), you see as an African there is a saying that, if you do something well, so let us say that I am a female, wife at home and I do something well, so if there is something that I do well other people will say now you are a man – you are doing a job just like men do. So they are looking at me as a man, so they are giving me that part they are saying that the work that I do it is men's work, so my abilities now are equal to a man. Precious 'isiZulu bati eyindoda' which means that you are a man, now that you are doing this, this is what men do, women don't do this, so we can recognize you as our equal because you have got the potential that we have. This is not about being submissive, it is about the things that you are able to bring home, because men are supposed to bring home things, men are supposed to go out there and work for their children and wife, and run the household, but if you as a female do that, they look at you as a person it is like WOW this woman is just a man because she is the provider of the house. So, they give you the authority, they give you the authority that you are a man, they look up to. It is easier because they have now actually promoted you, and they can now say because she is like us, we can encourage what she does. But they can't say, that woman has done well because women are not supposed to be economically stable you know, they are supposed to be submissive. So, if they see that you are doing things that they cannot ignore, and they see that what she does is good, so they promote you in a way, so that it is easier for them not to lose the identity that men are providers, men are (needed), so at least it is comfortable to them to relate to you.

PR: Just so I understand, and maybe you have said this in what you were saying. What are the consequences that you think that woman would face in the community that you are mentioning?

BB: Well, I don't know people would expect her to do more, maybe because can you try and let us see that you can do that. And in most cases such women are actually given higher positions in terms of any community projects, because they can (recognize) you. But, men will always push you beyond to see how far you can go, if you have all the strength that you feel you have. So, you know there is that anti antagonistic what do you call it? You know, they will be negative towards you in doing all these good things. And

what I have realized is that, people who are threatened, will do things that will move you from that limelight that you are placed in, to try and prove that women can't be that strong, men will always be that strong. But, people do it in different ways, I don't want to call names, we have many in this country who are in government, and we can just see how the dynamics – of the gender issues, and women are always thrown out there and there will always be things that are said about, or will come out about them all the time. So, I don't know why men do that, I don't think it is all about economics, but I really think that it is more about them not losing their status, their power, their authority as men because they still live by the old principles, and still feel that women should remain at home, women should be submissive, women should bow down. They feel they should be in control, and they should not be allowing us to control all of that. And in society it will always be like that, you are a boy, are a man, you are supposed to be out there to work and be strong. So, also not that even though it is now changing, we are giving that role which makes it even more difficult for men to deal with it. So, I think that all things, I think emanate from that, women are put out there, they are faced with extreme challenges so that men can see if they can cope and in that way, men are trying to maintain their power.

PR: What other ways do you think that men would try to maintain their power in a domestic environment?

BB: It is very difficult, but women have different experiences, like some women experience financial withdrawal from men, hence, financial abuse from the man. Like now that you think you are educated, you think you can be much more better than me. Other women experience emotional abuse, like now that you are educated you are going out there and work, you are going to meet other men, and I know that you are going to divorce me. And that is the part in the relationship, where they feel threatened, they feel like if one's self-esteem is low, we are bound to look at things irrationally most of the time. So, there is a lot of that, that goes on into that relationship which actually creates and perpetuates domestic violence in the home set-up, because it is a two way conversation, it is not just one person saying something, and it is where you know people end-up fighting over it. Some people have actually experienced things, you know, where the husband is so threatened, that he would rather have another relationship with a very low income type of person, just for them to maintain that power and they are in power there, they get whatever, and they would try to draw back that sense of authority, I am a man and I will (make you feel better). But still that is another form of abuse because that woman is actually not getting the love from the man, he is just inserting his authority, his own power. So, it is a chain that fabricates abuse in a different way. And for them maybe domestic abuse is a way a man is trying to cope with something new, because nobody is actually talking about it and saying this is happening, how do we deal with it, such as to create a healthy uh, kind of domestic environment. They are all experiencing it at the same time and nobody cares in terms of let us sit down and talk, this is happening. People don't want to acknowledge it, and they are saying let us still fight it, there is a lot of denial around it, and when they talk about it, they feel that the anger they have should be projected onto the woman in all these various ways that we have actually mentioned. So, one would really tend to think for the men as well that when you you grow up,

you know, that you are supposed to be in power all your life, and then the next thing things turn the other way. It is very difficult you will not know how to adjust as a man, because you know all the time that I should provide, I should do this, so all of the sudden your wife earns three times than your income, then who are you? What are you going to do for the family, because when you married this person she took your name (laugh) and she now cannot provide for you, you now have to provide for her, do you understand? You owe your family a lot because you now have a wife, a wife to produce for you, for you to provide, and now if she produces and provides aren't you failing your family or your clan name, or your uncles and relatives? Because when we get married, you know, that you pay ilobolo to Precious, and now Precious is supposed to come here and feed for you, and now you are feeding for Precious and now you owe them that ilobolo, now because she is the one that is actually doing all the work. So, there are a lot of cultural issues that you may find come in and erode, in a way they actually erode the man's self-esteem and identity as a man because lots of women There is a lot that comes with him being husband, and keeping his family name and clan name is very important. So, if now you change that, it is not only him that you are changing, you are changing the whole family, the whole clan is going to look at him as a person who is failing.

PR: You mentioned four points that I want to touch on, the first one is that of preference, is that the man will go out and look for a woman who is earning a little bit less than him. What preference do you think that an independent woman will go out and look for?

BB: If you are financially stable, ha you are going to look for a man that can provide for you. You are not going to look for someone who can't go out there, he is independent, provide, and help you. You are looking for someone who is of the same level, you are looking for someone who is confident enough, you are going to have somebody who can go out there and meet the challenges of life. You are not going to have someone who is so threatened by you, who is going to be name calling you all the time because he can't provide. So, you would consider someone who is more comfortable in going out there and meeting challenges, and in doing that feeling comfortable that I am still able to provide for my family. Because you would know that, should this person feel less of a man, that even you are bound to experience such a balance in the relationship, and you don't want that, you want a healthy relationship. And also for you to make sure that you are both competent, there is not one who feels threatened, and compatible in the relationship, I think it makes it a lot more easier, you would look for someone that you are more compatible with, than a partner that you are not going to be compatible with.

PR: Okay, so basically choosing someone of the same level, with regard to finance and education is more beneficial and reduces complications in the [relationship]

BB: not necessarily] I don't think complications, I would say I am an ambitious person, there is someone out there who is ambitious with matric, who meets challenges and has been able to sustain themselves in life, and establish themselves in life and use his decision-making skills quiet well, and has been able to make some money in life (laugh), and I am able to relate to this particular person, and I find that we are both compatible irregardless of how many degrees, it does not matter, you know, but I am able

to sit down and do something that I am passionate about this person, and we meet in terms of our interests of what drives us into who we are in terms of our ambitions, in terms of our confidence. So, I would say ja, I would go out with the person like that. I think women, it is not all let me not generalize, some people have really made it out there and they are very humbled by people who would come from all economic backgrounds, and then they would just settle for someone who loves them. But they are different, because I think I should be able to look forward to be coming home to discuss things with him, for you to challenge me in terms of things that I do, and to be able to sit and say okay, we disagree here and to disagree and agree at the same time, you know. And so, it is kind of what a person wants. I cannot say you know, all women will be like that, you know, because reflecting on women that I know, I have a friend of mine who is like who earns three times as much of her husband, and um, the husband is kind of – he is okay with that. The way she is actually doing it, she earns more money, she brings back the money home just um, it is not her money – it is the family money and um, decisions are made on what the family has brought. So, they have decided to do it like that. So, it is not like I am bringing 5 000 and you are bringing 15 000, they say there is R20 000 in the bank, so how are we going to spend that? So, they budget on that, you know, and they regard it as the family money, and you know such people are able to actually without harming anybody. So, that is why I am saying that people are different, but there are women who are able to sustain their family without having to go through domestic violence, but I think that there are just one in a few, ja.

PR: Now another point I want to touch on is that of family, I suppose what I picked up from your previous point is that your extended family in terms of your in-laws, your parents that they see that man as a failure to some extent. How do you think that they see that relationship and that woman?

BB: Obviously, they tell you who wears the pants in that home (laugh). I mean, people call you names, they would even say your wife wears the pants () because of what she actually earns, and what she does. And I think that such stereotypic things, or let me say statements rather make people feel bad, because culturally it is not expectable. You know, as I have mentioned, the man is the one who is supposed to earn more and be the main provider of the household. You know, I found that it is not only the man who feels that the woman is wearing the pants, most people in the family feel that now you are overpowering the man in that regard, and they also feel threatened that the woman is also wearing the pants Uh, I don't know how to explain, but it is like the women also feel threatened because maybe it is their own issues of not being able to doing it. There are lots of things, it is not only men who would feel like that, but is also females who would feel like that because they see that she has achieved and you can't. What I have seen is the with mother in-laws, is that they would say that you are supposed to be a wife, you are supposed to take care of my son's children in terms of being there, like we were saying earlier on that maybe you are going to conferences, you are going away and living my son, your children, and your family. It is okay, if the son cheats because you have decided to be the man of the house, and it makes it very difficult and I am sorry to say but it happens. And um, in a way that emotionally you are manipulated to going back into being that submissive type of a person who is going to I almost said something which

is very bad, who is going to actually allow her space and time to be dictated to by the husband, controlled by the husband irregardless of what their economic status. So, I really feel that people sometimes, they do not live economically in terms of making those decisions, but they are stuck in our value and principle which really kind of contribute in a way to domestic violence, because me staying at home, and the needs and children's school fees is about R6 000 and I have 5 children because my husband want more children, and my mother in-law wants a bigger family, or whatever reason there might be, is not actually going to give our children the education they deserve, and therefore, our children are not going to (see) to their society the way they are supposed to, because things have changed. If I stay in the township, okay fine, schools around me are free, education is free, but there are lots of other things that are happening which would threaten my children and their self-esteem, because my mother and father cannot provide, and we are having the situation where children are actually looked after by the social welfare because the father cannot meet the needs of the family. So, even though people do not think about things, some people really do feel they would go to various lengths to actually oppress the family such that they stay in poverty. And these are things that are being targeted, that women are empowered, that women can meet the challenges, let them go out there so that these children cannot suffer.

