

**DISCOURSES OF MASCULINITY AND CHANGE: MEN'S EXPERIENCES OF ATTENDING A
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMME**

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree.
It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the
work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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ABSTRACT

Domestic violence research and interventions have aimed to empower abused women; however, there remains a gap in research on men's accounts of their violence and of the programmes they attend. Because research shows mixed results concerning the effectiveness of domestic violence perpetrator programmes, this lack of clarity may impede efforts to rehabilitate violent men. This study investigated the discourses which men drew upon when talking about their experiences of attending a particular domestic violence programme in Cape Town, South Africa. Twelve men were recruited from three different perpetrator groups held at a particular organization. A longitudinal qualitative approach was employed where 12 unstructured interviews were completed during the programme and nine semi-structured interviews were conducted three-to-four months after the programme had ended. A Foucauldian discourse analysis and rhetorical analysis of 21 interviews revealed that on the one hand, the men drew on various strategies to indicate their opposition to the disturbance of the traditional gender framework. Men employed subtle language to keep women subordinated through constructing themselves as powerful, omniscient and superior in relation to women. On the other hand, men paradoxically constructed themselves as powerless against their female partners, women in general and as victims in the face of a gender biased criminal justice system. In this way, men were found to dissociate from their 'perpetrator' identities to position themselves as victims. Findings for this study suggest that future research investigate the ways in which domestic violence programmes might affect a genuine change in men's behaviours (e.g, with regard to the programme's intervention model; the impact of the group format; the programme duration; and facilitator training).

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CHAPTER ONE: AN INTRODUCTION

In the 1970s, feminist activists and scholars brought domestic violence¹ to the forefront of social concerns (Bograd, 1990; Brown & Hendricks, 1998; Dobash & Dobash, 1979). Today, domestic violence against women is recognized globally as a human rights and social problem where resources and the need for effective interventions are necessary (Brown & Hendricks, 1998; Edleson & Tolman, 1992). Statistics from the World Health Organization (WHO) report that women, from the age of 15 years, who had experienced physical violence, sexual violence or both ranged between 19 to 76 percent (Garcia-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise & Watts, 2005). In most cases, this violence against women was perpetrated by their intimate partners (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005).

There have been a number of strategies to assist women who experience domestic violence; however a continuous portrayal of victim's accounts has resulted in a one-sided perspective (Ahmed-Ghosh, 2004; Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Cavanagh, Dobash, Dobash & Lewis, 2001; Santana, Raj, Decker, La Marche & Silverman, 2006). This lack of research on domestically violent men's perspectives has led to limitations regarding interventions designed for them.

¹ The terms domestic violence, abuse, women abuse and partner violence will be used interchangeably throughout this dissertation.

1.1 South Africa: a 'culture of violence'

This global problem of domestic violence informs the current issues in South Africa. Globally, South Africa is positioned as having one of the highest rates of crime in the world, where interpersonal violence is rated as five times the global average (Tonsing & Lazarus, 2008). While there is a lack of statistics based on the gender of perpetrators in South Africa (Tonsing & Lazarus, 2008), South African research does suggest that the majority of perpetrators of violence in the context of intimate relationships are men (Abrahams & Jewkes, 2005; Abrahams, Jewkes, Laubscher & Hoffman, 2006; Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Mathews et al., 2004). This might not be surprising considering Morrell's (2001) assertion that: "Masculinity and violence have been yoked together in South African history" (p. 13).

As Boonzaier (2009) argued, the 'culture of violence' thesis is frequently employed as an explanation for men's violence against women. It has been argued that the South African history of apartheid, including the history of violent colonialism, contributed to the production of violent masculinities (Hook, 2004c; Morrell, 2001). Violence was considered as being fundamental to masculinity and a necessary means to resolving conflict (Hook, 2004c; Morrell, 2001).

Today, South African research indicates that violence has become normalised and continues to be a way in which men exercise their power to resolve conflicts, particularly with women partners (Abrahams et al., 2006; Jewkes, 2002; Jewkes, Levin & Penn-Kekana, 2002; Kurian, Wechsberg & Luseno, 2009). It is argued that South African women experience many forms of violence by the hands of their intimate men partners (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004).

For example, Bollen, Artz, Vetten and Louw (1999) reported that 71 percent of women in their study had experienced sexual abuse, 90 percent had experienced physical abuse, 58 percent had experienced economic abuse, and 90 percent encountered emotional abuse. However, almost 43 percent of South African women had experienced all four forms of abuse (Bollen et al., 1999).

While all forms of abuse have damaging effects on the victim, intimate femicide (i.e., the killing of women by an intimate man partner) has been argued to be the most severe form and product of violence against women. Statistics show that almost 9 per 100 000 women in South Africa, 14 years and older, were killed by their intimate partners in 1999 (Mathews et al., 2004). Moreover, 50 per cent of women are murdered by a known perpetrator; in most cases, this was their intimate partner (Mathews et al., 2004). Therefore, given this prevalence of violence against women within the South African context, it is imperative to evaluate the ways in which the South African legal system has operated to alleviate this problem.

1.2 The South African domestic violence legislation

The South African domestic violence legislation (Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998) recognises that domestic violence takes on many forms, such as, physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, psychological, and economic abuse. Additionally, stalking, harassment, intimidation and damage to property are considered forms of domestic violence (Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998). Research on partner abuse also indicates the necessity to incorporate these broader definitions of abuse (Boonzaier & van Schalkwyk, in press; Buttell & Carney, 2004; Hearn, 1998;

Hoosen & Collins, 2004). Consequently, this study understands domestic violence to emerge in the forms outlined above by the Domestic Violence Act (DVA from here onwards).

Domestic violence has been noted to threaten the safety of women and to silence them (Bograd, 1990; Dobash & Dobash, 1990). Aligned with the goals of the Constitution of South Africa, this Act stands for the right to equality, freedom and security of the victim. Because victims of domestic violence are noted as being among the most vulnerable members of society, the purpose of the DVA is to provide them maximum protection by the law.

However, as Daniel (2009) argued, the Act neglects a crucial aspect pertaining to the rehabilitation of perpetrators (Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998). Daniel (2009) highlights that Section 7(2) of the Act permits the court to “impose any additional conditions which it deems reasonably necessary to protect and provide for the safety, health or well-being of the complainant” (Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998). This includes seizing any dangerous weapon in possession of the respondent and that a peace officer must accompany the complainant to arrange for the collection of personal property. On the contrary, this Act does not specify guidelines for the rehabilitation of offenders, which could also be construed as providing “safety, health or well-being of the complainant” (Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998).

However, the DVA does provide guidelines for the court protection order. While it provides clear guidelines for the way in which complainants might obtain a court protection order, the procedure does not provide a fool-proof plan to ensure victims’ safety. Additionally, the onus of ensuring that the court protection order is correctly carried out appears to be placed upon the complainant. For example, once the forms have been completed, it is the

complainant's responsibility to ensure that the police officer delivers the necessary forms to the alleged offender. Complainants might also request that a police officer take them to a doctor and to safe shelters (Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998). However, as Daniel (2009) argued, the complainant's needs might be deferred due to various factors, such as, police officers' limited time allowances and limited shelters that might be available. Additionally, Mathews and Abrahams (2001) found that because the number of reported cases of domestic violence had escalated (i.e., 37.5 percent) over the 2000 to 2001 period, the workload for court officials had also increased. Consequently, the application process was described as prolonged and court officials were argued to have handled domestic violence complaints with a lack of efficiency. Therefore, through placing all the responsibility on victims, it compromises their safety because they might have to return to abusive circumstances.

Through placing the emphasis and responsibility on the victim, the Act neglects to acknowledge the responsibility that should be placed upon perpetrators, and the work that needs to be done with regard to their rehabilitation. The DVA was developed in response to the problem that the solutions available to victims of partner abuse were not effective (Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998). Aligned with the DVA's response, it might follow that a redirected and improved focus should be placed upon effectively rehabilitating domestic violence offenders. However, this has not been the dominant strategy in this legislation; neither has South African research focused on intervention efforts with domestically violent men.

1.3 Researching domestic violence programmes and the male ‘perpetrator’

The international literature evaluating the effectiveness of domestic violence perpetrator programmes² has propagated over the past 25 years (Shrock & Padavic, 2007). Currently, the effectiveness of these programmes is assessed through primarily a quantitative focus on programme outcomes, such as attrition and recidivism rates. However, internationally, attrition and recidivism rates for these programmes have remained high for violent men because the programmes are not necessarily tailored to suit the target population at hand (Babcock, Green & Robie, 2004; Babcock & Steiner, 1999; Bennett, Stoops, Call & Flett, 2007; Saunders, 2001; Taft & Murphy, 2007).

This lack of effectiveness of domestic violence interventions might also be the result of deficient qualitative knowledge regarding the experiences and understandings of violent men themselves. Qualitative research has broadly focused on men’s accounts and understandings of their violence (Adams, Towns & Gavey, 1995; Anderson & Umberson, 2001; Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Cavanagh et al., 2001; Smith, 2007; Strebels et al., 2006; Wood, 2004) and this research is only emerging in South Africa. However, there is a lack of research on the meanings men make of their attendance at a domestic violence programme (Smith, 2007).

This lack of focus on understanding the worlds of violent men has led to increased stigmatisation of the ‘batterer’. The labelling of perpetrators of domestic violence as ‘batterers’ has become an acceptable and normalised perspective in both policy and intervention,

² The phrases domestic violence programme(s), domestic violence perpetrator programme(s), and domestic violence intervention(s) will be used interchangeably throughout the thesis.

especially within the North American context (Corvo & Johnson, 2003). The 'vilification of the batterer' allows experts, advocates in social settings or laymen to be distrustful of the 'perpetrator' and to position them as worthy of being disgraced and shamed (Corvo & Johnson, 2003). Therefore, a focus on the male 'perpetrator' might be perceived as a 'stigmatised' form of domestic violence research. However, this gap in research has serious implications for developing effective intervention programmes for domestically violent men.

Up until now, domestic violence programmes have treated the problem of men's violence against women in isolation of their class and social groups (Douglas, Bathrick & Perry, 2008). This narrow perspective is problematic in the South African context where race and class are vital to understanding how men identify with their masculinity (Morrell, 2001). Connell (2000) reiterated that race remains a crucial factor in the relationship between hegemonic masculinity and other marginalized, oppressed masculinities. Because the social and political history of South Africa has played a crucial role in normalizing violence, it is necessary that South African programmes for violent men are accessible, effective, and that they speak to the particular issues that may arise for these men.

1.4 Outline of thesis

The prevalence and severity of domestic violence is a grave concern both internationally and locally. However, within the broad field of gender-based violence minimal interest is placed on the male perpetrators of domestic violence. While the problem of domestic violence could be addressed by drawing attention to victim's experiences, it could also focus on the men who perpetrate such violence, particularly because it relates to intervention programmes for them.

In response to this, this study aims to explore the discourses that South African men draw upon in their talk surrounding their experiences of attending a particular domestic violence programme.

Chapter Two reviews the theories that have provided explanations for men's violence. It also presents examples of interventions that have been developed based upon these theories and, in addition, data on the effectiveness of domestic violence perpetrator programmes are presented. Chapter Three provides an overview of the feminist post-structuralist approach employed as a framework for this study. The chapter also elaborates on the research design, methods of data collection, the ethical considerations of the study, and methods of data analysis. Chapter Four and Five present the findings of this study with an analysis of the masculinity and change discourses that the men drew upon and a rhetorical analysis of these discourses. In the final and sixth chapter of the thesis, the findings of the study are summarised, overall contributions are assessed and recommendations for future treatment of South African violent men are provided. This is followed by the limitations of this study and recommendations for future South African domestic violence research.

CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCHING VIOLENT MEN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMMES

This chapter reviews the literature on theoretical explanations for men's violence, domestic violence treatment models that emerged from these theories, as well as an evaluation of the effectiveness of domestic violence perpetrator programmes. Due to the substantial amount of research done in these areas, the chapter will be divided into two sections: *setting the scene: theoretical approaches to men's violence*, and *the effectiveness of domestic violence perpetrator programmes*.

2.1 Setting the scene: theoretical approaches to men's violence

In response to the severity of domestic violence against women worldwide, large amounts of research and clinical work have emerged in order to provide possible explanations and risk factors for men's perpetration of domestic violence as well as ways of treating it (Hearn, 1998; Sartin, Hansen & Huss, 2006). The array of explanations evident in literature could be broadly categorised according to three main frameworks: the individual-psychological perspective (including the biological and evolutionary frameworks) (Boonzaier, 2006; Brown & Hendricks, 1998; Greene, 1999; Hearn, 1998; Miller & Welford, 1997; O'Neill, 1998; Silverstein, 1999); societal perspectives (Brown & Hendricks, 1998), and feminist perspectives (Boonzaier, 2006; Hearn, 1998; Miller & Welford, 1997). Furthermore, emphasis will be placed upon the benefits of employing an ecological approach to understanding men's violence against women. In addition, because treatment models for domestically violent men emerged from the above theories of men's violence, selected treatment approaches will also be briefly assessed.

2.1.1 The individual-psychological perspective.

These perspectives lay emphasis on the personal, individual, psychological characteristics, and biological predispositions of the abuser as a determinant for the perpetration of domestic violence (Boonzaier, 2006; Browns & Hendricks, 1998). From the biological perspective violent men have been perceived as having inherent aggressive qualities and violence is treated as natural for men (Greene, 1999; Hearn, 1998). As one example of an argument emerging from a biological perspective, greater testosterone levels in men have been argued to lead to increased aggression (Greene, 1999; Hearn, 1998).

O'Neill (1998) highlighted that instinct theories of human aggression support the biological and evolutionary explanation of the origin of men's violence (Silverstein, 1999). Evolutionary theories of human aggression postulate that human's inherent aggression has aided survival for centuries and this aggressive tension is treated as a form of energy needing to be released regularly (O'Neill, 1998). Similarly, O'Neill's *discourse³ of violence as an expression of inner tension* supports this explanation of men's violence because violence is perceived to be controlled by hot-headed forces (i.e., anger, tension, aggression) from within. These forces are then directed towards the object of frustration causing injury. Why this violence is often directed at the woman partner, is something that cannot be accounted for by this perspective.

³ Foucault (1978, as cited in Wilbraham, 2004) uses the term, *discourse*, to refer to sets of "historicized, overtly institutionalized or technical statements practices, which constitute the objects they describe, address subjects in particular ways, and reproduce power relations and ideological effects" (p. 489).

From a psychological standpoint, it has been contended that individual psychopathology is also a risk factor for perpetrating domestic violence (Bograd, 1990; Boonzaier, 2006). In this regard, violent men have been constructed as pathological beings (O'Neill, 1998). O'Neill's discourse of pathology constructs men's violence to be an abnormal and pathological phenomenon. Terms such as pathology, cure and disorder imitate the medical discourse where abnormal behaviours mirror a "disease, an illness, or an aberration that is unhealthy and in need of treatment, cure, or therapy" (O'Neill, 1998, p. 459).

