

**THE PHENOMENON OF WOMEN WHO CONTINUE TO STAY IN ABUSIVE
MARRIAGES: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED WOMEN IN MANKWENG AREA,
LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that **The phenomenon of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages: a case study of selected women in Mankweng area, Limpopo Province** is my own work and that all the sources that are used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged using complete references and that this work has not been submitted before for any other degree at any other institution.

Declaration by

WISEMAN NTLHARI MATHEBULA

Student number

██████████

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, enclosed in a dashed rectangular box. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'W. Ntlhari Mathebula'.

Date

31 January 2021

DEDICATION

Having noticed that cases of women abuse in marriages has become endemic and a social issue that affects people daily, this study is dedicated to all women who have either directly or indirectly experienced abuse in a relationship or marriage.

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For the success of this study, I would like to thank my creator who gave me wisdom, strength and understanding throughout my academic life and forever. I do acknowledge that without you God, I can do nothing.

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ACRONYMS

GBV	Gender-Based Violence
LREC	Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee
MRC	Medical Research Council
NPA	National Prosecuting Authority
NRCDV	National Resource Centre on Domestic Violence
STATSSA	Statistics South Africa
TCA	Thematic Content Analysis
VEP	Victim Empowerment Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

ABSTRACT

Studies have shown that women abuse in marriages is prevalent. Globally, one in three (1:3) or 35% of women have experienced physical and or sexual violence by an intimate partner who in some instances, could have been a marital partner or spouse. Reports from Statistics South Africa show that one in every four of all women in South Africa is assaulted by their partners weekly.

This study sought to describe reasons why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. The study was qualitative in nature and used a case study design. The sampling of the study was purposive and involved sixteen (16) participants who met the criteria of the study: women who continued to stay in abusive marriages. The study was conducted at Khuseleka One-stop Centre and Victim Empowerment Programme in Mankweng, Capricorn District in Limpopo Province. Data was collected using a semi-structured interview guide, and was analysed using Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) to gain in-depth account from participants of their abuse in marriage. This study employed the Womanism theory to discuss findings.

The major finding of this study was that many abused women who stay on in their marriage are economically dependent on their husbands. The study further reveals that children are main contributing factors that hinder these women from leaving abusive partners. The study further reveals that cultural beliefs play a crucial role since these women were socialised and brought up with cultural beliefs that “*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*”, which simply means that a woman’s grave is at the home of her husband. The study recommends educational programmes about GBV and related programmes for both genders.

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

Cases of women abuse in marriages have become endemic and a social issue that affects people daily. The World Health Organization (2013:3) found that universally, “1 in 3, or 35% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner”, who in some instances, could have been a marital partner or spouse. There is a prominent growth in the number of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages in South Africa. A study conducted in three South African provinces highlights that 19% of women in Limpopo, 27% in the Eastern Cape and 28% in Mpumalanga have suffered physical abuse in their lifetime by their intimate or marital partners (Abrahams, Mathews, Martin, Vetten, Van der Merwe & Jewkes, 2013).

Recent reports have highlighted that women abuse is growing persistently (Sanders, 2015). Statistics South Africa (2018:6) reported that “Although the crime rate, in general, has decreased between 2013/14 and 2016/17, women abuse such as physical abuse, sexual assault, increased drastically between 2015/16 and 2016/17.” Links (2012) reported that 36% of women in KwaZulu-Natal, 51% in Gauteng and 45% in the Western Cape have an experience of abuse and the majority of these women continued to stay in such abusive marriages. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to investigate why South African women continue to stay in an abusive marriage.

Historical evidence shows that women have always suffered abuse at the hands of their husbands (Shilubane, Khoza; 2014; WHO, 2013; Shivambu, 2015). The researcher surmises that this could be a result of societal, cultural and religious teachings. Sibanda and Msibi (2016) found that there are factors that play a role in driving women abuse, namely, cultural, social, religious and economic factors. There is also a notable increase in the number of cases of abuse which are reported daily. The South African Police Services (2017) reported that cases of abuse are regularly reported by women at police stations.

The researcher drew his motivation from an urgent need to investigate why women continue to remain in abusive marriages. According to Seabi (2012), wife abuse by their husbands has been on the public agenda for many years, but the phenomenon is still not studied sufficiently, nor are their effective measures in place to deal with the scale of the problem. Although several authors and organisations such as Trevillion, Oram, Feder and Howard (2012), Herman (2015) as well as WHO (2013) conducted studies of violence against women, there is a greater need to study why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. The scope of this study will, however, be limited to women who continue to remain in abusive marriages. Nevertheless, researchers such as McNally and Mannan (2013), and Ellsberg, Gennari, Arango, Contreras, Morton, Kiplesund and Watts (2015) tapped into the world of women abuse as a challenge. The motivation of this study envisions to fill the gap of scientific knowledge that attempts to find out why women continue to stay in abusive marriages.

The study was conducted at Khuseleka One-stop Centre which deals with abused women in Seshego Hospital situated in Zone 3 and Victim Empowerment Programme located at Mankweng, Capricorn area. These institutions are both located in Limpopo Province, South Africa. They were purposefully selected based on the nature of the study and the researcher's judgement and motivated of the purpose of the study. The Khuseleka Model is an initiative of the Department of Social Development that provides support and services to women and children who are victims of crime and violence under the Victim Empowerment Programme (NPA, 2009). Participants were identified with the assistance of Khuseleka at the One-Stop Centre and Victim Empowerment Programme that focuses on women who suffered at the hands of their spouses. They were identified through a Social Worker and were briefed that they might be approached for interviews to which they agreed.

1.1 Operational Definition of Concepts

1.1.1 Abuse

Rawal and Agrawal (2016) define abuse as a behaviour used to intimidate, isolate, control or dominate another person. In the context of this study, abuse is any act that causes harm to a woman in a marriage or the misuse of power which uses the bonds of marriage, trust and dependency to make a woman vulnerable.

1.1.2 Abusive Marriage

Sanders (2015) defines abusive marriage as controlling behaviour of a partner that one person gains and control over another person in a marriage. The term abusive marriage as defined by Sanders is adopted in the context of this study.

1.1.3 Marriage

Seabi (2012) defines marriage as the legally or formally recognised union between a man and a woman in a personal relationship. In the context of this study, marriage refers to a union between a husband and his wife, be it traditional or western marriage.

2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

The abuse of married women is a serious problem that affects many. This is the case irrespective of class or ethnicity. Seabi (2012) found that between 10 and 60 per cent of married women of reproductive age in South Africa have had an experience of abuse in their marriage. Interestingly, and in line with the above statement, societal, cultural and religious teachings seem to influence and accelerate abuse of women in marriages. However, evidence shows that women continue to stay in abusive marriages even when the abuse is sustained (Eckstein, 2011). The researcher agrees with Masenya's (1996) contention that religious teachings, cultural norms, and some Biblical verses reinforce the patriarchal system, and contain elements that oppress women.

Gass, Stein, Williams and Seedat (2010) found that women in rural areas in South Africa have been victims of societal, cultural and religious teachings which reinforce patriarchy. In support of the above-mentioned statement, Zlatka (2014) states that patriarchal structures are common phenomena in African countries and expose a lot of women to abuse as well as to diseases and physical injuries that could result from the abusive behaviour. Women's unequal status is persistent in patriarchal societies. There is a saying in Northern Sotho which states: "*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*". Simply translated, it implies that a married woman has to constantly stay at the bridegroom's home no matter what problems she may encounter, including enduring abuse by her partner. As a result of such teachings, women may continue to stay in an abusive marriage even though the abuse is sustained.

Women who are in abusive marriages continue to make justifications as to why they remain in such relationships (Eckstein, 2011). As noted by Eckstein (2011), some women in abusive marriages focus on the positive social aspects such as love for their partner, instead of negative aspects of abuse from their partner to cope with their marriages. Based on previous research conducted on the abuse of women in marriages, there seems to be several explanations forcing abused women to stay in abusive marriages (WHO, 2010; Seabi, 2012; Rawal and Agrawal (2016). Herman (2015) concurs that most women may continue to stay in abusive marriages despite negative consequences. These include mostly fear of being alone, lack of a safe haven, economic dependence, and fear of losing security or surviving on moments of great happiness (Eckstein, 2011).

The researcher opines that patriarchal structures and culture are root causes of women who continue to remain in abusive marriages. Mies (2014) argues that males are dominant and considered authoritative figures, while women are considered to be weak in most African countries. However, women abuse in marriages have been traditionally hidden within homes, and there has been, until quite recently, a general lack of awareness of the seriousness and extent of the problem (Alwedinani, 2017). Nonetheless, Mies (2014) found that a woman who is abused may be too embarrassed and humiliated to speak out as a result of a culture that encourages patriarchy. As a result, this limits the effectiveness of women to report abuse or to leave their abusive marriages.

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

3.1 Aim of the study

This study aimed to find out reasons why women continue to stay in abusive marriages.

Objectives of the study

The study pursued the following objectives:

- to identify cultural and religious aspects that sustain patriarchal tendencies to abuse women;
- to appraise the nexus of economic dependency and poverty among abused women in an abusive marriage; and
- to determine how loneliness or fear of being alone influences women to remain in abusive marriages.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was designed to describe experiences of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages using the Womanism theory. The study involved finding out and understanding views of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. In other words, the interest is in revealing different views of women who are affected by abuse in their marriages.

4.1 Research Approach

This study followed the qualitative approach. According to Myers (2013), qualitative research methods are designed to help the researcher to get a better understanding through first-hand experience, truthful reporting, and quotations, of actual conversations. The approach was selected and deemed fit for the study since the researcher wanted to investigate experiences of women who remain in abusive marriages.

4.2 Research Type

The study follows a phenomenological approach which assisted the researcher in obtaining a better understanding of participants' views and experiences of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. Phenomenology is concerned with the study of experience from the perspective of the individual.

According to Lester (1999), phenomenological approaches are rooted in the original prototypes of personal experience and subjectively serve to emphasise the importance of personal perspective and interpretation.

4.3 Research Design

This research used a case study design. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), a research design is perceived as a plan or blueprint of how the researcher intends conducting a study, while the researcher considers it a large and comprehensive toolbox for the research journey to be undertaken. For the qualitative approach chosen in the study, a case study design was further selected due to its flexibility, which allowed the researcher to be guided by what will be seen and said in the field by the sample of abused women with the hope of gaining their in-depth understanding of situations, meanings and lived experiences (Becker, 1970).

4.4 Population

The population of this study was drawn from women in Khuseleka One-Stop Centre and Victim Empowerment Programme in Mankweng Area. The researcher selected sixteen (16) women who continued to stay in their abusive marriages. The Centres were selected using purposive sampling. This sampling method allowed the researcher to concentrate on women who continue to stay in abusive marriages as the study was conducted in a cost-effective manner (De Vos et al., 2011). The researcher focused only on women who were currently in wedlock. Women who were not married were not part of the sampling frame.

4.5 Sampling

This study selected sixteen (16) women who are living in abusive marriages. Participants were selected using a non-probability sampling method, namely, purposive sampling based on the researcher's judgement, and motivated by the purpose of the study (De Vos et al., 2011). Participants have certain characteristics in common such as physical, economic and psychological abuse to suit the selection criteria.

They were identified with the assistance of Khuseleka and Victim Empowerment Programme as Centres for abused women. The researcher was strict with the selection criteria to ensure that the data collected is relevant and accurate. This is because participants were admitted following abuse they suffered at the hands of their husbands. No one was forced to participate in the study. The full details of the study were explained in great details.

4.6 Data collection

Face to face interviews were used as the main data collection technique. The use of open-ended and flexible questions allows interviews to provide rich detailed and in-depth information, development of rapport and trust, verbal and non-verbal data and were structured well to generate consistent, quantifiable data (Flick, 2014). The researcher chose this method because interviews limit bias, and ensure that participants understand the nature and content of the questions and are therefore able to give relevant and appropriate information that will be useful to the researcher.

Since the topic related to issues of abuse and is largely viewed as sensitive and private, the physical presence of the interviewer combined with a safe environment such as a boardroom had a positive effect on promoting the accuracy of the data obtained. This data collection method is most suited for this study because it propagates reliable results due to transferability and conformability by not manipulating the study instruments, keeping them the same while conducting the study in its natural settings (Patton, 2002). A recording device and field notes were used to ensure that all data is recorded and safe for analysis. Saturation was reached when participants repeat the same information. Each interview took approximately 10-18 minutes long.

4.7 Data Analysis

A general inductive approach for qualitative data analysis was followed. The researcher used Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) to analyse data. As outlined by Braun and Clark (2011), TCA entails identifying, analysing and reporting themes within the data. Raw data from interview transcripts, field notes and recordings will be coded, and themes will be developed so that meanings can be interpreted and conclusions made.

The steps of Thematic Content Analysis as clarified by Braun and Clark (2011) will be followed in the study.

Step 1: Becoming familiar with data

Becoming familiar with data entails actively reading the data to extract meanings and patterns. The researcher will gather interviews to transcribe them, then read and re-read through the transcripts and make notes of initial ideas to be familiar with the data. This will involve carefully reading the data to extract themes and explaining why women continue to remain in abusive marriages.

Step 2: Generating initial codes

Generating initial codes involves generating ideas regarding what is in the data that may be of interest. It also involves the creation of new codes for the data. This involves generating possible codes of analysis that explain rural women who continue to remain in abusive marriages.

Step 3: Searching for themes

Searching for themes involves coding the data and clustering similarly coded data extracts into themes. In this phase, the researcher will re-assess different codes as identified in phase two (2). He will then formulate potential themes using the codes. This involves considering how different codes may combine to form overarching themes.

Step 4: Reviewing themes

Reviewing themes involves the refinement of identified codes. Data within themes should have related meanings but should have clear distinctions. At this stage, the researcher reviews the themes to refine, modify and develop them further. The researcher will assess if the themes make sense if the data supports the themes and if all data extracted will be represented in each of them or subtheme.

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

Defining and naming themes to refine themes that are presented for analysis which involves formulating exactly what you mean by each theme. Definitions and names should capture the essence of the relevant themes. In an attempt to refine and define themes, the researcher will run theme names and clear working definitions that outline the essence of each theme briefly. Themes that relate to women abuse will be reviewed.

Step 6: Producing the report

In this stage, the production of a report will start when the researcher has worked out the themes. This will include the final write up of a report that demonstrates the abuse of women in marriage between various themes. After having worked out all the phases, the researcher will produce a report which will be a true representation of the data. This will entail a final write-up of a report on women abuse based on the available data.

5. Quality criteria

Halcomb and Andrews (2009: xvii) define trustworthiness as “the degree of confidence that the researcher has that their qualitative data and findings are credible, transferable and dependable”. The following criteria will be applied to determine the trustworthiness of qualitative research.

5.1 Credibility

The criterion reflects the truth and value of the information and findings of participants, as well as the context in which the study has been undertaken (De Vos et al., 2011). The researcher asked a sequence of questions and probe for answers in other similar studies. Given protocols recorded in Sepedi for those who speak Sepedi and later translated into English, omitting some words as an expression of participants may be considered as a threat to the credibility of this study. The researcher ensured this by checking whether participants consider their words a match of what they actually intended, and by ensuring that questions asked are clear and precise to the participant to ensure accuracy in their responses. To overcome such a hurdle, the researcher used translators to preserve participants’ original statements.

5.2 Conformability

Confirmability seizes the traditional concept of fairness. As found by De Vos et al. (2011), confirmability is achieved when truth value and applicability are established from participants. “Conformability refers to the degree to which the results could be confirmed or collaborated by others” (De Vos et al., 2011). It emphasises the need to include others to examine the data collection and analysis procedures. It requires a demonstration from the researcher to indicate how interpretations and conclusions have been reached. The researcher will re-analyse notes and recordings to make sure statements are written down and recorded to correspond to those of participants.

5.3 Bias

To avoid and minimise bias, the researcher applied the following:

- When transcribing the recordings, the researcher will do so faithfully.
- The researcher will follow the data analysis steps when going through transcribed interviews.
- Ethical standards will be adhered to during interviews and when interpreting data.

6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The description of women who continue to remain in abusive marriages is essential for people who are directly involved in programmes and projects that address women abuse. The proponents of women abuse will benefit from the findings towards policy development in our country. Secondly, this study is significant because it can be used to close research gaps of women abuse within the Social Work discipline. Policymakers in the South African Police Services, Health and Social Development and other participating government departments that address women abuse will make use of the recommendations and information from the study to consider changes about existing policies which protect and fight against women abuse.

7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research should be guided by acceptance, promises, mutual trust, cooperation and well-accepted prospects between all parties involved (De Vos et al., 2011). In this study, the researcher will be guided by the following ethics:

7.1 PERMISSION TO CONDUCT THE STUDY

First of all, considering that human beings are subject to study in social sciences, while planning to conduct research, the researcher needs to be aware of what is improper and proper in scientific research. For this reason, ethical concerns are considered as an integral part of the planning and execution of research. This statement is supported by De Vos et al. (2011), who explains that ethical research is aimed at avoiding harm and producing gain not only in the wider field, but also for participants in the study.

- The researcher sought and received permission to conduct the study from the relevant authorities namely, Turfloop Research and Ethics Committee (see Appendix F), Office of the Premier (see Appendix G) and Department of Health & Social Development (see Appendix H).

7.2 INFORMED CONSENT

The researcher informed participants about what the study is about and its intentions after its completion so that they can freely participate in the research, knowing what the study entails. According to De Vos et al. (2011), this will make participants fully aware of the possible advantages and dangers as a result of the study. Participants were required to sign a consent form as outlined by De Vos et al. (2011), that locating informed consent suggests that all important procedures of the investigation will be followed, and participants are made fully aware of the procedure.

7.3 CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

The researcher handled the responses properly and confidentially to ensure the anonymity of participants. Participants, therefore, were not connected to the study while the research is done (De Vos et al., 2011). Privacy in its most basic meaning is to keep to oneself that which is normally not intended for others to observe. Every individual has a right to privacy, and it is his/her right to decide when, where, to whom and what her beliefs and behaviour will be revealed. The researcher informed participants that all possible limits to this principle will be taken and that steps will be followed to make sure this principle is not tampered with (De Vos et al., 2011). Participants were informed that all information shared and responses provided during data collection will be kept private and made available to the supervisor for guidance and the purpose of the study. The researcher also protected the identities of participants and make sure that their right to privacy is respected, and if they want to remain anonymous, their wishes respected (De Vos et al., 2011).

7.4 AVOIDANCE OF HARM

The fundamental ethical rule of social research is that it must bring no harm to participants (Babbie, 2007). The nature of the proposed study is emotion-focused and may provoke negative feelings from participants who have experienced abuse in their marriages. Emotional harm to participants was more difficult to predict and to determine as compared to physical harm. In the current study, the researcher ensured that participants were not exposed to any harm. Prior to the commencement of interviews, counselling was made to prepare participants for the nature of the study. They were informed in advance about the potential impact of the study. They were fully prepared for the interview and the nature of the study itself to enable them to be open and to share their experiences in detail.

7.5 VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study was always voluntary and no one was forced (De Vos et al., 2011). Participants were not coerced to engage in the study without their consent. All important information and processes involving their participation in the study will be explained. They were required to sign a consent form prior to the commencement of data collection (see Appendix D).

7.6 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Chapter one of this study encompasses background and motivation of the study, research problem, brief discussion of the literature review, a summary of the theory that was used in the study, aim and objectives of the study, methodology and ethical considerations of the study.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Chapter two incorporates the theoretical framework that is used in the study.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter three encompasses the literature review which discusses themes that are relevant to the research objectives. These are discussed in the context of the research topic.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

Chapter four comprises the methodology used in the research study. This includes data collection, research design, data analysis, sampling and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER 5: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

Chapter five deals with presentations of data, analysis and interpretations of empirical findings by looking at themes that emerged from the data.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter six includes the summary, recommendations, conclusion and limitations of the study. In the next chapter, the theoretical framework is discussed.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Whereas the previous chapter dealt with the whole structure of this study, this chapter focuses on the theoretical framework and illustrates how the theory guides the study. Manganyi (2015) and Willemse (2015) and Thompson (2017) point out describing, explaining and predicting as some of the major functions of theories and models. It is the researchers' understanding that the use of theories in explaining social phenomena and societal realities is of paramount importance, particularly considering their role as a guide. The current study adopted the Womanism theory by Alice Walker (1983, 1985) to explain reasons and factors that contribute to women continuing to stay in abusive marriages. For the purpose of this dissertation, the researcher will only focus on factors that explain reasons why women continue to stay in abusive marriages.

The researcher acknowledges that the theory was coined by an African-American woman and has been used frequently by African-American women and those in African countries to analyse subjects relating to challenges faced by women. Numerous scholars, including Motsemme (2011), Mandova (2016) and Gudhlanga (2016) have also applied the Womanism theory continentally and at local settings with diverse groups to study similar issues. Additionally, women from the African diaspora and Africa have predominantly embraced the idea of women who support each other based on their experiences in relationships, especially mothers since they are most vulnerable in relationships and need support from African countries which often struggle with diseases, poverty and domestic violence (Ongunyemi, 2006; Collins et al., 2013; Lightsey, 2015). The Womanism theory is believed to be most applicable in studying experiences of black women, black culture, black myths, spiritual life and factors that contribute to why women continue to stay in abusive relationships. The researcher finds this theory relevant and applicable in the present study due to its flexibility in terms of application in unique settings. However, it is important to indicate that not all women's experiences are the same or essentially similar. The researcher understands that women who continue to stay in abusive marriages are confronted with different forms of abuse.