PR: Okay, I get what you are saying. But in that context of family, it is almost as if the family and also the husband are almost driven by those dominant and socio-cultural values, that this is how a woman should be like, so they do not see the benefits that women who are economically empowered can bring into the family.

BB: Even though they see that, it is difficult for them to actually accept that because of what it means to them their role and their identity. I mean, we have spoken about it because these are the men who don't think that my wife should go out there and earn more than me, and also they still need the feeling that they could provide, it is failure on their part. They don't see themselves as, I am a man, so it is not just that we are looking at how they were brought up, so it is who they are, they were brought us as providers, so their authority, their identity is being threatened. You know, we are coming from a society where men are supposed to have control and power in the home. I remember my father's friend coming at home and saying how can you allow your wife to do that? Like I am saying, they are aware that there are changes, but they are still fighting for control. And even though they don't comply, and sit and discuss about that, it is like you don't do this, you mustn't do this, you must keep things as they were and yet life has changed.

PR: Previously you also spoke about women, that other women also see successful women as a threat. In what way, do you mind elaborating on that?

BB: They see them as a threat because it is like what I said, uh it is either one, it is a reflection of who they cannot be. If I see someone who is making more money and who is much more independent, I also want to do the same thing, but you find that because of my husband or my situation, I can't I am always oppressed, I cannot go out there and stand on my own and be brave enough to say enough is enough. If I see you doing all of that, and I have always been oppressed and always being told and put down by people

saying that you are not able, you cannot do that. I am the one who is going to do that, and here, now I see that you are able to do that, and I know that I would like to do that, I would envy you in so many ways. But, because of what I am, maybe I have been put down so much that I can't do the same, and I would feel that if people would see that what I can also approach, rather than see what I can't do, so that is what I think would cause the jealousy and envy. And women, some of them even though they have time and space and people did not prevent them, they just cannot do it and they are stuck with this socialization of that culture says, and therefore I must stay at home because if I don't, I will be betraying my husband that is an African, and that despite the fact that other people out there do that, we Africans don't do that. And I think that this is what puts people down, and not because people don't want to be there. Some people do appreciate women being successful but there is a lot of women saying, how could she? And how did she? And why can't I, you know. And all of that sometimes becomes a complement, because sometimes you get people project their own issues in different ways and it is up to you to make the right decisions in terms of what is a good or negative complement, because I have experienced it. I have heard females coming up to me and saying that I can't drive the car that I am driving. People would say that this is man's car, and why are you driving this car? And in a way (laugh) you know, because in my mind I don't think that there is a car that is driven by men, and a car that is designed for a female. I thought that if you are independent, you have money, and you like something you do it. But, it is like females who approached me and said that, that is a males' car. So, these are all the dynamics that you find. And you ask why, because people are socialized in that because obviously if you look around you will find that most of the people who are driving this car – Mercedes Benz it is men, women are usually driving small cars. So, I don't want to say that they are envious, but it is because of what I have done, I have crossed the boundaries that were set before and people feel threatened, because they feel oh what is she able to achieve my goodness. So, it is all those things of how we are socialized and our thinking patterns and then they think, oh now she is a man, you know.

PR: Okay, I want to mix a little bit now, I want to focus on the ilobolo negotiations especially in your Zulu culture, and especially how the in-laws see that woman? How are the ilobolo negotiations taken upon, like what kind of challenges are encountered?

BB: I don't think that ilobolo has much impact. From my experience ilobolo is just ilobolo it depends on how greedy your parents are (laugh). Because, whether I am independent and earning more than the husband, the parents will tend to ask for whatever, because they know that they have given you good education. And so, ilobolo is just something that shows that this person is going to be responsible for our child, and that our child is not going to starve, that this man is going to take care of our child. So, it is basically the whole ideology about ilobolo, I think that there is an understanding that life is stable but things change, it is more about what I feel the ilobolo negotiations is (achieving) now, and we want you to show that you can commit and how much you can commit, whether you have it, or you don't have it. People tend to say like if you want to marry the daughter of a chief, it has been expected that you are bound to pay 15 times as much. But the notion around ilobolo is how committed are you, and how much you can go in terms of showing us that you are committed because even culturally some

people don't finish ilobolo. Lets say that you have to pay R100 000, that is the amount of money they would like to be covered, and would like you to reach at some point in life, and you can cover R15 000, and that is okay because it shows the commitment that you are actually putting. Uh, you also find that even with girls who are not earning that much, people pay I find it very sad, a person will get someone who is unemployed, and the family will say give us R40 000, so it is basically not who you are because But I think in that woman it is more like, if I earn more than him and he happens not to be employed and I run the household that to me is a fact that knowing that he paid R10 000 and I am bringing home twice as much, so it is definitely a man's issue. But, for me what I have experienced is that it is not about what you can afford, and how much our daughter can afford, or how much is she worth in terms of what she brings, it is about your loyalty, your commitment, and you want to show this family that you are committed, and you want to meet their standards, and that is what ilobolo is all about. But, it changes the meaning of ilobolo in a man because when you are doing that you are saying that I will take care of your daughter, I will meet the standards. So, when you don't meet the standards it questions that commitment, and hence the conflict starts. So, that is what happens to a man. The family will say it is okay, you can take her it is fine, she is an accountant she will bring you R500 000, it is okay, but give us so much. But, if she continues and she keeps on bringing more, then it becomes a problem, because the man promised that I am going to take care of Precious, and I am failing, I am not only failing myself, I am failing my family because it is my family who goes to Precious's house it is not me, it is my uncle and my father and are saying that we are committing this our ability, and now it the whole family, it is being and now if I fail, I am failing the whole family. So, you are becoming a shame, and a disappointment, not only to yourself but to your family. You are making your father and uncle less of men than they are, because they promised that you would take care of her and you are failing to do that.

PR: I am about to come to a close, I just want to ask, do you think that that economically independent woman would remain in the abusive relationship?

BB: It depends, some women let me be honest with you, some women who came into the relationship and they were not as educated, and the man, and the man decided to take care of them and helped them to get good education, most of the time you find that they are caught in the dynamic dilemma and they remain in the relationship because they are always reminded that you were nothing. But, sometimes you find that women who are economically independent will actually pay back the ilobolo money and get out of the relationship. Uh, some people stay because they think that things will change, and they stomach the abuse, and they make sure that they try to make things work. But me, I would leave that is why I am not married. I don't think that any woman should for any reason, should stomach domestic violence. Because like I have said, in a way you are going out there you are modeling something. So, if I stay I am modeling something for my children, what I am saying to them is that is okay to be abused and hurt, as long as I am married and I am being given money. I would leave, so that my children would grow up in a healthy environment that is my main priority. There are other reasons, other women stay because of the in-laws may be encouraging the women to stay and asking on

behalf of their sons for forgiveness. Other people stay because they think that, what they are earning is not enough like this other person ones said that, what I realized is that his money goes to paying the bound and the car that we have, and my money goes to the grocery, so I don't think that I will be able to pay the bound and support the kids, so they stomach it in that way. But, I would say that there are other reasons of why women remain in the abusive relationship that they are not telling. But, ideally I would say that if you find the relationship abusive, I would rather escape.

PR: Thank you very much.