The pathological causes of violent behaviour include (1) alcoholism and drug abuse and, (2) abnormal personality characteristics. Firstly, alcoholism and drug abuse (Abrahams et al., 2006; Armstrong, 2000; Field, Caetano & Nelson, 2004; Jewkes, 2002; Klevens et al., 2007; Kurian et al., 2009; Lisak & Beszterczey, 2007; Strelbel et al., 2006), have been employed by violent men as a way of making their violence seem pathological. For example, alcohol is often used to justify violence where the violent man is considered to be out of control and "temporarily abnormal" (Armstrong, 2000; O'Neill, 1998, p. 464).

Secondly, abnormal personality characteristics, such as borderline, anti-social personality disorder, and attachment issues (Bowen, Gilchrist, & Beech, 2005; Sonkin & Dutton, 2003) have also been found to pathologise men's violence. For example psychodynamic explanations reflect a pathological conception of the abuser by focusing on the underlying causes of violent men's aggression (Bograd, 1990; O'Neill, 1998). One such theory that draws on this perspective is attachment theory that postulates that adult attachment styles resemble that of an infant. For example, fearful attachment styles that developed during infancy

(predominantly with the mother as an attachment figure) might produce a man that expects the worst from an intimate relationship. However, the intimate relationship is needed in order to heal his negative self-image and low self-esteem (Sonkin & Dutton, 2003).

In summary, explanations for men's violence have been put forward by placing emphasis upon the personal, individual, psychological, and biological predispositions of the abuser. Various treatment models have been built upon these explanations of the individual-psychological perspective. Out of this selection of treatment models, one treatment approach will be briefly outlined.

2.1.1.1 Attachment treatment: the treatment of attachment insecurity.

The attachment treatment model represents one form of treatment based upon psychodynamic understandings of men's violence. It has been argued that the recognition of attachment, shaming and trauma should be practiced as a fundamental component in intervention programmes for violent men (Sonkin & Dutton, 2003). Sonkin and Dutton provided one way of working with male perpetrators of domestic violence that places attention on attachment issues. The integration of attachment theory and psychotherapy allows for the formation of a secure atmosphere for domestically violent men so that they might discover their current and previous attachments within a therapeutic setting (Sonkin & Dutton, 2003). As part of Bowlby's (1988, as cited in Sonkin & Dutton, 2003) adjustment of attachment theory to fit the clinical setting, a set of tasks are offered as a structure for therapeutic work with individuals. The therapist is likened to a "surrogate mother" who creates a support-base for the

individual to securely explore his feelings (Bowlby, 1988, as cited in Sonkin & Dutton, 2003, p. 111). Sonkin and Dutton outlined the five tasks:

1. Create a safe place or secure base: this is for the client to explore thoughts, feelings and experiences regarding self and attachment figures.
2. Explore current relationships with attachment figures.
3. Explore relationship with psychotherapist as an attachment figure.
4. Explore the relationship between early childhood attachment experiences and current relationships.
5. Find new ways of regulating attachment anxiety (i.e., emotional regulation) when the attachment behavioural system is activated. (p. 111)

From a review of the literature, it appears as though this approach of treating male abusers with attachment-theory psychotherapy has not been evaluated. Given the individual focus of attachment-theory psychotherapy, it has been argued that the one-size-fits-all approach should be avoided. Because each perpetrator would have a different attachment style (e.g., the overly structured dismissing attachment style, the preoccupied attachment style; the fearful attachment style), a unique intervention and approach would be necessary for each individual (Sonkin & Dutton, 2003). With a thorough assessment of the man's attachment style

and long-term treatment, it has been argued that a positive transformation towards a non-destructive attachment style is “inevitable” (Sonkin & Dutton, 2003, p. 130).

In summary, attachment-theory-informed psychotherapy was examined as a treatment model that is in line with the individual-psychological explanations for domestic violence. However, it should be acknowledged that other types of individual-psychological treatment models do exist, such as anger management. While it is recognised that psychological factors are valid in contributing to men’s violence (Boonzaier, 2006), it does tend to simplify the phenomenon of domestic violence (Hearn, 1998). All violent men do not conform to the psychopathological prototype; therefore, this highlights the gaps in this perspective (Bograd, 1990). Furthermore, this explanation of men’s violence allows them to position themselves as victims of their pathology of violence, which, in turn, allows them to avoid responsibility for their violence (O’Neill, 1998). Consequently, Boonzaier (2006) suggests that a more holistic view should be incorporated that focuses on the larger context of men’s violence. The response has been to place a more pronounced focus on societal perspectives.

2.1.2 Societal perspectives.

The societal perspective is based on a combination of psychological and sociological factors. This perspective focuses on the role that society and family play in either curbing or influencing domestic violence (Brown & Hendricks, 1998). For example, a history of abusive families (also intergenerational violence) has been argued to be a risk factor for the perpetration of domestic violence (Abrahams & Jewkes, 2005; Abrahams et al., 2006; Lisak & Beszterczey, 2007). O’Neill (1998) highlighted the *discourse of violence as a learned behaviour*

as a commonly employed discourse in theories of domestic violence. This discourse allows individuals to position all human behaviours, including violence, as being learnt from experience. Social learning theory (SLT) emphasises that human thought, affect, and behaviour are greatly influenced by observation and direct experience (Bograd, 1990). One of the most important forms of SLT is *modelling*. This is where individuals learn from viewing behaviours; if people gain or are rewarded for certain behaviours, they are more likely to use it (Bandura, 1977).

South African research has shown that intergenerational violence has a significant effect on predicting violence by a man towards his woman partner later in life (Abrahams & Jewkes, 2005). It has been argued that experiencing or witnessing abuse in childhood years teach children that violence is normal and acceptable (Abrahams & Jewkes, 2005; Abrahams et al., 2006; Kurian et al., 2009; Lisak & Beszterczey, 2007). Therefore, this is how men might learn to use violence and women learn how to endure it (Jewkes, 2002; Jewkes et al., 2002). As O’Neill (1998) asserts, violence is like a “hereditary disease” (p. 4); it is passed on from one generation to the next.

In summary, societal explanations for domestically violent men have highlighted the role of the family and society in increasing the likelihood of the perpetration of abuse. Intergenerational violence and ‘violence as a learned behaviour’ indicated the ways in which violence might be learnt from an early age through witnessing or experiencing abuse in the home. A treatment approach that speaks to the societal perspective will be evaluated in the next section.

2.1.2.1 Cognitive-behavioural treatment: a theory of learned behaviour.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) locates men's violence as the focal point for treatment (Babcock et al., 2004). Because the central tenet for CBT is that violence is a learned behaviour, it is argued that, similarly, violence can be unlearned. SLT contends that a behaviour that is rewarded will be employed frequently (Bandura, 1977). Therefore, men that use violence to gain control over women are most likely to continue if the desired effect is achieved (Dunkle et al., 2004; Hoosen & Collins, 2004). Additionally, CBT also draws upon individual-psychological treatment techniques, such as, anger management (Babcock et al., 2004).

The CBT treatment model primarily operates as a group format when applied to domestic violence interventions (Babcock et al., 2004). The role of the CBT counsellor is to highlight the advantages and disadvantages of using violence in order to present possible alternatives for the use of violence. According to Babcock and colleagues, this is complimented with:

1. Skills training: communication, assertiveness, and social skills training
2. Anger management: timeouts, relaxation training, and changing negative attributions. (p. 1026)

A review of the literature has indicated that there have been insignificant results for the effectiveness of CBT programmes (Buttell, 2001; Buttell & Carney, 2005; Dunford, 2000; Sonkin & Dutton, 2003). Dunford (2000) found that the CBT model had little impact on facilitating

change within violent men. The evaluation of this intervention was based on partner and perpetrator reports, and arrest records, which all contributed to the conclusion that CBT did not produce significant change within the sample of violent men. Similarly, Buttell and Carney (2005) rated a CBT domestic violence programme as “marginally effective” (p. 26). Quantitative findings for this study reflected insignificant results for men’s decreases in passive-aggressive behaviours at programme completion. These findings were derived from pre- and post-treatment assessments of the court-mandated men who attended the programme (i.e., a demographic questionnaire and four psychological instruments) (Buttell & Carney, 2005).

In summary, the CBT model was outlined as a treatment approach that supports societal arguments that violence is a learned behaviour. However, societal arguments have been critiqued for their flawed arguments that lack focus on the rationale for men’s use of violence and their intentions for acting violently towards their women partners (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). Therefore, a closer focus on gender and power by feminist theorists has been the response.

2.1.3 Feminist explanations.

Feminist perspectives hold that patriarchal structures serve to subordinate women through men’s coercive control and domination, and this is argued to result in violence against women (Bograd, 1990; Boonzaier, 2006; Brown & Hendricks, 1998; Campbell, 1992; Shefer, 2004). Radical feminist theorists asserted that the institution of marriage disguises incidents of violence within the privacy of the home (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). It has been argued that women struggle against the oppression of living with violence from intimate partners due to

beliefs that the family is a supposedly safe, impenetrable and a nurturing environment uncontaminated with danger or “evil” (Dobash & Dobash, 1979, p. 7). Within this line of reasoning, the family is recognised as the platform from which violence is mostly like to occur against women and children, with the emphasis placed on women (Dobash & Dobash, 1979).

Dobash and Dobash (1979) compared a disciplinary, authoritarian relationship between parent and child to the husband-wife relationship. The unequal gender positions and male domination evident in the husband-wife relationship were argued to manifest through physical violence against the woman partner. Therefore, power, gender inequality, control and authority are the factors that feminists pronounce as men’s strategies to dominate women (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Shrock & Padavic, 2007). It is argued that patriarchal practices have permeated into society to such an extent that the husband’s expression of physical violence is merely a reflection of his power and dominance in the larger context of society (Brown & Hendricks, 1998; O’Neill, 1998; Shrock & Padavic, 2007).

O’Neill’s (1998) *discourse of violence as an instrumental power strategy* draws upon radical feminist understandings of women abuse; this discourse argues that patriarchal structures that subordinate women result in men’s violence against women. This discourse takes the position that violence is instrumental – violent men are argued to be rational agents and violence is used as a strategy to resolve conflicts and assert power over women partners (O’Neill, 1998).

Men’s violence is also perceived to be deeply embedded in the cultural and social structures in which they occur. Running concurrently with the cultural explanations for men’s

violence is O'Neill's (1998) *discourse of the normative social system*, which constructs violence as a consequence of various cultural norms that are evident globally. For example, the patriarchal culture is characterized, on the one hand, by men believing they are superior to women, and that they have the right to control and discipline women through abuse. On the other hand, women are socialised to become subservient and passive in obedience to men (Wood, 2004).

Patriarchy is also practiced in conjunction with traditional gender role norms (O'Neill, 1998). *Gender role norms or ideologies* refer to expectations about what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour for men and women in particular social situations (Levant & Richmond, 2007; Sigelman & Rider, 2006). Traditional feminine gender roles are characterized by being nurturing, considerate, selfless and often making their partners' needs the first priority (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004). Dominant masculine norms are associated with *traditional masculine ideology*, also consistent with Connell's (2000) description of *hegemonic masculinity*, which originated in Westernized countries (Levant & Richmond, 2007). Traditional masculinity has been characterized by the performance of violence, aggression, the avoidance of vulnerability and weakness, the need to compete, the incorporation of patriarchal ideology, and the subordination of women (Hoosen & Collins, 2004; Luyt, 2003; Mahalik & Rochlen, 2006; O'Sullivan, Harrison, Morrell, Monroe-Wise & Kubeka, 2006; Reidy, Shirk, Sloan & Zeichner, 2009; Seal & Ehrhardt, 2003; Santana et al., 2006). However, this type of masculinity does not reflect a certain type of man but, according to Connell and Messerschmidt (2005), men position themselves in relation to hegemonic masculinity through a variety of discursive practices. It

should also be considered that certain marginalized or subordinated men might position themselves more strongly in relation to violent attributes of the hegemonic norm (Morrell, 2001). This might be done to compensate for their lack of dominance and power in attaining a form of 'hegemonic masculinity' (Morrell, 2001).

However, given South Africa's apartheid history, it is important to examine whether shifts in power in the gender order might have occurred since the abolition of apartheid. If this shift has indeed occurred, it is vital to evaluate the ways in which South African men have responded to these shifts in power (Morrell, 2002; Strebel et al., 2006). Because South Africa has been shaped by a history of violence; it is vital to investigate the impact of the apartheid past, race and the current gender order. In Strebel and colleague's study, narratives of black women and men reported that in the current political context of South Africa, traditional gender roles are being challenged – women are constructed as becoming more powerful, while men are perceived as becoming disempowered. Current affirmative action policies are gradually situating women in more powerful positions, which have resulted in some men feeling threatened (Morrell, 2002). Alternatively, this could also be perceived as a way in which men use women's empowerment as a narrative about emasculation.

In response to challenges against the traditional gender order, control over women is often exerted violently to reinstate men's power (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Strebel et al., 2006). Research has also linked gender-based violence to the risk of HIV infection (Dunkle et al., 2004; Hoosen & Collins, 2004; Santana et al., 2006). For example, in South Africa, girls and young women in sexual relationships have been particularly easy targets for violence

perpetrated by men. Violence is a way in which men can ensure various forms of control over women (Dunkle et al., 2004; Hoosen & Collins, 2004). Such control may include the prohibition of condom use in sexual relationships with women. This is shown in Hoosen and Collins' study where they found that 80% of women participants claimed that condoms were not used because men partners objected to it. Therefore, due to dominant norms of gender inequality, men also exert their power and control within the realm of sexual relationships (Abrahams et al., 2006; Jewkes, 2002; Jewkes et al., 2002; Kurian et al., 2009). This results in placing women at increased risk of contracting HIV (Hoosen & Collins, 2004).

More so, patriarchal institutions and sexist norms have also been argued to contribute to justifying violence towards women (Abu-Ras, 2007; Ahmed-Ghosh, 2004; Aphane, Hlanze, Dlamini, Mkatshwa & Shongwe, 2001; Armstrong, 2000; Miller, 1992; Strebel et al., 2006). Institutions of patriarchy are often perceived as powerful influences that influence the perpetuation of the traditional gender order (Oates, 1998; Strebel et al., 2006). Perceptions of South African participants in Strebel and colleagues' study illustrated that the church and traditional culture are responsible for maintaining traditional gender role norms. Religious doctrines might also influence victims in their responses to violence. For example, the Catholic religion does not approve of divorce which may mean that many women who practice Catholicism may choose to stay in abusive relationships rather than to get divorced. Therefore, because patriarchy is reinforced and supported by major social institutions, such as religion, women have no choice but to conform to submissive feminine gender roles (Brown & Hendricks, 1998).

In summary, from a feminist perspective it is understood that men's violence against women partners result from widespread and ingrained ideas about gender and power. A pro-feminist treatment model was developed in response to these explanations of men's violence and is rooted in explanations of patriarchy and male domination over women. This treatment approach will be examined in the next section.

