

UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE



**EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG MALE
VICTIMS IN KWEKWE**

By

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ACRONYMS

AAZ	- Automobile Association of Zimbabwe
ARV	- Antiretroviral
CBD	- Central Business District
CEDAW	- Convention of Elimination of all forms of Domestic violence Against Women
DV	- Domestic Violence
DVA	- Domestic Violence Act
DVAM	- Domestic Violence against Men
FVLC	- Family Violence Law Centre
GSS	- General Social Survey
HIV	- Human Immunodeficiency Virus
JSCNR	- Judicial Service Commission National Returns
KDVR	- Kwekwe Domestic Violence Register
LDCZ	- Law and Development Commission of Zimbabwe
NCPEA	- National Committee for Prevention of Elder Abuse
NGOs	- Non-Governmental Organizations
SPSS	- Statistical Package for Social Sciences
STI	- Sexually Transmitted Infection
VSR	- Varume Svinurai Register
WCoZ	- Women Coalition Zimbabwe
WHO	- World Health Organization
WiLDAF	- Women in Law and Development in Africa
WRVH	- World Report on Violence and Health
ZDHS	- Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey
ZETDC	- Zimbabwe Electricity Transmission and Distribution Company
ZIMASCO	- Zimbabwe Mining and Alloy Smelting Company
ZNSA	- Zimbabwe National Statistical Agency
ZPC	- Zimbabwe Power Company
ZRP	- Zimbabwe Republic Police
ZWRNC	- Zimbabwe Women Resources Centre Network

ABSTRACT

The study examined the nature of domestic violence against men in Kwekwe. It focused on the lived experiences among male victims. Particular attention was given to the forms of violence experienced, perceptions of violence held and the coping mechanisms adopted by the male victims. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed to gather required data. These included perusal of court records, tele-observation, questionnaire, in-depth interviews and observation. The study findings confirmed the existence of domestic violence against men both in natural and unnatural forms. Various recommendations were noted and these included the need for incorporation of the rights of men in the constitution, the need for funding of men's organizations by both government and NGOs and the consideration of such acts as forced sex by wives as punishable offences.

Key concepts: Domestic violence, male victims, experiences and perceptions.

INTRODUCTION

This study is grounded on the view that men are abused by women in their homes. The study acknowledges that domestic partnerships that are potentially abusive are diverse. However, of particular interest to this study are the abuses that take place in a husband and wife relationship. Violence in the home has generally been understood from the perspective of male perpetrators and female victims. Studies conducted in other parts of the world (GSS in Canada 1999; ZHDS 2011; Kirsta 1994) and within Zimbabwe (Mutepfa 2009), attest to the existence of violence against men in its variations. Statistical evidence show both existence and increase in prevalence of the phenomenon in Kwekwe. According to the KDVR (2012), of the 768 and 998 domestic violence cases dealt with at Kwekwe Magistrates' Court in 2011 and 2012, 26% (200 cases) and 45.9% (454 cases) respectively, involved male victims who reported various forms of abuse by women.

Central to this study is the quest to gain understanding of the nature of abuse perpetrated against men by women in the home. This is accomplished in three sections. The first section attends to the male victims' experiences by specifically exploring the forms of abuse faced by men in the home, the point at which abuse was perceived and the context within which it occurs (whether public or private). The second section examines the ways in which male victims perceive abuse perpetrated against them by women, querying the basis of those perceptions. This brings in the discussion on cultural and religious values as determinants of victims' perceptions. The last section analyses the coping mechanisms or strategies that include divorce, suicide, desertion and seeking counselling. The issue of patriarchy is also addressed in relation to both the victims' perceptions of abuse and their coping mechanisms. As can be noted below, Kambarami (2006) defines patriarchy as a social organization or system that reproduces itself from male members of a society who are endowed with power and authority. I assert that patriarchy has a bearing on the perceptions held by male victims in Kwekwe.

The results of this study are based on data gathered through mixed research methods (both quantitative and qualitative). The study was conducted in Kwekwe urban from December 2012 to February 2013. The discussions in this study are based mostly on fifty respondents chosen using purposive and snowball sampling. Even though the results of the study may not be

generalizable considering the sample size, I contend that the results make a significant contribution to understanding gender violence in Zimbabwe. Hammersley (1992) also argues that generalization is not always the purpose of social science research.

Questionnaires, in-depth interviews, personal narratives, tele-observation and secondary techniques i.e. perusal of records at Kwekwe Magistrates Court and Varume Svinurai were employed to solicit required information on male victims. The data pertain to the victims' experiences and perceptions as well as their coping strategies. After analyzing data, using the common themes approach and running Chi-square tests of the determinants of victims' perceptions using SPSS 16.0, it has been realized that domestic violence against men is existent in various forms in Kwekwe.

DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Domestic violence

Domestic violence has been defined in varied ways across academia. For Kambarami (2009), it is synonymous to wife battering. This study adopts a broader definition which presents domestic violence as a variety of abusive behaviors between related people who normally stay together or share some intimacy, (Loseke et al 2005). This includes abuse by parents against children, abuse by men toward women, abuse by women against men and abuse among siblings. The abusive behaviors can either be physical, psychological, emotional, economic, sexual or verbal. The definition given by Loseke et al (2005) shows various potentially abusive relationships. However, of interest to this study is spousal abuse perpetrated by women against men.

Male victims

According to Hall (2001a), a victim is a person who unjustly suffers harm and therefore deserves sympathy, attention, assistance and support. Hall (2001a) further states that the definition of victimhood is influenced by other factors such as the cultural perceptions of victims and the legal definition of victims. The cultural setup in Zimbabwe, that is predominantly patriarchal (Kambarami 2006), does not present male members as potential victims. This study however, considers men as victims of domestic violence perpetrated by women.

Experiences and Perceptions

According to Scott and Marshall (2009), lived experiences are first-hand accounts and impressions of living as a member of a group or family. In this study men give accounts of what it is to be victimized by women at home. Perceptions on the other hand are views or ideas held based on knowledge gained through interpretation of a particular social phenomenon, Scott and Marshall (2009). They can also be understood as the ways in which people comprehend a particular phenomenon. Both definition by Scott and Marshall (2009) are widely employed in this study.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Domestic violence in its variations is evident in many communities around the world. It transcends religion, class, race, age and national boundaries. There are vast studies (WiLDAF 1995; ZWRCN 1995; LDCZ 2000; WHO 2002; Musasa Project 2009; ZDHS 2010-2011) on the phenomenon among academics and various organizations. However, emphasis among these studies is directed on violence against women by men. Kambarami (2006) attributes this bias to patriarchy which is endemic in most parts of the world including Zimbabwe. Patriarchy is a socially constructed system that reproduces itself from male members of a society who are endowed with power and authority (Kambarami 2006). In this social system, men and women are socialized into gendered roles by such institutions as family and education. Men become breadwinners while women are socialized into caregivers. For women organizations (Musasa Project; Girl-child Network; WCoZ) and women activists, patriarchy necessitates subordination, discrimination and abuse of women by men in societies in which it is present. During the colonial era and after independence, Zimbabwe did not have law covering domestic disputes. It was only in the late nineties that Zimbabwe ratified the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In 2006 and 2007, reforms were made to the Criminal Law Act (Codification and Reform) and the Domestic Violence Act was adopted into law, respectively. All these and other efforts such as gender mainstreaming by the Zimbabwean government were meant to improve the welfare of women. However, women now take it upon themselves to abuse men against all cultural dictates. Despite constraints imposed upon women by the patriarchal culture and its presumed resultant domestic violence against women, cases of domestic violence against men in Zimbabwe have been on the increase. According to JSCNR

(2012), domestic violence cases dealt with at Zimbabwean courts for the years 2009, 2010 and 2011 were 3 193, 7 628 and 10 089, respectively. The cases that involved male victims were 997 (27.4%) in 2009, 2 968 (38.8%) in 2010 and 4 009 (39.7%) in 2011, JSCNR (2012). The statistics show an increase in cases involving male victims as the general domestic violence cases increased. Nonetheless, the vigorous advocacy against women abuse in the home by women organizations (Musasa project) overshadows campaigns against domestic violence against men by men's organizations such as Varume Svinurai. Furthermore, it contributes to the apparent dearth in research on domestic violence against men.

As noted above Zimbabwean society is predominantly if not entirely patriarchal. It is embedded in both urban and rural communities. Therefore, families in Kwekwe are largely patriarchal. Domestic violence against men is largely viewed as a taboo as men are perceived as strong and powerful enough to defend themselves. The given scenario makes domestic violence against men appear as non-existent among families in Kwekwe urban community. This therefore explains the scarcity of studies on domestic violence against men in Kwekwe as no attention among academics is drawn to the subject.

The above presented statistics and media reports both point to the existence of domestic violence against men. Based on these, it can be asserted that men are abused by women at home and violence against men at home is an expression of initiative and agency within the women groups and among individual women. Domestic violence against men is therefore one way in which women deal with the structural constraints of patriarchy in Kwekwe. It is in this socio-cultural context that this study is undertaken.

OBJECTIVES

- To identify the forms of domestic violence experienced by men in Kwekwe
- To examine men's perceptions of domestic violence
- To identify the coping strategies employed by male victims of domestic violence

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the forms of abuse men face from women in the home?
- How do men perceive the abuse perpetrated by women?

- How do men cope with abuse perpetrated by women?

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Kwekwe is a town in central Zimbabwe. It is located in Kwekwe District in the Midlands province. It is approximately equidistant from Harare to Bulawayo. It is 62km North-east of Gweru and 72 km South-west of Kadoma towns, (AAZ 2010). Its population, according to ZNSA (2012), stands at roughly 100 455. The residential areas are divided into low, medium and high density suburbs. The majority of the population lives in the high density areas while a small proportion occupies the low and medium densities. The population is made up of both Shona and Ndebele speaking people and the culture is largely patriarchal. Kwekwe is an industrial town hosting New Zim Steel, ZIMASCO, ZETDC, ZPC and Sable Chemicals among other big industries in Zimbabwe. There is extensive Gold mining (both formal and informal) in and around Kwekwe town. Kwekwe has numerous churches including Catholic and Protestants.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There is evidence of the existence of (JSCNR 2012; ZDHS 2010-2011; KDVR 2012; ZRP Report 2011 & 2012) and increase in cases of domestic violence against men in Kwekwe and in Zimbabwe in general. Men of different age groups, social backgrounds and professions fall victims to various forms of abuse perpetrated by women at home. They are not only physically and verbally abused. Rather, women abuse men psychologically, emotionally as well as sexually. Against all cultural dictates, there is apparent evidence of domestic violence against men by women. While studies covering domestic violence against women by men are vast in Zimbabwe and other parts of the world (WiLDAF 1995; ZWRCN 1995; LDCZ 2000; WHO 2002; Musasa Project 2009; ZDHS 2010-2011), research addressing abuse perpetrated by women on men are very few if ever they exist. The paucity of research on the nature of abuse perpetrated by women on men in Kwekwe, Zimbabwe prompted this study. The main crux of this study is on bridging the highlighted knowledge gap in sociological literature by exploring the lived experiences of male victims of domestic violence with particular attention being given to the forms of abuse they face, their perceptions of the abuse and how they respond to the different forms of abuse. This study further intends to come up with recommendations for consideration by bodies interested in gender issues and policy makers in government.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