ISSUES RAISED IN THE INTERVIEW – BB

Main Issue: List 1

1. Women's socio-economic status

- ***Privileges of economic independence***

- Women's participation in the economic sector is enabling them to be empowered, economic stable, and independent
- They are no longer dependent on their spouses, but they are now their own providers
- Furthermore, they can financially support and provide for their children
- Economic independence seems to also entitle women with the ability of making decisions in the domestic domain
- and improves their sense of self-esteem

- ***Disadvantages of economic dependence***

- A patriarchal dominated society inhibited women from participating in the economic domain
- As the result, more women were financially dependent on their partners or husbands
- They did not have power and control over their own lives
- And their decisions were marginalized and submissive
- Most of the women also seemed to lack self-esteem due to various factors including financial dependence and an inability to make their own decision

2. Deconstruction of dominant socially constructed perceptions

- ***Males' perceptions of economically independent women***

- Some men in society seem to consider and perceive self-reliant and economically independent women as masculine
- They consider these women to be men because they can perform the role that socio-gendered for men, such as, participating in the economic realm; earning an income; financially supporting and providing for their family
- Therefore, they seem to consider them to be part of them, as equal to men

- And although they will encourage the self-reliant women, but they will not verbally acknowledge that they are doing a good job
- This is due to multiple reasons, including that they still perceive women as a gender to be submissive
- Therefore, identifying self-reliant women as equivalent to men, and having a masculine identity seems to be some of the men's subtle way of maintaining their masculine identity, power, authority, and keeping women in their socially appropriate submissive position
- For instance, most men who feel threatened and intimidated by self-reliant women, tend to place these women in charge of community projects with an intention of proving that women are incompetent compared to men
- Some men also tend to be negative towards these women
- ***The in-laws' perceptions of the economically independent woman***
 - Some in-laws seem to consider the self-reliant daughter in-law or prospective daughter in-law to be dominant and masculine in the relationship
 - Therefore, the in-laws also seem to feel threatened and intimidated by the woman's socio-economic status
 - Their perceptions appear to be influenced by the stereotypical socio-cultural and gendered roles
 - In that a man in patriarchal dominant society is the breadwinner and the head of the domestic domain
 - In some domestic and familial settings, the mother in-law tend to expect the woman to stay at home, fulfilling her socio-gendered domestic duties, such as nurturing her husband and children
 - Some mother in-laws also tend to blame self-reliant woman for their son's infidel behaviour
 - Other mother in-laws justify their son's infidel behaviour by focusing on the woman's hectic work schedule
 - So they seem to emotionally manipulate her to be submissive and comply to the social constructions of femininity
- ***Transforming socio-gendered roles***
 - It seem to be difficult for society, the family, and the husband to accept women's change in the socio-economic status despite the fact that their income assists the family's lifestyle
 - For instance, they can afford to provide their children with the best education
 - There are multiple reasons to the unacceptance one of them being, that they were socialised to financially provide for their family
 - So will be playing a significant role in deconstructing and transforming the socio-gendered role if they accept the socio-economic change
 - Therefore, they are protecting and guiding the binary relationship between femininity and masculinity by refusing to accept the economic change

- ***Women's perceptions of the economically independent woman***
 - Other women in society also seem to feel threatened and intimidated by the self-reliant woman
 - Some women also develop feelings of jealousy and envy because they see what she has accomplished compared to them
 - Her success becomes a reflection of their desires that they are struggling to achieve
 - Some women are struggling or cannot achieve their self-actualisation because they have discouraged and oppressed by people in society on several occasions
 - Society seems to have played a significant role in deteriorating their self-esteem and self-confidence that they don't have the motivation to strive for success anymore
 - However, some women have received adequate support, encouragement, and motivation from significant others and society to strive for success
 - Some of these women are reluctant to empower themselves due to socio-cultural beliefs, they seem to feel that they will be betraying their husbands if they liberate and empower themselves
 - Therefore, they seem to choose to remain in the submissive, subordinate, and financially dependent position, and adhere to the dominant patriarchal principles
 - Hence, there are some women in the contemporary society who seem to play an important role in maintaining the femininity-masculinity boundaries
 - For instance, there are some women who appear to become astonished by self-reliant women driving certain model of cars such as, Mercedes Benz, because they consider them to be masculinised cars

3. Socio-cultural perspectives on economically independent women

- ***Socio-cultural and religious perceptions of economically independent women***
 - The Zulu culture seems to experience difficulty accepting self-reliant and economically independent women
 - Particularly women who are earning and contributing more financially in the domestic environment compared to their male counter-part
 - The cultural unacceptance of self-reliant women seems to be due to various reasons including that, according to the dominant Zulu cultural beliefs, a man is:
 - ✓ dominant in the domestic domain
 - ✓ He is the head of the household
 - ✓ And one of his significant domestic responsibilities is to financially provide for his family
 - Therefore, difficulties are most likely to occur when dominant socio-cultural perspective are challenge

- ***The influence of change in socio-economic status on ilobolo negotiations***
 - From a cultural perspective, change in women's socio-economic status does not seem to affect only the partner or prospective husband's self-esteem and masculinity, but also that of the male relatives of the prospective husband
 - This is due to multiple reasons, one of them being that, during the ilobolo negotiations, the prospective husband's relatives and family, such as uncles, promised the family that their son will take care and financially provide for the daughter-in-law
 - And when the husband is unable to provide for his wife because his wife is earning more than him, it becomes failure not just on him but also his family and relatives
 - The husband's failure is perceived as a shame and disappointment not only on him but also his family that they have failed to maintain their promise
 - Therefore, the husband is not just failing his wife but his family too
 - In some families, therefore, the issues of ilobolo negotiations and payment seem to a problem and instigate conflict when the wife has a better occupational position and is earning more compared to her partner because of feelings of emasculation
- ***Payment of the ilobolo negotiations***
 - From a cultural perspective, ilobolo indicates the commitment, dedication, and loyalty of the husband, that he is going to be responsible for the wife, and financially provide for her
 - Based on the cultural definition of ilobolo, some people in some familial settings do not finish paying the ilobolo
 - The significant part is that they paid a certain amount of money that indicates their commitment and loyalty
 - However, the definition of ilobolo seems to change over time and different and changing socio-cultural and familial contexts
 - For instance, in some families ilobolo negotiations and payment seems to depend on greediness of the parents
 - If the parents feel that they have provided their daughter with good education and now she has a good occupation, then the ilobolo will be expensive
 - Some parents seem to also charge expensive ilobolo even though their daughter is unemployed
 - Therefore, ilobolo negotiations and payment does not seem to be determined by the qualifications of the daughter, but the greediness of the parents

4. Threat on masculinity

- ***Women's economic status***
 - Women's economic independence seems to impose a threat on men
 - Most men seem to feel threatened by their partners being self-reliant and economically stable

- This is due to various issues, including that women's economic stability:
 - ✓ Raises the issues of power dynamic
 - ✓ It induces a threat on their masculine identity and role in the domestic domain
 - ✓ Such as, being the authority figure, protector, and financial provider in the domestic domain
 - As the result, most men seem to feel emasculated by their partners' financial independence and contribution in the domestic realm because this is contrary to the way they were socialized
 - Therefore, it is a great challenge for the man to accept the socio-economic change and let go of the power that he previously possessed in the household
- ***Seeking a woman of a low socio-economic status***
 - Other men feel seem to feel very threatened by their partner's socio-economic status, that they leave the current relationship and engage in a relationship with a woman earning a low economic income
 - This is one of the various ways that the man is attempting to maintain his authority, power, and control
 - In most situations, the new relationship is not based on love, but it is another way of abuse and oppression of women
 - ***Social perceptions of money***
 - Societies that are governed by patriarchal principles seem to associate money with power
 - Therefore, the more money an individual possesses sanctions that individual with a sense of power and control both in society and the domestic domain
 - A patriarchal dominated society appears to have always reserved and privileged most men with high income occupation positions, while women were subjected to low income occupation or were unemployed,
 - As the result most men had more money, therefore, more power and control over women both in society and the domestic environment
 - However, in the contemporary society patriarchal principles are being challenged and more women are able to participate in the economic sector and occupy high income occupation positions
 - As the result an increasing number of women are able to contribute financially in the domestic domain, therefore, possess a certain amount of power
 - Furthermore, due to their financial contribution their decisions are not submissive and oppressed

5. Women's perceptions of motherhood

- ***Maternal relationship***
 - Some economically independent mothers seem to struggle adequately managing their time so that they can spend quality time with their children

- As the result of their work, some mothers tend to spend less time with their children
 - But there are self-reliant mothers who are aware of the importance of spending quality time with their children
 - They are aware their work schedule is demanding and restricts them from spending quality time with their children
 - Therefore, they strive to manage their time adequately and make an effort of spending quality time with their children, showing interest in their lives
 - For instance, if there is tension in the house, she can plan for a holiday, especially since she has the finance
 - Some children of working mothers seem to benefit more from their mothers compared to unemployed and economically dependent mothers
 - Society tends to think and assume that unemployed mothers have a less strenuous work, therefore, can provide their children with adequate love and attention compared to self-reliant mothers
 - Society is unaware that being a 'house-mother' is an exhausting role, because some mothers have to fulfil domestic responsibilities and chores which are very demanding
 - Therefore, based on the responsibilities that a 'house-mother' has to fulfil, the amount of quality time that she spends with her children can also be restricted
 - Other factors that might restrict the amount of quality time that an unemployed mother spends with her children, is feelings of depression that might be precipitated by various factors, including economically dependent on a husband who sometimes fails to financially provide for you and your children
 - Therefore, the amount of quality time that either mothers spend with their children, depends on the mothers
 - however, it is better to liberate and empower women and in the process liberate their children
 - because an economically independent woman seems to be better able to make good decisions for her mother
- ***Feelings of self-efficacy***
 - Some unemployed and economically dependent mothers seem to lack self-efficacy
 - They seem to most likely to feel hopeless and helpless if their husbands fail to provide for them and their children
 - Other women might feel frustrated and engage in negative thinking that there is nothing that they can do to change the situation and better care for their children, especially when her children are also applying pressure on her
 - As the result, she might therefore neglect her children
 - Whereas an economically independent mother has self-efficacy, and she can afford to fulfil her children's materialistic needs without having to dependent on her husband

- ***Becoming a role model for your children***
 - Self-reliant mothers seem to become role models for their children
 - Their strive and effort for prosperity and independence seem to motivate, inspire, and enlighten their children
 - Their children become aware that they don't have to depend on a man for financial support
 - But that a woman can participate in the economic domain, become financially stable, and financially provide for her children
 - The children also become aware of the benefits that they are gaining from the mother being economically independent, such as, the level of education that their mother is able to afford for them to achieve
 - Therefore, the quality time that the mother finds to spend with her children becomes, appreciative, meaningful, and productive, because the children learn and gain a lot from her