2.1.3.1 The Duluth model: a feminist-based intervention model.

The Duluth model is the most widely used feminist intervention approach with domestically violent men (Babcock, et al., 2004; Dutton & Sonkin, 2003). The Duluth model was developed in Duluth, Minnesota in the United States and aimed to achieve attitude readjustment by getting men to admit their privilege, power and control over women. This particular model employs a group format and involves challenging violent masculinity by re-educating men on performing egalitarian roles within the family, using egalitarian language, as well as recognising their own and others' emotions (Babcock et al., 2004; Dutton & Corvo, 2006; Dutton & Sonkin, 2003; Shrock & Padavic, 2007).

A primary tool of the Duluth model is the *Power and Control Wheel*, which serves to illustrate that violence is an integrated pattern of behaviour as opposed to a set of random incidents (Pence & Paymar, 1993, as cited in Babcock et al., 2004). This tool is employed to guide men in creating non-controlling, positive relationships, which is represented in the *Equality Wheel*, which is another tool used in the intervention (Pence & Paymar, 1993, as cited in Babcock et al., 2004). It should be noted that, in practice, the Duluth model is rarely

employed on its own. This model is frequently accompanied by CBT with a particular focus on anger management and other techniques (Babcock et al., 2004; Dutton & Sonkin, 2003).

However, criticisms of the Duluth model are based on its narrow view of the explanation for men's violence (Dutton & Sonkin, 2003). It assumes that violent men's attitudes result in abusive behaviours, when in fact, research points to attitude and behaviour as being reflective of deeper individual-psychological and social factors (Abrahams & Jewkes, 2005; Abrahams, Jewkes, Laubscher & Hoffman, 2006; Armstrong, 2000; Field, Caetano & Nelson, 2004; Jewkes, 2002; Klevens et al., 2007; Kurian, Wechsberg & Luseno, 2009; Lisak & Beszterczey, 2007; Strebel et al., 2006). The Duluth model has been strongly critiqued for its superficiality and short-sightedness in not dealing with deeper psychological matters that may also be operating with regard to men's violence (Dutton & Sonkin, 2003).

The manner in which the Duluth model is practiced has also led to much criticism. Research has found that Duluth-type interventions can be an emasculating experience for men (Shrock & Padavic, 2007), and this has been argued to strain the facilitator-participant relationship. For example, in Shrock and Padavic's (2007) study, the construction of hegemonic masculinity was examined amongst a group of men who attended a Duluth-informed programme in the United States. The Duluth-based programme was evaluated with ethnographic methods where the researcher attended weekly group sessions. Through an analysis of the group interactions, it was found that facilitators' attempts to elicit emotional vulnerability amongst men at each session were greeted with resistance, detachment and digression by the men. The researcher found that this ultimately closed down the space for

genuine therapeutic engagement and instead resulted in facilitators' more forceful attempts to make men more vulnerable. It has been suggested that the Duluth model's attitude 'transformation' might cause resistance by men who refuse to share feminist ideals and could concurrently, generate shame within men due to their probable early childhood experiences of being victimised (Dutton & Sonkin, 2003).

Dutton (1995) found that by shaming men, it might result in resentment and aggressive responses such as externalising blame, discarding advice, and experiencing more intense feelings of anger. Additionally court-mandated men might experience feelings of powerlessness in their marriages and in their lives in general (Dutton & Starzomski, 1994, as cited in Dutton & Corvo, 2006); yet, Duluth methods only serve to ignore the realities of men programme participants (Dutton & Corvo, 2006).

Despite the critiques of the Duluth model, many countries and states in North America still employ this model and it has been legislated in some States in America (Dutton & Sonkin, 2003). According to Dutton and Corvo (2006) no methodologically sound evaluation research has pronounced the Duluth model to be effective in changing men's violent behaviour. Dutton and Sonkin (2003) highlight that research on the psychology of batterers has expanded broadly over the past decade; however, there still appears to be a dependence on the original unchanged Duluth approach (Dutton & Corvo, 2006). Therefore, this might indicate that in some contexts, such as the United States, there is a resistance to exploring alternative forms of treatment or intervention.

In summary, the Duluth model was introduced as a treatment model in line with feminist explanations for men's violence. It has been asserted that the goals of the Duluth model (i.e., to achieve respectful and non-abusive relationships) do not differ radically to approaches such as CBT or psychodynamic treatment (Dutton & Corvo, 2006). However, in relation to other models, such as CBT, the Duluth model has been labelled the "ideologically narrowed view of domestic violence" because of its one-dimensional patriarchal model of male domination and power over women (Dutton & Corvo, 2006, p. 461). Alternatively, in order to avoid narrow explanations for domestic violence, an integrated theoretical approach might be more effective. Consequently, the ecological approach will be evaluated next.

2.1.4 Gaps and implications of theories: towards an ecological approach.

As Hearn (1998) has cautioned, stressing a particular theory as most accurate can create ignorance to the broader occurrence of men's violence. Consequently, the questioning of theories is essential in deriving suitable and effective interventions and policies (Hearn, 1998). Although all theories contribute importantly towards the understanding of men's violence against women, it has become evident that no one theory is capable of adequately explaining all the risk factors for the perpetration of violence against women partners (Bell & Naugle, 2008; Bograd, 1990).

The limitation of existing explanatory theories of men's violence is the lack of or mixed empirical support for certain theoretical views (Bell & Naugle, 2008). On the one hand, feminist theories have criticized psychological approaches because of their psychological causal factors or distinct personality traits associated with men's violence against women. This is because not

all abusive men suffer from psychopathology and a focus on the individual leaves the broader context unchallenged (Bograd, 1990). On the other hand, early feminist theories are critiqued for their narrow perspective that male power and control are directly associated with partner abuse (Dutton & Corvo, 2006). Consequently, it follows that all men who conform to hegemonic masculine norms of control will perpetrate violence against a partner; however, this is not the case.

However, the most important limitation of etiological theories of men's violence is their inability to capture the complexities of men's violence (Bell & Naugle, 2008). It is more beneficial to understand the differences in risk factors for perpetrating violence within different historical and cultural contexts (Hearn, 1998). Research indicates that factors such as alcohol or drug abuse (Abrahams et al., 2006; Armstrong, 2000; Field, Caetano & Nelson, 2004; Jewkes, 2002; Klevens et al., 2007; Lisak & Beszterczey, 2007; Strebel et al., 2006) and unemployment or lack of tertiary education for men (Abrahams et al., 2006; Strebel et al., 2006) in certain cultures and societies are all strong predictors of their violence. Radical feminist researchers incorporate limited cultural analysis, which weakens their explanations for male violence (Campbell, 1992). Instead, by integrating these domestic violence theories a more contextual approach will follow. This will allow for greater insight into the problem of domestic violence (Bell & Naugle, 2008; Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Saunders, 2001; Tolman, 2001), and is also likely to improve intervention efforts with domestically violent men.

Recent trends in research indicate that the personal, interpersonal, social and cultural factors *all* need to be taken into account when studying the behaviour of the individual

(Eisikovits, Winstok, Grauwiler & Mills, 2008). According to Bronfenbrenner (2001), in order to fully understand human behaviour it is important to understand the complete ecological system within which this occurs. In this way, the ecological framework emphasizes the dynamic aspects of the problem of domestic violence (Eisikovits et al., 2008). From an ecological view, various systems (i.e., the church, neighbourhood, peers, family, criminal justice system, police, social services, culture) interact to develop and maintain violent behaviours (Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Tolman, 2001). Risk factors are evident at each level of the violent man's ecology (Douglas et al., 2008); therefore, theories should be integrated to cover these relevant risk factors. Additionally, the ecological framework allows for a particular examination of the cultural context of the violent man and the interactions between the man's community, family, peers and ethnic groups.

In summary, an ecological approach to understanding domestically violent men was put forward as a way of acknowledging and integrating the various risk factors for the perpetration of domestic violence. A particular treatment model that addresses the goals of the ecological model will be evaluated in the next section.

2.1.4.1 Community-based interventions.

It has been argued that the crisis of domestic violence needs to be addressed on all levels of the ecology; not just with individuals, couples or small groups of men (Edleson & Tolman, 1992). Aligned with the goals of the ecological model, the employment of community-based interventions as a way of addressing the problem of domestic violence will be reviewed. While domestic violence is a wide-spread phenomenon globally, research suggests that lower

socio-economic status (SES) groups are more likely to experience more severe violence (Armstrong, 2000; Jewkes, 2002). Poverty is often associated with stress, frustrations and fewer life chances due to the limited resources available to these lower SES groups (Jewkes, 2002). Furthermore, it has been argued that stress and tension finds expression through violence (O'Neill, 1998).

Specifically in South Africa, poverty has been found to increase risk of domestic violence through the effects of financial problems and jealousy in intimate relationships (Jewkes, 2002). This draws attention to potential high-risk communities, which are often associated with poverty, crime, neighbourhood disorganization, and those permitting substances such as drugs and alcohol (Van Horn, Hawkins, Arthur & Catalano, 2007; Moody, Childs & Sepples, 2003). Given this existence of high-risk communities, interventions should aim to target the particular group of people or communities that carry such high risk characteristics.

Community-based intervention programmes have been used successfully because they focus on multiple contexts. The community-based intervention models speak to the ecological framework because they incorporate a particular examination of the cultural context of the batterer and the interactions between the men's communities, families and peers (Douglas et al., 2008). Furthermore, these interventions are designed in collaboration with community members; in this way, cultural norms, traditions and expectations of the community are taken into consideration (Dawes & Donald, 2000; Gillum, 2008).

For example, Douglas and colleagues (2008) found that the Men Stopping Violence (MSV) community-based approach in the United States aided in challenging cultural norms of

abuse and dominance that interacted at the individual, familial and local levels. In particular, the programme shows an awareness of the impact of patriarchal structures and aims to educate men regarding the causes of men's violence against women (Douglas et al., 2008). In this way, this programme also integrates aspects of a pro-feminist treatment model due to its focus on patriarchy and the psycho-educational form of treatment.

Douglas et al.'s (2008) study also drew attention to the fear men experience in letting go of their cultural definitions of manhood because it is deeply embedded in their identity. This finding has important treatment implications for violent men; it illustrates the importance of listening to violent men's experiences in order to assess if and how interventions might actually help abusers. Ultimately, through an acknowledgement of violent men's views, it might assist in the improvement of domestic violence interventions (Gillum, 2008).

Additionally, community-based programmes are most frequently employed in conjunction with the criminal justice system (Edleson & Tolman, 1992). Therefore, this ecological intervention employs a major social institution to reinforce societal rights and sanction violent men (Edleson & Tolman, 1992). Despite the advantages of employing this approach, it has also received critique regarding its incorporation of the criminal justice system. Edleson and Tolman argued that community-based programme's dependence on male power-driven institutions, such as the police, conflicts with the feminist approach that it simultaneously employs. Regardless of these critiques, it has been found that community-based intervention programmes are growing in number and research on the effectiveness of such programmes has been positive (Edleson & Tolman, 1992).

In summary, the benefits and disadvantages of employing community-based intervention programmes have been reviewed. As the ecological approach has shown, it is crucial to understand and integrate the various risk factors associated with domestic violence perpetration within a broader systemic context. Through this improved contextual understanding, it might aid in formulating appropriate policies and intervention strategies for male perpetrators of domestic violence (O'Neill, 1998).

2.1.5 Summary of theoretical approaches to men's violence.

A broad landscape of explanations for men's violence has been overviewed: the individual-psychological perspectives, societal perspectives, feminist explanations and the ecological approach. Treatment models for violent men were built upon these explanations. These models included the attachment-theory based psychotherapy, the CBT approach, the Duluth model, and community-based interventions.

Intervention models have been under much scrutiny regarding which form of treatment for abusers are best in terms of promoting a non-violent change (Babcock et al., 2004; Saunders, 2001). However, there is no literature to date that necessarily promotes a particular technique or approach above another. Research has also consistently argued that interventions lack the fundamental elements to create long-term cessation of men's violence (Sonkin & Dutton, 2003). Consequently, the next section will outline some of the findings that have emerged in various reviews of intervention programmes for domestically violent men.

2.2 The effectiveness of domestic violence programmes

The effectiveness of perpetrator programmes are assessed through measuring a combination of factors, such as the treatment model (Babcock et al., 2004; Saunders, 2001), and whether recidivism (i.e., re-offences) and attrition (i.e., programme dropouts) rates are low (Babcock et al., 2004; Babcock & Steiner, 1999; Bennett et al., 2007; Taft & Murphy, 2007). Research on the effectiveness of perpetrator programmes will be presented according to literature on *recidivism and attrition rates; individual or group formats; and methodological constraints*.

2.2.1 Recidivism and attrition rates.

The effectiveness of intervention programmes for domestically violent men have been investigated globally, regarding the programme's ability to reduce recidivism and attrition rates (Babcock et al., 2004; Babcock & Steiner, 1999; Bennett et al., 2007; Taft & Murphy, 2007). Babcock and colleagues reviewed the outcome literature of quasi-experimental and experimental studies to test the effectiveness of particular treatment models for domestically violent men, such as the Duluth model and CBT approaches. On the one hand, it was found that, regardless of the treatment type, effects sizes for their study were quite small ($d = 0.34$) meaning that only a small proportion of improvement in recidivism was owing to the treatment. It was suggested that due to the men's lack of investment and attrition from the programme, small effect sizes were yielded. On the other hand, it was found that the number of sessions that men attended at a programme was negatively correlated with recidivism

(Babcock & Steiner, 1999; Bennett et al., 2007). Therefore, the more sessions that was attended, the less likely would recidivism occur.

This suggests that abusers need to stay motivated throughout the programme to reduce attrition rates (Rosenfeld, 1992). For example, the involvement of the legal system in mandating men into programmes has been argued to be a potential catalyst to motivating programme members to stay in treatment (Pate & Hamilton, 1992; Rosenfeld, 1992; Sherman & Berk, 1984).

Sherman and Berk (1984) conducted a randomized experiment where domestic violence perpetrators were assigned to three different police responses, namely, being arrested, separated (i.e., an instruction given to the suspect to leave for eight hours to allow for short-term reconciliation) or given advice/mediation from the officer at hand. Results based on the official recidivism data indicated that arrest had a strong influence on decreasing the likelihood of further incidents of violence against the woman partner. Concurrently, the victim report data indicated that arrest was a stronger determinant for deterring future violence against the partner as opposed to those who were merely advised by police.

With regard to more recent studies, a review of literature indicated that arrests for domestic violence had mixed results (Dutton & Corvo, 2006; Pate & Hamilton, 1992; Rosenfeld, 1992). In some cases, arrest was considered to spiral the likelihood of subsequent violence (Pate & Hamilton, 1992). Pate and Hamilton evaluated the deterrent effects of arrest and its interaction with factors of employment and marital status. It was found that arrest acted as a considerable deterrent amongst employed offenders; however, arrest of unemployed offenders

led to a significant increase in subsequent domestic violence. There were no significant interactions between arrest and marital status. It was recommended that because arrest only deters those men who hold value to their jobs, this should be taken into account when developing policies (Pate & Hamilton, 1992).