This study emanates from several observations made during my employment at Kwekwe Magistrates' Court as an official. It intends to explore the nature of abuse perpetrated against men by women through specifically identifying the forms of abuse experienced, the perceptions held by male victims of abuse and examining their responses to the abuse perpetrated by women at home. It is evident that domestic violence against men in Kwekwe and in Zimbabwe in general is a real phenomenon, (KDVR 2012). As such this study brings it to the fore arguing that men are abused in various forms, both natural and unnatural. It further argues that the way men respond to abuse perpetrated against them is related to their held perceptions of the abuse as well as their religio-cultural values which inform the noted perceptions. A special contribution is therefore made by this study towards understanding the lived experiences of violence among men who are in abusive relationships. The convenience of Kwekwe to the researcher and the fact that it is located within the Midlands region which has posted the highest number of domestic violence cases among other provinces since 2010 (JSCNR 2012; *The Chronicle* -Dec. 2012) makes it an ideal context for the study on domestic violence against men. This study employs both quantitative (survey) and qualitative (in-depth interviews) methods of inquiry. This triangulation has made possible the comprehension of experiences of male victims of domestic violence. The outcome of the research has theoretical significance as it shows that as women struggle for power against men in the home, men, on the other hand, devise mechanisms to deal with the perceived violence showing their resistance to cede power and authority endowed to them by culture. The study presents another dimension of domestic violence that has received very little attention in Zimbabwe thus far, that of male victims. For sociologists, the study on experiences of victimized men has great significance as it reflects on the interface between the agency in women as individuals or groups and the structure in the patriarchal culture. Finally, the study presents provocative insights on the domestic violence phenomenon and narrows the paucity of studies on domestic violence against men and their experiences in Zimbabwean sociological literature. It therefore is functional in creating a much required balance in literature on the gendered phenomenon of domestic violence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on domestic violence in Zimbabwe mainly focus on women and children. This is so because women and children are believed to be vulnerable and weak. In their study on violence against women in Sub-Saharan Africa, Watts et al (1995) identified the forms of violence experienced by women in their homes, WiLDAF (1995). Other corroborative studies were done by (ZWRCN) Zimbabwe Women Resources Centre and Network (1995), (LDCZ) Law and Development Commission of Zimbabwe (2000), WHO (2002). Among the above mentioned studies, focus and emphasis were placed on women as victims of domestic violence and no attention was given to the possibility of men falling victims as well. WiLDAF (1995) and ZWRCN (1995) both surveyed the prevalence of physical abuse among spouses and the reasons behind that form of abuse in Zimbabwe. They both came up with the conclusion that domestic violence against women is highly prevalent in Zimbabwe, with statistics from (ZRP Report 1994) confirming the findings. Zimbabwe Republic Police reported that more than 20 women are assaulted everyday and more than 60% of murder cases that go through the courts are a result of domestic violence (ZRP log books, 1994). However, these studies did not examine the nature of violence men face from women or its existence.

Studies carried out by Maboreke (1986) and Nzuma (2000) examined the role played by the law (both customary and common) and culture in Zimbabwe in promoting domestic violence. According to Maboreke (1986), the patriarchal culture predominant in Zimbabwe has a considerable effect on domestic violence against women and even on the way domestic violence cases are dealt with at Zimbabwean courts. Closely related is Nzuma's study on the problems faced by battered women in obtaining and enforcing peace orders in Harare, Nzuma (2000). Osirim carried out an investigation into the extent to which those organizations that provide support to women victims of domestic violence were successful in Zimbabwe, Osirim (2003). From this study she made the conclusion that such organizations as Musasa project and Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre Network would perform (ZWRCN) better with increased funding. Nonetheless, these studies focus on women as victims of domestic violence and not instigators.

More recent studies on domestic violence (Population Council 2008; WRVH 2002; ZDHS 2012; ZRP report 2012; WHO 2005; Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse 2005;

Mutepfa; 2009) show acknowledgement of the existence of domestic violence against men in Zimbabwe and in other parts of the world. Moreover, the increase in reports on violence against men at home in Zimbabwean mass media (*The Sunday Mail, September 2012; The Chronicle, July 2012; H-Metro, December 2011*) points to the existence of domestic violence against men. The Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey (ZDHS) (2012) though mainly focused on spousal violence against women, contends that either person can be an instigator of violent behavior. In a ZDHS 2010-2011 carried out in Zimbabwe's ten provinces, 1 445 ever-married women confessed having instigated violence when their men were not already hitting them.

According to the World Report on Violence and Health (WRVH) (2002), in Zimbabwe as in South Africa there is a correlation between women empowerment and violence against men. The more educated women are, the more they become resistant to patriarchal norms. For Mutepfa (2009), women's assertiveness in Zimbabwe stems from the affirmative action policies adopted by the Zimbabwean government. Misconstrued equal rights could therefore be the reason for the increase in cases of domestic violence against men and the revolt against the dictates of patriarchy. The assertions made by the WRVH (2002) are, nevertheless, indicators of the origins and the existence of domestic violence against men. They do not explore the experiences of male victims, which is the focus of this study.

The ZRP Reports (1994-2012) show statistical evidence of the existence of domestic violence in different provinces of Zimbabwe. According to these reports, domestic violence against men has always been existent but the past five years have seen an upsurge in cases of men facing violence from women at home. For instance, of the 1 020 domestic violence cases reported in 2005, 10% were those perpetrated by women on men, ZRP report (2006). Yet, in the year 2011, 39.7% of the 10 089 reported domestic violence cases from all over Zimbabwe involved men as victims, (ZRP report 2012). This indicates that even though women are abused by men, men can also be abused by women.

A Zimbabwean protest group, Varume Svinurai (men open your eyes) aims to address advocacy imbalance between men and women rights. Varume Svinurai has vested interest in domestic violence and the male victims in particular. It calls upon the government to take serious steps towards addressing violence against men. According to their records, (VRS 2010-2011) 1 100 men approached their organization between the years 2010 and 2011 for counseling, psycho-

social as well as economic support as a result of abuse suffered at the hands of the current or former spouse (wife). In the year 2012, Varume Svinurai has dealt with an average of ten male victims of domestic violence per month, (VSR 2012). For the chairman of the organization Mr Freddy Misi, this is a very high figure that warrants serious consideration from the government and other stakeholders in the judicial sector. The organization challenges the way in which the Zimbabwean law, particularly the Domestic Violence Act (2007), defines domestic violence as well as the way in which male victims are treated during the execution of this law. According to the Domestic Violence Act (2007; 3), domestic violence is any form of abuse derived from cultural or customary rites or practices that discriminates against or degrade women such as, “forced virginity testing; female genital mutilation; pledging of women or girls for purposes of appeasing spirits; forced marriage; child marriage; forced wife inheritance; sexual intercourse between fathers in-law and newly married daughters in-law”. This definition overlooks the possibility of men falling victims of violence at the hands of women in homes. For Varume Svinurai, this is possibly the reason why domestic violence cases involving male victims do not receive the same attention as those involving female victims at Zimbabwean courts. However, Varume Svinurai does not have academic studies on domestic violence against men supporting their assertions. There are no documented life-experiences of the victims and hence domestic violence against men remains under-studied in Zimbabwe.

Most African societies are predominantly patriarchal, (Maboreke 2009) and as such, violence against men is not something significant because men are believed to be strong enough to defend themselves. Those men who report abuse by women are viewed as weak. That explains the reason why domestic violence is commonly studied and understood from the perspective of women victims and men batterers. However, according to national statistics in Nigeria; South Africa; Kenya; Zambia; Tanzania, to mention a few, domestic violence against men is prevalent, (WHO 2002). Deinye (2008) studied the prevalence of domestic violence in Nigeria as well as the socio-demographic characteristics of the victims of domestic violence and concluded that there is 23% prevalence rate of domestic violence against men amongst married couples. A South African men’s group, Sonke Gender Justice in 2011 reported that in every 10 reported domestic violence cases, 4 involved male victims, WHO (2002). These studies are all important in indicating the prevalence of domestic violence against men. They nevertheless, do not give any detail of experiences and perceptions of these male victims. In addition, methodologically,

the study by Sonke Gender Justice (2011) is not representative of the South African domestic violence situation. This is mainly due to the fact that the study solely focused on reported cases. The assumption is that, domestic violence against men in South Africa could probably be higher than the reported 4 in every 10 cases. This study will also take note of the unreported cases of domestic violence which are normally dealt with at churches.

A study by Mutepfa (2009) focused on the prevalence of spousal abuse among different socio-economic status groups and gender groups in Zimbabwe. The author refuted the notion that only women are victims of domestic violence. He instead, established that men as well face various forms of violence in homes in Zimbabwe. This corroborates findings from other parts of the world such as those by the GSS in Canada (1999); Kirsta (1994) that also reported that both women and men are likely to be instigators of violence at home. Such studies as Mutepfa (2009); WRVH (2002), ZDHS (2012) and WHO (2005) are relevant to this study because they show the social dynamics that characterise the family institution in Zimbabwe which is founded within a patriarchal setting. Women who are supposed to be passive and submissive to their husbands as per the dictates of patriarchy are seen taking up assertive roles.

However, after an evaluation of the literature on domestic violence, one may note that domestic violence against men is understudied. The experiences of male victims of domestic violence are scantily documented if at all they are. Let alone their perceptions and the strategies which they employ in dealing with violence perpetrated against them by women. This study therefore explores the experiences of men who face violence at home and those who at some point were abused by their intimate partners. It bridges the gaps in scholarly studies on domestic violence against men.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the way in which the research was undertaken and it depicts the series of activities that were executed by the researcher. It is in this section where research design, sampling techniques, data collection techniques and analysis processes are discussed. Silverman (1993; 1) defines research methodology as ‘the general approach to studying a research topic’.

Research design

The research design is a guide or blueprint of research, dealing with such problems as: what the research questions are, what data are pertinent, what data to collect, and how to collect the data and analyze the results (Yin, 2008). It is much more than just a work plan in that it helps to avoid the situation in which the evidence does not address the initial research questions. This study employed both qualitative and quantitative research designs and it employed survey and cases study methods as the main research methods. Adoption of both designs helped in answering questions of reliability and validity of research results.

Sample design

Purposive sampling of court roll cases at Kwekwe Magistrates' Court, cases dealt with by pastors and at Varume Svinurai was used to select respondents. Kothari (2004) notes that the strength of purposive sampling lies in the fact that it selects cases that are typical of the population needed. The research sample consisted of men who have experienced domestic violence. Any domestic violence case that involved women perpetrator or defendant at Kwekwe Magistrates' court from December 2012 to February 2013 was viewed as rich in information case. I approached 2 local pastors from different churches of my choice as key informants in a bid to purposively identify other participants from unreported cases which are normally dealt with at churches. The pastors then referred me to their clients through snow-ball sampling and they (the clients) voluntarily participated after I debriefed them. In order to recruit other respondents who neither had their cases dealt with at courts nor at churches, did I purposively approach local members of Varume Svinurai men's forum. Purposive sampling is mainly utilized in this study due to its strength in recruiting cases with required information. As such, less time was spent in trying to identify the bona fide potential participants. The snow-ball sampling technique was also employed in identifying respondents from the cases that were not dealt with at courts. According to Babbie (2001), snow-balling is a technique in which the researcher identifies key informants and then asks them to assist in locating other members of the research population whom they know. Snow-ball sampling is crucial to this study because of its suitability in exploratory studies of this nature which are done to satisfy the researchers' desire to understand a particular phenomenon. Fifty men made up the sample population. However, only eight of the fifty respondents were selected for intensive and in-depth study.

Research techniques

Survey is a method that is commonly employed in sociological research in the form of interviews or questionnaires. This study employed questionnaires as a prelude to in-depth data collection from individual participants. This is because they are considered the appropriate instrument in this study to elicit biographical and historical information from respondents. For Denscombe (2009), questionnaires are well suited for gaining information on a topic about which the researcher knows little. The questionnaires helped in the identification of abuse suffered by the respondents. They also assisted in generating statistical data that in turn are appropriate in the quantitative design partly adopted in this study. I administered the questionnaire using the face-to-face mode, where I presented the questions orally to the fifty respondents. This assisted those participants who were not conversant with English and created familiarity between me and the respondents.