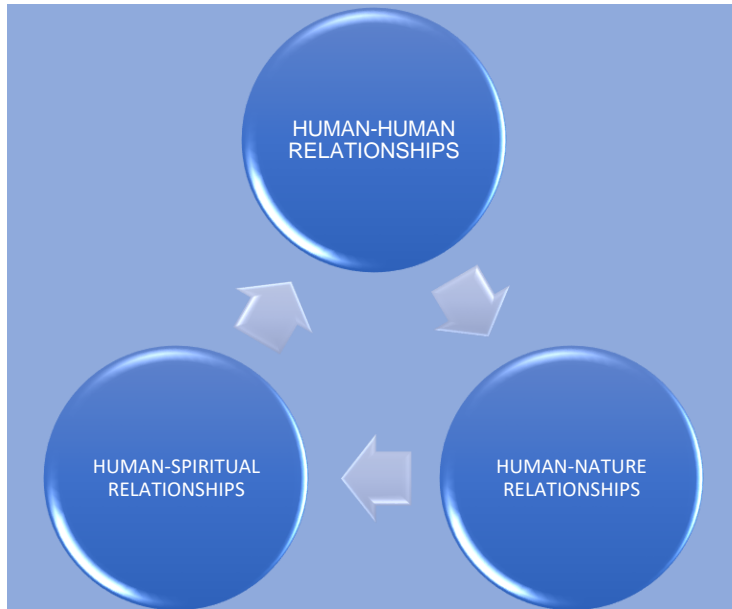
2.2 WOMANISM THEORY

Alice Walker founded the Womanism theory in 1983 as a social theory based on the limitations affecting black women with regard to their history and experiences. Phillips (2006: xx) defines Womanism as “a social change perspective rooted in Black women and other women of colour’s everyday experiences and everyday methods of problem-solving in everyday spaces, extended to the problem of ending all forms of oppression for all people, restoring the balance between people and the environment/nature, and reconciling human life with the spiritual dimension”.

As Walker (1983) correctly noted, the main focus of this theory is on black women’s experiences concerning their culture, religion and society. She sees Womanism as a theory for the survival of the black race; a theory that takes into consideration experiences of black women in relationships, black culture, black myths, spiritual life and orality. Walker’s argument as explained by Phillips (2006) is that womanists are universalists. Ellis-Williams (2003:110) posits that “the womanist paradigm is already a global model that speaks to many women of African descent throughout the Diaspora—Africa, South America, Caribbean, North America, and Asia”. This philosophy is further supported by Walker’s (1983) metaphor of a garden where all flowers bloom equally. Walters (2005:118) and Izgarjan and Markov (2013:311) agree that the “Inclusiveness of Womanism allowed it to become a functional paradigm not just for women in the United States of America and Africa, but also for women in Latin American countries”. The researcher finds this relevant mainly because women exist in all parts of the world. Therefore, this study seeks to understand the influence of culture, religion and society on women who continue to stay in abusive marriages.

The diagram below shows the Womanism triad of concerns; Interconnection of Human, Environmental and Spiritual Realms:

Diagram 1: Triad of concerns of Womanism theory (Maparyan, 2013)



2.2.1 Human-human relationships

Ogunyemi (1985), Junior (2015), Fatema (2018) and Pears (2019) point out that a womanist is dedicated to the survival of both females and males and desires a world where women and men can coexist while maintaining their cultural distinctiveness. The inclusion of men affords black women an opportunity to address gender oppression without openly attacking men (Phillips, 2006; Mandova, 2016). As outlined by Izgarjan and Markov (2013), the strength of Womanism is on its insistence on women working with men to eradicate the oppression of wives by their husbands. The researcher agrees with the above authors that to win the battle of women continuing to stay in abusive marriages, husbands and wives should work together in finding solutions to the continued stay of women in abusive marriages. Therefore, Womanism and womanist scholarship have kept on evolving and reject any form of oppression against women anywhere it appears (Bryant-Davis, 2016; Maxwell, 2017; Makombe, 2018).

Moreover, Walker (1983:151-152) writes;

I feel that black men should not take out their anger and frustration on their wives and children. A temptation that is all too obvious. Coretta's face is thoughtful as she says, "Maybe I shouldn't say this, because I don't know it, it's just a feeling I have... but few black men seem to feel secure enough as men that they can make women feel like women.

An example of this is the abuse of women by their husbands that is common in some black families. The World Health Organization (2010) posits that since men are typically physically stronger, they use their 'power' to control, humiliate and take out their anger and frustration on their wives and children. The researcher's opinion is that men should treat women with respect, protect them and not abuse them. Moreover, scholars posit that at the centre of Womanism is the concern for women and their role in their immediate surroundings (be it family, local community or workplace) and the global environment (Leuven, Letteren & Literatuur, 2008; Maparyan, 2013).

2.2.2 Human-spiritual relationships/religion

The Womanism theory has been adopted by African women theologians as a useful theory in understanding human relationships in religion as it brings out perceptions about moral life based on a productive quality of life, survival of women and supporting justice for women (Phillips, 2006; Izgarjan & Markov, 2013; Manyonganise, 2015; Maxwell, 2017; Makombe, 2018). Hudson-Weems (2019) states that the Womanism theory has had a philosophical influence on the formulation of theories and analytical frameworks in gender, women, and religious, literary and African American studies. It is the researcher's understanding that the fundamental issue of women's lived experiences and continued-stay in abusive marriages and spirituality cannot be conveniently separated because of the interconnection between human and spiritual relationships. It is evident that the impact of Womanism goes beyond the United States; and many women scholars have embraced the theory as an analytical tool (Goddard, 2015; Norwood, 2013; Hudson-Weems, 2019).

About spiritual black women who continue to stay in abusive relationships, she writes:

Their spirituality was so intense, so deep, so unconscious, that they were themselves unaware of the richness they held. They stumbled blindly through their lives: creatures so abused and mutilated in body, so dimmed and confused by pain, that they considered themselves unworthy even of hope. In the selfless abstractions their bodies became to the men who used them, they became more than "sexual objects," more even than mere women: they became "Saints." (...) Who were these Saints? These crazy, loony, pitiful women? Some of them, without a doubt, were our mothers and grandmothers (Walker, 1983: 232).

The researcher's contribution is to further emphasise that although religion plays an important role in people's lives, at times it (religion) may be another reason why women may be persuaded to remain in abusive marriages because some religious writings recommend the entire control of a husband over his wife (Halimah, 2014; Parker, 2012; Coleman and Maparyan, 2013).

2.3 WOMANISM IN BLACK COMMUNITIES

According to Alice Walker (1983: XI), the first definition of “Womanist” was a “feminist of colour”. Most importantly, throughout the collection of her essays, Walker (1979, 1982, 1983) refers to black people as a community and thus consist of women and men both equally important. However, she does not hesitate to state it clear that she is concerned mainly with the black woman’s case. As correctly noted by herself, she is worried about “the survival whole of her people” (Walker, 1983:250). The researcher is reminded of Walker’s (1983) definition of a womanist who is dedicated to the survival of both females and males and desires a world where women and men can coexist while maintaining their cultural distinctiveness. This statement is supported by Manyonganise (2015), who argues that Womanism has presented an alternative for black women by framing their survival in the context of their relationships in the community where the fate of women is experienced. Nonetheless, Boesak (2011) sees Womanism as a holistic approach to the challenges of the community as a whole.

The Womanism theory (1983) is not only concerned about the liberation of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages, but also about struggles with black men and children for the liberation, survival and positive quality of life for the entire oppressed black community. As Walker puts it, “the womanist concept of universality also underscores as its utmost goal the wellbeing of the whole community: survival and wholeness of entire people and love for the Folk” (Walker 1983: xii). However, literature suggests that the underlying epistemology of the Womanism is based on a reliance on women-centred networks that are built on traditions and cultural values, community-focused, collaborative activism and spirituality (Halimah, 2014; Boesak, 2011; Hudson-Weems, 2019).

The researcher's opinion is that the Womanism theory continues to reinvent itself and functions as a theory, which cautiously monitors definition of the role of women in their communities so that previous mistakes can be avoided and vital balance is maintained between men and women. Walker's Womanism theory (1983) is still dedicated to the struggle against oppression and any behaviour whose goal is to denigrate a community. Therefore, the researcher is of the view that Womanism emphasises the transformative power of women and resist conditions of oppression. In the case of this study, the theory is relevant in shaping the future of women who remain in abusive marriages in African communities who should resist all forms of violence. Nonetheless, it can be asserted that the Womanism theory creates a platform based on women experiences, which would allow them to solve everyday problems in marriages.

2.3.1 Womanism and culture

While diverse, the Womanism theory (1983) holds at its core that both femininity and culture are equally important in the woman's existence. The theory supports the idea that women's culture, which in the context of this study is the focal point of connection or intersection as opposed to some other characteristics, is not an element of her femininity, but rather the lens through which femininity exists (Baker-Fletcher, 2014). In this conception, one femininity cannot be stripped from the culture within which it exists (Phillips, 2006). Hence Walker firmly locates Womanism "within black matrilineal culture deriving the word from womanish used by black mothers to describe girls who want to "know more and in greater depth than is considered 'good' for anyone" and whose behaviour is "outrageous, courageous or willful" (Walker, 1983: xi).

The Womanism theory (1983) acknowledges the fact that patrilineality appears to have many advantages for men, especially when looking at the problem of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. In virilocal and patrilineal societies, a significant number of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages had experienced a negative relationship with men who played a critical role in their lives (Thubauville & Gabbert, 2014).

The researcher holds the view that women who continue to stay in abusive marriages are positioned to embrace the Womanism theory that rejects all forms of abuse anywhere it appears.

Alice Walker (1983) holds the view that some womanists believe that experiences of black women will not be validated to be equal to experiences of white women because of the problematic way in which black women were treated throughout history. Taylor (1998) states that the term “Womanist” reflects Walker’s view that experiences of black women are unique and significantly divergent from those of white women. Some scholars argue that the word “Womanist” incorporates the complexity of life as an African American woman and reflects both the language and principles of the African American community (Ogunyemi, 1985; Floyd-Thomas, 2006; Maparyan, 2013). The researcher appreciates the fact that the Womanism theory is believed to be most applicable when studying experiences of black women because of the unique experiences faced by black women in their relationships. Nanda (2019) qualifies Walker’s observation about white women’s portrayal of black women as being incapable of motherhood by arguing that white capitalist culture has a de-sexualised black female body and projected them as loving maternal figures but not to their children.

Nicholson (2013) emphasises that the division between white and black women could be traced back to the very beginnings of feminism as a movement. Scholars come to an agreement that the goal of feminism was to win equality and suffrage for women (Kolawole, 1997, 2002; Dove, 1998; Boisnier 2003; Hudson, 2019). However, in the nineteenth century, it became clear that there were two separate women’s movements (Feminism and Womanism) since white women refused to support the struggle of black women for their rights. Moreover, numerous myths were circulated about black women in the form of “jokes” and “stereotypes” which then served to popularise and normalise misconceptions about black women in American popular culture (Maparyan, 2013).

2.4 APPLICATION OF WOMANISM THEORY IN THE STUDY OF WOMEN WHO CONTINUE TO STAY IN ABUSIVE MARRIAGES

The Womanism theory is useful in this study. Social scientist scholars such as Motsemme (2011), Parker (2012) and Rousseau (2013) see the theory useful as a universal perspective authored by an African woman drawing from the unique history of black women experiences, oppression and activism. Therefore, the theory was able to open up a system of analysis and a worldview that was previously not explicitly available to African women scholars (Motsemme, 2011; Parker, 2012; Peters & Wolper, 2018). Walker (1983:374) states that “It was at the Radcliffe symposium that I saw that black women are more loyal to black men than they are to themselves, a dangerous state of affairs that has its logical end in self-destructive behaviour”. Scholars such as Peters and Wolper (2018), Kittay (2019) and Kroeger (2019) qualify Walker’s sentiment that the theory (1983) becomes relevant in shaping the future of women who remain in abusive marriages in African communities who should resist all forms of violence.

The Womanism theory has been adopted by African women theologians as a useful theory in understanding human relationships in religion as it brings out perceptions about moral life based on a productive quality of life, survival of women and support for justice for women (Phillips, 2006; Izgarjan & Markov, 2013; Manyonganise, 2015; Maxwell, 2017; Makombe, 2018). In line with the study objectives, the researcher used the Womanism theory to unearth the impact of societal, cultural and religious teaching for women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. Also, the theory is a useful framework for indicating the past and present perspective on women who continue to stay in abusive marriages.

2.5 SUMMARY

This chapter dealt with the Womanism theory as employed in this study. This dissertation focuses on an issue that is assumed to disadvantage women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. The Womanism theory is used as an explanation of why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. The theory provides a contemporary argument to accusations that black women are more loyal to black men than they are to themselves hence they remain in abusive marriages. It advocates for the equal value of women in society. Womanism is a social change perspective rooted in black women's everyday experiences and everyday methods of problem-solving in everyday spaces extended to the problem of ending all forms of oppression (Izgarjan & Markov, 2013). In the next chapter, the literature of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages will be dealt with extensively following a systematically review starting at international, continental and national levels.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW ON WOMEN WHO CONTINUE TO STAY IN ABUSIVE MARRIAGES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the theory of this study. In this chapter, the literature was reviewed in line with the objectives of the study. This will be systematically reviewed starting at international, continental and national levels. This chapter illuminates obtainable and current literature on women who continue to stay in abusive marriages.

3.2 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

3.2.1 Abuse

Rawal and Agrawal (2016) define abuse as a behaviour used to intimidate, isolate, control or dominate another person. Robert (2001) explains abuse as a pattern of behaviour, stating that abusive behaviour might involve acts or words. Several scholars posit that abuse can happen to anyone: spouse or former spouse, someone in a dating relationship, a partner in an intimate relationship or former partner, older person or young person (Shurman & Rodriguez, 2006; WHO, 2012; Wood, 2019). In the context of this study, abuse is any act that causes harm to a woman in a marriage or the misuse of power, which uses the bonds of marriage, trust and dependency to make a woman vulnerable. The abuse can be sexual, physical, cultural, psychological and economic.

3.2.2 Marriage

There is no universal definition of marriage. Forms of marriage differ widely across cultures. The Customary Marriage Act (1998) defines marriage as one concluded in accordance with customary law. Hahlo (1985:21) posits that marriage is a legally recognised union for life in common of one man and one woman. Seabi (2012) defines marriage as the legally or formally recognised union between a man and a woman in a personal relationship. Seabi (2012) defines marriage as a legally or formally recognised union between a man and a woman in an intimate relationship, but Collins (2015) defines marriage as a merger or union between two individuals.

3.3 A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF WOMEN WHO CONTINUE TO STAY IN ABUSIVE MARRIAGES

Globally, cases of abused women in marriages have been visible throughout human history. Millions of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages throughout the world face physical, sexual, economic and psychological abuse (Eckstein, 2011; Motsemme, 2011; World Health Organization, 2013). Scholars such as Moore (1979), Hubbard and Wise (1998), Sister Namibia (2001) as well as Roberson and Wallace (2016) found that in Rome, where the first laws of marriage were legislated, a husband was the complete ruler who controlled all persons and properties in his household. Kanagawa (1995:12) posits that the wife was required to obey her husband and was given a “legal right to punish his wife for any misbehaviour”. Interestingly, the above-mentioned matters were considered private issues and were not publicly scrutinised. In the same vein, studies have reported that throughout the 17th, 18th and 19th century, husbands may beat their wives in marriage with the approval of the public, and this was done without any intervention of others (Gelles, 1976; Okun, 1986; Rusbult & Martz, 1995). In support of patriarchy, Moore (1979) and Kefalas *et al.* (2011) reveal that in the 19th century in England, Common Law was introduced in marriages. The law gave the man rights to beat his wife in the name of upholding discipline in the marriage.

As part of the headship role in the family, men fostered discipline to their children and wives. Holleman (1952:277) describes the situation as follows: a husband is entitled to beat his wife moderately when circumstances warrant such a punishment. The researcher argues that despite the punishment that women who continue to stay in abusive marriages were faced with, they were still expected to remain in such an abusive marriage. Ever since husbands in traditional cultures were usually allowed to discipline their wives, it was argued that “violence is seen as an acceptable way to settle disputes and exercise control within marriage” (Hindin 2003:502). The researcher argues that occasional disciplinary actions of this kind are regarded as normal incidents of married life to which a woman will not seriously object.

From the 1970s, research into the phenomenon of continued stay to marital abuse became much more intense than ever before. There is a slight understanding of reasons why women remain in abusive marriages for a prolonged period. Academic writings emphasise several explanations why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. Some of the explanations as outlined by Anca Bejenaru (2011) are of the woman as a victim characterised by the submissive acceptance of victimisation, and of the woman who adopts painful situations and uses several strategies to remain in an abusive marriage. The idea that women adopt painful situations was strongly countered by several authors in the 1970s. Seligman (1972) formulated the learned helplessness theory and Gondolf and Fisher (1988) framed a theory called battered women as survivors. Many research works internationally highlight the devastating effects of this phenomenon of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages (Gelles, Richard, 1976; Gondolf & Fisher, 1988; Bejenaru, 2011; Kittay, 2019).

The Womanism theory (1983) is one of many other theories formulated to deal with issues affecting women in their relationships. Academic literature indicates that the help-seeking increased as the problem of the phenomenon of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages became more dangerous and irredeemable (Rusbult, Martz, 1995; World Health Organization, 2012; Sedziafa et al., 2018). The Womanism theory does not deny the fact that women who continue to stay in abusive marriages are faced with severe psychopathological effects as a result of abuse, or the fact that at times women may return to the abuser. This theory implies that black women are more loyal to black men than they are to themselves, hence they remain in abusive marriages (Walker, 1983). The researcher appreciates the fact that several theories formulated by researchers marked an important change of the view on women who continue to stay in abusive marriages, and draws attention to societal, cultural and religious aspects that influence women to continue to stay in abusive marriages. It is for this reason that this dissertation focuses on many factors that contribute to women's decisions to continue to stay in abusive marriages.

In the early 1800s, In France, a military leader by the name of Napoleon Bonaparte also passed a civil code which stated that women are the property of men (Kanagawa, 1996; Peltzer, Nangolo, 2003; Dobash & Dobash, 2003). This is how the code was outlined: firstly, women were owned by their fathers, and secondly, in a marriage that ownership was transferred to their husbands. Research confirms that married women have been considered as the property of their husband (Borkowski & Du Plessis, 2005; Watson & McLanahan, 2011; Carnelley, 2013). This can be seen in the case of some African countries where married women were regarded as continuous minors. They could not own property in their rights, and customary husbands had total ownership of the household property, including earnings of their wives (Button, Moore & Himonga, 2016). This suggested that the husband owned their wives in marriage and can do anything they please. These are the historical manifest of power imbalances between men and women in marriage.

In the late 1800s, the recognition of the fact that the problem of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages is a major concern has grown to countries such as Australia, Canada, Europe and United States of America. The problem has worsened to the point where it became a priority on the international agenda (Dobash & Dobash, 2003; Nangolo, 2003). Watson and McLanahan (2011) stated that during the 1960s and 1970s, there was an explosive growth of women's movement which sought to fight for women's rights. The researcher's understanding is that it was during these times that women who continued to stay in abusive marriages began to seek help and protection against abusive husbands.

Schuler (1992) indicates that in developing countries, the problem of women continuing to stay in abusive marriages also emerged in the context of increased womanist organisations as part of community struggles, national democratic movements or international development projects. Research shows that several women's organisations around the world have long drawn to violence against women, and women who continue to stay in abusive marriages in particular (WHO, 2005; Edwards et al., 2012; Whiting, 2016). The researcher argues that through efforts of women's organisations, the problem of the abuse of women by their partners and the continued stay of women in abusive marriages has now become an issue of international concern. Therefore, it is argued that the problem of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages is viewed largely as a human right issue.

Debate continues about women who continue to stay in abusive marriages internationally. The problem of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages occurs in all countries, irrespective of an economic, social, religious or cultural group (Thao, 2016; Estrellado & Loh, 2019). Continentally, there has been a dramatic increase in cases of women who continue to stay in abusive relationships over the past decade (Baholo, Christofides, Sikweyiya & Shai, 2015). In South Africa, women may be abused in various forms of relationship: dating, cohabitating and marriage (Thao, 2016; Estrellado & Loh, 2019). In anticipation of the discussion of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages, it is important to note that this problem has raised serious concerns. However, it is paramount to state that not all women who are abused by their husbands continue to stay in such marriages. Furthermore, Abrahams et al. (2012) found that South Africa has the highest rate of women killed by their husbands or ex-intimate partners. The researcher argues that some of these women who are killed by their husbands continued to stay in abusive marriages with the hope that the situation will get better.