6. Coping mechanism

- ***Assisted by the daughter***
 - It seems to be difficult for self-reliant women to fulfil both domestic and work responsibilities
 - Some women, therefore, have other sources of assistance that enable them to cope
 - For instance, the participant reported that, she is assisted by her 14 year old daughter
 - When her daughter comes home from school at 3 o'clock, she cooks and prepares supper
 - The participant reported that, she is responsible for washing the dishes and cleaning the house
 - Thereafter they help her son with his academic task and they discuss their day

7. Sources of domestic violence

- ***Feelings of insecurities***
 - Some men tend feel insecure and threatened by their partner's economic income in the domestic domain, especially when she is earning and financially contributing more than them
 - Most of these men, therefore, financially abuse their partners by financially withdrawing from fulfilling domestic responsibilities
 - They seem to expect their wives or partners to finance all the domestic necessities, while they care for unnecessary items, such as, their cars
 - The financial withdrawal seems to be intended to test if the woman can cope financially,
 - Therefore, this appears to be one of the ways, that men aim to maintain their power and control in the relationship
 - Different women have different experiences of domestic violence
 - Some women experience emotional abuse by their partners

- For instance, the husband or partner might feel intimidated by his wife's or partner's level of education and start having and negatively verbalizing his irrational thoughts that his wife will leave him for another man at work
- Their feelings of insecurities seems to be precipitated by various factors including low self-esteem
- Most men therefore, seem to using domestic violence as a coping mechanism, that enables them to cope with the socio-economic and gendered roles changes
- Domestic violence seems to become one of their ways of releasing their feelings of anger and frustration induced by the socio-economic changes which they appear to experience difficulty adjusting to

8. Reasons for remaining in an abusive relationship

- ***For the sake of a good educational and socio-economic status***
 - Different women respond differently to an abusive relationship
 - Some women seem to reluctant to leave an abusive relationship because their husbands helped them to acquire good education
 - Before they met their husbands or partners they did not have education and a good socio-economic status
 - Therefore, in some relationships the husbands continuously remind them of whom they were before they met them
- ***Hope that the domestic situation will change***
 - Some women appear to prolong their decision of leaving an abusive relationship because they seem to have hope that the abuse will stop
 - They seem to have hope that their domestic situation will change and they try their best to get it to change
- ***Encouraged by the in-laws***
 - Some women seem to remain in abusive relationship because they are influence and encouraged by the in-laws
 - For instance, some in-laws ask the wife for their son's forgiveness on his behalf
- ***Economic independent women: low self-efficacy***
 - There are other economic independent women who remain in an abusive relationship because they seem to lack self-efficacy
 - They seem to think that they cannot manage financially regardless that they are earning
 - For instance, some of the women seem to think that they cannot fulfil the financial domestic responsibilities and financially support their children
- ***Paying back the ilobolo and leaving the relationship***
 - Although other economically independent women remain in an abusive relationship and endure the abuse

- There are some economically independent women who pay back the ilobolo and leave the abusive relationship
- ***Modelling appropriate behaviour for the children***
 - Although some women tend to remain in an abusive relationship for the sake of the children
 - Some women seem to leave an abusive relationship for the sake of the children
 - For instance, they want to model appropriate behaviour to their children
 - That they should not support domestic violence and woman abuse
 - And that their happiness is more important than money and remaining in an abusive marriage
 - Furthermore, some economically independent women seem to leave an abusive relationship so that their children grow up in a conducive domestic environment

9. Characteristics that self-reliant women look for in a man

- ***Similar socio-economic, occupational, and educational status***
 - Most economically independent women seem to choose men of a similar or slightly high socio-economic, occupational, and educational status
 - They seem to choose men that are confident, competent, decisive, knowledgeable, and can provide for them
 - The spousal preference seems to be due to various reasons including:
 - ✓ The similarity between them seems to create a good interaction relationship
 - ✓ According to the participant, it reduces tension, feelings of insecurities, and verbal abuse in the relationship
 - However, some self-reliant women do not base their spousal preference on the socio-economic and occupational status to the man
 - Their relationships do not seem to be influenced by their high economic domestic income
 - For instance, some women can be married to a man who is earning less than them and still manage to maintain a good interactive and communicative relationship
 - This is due to multiple reasons, including that they do not seem to individualise their income, but they consider it to be the family's income
 - And they both share decisions regarding the budget and domestic financial responsibilities
 - There seems to be no feelings of insecurities and tension in such relationships because they don't allow their income to create power dynamics

Main Issue: List 2

1. Women's socio-economic status
 - Privileges of economic independence
 - Disadvantages of economic dependence
2. Deconstruction of dominant socially constructed perceptions
 - Males' perceptions of economically independent women
 - The in-laws' perceptions of the economically independent woman
 - Transforming socio-gendered roles
 - Women's perceptions of the economically independent woman
3. Socio-cultural perspectives on economically independent women
 - Socio-cultural and religious perceptions of economically independent women
 - The influence of change in socio-economic status on ilobolo negotiations
 - Payment of the ilobolo negotiations
4. Threat on masculinity
 - Women's economic status
 - Seeking a woman of a low socio-economic status
 - Social perceptions of money
5. Women's perceptions of motherhood
 - Maternal relationship
 - Feelings of self-efficacy
 - Becoming a role model for your children
6. Coping mechanism
 - Assisted by the daughter
7. Sources of domestic violence
 - Feelings of insecurities
8. Reasons for remaining in an abusive relationship
 - For the sake of a good educational and socio-economic status
 - Hope that the domestic situation will change
 - Encouraged by the in-laws
 - Economic independent women: low self-efficacy
 - Paying back the ilobolo and leaving the relationship
 - Modelling appropriate behaviour for the children
9. Characteristics that self-reliant women look for in a man
 - Similar socio-economic, occupational, and educational status

2. DATA TRANSCRIPTION – SA (Indian female)

PR: I am not going to ask you any tricky questions. What this interview is focusing on, are your thoughts and perceptions on the influence that women's economic independence might have on domestic violence. What are your thoughts on women becoming economically independent?

SA: Okay, I think that it is important and good, and it is about time. I think that when we rely on the men, they take advantage of us and the situation, you know. When you are earning your own money, you can see to your needs, and at least try to make yourself better. Like, you can be more in control because you are contributing, and you can afford to do certain things, and you are making payment to what you should be able to – you know like going away for the weekend, or buying staff. You know, you don't have to ask for it, you know you are making a contribution to be able to do everything together, it should be equal.

PR: So, it is almost like you have a voice in the house. How do you think it was like when women were not working?

SA: Yeah, it was terrible, it was definitely different. Everything they had to In some cases when the women left the house, they had to tell their husbands where they are going. I know in my grandparents' time, you know they had to report everything. But, today you get women jumping into their own cars, go wherever they want to go. It is definitely different, those days all that women did was cook, clean, wash, and scrub.

PR: Today some women who are working, have to perform those two roles, of cooking and earning, how do you think they are fulfilling those two roles?

SA: I think that it is frustrating. I mean, you are definitely working the whole full day at work. And I'm - lucky ((laugh)), on some days not always, my husband is such a nice person you know, he can put food on the table and help out, as long as there is food in the house, it is okay – because some people have to go home and cook, and their husbands will be sitting in front of the TV expecting food, you still get that a lot.

PR: How do you think the man perceive the woman?

SA: They perceive the woman's place as being in the kitchen and falling pregnant, having babies and staying at home and – some women let them, you know. They feel that it is their job, because that is maybe how they were raised, you know, because it is the woman's place to stay in the house, if they want to go out and work it is their own added responsibility, so when they come home they have to continue with what they are supposed to do at home.

PR: What kind of problems, do you think a woman like that will have in her marriage, should you think that there will be problems?

SA: THERE WILL BE PROBLEMS in their marriage. There could be various problems of it, such as, one of them will end up having an affair, or getting divorced, or violence, and the children's are involved. There will be, I think Recently, I read the paper, and they said that you get a lot of women who are sitting in management level, and they are still expected to go home and be basically a slave to what needs to be done. But, it should not be the case, I mean, domestic violence is um IT SHOULD ACTUALLY BE A TWO WAY THING, you work together for everything, it should not be, you are the woman that is your job, and that is it. It has to be both equal right, everything has to be equal. You know, there are certain circumstances you know you as a wife you should be subservient, but not to the extent where, if you don't do it, I am going to beat you up, you know type of thing. You have to, I mean, it is always the case that you should respect your husband, and he should have a full respect FOR YOU. You know what I am saying, it works two ways. It is not, I should respect you all the time, if you have an understanding of the relationship it should work both ways. But, a man always feels that they are are IT, you know what I am saying. That they are a man, and that is it, listen to me or else, and it should not be the case. Lots of them have that perception, and really it should not be that way, them ill-treating women. You know, it is not only women, but kids are getting involved in domestic violence. I don't know whether it is because a mother is not home to run a home that the husband gets abusive, I don't know what it is that triggers it. I don't know if what triggers the husband is that he is frustrated he is not having it his own way, or what it is. It is really very rare you find especially in this day and age men that are good, they are either TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, or they are FULL of themselves. They are so full of themselves, I mean, if they are your customer you know, they make you feel you know you are a woman, and they are a man, you should just be able to serve them, you know it is not about that. You know, my wedding ring sometimes I take it off, and so my son put it in the jewellery box. You know how you sometimes live things lying around for daily use, and I did not bother to take it out, unless you are going out. So then, this other man said, so when I can I marry you? So I said, hello, and he said but you don't have a ring on. I said SO you know, it is not like I have to have a ring on to say I am married, things like that I don't know.