The case study was chosen as the main method for the qualitative research design. According to Feagin et al (1991), a case study is a multifaceted, intensive investigation that uses qualitative research instruments and several data sources i.e. primary and secondary. The case study method enabled the use of in-depth interviews that assisted in understanding of men's lived experiences, perceptions of and the mechanisms employed in dealing with domestic violence. Kothari (2004) defines in-depth interviews as interviews which do not have predetermined questions or answer categories. They depend on social interchange between the researcher and the informant. They helped in developing personal relationships between me and the respondents. In this study, they allowed the respondents to express themselves with spontaneity in reciting their personal experiences of domestic violence. Furthermore, in-depth interviews were employed because of their appropriateness in the qualitative design partly adopted in this research. They provided room for the researcher to probe deeply into the issue of domestic violence against men and to open up all dimensions to the phenomenon, (Burgess, 1982). In-depth interviews helped in gaining a detailed picture of men's experiences and perceptions of abuse perpetrated by women. Eight of the fifty respondents were chosen for in-depth study because of the limited time.

Secondary sources of information such as court records, ZRP records as well as Varume Svinurai registers were utilized due to their significance in corroborating primary data pertaining to domestic violence against men. These secondary sources provided a pool from which respondents were chosen as well as the much needed statistical data. I also employed tele-

observation. According to Jaji (2009; 36) tele-observation refers to conscious effort by the researcher to follow television coverage of events and issues relating to the topic under investigation. Newspaper articles on domestic violence against men, particularly those from Kwekwe complemented tele-observation.

Data analysis

Data were analyzed in a thematic manner. That is, the collected data was divided among the identified main themes underlying the whole research. Thematic analysis of data was chosen in this study because it avoids unnecessary repetition in recording of data which is common in many case analysis approaches as Burgess (1982) notes. The data collected through questionnaires were validated and entered simultaneously into the prepared SPSS computer database after a range of variables based on the questionnaire were coded. These statistical data is presented in explained graphs, tables and pie charts after running frequencies of different variables such as age; social class; perceptions and coping mechanisms of respondents using SPSS 16.0. SPSS 16.0 was used to run chi-square tests and cross tabulations between different variables in-line with the objectives of the study.

The recording and presentation of data during in-depth interviews was done on case basis in tandem with research objectives. Case presentation of data is grouping of information according to particular and specific cases. This helps in highlighting unique data gathered from specific cases.

Post-fieldwork data analysis involved the reading and re-reading of the fieldwork data transcripts and relating them to reviewed literature and the theoretical framework. This was done through the systematic organization of the field notes derived from the case studies and from questionnaires into topics or themes identified from recurring data. Analysis of data was also done through counter checking secondary source material with data gathered using primary instruments.

Ethical considerations

Ethical concerns are part of the everyday practice of doing research, as noted by Denscombe (2009). This study is therefore not an exception. Its nature calls for intimate and highly personal information and as such all the necessary ethical considerations took precedence. As Lewis et al (2003) note, those who investigate violence face particular dilemmas in relation to 'ethics, data

collection, confidentiality and empathy.’ I sought permission from the Resident Magistrate at Kwekwe Magistrate’s court to conduct research. After that, I went through the court records in a bid to identify respondents and obtain statistical data. I liaised with the identified pastors for permission to access their clients. They also liaised with their clients who participated voluntarily. The aims of research were made known to these pastors, who were very valuable in mobilizing their clients to voluntarily cooperate with me in providing relevant information.

Participation in this study was exclusively on voluntary basis. I established informed consent after debriefing the identified respondents on what the study aimed at achieving. This study does not use real names. Rather, pseudonyms are employed. Furthermore, participants were assured that the findings of the research are used for academic purposes only. I did this in a bid to foster the respondents’ confidence in me and to create an environment where sensitive issues could be discussed without fear of public ridicule.

Limitations of Study

A number of potential respondents were reluctant to participate in this study. Therefore, the sample size is not representative of the exact figures of abused men in Kwekwe. Limited time and resources also made wider coverage impossible. As such, the study only covered Kwekwe urban.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is largely informed by Bourdieu’s theory of practices but also borrows from the Conflict Theory of Randall Collins. In his theory, Bourdieu identified such elements as habitus, field and capital as playing a central role in human practices and action. Bourdieu (1979) constructed a theoretical model in which agents’ lives are not taken for granted, but seen in wider patterns of the social world. He illustrated the agentic nature of human action through the interaction between habitus, field and capital. According to Bourdieu (1979), the actions of people are constituted by and constitute their dispositions (habitus), the capital they possess and the fields within which they operate. He saw the relationship between habitus and the field operating in two dialectical, but reciprocal ways (Gukurume 2010). While the field conditions the habitus; the habitus on the other hand structures the field and capital is the intermediate element.

This theory is appropriate to this study because it explains how people deal with their lived social world. The habitus can be defined as a set of durable, unconscious schemes which form the foundation of someone's thinking, perceiving and acting, Bourdieu (1979). It refers to something historical, linked to the individual history and backgrounds. On a primary level, the habitus is influenced by family, parents, friends etc yet on secondary level the habitus is influenced by education, religion, etc. The habitus constraints and enables at the same time, it does not only structure, but is also a structure itself. It does not only give direction to behaviors (praxis), but is also an objective translation from the objective structure (structured structure) in an agent. In this study, the habitus will be viewed as the tendencies held by both men and women in the home which are themselves influenced by the cultural environment within which men and women grow. In a patriarchal environment as in Zimbabwe, men are nurtured to be assertive and masculine while women should take up passive roles in the family. This form of gender habitus is existent in many patriarchal societies. However, it is not without resistance and questioning. Patriarchal tendencies (habitus) in Zimbabwe have been criticized for promoting gender inequalities in society which have seen the discrimination and subordination of women. The Zimbabwean government and other women's groups (ZWRN; Musasa Project; Padare) and organizations have worked and are still working together to root out male dominance stemming from patriarchy. This has resulted in a shift in the tendencies held by women in Zimbabwe who now have assumed dominance somewhat over men evidenced by an increase in numbers of men who are abused by women in the home. 1 100 men approached their organization between the years 2010 and 2011 for psycho-social and economic support after they had been abused by women who were either current or former spouse, (VSR 2011).

The second element in Bourdieu's theory is the field. As noted by Ernste (2006), the field is a structured system of social positions occupied by agents and the nature of social position determines their situations i.e. agents. It is an arena of contestations and struggles in a network of relationships, (Gukurume 2010). Therefore, the field in this study is used to identify spheres of struggle for domination between men and women and strategies that they both adopt to acquire or maintain dominion. Occupants of the positions within the field employ a variety of strategies to deal with their conditions.

For the purposes of this research, the field will be considered to be the family institution in which both men and women as individuals or collectives seek to safeguard their positions and to impose the principles most favorable to them. In other words, a field is not only a definition for a certain object or space, but also a place where agents struggle for power and where agents meet each other. The strategies employed depend on their positions in the field (Benson, 1998). Women who have historically been subjected to unequal power relations with men under the patriarchal social setup predominant in Zimbabwe, now fight back to ensure equality or dominance. Men on the other hand devise various ways of coping or resisting women's agency and hence the struggle which characterizes the field is established.

When men and women with their dispositions (*habitus*) are interacting and struggling for power within the field (the family), they employ the capital. Capital is the third basic element in Bourdieu's theory of practices. According to Bourdieu (1979), capital is any part of the whole body of valuable resources employed by agents to enact practice. Bourdieu, identified different kinds of capitals i.e.; economic, political, cultural, social and symbolic as being the principal ones that are utilized across social classes or genders. Individuals as agents are able to exercise more power, dominance and influence in a certain field through using capital. Women in Zimbabwe are able to challenge male dominance through patriarchy using both social and economic capital. Such phenomena as women empowerment, affirmative action and even the Domestic Violence Act (2007) are in this study viewed as the different forms of capital women in Zimbabwe employ in their effort to fight patriarchy, which effort has seen the prevalence of domestic violence against men.

Bourdieu's thesis provides an important analytical tool for understanding the dialectical relationship within the field. In this study, women who abuse men in homes are referred to as actors since they actively devise strategies of dealing with the structure (the oppressive patriarchal culture). These actors employ multiple strategies which vary with the nature of their problems. Actors, as noted by Gukurume (2010), are thus not passive victims of their culture. Rather, they should be viewed as agentic, logical and knowledgeable beings that can respond swiftly to the dictates of the structure, which in this case is the patriarchal culture in Zimbabwe. Human action is performed within the context of a pre-existing social structure governed by a set

of laws and cultural norms. However, these rules should not be viewed as external to actors but as sustained, modified and manipulated by social action.

The Conflict perspective in sociology with particular reference to Randall Collins (1974) contends that unequal distribution of scarce resources is a potential source of conflict between those who are in control and those who do not have control. Randall Collins gives types of scarce resources that include but are not limited to *economic resources*; that can be broadly understood as all material conditions and *power resources*; that are best understood as social positions within organizational or institutional networks and status. Randall (1974) further asserts that conflict for scarce resources can occur in such dimensions of stratification as racial and gender inequality. He basically argues that life is characterized by struggle for status between people of both strata i.e.; the powerful and the powerless. People maneuver for advantage pushing towards satisfaction of their own interests. For Randall (1974) inequalities in resource control also result in the dominant parties taking advantage of the situation by striving to maintain dominance at the expense of the recessive part.

Randall's (1974) conflict theory is essential to this study because it gives an insight on the family institution which is constituted by both men and women who are related in different ways. Men and women in the family institution are either in a husband-wife; father-daughter; brother-sister relationships. However, in patriarchal societies as in Zimbabwe, women occupy subordinate positions in the family both as wives, sisters or daughters. Within the Zimbabwean patriarchal set-up, men as heads of the family can discipline their wives, sisters and or daughters and, until recently, women could not inherit from their fathers or husbands. This shows that the patriarchal culture gives power to men. As such, men have access to power which is a scarce resource. As a corollary, conflict arises as women also want access to this important resource.

Women in Zimbabwe abuse their husbands in the home as a way of fighting for power. Yet, at the same time, men strive to maintain the status quo. Randall's theory is of great importance in this study primarily because it provides another mode of sociologically analyzing and understanding the family institution. The family institution is not only a harmonious co-existence of men and women as functionalists contend but also an establishment in which they struggle and compete for scarce resources.

RESEARCH FINDINGS PRESENTATION

The study specifically draws data from a survey of fifty (50) men, eight (8) of which were selected for further in-depth study. The data presented here focus on the socio-economic profile of the eight respondents selected for intensive study, their lived experiences, the strategies they adopted in dealing with and their perceptions of abuse. The motives of those women who perpetrate violence on men are also presented here, drawn from three (3) women who agreed to participate in the study. Views of other stakeholders such as pastors and men's organization (Varume Svinurai) elicited through interviews with representatives are also presented here. Survey results are presented in tables, graphs and pie charts in the discussion of findings section.

Case 1

Mr Buyayi (not real name) is a thirty-three years old man from Amaveni, a high density suburb in Kwekwe. He is not employed formally and he survives on gold panning. His family comprises two wives and five children from both of these wives. He married his second wife in 2007 after she fell pregnant by him. Mr Buyayi stated that since then, his second wife insults him whenever they have a misunderstanding. He has also been denied sex on different days. It is his report that his wife often gives excuses like "*ndakaneta*", (I am tired) and "*handidi, enda kumukadzi wako mukuruka*", (I don't want, go to your first wife) whenever he wants to have sex with her. For him, that is abuse because they are married. As such, he is entitled to sex with her whenever he wants it.

Mr Buyayi noted that the most painful form of abuse he has suffered at the hands of his second wife is the spell called '*kusungwa*', she cast on him that has resulted in him being partly impotent. '*Kusunga murume*' (locking a husband) is a practice, in which the wife disengages her husband's manhood so that he would not sustain an erection with other women. He will only be able to sustain an erection upon being intimate with that woman who would have cast a spell on him. In an interview with her, Mrs Buyayi (the second wife) admitted to the alleged act of witchcraft but she indicated that she could not reverse it because the person who assisted her is now deceased.

Mrs Buyayi stated that she 'locked' her husband with the assistance of her now-deceased grandmother. She further stated that she wrapped some concoction she received from her grandmother on the unwashed cloth she used to wipe her husband's crotch after sex and threw

them in a nearby river. As African traditionalists, Mr and Mrs Buyayi believe that this act can result in the husband losing his virility when he tries to have sex with other women.