In reviewing the literature, the focus will accordingly be on several issues that play a role in influencing women to continue to stay in abusive marriages. In this study, the societal, cultural and religious aspects that sustain patriarchal tendencies will be discussed and explored critically. The nexus of economic dependency and poverty among abused women who continue to stay in abusive marriage will be examined. The study will also review how loneliness or fear of being alone influences women to continue to stay in abusive marriages.

3.4 SOCIETAL, CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS ASPECTS THAT SUSTAIN PATRIARCHAL TENDENCIES

For the purpose of this study, society is contextualised within the African region; hence, society is defined as a group of people involved with each other through persistent relations or a large social grouping sharing the same geographical or social territory, typically subject to the same political authority and dominant cultural expectations (Charsley & Liversage, 2013). Collins (2015) defines a society as a group of people who live in a region or country. More broadly, academics concur that society can consist of people governed by their norms and values within a dominant larger society (Dutton, Edleson & Eisikovits, 1996; Nkuna, 2003; Pillay, 2015). Society may also refer to an organised voluntary association of people for religious, cultural, political, scientific or other purposes (Henslin, 2001). Therefore, the definition of society as defined by Charsley and Liversage (2013) is adopted in this study.

Tylor (1871) defines culture as an umbrella term that encompasses social norms and behaviour found in human societies, as well as beliefs, knowledge, laws, arts, capabilities and customs of individuals in these groups. Makhubele (2004:19) defines culture as “the people’s way of living”. In the context of this study, the researcher uses the concept culture to refer to the customary beliefs, social forms, and the way people live in African communities. In line with the study objectives, culture and its interaction with women who continue to stay in abusive marriages are some of the central themes of this study.

For sociologist Goerge Simmel (2005), culture is defined as ways of acting and thinking and the material objects that together shape a people's way of life. Culture is a very important aspect of the world at large and African people's lives. Ncube (2018) suggests that culture informs the way men and women are related, and how communities are structured. As defined by Alokun (2013), culture "is a people's store of knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and everything that humans acquire by virtue of being members of society". Therefore, from the above definitions of culture, one can depict that culture eventually brings people together, and informs morals and values that people should uphold.

There is no culture that is above the law, and cultural rights are protected in the South African Constitution (1996). However, Section 31 of the constitution recognises cultural rights of groups and communities. Hence, women should not be deprived of social, economic and personal freedom by being forced to continue to stay in abusive marriages. This dissertation evolves because of societal, cultural and religious aspects that sustain patriarchal tendencies. The key role of culture in human life as articulated by Makhubele (2004) is that culture shapes peoples' life and plays a key role in their day-to-day life. This makes it very vital that we understand women who continue to stay in abusive marriages because of factors that influence them to stay. Despite some considerable efforts made by feminist scholars who openly addressed the issue of women's lack of rights, low status within marriage, inequality, cultural tendencies and the abuse of women in marriage by their husbands is eminent. In South Africa today, policies of dealing with the abuse of women are developed and are very clear. The researcher's opinion is that there is no excuse for no action.

Historically, patriarchy has manifested itself in the legal, political, social, religious and economic organisation of a range of different cultures. Macdonald, John and Plumber (2013) define patriarchy as a social system in which men hold crucial power and dominate in social privilege, political leadership, control of property and moral authority. Sociologists such as Henslin (2001) see patriarchy as a social product and not as an outcome of inborn differences between the sexes and they focus their consideration on the way that gender roles in a society affect power differentials between women and men.

Prior studies of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages in South Asian highlight patriarchal restraints that create women's vulnerability to abuse (Chaudhuri, Morash, and Yingling, 2014; Alwedinani, 2017). Narrative analysis by Alokani (2013) revealed that patriarchal constraints in natal families, culture and expectations of benefits gained through marriage influenced many of the women to remain in an abusive marriage. However, Sultana (2010) contends that women who continue to stay in abusive marriages are from a historical and deeply rooted culture, societal and religious teachings. He further argues, "Patriarchy is the prime obstacle to women's advancement and development" (Sultana, 2010:1). It is a fact that patriarchy moulded societies in the history of humanity, which is the case of both in the past and the present (Maisiri, 2015).

Abused women in social or prominent church positions may feel obliged to protect their abusive husbands. Academic literature suggests that many abused women in their marriages continue to stay because of their cultural and religious backgrounds, fear of not being trusted by members of the church or because they longed to protect their husbands and preserve the family unit (Sultana, 2010; Hamilton, 2012; Crawford, 2014). Scholars such as Oduyoye and Kanyoro (2005), Pillay (2015) and Yanek et al. (2016) have characterised the role of the church in the lives of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages as regressive and unwholesome one. This is substantiated by a study conducted by Abrahams et al. (2012), who found that in South Africa wives are most likely to report abuse to their pastors than other professionals except the police. The researcher argues that in most cases, pastors' beliefs reflect society's acceptance of patriarchal tendencies which compel women to continue to stay in abusive marriages. Society praises women who endure abusive marriages and criticises those who end up abusive relationships too easily (Pillay, 2015). Encouraging words like "I married him for better and worse or sticking together through thick and thin" seem to be influencing women to continue to stay in abusive marriages (Peltzer & Nangolo, 2003:54).

Literature review shows that women often remain in abusive marriages because of external forces such as physical and material resources (Ehrlich & Levin, 2005; Eagly, Wood, 2016; Vyas & Jansen, 2018). Sanders (2015) asserts that external forces such as friends, family, education, lack of physical health, transportation and the number of children (their health and their ages) influence women to continue to stay in abusive marriages. Numerous studies have indicated that children are the primary concern why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. Moreover, some women even continue to stay in an abusive marriage to protect children against their abusive father. Treas and Gubernskaya (2014:32) argue that extended family members may also influence married women to continue to stay in their abusive marriages with words like “You made your bed, now lie in it”. The researcher’s opinion is that women in abusive marriages who are told such words like “You made your bed, now lie in it” live with the belief that all marriages have complications.

History is replete with laws and customs allowing women to be tortured and beaten by their spouses. This is very important in understanding how society has accepted patriarchal tendencies overlooked, normalised and ignored by individuals. Some scholars argue that at times societies embrace patriarchy (Malik, 2015; Collet, 2017). Therefore, historical, economic and social processes function both directly and indirectly to support the patriarchal social order (Bosch & Bergen, 2006; Collet, 2017).

For the purpose of this study, the following social norms are discussed:

- **Marital Norms**

Marital norms govern behaviours and attributes that are considered acceptable and holds together the marriage. The traditional Christian interpretation of marital roles and male headship and female submission has been formed by both culture and religion (Maisiri, 2015).

When I was doing my fourth-year practical at the Department of Social and Development, I encountered married Christian couples with marital problems due to contradictory views regarding female submission and male headship in marriage. The husband claims to have a better understanding of the bible and how his wife should be submissive. He claims that he is acting in accordance with the bible and the woman claims that her husband uses the bible to force her to be submissive. Previous studies demonstrate that culturally, women are anticipated to obey their husband's authority and show respect at all times (Willoughby, Hall & Luczak, 2015; Chien & Yi, 2016; Gudhlanga, 2016). Hamilton (2012) concurs that women are expected to be subordinate to men because men are traditionally professed to be the head of the family.

In line with the study objectives, this dissertation aims to investigate societal and cultural aspects that sustain patriarchal tendencies. In the context of this dissertation, the researcher refers to marital norms as a set of ideas or rules about how men and women should behave in marriage. Literature shows that vows taken by each spouse in the marriage ceremony, be it traditional or western marriage, are the basis of enforcement of marital norms (Bicchieri & Lindemans, 2014; Ghimire & Samuels, 2014; Watson, 2014; Collet, 2017). For example, in western marriages, couples bind themselves to one another by entering into a marriage contract that declares, "*until death do us apart*". The researcher argues that such a declaration may influence women to remain in abusive marriages.

The universality of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages crossways the boundaries of nation, culture, race, class and religion points to its roots in patriarchy. Shivambu (2015) defines patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women. He further argues that historically, gender roles, which are socially constructed roles of women and men have been ordered hierarchically, with men exercising power and control over women. According to Renzetti, Edleson and Bergen (2011), when a woman is subjected to abuse for disobeying social norms, patriarchy, which governs female sexuality and family roles, reinforce prevailing gender norms.

Gass, Stein, Williams, Dand and Seedat (2010) posit that cultural ideologies in both developed and developing countries provide legitimacy for violence against women in certain circumstances. The physical punishment of wives has been endorsed under the concept of entitlement and ownership of women. Male's control of family wealth inexorably places decision-making authority in male hands, leading to male dominance and property rights over women (World Health Organization, 2011). According to Junior (2015), in many societies globally, for instance, in Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa, women are expected to be subjected to their male partners' desires sexually and show respect for them socially, at all times. Lobola will be used as an example of cultural aspects that sustain patriarchal tendencies.

- **Lobola**

According to the Customary Marriage Act (1998), lobola means the property in cash or kind, whether known as *lobolo*, *bogadi*, *bohali*, *xuma*, *thaka*, *lumalo*, *ikhazi*, *magadi*, *emabheka* or by any other name, which a prospective husband or the head of his family undertakes to give to the head of prospective wife's family in consideration of customary law. Customarily, marriage is considered the greatest social significance for several reasons. One of the most important reasons is that marriage serves to establish alliance between families (Maisiri, 2016). Mupotsa (2008) defines lobola as a means to a goal, namely a negotiation process that results in the coming together of two families by paying a price – a means of legitimising the union between two people. It is argued that lobola gives a man all rights over a woman while on the other hand a woman is stripped of all freedom and rights (Alokan, 2013; Bejenaru, 2011; Herman, 2015).

This dissertation attempts to show that although lobola is highly practised and praised in African cultures, at times it sustains patriarchal tendencies. Previous studies suggest that lobola, which is part of the patriarchal nature of our society, breeds inequality and widens the gap between men and women, thereby placing women in a subordinate position (Kambarami, 2006; Mackie, Moneti, Shakya & Denny, 2015).

Equally important, lobola plays a significant role in marriage. Without the payment of Lobola, a marriage does not officially exist. Nevertheless, married women are not allowed to pass on their citizenship rights to their children even though single mothers are allowed to do so (Ndulo, 2011; Sultana, 2012).

Although lobola has positive aspects, there are negative aspects that sustain patriarchal tendencies. On the harmful side, the practice of lobola is reflected by others to be oppressive to women for several reasons. Some scholars argue that the payment of lobola is compared with “buying a wife” (Chireshe & Chireshe 2010; Ndulo, 2011; Mackie, Moneti, Shakya & Denny, 2015). Maisiri (2015:24) elaborates as follows: “The fact that a man, has paid lobola for his wife, bestows upon him the right to regard her and his children as his property and she knows this”. However, Ndulo (2011) strongly argues that there is a distortion of this customary practice by Western cultures: “Lobola has become what Westerners alleged was a ‘bride price’ and has ceased to be a source of African pride”. Therefore, this dissertation argues that because of the payment of lobola, women may continue to stay in abusive marriages.

Chabata (2012) alludes to the fact that increase in the abuse of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages has to do with the large sums of money which men pay for lobola for their wives. This statement is supported by Maisiri (2015:37), who correctly notes that the payment of lobola can be seen as “rendering the wife powerless and giving the husband the right to do as he wishes”. However, it is important to note that women who continue to stay in abusive marriages are judged by their husbands as underperforming considering the amount of money paid for lobola. Although, it is evident that some women continue to stay in abusive marriages because of the amount of money paid for lobola (Chabata, 2012), the researcher argues that the perception that because the lobola has been paid, a woman should do anything to please her partner could consequently be used by the husband as an advantage to abuse women.

Women who continue to stay in abusive marriages face exceptional challenges to resolve marital issues with abusive and oppressive husbands. For example, when these women are being abused in their marriages, they approach their aunts, mothers or fathers-in-law. The kind of advice they usually get culturally is, for instance; “*Tiyisela nwananga, tsundzuka leswaku nuna wa wena u hakerile lovola naswona loko wo n’wi tshika hi ta yi hakerisa ku yini mali leyi a nga lovola hi yona*”. Simply translated, this means that you just have to endure my child and remember that your husband has paid lobola; if you divorce him how are we going to repay him the money he has paid?.

This dissertation argues that because of the payment of lobola, women could be bound to continue to stay in abusive marriages. Despite the negative impact of lobola, it is important to note that this custom is still held as essential in the validation of African marriages (Manyonganise, 2015). Chabata (2012) found that some women cannot negotiate safe sex in marriage because their husbands will say “Dzakaenda dzakapfeka macondom here” meaning that did the cattle we paid for lobola go with condoms? The United Divisions for the Advancement of Women (2009) correctly notes that culturally, damaging practices are as a result of gender inequality and discrimination towards women.

Harmful practices in the context of this study refer to traditional practices or customs which seem to be injurious to women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. Hamilton (2012) states that after the payment of lobola, the husband can claim the ownership of his wife. It is important to note that at times cultural practices clash with human rights. Gouws and Stasiulis (2013:17) posit that “culture sees the group as the primary unit, not the individual and therefore the application of human rights within cultures has been problematic, leading to gender inequalities”. Ncube (2018) states that African countries are still struggling with aspects to get rid of without losing their African identity. Several authors come to the same conclusion that “cultures tend to control women’s personal, sexual and reproductive life and blames them for men’s difficulty in controlling their sexual impulses” (Okin, 1999; Aris, 2011; Brown-Miller, 2012; Manyonganise, 2015).

- **Gender Norms**

The concepts of gender and sex are distinguished in scholarship. Harawa-Katumbi (2012:105) refers to gender as a “division of people into masculine and feminine with accompanying socially constructed roles, rules of behaviour, activities and attributes and Gender is not physiologically determined but socially constructed”. Gender norms in marriage normalise behaviour to encourage partners to fulfil their marital roles faithfully. Scott (2000) defines gender norms as social norms that communicate specifically to gender differences. A considerable amount of literature reveals that women have always been held primarily responsible for domestic work and childcare, while men are to provide financial support to their families (Scott, 2000; Gonzalez & De La Rica, 2012; Pears, 2019). Ramaite (2010) comes to an agreement that women bring life to this world and therefore they have a responsibility of making sure that life is protected and preserved. In African society, the idea that men are heads of the house is symbolised in various ways. Therefore, women are still considered to be primarily responsible for domestic work.

Despite considerable development and progress, women still find it difficult to break stereotyping roles, especially in traditional marriages. Over the past fifteen years, considerable research has arisen in gender norms to understand fundamental factors that shape social norms, divisions and identities in marriage (Bicchieri, Jiang & Lindemans, 2014; Alwedinani, 2017; Collet, 2017). Although Mies (2014) argues that gender norms in marriage ensure the maintenance of social order and interact to produce outcomes that are frequently unbalanced, numerous studies concluded that because of gender norms, women dedicate their efforts to serving husbands’ needs, and subordinate their interests and preferences while the husband is encouraged to provide for the family needs at all cost (Kranton, 2016; Mackie, Moneti, Shakya & Denny, 2015).

Patriarchal tendencies are extremely entrenched in norms, customs and values of African life. Women may continue to stay in an abusive marriage because society does not see it as a problem (Murray & Graves, 2013). Research indicates that women who perceive abusive behaviours as normal because of societal standards may find it hard to realise that they are continuing to stay abusive marriages and therefore, see no reason to seek help (Barnett, Miller-Perrin & Perrin, 1997; The Gender-Based Violence Organisation, 2012; Brown-Miller, 2012).

3.5 RELIGIOUS ASPECTS THAT SUSTAIN PATRIARCHAL TENDENCIES

Religion is a personal and institutional reality in the lives of the majority of the population in the world. Inside faith communities, patriarchy is one of the main tripping blocks that prevent women to be fully equal to men in their own right (Wood, 2019). There is no surprise that religious teaching and affiliation provide a significant context for many women as they address experiences of victimisation. Collet (2017) posits that religion, social structures, educational institutions, the media and culture have played a leading role in the formation and perseverance of the patriarchal ideology. Furthermore, Klingorova and Havlicek (2015) contend that “the status of women in society is an outcome of the interpretation of religious texts and the cultural and institutional set-up of religious communities”. The researcher argues that in the context of women’s continued-stay in the marriage, religious teachings and communities play a role and will never be neutral. On the other hand, the literature indicates that religious texts and teachings can serve as resources to assist those who have experienced abuse in finding safety and healing (Cooray & Potrafke, 2011; Jeffery & Basu, 2012; Bartkowski & Shah, 2014; Wood, 2019). Nonetheless, religious texts can also be misused or misinterpreted to sustain patriarchal tendencies.

The New Living Translation (2013) of the bible translates Ephesians 5:22-24 as follows: “For wives, this means submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Saviour of his body, the church. As the church submits to Christ, so your wives should submit to your husbands in everything”. This text is resonant of 1 Corinthians 11:13, which in the New Living Translation, says “But there is one thing I want you to know: The head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is man, and the head of Christ is God”. From this text, a hierarchy of power is provided which a man is the head of the woman. Ephesians text (5:22-24) postulates that the relationship between wife and husband is similar to that of the Church and Christ. Same as the wife should submit and depend upon her husband in everything, on the other side, the church is submissive and dependent on Christ.

Many scholars have pointed out that the misinterpretation of Ephesians 5 stems from the failure to realise that the scripture is about household codes (Murray & Graves, 2013; Boesak, 2011; Maisiri, 2015). Cooray and Potrafke (2011:26) suggest that the focus of this text is on the organisation of household finances; “with a focus on production, self-sufficiency and family business organization”. The text, therefore, focuses on the day-to-day daily business of family matters. Al-Rasheed (2013) state that the reality of violations of women’s human rights is a reality of misapprehension of religious tenets. Ephesians 5:22 talks about being submissive but does not explain further about how to submit to your husband. As a result, those that are married may take advantage of this scripture as an excuse for being abusive.

Religion plays a role in strengthening patriarchy in society. Genesis 3:16 New Living Translation says that God told Eve that your husband will rule over you. This scripture is used to confirm male dominance over females. Literature shows that Genesis 3:16 is understood as a biblical command for women who continue to stay in an abusive marriage at all times to accept that men will rule over them (Turaki, 2006; Boesak, 2011; Maisiri, 2015). Scholars such as Masenya (1996), Saine (2012) and Al-Rasheed (2013) postulate that religious teachings, cultural norms and the Bible reinforce the patriarchal system, and contain elements that oppress women.

Moreover, religious teachings may be another reason why women may be persuaded to remain in abusive marriages because some religious writings recommend the entire control of a husband over his wife (Boesak, 2011). Therefore, a woman with a deep religious conviction may try to get advice from a spiritual advisor and/or other members of her religious community for support. Nonetheless, the researcher believes that some religious teachings about forgiveness may play a vital role for a woman to remain in an abusive marriage. For example, Ephesians 4:32 NLT states to married couples: “Instead, be kind to each other, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you”.

Many of the formal religions do not support divorce. Majority of Christian religions have feelings about the concept of divorce, citing the 19th Chapter of the Book of Matthew as a prohibition against divorce (Boesak, 2011). In Matthew, 19:2 NLT, Jesus Christ is asked “Should a man be allowed to divorce for just any reason?” and interestingly, the answer is “Let no one split apart what God has joined together”. The above-mentioned scripture resonates with 1 Corinthians 7:10-11: “But for those who are married, I have a command that comes not from me, but the Lord. A wife must not leave her husband. But if she does leave him, let her remain single or else be reconciled to him. And the husband must not leave his wife”. The researcher argues that this kind of teachings suggest that married couples should not divorce, and women should continue to stay in abusive marriages because it is God who has joined them together.

3.5.1 Marriage in the Bible

The focus of this study is on women who continue to stay in abusive marriages, specifically in the context of religion, society and African culture. Meanwhile, Christians are guided by the Bible, a brief consideration of marriage as portrayed by biblical text with a specific reference to the idea of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages is essential. The assumption of this study is that biblical texts concerning marriage influence women to continue to stay in abusive marriages.

Several texts in the Bible demonstrate that God created male and female to be together in a mutual relationship (Genesis 2:24; Mark 10:6-9; Matthew 19:4-6). Genesis 2:24 NLT says: “This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one”. Mark 10:6-9 NLT says: “But ‘God made them male and female from the beginning of creation. Since they are no longer two but one, let no one split apart what God has joined together”. Matthew 19:4-6 “Haven’t you read the Scriptures? Jesus replied. They record that from the beginning ‘God made them male and female. Scholars such as Boesak (2011) and Maisiri (2015) argue that Ephesians 5:22-24 is interpreted incorrectly by African Christians concerning marital roles.

3.6 THE NEXUS OF ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY AND POVERTY AMONG ABUSED WOMEN WHO CONTINUE TO STAY IN ABUSIVE MARRIAGE

Women who continue to stay in abusive marriages often tell unbelievable stories about their experiences of torture, beatings, rapes and living in constant terror. This dissertation argues that there is a nexus between poverty and economic dependency among women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. Research shows that a variety of factors may contribute to the poverty of women who have experienced abuse in the marriage, including lack of affordable housing and of accessibility to legal assistance (Florence, Luo, Xu & Zhou, 2016; Budzinski, 2018). Some of the most significant factors are barriers to employment. The researcher argues that because of these barriers, many victims of abuse may not be able to leave their abusive relationships. A recent study found that approximately 70% of women who continue to stay in abusive relationships did not disclose the abuse to their family members (WHO, 2013). This implies that women who continue to stay in abusive marriages are compelled to stay with their abuser because of children and poverty.