PR: So, it is almost like, even if women are economically independent, they are still placed in that role that society wants them to be.

SA: Ja, it is more society driven than individually, that is why like I don't know, in our culture okay, you are married, you are a working Indian woman, but still you should be living under your husband's rules, and you know a whole lot of things. And especially it is not the husband in many cases, I mean you have an understanding, it is the in-laws. It is the extended family, why is he behaving like that? Why is she dressed like that? You know, it is more from them. You know, you still get that from extended families, but I don't.

PR: In some situations, some women have that, what do you think let me rather say, what kind of pressure do you think that places on the husband?

SA: It does, because it is like you are not marrying your husband, you are marrying the whole family (laughs), family issue. So, it is like, if you get married you are marrying into the family, you live by these rules, because it is the family's rules. That is what society states should be done, that is society What would people say? How would they look at you? You are bringing shame on the family, you know things like that. But uh, you still get that very dominated especially from people who are from very old school, the orthodox, then all you need is one catalyst that stirs up the pot, and then thing go boom (laugh), ja you still get that.

PR: Okay, so how does the family see the economically independent woman?

SA: They don't handle it well, hey. There is always envy and jealousy, it sounds stupid, but things are just like uh, she thinks she is rich, you know. It is not that you are still the same person, but you want to be independent, because it gives you more. Can you imagine, I can't imagine myself, you know, sitting at home cleaning, cooking, and washing. I mean, I would like to be at home, but not to be somebody's slave. It is nice even if women don't work the full day, just to be mingling with different people, getting to know things. It is actually keeping you in contact still with the world. You sit at home, you actually lose sight of everything. You don't know what is happening inside the world. You, you just sit, I don't know, all these women sit and watch soap operas, and run around in the afternoon fetch kids. I mean, I would enjoy that, but to a certain extent. But, I don't think it will be for me permanent, my life would be decided for me. Ja, I would not have any say, I would be talking baby language all the time, you know. I don't know, may be for a little while, but I don't think for long.

PR: Do you think ... you know we still have women who are economically independent still experiencing things that you were talking about. Do you think maybe that is the intention of society?

SA: I think that society just expects too much. I mean, if a woman get raped, did she ask for it? How was she dressed, you know things like that. You know, society basically dictates, you know, how a woman should live their life. And society is the people, the people we live and work with. But, society is also it is our family, they make society. They were brought up us in such a way, and so they feel it should continue from generation. For many generations it has just continued. But, if you look at my generation compared to my kids, already you can see it changing, you know. What they spoke to you about in school, we never heard about it, so society is changing, but very slowly in certain cultures, and religions, different nationality, but it is changing very slowly. But then again, if it was changing so fast just like a snowball, we would have a disastrous situation, like we DO HAVE SOMETIMES, the kids are beyond control, you know what I am saying. And that is why you see and hear a lot of people getting married they want to be together, but they decide no, they are not going to have kids, and then stopping their generation from moving. Either they can't have kids, or they don't want to because of uh, what is happening in society, the way people are living, the way people's morals have changed. You know, fine you want to be independent as a woman, but do you want to bring up children in the society we are living in? It is either they are orthodox, or they are

moving too fast, they are not living in between. They are living on the safe side of life. They are either going to one extreme, or the other, whereas it should be in the middle, you know a balance. You should know you come from this type of an environment, your family has brought you up in this way, this is how you should live. But, you should have choices, it should not be your husband making the choice, or your parents making the choice for you. You are a woman, you should be able to know what is right, what is wrong, how far you should put society, and draw the line. You should have some respect for yourself, you know as a woman. You shouldn't say, I don't care what you are saying, I will do that just to annoy him, or upset him. As a woman, you know you should still have your balance. As a woman, you know that is for me personally, you should be doing things like you are not married, like you are a teenager running around. You should be doing things not discretely. You should be doing things appropriately to the situation that is required.

PR: But also at the same time you should also have a saying into the [situation

SA: yes] definitely, that is what I am saying, you should still have a choice and make the correct choice. Choices are not always correct, you don't always make the right choices in life, but you should be able to learn from it and uh, society really places a lot of pressure on women, the expectation are too high. I know my mother always says, what will people think? What will the family say? So uh, I don't know, it is very difficult. I just personally met my husband and married him, that type of thing. But, if the girl goes out with too many men, and she is not happy, straight away she jumps into bed with them. It is not a matter of, you are meeting different people to find out, is this person going to be compatible with me, for the rest of my life? Being independent does not have anything to do with how you should behave. You should have a mutual understanding that is why many women spend time with different people, to get to know are they going to be dictating my life? Are they going to expect me to be subservient? And then you get a lot of them, that don't marry until their late 30's, their late 40's, so they don't marry because they want to be independent, because they don't want to be ruled by somebody, somebody dictating you should you shouldn't, this is when, this is how.

PR: What you are basically saying is that, women who are, or want to be economically independent, avoid pressures that society places on them by choosing not to have families and getting married. What consequences in life do you think these women experience later in life?

SA: Well uh, as you get older you need, well I would not say companionship. I mean, you can't stick now you are young, things are happening for you. You have got your car, you can move, but you don't know how your health is going to be like, but hopefully you have got enough money to just dump yourself into a home. But, you are going to miss somebody visiting you, somebody taking care of you. I mean, if you missed it when you were young it was fine, because there were people around you that you could always go and interact with. But, if you are old, and you are all wrinkled up, is there anybody that is going to come take care of you? Is there anyone who is going to stop and say hey, how is it? They are going to miss it when it is too late, by then they are going to

be saying oh, I have got family, but they don't bother. But when they had their life, and they had everything going for them, they did not want to extend their family. They did not want that for them because they wanted that independence life. Now they have got it all their lives and I think that, they regret it because they have got nothing, no comfort.

PR: It seems as if then that society places women in a [difficult position

SA: then you get those who marry], who are happy. You know, they have got a husband, they got kids, or they are single, and they try to make better choices and it works in the initial. You know, if you can't cope with what you have, what is there to say that something else is going to make it different, if you can't make it happen. You know what I am saying, if you can't make this work, then what is going to make that work, whether it might be your relationship, or your chores, you can't work together. Maybe you are the problem, you never know. Maybe, I am the problem, you never know. But, if you don't talk about it, you must be able to talk about it. But, some people don't like talking. Some people will just keep quiet, and when they come around, then you will talk, or whatever. But they won't talk about what happened, they will just carry on. It is almost like they starch away what happened. They close that box, put it one side, and they just move on.

PR: What do you think is happening in a situation of a financially independent woman, who is in a domestic violent situation?

SA: Well firstly, it is embarrassing especially to be getting divorced. And sometimes they are living under threat, if you leave me, I might kill the children, or I might kill you, you know something stupid. But uh, a woman who is abused might take that seriously, do I lose my kids? Do I lose my life? Do I wait? What do I do? So, they just live day by day in that situation, I think. So, people can handle it by just keeping quiet. Some people move on, they get the divorce over and done with, and try to move on because they are independent. But, some people I don't know what it is that keeps them going, whether they still love that person, or whether they are scared of the unknown, because maybe you have been with that person for ten years, and you have got kids, and at this age where do you go? Where do you start? You have built a home together. Although they are independent, I think it is more the fear, you know. How do you handle society, firstly? What would they say? What would Obviously, it is always the women's fault. How is that added pressure going to affect you? And it is very difficult to decide, but yet you know. You are independent, you are getting your money, you can live with that money, but yet you still feel you can't do this. You can't do that. They feel that, they can't be able to cope, you know, almost like they lack self-esteem, they don't believe in themselves. The low self-esteem is caused by the abuse, your husband telling you that you are incompetent, and you can't make it on your own. So, I don't know what it is, I think that if somebody knew they would encourage women who are abused to actually say, this is enough.

PR: But, it is almost as if, they have the same experiences as economically dependent women, because they always have fear of living [such as

SA: I know, I am not working so where I'm I going to go?]

PR: but an economically independent woman also has her own fears.

SA: Ja, I don't know what it is really that keeps them, really. As I said, I don't know whether it is the children, they are trying to hold on to their kids, because if they do get divorced, the kids do get split up. How is the child going to get affected psychologically? You know mom is not here, your dad is not here. I don't know if they don't realise that the violence also still damaging the child, you know psychologically, is affecting the child. You know, in some cases you find the children marrying into the same type of situation, abusive. You know, their husbands become the same as their father was to their mother, or they don't get married, or they try and better their life. You know, sometimes I always say, it is either you try to do better than your parents, or you try to improve your life, not where necessary where violence is related, just generally, or you do worse.

PR: So, what you are saying is that even though economically independent women remain for the sake of the children, but the children's lives are also endangered to the extend that they might end up, or placing themselves, in the same situation like that.