Mr Buyayi feels that he suffered severe emotional and psychological distress due to the actions of his second wife. He said, '*kusungwa chinhu chinoshungurudza zvikuru. Kana nemiwo mukoma chionai kuti ikozvino handichakwanisi kurara nemukadzi wangu mukuru*' ('*kusungwa*' is so frustrating to say the least my brother, especially when I am supposed to sexually satisfy my first wife as well'). He feels frustrated by the fact that he cannot address the sexual needs of his first wife. Mr Buyayi claims that he also suffered physical abuse due to the disengagement of his manhood. Mr Buyayi attempted to recover from his 'disturbed' potency through consulting traditional and faith healers but that failed to produce desired results.

Mr Buyayi views domestic violence against men as an indicator of women's capability to challenge men in the home and in society in general. He perceives it as a practice that robs men of confidence. However, for him, domestic violence against men is a common practice in Kwekwe. He contends that women employ unnatural means when abusing men in homes such as bewitching. He perceives the abuse perpetrated by women against men as a means by which women endeavor to dominate and control men. As a result, it presents a threat to the conventional construction of masculinities.

Mr Buyayi argued that the DVA does not cover some forms of abuse which are likely to be experienced by men such as, bewitchment and the unwittingly raising of children fathered by other men in its definition of domestic violence. It is Mr Buyayi's suggestion that such forms of abuse be covered by the legislation so that men can as well report the perpetrators and bring them to book.

Case 2

Mr Mkandla (not his real name) is a man from one of Kwekwe's high density suburbs and is aged thirty-five years. He is employed and is married with four children. Mr Mkandla is a Christian. He reported that his former wife subjected him to emotional, sexual, physical and verbal abuse through cheating and scolding among other abusive acts. He stated that his former marriage was characterized by squabbles between his former wife and him over issues including but not limited to insufficient income in the home and his wife's infidelity. He invited his wife's

relatives three times to discuss the persistent problems. However, the problems were not resolved. His wife still cheated on him with other men and accused him of failing to satisfy her sexually as well as financially. According to Mr Mkandla, she claimed that she cheated on him in order to raise money to supplement his inadequate income.

It is his account that on an unspecified day in October 2011 at around 9pm, his wife invited her unnamed lover to their marital home when Mr Mkandla was away. Mr Mkandla, however, came back home unexpectedly and found his wife and her lover in their marital bed. While he tried to take hold of his wife's lover, Mrs Mkandla rushed to the kitchen where she took a pot of boiling porridge on the stove. She then threw it into his face and disappeared into the darkness together with her lover. Mr Mkandla sustained first-degree burns on his face and was rushed to Kwekwe General Hospital by their neighbours who came after they heard the noise. A police report was then made without which he could not be attended at the hospital. Mr Mkandla intended to divorce his wife after he was discharged from the hospital. However, upon his arrival at home, he found that his wife had already left with their children and that marked their divorce. Mr Mkandla sought the help of the local members of Varume Svinurai in applying for the custody of his children and he was granted.

Mr Mkandla stated that he knows at least five men who suffered abuse at the hands of their spouses in his neighborhood. For him, DV against men is humiliating and demeaning to a father figure who is normally venerated and highly esteemed. He noted that it becomes abuse to the children as well.

Case 3

Mr Zangenere (not his real name), is a man who stays in one of Kwekwe's low density suburbs still in his early forties. He is married with two children. His current marriage is the second after he got divorced from the previous wife. He is employed at a local company. Mr Zangenere is a Christian and a full member of a local church. He got married to his now divorced wife in 1995 and they did not have children. His former wife was not formally employed; she was a cross border trader.

Mr Zangenere stated that he was a victim of DV for nine years. According to him, his wife insulted him on numerous times. It is Mr Zangenere's account that his wife blamed him for their

failure to have children and accused him of failing to support her financially for the whole period they were together. She would go to his work place where she shouted at the top of her voice alleging that Mr Zangenerere was not man enough for her; he could not give her children because he did not perform in bed. Mr Zangenerere quoted her in one of the occasions saying, '*Ungazvare sei iwe uchitadza kundigutsa? Uri ngomwa?*' ('How can you have children if you can not satisfy me? You are impotent?'). Mr Zangenerere stated that his wife's behavior was contemptuous considering that his workmates and subordinates were present.

Mr Zangenerere stated that in one instance, his wife insulted him by calling him the name, 'Legion', which name is used in the bible to refer a man possessed by a group of demons. He claimed that she used the name because she suspected that Mr Zangenerere is demon-possessed and so he could not have children or make her pregnant.

Given Mr Zangenerere's Christian background, he sought help from the elders of his church who summoned his wife but she never turned up. He (Mr Zangenerere) even invited them to visit the couple at their place of residence, in a bid to discuss the problems but the wife escaped upon the realizing the aim of the visit. Mr Zangenerere then applied for a protection order at Kwekwe Magistrates' Court in 2002 after realizing the failure of efforts to get counseling as a couple. The protection order was granted and it prohibited any shouting at each other by both parties. It lasted for twelve months and for Mr Zangenerere peace only lasted for that period in their home.

Mr Zangenerere reported that his wife reverted to her usual behavior after the protection order period lapsed. She became even worse. She (Mrs Zangenerere) started disposing some of the household goods without Mr Zangenerere's consent. She stopped performing her household chores such as cleaning the dishes, cooking for her husband and washing his clothes. Worse of all, she started denying him sex. This resulted in them using separate bedrooms. It is also after the expiry of the protection order that Mr Zangenerere's wife started bringing boy-friends in their matrimonial home. He reported that they sometimes would bring in beer and play music loudly while they drank. Meanwhile, his wife (Mrs Zangenerere) would brag to her husband that she finally got men who could satisfy her sexually as well as financially-the job which her husband Mr Zangenerere failed to do. Mr Zangenerere finally divorced his wife in 2004. He indicated that he could not take any more of the insults and embarrassment. Yet, he felt very bad because the decision was against his Christian values.

Mr Zangenere perceives domestic violence against men as a reality in Kwekwe urban community. He contends that it weakens the capacity of men as family or community leaders. In support of his perception, Mr Zangenere cited the example of a high ranking official in one of Zimbabwe's security forces, whose story on how he suffered abuse at the hands of his wife hit the news papers in mid-2012. According to Mr Zangenere, the comments that were passed by news-paper readers showed that they lost confidence in a leader who was abused by a woman to the extent of fleeing their matrimonial home.

Case 4

The now deceased, Mr Nzou (not his real name) an African traditionalist committed suicide in December 2012 after his wife divorced him. Prior to committing suicide, Mr Nzou indicated that he was married to his wife for four years and they had a three years old son together. Mr Nzou was an airtime vendor in Kwekwe CBD and he had been in the business since 2007.

Mr Nzou identified himself as a victim of verbal and emotional abuse perpetrated by his wife on several occasions since 2011. The two started having problems in their marriage when Mrs Nzou (the wife) started buying and selling second-hand clothes. As a businesswoman she became financially independent from her husband, who supported his family by the earnings from airtime vending. Mr Nzou quit his business in July 2012 for full time employment at a supermarket in Kwekwe CBD in an effort to please his wife. Despite all the efforts by Mr Nzou to earn a decent income, his wife was not impressed. She kept complaining and insulting him with different names. He invited her family members to discuss the ongoing tension between them but that did not bring the desired results. Eventually, Mr Nzou successfully applied for a protection order at Kwekwe Magistrates' Court, which forbade his wife from using insults against him. The order did not make the situation any better. She finally divorced him in September 2012 which act brought so much grief to Mr Nzou.

Mr Nzou stated that his victimization changed his perception about domestic violence against men. Prior to his experiences, he thought it did not exist to real men and for him; those who reported it were weaklings. After his experience, he felt that domestic violence against men is a reality that challenges leadership of men at home. Although Mr Nzou was not physically abused, he noted that the insults and divorce he was subjected to caused him severe psychological and emotional suffering. In December 2012, Mr Nzou committed suicide by hanging himself on a

tree. He wrote a note before he died in which he stated that he took his life because his wife divorced him.

Case 5

Mr and Mrs Banga (not their real name) is a couple in their late thirties and they have two children together. They have been married for seven years and they are both members of a church in Kwekwe. Mr Banga is formally employed at a local manufacturing company. Mrs Banga, on the other hand, is self-employed as a dressmaker. She operates her enterprise at home.

Mr Banga identified himself as a victim of domestic violence perpetrated by his wife. According to him, Mrs Banga subjected him to forced sexual intercourse on different occasions for the seven years they have stayed together. On one cited incident, Mr Banga came home from work and upon his arrival, his wife who was at home the whole day demanded sex. He explained to her that he was tired and, as such, he was not ready. Mrs Banga did not heed his pleas. Instead she started shouting at the top of her voice while also dragging him to their bed. She reportedly told her husband that it is his duty to sexually satisfy her, "*Basa rako pano nderei kana usingarari neni? Uri murume pachii? Hausi murume iwe, uri mbwende*". ("What is the point of having you if you cannot sleep with me? What kind of man are you? You are not a man, you are a weakling"). He would give in on most of such occasions but it would be against his wish. He feels it is his responsibility to initiate and instigate sex as well as to satisfy his wife sexually without coercion.

Mr Banga indicated that he moved out of their matrimonial home to stay with a friend for almost three months and, with his friend's advice, they approached their church pastor for counseling. During the time of desertion he avoided her calls and the people she sent to him. It was after their meeting with the pastor when Mr Banga returned home and he reportedly noted a change in his wife's behavior. He was not forced to have sex any more. However, until the time of this study Mr Banga was still subjected to verbal abuse by his wife.

Mrs Banga stated in a separate interview that she does not view her behavior as abuse in any way. For her, in a marriage setting either of the parties can instigate sex. She disputed her husband's view that it is the preserve of men in marriages to initiate sex. For her, her husband's view exposes men's intention to control women and their sexuality.

Mr Banga views domestic violence against men as a means utilized by women to control men. He argued that domestic violence against men negatively impacts on the capacity of men in set-ups like Kwekwe, Zimbabwe where they are socialized to be authoritative. Mr Banga padded that domestic violence against men is a violation of human rights in just the same way as domestic violence against women. Furthermore, Mr Banga noted that the DVA does not cover rape perpetrated by women on men. It is silent about men being coerced to having sex. He therefore suggested the consideration of such abuse as offences so that perpetrators would be charged.

Case 6

Mr Mutoro (not his real name) is aged thirty three and is self-employed. He is of the African Traditional religion. He divorced his wife in May 2012 on the grounds that she deliberately infected him with HIV. They have one child together. Mr Mutoro stated that for the period they were married, his former wife falsely accused him of infidelity on various occasions.

Between August 2010 and May 2012 when Mr Mutoro was in South Africa on business, his former wife contracted an unnamed STI where-upon treatment she was tested for HIV and she was found positive. Upon coming back from South Africa, Mr Mutoro had unprotected sex with the then Mrs Mutoro who kept the condition secret. It was only after Mr Mutoro quizzed her on some tablets he found in her belongings that she disclosed the secret to him. She told him that she had unprotected sex with a man from their neighborhood during his stay in South Africa and according to Mr Mutoro, the same man succumbed to the virus in November 2012. Mr Mutoro also tested positive to HIV when he went for testing in June 2012. Mr Mutoro, however, feels his former wife's infidelity rendered him worthless. He reported psychological distress resulting from his wife's behavior. He approached the local members of the Varume Svinurai men's organization intending to secure some counseling and assistance in accessing ARV drugs.