Academic literature indicates that many women continue to stay in abusive marriages because they are economically dependent on their husbands (Sanders, 2015; Finley, 2013; WHO, 2013). For example, in some situations, men are sole breadwinners or the women have no work skills or little income. The researcher argues that the high unemployment rate compounds the plight of women. In 2020, the unemployment rate in South Africa was 29 per cent, the highest in history since 2008 (Statistical Report, 2019/20)

3.6.1 Economic Dependency and Poverty

The link between economic dependency and poverty is circular. Rawal and Agrawal (2016) postulate that a lack of economic means reinforces women's vulnerability to continue to stay in abusive marriages. Literature suggests that the fear and threat of abuse keeps women from seeking employment, or compels them to agree on home-based exploitative labour (Sanders, 2015; Slabbert, 2017; Sedziafa, Tenkorang & Owusu, 2018). On the flip side of the coin, with restricted economic freedom, women have no power to escape from their abusive husbands (Florence, Luo, Xu & Zhou, 2016; Budzinski, 2018). Despite the above argument, Sanders (2015) argues that in some other countries, women's growing economic activities and independence is seen as a threat to men who are poor, and leads to the influence of women being abused in their marriages. For example, when a male is unemployed and his wife is employed, he may feel his power is undermined in the household because culturally, a man must provide. This dissertation argues that when a woman is poor in a marriage, she has more chances to continue to stay in that marriage compared to those who are economically independent.

Poverty is another factor why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. Finley (2013) states that among Africans, poverty is another influence that is linked to the abuse of women in relationships. However, scholars such as McCue (2008), Da'il (2012) and Finley (2013) contend that poverty does not cause women to continue to stay in abusive marriages but rather worsens the possibility of women to put an end to an abusive relationship.

Research indicates that women generally are vulnerable to poverty due to the history of inequality, wage inequality, gender discrimination and the social welfare policy (Holmes & Jones, 2009; Sanders, 2015; Gilman, 2018). In support of the above statement, a study conducted by Rasool (2015) found that poverty, unemployment and the number of children are reasons why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. Previous studies have found that unemployment of women and low income have been found to forecast the continuation of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages (UNICEF, 2000; Walker, 2009; True, 2012; Budzinski & Martty, 2018).

Economic dependency by women on male partners and the absence of alternative housing may be reasons why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. Moreover, poor women need economic security and independence to improve their chances of leaving an abusive relationship (Razavi & Turquet, 2016). A study by Watson (2014) shows that marriage may provide improvements in women's economic projections, especially if the husband is employed or both partners are employed. Literature suggests that poor mothers who lack secondary or tertiary education and do not have employment history are likely to continue to stay in abusive marriages even when the abuse is sustained (Ganle, Afriyie & Segbefia, 2015; Razavi & Turquet, 2016). Another researcher came to similar findings that women without economic independence have no power to escape, but continue to stay in abusive marriages (Bejenaru, 2011).

This dissertation focuses on an important under-researched issue concerning women who continue to stay in abusive marriages, that is, the degree to which poor women continue to stay in abusive marriages, economic hardships or the nexus of poverty and economic dependency associated with the experience of intimate partner violence. Literature findings clearly show that women who are from extreme poverty are more at risk to suffer abuse at the hands of their husbands and continue to stay in abusive marriages (WHO, 2012; True, 2012; Slabbert, 2017). Furthermore, the husband may use the money to weaken his wife (Razavi & Turquet, 2016). The researcher argues that economic instability is a link that binds a woman to her abuser.

Sanders (2015) demonstrated that at times poor women put the interest of their children first and continue to stay in abusive marriages because of a lack of income. For example, a woman who is unemployed and has five children may continue to stay in abusive marriages because she has no capital for looking after the children in the absence of the father.

Poverty plays a major role in women who continue to stay in abusive marriages because of their poor status. WHO (2013) defines poverty as the lack of capabilities and resources to fulfil the basic needs of life, education and health care, access to food and nutrition, security and shelter which is necessary for the wellbeing of an individual. Previous researchers such as Zlakta (2014), Adams (2011) and Sanders (2015) demonstrated the connection between economic dependency and women who continue to stay in an abusive marriage in at least four ways: "(i) poor women are vulnerable to abuse; (ii) women are often prevented from leaving an abusive partner due to economic dependence; (iii) women's economic status as well as their ability to obtain or maintain employment is significantly associated with and affected by intimate partner violence; and (iv) partners use a variety of intentional tactics that negatively affect women's economic well-being".

McCue (2008) posits that poverty is associated with stress and intimate partner violence is often a consequence of this stress. This statement is supported by Adams (2011), who states that women who experience poverty (and thus have few economic resources) are confined to their homes where their abusers share their space, which erodes their chances of leaving the abusive relationship. Previous studies demonstrate a diversity of factors that may contribute to the poverty of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages such as lack of affordable housing, health care, employment and basic needs of life (Adams, 2011; Zlakta, 2014; Slabbert, 2017). Furthermore, husbands may use violence as a strategy if they have low income or from lower socioeconomic class to maintain a position of power in family life (Adams, 2011).

Women who continue to stay in abusive marriages are often also victims of poverty. A study conducted by Mesatywa (2014) found that having no money to leave or to buy food and find shelter is one of the critical motives why women continue to stay in abusive relationships. Existing evidence suggests that women who continue to stay in abusive relationships are not passive victims but adopt strategies to maximise their safety and that of their children (WHO, 2012; Hakim, 2016; Slabbert, 2017). Furthermore, Mesatywa (2014) states that women go on to cite various reasons as to why they stay in abusive marriages such as concern for their children, lack of alternative means for economic support, fear of retaliation and love, hoping that the abuser will change.

3.7 THE INFLUENCE OF LONELINESS OR FEAR OF BEING ALONE

True (2012) states that for many, women staying in abusive marriages endangers their lives and the lives of their children, but they fear to leave and experience the feeling of loneliness caused by possible loss of friends, family or financial devastation. Furthermore, women who continue to stay in abusive marriages also fear the disgrace of being divorced (Whiting, 2016; Wood, 2019). Research on women who continue to stay in abusive marriages with their abusers provides us with social structural and interpersonal explanations for the problem of continued-stay (Spielmann *et al.*, 2013; Rousseau, 2013; Masoom, 2016). Interestingly, common to most of these explanations is the assumption that women are afraid of being alone and therefore continue to stay in abusive marriages.

There are many women who continue to stay in abusive marriages because of fear of being alone. They go to great lengths to try to avoid it. Sedziafa, Tenkorang, and Owusu (2018) explain two types of loneliness, namely; the loneliness of social isolation and the loneliness of emotional isolation. They found that feelings of loneliness experienced by married women who had recently divorced differ from those experienced by single parents (Sanders, 2015). However, single parents, most of whom had put an end to an unhappy marriage, felt lonely because they no longer had partners (Seabi, 2012). Women who have put an end to their marriage suffer from emotional isolation and the accompanying feelings of desolation and insecurity and of not having someone to turn to (WHO, 2012).

Past research has shown that divorce tends to result in a loss of personal relationships: members of the former couple's network take the side of one of the two partners (Ghimire, Samuels, 2014; Gouws & Stasiulis, 2013; Goddard, 2015). Literature shows that divorcing an abusive spouse does not terminate violence. Several studies indicate that leaving an abusive marriage may be more dangerous than staying for both women and children (Bejenaru, 2011; Goddard, 2015; Gudhlanga, 2016). Furthermore, leaving an abusive husband may expose women to severe injuries, and at extreme, may even result in murder. However, others are found to leave and return to their abusive husbands (World Health Organization, 2013).

Spielmann *et al.* (2013) state that fear, loneliness, isolation and low self-esteem may influence women to continue to stay in an abusive relationship. Previous studies find that a woman who is attached to her abuser may feel that she loves the husband and depends on him for her survival may fear to be alone (Shivambu, 2015; Sibanda & Msibi, 2016; Slabbert, 2017). Loneliness is a feeling of being cut off, disconnected, and/or alienated from other people so that it feels difficult or even impossible to have any form of meaningful human contact (WHO, 2013). Several authors concur losses encountered by women who continue to stay in abusive relationships intensify their fear of loneliness: living in a home, self-esteem, success in marriage, everyday routine, safety, support systems, a father figure of children, and status (Kefalas *et al.*, 2011; Shivambu, 2015; Slabbert, 2017). Loneliness is more than just the feeling of wanting company or wanting to do something with another person.

Women who continue to stay in abusive marriages may be more fearful to the husband, especially when he threatens to kill her and her children when he arrives back home. Gudhlanga (2016) found that as a result of women being threatened by their husbands, women remain hyper-vigilant, live in fear and wait with nervousness for the expected abuse. This statement is supported by Whiting, Oka and Fife (2012), who argues that the threat of bodily and emotional harm is powerful. Abusers use this to control and keep women trapped because they are afraid of their partners. Women who continue to stay in abusive marriages are much more likely to be terrorised and traumatised because of fear of their partners (Estrellado & Loh, 2019).

Moreover, some women who are abused by their husbands remained fearful for the unknown, that anything tragic could happen to them at any time (Saine, 2012). Most importantly, Eckstein (2011) postulates that many times, leaving an abusive marriage is not only emotionally difficult but can also be life-threatening. Factors that contribute to women continuing to stay in abusive marriages are discussed below.

3.7.1 Love and Hope

Some women continue to stay in abusive marriages owing to a combination of love and hope. Literature indicates that there is a strong connection between the husband and wife despite the abusive environment (Walker, 1979; Persson, Pfaus & Ryder, 2015). Research shows that majority of women who continue to stay in abusive relationships endure hoping that her abusive husband will change and sometimes will apologise after abusing her (Mikulincer, 2013; Wong & Mellor, 2014; Sanders, 2015). Moreover, women tend to focus on positive aspects such as love even when the abuse is sustained. Peterson (2010) states that women in abusive relationships may develop a feeling of learned helplessness. Mikulincer (2013) argues that learned helplessness makes women continue to stay or even return after they have left their abusive husbands hoping that things will get better. On the other side of the coin, these women also wish to save their marriage (Ademiluka, 2018).

3.7.2 Denial

Most women who continue to stay in abusive marriages find it difficult to openly accept that they are in an abusive marriage. In the context of this study, denial refers to a situation when a woman who continues to stay in an abusive marriage is unable to acknowledge and admit that she is being subjected to abuse. The researcher argues that such denial may be influenced by the fact that sometimes women are ashamed and embarrassed to talk about their abusive husbands.

Moreover, a study conducted by Ullman, Peter-Hagene and Relyea (2014) found that denial by women who continue to stay in abusive relationships may be influenced by the myth that the abuse of women in marriage is private and family matters. However, literature shows that denial to talk about abusive marriage may be an attempt to try to cope with the painful situation (Goodmark, 2013; Peterson, 2010; Sedziafa, Tenkorang, Owusu, 2018). Nonetheless, some women in abusive relationships are afraid to express their anger with abusive spouses for the fear of provoking the situation.

Saine (2012) states that during this stage of denial, women not only admit the abuse to their family, but will also not acknowledge the brutality that they are suffering from while they continue to stay in abusive marriages. Sedziafa, Tenkorang and Owusu (2018) postulate that these women fail to recognise that there are any problems between themselves and their partners. Shivambu (2015) indicates that there are factors that contribute to abuse women unwavering denial: manipulative and behaviour of their abuser and the acts of abuse may be so covert that they do not appear to be harmful or detrimental. The researcher considers that at times women who continue to stay in abusive marriages may believe that denial is the most effective way to avoid being subjected to further abuse and brutality.

3.7.3 Learned Helplessness

Many women in abusive marriages develop a feeling of helplessness. Because of repeated victimisation, these women believe that there is no way in which they can avoid the abuse (Peterson, 2010). Seligman's (1975) theory of Learned Helplessness has been used in many studies to explain why many women fail to leave their abusers. Research indicates that the feeling of helplessness is the most speedy feeling that women feel following the abuse by their husbands (Maier & Siligman, 1976; Peterson, 2010; Mikulincer, 2013). Moreover, women learn that there is no way to put an end to abuse, they give up and accept painful situations. Seligman (1976) found that "repeated abuse to women diminishes woman's motivation and her cognitive ability to perceive success is changed hence learned helplessness".

3.8 INDICATORS OF A WOMAN IN AN ABUSIVE MARRIAGE

According to Wallace (1997), the following are factors that may indicate that a woman is in an abusive marriage. The woman:

- is not active in social activities or withdraws from them after having been an active participant;
- has no close friends of her own. She seldom invites people to her home, or when she does, visitors get subtle clues that they must leave before the spouse returns;
- appears nervous and will never accept an invitation or a responsibility without checking with with her spouse first;
- seldom has any cash and has forgotten her chequebook but may have a credit card with her;
- wears heavy makeup or sunglasses, even indoors. Her wardrobe includes scarves, turtleneck sweaters, long sleeves and slacks;
- has many 'accidents' and at her place of employment she receives and places many calls to her spouse;
- and her spouse has frequent changes of residence that seem unrelated to employment requirements.

3.9 SUMMARY OF THIS CHAPTER

This chapter extensively reviewed historical and recent literature on women who continue to stay in abusive marriages and factors that compel women to stay in abusive marriages. Societal, cultural and religious aspects that sustain patriarchal tendencies were also explored. In this chapter, the literature review was discussed in line with the objectives of the study. This was done systematically starting at international, continental and national levels. This chapter illuminates obtainable and current literature on women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. The following chapter presents the research methodology.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The information obtained from the literature study in the previous chapter has shed some light on factors influencing women to continue to stay in abusive marriages. In this chapter, the researcher elaborates on the methodology employed in this study to contribute to research on reasons why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. Emphasis is placed on the following: research approach and research design, population and sampling procedures, quality criteria, the significance of the study, ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

4.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

4.2.1 Aim of the study

The study sought to describe reasons why women continue to stay in abusive marriages.

4.2.2 Objectives of the study

The study pursued the following objectives:

4.2.2.1 To identify cultural and religious aspects that sustain patriarchal tendencies to abuse women.

4.2.2.2 To appraise the nexus of economic dependency and poverty among abused women in an abusive marriage.

4.2.2.3 To determine how loneliness or fear of being alone influences women to remain in abusive marriages.

4.3 RESEARCH APPROACH, RESEARCH TYPE AND RESEARCH DESIGN

4.3.1 RESEARCH APPROACH

The researcher selected the qualitative approach to guide the study. Creswell (2013) states that qualitative research methods are designed to help the researcher get a better understanding through first-hand experience, truthful reporting and quotations of actual conversations. The approach was selected and deemed fit for the study since the researcher wanted to investigate experiences of women who remain in abusive marriages. A case study design was employed in this study to allow the researcher the opportunity to collect data in different settings and to assimilate results in the interpretation stage. Yin (2014) explains that when the researcher chooses to use a case study, he/she can analyse the data within each situation and across different situations. Baxter and Jack (2008) state that in a case study, the researcher studies cases to understand similarities and differences between them. Therefore, for the qualitative approach chosen in the study, a case study design was used because the study includes more than one single case.

4.3.2 RESEARCH TYPE

The researcher sought to describe experiences of women who continue to remain in abusive marriages.

4.3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Yin (2014:280), “the research design is a logical plan of getting from here to there, where *here* may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered, and there is some set of conclusions about these questions”. Oliver (2014:142) states that research design indicates the practical way in which the whole research report has been organised. Barbie and Mouton (2001) describe a research design as a perceived plan or blueprint of how the researcher intends to conduct their study, while the researcher considers it a large and comprehensive toolbox for the research journey to be undertaken. Nonetheless, Kerlinger (1986:279) defines a research design as a “plan, structure and strategy of the investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions or problems”. Therefore, the plan is the complete programme of the research.

The case study design was used to produce detailed descriptions of the phenomenon of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages using theories to order the data and to relate them to earlier literature. The goal of the study was descriptive and empirical. The intention was to provide a clear understanding of why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. Yin (2014) emphasised that case study design strengthens the results by reproducing patterns, thereby increasing the strength of the findings. In this study, a case study design was used for the data collection method of interviews.

4.4 AREA OF STUDY

The study was conducted at Khuseleka One-Stop Centre which deals with abused women in Seshego Hospital, which is situated in Zone 3. and the Victim Empowerment Programme Centre, which is located in Mankweng Capricorn area. These institutions are both located in Limpopo Province, South Africa. These two institutions were purposefully selected by the researcher for the following reasons:

- These are care centres and Victim Empowerment Programmes that deal with abused women; and
- Convenience concerning the distance travelled to conduct the study.

4.5 SAMPLING AND SAMPLE SIZE

A purposive sample of 16 women who are living in abusive marriages was constituted. Participants were selected using the non-probability sampling method, namely purposive sampling based on the nature of the study and the researcher's judgement as motivated by the purpose of the study. The inclusion criteria of the sample included only women who are married and continued to stay in an abusive marriage. The exclusion criteria side-lined boyfriend-and-girlfriend type of arrangement and women who are not married. Participants were identified with the assistance of Khuseleka One-Stop Centre and Victim Empowerment Programme, which focus on surviving abused women. They were identified through a Social Worker and were briefed that they might be approached for interviews to which they agreed. The respondents had common characteristics such as physical, economic, psychological abuse and others that suit the criteria of the study.

The researcher was very strict with the selection criteria to ensure that the data collected is relevant and accurate. This was done because of the sensitivity of the study and to ensure that abused women cases are handled with care and protection. No one was forced to participate in the study.

4.6 DATA COLLECTION

Firstly, the researcher scheduled appointments with participants, and interviews were conducted in locations of participants' choice. This was to ensure their personal safety and that they were comfortable during the interview. A semi-structured interview guide (see appendix C) in face-to-face interactions with participants to collect data was used. This empowered the researcher to gain a comprehensive picture of participants' perceptions, beliefs and experiences of abuse from their husbands. Observation was key in collecting data. The researcher purposefully and systematically selected a way of watching and listening to interactions of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages as the interviews took place. Prior to the commencement of data collection, the researcher obtained ethical clearance from Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC).

The researcher also obtained permission from gatekeepers at the Departments of Health and Social Development, which covers Khuseleka One-Stop Centre for abused women. Another ethical clearance was obtained from the office of the premier for the Victim Empowerment Programme at Mankweng for survivors of abuse. Thereafter, ten (10) participants were interviewed by the researcher from VEP Mankweng using a list of questions carefully constructed before the interview and six (6) from Khuseleka One-Stop Centre for abused women in Seshego Hospital. The interviews were more appropriate for complex situations of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. A total response rate of hundred per cent (100%) was successfully achieved. An audio device to record was utilised with permission from participants to record their responses. The researcher also used field notes to back-up the process.

4.7 Data Analysis

A general inductive approach for qualitative data analysis was followed. This study sourced primary data from interviews, and secondary data was obtained through literature study which shed greater insight into the current study. Hsieh and Shannon (2005:178) defined Thematic Content Analysis as “an analysis technique for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns”. Raw data from interview transcripts, field notes and recordings were coded, and themes developed so that meanings can be interpreted and conclusions made. Moreover, Marks and Yardley (2004) state that Thematic Content Analysis allows the researcher to understand the potential of any issue more widely. Nevertheless, TCA also goes further by interpreting various aspects of the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998). Therefore, Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) was selected as a method of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clark, 2011). After the data had been transcribed, the researcher conducted the six phased Thematic Content Analysis as outlined by Braun and Clark (2011).

Step 1: Familiarising oneself with data

The researcher collected data and thereafter occupied himself with it by frequently reading and developing themes. The researcher conducted interviews and transcribed them, then read and re-read through the transcripts, making notes of initial ideas to be familiar with the data. This involved careful reading of the data to extract themes, explaining why women continue to remain in abusive marriages.

Step 2: Generating initial codes

After the researcher had familiarised himself with the data, a list of ideas was generated. This step was the production of initial codes from the data. The codes identified a feature of the data that looked interesting to the analyst and referred to the most basic elements of the raw data. All actual data extracts were coded and collated together within each code. Codes of analysis that explain why women continue to stay in abusive marriages were generated.

Step 3: Searching for themes

After data were coded and collated, different codes were organised and identified into credible themes. Assembling all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes was then done. The researcher then analysed the codes and considered how different codes could be combined to form the all-comprehensive theme. Thereafter, the themes were then arranged into themes and sub-themes.

Step 4: Reviewing themes

The themes that developed from the data were then reviewed and advanced. The researcher began to review the themes to refine them and remained with interesting and salient themes. All collated extracts for each theme were read and considered to see whether they appeared to form a coherent pattern.