SA: Ja, I feel that. I feel I mean, if you look at all the young mothers and they are baking, obviously they are not working, but they are baking with their children, but where is the husband in that relationship? Why is he not providing for them to be at home a safe environment? When you go out in the evening, you see all these kids on the streets, what are they doing? Are they coming from broken homes? Are they not happy and they ran away? What has caused so many street children to be actually out in the cold in the rain, sleeping outside? I don't know what it is that is driving our kids to do what they do. I mean, you give the kids everything, and then the next thing you find the next thing that no, the uncle or someone was abusing the child, you know. It is actually frightening, so I don't know what society's expectations of women are. You know, they expect women to control everything, you know. Let us all be responsible for the house, for the children. You know some people have the choice of working, some women some are forced to especially with the way the economy is going. I mean, two people's salary is not enough sometimes, so there is a lot of pressure on them.

PR: I want to focus on women and children. Say that now we have this economically independent woman, she always busy, she is going out to various places for meetings, and she comes home late. What kind of interaction do you think she will have with her children?

SA: HORRIBLE. There is no going to be time for her to be with her children. Personally, if I had to advice the generation that is working now especially, both the men and wife, it is not fair for them to have kids, you know what I am saying, if they can't be there for them. But, they just make up with, I am giving you money, and I am supporting you financially. It is not that, they are growing up in a different generation, and that is why children behave the way they do. It is either they try to make up, especially mothers

they try to make up for lost time by just giving their kids what they ask for one thing, or whether they demand fancy things, they just give it to them, because they feel they are not going to make that time. But, they are buying the love, they are buying love, they are not they are not giving it to them physically, but they are trying to buy into that child's world. It is almost like they are feeling guilty that I am not being a mother that society expects me to be, but if I give my child, my child will still be clingy to me, and hang on to me, you know. Society will not have the misconception that, I don't have a relationship with my child. Because I know with my kids, they will always ask me for things, and I will say sorry, I can't get it for you. And they will say mom, mom my friends has it. And I will ask and how did they get it? And they will say, well her mom travelled and got it for him. And I will say, sorry it does not work in this house. Ja, but you can't buy those things. Ja, then you get the kid that everything was so happy at home, and then they get into the real world where things are not happening, because they were spoilt at home, they turned around and this was there, they walk out that is there, I want to go to the mall it is happening. Parents are feeling guilty, so they are letting it happen. But, when this child goes into the real world, and things are not happening, that is where it is going to be hard, hard core reality hitting them in the face, and then they start saying I was not brought up to believe that this could happen, not getting my own way. And then the parents will say, you are in the big world. It is either you carry on supporting your child to what you brought them to expect, or what you have delivered to them, so it is that added responsibility, a responsibility that does not end, or you let them go.

PR: But it seems as if, we are once again focusing on the responsibility of the mother to make sure that she disciplines her child right. And now if she becomes economically independent, and she is not like there for her children, and then it is like it is your fault.

SA: Ja, where is the husband in this role. I mean, I don't know. I mean, with my life I mean, it is not perfect, we have our hassles just like every relationship has its own problems. But we learn to cope and move on. But, if I had to call my husband and say you know what, can you fetch the kids because I am running late, or whatever, and you can also buy dinner for us because by the time I come home I will be too late to cook, he is okay with things. But, you don't find that in every home, you know. Or, if I buy something I am sorry you will have to eat this, because I had a long day, I had a tiring day, they are okay with it, as long as they are full, there is something for them to eat, you know. But, in some families, they will not tolerate it. You will find that the mother is standing all day, whether in a shoe factory, or in a bank, or some form of organisation, or whatever, but they stand all day because it is part of their job, it is not where they sit at the desk, you know office bound. Or you find that she is driving all day, and then she is expected to get home and cook.

PR: And what about an economically independent woman, who is married to a narrow minded type of man, who is like I know you are economically independent, but I expect you to come home and cook and do all those things. What do you think makes that man behaves the way he does?

SA: Sometimes it is society, sometimes it is the person himself, the way they have been brought up is important as well, in the sense that, if their mother spoils them, spoils them in that if they walk home there is food on the table, the man is home, washing and ironing done. If they have been brought up like that, so when he moves out, although his wife is working, some of his expectations are that my mother did it so why can't you? But sometimes, the wife can converse, but I am not your mother, I can only do so much, I mean you know this yourself, you can do this too. Sometimes you are so in love in the loving stage, you don't realise that you eventually get caught up with starting to do it, you want to cook for your husband, you want to clean for you husband because you are married, you want to do everything for them, and then the years go down the line and then the kids start, and then you say hey hold on, now I have got the responsibility of the child, but why can't you do it as well? But then, he can say you have doing it for so long, I think you can cope. But, I think that, they should do it from the very beginning, and say you know what, this is all you can expect from me because I am not your mother, unless you can go over there so that she can carry on and do it for you. You just keep it like that, and just live you life through. Sometimes, my husband says that I don't even understand him because when we have to dish up, I have to say to him which portion of the chicken you want? And he will say, you still don't know me, and then I can say ja, here is the pot help yourself. You know I can still tell him that. Some people gosh, they know everything about their husbands, basically because they do it for them, and now suddenly the wife is not there, and they can't move forward.

PR: But why do you think that these women feel that they always have to be there for their husbands, they always have to do everything for their husbands?

SA: It is more like, it is you place, because society says so. It is almost like the mother let his son get married, and she will say oh he is married now, I am sure his wife will take good care of him, and do all the things. And suddenly when she is not doing this, and she is not doing that, and he is going to mommy's place to get it done, and then the whole family get involved. And it either ends up in divorce, or whole lot of fighting. You know, the woman might say, your mother is getting involved, and that is how all the violence starts eventually.

PR: I wonder how then these women who are economically independent cope and manage this situation?

SA: Ja, some cope better than others, some can't cope. It depends on you and this person. It is a matter of how strong you are. It has a lot to do with that. But, when I left my parents home when I got married, although it is my choice, I had to cry when I left my parents house, you know, because you are not going to be a spoilt child, you are going to be an independent woman running her own house. It is a big responsibility. Uh, it is mostly because you delayed being responsible because your mother did everything, but also because your mother has done it in her home to her dad, you are expected to do that. And parents as well have the expectations, because they did for their husbands, because they took care of their in-laws, and their husbands, they expect it to carry on for generation to generation. But, it is actually going to be a big shock in the next generation

when our kids are not going to be doing that at all, so I don't know. It is a whole lot of things that have happened from generations a long time ago that filter from every generation, and it is going to come to an end, where either women don't marry, or men don't marry because they can't find that right woman, because that woman has bed hopped from man to man, you know, a whole lot of things. You know, you find that an abused woman is constantly depressed, and she is just living life, and she can't wait for the day she closes her eyes. You know, and it is sad, because you should be living for the moment, enjoying yourself, what comes, and what may turn up. I don't think that a woman who is independent is enjoying to be married to a narrow minded man. I think that, they are so confined in their routine because getting out of the house, just to get to work is an excuse, because they can't do anything else. It is either you do it with me, or you don't it, and you go to work and come back. So, some of the excuse of the independent woman is to get out of the house. There might not be a need for her to work, but you know besides being a slave at home, at least she gets out working. Ja, is like FREEDOM, as long as I am getting out of the house, it does not matter if I have to go to work and scrub the whole day, just as long as I am getting out of the house. It does not matter if I have to come home and cook, and clean, and whatever.

PR: But now, how do you think that her performance of her role affects her work?

SA: Some people it would affect them, I mean you are trying to be two different people. Some people will just be, who cares, I am just getting out of the house it is freedom, as long as I can mingle with people, I have a lunch break, I can do what I want, I have a tea break, I can do what I want, it is freedom. So I am being, I am still active, I am still independent with regard to the other woman. But uh, staying at home, I must quickly wash the kids, wake them, feed them, help them with their homework, put them to bed, then you clean up, you wash YEAH. I don't know, I don't think, I think I will do it for a while. I think, I will just have to have a job. You find that some people have half day jobs, or three days. It is just, it is important to make a mingle with people, and to be just working. But, if you become that house wife, I think you eventually lose yourself, your mind can't think, and you can't have a conversation with somebody, because you don't know what to talk about. Ja, you lose your whole self-esteem and you start going down.

PR: So, then basically based on what you are saying women who are independent have a high [self-esteem

SA: Ja, they are confident], they can start a conversation, whether it maybe male or female, they can just start a conversation with a total stranger. But, if you sat at home, you don't have a social life, and eventually you don't want to go anywhere, you don't want to do anything, even the shopping, you have to force yourself, you know, I don't know.

PR: What role, how do you think the interaction would be like, if a woman is working, she is a CEO hence a manager of other men in her company, what experiences do you think she would have there?

SA: It depends on her husband. I mean, not many men would like their wives to be seniors and men under them. Do you know what I mean? It is a man thing. Do you know what I mean? Obviously, if she is in that position, he will have to be a bit conservative unless they have an understanding, where I am a boss at work, but not at home, we do everything equally at home. But you know, if it is a narrow minded person, then that woman is going to take some type of abuse such as emotional, verbal, or psychology, you know. Because it is either you are having an affair with every man at work, because you are working with men. Because you know, it is so easy for a man, even though the wife is independent, they still feel that is it, I am the man whether their wife is earning an income or not, and it is definitely not right. You don't always have to agree, you can agree to disagree, you know what I am saying. You can have your own opinion, they can have their own, but it would be nice to for them to agree on everything small.

PR: Do you think that, the husband basically sees his wife as a man at work and now is threatened that you have to become a man in the house? How do you think that makes him feel?