The former Mrs Mutoro indicated to him that she cheated on him because she thought he engaged in promiscuous behavior as well while he was in South Africa. However, Mr Mutoro said he never had any sexual relations during his stay in South Africa, nor did he suspect cheating by his former wife. Mr Mutoro feels that domestic violence against men is a great challenge to the cultural construction of manhood and womanhood. He noted that such unusual forms of abuse as deliberate HIV infection render many men incapable of fulfilling their mandate

of providing for their families. Instead, according to Mr Mutoro, men are turned into dependents or appendages that have to rely on other people for upkeep. Mr Mutoro feels that he suffered emotional, psychological and physical abused at the hands of his former wife.

Mr Mutoro contends that there is need for concerted efforts from both the government and the NGO sector in sourcing and providing funds to men's organizations which he said are underfunded. He maintained that men need counseling in just the same way as women when they are abused and traumatized. He therefore suggested establishment of centers at which men can get counseling and other forms of assistance they may require. He gave an example of the Msasa Project which provides counseling and shelter to female victims of domestic violence as one that is required for men.

Case 7

Mr Nyoka (not his real name) is aged fifty-two years. He works at a mine in Kwekwe. Mr Nyoka is an African Traditionalist. He divorced his first wife in August 2012 citing continued physical and verbal abuse. Mr Nyoka's former wife is an active politician aligned to one of the main political parties in Zimbabwe ever since 1999. Mr Nyoka reported that she was once elected councilor for a ward in Kwekwe in 2005.

According to Mr Nyoka's account, his former wife always accused him of having extra-marital affairs which did not exist in reality. Mr Nyoka stated that he divorced his first wife in 2012 after she scalded him with hot water. According to Mr Nyoka, on unnamed day a misunderstanding arose between the two after his wife came home late and refused to cook. Even after Mr Nyoka persuaded her to cook, she still contended that she could not serve a husband who earned as little as her husband. Instead, Mr Nyoka had to serve her, given that she was earning handsomely as a councilor. Mr Nyoka went and ate out and upon coming back home later, his wife pounced on him accusing him of having gone to meet with his girlfriends. Mr Nyoka denied the existence of any girlfriends and his wife calmed down in pretense and they all went to sleep. Mrs Nyoka, however, woke up and boiled water which she then poured on her unsuspecting husband leaving him burnt on the face and chest. Mr Nyoka made a police report upon his admission at Kwekwe General Hospital that led to his wife's arrest. She was convicted at her on plea of guilt. However, she was given a wholly suspended sentence of 10 months imprisonment though her husband was battling with burns in hospital.

Mr Nyoka views domestic violence against men as a tool employed by women in disputing masculinities and femininities that are constructed with-in patriarchal set-ups. He maintained the opinion that, ‘women who abuse men are men-like-women’. (*Abafazi balezi nsuku mntakamama, ngabafazi ndoda*). They behave like men.

Case 8

Mr Rukudzo (not his real name) is a married man aged thirty-two and has been in this marriage for six years. He is employed and has two children. Mr Rukudzo is a Christian and his wife is a non-believer from an affluent family. He stated that they started having problems when they disagreed on when his wife was supposed to get employment. Mr Rukudzo’s reason for suggesting a delay in his wife’s employment was that their children were still young and so they needed their mother’s care at all times. He disputed the idea of leaving them with their old grandmother (as she suggested) who also needed attention herself. He indicated that he was not totally against the idea of his wife getting employed; she would get employed later when their children reached school going age.

In one cited incident when the two were quarreling, Mrs Rukudzo grabbed her husband by the throat and shoved him sideways resulting in him hitting their bedroom walls with the forehead. He sustained bruised neck, shoulders and forehead as well as visible scratches all over his body. He did not make a police report because he feared the public ridicule which he said is often associated with reporting DV perpetrated by women. He also did not divorce her. Instead he sought counseling from his wife’s relatives. Nonetheless, Mr Rukudzo noted that he suffered verbal and physical abuse through the continued quarreling between them and the physical attack. Mr Rukudzo also reported instances when he was denied sex by his wife. He contended that she wanted to pressure him to allow her to go to work.

Mrs Rukudzo admitted to both the physical and sexual abuse reported. She viewed her husband’s suggestion to delay her employment as illogical. She had to do everything in her power to convince him otherwise. Below is an excerpt from an interview with her.

JM: So you denied your husband sex so that he could allow you to go to work?

Mrs Rukudzo: ‘Yes, you know you men need some deprivation for you to give in and become considerate. Now that I deprived him tell me, (laughing) isn’t it that I am employed now?’

It is Mr Rukudzo’s perception that domestic violence against men is an instrument employed by women to manipulate men. For him, women abuse men so that they can incite them to behave in the way which they want. He also views domestic violence against men by women as an indication of an intensive adoption of the affirmative action and women empowerment initiatives by the Zimbabwean government. He cited the equal participation of men and women in local and national politics as an example.

Mr Rukudzo made an appeal to the authorities in the judiciary to have an appreciation of abuse and violence perpetrated against men by women. He gave an account of one case in which a Gweru woman sliced her husband’s ‘manhood’ accusing him of infidelity. The man survived because he was quickly rushed to the hospital which was nearby. The woman was charged with physical abuse and was given a suspended sentence. For him, the sentence she got did not reveal the gravity of her case; it was not justified considering the permanent injury she caused on her husband. He argued that men who are convicted of such offence are either given a jail term or community service to meet justice. He therefore advocates a more balanced and equitable approach in dealing with DV cases by the judiciary authorities. He added that the patriarchal perception that women are victims who only abuse men when they are retaliating is nowhere near perfection.

Pastor

Pastor Joko (not real name) is a leader of a local church. He has been with the church for the past ten years. Pastor Joko asserted that for the time he has been with the Kwekwe church, he provided counseling to at least ten couples per year and in every ten couples he counseled, four of them involved male victims of women abuse who cited varied forms of abuse by their wives. Reports of denial of food, denial of sex, cheating, and disposal of household goods without mutual consent, verbal abuse and physical abuse are amongst the common forms of abuse he noted. He reported rare cases of unnatural and spiritual forms of abuse such as bewitchment through what he referred to as ‘*mupfuhwira*’ (love potion or husband taming herbs) and ‘*kusunga murume*’ (husband locking) being employed by women in abusing their husbands.

For the period he has been in the counseling ministry, Pastor Joko contends that 95% (95 cases on average) of his clients maintained their marriages. He attributes the low divorce rate to his teachings which are based on the bible. Those cases that involve supernatural forms of abuse are dealt with through spiritual deliverance of the perpetrator.

Pastor Joko perceives domestic violence against men as a reality but a normal behavior between married people though he noted that continued abuse is not healthy. Pastor Joko equated domestic violence against men with any other form of conflict that takes place in the home. He believes that abuse perpetrated against men by women can be resolved without putting an end to the marriage. In addition, Pastor Joko noted that domestic violence against men often results from unresolved conflicts which build up and eventually erupt into abusive actions. He suggested that abused men should resort to God; they should approach pastors who are ever willing to assist them be they Christians or non Christians.

Men's organizations

A local representative of Varume Svinurai, Mr Dura (not his real name) has been representing the organization in Kwekwe since 2009. Varume Svinurai is an organization that aims at addressing gender imbalance in advocacy between men and women. Varume Svinurai has particular interest in male victims of domestic violence. Mr Dura reported that he has assisted men from various walks of life who cite different forms of abuse. He, however, indicated that there are other unusual cases where men report abuse through deliberate infection with HIV by a partner. In 2012, Mr Dura dealt with one case of that nature and the man required assistance to access ARV drugs and counseling as he was traumatized by the knowledge of his status. According to (VSR) Varume Svinurai Register-Kwekwe, an average of eleven men per month approach the organization for financial as well as psycho-social support.

Mr Dura contended that his organization's (Varume Svinurai) operations are stifled by lack of funding. It only acquires little funding from foreign benefactors which has proven to be insufficient. He reported that Varume Svinurai does not own buildings in any of Zimbabwe's towns. Furthermore, the organization cannot afford office rentals in most towns except only in Harare. As such, they resort to operating from home. He argued that the given circumstances have resulted in a strong challenge to the smooth delivery of services to male victims of domestic violence who in most cases need either financial assistance or shelter in case of those who are

thrown out of their homes. He noted that with efforts by the government and the NGO sectors, their objectives will be realized.

As noted by Mr Dura, there is need for awareness campaigns to make men and other potential victims of violence at home aware of the existence of the organization. He highlighted, in addition, that the campaigns also assist through disseminating information on the consequences of violence against men in the home that include suffering of children.

Mr Dura postulated that domestic violence against men is a reality that needs to be appreciated. He argued that his organization (Varume Svinurai) perceives it as unacceptable as any other type of violence. He, however, indicated that male victims of domestic violence suffer double abuse both at home and in the public sphere.

It is crucial at this point to attend to some issues that have been captured through direct observation. It has been observed that the men who reported to be victims of domestic violence did not have inborn disabilities. They were physically able and mentally sound. They all never lost their temper during interviews. Only those that had been scalded by hot water, cooking oil or porridge had visible burn marks on their faces and other parts of the body. All the male victims who participated in this study indicated that the general conception of a man in Kwekwe is that of an authoritative, courageous, brave and bold character.

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section presents the analysis of the research findings. It specifically discusses issues that were drawn from fifty (50) male victims; 3 women perpetrators; 1 pastor; 1 representative from Varume Svinurai and the observations that were made during field work.

Victims' socio-demographic profile

The fifty respondents were all male victims of domestic violence. Their ages ranged between fifteen and fifty-four years. Equal proportions of 40% (20) were formally employed and self-employed respectively and only 20% (10) were unemployed, as shown in **Table 1** below. In these categories were professionals, non-professionals as well as business people. All the respondents were proportionally divided into married, divorced and single categories with percentages of 70% (35), 28% (14) and 2% (1) respectively. Sixty-four percent of the study

population belongs to the African Traditional religion while the remaining 36% is of the Christian faith.

Table 1 Background characteristics of respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent (%)
<i>Age of respondent</i>		
15-24	4	8
25-34	28	56
35-44	16	32
45-54	2	4
Total	50	100
<i>Marital status of respondent</i>		
Single	1	2
Married	35	70
Divorced	14	28
Total	50	100
<i>Religion of the respondent</i>		
Christianity	18	36
African tradition	32	64
Total	50	100
<i>Employment status of the respondent</i>		
Employed	20	40
Self employed	20	40
Not employed	10	20
Total	50	100
<i>Background of the abusive spouse</i>		
Affluent and non believing	27	54
Politically active and powerful	12	24
Lower social class people	11	22
Total	50	100
<i>Employment status of the abusive spouse</i>		
Employed	18	36
Self employed	25	50
Not employed	7	14
Total	50	100

The presented data indicates that men can be abused regardless of their age, religion as well as economic or social standing. Based on these findings one can assert that men from all walks of

life are prone to abuse by women (their wives or former wives), thereby confirming Mutepfa's (2009) conclusions that spousal abuse does not differ by social class. Nonetheless, there is an indication that some age groups are more susceptible to abuse than others. As can be noted in **Table 1** above, most victims (56%) were from the second age group (25-34).

This section has looked at the age, class and religious composition of the male victims of domestic violence. It is linked to the next section on nature and forms violence experienced by men.

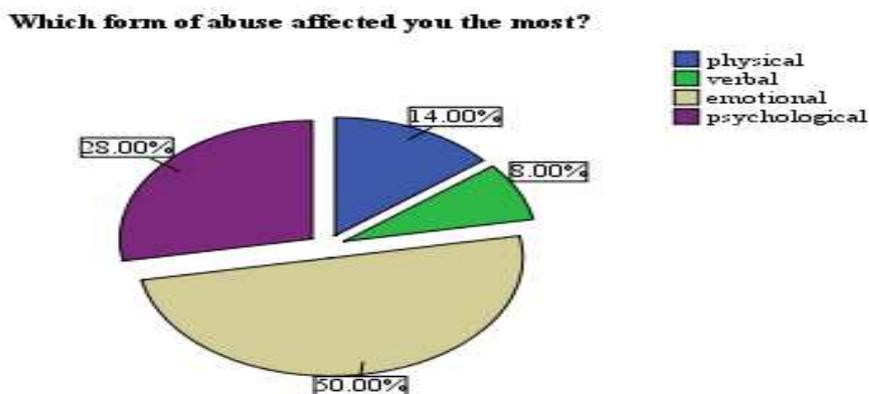
Forms of abuse experienced by men

Table 2 Forms of violence experienced

Type of abuse	Expected Frequency	Frequency	Percent (%)
Verbal abuse	50	49	96
Sexual Abuse	50	13	26
Emotional abuse	50	36	72
Physical abuse	50	32	64
Psychological abuse	50	16	32
Economic abuse	50	6	12

As can be noted in **Table 2** above every participant reported at least one form of abuse. All of the interviewed men reported having been either or both physically, psychologically, economically, emotionally, sexually or verbally abused by current or former spouse.