Therefore, despite these various research outcomes, it appears as though legal intervention, as a source of motivation for men, has not been consistently supported by research (Pate & Hamilton 1992; Rosenfeld, 1992). Because the principle of mandatory arrest was based on the presumption that domestic violence is always intentional and a product of men's domination over women (i.e., the basic principles of the Duluth model), state intervention, in the United States, was a crucial form of deterrence (Dutton & Corvo, 2006). However, it has been argued that once this Duluth- ideological assumption is erased, the need for mandatory arrest disappears (Dutton & Corvo, 2006).

With regard to programme dropout rates, a need for stricter supervision (Babcock & Steiner, 1999) and better alliances with therapists (Miller & Rollnick, 1991; Taft & Murphy, 2007) were also suggested to improve attrition rates. Research has indicated that attrition rates are related to the quality of the rapport between facilitators/counsellors and the client (Miller & Rollnick, 1991; Taft & Murphy, 2007). Therefore, the response has been to evaluate the ability of particular treatment models to deliver a welcoming, warm environment necessary for change (Dutton & Corvo, 2006; Dutton & Sonkin, 2003; Shrock & Padavic, 2007).

One of the critiques of the Duluth model was the atmosphere of blame and shaming it creates within the treatment environment (Dutton & Sonkin, 2003). This was argued to be the

result of the Duluth's fixation and "unyielding adherence" to its etiology of violence as pure male domination and power over women (Dutton & Corvo, 2006, p. 461). Consequently, this model has been disparaged for creating a therapeutic space incapable of welcoming change, trust, and honesty (Dutton & Corvo, 2006). Instead judgement, humiliation and producing emotional vulnerability amongst the men have been key features of this form of treatment (Dutton & Corvo, 2006; Shrock & Padavic, 2007), which has resulted in an approximate 40 to 60 percent dropout rate of men after attending the first session (Buttell & Carney, 2002). This was despite the conditions of their probation, which stated that the failure to abide by with these terms (i.e., attendance at all the sessions) would result in further sentencing (Buttell & Carney, 2002).

As Miller and Rolnick (1991) emphasised, the counsellor plays a vital role in creating an atmosphere conducive to change. In some cases, the way in which the counsellor interacts with the client is considered more important than the treatment approach (Miller & Rolnick, 1991). Therefore, the lack of the Duluth model's ability to create a genuine therapeutic bond has shown that empathy may be a fundamental component of facilitating change in violent men (Dutton & Corvo, 2006).

In summary, the effectiveness of programmes for domestically violent men, with regard to recidivism and attrition rates, have been rarely influenced by the treatment type. Rather factors, such as, the number of sessions that men attended at a programme (Babcock & Steiner, 1999; Bennett et al., 2007); a need for stricter supervision (Babcock & Steiner, 1999); better alliances with therapists (Miller & Rollnick, 1991; Taft & Murphy, 2007); programme member's

motivation throughout the programme; and the involvement of the criminal justice system (Pate & Hamilton, 1992; Rosenfeld, 1992; Sherman & Berk, 1984) have been considered vital in measuring programme effectiveness.

Sartin et al. (2006) assert that although literature perceives treatment to be a route to complete cessation of violence (Rosenfeld, 1992), perceptions about domestic violence should rather be placed on a continuum. For example, Sartin and colleagues argue that a man who beats his partner on numerous occasions cannot logically be associated with a man who pushes his partner on one occasion. Therefore, the understanding of treatment effectiveness should rather be stressed according to its ability to considerably reduce incidents of domestic violence (Sartin et al., 2006). This might follow that noteworthy treatment programmes should not be eliminated on the basis that violence was not completely terminated (Sartin et al., 2006).

2.2.2 Individual or group format.

It has been argued that the high attrition rates evident in domestic violence programmes could be the result of a lack of focus on the individual (Sartin et al., 2006). For example, Sartin and others argued that there might be men who resemble particular personality traits that make it more challenging for them to benefit from treatment and to instigate a non-violent change. Alternatively, the Stages of Change model employs an individual level approach where violent men are argued to move through different stages of the change process (Begun, Shelley, Strondthoff & Short, 2001; Daniels & Murphy, 1997; Eckhardt, Babcock & Homack, 2004; Miller & Rollnick, 1991).

Five stages of behaviour change were outlined: precontemplation (i.e., the man is not considering behaviour change), contemplation (i.e., where behaviour change is critically being considered), preparation (i.e., preparation and commitment to change is being developed), action (i.e., old behaviour is adapted towards new behaviour pattern) and maintenance (i.e., the maintenance of the new behaviour pattern) (Begun et al., 2001; Daniel & Murphy, 1997; Eckhardt et al., 2004; Miller & Rollnick, 1991).

This model indicates that violent men are not uniform in their stages of change; in fact, it is argued that more attention should be paid to designing programmes that cater for abusers on the individual level (Begun et al., 2001). This is seen in Eckhardt and others' (2004) study, where it was found that court-mandated men were more likely to stay in a programme because they were compelled to do so. Therefore, the programme might not have been as beneficial and they might have remained in the precontemplative stage (Eckhardt et al., 2004).

Group therapy has also become the most common mode of therapy where men are able to learn from each other and confront the denial of their violence (Babcock et al., 2004). Research has suggested both positive and negative feedback for the use of group therapy as opposed to an individual format (Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Hearn, 1998; Saunders, 2001). Group therapy has been considered beneficial because it opens up the abuser's social network to include those who are supportive of him becoming non-abusive. It also provides a safe environment for the man to express his feelings (Edleson & Tolman, 1992). This mode of treatment counters the possible mixed messages from men's immediate peer or family circles

and supplies him with more confidence in defending his choice to become non-violent (Edleson & Tolman, 1992).

On the contrary, it has also been found that a group format might enhance denial, sexist and violent attitudes in ways that group leaders might not notice (Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Hearn, 1998; Saunders, 2001). This could have detrimental effects after the session where the man might feel justified in further abusing his partner (Edleson & Tolman, 1992). This highlights the critical process of assessing batterers before they can be part of a particular group (Hearn, 1998).

In summary, while group therapy has been the most common form of treatment, the benefits of creating programmes tailored to suit the differences amongst abusive men appears to be more strongly supported in literature. This illustrates the need for domestic violence intervention programmes to acknowledge and adapt to the effects of individual differences amongst programme participants (Saunders, 2001).

2.2.3 Methodological constraints.

Weak research methodologies that assess the effectiveness of intervention programmes for violent men have been argued to potentially confound the outcome data (Rosenfeld, 1992). Amongst the various methodological problems that could potentially arise in outcome domestic violence research, two pertinent issues have been highlighted: the question of the reliability of outcome data, and the lack of qualitative domestic violence research that has been done.

2.2.3.1 Reliability of outcome data.

Rosenfeld (1992) had critiqued previous treatment effectiveness studies for employing men programme members' pre-treatment and post-treatment self-reports as the primary source of outcome data. Because men have been found to under-report their violence (Rosenfeld, 1992), partner reports have come to be viewed as more reliable (Dunford, 2000; Sherman & Berk, 1984). However, partner reports alone have not been consistently supported either (Austin & Dankwort, 1999; Sherman & Berk, 1984).

Methodological constraints are evident in literature with regards to victim and police official reports (Sherman & Berk, 1984). In Sherman and Berk's (1984) study that evaluated the deterrent effects of arrest for domestic violence, it was found that women partners were against contacting police officers. Possible reasons listed for this involved the perception of the arrest as being an "undesirable intervention" (Sherman & Berk, 1984, p. 269). To avoid the perceived negative stimulus of an unnecessary intervention, the women were argued to have purposefully shunned the assistance of legal endorsements (Sherman & Berk, 1984). Furthermore, realities of financial stress (e.g., the arrest might have resulted in days of work loss or immediate dismissal) or threats by the perpetrator, might have impeded more accurate victim report data. However, police officials' under-reporting of subsequent incidents of violence were explained to be due to their hesitance in diagnosing a family disagreement as "formal police business" (Sherman & Berk, 1984, p. 268).

Additionally, Austin and Dankwort (1999) used qualitative methods to explore the impact of an intervention programme on women partners of men who attended a domestic

violence programme. Amongst the various themes, feelings of enhanced safety were most pertinently employed by the women. However, women were found to attribute different understandings of what 'safety' meant to them. On the one hand, some women felt safer because the men were in the programme and were being monitored by authorities. On the other hand, women said they felt safe despite the fact that they were fearful of their partners and, in some cases, regardless of the fact that their men partners were still emotionally and physically abusing them. Therefore, reports from women partners may not be entirely clear and reports of safety should be considered with caution (Austin & Dankwort, 1999).

2.2.3.2 Qualitative versus quantitative: men 'talking' violence.

Yllö (1990) accentuates the dichotomy of qualitative versus quantitative approaches as a serious methodological concern in the domestic violence field. Quantitative methods have been predominantly employed to measure programme outcomes (Babcock et al., 2004; Buttell & Carney, 2005); however, this has resulted in a deficiency in qualitative methods that might aid in understanding the experiences of the target population (i.e., programme participants) at hand (Gadd, 2004).

Quantitative methods allow for a multitude of data to be collected; but, qualitative methods allow for an in-depth exploration of the individual's world and this allows for more information to be elicited. Ideas, for example, of how men might understand their violence or experience domestic violence programmes would not be restricted to the predetermined theories of the researcher (Yllö, 1990). As Boonzaier (2008a) concurred, domestically violent

men's experiences of the intervention programme they attend should be explored rather than to place a quantitative focus on recidivism rates.

Literature to date has employed qualitative methodologies to research men's violence. Research conducted with violent men has explored various avenues of investigating how men understand and account for their violence. Common themes in literature indicate that in violent men's talk, justifications (*also* excuses or blaming the victim) (e.g., "she disrespected me as a man"), dissociations (*also* minimization of the violent event) ("my violence was limited and abusers don't limit their violence"), and remorse ("I regret I abused her") are frequent mechanisms used to account for their violence (Adams et al., 1995; Anderson & Umberson, 2001; Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Cavanagh et al., 2001; Smith, 2007; Strelbel et al., 2006; Wood, 2004, p. 555).

Variation amongst violent men was also evident in the ways in which they drew upon themes in accounting for their violence. Anderson and Umberson (2001) examined themes of violence in men's talk and found that dissociation from the violent act(s) was evident. Additionally, the men showed variation in their self-representations and it was suggested that this variation was influenced by their social class. For example, the North American male participants of higher SES volunteered stories where respect was gained through purchasing material items for their families. Men of lower SES emphasised how physically violent conflicts gained their respect in their neighbourhoods.

Cultural differences were also found to influence accounts of violence. Men's narratives highlight that conflict in a relationship might occur if meanings of what it is to be a man or a

woman are unstable (Anderson & Umberson, 2001). Therefore, the ways in which men referenced meanings of violence and positioned themselves in relation to it varied according to their class and culture. These qualitative approaches to examining men's accounts of their violence illustrate that men are not uniform in their sense-making strategies or in their understanding of their violence. Consequently, it is necessary that domestic violence programmes adapt to the diversity of violent men.

In summary, potential methodological constraints in evaluating programme effectiveness has been categorised into two sections: *Reliability of outcome data* and *Qualitative versus quantitative approaches*. *Reliability of outcome data* critiqued victim reports or official reports for their unreliability in reporting re-offences. The section of *Qualitative versus quantitative approaches* highlighted another methodological constraint that too much emphasis is placed upon quantitative methods of measuring programme effectiveness. Instead it is argued that more emphasis should be placed on employing qualitative approaches to understand men's accounts of their violence. Through an increased understanding of the target population at hand (i.e., male perpetrators), more effective intervention programmes might be developed.

2.2.4 Summary of the effectiveness of domestic violence programmes.

This section has reviewed literature on the effectiveness of domestic violence perpetrator programmes. In particular, literature on recidivism and attrition rates; individual or group treatment approaches; and methodological constraints were evaluated.

In the latter section, a crucial issue was highlighted that minimal qualitative emphasis has been placed upon investigating the effectiveness of domestic violence programmes. Limited international and South African domestic violence research has focused particularly on the meanings men attach to their experiences of attending a domestic violence programme (Smith, 2007). Therefore, violent men's voices have been silenced in this particular area of domestic violence research, which has implications for whether men perceive particular intervention programmes to be effective.

With regard to analyses of violent men's 'talk', research has also neglected to employ discourse analysis as a method of uncovering the ways in which men construct their masculinities and non-violent change as programme participants. For example, Adams and colleagues (1995) employed an analysis of the discourses produced by men programme participants at a domestic violence programme who had been violent towards their partners. It was found that through a closer scrutiny of violent men's 'talk', discourses of male dominance and entitlement emerged. Therefore, despite their attendance and treatment at the programme, men still showed evidence of conforming to patriarchal values through their 'talk' of dominating women. Therefore discourse analysis is vital in unveiling the subtler forms of power in violent men's speech.

There is gap in South African domestic violence qualitative research of examining the meanings men attach to their experiences of attending a particular domestic violence programme through the use of discourse analysis. Therefore, through addressing this gap, it might assist in developing more effective South African programmes.

2.3 Specific aims: researching men's experiences of a domestic violence programme

This study seeks to explore the discourses men draw upon when talking about their experiences of attending a particular domestic violence perpetrator programme. These research questions will be explored:

1. Against which discourses of masculinity do men position themselves when talking about their experiences of attending a particular domestic violence perpetrator programme?
2. Which discourses and rhetorical devices do men reference when talking about their change towards non-violence?
3. What implications do these discourses have for this particular South African domestic violence perpetrator programme?

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Hayes (2004) contended that the term 'methodology' addresses a broader formation of research. Research methodology is the:

Conception of research in which consideration is given to the context(s) of the research; the theoretical or philosophical assumptions underlying the chosen research strategy; how the data was gathered; and the implications of analysing part of the data that makes up a greater whole. (Hayes, 2004, p. 174)

This chapter will speak to Hayes' (2004) expectations of a research methodology. It will begin with a focus on the research design with an overview of the origins of qualitative methodologies and the feminist paradigm. This will be followed by an outline of the study context and participants, the data collection procedures, and an examination of ethical considerations of this study. This will include an evaluation of the ethical guidelines that were addressed in the research interviews, and the impact of reflexivity and power in the research process. An explication of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) and rhetorical analysis will follow and, finally, the ways in which qualitative research and the current research should be evaluated will end the chapter.

3.1 Research Design

Qualitative research methods have been described as:

A commitment to try and understand the world better, usually from the standpoint of individual participants. Thus we are concerned with such aims as getting to understand 'real' people in their everyday situations, to learn about the world from different perspectives, to experience what others experience, to unravel what is taken for

granted, to find out about implicit social rules... (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindall, 1994, p. 19)

With reference to the above quote, the primary goal of qualitative research is to describe and to gain an in-depth understanding of human behaviour, rather than to generalize or explain behaviour (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Yllö, 1990). Qualitative research is also concerned with the meaning that is constructed in particular social and historical contexts. It is argued that social phenomena cannot be understood in isolation of the context in which it occurs (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). In critique of the quantitative approach, social scientists have been accused of bearing “physics envy” – a need to methodologically ‘size up’ in relation to “their brothers in the natural sciences” (Yllö, 1990, p. 34). Furthermore, quantitative methods have been blamed for “stripping the context” that provides research with character (Yllö, 1990, p. 34). This raises queries regarding research validity due to the researcher’s “distance” from the participants of the study (Yllö, 1990, p. 34).