SA: Ja, it makes him feel inferior, you know she is doing everything, she is bringing more money than me, she is driving a fancier car than me, it makes him Some men can handle it well, some men either become suicidal. Some men just become violent. That is why it is you as an individual who needs to make up your own mind and decide for yourself. Society should not predict and preach uh, it is over and down it is finished, you should be in this day and age be an individual who decides for yourself, you know what, that is my expectation of my wife, and that is her expectation of me, we have a mutual understanding. And there is times where the husband needs to be the senior, and there is times where the mother has to be, because she is basically running that home. I mean, when it comes to your kids you are still running around. I mean, you ask your husband and he says ja, whatever, whatever, by me and your know that is also good as well. But, he is just trying to get out the easy way, you know, if you live to the wife she will sort it out. But, he does not realise that when she is asking for that little help, for that guidance, she just needs a bit of input. But, he is just taking it as putting pressure, and he can't handle it, and that is not really fair.

PR: So it is almost like, the husband is threatened by his wife earning more money than him, he is worried about what society thinks, and he is also trying to move away from his parental responsibility.

SA: There are many men who do that, they just move away, the less they have to do, the less they have to worry about. And that is why many women are so pressurized, because they feel they have to live by those standards that society has made. But as I say, it is important for the woman not to abuse her status, you know even though she is bringing in the income, she should still know that I am a woman, and I should not go beyond my expectations. I am a married woman even more so, you should have some self-respect, it is important because you are expected to do these things. Today's generation is different, I mean, my kids are different, you can see it in the way they talk and interact, and then you think that is strange because they discussed it in school, I mean, we never heard until

we finished school, or we never heard it until we got married, you know what I am saying. It is just that society has to let go of it, and sometimes I don't blame society, because you get an odd woman who really let us down in her behaviours and things, and all it takes is for one to do the wrong and then society starts judging. And it is not fair for the ones who did not do anything, and that is why pressures are very high and expectations are very high, and to be a female in born in this world, it is really tough, it is not easy.

PR: I am going to conclude, do you have anything else to add based on what we have discussed.

SA: No, I actually um, I think that if you are in a violent relationship you should try and get out as soon as possible, because if you can't sort it out ones, it is just going to snowball and become worse. It is either you are abused, or they are going to abuse somebody else. And if you don't resolve it I mean, domestic violence does not just affect an independent woman only. It depends on whether your husband is drinking liquor. The man is drinking does contribute. There are various factors that contribute to violence, it is not necessarily because you are independent. So, it is important to know as a woman what you are getting yourself into. It is not a matter of you falling in love and that is it, you should know the person, such as, when they drink are they abusive? I mean, no one is going to tell you that up front, I take drugs, I drink. But you should be able to pick up on their behaviour if you are working with men. If you are working with people, you know, it helps you to make better judgement, hopefully. But not in all cases, you don't know the person until you are living with them. He might give you all the wrong ideas, but when you are living with him that is when you say, I did not know that, you know. It is like a shock, it is like it hits you wow. You do that you know, that is why it is important not to just jump into relationships. I know when people just live together, age plays such a big role in this as well, there is so much that plays a role in all of this, but you must remember if one of them has an affair, I mean, you could have brought some infectious disease home and contracted something, it does not have to be HIV, you know, but you can bring so many other stuff home, sexually transmitted infections. And uh, I mean, a man will always be a man, he can go out and have an affair and bring something home, and then he can tell you it could be you, you know. Sometimes people do stupid things. You know, if you are just open and honest it could alleviate so much of stress. I mean, nobody is here to say you don't drink, you don't smoke, you don't do drugs. I mean, you are not here to judge anybody, and tell them what to do. They were born alone and they will die alone. But you should be able to help that person control it. Some will react like you are telling me what to do, I am the man, you know. I don't know what happens, but society does play a very strong role. There are lots of expectations for women, they need to I am not saying that the expectations have to be removed, because otherwise we will get a lot of women running out wild. What I am saying is that, they need to be a bit lenient as well.

PR: Thank you very much.

ISSUES RAISED IN THE INTERVIEW – SA

Main Issues: List 1

1. Women's socio-economic status

- ***Privileges of economic independence***

- The change in the socio-economic status allows women to become self-reliant
- It seems to protect women from becoming less vulnerable to men's manipulation, exploitation, and oppression
- The change in the socio-economic status seems to permit women to:
 - ✓ become in control of their life;
 - ✓ financially provide for themselves and satisfy their needs;
 - ✓ contribute to the domestic domain's financial necessities, therefore, it seems to create gender equality
- and more women in the contemporary society have freedom to movement
- furthermore, women's opportunity of participating in the economic sector seems to be enhancing their knowledge and they become more socially enlightened through socialisation
- moreover, economic independence seems to provide women an entitlement to making their own decisions without having to depend on their spouse or family
- and their level of self-esteem and self-confidence seems to increase in that they can engage in productive conversations with people much more easily compared to economically dependent women

- ***Disadvantages of economic dependence***

- Economic dependence seemed to be a negative experience for most women
- Most economically dependent women did not seem to have power and control over their life
- They did not seem to have freedom of movement because they had to seek permission from and report their social movements to their husbands
- And their main responsibilities was fulfilling their duties in the domestic environment such as, cleaning, cooking, and doing the laundry
- Furthermore, some economically dependent women seem to lack self-esteem and self-confidence to an extent that they struggle interacting with people

2. Spousal interaction in the domestic domain

- ***Spousal support***

- Some economically independent women seem to have supportive husbands who are prepared to share domestic responsibilities
- For instance, the husband:

- ✓ can arrive home from work before his wife and ensure that supper is prepared and ready
 - ✓ and assists with the care of the children
 - some of these husbands seem to be understanding and supportive of their wives' work schedule and responsibilities
 - However, other husbands who are governed by patriarchal principles seem not to be supportive of their wives, they expect their wives to arrive home from work and cook while they are relaxing and they arrived home first
 - Some of these men seem to behave as such because that is how they were socialised
 - They were maybe socialised in a domestic domain whereby the mother was unemployed and her role was to fulfil female domestic duties, such as, cooking, cleaning, ironing etc.
 - Hence, the man expects his wife to behave similar to his mother
 - However, other men seem to behave in an unsupportive manner because their wives accustomed them to it
 - For instance, some women in the early period of the marriage tend to indulge their husbands, they do everything that a female is socially expected to perform in the domestic realm
 - They behave according to the way they were socialised and imitate the behaviour they observed from their mother
 - However, later in the relationship some women seem to feel overwhelmed by their domestic duties and expect their husband to be supportive, especially after they have children
- ***Constructions of sexual intercourse***
 - There are various difficulties that some economic independent women encounter in their marital relationship
 - For instance, in some relationship one individual in the relationship might resort to committing extra-marital affairs
 - ***Sources of divorce***
 - Other relationships seems to end in divorce due to various reasons one including the wife's economic status
 - For instance, the wife might be unable to perform and fulfil the socio-gendered domestic roles
 - ***The influence of the in-laws***
 - Some in-laws seem to be influential in most couples' marital affairs
 - Other in-laws seem to influence their son's behaviour towards his wife
 - For instance, they might complain to their son about his wife's dressing style, that it is a shame to the family
 - Some in-laws don't seem to take into consideration the couples' understanding and agreement
 - Therefore, it is almost as the married couples' issues become the extended family's issues

- And in some marital relationships the couple seems to be governed by the extended family's values and principles which are mostly patriarchal, hence, playing a significant role in induce conflict and difficulties in the marriage
 - Some mother in-laws expect the daughter in-law to care for their son and perform all the female domestic duties
 - And in some familial settings when the wife fails to care for her husband, the mother in-law gets involved in the matter which seems to give raise to violence and conflict
- ***Feelings of insecurities***
 - Some husbands who adhere to patriarchal principle seem to feel intimidated by their wife's occupational status whereby the wife is superior at work
 - Their wife's economic and occupational status seem to make them feel inferior and emasculated because his wife is financially affluent compared to them
 - Hence, some men tend to become suicidal because they cannot seem to cope with their wife's affluence
 - However, in some relationships, the couple have an agreement of creating a relationship where there is gender equality, there is no one in the household who is superior over the other irrespective of their occupational and economic status
 - The wife must respect herself and her husband and not use her status to oppress her husband and make him feel insecure

3. Deconstruction of dominant socially constructed perceptions

- ***Males' perceptions of economically independent women***
 - A majority of economically independent women seem to experience difficulties in their work environment
 - Some women depending on their type of employment seem to be undermined by males
 - For instance, there are some males who expect the women to wear their wedding as an indication that they are married, hence, they are unavailable
- ***The in-laws' perceptions of the economically independent woman***
 - Some in-laws appear to struggle accepting their daughter in-law's affluent economic status
 - The other in-laws who seem to be jealous and envious of their her economic status
- ***Transforming socio-gendered roles***
 - Society seems to have high expectations for women in general
 - Society is constituted of our family, and people in our domestic and work sphere, and these people seem to play an important role in protecting and maintaining the binary relationship between men and women

- This is, they seem to play a significant role in perpetuating the socio-gendered roles between men and women in a patriarchal society
- However, the dominant socio-gendered roles seems to be gradually contested and transformed in the patriarchal society

4. Socio-cultural perspectives on economically independent women

- ***Socio-cultural and religious perceptions of economically independent women***
 - The Indian culture seems to play a significant role in perpetuating and reinforcing the dominant patriarchal principles in the contemporary society
 - For instance, according to the participant, economically independent women appear to still be expected to be submissive and subordinate to their husbands
 - This is, most women are still silenced and marginalised within the Indian culture irrespective of their economic status