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

Themes were defined and further refined. The researcher ran theme names and clear working definitions that outlined the essence of each theme briefly. For each theme, the researcher made an analysis and put it in writing. Themes that relate to women who continue to stay in abusive marriages were reviewed. The refining and defining of themes is all about identifying the essence of each theme and determining aspects of the data each theme was taken.

Step 6: Producing the report

The researcher made a final analysis and wrote the report, in this instance, the analysis for the dissertation. The researcher provided a concise, coherent, logical, non-repetitive, and interesting account of the story of the data, within and across the themes.

4.8 Quality Criteria

Halcomb and Andrews (2009: xvii) define trustworthiness as “the degree of confidence that the researcher has that their qualitative data and findings are credible, transferable and dependable”. The following criteria will be applied to determine the trustworthiness of qualitative research.

4.8.1 Credibility

The researcher adopted a well-recognised research method to ensure the durability, and then debriefed participants and described the phenomenon under scrutiny (Shenton, 2004). As outlined by De Vos (2011), the criterion reflects the truth and value of the information and findings of participants, as well as the context in which the study has been undertaken.

The researcher absorbed himself in participants' world, views and feelings which assisted in understanding the situation that they are going through, eliminating distortions of information that arise due to his presence in the field, given the fact that the researcher is male. Therefore, credibility helped to establish if the findings will represent reasonable information drawn from participants' original data and that interpretation the participant's original views.

4.8.2 Confirmability

Trochim (2006) refers to the fact that confirmability is the degree to which results of the study can be confirmed or corroborated by others. The researcher also recognised shortcomings in the research methods and their potential effects and minimised them, for instance, administrator bias, which meant that he had to conduct the interviews similarly as he could (Shenton, 2004). The researcher enhanced confirmability by documenting all procedures used to check and recheck the data throughout the study.

Critical to this process is the audit trail, which allows any observer to trace the course of the research step-by-step via decisions made and procedures described. Beliefs underpinning decisions made and methods adopted were acknowledged within the research report, and reasons for favouring one approach when others could have been taken were mentioned.

4.8.3 Bias

In this study, the following safeguards were taken to minimise bias:

- The researcher did not assist or give signals on how he (the researcher) would prefer the questions to be answered.
- The researcher was guided by the supervisor from time to time.
- The researcher obeyed ethical standards when interpreting data as well as during the period of interviews.
- The researcher listened carefully to participants and recorded everything they said, took field notes and tape-recorded their non-verbal behaviour.

4.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study aimed at describing factors relating to women who continue to remain in abusive marriages. Therefore, it is the researcher's conviction that women who continue to remain in abusive marriages will benefit from the study. Secondly, the study is significant because it can be used to close research gaps of women abuse within the Social Work discipline. Policymakers in the South African Police Services, Health and Social Development and other participating government departments that address women abuse will make use of recommendations and information from the study to consider changes concerning existing policies which protect and fight against women abuse.

4.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research should be guided by acceptance, promises, mutual trust, cooperation and well-accepted prospects between all parties involved (Sarantankos, 2005). In this study, the researcher was guided by ethics.

4.11 PERMISSION TO CONDUCT THE STUDY

Prior to the commencement of data collection, the researcher obtained ethical clearance from Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) of the University of Limpopo. The researcher also attained permission from gatekeepers at The Department of Health (see Appendix A) which covers Khuseleka One-Stop Centre for abused women. Another clearance was obtained from the Department of Social Development which covers Victim Empowerment Programme at Mankweng for survivors of abuse.

4.12 INFORMED CONSENT

In this study, participants were provided with all the details of the study and their consent was obtained. The researcher informed participants about what the study is about and its intentions after its completion so that they can freely participate in the research, knowing what the study entails. According to De Vos et al. (2011), this makes participants fully aware of the possible advantages and dangers as a result of the study. Participants were required to sign a consent form (see Appendix D). As outlined by De Vos et al. (2011), locating informed consent suggests that all-important procedure of the investigation will be followed and participants are fully aware of the procedure.

4.13 CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

Babbie and Mouton (2001) state that in every study undertaken, the protection of confidential information of participants is essential. Confidentiality was ensured by making sure that none of the participant's information was discussed with anyone else. A covering letter explaining reasons for the study was provided. The researcher also protected the identities of participants and made sure that their right to privacy is respected, and if they want to remain anonymous, their wishes respected (De Vos et al., 2011).

4.14 AVOIDANCE OF HARM

The fundamental ethical rule of social research is that it must bring no harm to participants (Babbie, 2007). The nature of the proposed study was emotion-focused and provoked negative feelings to participants who experienced abuse in their marriages. Prior to the commencement of interviews, counselling was done to prepare participants for the nature of the study.

They were informed in advance about the potential impact of the study. They were fully prepared for the interview and the nature of the study itself to enable them to be open and to share their experiences in detail. However, a few participants experienced harm, and referrals were made for professional assistance with a social worker or psychologist.

4.15 VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study was voluntary and no one was forced to participate (Bowel, 2005). Participants were not coerced to engage in the study without their consent. All important information and processes involving their participation in the study were explained. They were required to sign a consent form prior to the commencement of data collection (see Appendix D).

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present, analyse and interpret empirical findings from data collected on women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. The term 'participant' is used as a replacement for real names of individuals participating in this study. Biographical information of participants will be given so that their socio-cultural context can be understood. In addition, several global and local literature was studied to gain an understanding of the phenomenon of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. The study employed a qualitative approach which is descriptive in nature. A case study design was employed to allow the researcher the opportunity to collect data in different settings and to assimilate results in the interpretation stage. The researcher used Thematic Content Analysis to organise and manage data.

In an attempt to seek a solution to the research problem, the researcher constituted a sample of sixteen (16) participants who were purposefully selected for the purpose of the study. The selection criteria involved women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. The researcher collected data until the saturation point was reached. Data collection was done through face-to-face interviews. The entire data collection process lasted for 14 days. Audio recorded interviews were transcribed. Themes that emerged during the interviews will be discussed in terms of the framework underpinning the study, Alice Walker's Womanism theory (1983).

5.2 DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF THE FINDINGS

Table 1. Demographic data of participants

Participants	Years of Marriage	Educational Qualification	Religious Pursuasion	Age	Employment Status	Number of Children
1.	21 Years	Primary Level	Christianity	48	Unemployed	4
2.	12 Years	Tertiary Level	Christianity	39	Employed	3
3.	8 Years	Secondary Level	Christianity	36	Unemployed	2
4.	6 Years	Tertiary Level	Christianity	34	Employed	1
5.	13 Years	Primary Level	Christianity	46	Unemployed	4
6.	12 Years	Tertiary Level	Christianity	43	Employed	3
7.	12 Years	Tertiary Level	Christianity	36	Employed	3
8.	14 Years	Tertiary Level	Christianity	38	Employed	4
9.	24 Years	Primary Level	Christianity	56	Unemployed	6
10.	15 Years	Secondary Level	Christianity	39	Unemployed	4
11.	23 Years	Primary Level	Christianity	41	Unemployed	6
12.	25 Years	Primary Level	Christianity	58	Unemployed	7
13.	16 Years	Secondary Level	Christianity	47	Unemployed	5
14.	13 Years	Primary Level	Christianity	39	Unemployed	4
15.	18 Years	Primary Level	Christianity	51	Unemployed	6
16.	21 Years	Primary	Christianity	61	Unemployed	7

Table 1 above presents demographic details of the sample of 16 participants who took part in the study at the Victim Empowerment Centre at Mankweng and Khuseleka One-Stop-Centre. The sample of this research consisted of sixteen (16) female participants who continued to stay in abusive marriages. This is because a point of saturation was reached on the sixteenth participant during data collection. Most participants spoke Sepedi, but every participant was allowed to express themselves in any language they wished. Before interviews, participants were counselled by a professional Social Worker about the nature of the study. All participants were women who continued to stay in an abusive marriage.

The data presented in Table 1 above indicate that participants' ages ranged from 34 to 61 years. Research indicates that between 10-60 per cent of married women of reproductive age in South Africa have had an experience of abuse in their marriage (Peterson, 2010; Saine, 2012; Parker, 2012; Maisiri, 2015). The abuse of married women is a serious problem that affects many (McNally & Mannan, 2013). This is the case irrespective of class or ethnicity. The Womanism theory (1983) correctly notes black women experiences in marriage with respect to their culture, religion and society. Therefore, this study sought to understand the influence of culture, religion and society in women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. For the purpose of this study, it was imperative to use the Womanism theory in that it is aligned with the objectives and literature which came up with meaningful contributions to the concept of women who remain in abusive marriages.

Eleven (11) participants were unemployed and four (4) participants were employed at the time of the interviews. Scholars posit that at the centre of Womanism is the concern for women and their role in their immediate surroundings (be it family, local community or workplace) and more global environment (Leuven, Letteren and Literatuur, 2008; Maparyan, 2013). The data presented in the above table indicates that participants' number of children ranged from 1-7. The study found that children were found to be an influence to women who remained in abusive marriages. The majority of participants indicated that one of the major factors why women continue to stay in abusive marriages is because of their children. Academic literature suggests that many abused women in their marriages continue to stay because of their cultural and religious backgrounds, fear of not being trusted by members of the church or because they longed to protect their husbands and preserve the family unit (Sultana, 2010; Hamilton, 2012; Crawford, 2014).

Religion plays a role in strengthening patriarchy in society. Genesis 3:16 in New Living Translation of the Bible, God told Eve that your husband will rule over you. The researcher argues that this scripture is used to confirm male dominance over females. Literature shows that Genesis 3:16 is understood as a biblical command to women who continue to stay in an abusive marriage at all times and to accept that men will rule over them (Turaki, 2006; Boesak, 2011; Maisiri, 2015).

Scholars such as Masenya (1996), Saine (2012) and Crawford (2014) postulate that religious teachings, cultural norms and the Bible reinforce the patriarchal system, and contain elements that oppress women. Moreover, religious teachings may be another reason why women may be persuaded to continue to stay in abusive marriages. A study conducted by Rawal and Agrawal (2016) found that poverty, unemployment and the number of children are the reason why women to continue to stay in abusive marriages.

5.3 QUALITATIVE RESULTS

The data gathered by the researcher was analysed by means of coding, or data reduction and arranged into themes. The study participants included married women currently in an abusive marriage. An audio-recorder was used in data collection after consent to do so was obtained from participants.

Table 2: Themes, categories and sub-themes.

Main Themes	Sub-Themes
1. ASPECTS OF TRAPPED WOMEN IN MARRIAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a woman in marriage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Perseverance and Resilience b. Suffering c. Love and Hope
2. THE INFLUENCES OF CULTURE AND RELIGION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Premarital Counselling b. Number of Children c. Learned Helplessness d. Learned Hopefulness
3. PATRIARCHY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Oppression of women b. Fear of the husband c. Fear of being alone
4. ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Marrying for financial challenges and poverty b. Self-blame and Guilt c. Denial and Avoidance

5.3.1 THEME 1: ASPECTS OF TRAPPED WOMEN IN MARRIAGE

Aspects of trapped women who continue to stay in abusive marriage emerged as the first theme. In the journey to discover why women continue to stay in abusive marriages, participants expressed the feeling of entrapment as a result of internalising gender roles and norms to the extent that they felt that they had no purpose other than making sure that their marriage works. They strongly felt that they are responsible for failure or success of their marriage, which resulted in experiences of perseverance and resilience, suffering, love, hope and gender stereotypes. This finding is endorsed by Sedziafa, Tenkorang and Owusu (2018), who stated that somewhat the puzzling aspect of trapped women in marriage is the fact that many women choose to remain in abusive marriages. Figure 2 below shows findings in theme 1. Aspects of trapped women and its sub-themes.

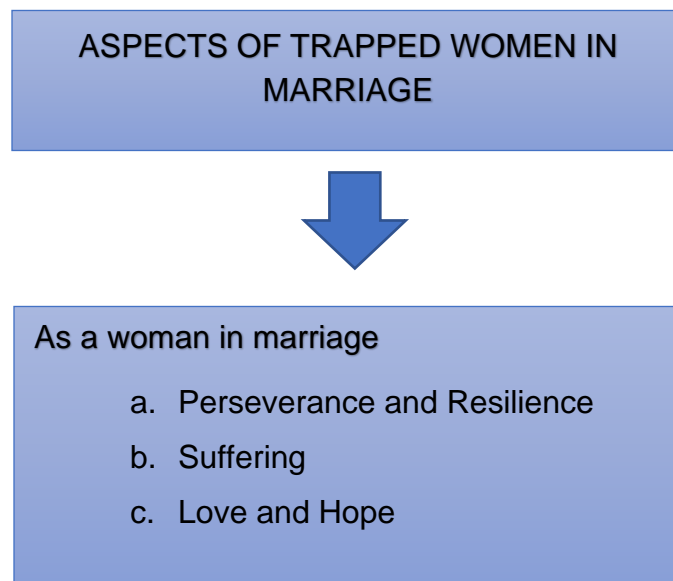


Figure 2 THEME 1: ASPECTS OF TRAPPED WOMEN IN MARRIAGE and sub-themes

5.3.1.2 Sub-theme 1: Perseverance and Resilience

Most participants indicated that prior to their marriage during premarital counselling, they were taught to preserve (“go kgotlolela”) and to be obedient in marriage. Many of them felt that they have to do everything to persevere and satisfy their husbands. Research indicates that premarital counselling is given to women to instill values of patience, perseverance, obedience and sacrifice in a marriage, which should be practised even in the event where the husband dies (Ellece, 2011; Parker, 2012; Sanders, 2015). Therefore, women in marriage are expected to honour, care and respect their husbands at all time. The following quotes were extracted from a transcript of participants who believed that every woman should persevere in their marriage and continue to stay with their husband’s family even in the event whereby the husband has died. The findings were expressed as follows:

Participant 5: *The proverb “lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi” was there a long time ago before my parents were born. I was told the same things my mother was told. I have to stay in the marriage because this is where I will be buried. Even when the situation is worse, I have to be strong and persevere because there is no going back. It is not easy you know.*

Participant 10: *I have spent time with women who have survived abuse and were being praised for their endurance that their strong and that is what women should do but not to divorce and leave their marriage. I have been told that since at my younger age that “lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi”.*

Participant 6: *Even if I have problems, I vow not to divorce my husband because I believe that “lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi”. So... I will do anything to save my marriage. As a married woman, you have to persevere and build your own family.*

5.3.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Suffering

Some married women who continue to stay in abusive marriages shared that they endured much personal suffering in their marriage. The study finds that suffering was expressed in the form of feeling of helplessness, intense emotional pain and inability to take decisive action at the required time. Participants were dejected and exposed to the feeling of distress and unhappiness and failed to challenge the situation by continuing to stay in their abusive marriage. Research indicates that the proverb, “*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*” encourages married women to endure suffering and to persevere in their marriages irrespective of problems they encounter (Johnson, 2004; Perumal, 2011; Ellece, 2011). The finding implies that some participants suffered deep personal pain due to being exposed to abuse in their marital journey. The implication is that the suffering experienced was associated with being trapped in a marriage. The finding was expressed as follows:

Participant 13: *He uses to beat me and I kept quiet about it because I was afraid... he will leave me and we will go hungry because I cannot afford everything on my own... To be honest it is not easy to explain all the things but I depend on him for many things. I thought about divorce but I am afraid of being on my own alone after so many years of being together with him.*

Participant 5: *This is heavy... I must say that every time I talk about it... I experience a certain feeling. (Mmmhmm)... After years and years in marriage... my husband became more and more miserable. I don't have comfort anymore. Countless and countless of insults made against me are terrible. I once went back home and my mother said to me, 'Go back my child' remember I have used 'Magadi a batho' the money paid for you as lobola". She told me that I just have to be strong and persevere in this family and accept everything that happens.*

Participant 8: *I am overly stressed and tired...and there were times whereby I felt like everything is just too much for me. I have this believe that I have experienced too much pain and that I am not as good as everybody else because I feel like I don't know what I can do to make things better.*

The above quotes illustrate how women who are trapped in their abusive marriage suffer unhappiness, feelings of helplessness, guilt and humiliation. The researcher further argues that it can be assumed that women's feelings of tiredness in their marriage does not only refer to physical tiredness, but also to mental exhaustion due to being trapped in their marriage from which they saw no escape because "*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*".

5.3.1.3 Sub-theme 3: Love and Hope

The study finds that women continue to stay in abusive marriages owing to a combination of love and hope. Literature indicates that there is a strong connection between the husband and wife despite the abusive environment (Walker, 1979; Persson, Pfaus & Ryder, 2015). Research shows that majority of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages endure hoping that their abusive husbands will change and sometimes apologise for their abuse (Peterson, 2010; Wong & Mellor, 2014; Sanders, 2015). Moreover, women tend to focus on positive aspects such as love even when the abuse is sustained. Peterson (2010) states that women in abusive marriages may develop a feeling of learned helplessness. Mikulincer (2013) argues that learned helplessness makes women to continue to stay or even return after they have left their abusive husbands hoping that things will get better. On the other side of the coin, these women also wish to save their marriage (Persson, Pfaus & Ryder, 2015).

The study found that although participants were unhappy, they had hope that the situation would change for the better. Ondincho (2013:105) found that "clinging to hope may be a rationale for women in marriage who were socialised to accept the status quo to survive the abuse against them in the name of culture". This confirms the finding by Larsen, Stege and Flesaker (2013) that nurturing a positive attitude helped women who were vulnerable and marginalised to develop courage and resilience to carry on during difficult times in their marriage. The researcher argues that without hope, women may not cope well with the kind of challenges that they face in their marriages. These assertions suggest that without hope and faith, it may be extremely difficult for abused women to survive in marriage.

The finding was expressed as follows:

Participant 2: *Every day I had a hope that everything tomorrow will be better.*

Participant 4: *I never stopped believing that things will be ok. I kept on believing that the situation will be better.*

Participant 5: *Things you do for love...just think about it. What have you done in the hope of being loved and cared for? I continued to stay because I believed that things will change.*

The Womanism theory alludes to the fact that living with the hope that things will change has been the core reason sustaining women who suffer and struggle in their marriages. Some participants argued that they embraced the Christian faith and used it to instil hope in themselves that one day their husbands will change for the better. The researcher argues that hope made women in abusive marriages to develop survival skills. A study conducted by Kanaragatman et.al (2012) investigated the burden of womanhood. The findings concluded that women in abusive marriages used different coping strategies to deal with the challenges they were faced with in their marriage.

5.3.2 THEME 2: INFLUENCES OF CULTURE AND RELIGION

Women (African) who participated in the current study were of a Christian faith. They explained that Christianity lays down strict rules for married women on how to treat their husbands. Ways of encouraging women to endure were imparted through the principle of Christianity. The researcher argues that God-fearing women of the Christian faith will not wish to go against the will of God; thus, the strengthening of patriarchal tendencies that oppress women in marriage is maintained by pastors, elders and mothers who use verses from the Bible. A study conducted by Boesak (2011) agrees with this point that using certain biblical scriptures lowers women's dignity as advocated by religious leaders. The relationship between the husband and wife is referred to in the Bible in the book of Colossians 3:18 (King James Version 2018:725) which state that "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord".

Therefore, the researcher argues that in the context of this study and considering the issue of women in an abusive marriage, the oppression and ill-treatment of women can indeed be ascribed to a certain degree of misinterpretation of biblical scriptures. The consequences of women who continue to stay in an abusive marriage and are still encouraged to be resilient and strong can be terrible.

The researcher's contribution is to further emphasise that although religion plays an important role in people's lives, at times religious influence may be another reason why women may be persuaded to remain in abusive marriages because some religious writings recommend the entire control by a husband over his wife (Halimah, 2014; Parker, 2012; Coleman & Maparyan, 2013). Many participants pointed out that they use prayer as a coping mechanism, which keeps them going with the belief that the situation will change in the abusive marriage. Participants indicated that they pray and believe that God will change their situation.

Their response designates that faith and the word of God make them believe that the situation will change. Therefore, a woman with a deep religious conviction may try to get advice from a spiritual advisor and/or other members of her religious community for support. The Womanism theory (1983) points out that the fundamental issue of women's lived experiences, continued-stay in abusive marriages and spirituality cannot be conveniently separated because of the interconnection between human and spiritual relationships. It is not surprising that religious teaching and affiliation provide a significant context for many women as they address experiences of abuse. It was evident from the findings that resilience and perseverance was promoted using the Christianity doctrine. The above point is demonstrated in the following response:

Participant 1: *As a married woman who is facing problems at home, I spend most of my time in church, talking with my pastor helps me because he opens scriptures that comfort me and he prays for me, being a prayerful woman helps because you get comfort.*

Participant 3: *In my church, our lady pastor in women meetings... always encourages us to endure and that nothing is greater than God and we have to do as women in marriage is to pray and ask God to intervene.*

Participant 4: *Bona... I am a believer and I go to church most of the times. I have been taught several times to submit to my husband and that I should not divorce because God hates divorce. I will tell you that I found this thing favouring men even culturally.*

The study findings reveal that church leaders where these abused women belong to encourage women to continue to stay in abusive marriages, and advise them to trust in God who will change their situations. Most participants believed that God will help them and comfort them during difficult times in their abusive marriages. A study conducted by Saine (2012) came to similar findings that if women are abused physically, they believe in their religious convictions that lead them to believe that a wife is subordinate to her husband and that marriage is a lifetime commitment. They further believe that suffering shows a lot of commitment, they are most likely to continue to stay in an abusive marriage much longer. However, research shows that abused women in marriage turn to their pastors, spiritual advisors and other members of their religious community for help and support but often they do not obtain the support they need (Mothoagae, 2015; Parker, 2012; Coleman, Maparyan, 2013).