The qualitative-quantitative dichotomy has been stressed in various works (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Rosenthal & Rosnow, 2008; Yllö, 1990) where segregation between “hard/masculinist” approaches (e.g., statistical research) are set in juxtaposition to the “soft/feminist paradigm” (e.g., field research or in-depth interviews) (Yllö, 1990, p. 34). This distinction is also evident in domestic violence intervention research where quantitative focal points around treatment outcomes and recidivism rates are foregrounded (Babcock et al., Babcock & Steiner, 1999; Bennett et al., 2007; Taft & Murphy, 2007) as opposed to the qualitative experiences of programme participants. However, in response to this emphasis on

quantitative methods, it has been argued that the emphasis should be placed upon understanding the experiences of the target population at hand (Gadd, 2004). This calls for methodological *eclecticism* where quantitative-, qualitative methods or both would emerge in response to evaluating the needs of the community and the particular research problem (Macleod, 2004). Therefore, providing a detailed, in-depth account of the meanings men make of attending an intervention programme was of importance in this study.

Given this need for a movement towards qualitative, feminist research, the historical emergence of feminist trends in research will be overviewed against the backdrop of the positivist, quantitative bias of mainstream psychological research. This overview is particularly appropriate considering that the origins of qualitative methodology are located within a critique of the positivist, essentialist nature of mainstream psychological research (Hayes, 2004). Through this examination of ever-changing research trends, a greater understanding of the importance and benefit of qualitative methodologies will materialize.

3.1.1 Mainstream psychology reinforces positivism and essentialism.

Mainstream psychology has been critiqued predominantly on two of its research principles. Firstly, it has been argued to define itself against positivist, value-free scientific notions; hence, eradicating a political stance in the conduct of research (Boonzaier & Shefer, 2006; Hook, 2004a; Kiguwa, 2004); and secondly, it places the individual as the focal point; therefore, turning a 'blind eye' to the social context of the individual. In effect, this aids in producing a "self-contained individual", unaffected by historical changes, ideologies and social contexts (Hook, 2004a, p. 15). In other words, identity becomes *essentialized* (Hook, 2004a).

Mainstream psychology tends to fixate on the individual while identity is taken to be consistent and universal (Hook, 2004a). Boonzaier and Shefer (2006) highlighted this as the main criticism of positivist notions where assumptions of absolute truth and *universalistic* characteristics of behaviour are asserted. This resembles the *essentialist* position which is the view that identity is static and factors such as race, sexuality, class and gender are naturalized (Bohan, 1997; Kiguwa, 2004; Morrell, 1998). These fixed characteristics of gender are consequently argued to describe one's "personality, cognitive process" and "moral judgment" (Bohan, 1997, p. 32). Therefore, due to mainstream psychology's claims of essentialism, these attributes are considered to be static and social and historical factors which are in constant flux are isolated from the individual.

In the nineteenth century discourses of medicine and psychiatry played a key role in constructing individual identity through static, essentialist notions. In addition, it was understood that the individual functioned in various areas of society; therefore, creating various identities (Sawicki, 1991). It is asserted that there are several ways in which an individual might choose to give attention to various aspects of their identities (Wetherell, 1995). Sawicki gives the example of a black lesbian within a racist and homophobic context who is likely to experience inconsistent loyalties towards other black women, as a lesbian, and towards lesbian groups, as a black woman. Therefore, identity for all individuals cannot be unified; individuals might experience identity differently due to their varying positions in society and at various historical moments. The critique of the essentialist assumption is that psychological research findings are generalized to all groups and the heterogeneity of the

various categories (e.g., race, class, sexuality, gender etc.) are ignored (Bohan, 1997; Kiguwa, 2004).

In line with further criticisms of positivist and essentialist constructs, research participants were usually restricted to mainly white, middle-class, heterosexual males which was argued to have oversimplified research findings (Boonzaier & Shefer, 2006). It also ensured that samples were unrepresentative of many of the population. Moreover, this lack of representation allowed that women and other oppressed groups were subjugated and were not part of the knowledge production process (Boonzaier & Shefer, 2006). Within mainstream psychology women were viewed as a homogenous category. Positivist researchers ignored the intragroup differences of women, which resulted in an ahistorical and apolitical account of their realities (Boonzaier & Shefer, 2006). Through this ignorance of the heterogeneity of gender, race and class in research, conditions of extreme oppression could not be successfully addressed (Kiguwa, 2004). Boonzaier and Shefer argued that this lack of acknowledgement of individual differences might result in the marginalisation of cultures and the oppression of the individual's reality. Therefore, the "value-free" role of psychology as a science and the distant, authoritative role of the researcher have only served to marginalize the views of women (Boonzaier & Shefer, 2006; Kiguwa, 2004, p.290). It has also resulted in the discipline of psychology not being sensitive to the realities of women as well as the differences amongst women.

3.1.2 A journey towards feminist post-structuralism.

Feminism should be understood, not merely as a means by which issues of gender oppression are tackled, but also as a powerful tool in transforming these issues to match more positive outcomes (Kiguwa, 2004). However, the radical feminism view has been similarly critiqued to mainstream psychology due to its lack of acknowledgement of the heterogeneity of women. The notion of “sisterhood” emphasised the idea of unified identities amongst *all* women irrespective of their race and class; in other words, despite their varying positions in society (Kiguwa, 2004, p. 279). However, this falsely unified perception of feminism made various feminist debates and areas of contestation explicit. These disagreements between feminist groups were lodged in opposing views of the ways in which the marginalization of women could be addressed (Kiguwa, 2004). Therefore, Wetherell (1995) argued that feminism is mostly at fault for assuming that collective action and unifying experiences would act as sufficient modes of resistance against oppressive structures. Rather, radical feminism depicted the characteristic universalized impression of women similarly to mainstream psychology.

“Black, poor and third-world” feminists have responded to radical feminism with the goals of highlighting difference within the feminist discourse of “white, middle-class” women (Sawiki, 1991, p. 9). Audre Lorde (as cited in Sawicki, 1991, p.17) expressed the effects of oppression and not being heard when she stated, “It is not difference which immobilizes us, but silence”. Feminism started as an endeavour to do away with the silences of women within the patriarchal discourse. However, the idea of a unified mass of feminist voices only served to

further silence those women oppressed by their race, class or culture (Kiguwa, 2004; Lewis, 1996; Sawicki, 1991).

In response to the critiques of mainstream feminism, a wide variety of feminist approaches can currently be identified. One such approach is *post-structuralist feminism*, which dates back to the work of theorists such as Foucault. Aligned with social constructionist notions, the feminist post-structuralist paradigm provided a stronger stance from which differences in terms of race, class and sexuality could be acknowledged amongst women and essentialised perceptions of identity could be admonished. Consequently, this approach achieves a way of surmounting the narrow approach of radical feminism (Boonzaier & Shefer, 2006; Kiguwa, 2004; Wetherell, 1995). Feminist post-structuralists are also predominantly concerned with “theories of language, subjectivity, social processes and institutions to understand existing power relations...and strategies for change” (Weedon, 1987, pp. 40-41). In this regard, theories of post-structuralism have assisted feminists in theorising issues of subjectivity and power (Boonzaier, 2006); therefore, being able to acknowledge and embrace ‘difference’ (Kiguwa, 2004).

In the current study, a *feminist post-structuralist* approach was employed as a framework through which to understand and theorise issues of subjectivity and meaning. Post-structuralist theory discards the prospect of absolute knowledge or truth (Gavey, 1997). Rather than aiming to uncover truths or reality, the goals for *feminist post-structuralism* is concerned with disrupting oppressive knowledge and power relations (Gavey, 1997). Within this

perspective of power operating through discourses, an overview of the Foucauldian Discourse Analysis combined with feminist post-structuralist perspectives will follow.

3.1.3 The Foucauldian Discourse Analysis and feminist post-structuralism.

Post-structuralist psychology and discourse analysis was inspired by the work of Michel Foucault. Post-structuralist theories of discourse, argue against works, such as radical feminist discourses of essentialism, used to universalise women's experiences (Matthews Lovering, 1995; Sawicki, 1991). It is the Foucauldian view that language is found in discourse as opposed to isolating language from history, culture and power (Gavey, 1997; Matthews Lovering, 1995). In accordance with this perspective, the *post-structuralist* approach to knowledge emphasizes that meaning and knowledge are discursively represented through language. Language is seen as a fundamental part of the experience of the individual wherein subjectivities can be fashioned (Gavey, 1997). In contrast, a traditional belief of language, constructed language as neutral and claimed that it was 'truth' and that it revealed the nature of reality (Wilbraham, 2004). Alternatively, the *post-structuralist* view of language argues that it is not simply neutral; it incorporates discourses which constitute the existence of power, knowledge and ideology (Parker, 1992; Wilbraham, 2004).

Foucault's (1977, as cited in Sawiki, 1991) key contribution lies in the *genealogical* approach, which analyses historical phenomena in the search for hidden systems of power that operate in society. Through exposing systems of power, it provides an opportunity to create awareness around experiences of oppression in society. Foucault (as cited in Sawicki, 1991, p. 43) explains a discourse to consist of "power...domination...resistance" that are found to

actively impact on society. More so, it is argued that power should be conceived of as “exercised”, “productive” and as “coming from the bottom up” (Hook, 2004b, p. 211, 212; Sawicki, 1991, p. 21). In this way, power is understood as a relational and ‘active’ construct, rather than it being in the possession of specific individuals. Therefore, it is through discourse that power is exercised. The way in which power operates means that some discourses appear more natural and normal than others, while individuals exercise choice when they position themselves in relation to discourses (Shefer, 2004; Willig, 2001).

Power is also argued to be produced by institutional and cultural practices where *disciplinary powers* form binary descriptions of defining the dominant norm (Hook, 2004b; Sawicki, 1991). Subsequently, *feminist post-structuralism* maintains the argument that change is necessary at the “material bases of power” (e.g., the organization of social, cultural and economic systems) (Gavey, 1997, p. 54). As Sawicki argued, Foucault’s *genealogical* approach to resistance allows that oppressed groups have the opportunity to be heard and to resist systems of power.

The permutation of the Foucauldian and post-structuralist approach to language and meaning has provided a suitable standpoint through which this research is conceptualised. As Morrell (2001) argued, South African men are stereotyped to reflect characteristics that appear to be universal and common; but this perception fails to capture the diversity of South African masculinities. *Feminist post-structuralism* has succeeded in focusing more on the differences amongst women (Boonzaier & Shefer, 2006). Likewise, this approach has proven to be beneficial in this study. An understanding of the diverse ways in which South African men

construct their experiences and the ways in which power is legitimated in their speech allowed for important issues to surface.

3.2 Methods

This study explores the discourses men draw upon in their talk surrounding their experiences of attending a particular domestic violence intervention programme. As an extension to the previous section, which provided an overview of the emergence of the qualitative feminist post-structuralist paradigm, this section will continue with a synopsis of the methodology employed in this study. This will include an overview of the study context and participants, and the data collection procedure.

3.2.1 Study context and participants.

A total of 21 in-depth interviews were conducted with men who attended a particular perpetrator group at a non-governmental organisation based in Cape Town, South Africa. Due to the confidentiality agreement between the organisation and researcher, limited and only necessary information regarding the programme and organisation will be revealed. This organisation operates predominantly in low-income communities so as to address issues of violence and crime experienced in the community. With a recent focus on developing effective domestic violence programmes, the organisation developed psycho-educational, Duluth-CBT-type intervention model through which both voluntary and largely court-mandated men could receive education about domestic violence. The programme is run over a 16-week period with group sessions twice a week at the beginning of the programme, and once a week for the

remainder of the programme; totalling to 20 sessions. As part of the process of familiarising myself with unique techniques and goals of this particular intervention programme, I attended the weekly group sessions with the permission from the facilitators and members in the group.

Interviews were conducted with men who attended three different perpetrators groups run by the same organisation, around the Cape Town area. Men were eligible to participate on two conditions: (a) if they attended a perpetrator programme at the organisation and, (b) if they spoke English or Afrikaans. With regard to point (a), men were court-referred to the programme based on a variety of charges of domestic violence. In some cases, men were charged for physical violence against immediate family members, not just against women partners. However, the same men reported having been physically abusive towards their partners in the past; however, they were not charged for these incidents of violence. In addition, a few men were court-mandated to the programme due to charges of verbal and psychological abuse towards women partners. Therefore, the men recruited into this study (like those who attended the programmes) differed with regard to the types of violence they had perpetrated and whether they had attended the programmes voluntarily or had been court-mandated to do so.

With regard to point (b) above, it has been argued that the actor's perspective should remain the primary focus of investigation in qualitative research (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). South Africa is a multilingual and diverse society and it is vital that aspects of the interview are adapted to suit the particular interviewee. Consequently, the participants' spoken language was considered and it was concluded that because group sessions were conducted in these

languages (i.e., English and Afrikaans), likewise, conducting the interviews in these languages would not pose any methodological problems.

Each group was comprised of a maximum of five individuals. Therefore, recruitment of participants from a selection of perpetrator groups was necessary to obtain a suitable sample size for this research. However, the opportunity to select from an array of groups also allowed for a range of information from the Cape Town context to be obtained. As literature has suggested thus far, violent men are often grouped together on the assumption of their similarity (Edleson & Tolman, 1992). By ignoring the diversity amongst the men, domestic violence programmes are consequently ineffective (Saunders, 2001). Therefore, selecting men from a range of contexts within the Cape Town area allowed for the expression of some diversity of experiences.

A longitudinal approach was employed and 12 interviews were completed during the programme, with a follow-up of nine interviews conducted three months post-programme completion, totalling 21 interviews. The purpose of a longitudinal study is to investigate people's experiences over a particular time-span (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 2008). The benefits of employing a longitudinal perspective is that it allows the researcher to examine changes over a lengthy time period as opposed to cross-sectional research, which only involves the collection of data at a specific point in time (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 2008). The employment of this approach strengthened this study because it allowed that the discourses men draw upon in their talk surrounding their attendance at a domestic violence programme could be explored over an extended period of time.

For ease of organising the men's second interviews, the interviews were planned according to their three-to-four-month follow-up sessions at the agencies. In this way, men were alerted to both follow-up 'events' with the use of telephone calls, or if contact details had changed, a letter was mailed to their contact address. Given the noted complexities of tracking down participants in longitudinal research, only nine out of 12 men were available for a second interview. Although programme drop-out rates are relatively high, each participant in this study completed the programme (i.e., attended most of the 20 intervention sessions).