Fig. 1 Abuse that affected respondents the most



Verbal abuse

There is an indication that men are largely violated verbally. According to Drenfeld (2013), verbal abuse refers to the use of language to cause distress, insecurities and to exploit the other party. It is the commonly cited form of abuse perpetrated by women against men. All but one (96%) participants cited verbal abuse against them (**Table 2**). The verbal abuse reported was mainly committed through criticisms; name calling or shouting; use of derogatory and sarcastic language meant to demoralize victims or destroy their confidence. In Case 3, the man was called 'ngomwa' (a man who cannot make a woman pregnant) as well as 'Legion' (the bible character possessed by a group of demons). In Case 5 too, the man reported harsh words being used against him, 'hausi murume iwe, uri mbwende' (you are not a man, you are a weakling). Such words have emotional and psychological effects on the victims. It can be noted from **Fig 1** above, that 50% and 28% of the participants indicated that they are mostly affected by emotional and psychological abuse, respectively yet only 4% reporting verbal abuse as the abuse that mostly affected them. One may therefore infer that although men are commonly verbally abused as the study indicates, they are mostly affected by the emotional and psychological consequences of the verbal abuse than they are affected by verbal abuse itself. There is a general consensus in academia (Maboreke, 1989) and among women NGOs (Musasa Project, 1997) that women are not physically gifted and, as such, they are not capable of abusing men. Rather, they are abused by their husbands. Such studies do not put the fact that women devise means of abusing men despite their physical weakness. In this study, verbal abuse can be considered an epitome of those means that are readily available to women.

Physical abuse

The NCPEA (National Committee for Prevention of Elder Abuse 2013) defines physical abuse as a contact on another person intended to cause bodily harm; physical pain or impairment. In this study 70% of the respondents reported having been physically abused by various means. Fifteen (30%) respondents reported that they had been scalded (with water, cooking oil or porridge), shoved, punched or kicked. Those who reported that they had an object thrown on them and had their private parts pulled comprised 18% and 16% respectively. This study shows that men of all ages ranging between 15 and 54 years can experience physical abuse perpetrated by women in the home. There, however, is a notable difference among the age categories in terms of reporting physical abuse. A cross-tabulation (**Table 3**) below of age and physical abuse

variables indicates that men of ages between 25 and 34 years are physically abused more than any other age group. Men in this age group (25-34) in an African set up are expected to exhibit high levels of assertiveness and authority yet in this study, they are shown suffering physical abuse at the hands of weaker species (women). This therefore works as evidence of threatened conventional masculinities as reported by almost all respondents who participated in in-depth interviews.

Table 3 Cross-tabulation of the age of respondents and the frequency of physical abuse

		Age	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	Total
Have you ever been physically abused by your wife / girlfriend?	Yes		2	20	11	2	35
			5.7%	57.1%	31.4%	5.7%	100%

Fifty-two percent of the physical abuse incidences were reported as having taken place in the presence of children or in public and only 12% taking place behind closed doors. As noted earlier in this study, this explains why a greater number (50%) of respondents reported having been affected mostly by emotional abuse. The humiliation of a father figure in the presence of his children has emotional consequences on both of them.

Despite their presumed incapability to physically abuse men and some assertions that violence perpetrated by women is far less likely to be injurious (Kimmel 2001), there is an indication from the results of this study that women are capable of causing physical injury to men. Respondents in Case 2 and Case 7 reported having been scalded by hot liquids (porridge and water) yet in Case 1, he reported bewitchment which he discovered later on. This study corroborates a study by Mutepefa (2009) which came to the conclusion that women as well as men are capable of abusing the other party in a marriage or relationship. Women in this study are seen using means that are at their disposal to inflict bodily harm on men, i.e. scalding. They are the ones who spend a lot of time in the kitchen and so they can easily access hot water or hot porridge. Observed burn marks on some of the respondents confirm scalding.

Emotional and Psychological abuse

The Domestic Violence Act (D.V.A.) (2007) defines emotional and psychological abuse as pattern of degrading or humiliating conduct towards a partner that includes but is not limited to repeated insults, ridicule or name-calling as well as repeated threats to cause emotional pain.

According to Quinn (1997), psychological abuse is the willful infliction of mental emotional anguish by threat or humiliation by other verbal or physical contact. Emotional and psychological abuses are taken as one form of abuse in this study mainly because most respondents reported having concurrent experiences of the two. As noted earlier in the study, the two (emotional and psychological abuses) are largely resultant effects of the verbal and physical abuses. However, other respondents reported emotional and psychological abuse without prior experience of verbal or physical abuse. The respondent in Case 1 reported emotional abuse through bewitchment (*kusungwa*), other (42%) respondents reported emotional abuse through denial of sex, yet 14% indicated that they were psychologically abused by being infected deliberately with HIV. Emotional abuse ranked the highest (48%) form of abuse that affected respondents the most, as shown in (Fig.1) above.

Sexual abuse

Generally, it is acknowledged that boys are sexually abused by women and some scholars (Quinn 1997) have even concluded that men are only sexually abused during childhood. This study challenges that assertion. In fact, as shown in this study, adult men experience sexual abuse perpetrated by either their current or former spouse (woman). The Domestic Violence Act (2007) gives a rather vague definition of sexual abuse as behavior including any conduct that humiliates; degrades or violates the sexual integrity of the complainant. However, Quinn (1997) gives a more clear explanation. According to Quinn (1997), sexual abuse is a form of non-consensual physical contact which includes molestation, rape or any other sexual conduct on another person. Twenty percent (5) of the respondents in this study reported that they were sexually abused by their spouses through forced sexual intercourse. Such encounters bring with them a challenge to the definition of what constitutes a man in patriarchal set ups as noted by Mr Banga-Case 5.

Economic abuse

It is defined as the unreasonable deprivation of economic or financial resources to which one is entitled and requires out of necessity. Twelve percent of respondents reported economic abuse perpetrated by their wives and former wives. Six respondents reported that they unwittingly raised and paid fees for the children who were not biologically theirs. They argued that their wives' deception resulted in them losing their money which they could have spent on other things of their choice. It can be noted from the number of victims who reported this form of

abuse that it is not a common one. However, it contributes to men’s entire experiences of abuse in the home.

The above discussion gives an understanding that domestic violence against men is a real phenomenon that is prevalent in various forms. It is not only manifest in physical and verbal forms but is also found in unnatural and uncommon forms such as bewitchment (*‘kusungwa’*), deliberate infection with HIV and unknowingly raising other men’s children. Violence does not only take place in private. The study findings indicate that men are abused in the presence of other people as well. Furthermore, the noted forms of abuse were not one-off events. Rather, abuse took place in a series of incidents. Men from all social classes, religions and age groups experience some form of abuse perpetrated by women. However, this study establishes that some age groups are more susceptible to abuse than others as noted in **Table 1** above.

Perceptions-How do the victims perceive violence by women?

This section attends to how men view violence perpetrated by women in the home. It also examines their feelings as well as their general understanding of the phenomenon. It is pertinent to discuss the various perceptions noted before looking at how the men cope with the perceived violence because there is a relationship between the variables (perception and coping strategy). It is also important at this stage to highlight an assertion that the perceptions of DV perpetrated by women against them are a result of their religious and cultural values. The respondents were divided into two religions i.e. Christianity (36%) and African traditional religion (64%), as shown in **Table 1** above.

Table 4 Chi-square test

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	25.570 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	32.241	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.012	1	.912
N of Valid Cases	50		

p=0.000, p<0.05; Cramer’s V=0.715; Phi=0.715

H₀= Men’s perceptions of domestic violence perpetrated by women have nothing to do with their religio-cultural values.

H₁= Men's perceptions of domestic violence perpetrated by women result from their religio-cultural values

Table 4 above shows a Chi Square test which tested the hypothesis (H₁) that, men's perceptions of domestic violence perpetrated by women against them are a result of their religio-cultural values. The null hypothesis (H₀) in this case states that the perceptions of domestic violence against men reported by respondents have nothing to do with their religio-cultural values. The p value ($p=0.000$) falls within the rejection region ($p<0.05$), hence the null hypothesis (H₀) that men's perceptions of domestic violence perpetrated by women have nothing to do with their religio-cultural values is rejected. This study assumes the alternative hypothesis (H₁) which states that, men's perceptions of domestic violence perpetrated by women result from their religio-cultural values. Therefore, the test confirms that the victims' perceptions are informed by their religio-cultural values. A further test to ascertain the strength of the association between the two variables (religion and perception) gave *Cramer's V*=0.715 and *Phi*=0.715. Such values confirm that there is a strong relationship indeed between the variables (religion and perception).

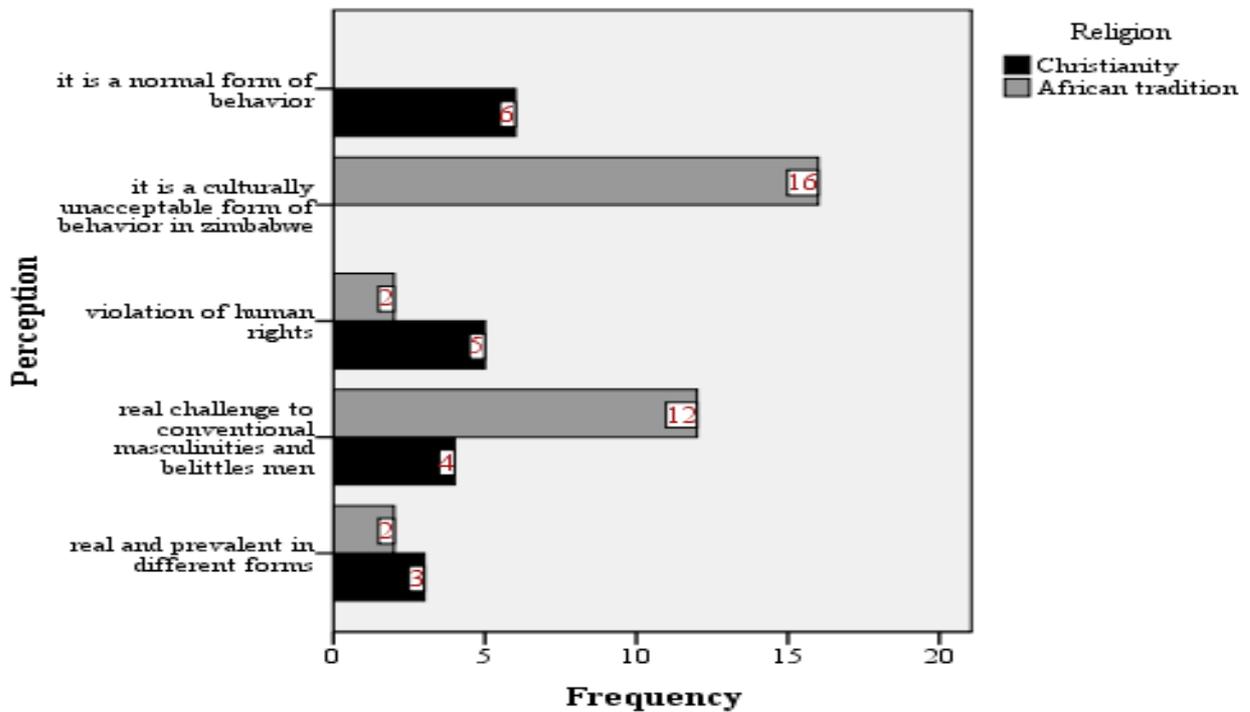
As can be noted in **Fig 2** below, only African traditionalists perceive violence against men as culturally unacceptable and as a challenge to the conventional construction of masculinities (redefinition of manhood). On the other hand, **Fig 2** shows that Christian respondents perceive violence by women as a common and normal behavior which is part of every marriage and relationship. However, they felt that it has to be managed (Pastor Joko). This is an indication that Christians do not perceive violence against men in the same way as African traditionalists.