The study findings revealed that some participants were socialised to culturally believe the deeper meaning of the proverb "*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*". Simply translated, this means that a woman's grave is at the home of her husband. The idioms and sage sayings represent societal and cultural beliefs and values inherited from their forefathers. Literature indicates that over many years of African people, women have been brought up and advised to conform to and follow with care these ancient instructions (Masenya, 2013; Mothoagae, 2015; Shokane & Masoga, 2018). The researcher's view is that "*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*" dictates how married women should live their lives according to cultural standards. It is evident from the findings that women are socialised to believe that proverbs represent their traditional heritage and people's culture. Therefore, married women are expected by their communities, society and families to abide by this proverb. This study reveals that using idiomatic expressions is a way by a society to ensure that married women respect their culture and marriage.

This finding was expressed as follows:

Participant 2: *I grew up somehow knowing that my culture teaches me that I should not become the next example of a failed marriage... Before I got married... I was taken for pre-marital counselling...whereby my aunts and female married relatives started giving me rules on how to behave towards my husband... The proverb “Lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi” and many other things were taught to me primarily that I should be strong even when I face hardships.... My culture teaches me that I should respect elders and do as they tell me... My husband will tell me that he is the head of the family and every family has a leader so he is leading and I must do as he says.*

Participant 12: *My culture always praises women who are strong when faced by situations...Like the proverb “Lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi” was there a long time ago before and It encouraged me to stay in my marriage even when things are worse, I understood that I have to stay with my husband.*

Participant 9: *Nna...I was taught in my entire life in my culture that “Mosadi o swara thipa ka bogaleng” loosely translated that “a mother would go to any length in protecting her children” ... that tells me that I must do anything to protect my children and I did that because I did not want them to grow up without a father.*

Although, cultural justification of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages usually follow a traditional notion that a woman is strong and should endure painful stimuli in marriage, the researcher argues that the decision to continue to stay in an abusive marriage may be informed by cultural values, norms and standards which encourage a married woman to stay strong when experiencing abuse. Culturally, these perceptions are formed within the family origin which are guided by cultural values (Ncube, 2018). While diverse, the Womanism theory (1983) holds at its core that both femininity and culture are equally important to the woman’s existence. The theory supports the idea that culture of the woman, which in the context of this study is the focal point of connection or intersection as opposed to some other characteristics, is not an element of her femininity but rather is a lens through which femininity exists (Baker-Fletcher, 2014).

In this conception, one femininity cannot be stripped from the culture within which it exists (Phillips, 2006).

An understanding of the role played by culture is very important because it can help researchers to build practical strategies, skills or coping mechanisms for women to survive or exit abusive marriages (Baker-Fletcher, 2014; Ncube, 2018). For this study, the researcher conceptualises cultural factors along the same line with Peltzer and Nangolo (2003) as well as Shilubane and Khoza (2014). They argue that cultural factors such as beliefs, values, traditions, marriage customs and laws play an important role on women who continue to stay in an abusive marriage because they are indigenous and conform to cultural standards of married couples.

5.3.2.1 Sub-theme 1: Premarital Counselling

According to Ellence (2011:44), premarital counselling is “viewed among the Batswana ethnic group as a process of inculcating values of perseverance, tolerance, sacrifice and patience in marriage”. This process is conducted before the bride is escorted to her in-law’s residence or during the wedding ceremony and is referred to as “Go laya” in the Setswana language (Ellence, 2011). The study finding indicated that participants considered the proverb “*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*” as providing them with the opportunity to remain in their abusive marriage despite the challenges they were faced with. Some participants were adamant that they were prepared to keep their marriage and persevere. Findings of a similar study conducted by Mbatha (2011) indicated that in the Zulu tradition, a woman should leave her father’s house, marry and remain in that marriage regardless of the challenges she encounters in that marriage. KaNdlondlo (2011:20) supports the finding of the study and Mbatha’s view that in the Zulu tradition, “the wife may only leave in a coffin” because it is expected that her grave should be next to her husband. The study found that the general use of proverbs and language came up strongly from many participants, who sensed that during premarital counselling, “*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*” was hyped as the most important saying relating to how married women’s future life had to be lived in marriage.

Participant 5: *I went through a process called “Go laya” (in Sepedi language). Immediately before I could be officially handed over to my husband. Elders sat down with me and teach me how to behave as a married woman. I was taught to be strong, to be kind and to do anything my husband ask.*

Participant 7: *My mother told me that “lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi” she listened to the elders when they counselled her before she got married. My mother told me that if I want to keep my marriage, I should practice that.*

Participant 14: *Before I got married... I was taken to pre-marital counselling...whereby my aunts and female married relatives started giving me rules on how to behave towards my husband.*

5.3.2.2 Sub-theme 2: Number of Children

Children were found to be an influence to women who remained in abusive marriages. The majority of participants indicated that one of the major factors why women continue to stay in abusive marriages is because of their children. The mothers reported that taking care of their children alone without the help of their husbands would not be good for their children. Few participants did not see the number of children as a reason for their stay. Nonetheless, they all had a strong fundamental belief that children need their father. The Womanism theory (1983) is not only concerned with the liberation of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages, but is also concerned with the struggles of women and their children for the liberation, survival and positive quality of life of the entire oppressed black community.

The study found that women are likely to stay due to the number of children they have with their husbands. However, the literature indicates that at times poor women put the interest of their children first and continue to stay in abusive marriages because of a lack of income (Sanders, 2015; Budzinski, 2018; Ncube, 2018). The following responses were recorded as follows:

Participant 1: *You know, one thing I am sure of.... [Sobbing]... Even if you decide to leave... how are you going to support these children alone?... Even the money I get for a social grant is not enough to support the entire family... Everything I do... I plan for it*

because I cannot afford... Every time when I think of divorcing my husband... the first thing that comes to my mind is my children... I do not want my children to grow up without a father... You cannot pack your bags and go, what about your children?... I have seen children without a father.

Participant 3: *I already have two children with him and the other thing is that the children need his love and they still love him... you know the children do not understand like adults and I have to save my marriage because he is my husband... he married me.*

Participant 5: *I have to stay to try and save my marriage and that my children could live because I had no means to support them on my own... I have stayed so that my children can have bread to it.*

Participants demonstrated that at times poor women put the interest of their children first and continue to stay in abusive marriages. Therefore, having no resources to look after their children is one of the critical motives of why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. Furthermore, they also expressed on how they do not wish to see their children to grow up without a father. The study findings reveal that leaving an abusive marriage can be much more difficult when children are involved. A study conducted by KaNdondlo (2011) found that poverty, unemployment and the number of children are reasons why women continue to stay in abusive marriages.

Participants reported that children need their fathers to grow up in terms of support. Mbatha (2011) states that a woman can feel unable to support her children without the help of her husband, or she might fear for her children's well-being and their safety if she leaves the abusive husband. However, Mesatywa (2014) makes a comparison between a woman who has more than two (2) children and a woman with one (1) or no child. Mesatywa (2014) argues that it may be more difficult for a woman with many children to leave an abusive marriage compared to a woman with no child. Moreover, Nangolo (2003) found that women who stayed for a longer period in their relationships have a higher number of children than those who stayed for a shorter period.

As Walker puts it, “the womanist concept of universality also underscores as its utmost goal the wellbeing of the whole community: survival and wholeness of entire people and love for the Folk” (Walker, 1983: xii).

5.3.2.3 Sub-theme 3: Learned Helplessness

Many women who remain in abusive marriages develop a feeling of helplessness. Because of repeated victimisation, they believe that there is no way they can avoid the abuse (Peterson, 2010). Seligman’s (1976) theory of Learned Helplessness has been used in many studies to explain why many women fail to leave their abusers (Nkuna, 2003; Boesak, 2011; Shivambu, 2015). Research indicates that the feeling of helplessness is the most speedy feeling that women feel following abuse by their husbands (Maier & Siligman, 1976; Peterson, 2010; Mikulincer, 2013). Moreover, women learn that there is no way to put an end to abuse; they give up and accept painful situations. Selingman (1976) found that “repeated abuse to women diminishes a woman’s motivation and her cognitive ability to perceive success is changed hence learned helplessness”. This point is demonstrated in the following responses:

Participant 1 *“In my entire marriage life, I went through a lot and accepting hurtful situations with the hope that my marriage will be better, I do not know what to do anymore... It seems as if I’m not good enough...Marriage is difficult”.*

Participant 3: *“Worse than that... I feel like nothing can help me at all... what can I say”.*

Participant 4: *Yes... after experiencing abuse for several times... I ended up believing that there is no escape...because I convince myself that me and my husband we will be separated by death.*

5.3.2.4 Sub-theme 4: Learned Hopefulness

Living with the hope that tomorrow will be better than yesterday has been the core reason sustaining women who continue to stay in abusive marriages and suffer in these marriages. Some participants expressed the way they embraced the Christian faith and used this faith to instil the hope that one day their lives will change for the better. They expressed this as follows:

Participant 2: *Every day you will hope that everything tomorrow will be better.*

Participant 4: *I never stopped believing that things will be ok. I kept on believing that the situation will be better because if someone is bewitching my husband or it is a curse it will one day come to an end and I will be set free from this miserable experience.*

Participant 5: *Things you do for love...just think about it. What have you done in the hope of being loved and cared for? I continued to stay because I believed that things will change.*

Participant 8: *Yes...it is like when someone comes and advice you to divorce... you will quickly tell the person that you don't understand what I am going through because of that hope... I always had faith that things will be better.*

The above quotes highlight how women who continue to stay in abusive marriages live with the expectations and hope that trials in their stressful lives would eventually change for the better. Some participants remained hopeful that their desires would materialise one day even though their husbands have been found to be irresponsible. Despite the challenges that they were facing in their marriages, they never lose hope. The researcher concluded that having hope or faith helps women to endure painful situations in marriages. It is evident that support from women experiencing the same trauma and having faith help women endure their situations. Finally, the proverb "*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*" encourages them not to despair but to somehow have faith and always believe that they will die and be buried here.

Sometimes women tend to believe that their abusive husbands will change when time goes on. Bejenaru (2011) describes Learned Hopefulness as the hope that regardless of one's own inability to control an abusive situation the abuse will come to an end and a happy marriage will resume. Rehan, Assistant and Masoom (2016) argue that women's hope that their abusive husbands will change is influenced by friends, religion, friends, the media and the context where women live in. The researcher argues that at times, women believe that their role is to change and do what the husband wants. Participants reported that hoping that her husband will change makes her to continue to stay in the marriage. Bejenaru (2011) determined that such hope often provides the foundation for women's decision to remain in an abusive marriage.

5.3 THEME 3: PATRIARCHY

Participants felt that they live in a patriarchal system whereby men and women are not treated equally by society. The study refers to patriarchy as a system in which both women and men partake through action and discourse. However, the researcher argues that women's participation is subjugated to using proverbs that articulate women's subordination to men. Froschauer (2014) describes patriarchy as a system whereby women are considered to be secondary to men. He argues that it is historically developed and a deeply built integrated system of male dominance. Participants viewed men as the privileged group who live comfortably in a patriarchal society that allows them to dominate using idioms to legitimate their male dominance. Participants expressed how they felt that they grew up in a system that favours men. This finding is echoed in the following statements made by participants:

Participant 1: *To be honest, what I know about my culture (Pedi) is that at times my husband is being influenced somehow to be abusive.... Like culturally I am taught that ("monna o laola mosadi" ("the husband rules the wife").*

Participant 6: *At times to be beaten by your husband is justified culturally... I was told several times by my husband that a man is a man and he has a right to correct me in marriage if I am not doing according to his expectations because he has paid "mahadi" lobola in full. He used to tell me that "Dikgomo le jele, so bereka mosadi".*

Participant 4: *I am expected to be submissive to my husband, respect him and always support him. I am expected to look after children and raise them. Ahhh almost everything is expected from a woman you know.*

Participant 2: *The proverb “lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi” and many other things were taught to me primarily that I should be strong even when I face hardships.... My culture teaches me that I should respect elders and do as they tell me... My husband will tell me that he is the head of the family and every family has a leader so he is leading and I must do as he says.*

The study findings revealed that the socialisation of women in marriage is usually done through the use of proverbs and traditions as alluded to by participants of the study. The researcher argues that submissive endurance as prescribed by the proverb “*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*” frequently leads to continued abuse in marriage. The finding reaffirms Mulaudzi’s (2013) findings that men are privileged and can make choices for women in marriage, whereas women have no choice but to be submissive to their husbands. The researcher contends that the proverb “*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*” is still used in many societies to encourage married women to continue to stay in abusive marriages irrespective of what harm and suffering they will experience. Therefore, the oppression of women in marriage is carried and practised under the pretext of cultural expectations of women in marriage as indicated by the proverb.

Many participants shared their experiences that married women had to endure anything in the marriage without the privilege to return to their parents’ home. Therefore, the researcher argues that the proverb “*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*” is part of the socialisation process which had been carried from previous generations until today. Research shows that for married women, the purpose is to keep their marriage intact because the interpretation of the proverb is that marriage is their only home and place (Whiting, 2016; Ncube, 2018; Wood, 2019). These findings are similar to those from the Medical Research Council Organization (2010) that women in rural areas in South Africa have been victims of societal, cultural and religious teachings which reinforce patriarchy.

Scholars such as Shilubane and Khoza (2014) as well as Shivambu (2015) agree that culture and patriarchal structures are common phenomena in African countries that expose a lot of women to abuse, diseases and physical injuries that could result from the abusive behaviour. The Womanism theory (1983) is dedicated to the survival of both females and males, and desires a world where women and men can coexist while maintaining their cultural distinctiveness. The inclusion of men affords black women an opportunity to address gender oppression without openly attacking men (Mandova, 2016).

5.3.1 Subtheme 1: Oppression of women

The oppression of women in marriage has emerged as a subtheme under patriarchy. Moloko-Phiri (2015) argues that “oppression is where there are constraints and restrictions that diminish, immobilise and fashion into subordination to others”. Ncube (2018) proclaims that oppression and marginalisation exist where there are subordinate positions. These result in the loss of self-esteem and power. The current study finds that the oppression of women was expressed in different ways by participants. The findings revealed that the oppression of women was practised and carried out using the proverb “*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*”. In the context of the study, the researcher refers to oppression as mistreatment of married women that results in emotional and physical pain, and continue to suffer due to being trapped in their unhealthy marriages. Mbata (2011) found that the oppression of married women under the banner of culture and religion is deeply rooted and contrasted; and women suffer silently while trying to save their marriage. Culture is used to set expectations that have to be adhered to through proverbs such as “*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*”. The findings were expressed as follows:

Participant 8: *I was told by my elders that I must love and look after my husband several times but I was never told that I must have time to look after myself.*

Participant 12: *When I complained to the elders about the way my husband is treating me; I was told that women of nowadays view everything as abuse and oppression.*

This was just a cultural expectation. I was told that is why some women marry and go and stay in suburbs because they don't want to stay with their in-laws.

Participant 14: *My relatives always monitor and evaluate if I am able to cook, clean and if I am able to take care of a large number of people. They say that the money which was paid for lobola is not a waste if I am a hard worker and I can take care of many people.*

5.3.2 Subtheme 2: Fear of the husband

When participants were asked about how they feel around their husbands, they described fright and fear as part of their reaction to their husbands because of the abuse that they suffer. Some participants explained how the abuse affected them to a point where they fear their husbands as if they have done something wrong. As reported in the following responses, the study found that fear is terrifying and real:

Participant 1: *I am scared of my husband because you don't know if you're going to get beaten or not... Sometimes he tells you he won't beat you and do the opposite... You end up being scared when you see him.*

Participant 8: *If I say I am not scared of him I will be lying because you never know if you are comfortable or not. I just find myself having mixed feelings towards him... sometimes I will be happy and sometimes I will be sad and having this fear that he might beat me if I wrong him.*

Participant 12: *I will say that I do fear him and sometimes I have mixed feelings because you never know when the bad is coming.*

Scholars such as Wallace (1997), Walker (2009) and Sedziafa (2018) describe terror and fear as part of women's reaction to their husbands as a result of physical abuse. Shivambu (2015) also deliberates that women who are abused by their husbands always live-in fear. It becomes worse when they have done something wrong. Moreover, some women who are abused by their husbands remain fearful for the unknown, that anything tragic could happen to them at any time (Mesatywa, 2014). True (2012) found that as a result of women being threatened by their husbands, women remain hyper-vigilant, live in fear and wait with nervousness for the expected abuse.

This statement is supported by Whiting, Oka, and Fife (2016) they argue that the threat of bodily and emotional harm is powerful, abusers use this to control and keep women trapped because they are afraid of their partners.

The researcher argues that such women live in fear because of what they experience as a result of perceived wrongdoing. However, Khoza and Shilubane (2014) argue that abusive husbands instill fear in their women by threatening them, telling them what they will do to them in an event when they want to leave them. Most importantly, Sedziafa (2018) postulates that many times, leaving an abusive marriage is not only emotionally difficult but also life-threatening. The Womanism theory (1983) acknowledges the fact that patrilineality appears to have many advantages for men, especially when looking at the problem of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. In virilocal and patrilineal societies, a significant number of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages had experienced a negative relationship with men who played a critical role in their lives (Thubauville & Gabbert, 2014). The researcher holds the view that women who continue to stay in abusive marriages are positioned to embrace the Womanism theory that rejects all forms of abuse anywhere it appears.

5.3.3 Sub-theme 3: Fear of being alone

Fear of taking a decision to leave the abusive marriage was cited as the main reason for some participants to stay in their marriage. They shared how they were afraid to leave their husbands because they feared poverty and being alone. Abayomi and Olabode (2013:57) came to similar findings that “a woman endured brutalisation and dehumanisation because she was concerned about being alone”. There are many women who continue to stay in abusive marriages because of fear of being alone. They go to great lengths to try to avoid it. Past research has shown that divorce tends to result in a loss of personal relationships. Members of the former couple’s network take the side of one of the two partners (Dykstra & Fokkema, 2007; Ghimire & Samuels, 2014; Rehan, Assistant & Masoom, 2016). The Womanism theory provides a contemporary argument to accusations that black women are more loyal to black men than they are to themselves hence they remain in abusive marriages.

The Womanism theory advocates for the equal value of women in society. Womanism is a social change perspective rooted in black women's everyday experiences and everyday methods of problem-solving in everyday spaces extended to the problem of ending all forms of oppression (Izgarjan & Markov, 2013).

Wong and Mellor (2014) state that for many women, staying in abusive marriages endangers their lives and those of their children. But they are afraid of leaving and experience the feeling of loneliness caused by the possible loss of friends, family or financial devastation. Furthermore, women who continue to stay in abusive marriages also fear the disgrace of being divorced (Adams, 2011). Research on women who continue to stay in abusive marriages with their abusers provides us with social structural and interpersonal explanations for the problem of continued-stay (Wood, 2019; Rehan, Assistant & Masoom, 2016).

The following responses underpin the theme:

Participant 1: *It means if I file for a divorce... I am on my own and I will need his support which he had to support the children... and if I am no longer with him... he will not even bother to support us... I have never imagine being on my own...I am scared of being alone.*

Participant 3: *I wanted to solve the problems within the family and not to be embarrassed in court and I had the fear that my husband would go to jail.*

Participant 5: *I have to stay to try and save my marriage and that my children could live because I had no means to support them on my own.*

5.4 THEME 4: Economic Dependency

There are still many women who stay at home, economically dependent upon their husbands and continue to stay in abusive marriages. A study conducted by Rawal and Agrawal (2016) found that in African societies, the economic dependency of women who rely on their husbands is generally high as compared to the western part of the world.

The economic influence is attested by many studies to be the main predictor of responses that women will have in abusive marriages (Smart, 2013; Price, Pound & Scott, 2014; Sanders, 2015). Fundamentally, the fact that these women continue to stay in abusive marriages can be seen as part of economic dependency which implies that women cannot manage without their husbands' financial help. First of all, the economic dependence of women on their husbands will make it difficult for them to leave (Sanders, 2015). However, some studies designate that in the 21st century, there are many women in the workplace compared to previous centuries (Bejenaru, 2011; True, 2012; Wood, 2019). The researcher is of the view that the abuse of women by their husbands obstructs women's abilities to find alternatives such as leaving the abusive marriage, establishing economic independence and safety.

Participants experienced economic violence. The Domestic Violence Act of South Africa, No, 116 of 1998 refers to economic violence as "the unreasonable deprivation of economic or financial resources to which a (complainant) a woman is entitled under law or which the (complainant) a woman requires out of necessity". When a wife and a husband are fighting in marriage, the husband ends up punishing his wife by not giving her money for clothes, food and other important family necessities. Chantler (2012) describes this behaviour as a maladaptive and passive. On the other hand, the husband uses finances to control the woman which results in the following responses that underpin this theme.