With regard to participant demographics (see Appendix A), participants ranged from the ages of 20 to 55 years (with a mean age of 36.5). The majority of the men were previously categorised as Coloured⁴ (83.3%), with the remainder described as Black/African (16.7%). Participants could largely be described as working-class. The sample largely consisted of Coloured men because this was the demographic primarily served by the organisation. A large proportion of the sample were court-referred (83.3%) to their particular programme while the smaller proportion voluntarily (16.7%) attended the groups. Almost 60 percent were employed and just fewer than 40 percent were unemployed during the time of the interviews. Areas of employment ranged from temporary to permanent work as well as unskilled and low-skilled

⁴ A racial term created during Apartheid that grouped particular South African citizens according to their skin 'colour'. According to Adhikari (2005), in the South African context, Coloured people are typically defined by their skin colour; "from charcoal black to bread-crust brown, sallow yellow and finally off-white cream that wants to pass for white" (p.2). More so, The Coloured racial group was often perceived of as 'between' the black and white racial divisions (Adhikari, 2005). Coloured people are argued to hold their origins in a range of ethnic groups, from Cape slaves and Khoisan to European settlers (Adhikari, 2005). This led to the label of being a "mixed race" with subgroups such as Malays, Griquas, Namas and Basters, as well as being situated in the 'in-between' ranking in the racial hierarchy (Adhikari, 2005, p. 2). However, despite the abolition of Apartheid, this term is still used to identify and name people as Coloured.

labour. The areas of employment could be associated with their levels of education. Twenty-five percent of men reported having passed grade 12 or having reached a tertiary level of education, while the remainder did not complete any secondary level of education. At the time of the interviews, a large majority of the men were married, while a small proportion of 33.3 percent were divorced, separated or single.

3.2.2 Data collection.

Rosenthal and Rosnow (2008) provide a selection of the various ways in which qualitative data could be generated:

The data do not exist in numerical form, but instead consists of people's spoken words, recorded conversations, narrative responses in nondirective or unstructured (also called open-ended) interviews, and observable behaviour. (p. 123)

In this study, both unstructured and semi-structured in-depth interviews were employed as research instruments. As Burman (1994) brought to light, interviews allow for the investigation of subjective meanings that interviewees attach to the topic under investigation. While interviews are commonly perceived as merely conversations, depth interviews should be more correctly described as *research interviews*. Here, the goal is to improve the interviewer's knowledge and the respondent is the main focus (Kvale, 1996; Roulston, de Marrais & Lewis, 2003; Wengraf, 2001).

Due to the exploratory nature of this study, an unstructured depth interview was employed for the first interview with men participants. Here, questions were largely improvised

by the interviewer during the interviewing process. While a deliberate partially-scripted interview might be prepared in advance for a semi-structured interview, an unstructured interview allows that the interview is co-produced by the respondent and interviewer without a necessary framework of questions (Wengraf, 2001). The first interview was introduced by the broad question: "Could you please share your experiences of attending this programme so far?". The second interview employed a semi-structured in-depth approach where a selection of open-ended questions was constructed based on a preliminary analysis of the first set of interviews (see Appendix B). These questions were formed according to noteworthy points that surfaced during the first interviews and were used mainly as a guide rather than a prescribed blueprint for the interview. As Burman (1994) argued, addressing each participant with the same questions might be ineffective. Because participants might differ according to their subject positioning and the interview relationship might vary, each interview might extract different meanings. Therefore, in order to acknowledge men's diversity, questions in the second interview were used flexibly and were shaped according to the positions of each participant.

3.3 Ethical considerations

Ethical approval for this study was granted by an ethics committee at the University of Cape Town in May 2009. Furthermore, consent to conduct research at the particular organisation was also established.

Because of the growth of the research enterprise and the increasing visibility of researchers, it is argued that researchers must adhere to an ethics code to avoid the

consequences of dealing with unsatisfied respondents who feel that they have been cheated (Gray, Williamson, Karp & Dalphin, 2007). Due to this problem of moral accountability in science, ethics principles have been implemented to guide researchers to the appropriate conduct of ethical research endeavours (Gray et al., 2007; Rosenthal & Rosnow, 2008). The American Psychological Association (1998, as cited in Rosenthal & Rosnow, 2008) ethics code highlighted five ethics principles: (a) a respect for persons and their autonomy, (b) beneficence and nonmaleficence, (c) justice, (d) trust, and (c) fidelity and scientific integrity. Aligned with these principles, I maintained a continuous sensitivity to participants' interests throughout this study.

All three satellite offices of the organisation were visited before data collection could begin. I was directed towards the facilitators who co-ordinated the specific perpetrator group. Further plans to: 1) present this research and request volunteers for this study, and 2) to attend weekly group meetings, were dependent on obtaining men's permission. Therefore, facilitators acted as mouth-pieces and mediators before further entry could be made into the research site. Once permission to attend weekly sessions and to present this research was obtained, the process of recruitment of participants and data collection could begin.

The men from the groups were informed about the intentions and process of this study up to two weeks before data collection began. This information session took place directly before a group meeting session, because this was when most of the men were present and therefore accessible. Men were given a brief information sheet (see Appendix C) highlighting the main details of the study. They were informed about a) the aims and objectives of the study

and an outline of questions they can expect, b) the invitation to voluntarily participate in the study, c) were requested to allow 90 minutes for the interview process to be fully completed d) informed about the use of a tape-recorder to document the interview, and e) the confidentiality agreement. Men who were interested in the study discussed interviewing arrangements (i.e., dates and times) with the researcher either telephonically or after a group session. To ensure the privacy of the researcher, a separate cell phone number was dispersed.

3.3.1 The research interviews.

Because the various group meetings at the satellite stations did not commence at the same time; interviews from each group were conducted on separate occasions. The interviews were scheduled at the convenience of the participant, which was normally on the day of their weekly group meetings. Otherwise, weekends were also popular for those that had strict work schedules. Each interview was conducted on the property of the respective satellite offices. A private room was provided, which served as a space in which the interview could be conducted without disruptions. In both interviews, men were thanked for giving up their time to contribute to the study. They were also reminded that their contributions would assist with helping the researcher to enhance her understanding of how men experience participation in a domestic violence programme.

The participants were reminded of the research project and aims. In particular, the first interview was described as an opportunity for men to air their views and experiences of attending the particular programme thus far. However, the second interview was described as an opportunity for the researcher to locate any changes or consistencies in the ways in which

men experienced the programmes. Additionally, the second interview was also an opportunity to track their non-violent change maintenance, as well as to elaborate on general points from the first interviews.

Ethical considerations were continuously taken into account during the research process. Rosenthal and Rosnow (2008) highlight an ethical principle called *beneficence and nonmaleficence*. This principle asserts that the research should have some plausible benefit for the participants and that it should not harm them. While participants derived no immediate benefit from my research, other than having the opportunity to have their stories heard, this work is likely to have some benefit to organisations that work with violent men through making recommendations to programme improvements.

With regard to ensuring nonmaleficence, participants were warned that sensitive and distressing issues might arise in the interview process and this could make them feel uncomfortable. For example, in this study, in cases where the men reported feeling uncomfortable, they were given the option to terminate the interview at that point or continue after a time-out period. Alternatively, in cases where the researcher might have perceived that participants were experiencing extreme distress in speaking about their experiences, interviewees would have been referred to appropriate sources of assistance, such as, counsellors and social workers available at the organisation. However, this did not occur in this study.

In line with the ethics principle of ensuring *respect for people and their autonomy* (Gray et al., 2007; Rosenthal & Rosnow, 2008), consent forms and information sheets were

distributed. It is shown in Appendix D that consent forms for participants included: a) clear descriptions of the aims of the study and the contributions of the participants for this research, b) awareness of potential inconveniences, c) the rights of the participant to drop out of the study at any point, d) the confidentiality of the data, e) an emphasis on not gaining rewards/prizes for participation in the research and finally, f) information about the researcher and a contact number and email address was provided. Providing prizes or rewards for participating in the study were not incorporated as mechanisms to obtain participants. However, reimbursement for travel costs was distributed to participants. In addition to tape recording the interviews, I also employed the use of brief field notes to substantiate the interview data. The use of both the tape-recorder and field notes were explained to participants and it was assured that the content would remain confidential.

On average, the interviews lasted approximately an hour, thereafter, some additional time was allocated to debriefing. The ethical principle of *nonmaleficence* also calls for debriefing to dispel any negative emotions the interview might have created. In this regard, it is considered important that interviewees left the interview with a sense of “dignity, knowledge, and a perception of time not wasted” (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 2008, p. 73; Wengraf, 2001). It was vital that the participants in this research understood that they might have potentially contributed to improving programmes by sharing their personal experiences. Furthermore, Jewkes, Watts, Abrahams, Penn-Kekana and Garcia-Moreno (2000) found that men experienced much distress in talking about their violence because it often caused them to reminisce about abuse experienced in their childhood or towards their mothers. This ultimately

supports the need for debriefing because certain topics might have provoked anxiety during the interview. As a result, the men might have needed this time to reflect and deal with it during the debriefing phase. While this was rarely the case amongst the participants, men were, nonetheless, still encouraged to reflect upon the interview process itself. Similar to Wengraf's (2001) observation, on certain occasions, debriefing also assisted in bringing forth more information that participants were too uncomfortable to share while the tape recorder was still on.

While it is important to consider the ethical impact of the research process on the participants, the role of the researcher in facilitating the process and co-constructing knowledge is an issue that should not be ignored (Gray et al., 2007; Kvale, 1996; Rosenthal & Rosnow, 2008; Wengraf, 2001). This draws the discussion towards ethical considerations of reflexivity and power.

3.3.2 Reflexivity and power.

Traditional and mainstream psychological research has put forward the idea of objectivity as being the gold standard stance for a researcher. Objectivity in research is perceived as the ability of researchers to remove their biases from the actual research process; in other words, researchers are expected to perform value-free research (Gray et al., 2007). The idea of objectivity is problematic in qualitative research however, especially research conducted within a feminist paradigm where it is argued that researcher bias cannot be completely avoided. Social researchers are not removed from the contexts in which they study. Therefore, researchers are expected to be *reflexive* and therefore evaluate their role in the

research and their impact on the research process (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Boonzaier & Shefer, 2006).

Qualitative theorists have conceded that the respondent is the main focus during the interview; however, the researcher is the most important instrument in defining how the interview process is carried out (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Kvale, 1996). Rather than minimizing researcher bias, feminist approaches acknowledge that researchers are not separate from the research process. While it is emphasised that reflexivity does not eradicate bias, interviewers should nonetheless practice reflexivity and continually examine their impact on the research process (Boonzaier & Shefer, 2006; Burman, 1994; Gergen, 2001). Gergen (2001) described reflexivity as “looking backwards, but always from another vested position” (p. 45). According to Burman’s (1994) suggestions, in this study, *reflexivity* was evaluated at all levels of the interview process; such as, the manner in which questions were devised, the interview process itself and the way in which the interview was transformed into a written form and represented. In addition, I also examined my personal and career-oriented motivations for undertaking the Master’s degree. Consequently, I acknowledge my personal investments in this research endeavour as a requirement for the fulfilment of the Master’s degree. However, this research should also be recognised as evidence of my interest in the phenomenon of domestic violence against women, which still remains a severe problem both internationally and locally. Therefore this research is also a means by which I aim to address the problem of domestic violence in South Africa through research in this particular area.

As an extension of the issue of reflexivity, feminist researchers have also highlighted the importance of evaluating power dynamics in the interview process. Gilfoyle, Wilson and Brown (1993) compared the situation between interviewer and participant to resemble the “doctor-patient” or “preacher-sinner” (p. 187) power dynamic. Power dynamics in the interview process might have also been affected by the extent to which race, class, age, gender and culture impacted on the interviewing relationship (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Burman, 1994). The impact of these demographic factors might impede on the way in which rapport between researcher and interviewee is achieved. In this study, it was important for me to reflect on my positioning as Coloured, educationally privileged and fortunate in accessing employment opportunities in comparison to the men’s positionings as working-class, housed in crime-ridden neighbourhoods and unemployed. While this might have created a power imbalance, in one sense, in another sense it became evident that men used the interviews to assert their own power by amplifying gender and age differences between myself and them.

Although interviewers might be assumed to have significantly more power than the interviewee, according to the Foucauldian perspective, power is not static and shifts throughout the interview process (Burman, 1994; Gilfoyle et al., 1993). In the case of this study, the broad topic is gender-based violence; consequently, the issue of gender and, more indirectly, age were experienced to have presented interesting power dynamics that were critically assessed. As a young woman researcher who was interviewing men similar in age or sometimes older, their responses might have been understood as attempts to appear more socially desirable (Willig, 2001; Wood, 2004). For example, frequent responses included

appearing as though they are changed men and no longer abusing their partners. In contrast, the men also took the opportunity to play 'victim' and position themselves as stigmatised 'perpetrators' and, consequently, constructed programme facilitators as biased and judgmental towards them. More detailed examples of such instances will be highlighted in the analysis and discussion chapters.

While there are a number of different responses the participants concocted, it is not a matter of whether they were speaking the truth but rather, it is the particular way in which the participant understood and interpreted the questions (Willig, 2001). Moreover, it also reflected the ways in which they wanted to frame our interactions. Respondents are not passive parties and they are able to resist strategies in the interviewing context by changing their positioning and by choosing to position the researcher in particular ways. In this regard, while the researcher might have his/her own goals, the interviewees also have their own agendas (Burman, 1994). Therefore, it is important that in practicing reflexivity as a feminist researcher that the impact of the interview context is acknowledged. In this study, as the interviewer, I was aware that responses by participants might have been adjusted, been incoherent or contradictory in an attempt to accomplish certain actions and achieve various agendas in the interview (Willig, 2001).

3.4 Analysis of data

For the analysis of the data, Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) and a rhetorical analysis were employed. These forms of discourse analysis will be reviewed.

3.4.1 Foucauldian Discourse Analysis.

As a method that is consistent in working with a feminist post-structuralist approach, discourse analysis was employed as an analytical technique. Discourse analysis refers to methods that have been used in conjunction with a variety of theories of language in different ways (Gavey, 1997). In particular, FDA was employed as its primary focus is language and language use. As opposed to Discursive Psychology which is concerned with how people use language in social interactions, FDA aims to explore how people see the world and their ways of being in the world. In this regard, FDA moves beyond just the immediate context and examines the relationship between discourse and subjectivity as well as the relationship between discourse and what it allows the subject to do (i.e., the practices of discourses) (Willig, 2001).

While there are limitations to the FDA approach, (i.e., the issue of whether subjectivity can be theorized only according to discourses and the need to explore the relationship between discourse and material reality) (Willig, 2001), it still provided a suitable platform from which to examine the subjectivities of violent men and the ways in which they draw upon discursive practices in their talk about the programme. In particular, this form of analysis revealed instances where the men positioned themselves in relation to various discourses, formed subjectivities and either reproduced or challenged discourses (Gavey, 1997; Parker, 1992). More so, the identification of structures of power in the way their language was conveyed was the primary focus of the analysis (Gavey, 1997; Parker, 1992).