5. Women's perceptions of marriage

- ***Reluctance of being married***
 - Most economically independent women seem to struggle to find a compatible spouse
 - A majority of self-dependent women seem to spend a significant amount of time moving from one relationship to the next looking for a spouse who is not going to dictate and control their lives, and also expect them to be submissive
 - Some women seem to be reluctant to get married and delay marriage until their late 30's and 40's so that they can become independent and successful
 - A significant number of women who choose not to get married due to their need for independence, seem to regret their decision later in life when they are old and sickly and they don't have no social and family support

6. Reasons for remaining in an abusive relationship

- ***Fear of humiliation and stigmatisation***
 - Some women are reluctant to leave an abusive relationship for various reasons
 - There are some women who are embarrassed to get a divorce and leave their abusive partner
 - Some of these women seem to be anxious that they will be blamed by society, hence, will receive inadequate social support
 - However, there are other women who seem to have the courage to get a divorce and leave an abusive relationship especially since they have the necessary resources required to continue their life

- ***Fear of being harmed by their husband***
 - Some women seem to remain in an abusive relationship because they fear for their life
 - In some relationships, the husband threatens the life of the children or the wife by warning her that if she leaves he will murder her or the children
 - Hence, some women remain as a way of protecting their life and their children's life
- ***Constructions of love***
 - Other economically independent women seem to experience difficulty leaving their abusive partner because of their feelings of love for their partner
- ***Economic independent women: low self-efficacy***
 - There are other financially stable women who seem to remain in an abusive relationship because they are anxious and concerned that they will not cope, and manage caring for their children irrespective of their economic income
 - Their perceptions seem to be precipitated by various factors including that, some women have been married for an extensive period of time, therefore, seem to have become accustomed to the lifestyle and the way financial matters are managed in the domestic domain
- ***For the sake of the children***
 - Some women remain in an abusive relationship for the sake of the children
 - Enduring domestic violence seems to be their way of avoiding for the children to be separated as the result of divorce
 - Some of the women are concerned of the psychological implications that the divorce will have on the children
 - However, they don't seem to consider the psychological impact that they abuse has on the children
 - Domestic violence seems to be detrimental to the children's psychological well-being
 - For instance, some children:
 - ✓ Some children tend to become abusive to their partners
 - ✓ Other children choose not to get married
 - ✓ And some children in their adulthood tend to imitate their mother's behaviour of succumbing to domestic violence

7. Women's perceptions of motherhood

- ***Maternal relationship***
 - Some affluent mothers seem to struggle finding quality time to spend with their children
 - The amount of time that they spend with their children seems to be compromised by their work responsibilities

- Some children who receive inadequate love and attention from their mothers seem to be vulnerable to various social hazards
 - For instance, some of the children become exposed to child abuse either by family members
 - And in most domestic circumstances mothers seemed to be blamed and held accountable for their children's negative experiences
 - In such circumstances most fathers don't seem to be held accountable for the care of their children
- ***Replacing love with money***
 - Most mothers who spend inadequate quality time with their children, and provide their children with inadequate love, attention, and support seem to replace love with money
 - They seem to provide their children with materialistic items as a way of symbolising their love and making up for the inadequate time and emotional support that they give their children
 - Some women seem to substitute love with materialistic items and money due to various reasons including their feelings of guilt
 - Other women seem to feel guilty because they think that they are deviating from the social expectations of a mother
 - Therefore, they intend to create a false image that they have a good relationship with their children so that society does not rebuke them
 - Most children who are provided with money and materialistic items seem to struggle becoming responsible and autonomous
 - Majority of these children seem to continue being dependent on their parents during adulthood because they were deprived of an opportunity to be independent during childhood and adolescence due to their parents' feelings of guilt

8. Coping mechanism

- ***Social upbringing***
 - Some women seem to struggle to fulfilling their domestic duties in their household due to various reasons including that, their mothers performed all the necessary domestic duties when they were growing up, hence, they did not have an opportunity to accustom themselves to such a role

9. Sources of domestic violence

- ***Feelings of insecurities***
 - Most husbands who are governed by patriarchal principles seem to feel insecure and threatened by their wife's occupational position and economic status
 - As the result some of the husbands tend to become emotionally, psychologically, and verbally abusive to their partners
 - And some men as the result of their insecurities falsely accuse their partners of having extra-marital affairs with their male colleagues


- ***The influence of alcohol***
 - In some situations domestic violence seems to be perpetuated by alcohol consumption
 - Some men who consume excessive amount of alcohol tend to become abusive to their partners
 - It is therefore important for the woman to have a slight idea of her partner's behaviour when he is under the influence of substances such as, alcohol or drugs

Main Issues: List 2

1. Women's socio-economic status
 - Privileges of economic independence
 - Disadvantages of economic dependence
2. Spousal interaction in the domestic domain
 - Spousal support
 - Constructions of sexual intercourse
 - Sources of divorce
 - The influence of the in-laws
 - Feelings of insecurities
3. Deconstruction of dominant socially constructed perceptions
 - Males' perceptions of economically independent women
 - The in-laws' perceptions of the economically independent woman
 - Transforming socio-gendered roles
4. Socio-cultural perspectives on economically independent women
 - Socio-cultural and religious perceptions of economically independent women
5. Women's perceptions of marriage
 - Reluctance to being married
6. Reasons for remaining in an abusive relationship
 - Fear of humiliation and stigmatisation
 - Fear of being harmed by their husband
 - Constructions of love
 - Economic independent women: low self-efficacy
 - For the sake of the children
7. Women's perceptions of motherhood
 - Maternal relationship
 - Replacing love with money

8. Coping mechanism
 - Social upbringing
9. Sources of domestic violence
 - Feelings of insecurities
 - The influence of alcohol

Appendix 4: Ethical Certificate from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal


**UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL**

RESEARCH OFFICE (GOVAN MBEKI CENTRE)
WESTVILLE CAMPUS
TELEPHONE NO.: 031 – 2603587
EMAIL : ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

29 AUGUST 2007

MS. P SEDUMEDI (206514800)
PSYCHOLOGY

Dear Ms. Sedumedi


ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL NUMBER: HSS/0506/07M

I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been granted for the following project:

"A qualitative study exploring the relationship between black women's changing socio-economic status and roles, and domestic violence"






PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

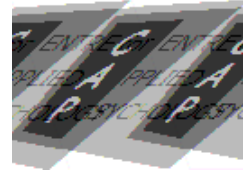
Yours faithfully


MS. PHUMELELE XIMBA
RESEARCH OFFICE

cc. Post-Graduate Office (Lyn Marriott)
cc. Supervisor (Dr. J. Clark)

Founding Campuses:

 Edgewood	 Howard College	 Medical School	 Pietermaritzburg	 Westville
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School of Psychology
with the Centre for Social Work

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL, DURBAN 4041, SOUTH AFRICA. TEL: +27 (0)31 260 2527 FAX: +27 (0)31 260 2618.

Appendix 5: Informed Consent Form

Letter of Permission to Interview Staff Members from a Banking Institution

Humanities, Developmental and Social Sciences
Room G056, MTB
University of Kwa-Zulu Natal
DURBAN
4041
26 May 2007

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH INTERVIEW
WITH STAFF MEMBERS FROM YOUR BANKING INSTITUTION

I am currently conducting a research project looking at how women's socio-economic transformation and roles influences domestic violence, as part of my post graduate study in Psychology. I kindly request your permission to interview five Black women from your institution. The participants will part-take in an individual interview that will proceed for an hour. The dates and times of the interview will be finalised in due course. All the interview meetings will be audio-recorded. The issues of voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity will be ensured.

Should you have any queries, please feel free to contact myself at:

- Cell no.: 076 787 9960
- Email add.: precious@polka.co.za

Alternatively you can contact my supervisor, Dr. Jude Clark at:

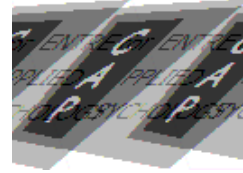
- Tel. no.: 031-260 2055

I appreciate your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely

T. P. SEDUMEDI (MS.)
Masters in Clinical Psychology
School of Psychology
University of Kwa-Zulu Natal

J. CLARK (DR.)
Student Supervisor
School of Psychology
University of Kwa-Zulu Natal



School of Psychology
with the Centre for Social Work

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL, DURBAN 4041, SOUTH AFRICA. TEL: +27 (0)31 260 2527 FAX: +27 (0)31 260 2618.

Appendix 6: Letter of Permission to Participate in the Study

26 May 2007

LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

I _____ agree to participate in this research project conducted by Precious Sedumedi of the School of Psychology, at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. I have been informed that the study is concerned with the influence of Black women's socio-economic transformation on domestic violence. I am willing to participate in an individual interview. I have been informed that the meetings will proceed for an hour and will be audio-recorded. I understand that I am allowed to remain anonymous and that this material will be treated confidentially. I also have been informed of voluntary withdrawal.

My contact details are:

Tel. no.: _____

Residential add.: _____

Signature

Date

T.P. SEDUMEDI (MS.)
076 787 9960
Masters in Clinical Psychology
School of Psychology
University of Kwa-Zulu Natal

J. CLARK (DR.)
031-260 2055
Student Supervisor
School of Psychology
University of Kwa-Zulu Natal