Participant 1: *My child... sometimes my husband doesn't give me money to buy food for my children and myself.*

Participant 15: *He uses the money to control me because he knows I have nothing and I need his money.*

Participant 7: *I depend on my husband for several things like his support financially and to be supported by him as his wife. Eh...It is difficult to live with a man who cannot afford to buy a Maize meal...No woman wants that...Sometimes he disappears with his money...what can you do? It's his money.*

Participant 10: *I depend on him for support financially and... “Watseba” “Shaka la kgosi gale tlale” simply translated that “there’s enough room for women in a man’s place” he might be supporting another woman who knows and even if I sell somethings to support him but he still has to support me financially and still give support to his children financially.*

Participants believed that a husband has to financially support his wife. Therefore, according to participants even if they have other forms of making money, they will still require the husband to financially support them. Participants confirmed that they depend on their husbands for financial support. This dissertation argues that there is a nexus between poverty and economic dependency among women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. This finding is similar to one by WHO (2013), who found that many women continue to stay in abusive marriages because they are economically dependent on their husbands.

The researcher argues that for women in marriage, being financially taken care of by their husbands is very crucial to those who are unemployed. Therefore, having a husband who financially provides to women is central to the survival of the family. Interestingly, many women who rely on their husbands to financially provide for them may find it difficult to divorce. Some participants in the study revealed how they were punished and humiliated by their husbands, but opted not to do anything about it. Economic dependency by women on the male partner and the absence of alternative housing may be the reason why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. A study by Watson and McLanahan (2011) shows that marriage may provide improvements in women’s economic projections more especially if the husband is employed or both partners are employed. Literature suggests that poor mothers who lack secondary or tertiary education and do not have employment history are likely to continue to stay in abusive marriages even when abuse is sustained (Goodmark, 2013; Ganle, Afriyie & Segbefia, 2015; Razavi & Turquet, 2016).

Lack of economic resources for married women has long been suspected of playing a major role in women who continue to stay in abusive marriages (e.g., Lister, 1990; Golden, Perreira, Durrance, 2013; Sanders, 2015). Another researcher came to similar findings that women without economic independence have no power to escape; they continue to stay in abusive marriages (Bejenaru, 2011). Moreover, poor women need economic security and independence to improve their chances of leaving an abusive relationship (Goodmark, 2013). Section 27 (1) of the Constitution of South Africa (1996) states that everyone has a right to have access to sufficient food and water (Sanders, 2015).

This dissertation finds that many women who continue to stay in abusive marriages lack the education, motivation or skills to obtain employment. Interestingly, unemployment among abused women who continue to stay in abusive marriages is high. In brief, economic dependence appears to be a major factor that prevents married women to terminate an abusive marriage. While comments in the study concerning the importance of economic dependence in maintaining abusive marriage are plentiful, clear empirical confirmation is surprisingly sparse.

5.4.1 Subtheme 1: Marrying for financial challenges and poverty

Several married women do not move away from their situations, often because they do not have financial means to escape and start a new life. In the journey to discover why women continue to stay in abusive marriages, the current study found that poverty and financial difficulties make them stay within the confines of their abusive marriages. Watson (2014) and Sanders (2015) supported the finding of this study as the two scholars reveal that coming out of marriage being poor in an African context was dangerous due to the complex nature of African family value systems. This finding is consistent with the Womanism theory (1983), which offers an understanding and explanation of why women continue to stay in their marriages for survival and due to social-economic factors such as poverty, religious and cultural influence and marginalisation.

While this study indicates that financial challenges moderate the tolerance for severe abuse in the marriage, it remains an empirical question whether poor women are less likely to leave their abusive marriages. Furthermore, women who remain in abusive marriages tend to acquire a mechanism to cope with their circumstances. These women may be resilient, motivated, capable and respectable and hope that continuing to stay in their marriage may be used to improve their situations (Sanders, 2015). The finding was expressed as follows:

Participant 6: *Marrying a husband who can provide for me is a dream of every woman. Imagine leaving him and poverty has come in the house on my own... I have to be with him... No one wishes to be poor.*

Participant 10: *Ending these marriages will be something else I don't want... I sleep with my stomach full and I don't wish to be poor out there alone.*

Participant 13: *I do not have financial means to support myself and my children alone because I depend on my husband for many things.*

5.4.2 Subtheme 2: Self-blame and Guilt

Women who continue to stay in abusive marriages suffer self-blame and guilt. Sanders (2015) posits that many women in abusive marriages develop self-blame as many victims of abuse cannot control it or the situation that causes the abuse. The researcher argues that such women try by all means to invest more in the marriage to make it work and to finally blame themselves for the failures. Participants indicated that sometimes they feel responsible for the abuse and blame themselves for failing to make the marriage work. This often becomes guilt: they feel guilty for almost any behaviour (Golden, Perreira & Durrance, 2013). The researcher argues that self-blame is caused by the inability by women in an abusive marriage to express their feelings, which leads them to anger. To support the statement that if there is no place for abused women in marriage to express their feelings, especially anger, these women usually turn it against themselves. This point is elaborated below:

Participant 1: *I have tried everything and I do not know what to do anymore...I feel like I have failed as a married woman.*

Participant 4: *I should just change the way I behave maybe he will at least appreciate me and stop blaming me because I think I am not good enough.*

Participant 8: *Maybe I must respect him more and I must be doing something wrong.*

5.4.3 Subtheme 3: Denial and Avoidance

Most women who continue to stay in abusive marriages find it difficult to openly accept that they are in an abusive marriage. In the context of this study, denial refers to a situation where a woman who continues to stay in an abusive marriage is unable to acknowledge and admit that she is being subjected to abuse. The study found that denial may be influenced by the fact that sometimes women are ashamed and embarrassed to talk about their abusive husbands. However, a study conducted by Ullman, Peter-Hagene and Relyea (2014) found that such denial by women who continue to stay in abusive marriages may be influenced by the myth that the abuse of women in marriage is a private and family matter. Moreover, literature shows that refusal to talk about abusive marriage may be an attempt to try to cope with the painful situation (Goodmark, 2013; Peterson, 2010; Sedziafa, Tenkorang & Owusu, 2018). Although Mikulincer (2013) found that women who are in denial of their abuse have learned to make numerous accommodation for their abusive spouses, nevertheless, some women in abusive marriages are afraid of expressing their anger against abusive spouses for fear of provoking the situation. Most participants reported that they denied that their marriage is abusive. The following responses support this assertion:

Participant 8: *I was reluctant to share my experience with friends because I thought that they will laugh at me and I kept on denying that my husband he is abusive by covering up for him that it was just a mistake and he truly cares for me. I felt ashamed and I did not want to expose him.*

Participant 10: *I did not open up because I did not look at it and see it as abuse...*

Participant 13: *I kept on keeping quiet for many years about the things that was happening to me to a point that I felt like I have ignored the fact that my husband abused me for many years...I thought I was protecting his image.*

Participant 14: *I used to cover up for him... I was deeply ashamed to open up and I hid my reality from everyone and myself... I was also so convinced that I didn't even realise how serious the abuse was becoming.*

Participant 7: *I just kept myself busy in the house to avoid him and keep quiet.*

The study also found out that some participants keep themselves occupied in their abusive marriages to avoid facing their everyday problems and thinking about their abuse. The researcher considers that at times women who continue to stay in abusive marriages may believe that denial is the most effective way of avoiding being subjected to further abuse and brutality. Barnett et al. (1997:43) state that “the basic psychological defence mechanisms of rationalisation and denial help the woman achieve this goal”. Some abused women fail to acknowledge the brutality that they are suffering from while they continue to stay in abusive marriages.

5.5 Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to present, analyse and interpret the empirical findings from data collected on women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. The findings and interpretations were grouped into themes. The findings were based on participants' experiences in their marriage. The related literature assisted in supporting and revealing important information about women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. The quotes were written in italics, and the researcher's argument was written in normal font. The themes were relevant to the study and revealed culturally inherited proverbs which inspire women to preserve and continue to stay in abusive marriage despite victimisation and abuse. The next chapter concentrates on the summary, recommendations, limitations and conclusion.

CHAPTER 6 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on data presentation, analysis and interpretation of empirical findings. Chapter 6 presents the research conclusions and report limitations of the study. Recommendations are suggested and limitations are addressed followed by the conclusion of the current study.

6.2 RESTATEMENT OF THE MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

The researcher drew his motivation from an urgent need to investigate why women continue to remain in abusive marriages. Research indicates that wife abuse by their husbands has been on the public agenda for many years but the phenomenon is still not studied sufficiently, nor are their effective measures in place to deal with the scale of the problem (Seabi, 2012; Bejenaru, 2011; Sanders, 2015; WHO, 2012). Although several authors and organisations such as Trevillion, Oram, Feder and Howard (2012), Herman (2015) as well as WHO (2013) conducted studies of violence against women, there is a greater need to study why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. The scope of this study was, however, limited to women who continue to remain in abusive marriages. Nevertheless, researchers such as McNally and Mannan (2013) and Ellsberg, Gennari, Arango, Contreras, Morton, Kiplesund and Watts (2015) tapped into the world of women abuse as a challenge. The motivation of this study envisions was to fill the gap of scientific knowledge that attempts to find out why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. The researcher was also motivated by his desire to acquire experience in the qualitative research method. The design of the proposed study allowed him to conduct research and to add knowledge and experience in the field of research.

6.3 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The title of the study is the phenomenon of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages: a case study of selected women in Mankweng area, Limpopo Province. The study design was a case study. The sample was made up of sixteen (16) participants. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data, which were audio-recorded, transcribed and coded into themes using Thematic Content Analysis. The Womanism theory (1983) was used to understand the influence of culture, religion and society in women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. The Womanism theory was used as an explanation of why women continue to stay in abusive marriages.

6.4 RESTATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The abuse of married women is a serious problem that affects many (McNally & Mannan, 2013). This is the case irrespective of class or ethnicity. Seabi (2012) found that between 10-60 per cent of married women of reproductive age in South Africa have had an experience of abuse in their marriage. Interestingly, and in line with the above statement, societal, cultural and religious teachings seem to influence the acceleration of abuse of women in marriages. However, evidence shows that women continue to stay in abusive marriages even when the abuse is sustained (Eckstein, 2011). The researcher agrees with Masenya's (1996) contention that religious teachings, cultural norms, and some Biblical verses reinforce the patriarchal system, and contain elements that oppress women.

The Medical Research Council Organization (2010) found that women in rural areas in South Africa have been victims of societal, cultural and religious teachings which reinforce patriarchy. In support of the above-mentioned statement, WHO (2010) states that patriarchal structures are common phenomena in African countries and expose a lot of women to abuse as well as to diseases and physical injuries that could result from the abusive behaviour. Women's unequal status is persistent in patriarchal societies.

There is a saying in Northern Sotho which states: “*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*”. Simply translated, it implies that a married woman has to constantly stay at the bridegroom’s home no matter what problems she may encounter, including enduring abuse by her partner. As a result of such teachings, women may continue to stay in an abusive marriage even though the abuse is sustained.

Women who are in abusive marriages continue to make justifications as to why they remain in such relationships (Eckstein, 2011). As noted by Eckstein (2011), some women in abusive marriages focus on positive social aspects such as love for their partners, instead of negative aspects of abuse from to cope with their marriages. Based on previous research conducted on the abuse of women in marriages, there seems to be several explanations forcing abused women to stay in abusive marriages (WHO, 2010; MRC, 2010; Seabi, 2012). Herman (2015) concurs that most women may continue to stay in abusive marriages despite negative consequences. These include mostly fear of being alone, lack of a safe haven, economic dependence, and fear of losing security or surviving on moments of great happiness (Eckstein, 2011).

The researcher opines that patriarchal structures and culture are the root causes of women who continue to remain in abusive marriages. Mies (2014) argues that males are dominant and are considered authoritative figures while women are considered to be weak in most African countries. However, women abuse in marriages has been traditionally hidden within homes; and there has been, until quite recently, a general lack of awareness of the seriousness and extent of the problem (Seabi, 2012). Nonetheless, Shilubane and Khoza (2014) found that a woman who is abused may be too embarrassed and humiliated to speak out as a result of a culture that encourages patriarchy. As a result, this limits the effectiveness of women to report abuse or to leave their abusive marriages.

6.5 RESTATEMENT OF THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

6.5.1 Aim of the study

The study sought to describe reasons why women continue to stay in abusive marriages.

6.5.2 Objectives of the study

The study pursued the following objectives:

- To identify cultural and religious aspects that sustain patriarchal tendencies to abuse women.

This objective has been achieved in the current study. The study findings revealed that women were socialised to culturally believe the deeper meaning of the proverb “*lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi*” which, simply translated means that a woman’s grave is at the home of her husband. The study findings also show that religion teaches women to be submissive to their husbands.

- To appraise the nexus of economic dependency and poverty among abused women in an abusive marriage.

This objective has been achieved. The study reveals that there are still many women who stay at home, economically dependent upon their husbands and continue to stay in abusive marriages. The study also found that there is a nexus between poverty and economic dependency among women who continue to stay in abusive marriages.

- To determine how loneliness or fear of being alone influences women to remain in abusive marriages.

This objective has been achieved. The study found that women were afraid to leave their husbands because they feared poverty and being alone. The study also shows that many women continue to stay in abusive marriages because of fear of being alone and go to great lengths to try to avoid it.

6.6 CONCLUSION

The researcher sought to describe experiences of women who continue to remain in abusive marriages. The study was qualitative and used Thematic Content Analysis to develop themes. Issues which emerged and impacted negatively on women who continue to stay in abusive marriages were economic dependency, patriarchy, cultural influence and religious influence. Recommendations based on the findings of the study have been indicated. The research question of the study was answered and all objectives were achieved. The researcher believes that the study may contribute to the empowerment and support of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages for several reasons. Moreover, it may contribute to the body of knowledge regarding support, caring and emancipation of abused women who continue to stay in abusive marriages.

6.7 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

- There should be a continued mass education about abuse for both men and women on how to champion for a no-violence between married couples. Moreover, this education awareness should prioritise and focus mainly on issues of marital roles, cultural issues, societal expectations and gender equality that promote the prevention of cultural-based violence against women who continue to stay in abusive marriages.
- There ought to be a new approach to educating the public in general about religious matters because at times religion is used to reinforce the suppression of married women's rights.
- More workshops should be conducted for parents, religious leaders and educators who may unintentionally encourage gender stereotypes on women who continue to stay in abusive marriages.
- Women in marriage should be empowered and educated on human rights issues.
- Communities have to acknowledge that men and women are equal in terms of human rights and therefore should be treated as such by everyone.

- Unemployed married women who are exposed to abuse by their husbands should be referred to social available programmes such the Victim Empower Programme and others to improve their economic status.
- Abused women in marriage should be treated with sympathy and empathy. Therefore, professionals dealing with abused women in marriage should treat them with respect and not be judgmental so that it becomes easy for other women to open up about their abuse.
- It is recommended that more support services in communities such as Thuthuzela should be opened whereby abused women stay and where they are supported by professional social workers and nurses trained in dealing with abused women.
- All national, provincial and local healthcare, private and public structures that are used to support women should be identified and made known to the public at all cost. These structures should work together to achieve their goals of caring for and supporting women who are abused.
- It is recommended that married women should be encouraged to be honest and share their experiences without fear with people around them.
- Children of women who choose to remain in abusive marriages should be provided with psycho-social support to help them cope with their situations.
- The study findings indicated that culture plays a role in influencing women to continue to stay in abusive marriages. Therefore, it is recommended that on a societal level, communities reinforce gender equality and change stereotypes regarding the role played by women in marriage.

6.8 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Based on the findings of the study, the following ideas can serve as possible topics for future research:

- Development of a culturally sensitive policy to address cultural norms and other social stress that affect women who continue to stay in abusive marriages.
- The availability of referral for abused women, especially in rural communities.
- The effectiveness of policies that help women in abusive marriages.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY

Wiseman Ntlhari Mathebula
University of Limpopo
Sovenga
0727

Head of Department
Department of Health
Polokwane
0699

RE: Request for Permission to collect data

I **Wiseman Ntlhari Mathebula**, Student No. **201311342**, hereby request permission to conduct a research study at the Department of Health, Khuseleka a One-Stop Centre for surviving women victims of abuse. I am currently enrolled in the Master of Social Work programme at the University of Limpopo and I am in the process of writing my Master's dissertation.

The purpose of my research study is to find out why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. I am looking for 20 patients that have been treated as being abused by their husbands.

Your approval to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

.....

0793207082 or Wisemanntlhari@gmail.com

APPENDIX B: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY

Wiseman Ntlhari Mathebula
University of Limpopo
Sovenga
0727

Head of Department
Department of Social Development
Polokwane
0699

RE: Request for Permission to collect data

I **Wiseman Ntlhari Mathebula**, Student No. **201311342**, hereby request permission to conduct a research study at the Department of Social Development, Khuseleka, a One-Stop Centre for women victims of abuse. I am currently enrolled in the Master of Social Work programme at the University of Limpopo and I am in the process of writing my Master's dissertation.

The purpose of my research study is to find out why women continue to stay in abusive marriages. I am looking for 20 patients that have been treated as being abused by their husbands.

Your approval to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

.....

0793207082 or Wisemanntlhari@gmail.com

APPENDIX C: DATA COLLECTION TOOL; SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Research topic: The phenomenon of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages:
A case study of selected women in Mankweng area, Limpopo Province

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF WOMEN WHO CONTINUE TO STAY IN AN ABUSIVE MARRIAGE

1. Age:
2. Educational level:
3. Employment status:
4. Number of children
5. Religious affiliation

SECTION B: TO ESTABLISH SOCIETAL, CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS ASPECTS WHICH ENGENDER PATRIARCHAL TENDENCIES

6. Would you kindly tell me a bit about yourself, who you are, and where did you grow up?
7. Can you tell me about the abuse. At what stage in your marriage did it start? What happened or what triggered it?
8. In which way does society play a role in your marriage?
9. Does your culture support women abuse? If yes elaborate
10. What are your cultural expectations of a woman in a marriage?
11. What role does your culture play in women abuse?
12. Does your religion support women to stay in abusive marriages? Probe
 - Have you ever reported the abuse to religious leaders?
 - What were the outcomes?

13. What measures did you initiate to bring the abuse to an end, and how successful have you been?

SECTION C: APPRAISE NEXUS OF ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY AND POVERTY AMONG ABUSED WOMEN IN AN ABUSIVE MARRIAGE.

14. Are you financially dependent on your husband? Please elaborate.

15. What made you continue in this marriage even though the abuse is sustained? Please elaborate.

16. In your opinion, do you think poverty contribute to women abuse? Please elaborate.

Section D: Determine how loneliness or fear of being alone influences women to remain in abusive marriages.

17. What are some of your fears or worries concerning divorce?

Appendix C

TSHEDIMOŠO YA TLALELETŠO C: LENANEO LA DIPOLEDIŠANO

HLOGOTABA YA NYAKIŠIŠO: Ponagalo ya basadi ba magaeng ba ba tšwelago pele go dula ka gare ga tlaišo manyalong: Tšweletšo ye e tseneletšego ka basadi bao ba hlaotšwego ba tikologo Mankweng

KAROLO YA A: TSHEDIMOŠO YA BASADI BA BA TŠWELAGO PELE GO DULA KA GARE GA TLAIŠO MANYALONG

1. Bogolo:
2. Maemo a dithuto:
3. Maemo a mošomo
4. Palo ya bana:
5. Tumelo:

KAROLO YA B: GO HLAMA DIKOKWANE TŠA BOSETŠHABA, SETŠO LE TUMELO TŠEO DI HLOLAGO MEKGWA YA TAOLO YA BANNA

6. Ka botho o ka mpotša gannyane ka wena, ke wena mang, le go re o goletše kae?
7. O ka mpotša ka tlaišo gore e thomile maemeng afe lenyalong la gago? Go diregile eng goba e rotošitšwe ke eng?
8. Setšhaba se bapala karolo efe lenyalong la gago le gona ka mokgwa mang?
9. E ka ba setšo sa geno se thekga tlaišo ya basadi? Ge e le gore go bjalo, leatša kgonthe ya seo.
10. Go ya ka setšo sa geno go letetšwe eng go mosadi ka gare ga lenyalo?
11. Setšo sa geno se bapala karolo efe tlaišong ya basadi?
12. E ka ba tumelo ya gago e thekga basadi go dula ka gare ga manyalo ao a ba tlaišago? Go go hlotla:
 - E sa le wa bega tlaišo go baetapele ba sedumedi?
 - Dipoelo e bi le dife?
13. Ke matsapa afe a o a tšerego go fediša tlaišo, la gona o atlegile go kaakang?