Willig (2001) provided a set of guidelines which assisted with analysing data according to the FDA approach. These guidelines highlight six stages of the process:

1. Discursive constructions: Concerned with the way in which the discursive object is constructed.
2. Discourses: Focuses on the difference between these discursive constructions.
3. Action orientation: The question is asked, “What is gained by constructing the object in this particular way at this particular point within the text?”.
4. Positionings: The subject positions that the discourses offer are examined.
5. Practice: The relationship between discourse and practice are examined.
6. Subjectivity: Explore the relationship between discourse and subjectivity (Willig, 2001, pp. 109 – 111)

It should be emphasised that discourse analysis does not follow a rigid set of instructions because it focuses more on the use of language in a particular context and the social world in which it is created (Gavey, 1997; Parker, 1992). Therefore, Willig’s (2001) criteria were employed as a guideline for the analysis of the data. The texts were analysed according to the order in which the men were interviewed for both the preliminary and the final analysis of the data.

3.4.2 Rhetorical Analysis.

A subsidiary focus is placed upon the rhetorical analysis of men’s speech, which was employed as a method of further analysing the ways in which men argue in favour of their

various subject positionings. Rhetorical analysis has been argued to be a form of discourse analysis that serves to locate subtle features in the speaker's talk (Adams et al., 1995). Additionally, rhetorical devices have been described as ways to "act strategically" because speakers use this to support and validate their arguments (Harris et al., 1995, p. 175). As Billig (1985) highlighted, the role of rhetoric allows for the "argumentative nature of thought" (p. 79) to be investigated.

In exploring the discursive positionings of violent men, Adams and colleagues (1995) found that five rhetorical devices were drawn upon as persuasion techniques in men's talk. These rhetorical devices were named:

1. *Reference ambiguity*: ambiguous 'talk' is employed to present violent men as being in consensual agreement with their women partners.
2. *Synecdoche*: this rhetorical device substitutes a part for a whole or whole for a part; therefore, allowing men to camouflage statements of authority.
3. *Axiom markers*: Axiom marking allows violent men to decree omniscience and to make universal statements regarding the nature of reality
4. *Metonymy*: This rhetorical strategy is employed when the speaker replaces the intended object with something that is related to it. While this may appear similar to synecdoche, on the one hand, synecdoche's conceptual association is categorical. Metonymy, on the other hand, employs historical conceptualisations that have been linked to the intended object.

5. *Metaphor*: This rhetorical device is employed to allow men to talk about their violence metaphorically (Adams et al., 1995, p. 391-401).

These rhetorical devices were described as adding “colour and interest to a text” (Adams et al., 1995, p. 402) and have been employed as a structure for the rhetorical analysis of men’s speech in this study.

3.5 Evaluating qualitative research: the demonstration of validity

The current study located itself with the feminist post-structuralist paradigm and therefore understands reality to be socially constructed and contextual; in other words, reality is not understood as having one fixed ‘truth’. As a result, mainstream evaluation criteria, such as objectivity, reliability and validity, were not applicable to this research. Yardley (2008) asserted that validity in research, in general, is evaluated according to the standard at which the research was carried out as well as whether the findings might be judged as practical and valuable; in other words, whether the findings can be trusted. However, theorists have highlighted the challenges in adapting criteria for validity to all types of qualitative research (Kvale, 1996; Yardley, 2008). The development of evaluation criteria for qualitative research is crucial, especially because, in the past, qualitative research has been critiqued for “lacking objectivity”; consequently, qualitative researchers have not been given the standing from which to demonstrate that their research is sound, rigorous and valuable (Kvale, 1996, p. 64; Yardley,

2008). Therefore, this section provides an overview of a selection of Yardley's (2008) evaluation criteria for qualitative research and the ways in which the current study has addressed them.

Yardley (2008) provides a "validity toolbox" (p. 239) which presents the essential ingredients necessary to produce sound qualitative research. She argues that these criteria set the standards by which qualitative research should be carried out; therefore, six of these 'toolbox' criteria will be assessed.

Firstly, Yardley (2008) labelled the first criterion as *comparing researchers' coding*. The principle behind coding with two researchers is to gain the triangulation of perspectives; therefore this guarantees that the analysis is not restricted to one perspective and that other people might understand it too (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Yardley, 2008). In addition, the inclusion of a second researcher might also diminish the effects of researcher bias. In the current study, steps were taken to reduce researcher biases through working closely with my supervisor in the analysis and writing-up process of this study. In addition, the triangulation of perspectives also contributes to understanding the findings from another perspective (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). This study accomplished the triangulation of perspectives in two ways: (a) through *peer debriefing* (i.e., reviewing findings with "similar status colleagues") as well as through, (b) collecting information from various sources or events (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 277). With regard to (a), *peer debriefing* was achieved through presenting my work regularly to my project team, which is comprised of fellow postgraduate students at my university working within the field of men, masculinities and violence. Through this regular assessment of my work by like-minded peers it allowed that questions, critiques, new insights and perceptions

surfaced. In addition, with regard to (b), information was not only gathered from the men's interviews but through my attendance at the weekly group meetings. My attendance at the group sessions also allowed me to gain insight into other constructions of reality that might exist in the context of the study. However, it should be noted that while the aim of this criterion might be to achieve 'objective' interpretations of the research findings, Kvale (1996) argues that there is no such thing. Instead he highlights that, "Different transcripts are constructions of different worlds, each designed to fit our particular theoretical assumptions and to allow us to explore their implications"; therefore implying that findings are merely subjective interpretations and researcher bias can only be acknowledged, not eliminated (Kvale, 1996, p. 165).

Secondly, Yardley (2008) highlights the importance of *participant feedback* (also referred to as Babbie and Mouton's (2001) *member checks*) as a criterion for validating qualitative research. This might entail asking participants to comment on the researcher's analysis, which serves to involve participants in the research and it allows that their views are clarified and not misunderstood (Kvale, 1996; Poland, 2001; Yardley, 2008). The current research used the men's second interview as a tool to gain participant feedback. As earlier discussed, questions for the men's second interviews were formed from a preliminary analysis of the first round of interviews. Therefore, while the second interview was to track the men's 'change' maintenance, it was also an opportunity to clarify and build on points from the first interviews.

Thirdly, the criterion of *disconfirming case analysis* also aids in minimizing the researcher's assumptions and interests (Yardley, 2008). It is suggested that once the initial coding of data is complete, the researcher should explore the potential existence of "disconfirming instances" to seek themes that might oppose the 'normal' or expected pattern (Yardley, 2008, p. 242). Due to the employment of discourse analysis as a method of data analysis, this criterion was fulfilled in this study. It is highlighted that because individuals' subject positionings might appear incoherent and contradictory at times, such instances should also be acknowledged in the analysis (Gavey, 1997). This forms the crux of discourse analysis – to understand the social worlds and realities of participants, which are less likely to be orderly and fixed and more likely to be ambiguous, inconsistent and paradoxical. The method of discourse analysis employed in this study will be investigated in more detail in the next section.

Fourth, there is a need to measure whether the study fully takes the context of the phenomenon into account (Yardley, 2008). In this regard, theoretical perspectives and a review of similar studies should be assessed. In the current study, confirmation of this criterion is relayed in the literature review. Fifth, reflexivity is a crucial measure of validity in qualitative research (Yardley, 2008). As mentioned earlier, the issue of reflexivity and power were central to this study and is a criterion upon which it should be evaluated. My research decisions have been clarified and justified. I have also drawn attention to my interactions with the participants and my own investments in the research endeavour, for example, obtaining a master's degree and my personal motivations to research in the field of domestic violence. In this regard, this study has also shown that it is sensitive to the socio-cultural context of the participants,

through my acknowledgement of my impact, as the researcher, on the participants and interview process (Yardley, 2008). Finally, the importance of assessing the impact of the study in making a difference to a particular phenomenon and adding to a knowledge base is paramount in validating qualitative research (Yardley, 2008). In the current study, findings contribute to building recommendations for local domestic violence programmes as well as recommendations for future research, which are discussed in the concluding chapter.

3.6 Summary of chapter

This chapter has provided an evaluation of the research methodology. A focus was placed on the research design which investigated the history and theoretical assumptions underlying the mainstream psychology and feminist post-structuralist approach. An examination of the method explained how data was gathered. An emphasis was placed upon the importance of ethical considerations. Within this section, an evaluation of the ethics guidelines were addressed in the research interviews, and reflexivity and power in the interview process were examined. Next, the process of analysing the data with FDA and rhetorical analysis was investigated, and the chapter ended with an examination of the ways in which qualitative research and the current research should be evaluated. The next chapter will present an analysis of the discourses of masculinity and change that the programme participants drew upon.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

CHAPTER FOUR: DISCOURSES OF MASCULINITY AND CHANGE

As a method that is consistent in working with a feminist post-structuralist approach, discourse analysis was used as an analytical technique. An analysis of the programme participants' 'talk' revealed that by positioning themselves in relation to various discourses, they form subjectivities that reproduce or challenge those discourses. By drawing upon those discourses, power and even powerlessness was legitimated in one way or another (Gavey, 1997; Parker, 1992). For that reason, the focus has primarily been placed on identifying structures of power and powerlessness in the ways language is conveyed (Gavey, 1997; Parker, 1992).

It is argued that the way in which violent men talk about their relationships with their partners might mask instances of "justifying violence, concealing abuse and supporting entitlements to positions of power" (Pence & Paymar, 1993, as cited in Adams et al., 1995, p. 387). While literature has focused on men's accounts of their violence with their women partners (Adams et al., 1995; Anderson & Umberson, 2001; Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Cavanagh et al., 2001; Strebel et al., 2006; Wood, 2004), few have analysed their 'talk' when speaking about their experiences at programmes. Consequently, the focus of this chapter is to reveal subtle uses of language that men employed when positioning themselves in relation to discourses of masculinity and change. This chapter presents three main discourses, namely, *discourses of male control, discourses of male domination and superiority*, as well as constructions of *the perpetrator as stigmatised and powerless*. Related discourses were found to emerge from these main discourses, namely, the *discourse of resistance to male*

vulnerability, the discourse of agency, the discourse of egalitarianism, constructions of men as victims of gender politics, and explanatory discourses of male violence and power.

4.1 Discourses of male control

Depictions of loss of male control and emasculation are evident in literature which has recorded men's experiences of attending domestic violence programmes (Shrock & Padavic, 2007; Smith, 2007). Due to Duluth model aims violent men who attend such programmes are expected to form more egalitarian attitudes (Shrock & Padavic, 2007). It was noted that within this sample of men, challenges to the discourse of hegemonic masculinity and male control forced men to redefine their gendered subjectivities. However, men were found to use various strategies of re-achieving some control by positioning themselves as rational and controlled subjects.

4.1.1 The discourse of resistance to male vulnerability

The Duluth model employs a group setting design, where methods of making male programme members vulnerable, in the company of other male group members, during sessions have been criticised (Shrock & Padavic, 2007). Research has confirmed that the more a man might experience difficulty in communicating emotionally, the less likely he might experience treatment approaches requiring emotional vulnerability to be helpful (Cusack, Deane, Wilson & Cairrochi, 2006). More so, given that most of the men were court-referred to the programme, it has also been argued that this process of arrest might have been emasculating for some men (Boonzaier, 2009).

In the excerpt below, Achmad⁵ talks about his experiences of being in the group setting. He consistently positions himself in both his interviews as the powerful and private man; therefore supporting *discourses of male control* and resisting the *discourse of emotional vulnerability*. In the second interview Achmad was asked to reflect on the programme and the ways in which he would have improved it:

Ja⁶, I was thinking about individually. Um, I'm a very shy person also. I don't like speaking in front of people actually. Sometimes you hold back and sometimes you must come out with it...(text missing)⁷... But they can interview me individually because they can hear my problems, you can hear my problems, not this one and that one...(text missing)...Yes, we're (him and his wife)⁸ very private people.

Achmad uses language that allows him to position himself as a reserved and private person and through this he argues his preference for individual therapy. Duluth-type interventions aim to dismantle hegemonic discourses of male power and control to create a discourse of gender equity (Dutton & Corvo, 2006; Dutton & Sonkin, 2003) and emotional openness (Shrock & Padavic, 2007). Therefore programme members are supposedly forced to reposition themselves in relation to a *discourse of the New Man* (Hondagneu-Sotelo & Messner, 1997). However, the way in which Achmad positions himself as a "shy person", without making reference to the emasculating effect of the group setting, it allows him to achieve a way of

⁵ All names and other personal identifying factors have been changed to protect and respect the anonymity of the participant.

⁶ 'Ja' means 'yes' in Afrikaans

⁷ Ellipses and (text missing) indicates that text has been intentionally erased to capture the meaning of the text.

⁸ Additional information in brackets is provided to make the meaning of the extract clearer..

making his critique of the group setting more acceptable. Ultimately, constructing himself as a shy person depicts him as powerless. On the contrary, if he positioned himself as resistant to being emotionally vulnerable, he would have created the image of a power-driven, controlling male. Therefore, Achmad practices his subjectivity of the controlled male even three months after the programme had ended.

Similarly, in both of Robert's interviews he positioned himself as a shy, reserved man who struggled to accommodate to the open, sharing nature of the group format. The two extracts below, taken from his first and second interview, illustrates this:

You can see, I'm not a person that can talk and talk man, whatever, in front of people whatever, I'm not a people person or something. Like I said, I'm a very CONSERVATIVE⁹ person, whatever. When I come here, they ask, "What's your name? What's your hobbies?" whatever, whatever. So I told her, "Hey what the KAK¹⁰ is *die*?" (*laughs*). (Interview 1)

Robert: I don't like speaking in front of a lot of people, I can't speak in front of a lot of people.

Taryn: Okay. So what ways would you then improve the programme?

Robert: I think for me it would've worked if I had a session one-on-one, the programme did work for me but it would've been more sufficient then I would've talked more, ek sou meerder gepraat het¹¹. (Interview 2)

⁹ Capital letters in extracts implies that the speaker emphasised the word.

¹⁰ Afrikaans profanity equivalent to 'shit'. However, in the context of this extract, Robert means it as 'hell'.

¹¹ This phrase translated into English means, "I would have talked more".

These extracts indicate Robert's consistency in positioning himself as "conservative", "not a people person" and unable to "speak in front of a lot of people". In the passage from his first interview, he depicts the opportunity to share basic details about himself as a joke when he laughs. Therefore, this indicates that emotional vulnerability is resisted because it furthermore distances Robert from the discourse of hegemonic masculinity. Instead, the subjectivity of male control is practiced.

In the passage from the second interview, however, he paradoxically supports the discourse of emotional vulnerability on one condition; that he shares openly in an individual setting as opposed to a group format. Consistent with the feminist post-structuralist notion, the ways in which individuals draw upon discourses might be perceived of as contradictory and incoherent (Gavey, 1997). Consequently, Robert's challenge and support of the discourse of emotional vulnerability appears to be contradictory. However, he does not locate this contradiction in his talk as being a flaw on his part. Rather, his assumption of male power emerges when he blames his inability to become emotionally vulnerable as a flaw on the programme's part. By placing the focus on the programme's supposed flaws, he achieves a way of escaping responsibility for his choice to remain emotionally distant during the sessions. Additionally, the underlying presence of his male-as-control subjectivity allowed him to construct himself as more fearful and shy of people. Through this, he attempts to gain more sympathy from the listener.