DVAM (Domestic Violence against Men) is culturally unacceptable

The clustered bar chart of perceptions and religion of respondents in **Fig. 2** below reveals that only African traditionalists perceive violence against men in the home as a culturally unacceptable behavior. According to Kambarami (2006) culture is a complex phenomenon which includes knowledge, belief, arts, morals, law, customs and social habits acquired and practiced by members of a society. Maboreke (1989) asserts that social habits and customs in Zimbabwe are largely based on patriarchy, which Kambarami (2006) defines as a social system that reproduces itself from males. It is a system of government in which male members are endowed with supreme authority in the family and descent is reckoned in the male line.

Fig 2 A clustered bar chart of religion and perception

N=50



As such, men are socialized to be household heads that should be accorded superiority over other members of the family. In this social set-up, it is acceptable for men to exercise control and administer discipline on other members of the family including women. Hindin (2003) therefore concludes that patriarchy is tolerant of ‘wife beating’ and other forms of abuse against women by men. Nonetheless, this is not the case when it comes to abuse perpetrated against men by women. Violence against men is scoffed at and the male victims are urged to fight their case as men.

In line with the Chi-square test in **Table 4** above, it can be noted that due to men’s socialization in a cultural set up which tolerates their dominance and authority in the home, they therefore resist any possible challenge or perceived threat. The male victims who perceive domestic violence against men as culturally unacceptable show their resistance towards a shift in cultural norms. This illustrates Randall’s (1974) conflict theory that he used to explain human practice in everyday life. He postulated that unequal distribution of scarce resources is a potential source of

conflict between those who are in control and those who do not have control. For Randall (1974), life is characterized by struggle for status between both the powerful and the powerless. The powerless struggle for power and the powerful resist its seizure. In this study, women are found abusing men in a bid to seize power and, on the other hand, men resist and fight to still maintain it.

DVAM challenges the conventional construction of masculinities

Meischer and Lindsay (2003; 4) define masculinity as a ‘cluster of norms, values and behavioral patterns expressing explicit and implicit expectations of how men should act and represent themselves to others’. It is a socially invented quality that distinguishes a man from a woman. Kambarami (2006) refers to the family institution as the ‘brewery’ of society where boys are taught to be breadwinners and heads of the household whilst females are taught to be obedient and submissive housekeepers. Masculinities constructed in patriarchal social systems (as in Zimbabwe) present men as authoritative and powerful, (Maboreke 1989) as noted in the discussion above. Those that view domestic violence against men as a challenge to the construction of masculinities fear for dilution of the patriarchal values that could entail a redefinition of what constitutes a man. Jaji (2009) notes that contact between masculinities in one society with other ideologies may result in changes in the meaning of masculinity.

In this study, 32% of the male victims reported that domestic violence against men is a challenge to the construction of masculinities in Kwekwe and among all the perceptions of domestic violence against men noted in this study, this perception had the second-highest frequency showing that the male victims are conscious of the real threat to the patriarchal definition of a man. One of the respondents (Case 7) is quoted saying, ‘*abafazi balezi nsuku ngabafazi ndoda*’ (women these days resemble men). The authoritative and powerful men created within the patriarchal setup are ripped of their confidence by the humiliation that comes through verbal, physical and emotional abuse perpetrated by women. They often do not retaliate due to fear of the punitive consequences such as imprisonment despite their capability to retaliate as Mr Rukudzo (Case 8) indicated.

DVAM is a reality that is prevalent in many forms

The real existence of domestic violence against men is yet to be acknowledged in some circles of the Zimbabwean society. One of the respondents (Case 4) stated that he did not believe domestic

violence against men existed until his own experience. Some sectors still exhibit their resistance to accepting the possibility of men falling victims of abuse perpetrated by women. This is evidenced, for instance, by the scoffing off at male victims when they approach authorities in the justice delivery system. Mr Nyoka-Case 7 indicated that when he approached the police after he was scalded with water by his wife, they could not believe him. They thought he had mistakenly burnt himself. This study confirms and proves that men are abused by women and hence it refutes such assertions that women are not abusers as a myth.

There was 100% acknowledgement of the existence of domestic violence against men among the 50 respondents as well as the two informants (Varume Svinurai representative and a Pastor). All of the respondents indicated that they know at least one man who is in an abusive relationship or marriage. It may also be noted from the research findings that there were other forms of abuse reported by the respondents that are uncommon and unnatural. In Case 1, the respondent reported that his manhood was 'locked' by his wife in an act of witchcraft. This act reportedly resulted in psychological and emotional distress as well physical impairment on Mr Buyayi. In yet another case (Case 6) the respondent was deliberately infected with the HIV by his wife and, as such, was rendered a victim of psychological abuse. The above mentioned forms of abuse (bewitchment and being infected with HIV) are uncommon and they had a relatively low percentage frequency of 18% and 14%, respectively. However, they were noted. It therefore can be asserted that domestic violence against men is a reality that is manifest and prevalent in various forms. The research results reveal that violence against men in the home is not only physical or verbal but men can also be abused by women through bewitchment. Women's agency is shown in the various forms of abuse they subject men to in the home. Bourdieu (1979) postulated that in a 'field', individuals employ different forms of capital in the struggle for domination which characterize the field. Women employ various forms of abuse even those which are not common in their effort to fight men and prove their power and capabilities to men.

DVAM is violation of human rights

The Zimbabwean constitution provides for the rights to personal liberty; human dignity and to freedom from torture, inhuman and degrading treatment to every citizen, (Constitution of Zimbabwe 2013). Seven respondents (14%) pointed out that domestic violence against men constitutes violation human rights. Both African traditionalists and Christians shared the same

sentiments. Violence on the person of anyone is violation of human right. Men and women are accorded the above mentioned rights and, as such, abuse against any of the categories is violation of human rights. One of the respondents noted that the Zimbabwean constitution does not contain a section that specifically covers the rights of men in the same way as there are sections covering the rights of women and children. Having such a section as part of the constitution has a long lasting effect on conscientizing the Zimbabwean populace of the possibility of domestic violence against men.

DVAM is an instrument employed by women to manipulate men

Domestic violence against men is perceived by some victims as a tool employed by women to deviously influence and control men as well as change the way they ought to behave as men. The most common abuse reportedly used for manipulation by women is denial of sex. Almost half (42%) of the sample population indicated that they were denied sex at some point in their marriages or relationships. One respondent (Case 8) reported that he was denied sex for almost two months by his wife as a means of pressurizing him to allow her to get employment. The wife remorselessly confirmed her husband's report and further indicated that she would even deny him sex as a form of punishment or protest for wrong doing. There is a general understanding that denial of sex works as an instrument for manipulation among the Zimbabwean populace and world over, Sunday Mail (Feb. 2013). Even women in politics encourage it as, 'sex strike'. According to Cochrane (2011), in the year 2011 a Belgian senator proposed that the spouses of all negotiators in the formation of a new government were to withhold sex until a deal was reached. A sex strike was used as a way of making men behave in a particular way. A Zimbabwean minister has on several occasions encouraged women to go on sex strikes for different reasons. Recently, she was quoted by a local news paper (Sunday Mail 24 Feb. 2013) urging women to deny their husbands sex for failure to vote in the referendum. She stated that, *'If they don't vote in the referendum, they should know that no sex for them'*, Sunday Mail 24 Feb. (2013). This is a clear illustration of how women may assert their power either in the domestic or public-political arena. It is a clear contrast to commonly held notions of femininity that, women are not assertive. It may also be understood as a form of sexual control in a society where they (women) were not privileged enough to control even their sexuality, (Maboreke 1986).

DVAM is a normal set of behavior

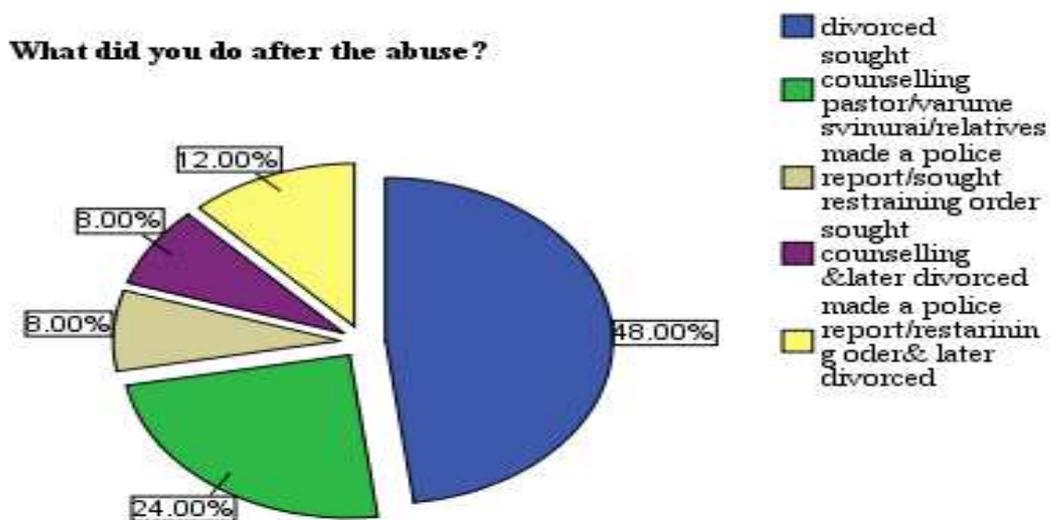
Twelve percent of respondents contended that domestic violence against men is a normal set of behavior. The respondents argued that in any relationship such as marriage, abuse or violence is possible and hence there is nothing abnormal about it. However, this perception is commonly held among Christian victims. Even the informant pastor (Pastor Joko) equated domestic violence against men with any other form of conflict that takes place in the home. He believes that abuse perpetrated against men by women can be resolved without putting an end to marriage. He therefore never suggested divorce as an option to his clientele during counseling sessions. This would explain some tolerance of domestic violence exhibited by Christians who never divorced (Case 8) or divorced at a later stage (Case 3) as a last option despite continued abuse. As has already been noted in this discussion, religio-cultural values influence the perception held by the victims of violence. African traditionalists do not perceive abuse perpetrated against men by women as normal even though they acknowledge its existence. This is because the cultural values of Africans inform the notions of what constitutes a man among members of a society. Christians on the other hand value harmony and stability in the home and as such they tend to tolerate violence against men to avoid divorces or marriage break ups which are prohibited by the bible.

The foregoing discussion together with an illustration in the cluster bar chart in **Fig. 2** above and the results of the Chi-Square test above (**Table 4**), attest to the assertion that male victims hold varied perceptions of violence against men in the home, which perceptions are highly informed by their religio-cultural values. The following section looks at the coping strategies employed by the male victims of abuse in the home. It is linked to the above section.

Strategies employed by male victims in dealing with the perceived abuse

As already noted in this study, Bourdieu (1979) uses the habitus; capital; and field concepts to explain the different ways which people use to deal with their social world. He asserts that, in their everyday lives individuals employ various means to grapple with perceived threats and challenges. Mararike (1999) asserts that people are not given strategies; rather, they devise their own strategies to deal with their situations. In this study, men are seen adopting various mechanisms to cope with abuse perpetrated by women.