KAROLO YA C: TEKOLO YA MAEMO A A HLAKAHLAKANEGO A MOKGWA WA BOIPHEDIŠO LE BODIIDI MAGARENG GA BASADI BA BA TLAIŠWAGO KA GARE GA MANYALO

14. E ka ba o ithekgile ka monna wa gago go tša mašeleng?

15. Ke eng se se dirago go re o tšwele pele ka gare ga lenyalo le le ge tlaišo e golela pele? Hlaloša!

16. Go ya ka wena, o nagana gore bodiidi bo na le seabe go tlaišo ya basadi? Etšwa tema!

KAROLO YA D: LAETŠA KA MO BOTEE GOBA LETŠHOGO LA GO BA TEE DI HUETŠAGO BASADI GO BA KA GARE GA TLAIŠO MANYALONG

17. Ke eng tše dingwe tše o di tšhogago goba o di belaelago mabapi le tlhalo?

Appendix D: Consent Form

I Wiseman Ntlhari Mathebula, I am an MA student from the University of Limpopo researching on the phenomenon of rural women who continue to stay in abusive marriages: A case study of selected women in Mankweng area, Limpopo Province. My study leader is Prof S SITHOLE. The following is information about the study so that you can make an informed decision.

1. AIM OF THE STUDY

The study seeks to describe the experiences of rural women who continue to stay in abusive marriages.

2. PROCEDURE

Participation in this study is voluntary. You have the choice to discontinue the interview at any stage should you feel uncomfortable without providing any reason.

- You have the right to choose the place of the interview within the village where confidentiality will be possible.
- With your permission, the interview will take 30-60 minutes long.
- The interview will be audio- recorded.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY

All information, including your identity and responses in this interview, will be kept confidential and only used for research. All audio-recorded materials, transcripts of the interview and completed interview schedules will be safely stored where it cannot be accessed by unauthorised users in a computer which is password protected.

All materials will then be stored in a storeroom at the Department of Social Work at the University of Limpopo, prohibiting all people, including the researcher and the study leader, from having access to the materials. The researcher will maintain anonymity as far as possible during the research process.

4. DECEPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

You as the participant will be briefed about the aim of the research and no information will be withheld from you in order to allow you to make an informed decision regarding your participation in the research and to ensure that there is no deception.

5. BENEFITS AND RISKS

- The information gained from the research can assist everyone in an abusive relationship. Other professionals will be able to identify gaps in knowledge relating to women abuse in rural communities, and will encourage the development of relevant programmes.
- Participants will be counselled before the interview. However, in case of any harm, participants will be referred to appropriate service providers.

6. COSTS

There will be no cost to you as a result of your participation in this study.

7. PAYMENT

You will receive no payment for participation. You are welcome to ask any questions to the researcher before you decide to give consent. You are also welcome to contact me as a student or my study leader if you have any further questions concerning your participation in the study.

8. VOLUNTEER STATEMENT

I agree that the procedures and processes of the interview have been clearly explained to me; that my identity and responses will be kept private and confidential; and that I may choose to discontinue the interview at any stage should I feel uncomfortable without providing any reason.

I also consent that the interview is audio recorded digitally and electronically so that data provided be analysed and findings of the study reported for research purposes. This is the only place where your name will appear otherwise you can mark with an "X".

Name of ParticipantSignature of Participant.....

I, Wiseman Ntlhari Mathebula as the interviewer have explained all procedures to be followed in the interview, the risks and the benefits involved and my ethical obligations.

Signature of Interviewer

Cell no: Mr WN Mathebula (079 320 7082)

Prof S Sithole: 082 200 5109 /015 268 2930

9. FEEDBACK OF FINDINGS

The findings of the research will be shared with you as soon as it is available if you are interested. We want to thank you for participating in the study.

Appendix E: Faculty Approval Letter



University of Limpopo
Faculty of Humanities
Executive Dean
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 4895, Fax: (015) 268 3425, Email: Satsope.maoto@ul.ac.za

DATE: 10 June 2019

NAME OF STUDENT: MATHEBULA, WN
STUDENT NUMBER: [201311342]
DEPARTMENT: MSW – Social Work
SCHOOL: Social Sciences

Dear Student

FACULTY APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL (PROPOSAL NO. FHDC2019/5/16)

I have pleasure in informing you that your MSW proposal served at the Faculty Higher Degrees Meeting on 29 May 2019 and your title was approved as follows:

TITLE: THE PHENOMENON OF WOMEN WHO CONTINUE TO STAY IN ABUSIVE MARRIAGES: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED WOMEN IN MANKWENG AREA, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

Note the following:

Ethical Clearance	Tick One
In principle the study requires no ethical clearance, but will need a TREC permission letter before proceeding with the study	<input type="checkbox"/>
Requires ethical clearance (Human) (TREC) (apply online) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Requires ethical clearance (Animal) (AREC) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>

Yours faithfully

Prof RS Maoto,

Executive Dean: Faculty of Humanities

Director: Prof SL Sithole
Supervisor: Prof SL Sithole

Finding solutions for Africa

Appendix F: Ethical Clearance



University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 3935, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: anastasia.ngobe@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 4 September 2019

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/222/2019: PG

PROJECT:

Title: The phenomenon of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages: A case study of selected women in Mankweng area, Limpopo Province.
Researcher: WN Mathebula
Supervisor: Prof SL Sithole
Co-Supervisor/s: N/A
School: Social Science
Degree: Master of Social Work


PROF P MASOKO
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

Note:

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

Finding solutions for Africa

Appendix G: LREC Approval Letter

CONFIDENTIAL



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

TO: MS R MOKOBANE

FROM: DR T MABILA

CHAIRPERSON: LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (LPREC)

DATE: 24th JUNE 2019

SUBJECT: THE PHENOMENON OF WOMEN WHO CONTINUE TO STAY IN ABUSIVE MARRIAGES: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED WOMEN IN MANKWENG AREA, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

RESEARCHER: MATHEBULA WN

Dear Colleague

The above researcher's research proposal served at the Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee (LPREC) meeting on the 24th June 2019.

The committee has noted that the researcher has displayed the understanding and application of ethical considerations. The committee is satisfied with the ethical soundness of the proposal.

Decision: The research proposal is granted full approval and ethical clearance.

Regards
Chairperson: Dr T Mabila

Secretariat: Ms J Mokobi

Date: 12/07/2019

Appendix H: Department of Health Approval Letter



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Ref : LP_201907_007
Enquires : Letseparela K
Tel : 015-293 6028
Email : Kurhula.Hlomane@dhsd.limpopo.gov.za

Wiseman Ntlhari Mathebula
Department of Social Work

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN DEPARTMENTAL FACILITIES

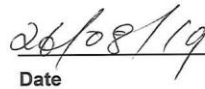
Your Study Topic as indicated below;

The phenomenon of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages: A case study of selected women in Mankweng Area, Limpopo Province Researcher: Mathebula WN

1. Permission to conduct research study as per your research proposal is hereby Granted.
2. Kindly note the following:
 - a. Present this letter of permission to the institution supervisor/s a week before the study is conducted.
 - b. In the course of your study, there should be no action that disrupts the routine services, or incur any cost on the Department.
 - c. After completion of study, it is mandatory that the findings should be submitted to the Department to serve as a resource.
 - d. The researcher should be prepared to assist in the interpretation and implementation of the study recommendation where possible.
 - e. The approval is only valid for a 1-year period.
 - f. If the proposal has been amended, a new approval should be sought from the Department of Health
 - g. Kindly note that, the Department can withdraw the approval at any time.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated


Head of Department


Date

Private Bag X9302 Polokwane
Fidel Castro Ruz House, 18 College Street. Polokwane 0700. Tel: 015 293 6000/12. Fax: 015 293 6211.
Website: <http://www.limpopo.gov.za>

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Appendix I: Transcripts

INTERVIEW DETAILS

PARTICIPANT NO.: 01

DATE : 27 May 2020

VENUE : Victim Empowerment Centre (Mankweng)

DURATION : 17 Minutes

Interviewer: Thank you for taking your time to participate in this study which intends to discover the phenomenon of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. I will start the interview by asking you a few of general questions about yourself. You are welcome to stop me at any time during the interview should you wish to end the interview. If you do not understand any question asked, I will be happy to clarify or simplify the question. The nature of the study is emotion-focused and may provoke negative feelings and I believe that the counselling has prepared you about the potential impact of the study and enabled you to be open and share your experience in details. However, if any harm is experienced, referral will be made for professional assistance by a Social Worker. I am asking that you speak loudly for the purpose of recording so that the audio will be clear.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

- Age: 48 Years old
- Educational Level: Primary Education
- Employment Status: Unemployment
- Number of Children: 4
- Religious Affiliation: Christianity
- Years in marriage: 21 years old

Interviewer: Would you kindly tell me a bit about yourself, who you are, and where did you grow up?

Participant: *Well... I was born and raised in Moletjie and grew up there. I am a 48 years old woman who went to school up until to Grade 6. I am a loving and a caring woman towards my husband. I got pregnant for my first child at the age of 19 and I was chased at home to go and stay with my husband.*

Interviewer: Would you kindly share your lived experience pertaining to your relationship? At what stage in your marriage did your abusive relationship start? What happened or what triggered it?

Participant: *Uhm that part... (After a short pause) ... Eish mara life... You know when things are still going well you can never think that one day things can completely change. I have experienced abuse since 1997 after giving birth to my second child. My husband started drinking and at times come back home late. This could happen once after a while and sometimes the year could end without him laying a hand on me. That on its own made me believe that he is sorry for the wrong things he did. He started shouting at me and calling me with names when he is drunk and putting a blame on me if things are not good in the house. So, it started with insults and later on moved to another level where he will beat me. He will beat me and later want to have sex with me immediately after physically abusing me. Sometimes he will be controlling me and be interested to know what I do when he is not around.*

Interviewer: How would you feel when with/or around your husband?

Participant: *I am scared of my husband because you don't know if you're going to get beaten or not... Sometimes he tells you he won't beat you and do the opposite... You end up being scared when you see him.*

Interviewer: Did you open up about the abuse in your marriage?

Participant: *In the beginning... I was ashamed of myself and I did not want to be the example of a woman who is abused. I kept it with myself and it made me believe there is something which I am doing that is wrong. So, I will try by all to improve or please my husband. Surprisingly, things will get worse. The first time I opened up was to tell my friend and I felt like I should have not done that because when my friend sees me, it is like I am being exposed about my abusive situation.*

Interviewer: Did you have faith or believed that the situation will be better?

Participant: *Of course, ... Yes... my husband use to cry sometimes and ask me to forgive him and promise that he was drunk and it will never happen again...joooh... When you are in that situation such words will comfort you and make you believe things will change.*

Interviewer: Does your culture support women abuse?

Participant: *... I will say Yes...*

Interviewer: Could you please elaborate?

Participant: *To be honest, what I know about my culture (Pedi) is that at times my husband is being influenced somehow to be abusive.... Like culturally I am taught that (“monna o laola mosadi” (“the husband rules the wife”) (aah, bona) For example, I grew up seeing my father beating my mom and my siblings. When you ask why are things that way and I was told that the father has a right to physically correct his wife because he is the leader of the family... Sometimes I am told that a woman must be strong and you will overcome such experience... When I got married...eish...[singh]... I was given rules that I must respect him and be submissive to him...*

Interviewer: What are your cultural expectations of a woman in a marriage?

Participant: *...I am expected... not to talk back or shout at my husband... aah..I must respect him at all cost. I am expected to cook, clean the house and look after my children and take care of my husband needs.*

Interviewer: What role does your culture play in women abuse?

Participant: *... Culture teach[es] us to be strong... and...ehh... to be faithful to our husbands... You know I think that women are not favoured culturally... You know why I am saying that is because many responsibilities culturally are given to men and as women... We... are given less responsibilities.... as if we are just supporters.*

Interviewer: Do you think religion support women to stay in abusive marriages?

Participant: ...*Ohh...I think yes...*

Interviewer: Can't you kindly elaborate?

Participant: ...*For all the years of my marriage... I cannot remember a single day whereby I was advised by my pastor or any church member to divorce my husband. I had come across scriptures that are against divorce... I can't remember them but I know they are there... As a married woman who is facing problems at home... I spend most of my time in[at] church... talking with my pastor helps me a lot... because... he opens scriptures that comfort me and he prays for me... being a prayerful woman helps because you get comfort.*

Interviewer: How many times, if you may recall, have you reported these senses of abuses to your religious leader/s?

Participant:*Ahhh...Many times... I have severally reported him to my pastor and.... Attempts by my fellow church congregants were taken with no luck.... And many people whom are close to me also talked to him about that... and failed.*

Interviewer: What were the outcomes?

Participant: ...*For those periods... he will change for about a week or so... a month and sometime later things will go back to the same situation.... when you are called by names.*

Interviewer: What measures were likely taken or you initiated to bring the abuse to an end? Where they successfully implemented as supposed to?

Participant: ...*I tried many things... I talked with his friends and family members... to talk to him. I went home and stay for three weeks and he sends people to come and take me back and promise to change. I once opened a case against him and he was later released on bail and came back to the same home and house which we share and the trauma was big...*

Interviewer: How depended are you on your husband?

Participant: *Yes... I depend on him for many things which he should provide for me... and my children...ehh.. because we use the money to buy many things we depend on in the house. Sometimes children will need money to buy clothes which you will find that I do not have and we ask him as a father to assist...*

Interviewer: Are you saying if you were affording to get the things which you just mentioned, things could have been done differently?

Participant: *You know my husband tends to think that because I depend on him for many things it looks like as if he owns me. That is why sometimes he would even tell me that I am not spending his money well to his satisfactory... I buy useless things...such as hair weaves...ear rings....*

Interviewer: Why would you continue with this marriage despite the abusive actions you have suffered?

Participant: *You know, one thing I am sure of.... [Crying]... It is only situation that can make you do things you don't like. Even if you decide to leave... **how are you going to support these children alone?**... Even the money I get for social grant it is not enough to support the entire family... Everything I do... I plan for it because I cannot afford... Every time when I think of divorcing my husband... the first thing that come to my mind is my children... I do not want my children to grow up without a father...You cannot pack your bags and go, what about your children?... I have seen children without a father.*

Interviewer: In your opinion, do you think poverty contribute to women abuse?

Participant: *Yes ... I think poor people suffers a lot compared to those who are not because if you know how will your children survive without their father you might easily go...*

Interviewer: What are some of your fears or worries concerning to a divorce?

Participant: *It means if I file a divorce... I am on my own and I will need his support which he had to support the children... and if I am no longer with him... he will not even bother to support them.*

Interviewer: **Have you ever felt to be helplessness?**

Participant: *In my entire marriage life... I went through a lot and accepting hurtful situations with the hope that my marriage will be better, I do not know what to do anymore... It seems as if I'm not good enough...Marriage is difficult. I once went back home and while I was there, my mother will ask me when are you going back to your home...remember you are a visitor here...you need to fix things with your husband. Yoooooh... that was painful because I had to find ways to be back with my husband.*

INTERVIEW DETAILS

PARTICIPANT NO.: 02

DATE : 21 September 2020

VENUE : Victim Empowerment Centre

DURATION : 14 Minutes

Interviewer: Thank you for taking your time to participate in this study which intends to discover the phenomenon of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages. I will start the interview by asking you a few of general questions about yourself. You are welcome to stop me at any time during the interview should you wish to end the interview. If you do not understand any question asked, I will be happy to clarify or simplify the question. The nature of the study is emotion-focused and may provoke negative feelings and I believe that the counselling has prepared you about the potential impact of the study and enabled you to be open and share your experience in details. However, if any harm is experienced, referral will be made for professional assistance by a Social Worker. I am asking that you speak loudly for the purpose of recording so that the audio will be clear.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

- Age: 39
- Educational Level: Tertiary Level
- Employment Status: Employed
- Number of Children: 3
- Religious Affiliation: Christianity
- Years in marriage: 12

Interviewer: Would you kindly tell me a bit about yourself, who you are, and where did you grow up?

Participant: *I've always been a very caring, friendly and creative person. I have been so lucky to have went to school... I grew up in a big and loving family.... I had the privilege of receiving a private education... I grew up in Lenyenye and then later moved to Lebowakgomo... Later my husband and myself moved to Ga-Molepo.*

Interviewer: Would you kindly share your lived experience pertaining to your relationship?

Participant: *This is not simple to explain... (Pause.... Later After about few seconds) ...My husband started gradually by isolating me from my family and my friends and made me believe that he is the only one that matters in my life. It's important to understand that an abusive relationship doesn't start by being told that you're stupid or incapable. My husband took away my self-esteem and self-belief by convincing me that I am responsible for the abusive actions. I endured emotional, psychological and physical abuse of this man that I selflessly loved and whom I believe he love me back. [...Crying... swollen face] ... 2016 was the worst year of my life. I was absolutely convinced that the whole thing was my fault and that I needed to fix it to make the problems go away. When you endure so much violence on a daily basis and in such an unpredictable way... it makes you feel physically and mentally exhausted. I was pushed around, hit, pinched, spat out in my face, he broke bones in my foot...I did not really understand why things was happening this way.*

Interviewer: How do you feel around your husband?

Participant: *I sometimes believe that this guy knows exactly what he is doing. It's like abuse is about control... He makes me fear him for no reason. He will sometimes promise me that he will beat me to dearth and that on its own will make me to be afraid of him. At times he is deeply moody and sometimes he is excited.*

Interviewer: Did you open up about the abuse in your marriage?

Participant: *I was deeply ashamed to open up and I hid my reality from everyone and myself... I was also so convinced that I didn't even realise how serious the abuse was becoming... In fact, ... I didn't even realise I was being abused... I use to cover up for him...*

Interviewer: Did you have faith or believed that the situation will be better?

Participant: *Every day you will hope that everything tomorrow will be better.*

Interviewer: Does your culture support women abuse?

Participant: *...ehh ...Somehow... yes.*

Interviewer: Could you please elaborate?

Participant: *I grew up somehow knowing that my culture teaches me that I should not become the next example of a failed marriage... Before I got married... I was taken to a pre-marital counselling...whereby my aunts and female married relatives started giving me rules on how to behave towards my husband... The proverbs “lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi” and “Mosadi a duli tseleng” and many other things was taught to me primarily that I should be strong even when I face hardships.... My culture teaches me that I should respect elders and do as they tell me... My husband will tell me that he is the head of the family and every family has a leader so he is leading and I must do as he says.*

Interviewer: What are your cultural expectations of a woman in a marriage?

Participant: *I am expected to support my husband and always be there for him. Raise children and looking after the whole family... All sorts of kitchen works are expected from me as a wife... I am expected to know how to cook... clean and do all sorts of female things...like house chores.*

Interviewer: What role does your culture play in women abuse?

Participant: *At times to be beaten by your husband is justified culturally... I was told several times by my husband that a man is man and he has a right to correct me in marriage if I am not doing according to his expectations because he has paid “mahadi” lobola in full. He uses to tell me that “Dikgomo le jele, so bereka mosadi”.*

Interviewer: Do you think religion support women to stay in abusive marriages?

Participant: I think yes.

Interviewer: Can you kindly explain

Participant: *In our church the Zion Christian Church it does not support divorce but however teaches us to find ways to save our marriage. Our pastors always preach that “Kgotso ebe le lena” and we should find ways to sort our differences.*

Interviewer: How many times did you reported the abuse to religious leaders?

Participant: *... Ohh A lot of times....*

Interviewer: What were the outcomes?

Participant: *... You will report to people that your close to and the issue will somehow find its way to some pastors... They will call us to talk to us and at that point things will be better for some period not knowing when will things turn again...*

Interviewer: What measures did you initiate to bring the abuse to an end, and how successful have you been?

Participant: *The first thing I did was of course to talk to him and explain my dissatisfaction with the kind of treatment I am getting from him and try to explain how I hope things can be. I talked to his friends, uncles and talked about this to my parents... Sometimes when I report home... I will be told to be strong and find ways to solve this matter. My family always tells me that “Mosadi ke Kgotlelelo” I have to be strong.*

Interviewer: How depended are you on your husband?

Participant: *Yes, although I have an income there are things that I depend on my husband to do for us. He was not using his money proper and at times I had to buy things for the house. I told my mother in law and she told me that “Monna ga a botsisiwi payslip makoti”.*

Interviewer: What made you continue in this marriage even though the abuse is sustained?

Participant: *Nobody wish to be a failure. I don't want to be an example to my child and disappoint my parents... I always believe in finding solutions to our problems and one day when he comes to his senses... he will realise that there's a better way of treating your wife...*

Interviewer: In your opinion, do you think poverty contribute to women abuse?

Participant: No...

Interviewer: Why do you think poverty do not play a role to women abuse?

Participant: *...Look even if you're not poor you can still be subjected to abuse.*

Interviewer: Have you ever felt helplessness?

Participant: *...oh...yes... if you have tried everything in your powers and you see no progress... you will end up feeling that you are on your own nothing can save you.*

Appendix J: Editorial Letter



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15 February 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

SUBJECT: EDITING OF DISSERTATION

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled 'The phenomenon of women who continue to stay in abusive marriages: A case study of selected women in Mankweng Area, Limpopo Province' by Wiseman Ntshari Mathebula has been copy-edited, and that unless further tampered with, I am content with the quality of the dissertation in terms of its adherence to editorial principles of consistency, cohesion, clarity of thought and precision.

Kind regards



Prof. SJ Kubayi (DLitt et Phil - Unisa)
Associate Professor
SATI Membership No. 1002808

Finding solutions for Africa