Fig. 3 Coping strategies employed by respondents



Among the reported strategies are:- divorce (48%) (with 20% either seeking counseling or making police report before divorcing); abandoning the abusive partner (Case 5- Mr Banga); seeking counseling (24%); reporting to police or seeking restraining orders (8%); consulting traditional and faith healers (Pastor Joko); and suicide (Case 4-Mr Nzou). A relationship has been established between the various perceptions noted in this study and the religio-cultural beliefs of the victims. It is further postulated at this juncture that there is a relationship between the perceptions held by the male victims of DV and the mechanisms they adopt in dealing with the perceived abuse. **Table 5** below shows a Chi-square test meant to test whether there is an association between victim’s perception and their coping mechanism.

Table 5 Chi-Square Test of perception and coping strategies of male victims

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	36.818 ^a	16	.002
Likelihood Ratio	39.489	16	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.777	1	.096
N of Valid Cases	50		

$P=0.02, p<0.05; Phi=0.858; Cramer's V=0.429$

$H_0=$ Coping mechanisms employed by male victims in dealing with abuse have nothing to do with their perception of abuse

$H_1=$ There is a relationship between the coping mechanisms employed by male victims of DV and their perceptions of violence

The Chi-square test (**Table 5**) result of $p=0.02$ lies within region of rejection of the null hypothesis. This affirms the alternative hypothesis which states that there is an association between the perceptions held by the victims and their coping mechanism. A test for the strength of the association (*Phi*) further confirms a strong relationship between the variables i.e. $Phi=0.858$.

Table 6 Cross tabulation of adopted coping mechanisms and the perceptions held by male victims

Perception	Divorced	Sought counselling	Police report/restraining order	Sought counselling & later divorced	Police report/restraining order & later divorced	Total
It is a real challenge to conventional masculinities	7 43.8%	1 6.2%	1 6.2%	2 12.5%	5 31.2%	16 100.0%
It is a culturally unacceptable form of behavior	13 81.2%	1 6.2%	0 .0%	1 6.2%	1 6.2%	16 100.0%
It is a normal form of behavior	0 .0%	4 66.7%	2 33.3%	0 .0%	0 .0%	6 100.0%

Table 6 shows a cross tabulation of perceptions held by and responses of male victims of DV. All but one of the victims that perceive DV against men as culturally unacceptable divorced. On the other hand, all of those who perceive DV as a normal form of behavior did not divorce. They only sought counselling and restraining orders and maintained their relationships. It may

therefore be maintained that the coping mechanisms adopted by male victims of DV are informed by their perceptions.

Divorce

The greatest percentage (68%) of respondents indicated that they divorced due to perceived abuse. While 48% reported that they did not consider any other strategy of dealing with the abuse before divorcing, 20% reported that they either made a police report or sought counseling before divorcing their wives. It can be noted from **Table 6** above that there is a very low tolerance level towards domestic violence against men among those respondents that perceive DV as culturally unacceptable, most of whom were non-Christians (African traditionalists). As noted in this study men adopt such coping strategies as divorce in order to save their 'face' (identities) from public humiliation associated with reporting abuse by women. Divorce therefore is adopted as a lasting solution to the abuse perpetrated against men. One respondent noted that divorce saves the male victims from societal victimization through demeaning and degrading remarks as well as blame for choosing wrong women for wives. The victims still want to be viewed as men who head their families and are in charge of what happens at home; who have confidence and are able to exercise authority at home. That is the reason why they remarried other women who would submit to them and accord them superiority. Therefore, as Goffman (1967) notes, male victims divorce their wives because they want to 'save face' or 'regain lost face'. This can be noted from **Table 1** (above) which shows that the majority, (70%) of the respondents are married yet the majority (68% in **Fig. 3** above) of them divorced their wives. There is evidence therefore that those who divorced remarried other wives. It may hence be asserted that they remarried in-order to prove to the society (which has a low tolerance level towards abuse perpetrated by women on men) that they are still 'men' and not weaklings.

Abandoning home

Leaving the marital home is one of the noted strategies employed by the respondents. After a series of incidences of verbal, emotional and psychological abuse Mr Banga- Case 5 reported that he left his wife of six years to stay with a friend in another residential area but in the same town. Although Mr Banga later returned home, some men who abandon their wives do not return home. They use the desertion as a step towards divorce. For instance, the case referred to by Mr Zangenere-Case 3, a high ranking official in the national army deserted his marital home and started another family elsewhere.

Pastor Joko indicated that among his clientele are men who desert their wives and children citing abuse perpetrated by their wives. According to his report, for the ten years he has been with the Kwekwe Church, all of the men who sought his counsel after deserting their wives reconciled with them. This gives an indication that a relationship exists between perceptions which are informed by religious values and the coping strategies adopted by male victims. Christians less likely choose strategies that would break marriages.

Counseling by relatives/ pastor/ men's organizations

Locke et al (2001) define counseling as a support process in which a person (normally an expert) holds a face to face talk with another person to help him or her solve personal problems or family conflicts or help improve that person's attitude or character. It provides a safe and confidential environment for victims to express their feelings and experiences, (Locke et al 2001). Counselors (be they pastors, relatives or professionals from NGOs) play a pivotal role in domestic violence matters because they are normally non judgmental and attentive to the concerns of the victims. In this study, 32% respondents reported having sought counseling from relatives, pastors, as well as NGOs (Varume Svinurai) in order to deal with perceived abuse. All but four (24%) of the respondents who sought counseling maintained their marriages. The remainder (8%) later divorced after the anticipated behavior change in their abusive spouses failed to materialize. **Table 6** above shows that those that perceive DV as normal (all of which were Christians) behavior dominated in number among the respondents who sought counseling yet only one (6.2%) of those that perceive DV as unacceptable considered counselling. It may be noted from this study that counseling was sought in situations where divorce was not considered as the first option. This thereby confirms the assertion that there is a relationship between perceptions held and coping strategies adopted by the respondents (male victims).

Report abuse to police / Restraining orders

Twenty percent of the male victims made use of the justice delivery system by seeking restraining orders or pressing criminal charges against perpetrators. The FVLC (Family Violence Law Centre) (2012) states that a restraining order is a court order that can protect victims from being physically abused; threatened; stalked and harassed. On the other hand reporting abuse to police entails pressing criminal charges against perpetrators and cooperating with the police as they investigate the alleged abuse, FVLC (2012). The study results (Case 2-Mr Mkandla and Case 7-Mr Nyoka) show that those who pressed charges against abusive perpetrators were

victims of physical abuse who had burns resulting from scalding and scratches as notable signs of alleged abuse. However, almost all victims who adopted these strategies showed dissatisfaction with them. They claimed that both the issuance of restraining orders and the pressing of criminal charges proved ineffective because, either abuse continued or sentences passed by Magistrates showed lenience. As noted in Case 7, Mr Nyoka's wife was given a suspended sentence yet he was battling with burns in the hospital. This would therefore explain the reason the relatively fewer cases reported by men compared to those reported by women.

Suicide

Suicide is the act of intentionally causing one's own death. According to Jones (1986) it is committed out of despair, which most often is a result depression or stress resulting from interpersonal conflicts etc. One of the respondents in this study (Case 4) committed suicide by hanging himself on a tree branch near his rural home. He wrote a note before he died in which he stated that he killed himself because of the divorce he suffered. It is unconventional and a taboo in a patriarchal set up for a woman to divorce her husband. Rather, the man should be the one to divorce his wife. Mr Nzou (Case 4) as an African traditionalist lost the sense of attachment to his cultural values and hence decided to take his life. In Goffman's phraseology Mr Nzou's suicide can be understood as 'face work', a form of human behavior in which people manage their identity by preventing loss of a face or by regaining it once it is lost, (Goffman 1967).

Durkheim (1897) in Jones (1986) propounded various typologies of suicide and among them is what he termed egoistic suicide. Durkheim (1897) refers to this typology as resulting from individuation. That is a scenario where individuals perceive themselves as being out of social groups through defined values, traditions and norms. They therefore commit suicide as a result. This explanation concurs with the assertion mentioned earlier in this study that there is a relationship between religio-cultural beliefs of victims and their perceptions of DV against men which then inform the coping strategies they adopt. An abused man can adopt suicide as a coping strategy due to loss of the qualities of a man stipulated by his culture or religion.

This section shows that the respondents had to make decisions about whether to keep the relationships with the perpetrators or to get rid of them. The decision made was based on the perceptions of the abuse they held. Those who perceived the violence as manageable; something that the perpetrators would change and an inherent part of every relationship or marriage sought

counseling and restriction orders. Nevertheless, those that perceived the violence as unacceptable and demeaning considered ending the relationships through divorce, desertion and suicide (Mr Nzou-Case 4).

The following section deals with the recommendations that came out of the whole study especially basing on the experiences of male victims, their perceptions as well as their coping strategies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the clear indications in this study of the evident existence of domestic violence against men, there should be serious consideration of the rights of men in the Zimbabwean constitution in the same way as any other groups of people.

As noted by other respondents, the definition of marital rape in the Domestic Violence Act should cover men as potential victims of abuse at home. This study presents the evidence of its existence. Furthermore, there is need for appreciation of domestic violence against men by the authorities and officials in the justice delivery system, so that there can be a balanced and equitable approach when dealing with domestic violence cases.

There is need for the government as well as the NGO sectors to fund men's organizations such as Varume Svinurai, so that they may be able to reach out to male victims of domestic violence and respond to their needs. Lastly, information dissemination through awareness campaigns is required to conscientize women and the general public of the consequences of violence against men in the home which include but are not limited to the abuse of children.

CONCLUSION

This study has examined the experiences of male victims of abuse in the home specifically focusing on the various forms of abuse perpetrated against men by women. Apart from the common forms of abuse such as physical and verbal abuse, men are also abused through unnatural and uncommon means such as '*kusungwa*' and getting infected with HIV, respectively. However, men are not passive recipients of cheating, beating, insults and witchcraft. They adopt various coping and identity management strategies that range from divorce, desertion, reporting to police, seeking restraining orders, seeking counseling and even suicide.

This study confirmed that domestic violence against men exists in varied forms. It refutes notions that give the impression that men are only abusive to women while women are passive recipients of abuse. Furthermore, this study establishes that perceptions of domestic violence against men vary depending on the victims' religio-cultural beliefs. Nonetheless, it demonstrates that both Christians and African Traditionalists generally view domestic violence against men as a challenge to the construction of conventional masculinities and violation of human rights. In a nutshell, domestic violence against men is a reality that is manifest in many forms both natural and unnatural. The family institution is characterized by struggles between both men and women.

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APPENDIX 1

Questionnaire

As a student from the Department of Sociology (UZ), I am carrying out a study on domestic violence in fulfillment of a Master of Science degree in Sociology and Social Anthropology. It is focused on exploring the experiences and perceptions of domestic violence among male victims in Kwekwe. I hope you will enjoy your participation in this study. *(Please tick the suitable answer)*

1. Age [20-25] [26-35] [36-60] [61+]
2. Marital status
 [single] [married] [divorced] [widowed]
3. Employment status
 [employed] [self employed] [not employed]
4. Have you ever been shouted at by your spouse or girlfriend? [yes] [no]
5. Have you ever been physically abused? [yes] [no]
6. If yes, how? By [clapping][shoving] [punching] [pulled my private parts] [n/a]
7. Have you ever been scalded with water or any other liquid by your spouse/ girlfriend?[yes] [no]
8. Have you ever been denied sex by your spouse / girlfriend? [yes] [no]
9. Have you ever been forced to have sex by your wife/girlfriend? [yes] [no]
10. Have you ever been cheated on by your spouse or girlfriend? [yes] [no] [I don't know]
11. What other form/s abuse were you subjected to?
 [I raised children who I did not father][bewitched][infected with HIV deliberately][none]
12. What did you do after the abuse?
 [divorced] [abused back] [went for counseling] [made a police report] [other]
 specify
13. For how long have you been in this relationship?
 []
14. How do you perceive domestic violence against men?

15. Do you know of any men being abused by women in your area?
 [yes] [no]
16. If yes how many?