It should be noted that while some men resisted discourses of emotional vulnerability consistently in both their interviews, others showed an appreciation for the support and

encouragement derived from sharing in a group setting. This latter response was also found in Dobash, Dobash, Cavanagh and Lewis' (2000) *Violent Men Study* where the men found the Duluth model approach to be beneficial in terms of talking to their fellow group members and sharing experiences. However, not even the men in the current study who supported the discourses of emotional vulnerability did so consistently in both their interviews. There seemed to be a consistent overarching resistance to the discourse of emotional vulnerability and an attempt to regain male power and control through their adherence to the discourse of male control.

According to feminist explanations, male control and power are associated with the perpetration of abuse (Shrock & Padavic, 2007). More so, men's conformity to hegemonic masculine characteristics, such as emotional inexpressiveness and avoidance of weakness, might equally be viewed as aspects of male control linked to potential violence. It was found in this study that men's conformity to hegemonic masculine norms increased the likelihood that they might continue to avoid responsibility for their abuse and; therefore, reoffend. For example, all four of the men who drew upon this discourse reported increased conflict in their relationships with their partners, post-programme completion. In one of the cases, a participant was arrested twice for allegedly reoffending against his ex-wife after the programme had ended.

In summary, almost half the men consistently positioned themselves in relation to masculinity discourses in an attempt to resist emotional vulnerability that the group process might have attempted to unearth. In the study by Shrock and Padavic (2007) it was deduced

that a Duluth-type intervention produced men who were still likely to perpetrate abuse even after programme completion. However, in this study, programme participants went further to employ various strategies to divert the focus from their violence to positioning themselves as rational, changed, non-violent men. This will be made evident with the *discourse of agency*.

4.1.2 The discourse of agency

The men drew upon the *discourse of agency* as one of the ways in which they talked about their change as non-violent men. While this sample of men constructed various subject positionings in relation to the *discourse of agency*; some men positioned themselves as being active agents in changing their violent behaviours:

But firstly you have to make that choice for yourself. If you don't decide to change this programme can't change you, to be honest with you. I could've come sit here, week in, week out. Then after September, I fade. But I made the decision, I WANT to change. (*Silence*) And I watched all the guys falling out of the group. If only they could BE a man and make that choice. 'Cause hulle was mans genoeg om hulle vrou te slaan¹².

Dobash and colleagues (2000) argued that men often talked about their change as being a progression from *object* to *subject*. Men who make a positive transformation from being abusive to non-abusive depart from the perspective that they are "*objects* of external events" (Dobash et al., 2000, p. 160). Alternatively, the men perceive themselves as *subjects* where they are active agents and in control of the decisions they make in abstaining from violence (Dobash et al., 2000).

¹² English translation: "Because they were man enough to hit their wives"

On the one hand, Adam positioned himself as a *subject* who is in control of changing his violent behaviours. He positioned himself as an active agent in his change by using words, such as, “choice” and “I WANT to change”. He created a subjectivity of the male-as -rational and asserts agency as a prerequisite to a genuine change in behaviour. Adam furthermore legitimated his beliefs by making these statements with much conviction and authority. Additionally, he made discrepancies between man-as-violent and man-as-taking-responsibility. In this way, he challenges the traditional meaning of masculinity.

On the other hand, there is a latent vein of male control lurking beneath Adam’s talk of rationality and agency. Shrock and Padavic (2007), in their evaluation of a Duluth-type intervention, highlighted that although the stripping of men’s ideas of male control was intended, facilitators were found to use male rationality and control as ways to re-assert self-control. For example, controlling talk amongst the men group members was guarded against; but at the same time, messages about male self-control was reinforced and was used to practice conflict and anger management skills (Shrock & Padavic, 2007). Without a suppression of attitudes of male control, controlling behaviours in relationships might persist and serve to feed patriarchal ideals (Shrock & Padavic, 2007). Therefore, Adam’s assertion of being an active agent in his change appears to be in support of social desirability where he gains approval, praise and; thus, power as an egalitarian-supportive, non-abusive man.

On the contrary, some men were found to position their change as dependent on the programme. In this way the men created subjectivities of *objects* where the programme was

argued to 'act' upon them. The two extracts below reflect Robert's change, firstly, as solid and permanent and, secondly, as a fragile and temporary:

Honestly ek dink die session toe ek gegaan het, het vir my reg gehelp, honestly dit het my reg gehelp. Ek was a different person dai tyd. Jy kan die verkere ding sê dan snap ek. (Extract 1)

Honestly, the sessions that I attended helped me (to change), honestly, it helped me (to change). I was a different person at that time. You could say the wrong thing and then I'll snap. (Author's translation)

Jy wil nie hê ek moet hier uit stap as die programme klaar is en gaan sy vrou weer dood maak en iemand kan dit prevent. (Extract 2)

You would not want me (someone) to walk away after the end of the programme and he kills his wife and someone could have prevented it. (Author's translation)

Robert was overwhelmingly praiseworthy of the programme in his second interview. In the first extract he appears to be on a quest to convince the interviewer and himself of his change. By positioning the programme as flawless and through the repetition of authoritative language (i.e., "it helped me (to change)"), he convinces himself that his change is permanent. While he appears to legitimate his change as being solid, he still places more power and weight on the role of the programme. Ultimately, he distances himself from *discourses of male control* and remains an *object* of the programme's 'control'.

Robert's second extract was formed in response to questions based on the programme's duration and whether he felt that it was too short. This passage heightens his drift from male

control where he places responsibility on the programmes for his potential relapse into violence. Through being a passive recipient of the programme's control, his responsibility to maintain his change of non-violence is reduced. Instead he locates his potential relapse as a flaw within the programme; this is being too short in duration.

Robert was not the only man who depicted his change and the maintenance thereof as being dependent on the programme. Some men positioned themselves as powerless and as *objects* of the programme's control more strongly than others:

Keith: I think we stopped too soon (the programme) and what I've basically just done is I've started to pull away (from arguments) because I know what can happen.

The constructions of powerlessness in men's speech when talking about the domestic violence programme highlights Foucault's (1977, as cited in Hook, 2004b) notion of *disciplinary power*. *Disciplinary power* encompasses a range of strategies that monitor and treat individuals in order to normalise deviant individuals (Hook, 2004b). Furthermore, Foucault (as cited in Hook, 2004b) describes *disciplinary power* as a process that involves the creation of certain types of people through the power of expert knowledge and practice. While some institutions have been highlighted as sources of *disciplinary power*, a discipline such as mainstream psychology has also been critiqued for its use of psychological knowledge to create docile subjects through the use of subtle control. It was argued that psychological knowledge and practice aids in objectifying and disciplining the individual – this is the central concept of *disciplinary power* (Hook, 2004b).

In the process of normalizing the men in this study who are termed *deviant subjects*, men's dependence on the programme as a source of expert psychological guidance and control were also to be amplified. This was made evident in the men's second interviews where it was a common request that the programme's duration be extended in the form of frequent follow-up sessions.

In summary, the discourse of agency allowed the men to construct themselves as *subjects*, to maintain their control and power, as well as *objects* to render themselves powerless. However, through the Duluth model techniques of either reinforcing participant's agency both strategies appear to result in more destructive consequences. Both techniques appeared to invite ways for men to either position themselves as active agents (i.e., rational, self-controlled men) or as *objects* (i.e., powerless and acted upon by the programme). Ultimately, through positioning themselves as powerless and controlled by the 'programme', it allowed them to avoid taking responsibility for their change and the maintenance thereof. Although powerlessness formed a strong positioning for men, paradoxically, men also drew upon *discourses of male domination and superiority* to legitimate their assumed male power.

4.2 Discourses of male domination and superiority

In accordance with previous research findings (Adams et al., 1995; Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Wood, 2004), *discourses of male domination and superiority* were also found to emerge in this study. This discourse represented one of the ways in which men subtly asserted their assumed male dominance and superiority in their talk about the programme.

Furthermore, this discourse draws upon aspects of Boonzaier and de la Rey's (2004) *masculinity*

as authority and femininity as subordination discourse. The discourse was argued to incorporate notions of hegemonic gender norms, which allowed men to position themselves in relation to the patriarchal ideology (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004). Similarly, this *discourse of male domination and superiority* is built upon assumptions of male entitlement and power. These assumptions allowed the men in the current study to position women as subordinate and to construct themselves as powerful over women (Connell, 2000; Hoosen & Collins, 2004; Mahalik & Rochlen, 2006; O'Sullivan et al., 2006; Seal & Ehrhardt, 2003; Santana et al., 2006).

This performance of male-as-superior manifested in the ways in which programme participants related to women facilitators. For example, this was made evident in Waleed's second interview where he drew upon this discourse to support his perception of the facilitators:

Sometimes I'll tell the guys, "Facilitator 2¹³ is talking a lot of nonsense now, I'm not agreeing" and they will agree with me. 'Cause why? They teaching one plus one is two. Just giving you an example. You must believe it...*(text missing)*... I've got my own brain so I've got my own way of thinking. I maybe won't do things the way they do it - I'll do it my own way.

Waleed shows resistance to female 'power' through his language of "I've got my own brain" and "I'll do it my own way". He uses his assumed male power and superiority to argue that he is more knowledgeable than the women facilitators. In this way, he supports the discourse of male domination and superiority where he positions men's knowledge as being

¹³ All names and other personal identifying factors have been changed to protect and respect the anonymity of facilitators

unquestionably superior to women's knowledge. Through drawing upon this discourse, he achieves a way of avoiding submission to the women facilitators and their teachings.

More importantly, his performance of male power involved forming an alliance with the rest of the group members. This appears to be one of the disadvantages of holding group sessions. Programme participants who intentionally disrupt the goals of instilling more egalitarian attitudes, might cause the rest of the programme members to regress. Research has suggested both positive and negative feedback for the use of group treatment methods as opposed to an individual-based therapy (Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Hearn, 1998; Saunders, 2001). Group therapy has been considered beneficial because it opens up the man's social network to include those who are supportive of him becoming non-abusive and it provides a safe environment for the man to express his feelings (Edleson & Tolman, 1992). On the contrary, it has also been found that a group format might inflict denial, sexist and violent attitudes in ways that programme facilitators might not notice or even reinforce (Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Hearn, 1998; Saunders, 2001). This could have detrimental effects after the session where the man might feel justified in further abusing his partner (Edleson & Tolman, 1992). Waleed seems to have accomplished this very effect in the group sessions. Through manipulation, he achieves a way of forming alliances with the men to 'silence' the facilitators.

This echoes Harris, Lea and Foster's (1995) findings where men were found to marginalise women so that the women remain *objects*. It was argued that this discourse of marginalisation creates the binary "majority vs. minority voice" (Harris et al., 1995, p. 180). The men would occupy the role of the 'speaker' in this case which represents the 'majority'. The

minority are constructed as the women who tell men “you must believe what we tell you”; therefore wanting to dominate and control men. Through positioning women as the minority and as domineering it allows the majority to ‘silence’ women (Harris et al., 1995).

This discourse was also drawn upon when some men positioned themselves as more rational, competent and changed in relation to their female counterparts. Women partners were commonly depicted as emotionally unstable, irrational and abusive:

She’s (wife) still got that thingy in her mind man. Like to say I’ve been unfaithful to her but me, I just keep cool. I try to emphasize to her that it is untrue. I tell her, “What it is you’re thinking about, NOTHING”, etcetera. Even she says “no I was accusing you of-“, I just ignore her. But I’m not that terrible that I can say “this and that, you’re the cause of this, you’re provoking me”. No, I just keep my cool.

This extract was taken from Steve’s second interview where his language accentuates instances of woman subordination. He stresses his subjectivity of male-as- superior through language such as keeping his “cool” and “going smooth” and he subordinates his wife by undermining and devaluing her opinions. In this way, he positions himself in relation to discourses of male domination and superiority as being more controlled, rational and competent than his wife.

Steve also explains his avoidance of language such as “you’re provoking me” or “you’re the cause of this” as an indication of the extent to which he has changed. However, this could also be explained as an illustration of Dobash et al.’s (2000) *programme speak*. Dobash and colleagues made reference to *programme speak* (*programme talk* from here onwards) as non-

genuine talk that might be prevalent in men's speech to position themselves as changed, non-violent individuals. Programme participants might employ *programme talk* to indicate that the programme lessons had penetrated their 'old' faulty attitudes and behaviours. By showing an awareness of non-violent language, Steve is able to position himself as a changed man. Therefore, through drawing upon this discourse, he achieves power as a changed man.

Almost all the men in this study were found to position themselves against the discourse of male domination and superiority in one way or another. The discourse of male domination and superiority relates to aspects of Adams and colleagues' (1995) *discourse of natural entitlement and domination*. Adams et al.'s (1995) discourse has been explained by theorists to support the assumption that men are biologically programmed to dominate women and in return, men demand respect and obedience from women (Adams et al., 1995; Harris et al., 1995; Smith, 2007). This discourse opposes social constructionist notions that behaviours and attitudes of men and women are flexible and; thus, changeable. Through drawing upon the *discourse of natural entitlement and domination*, it is emphasised that men's power over women is a fixed, unchangeable reality (Adams et al., 1995).

While the men in this study were not found to draw upon the discourse of natural entitlement, their subject positionings against the discourse of male domination and superiority reflected a desire to keep women subordinated. In other words, this indicated men's opposition to the disturbance of the traditional gender framework. Because programme participants practiced abusive behaviours in subordinating their partners prior to attending the programme, it is necessary that current forms of subordination are exposed. While abuse was used to

control and discipline women prior to the programme, the men's new non-violent subjectivities allowed them to endorse a new strategy of recapturing their power. Therefore, through drawing upon *discourses of male domination and superiority* men achieve a way of positioning women as weaker and more incapable than them.

Almeida and Durkin (1999) contended that based on the traditional gender order men and women have different ideas of what a "quality" (p. 314) relationship is. Consequently, it was found that most men who enter couple's therapy emphasize the problems and challenges in their relationship as the result of a deficit on the women's part. This faulty thinking pattern is suggested to be due to men's adherence to traditional masculine norms in their attempts to be perceived as righteous and authoritative (Almeida & Durkin, 1999). This was evident in this study where men positioned themselves as more competent, knowledgeable and skilled because they attended the programme. More so, research has shown that men use their attendance at a domestic violence programme to further disempower their partners by, for example, not sharing or being secretive about programme content (de la Harpe, 2009). Because the domestic violence programme was constructed as a tool for education and personal growth in this study, these factors allowed the men to achieve subjectivities of omniscience and superiority.

In summary, the discourse of male domination and superiority allowed programme participants to position themselves as superior to women as well as to subordinate their women partners using various strategies. Similarly to Adam and colleagues' (1995) discourse of *natural entitlement*, the men employed 'talk' that aimed to keep women subordinated and

powerless. However, men were still found to disguise their adherence to hegemonic masculine norms by emphasising their conformity to the *discourse of egalitarianism*.

4.2.1 The discourse of egalitarianism.

Boonzaier and de la Rey (2004) found that although conformity to traditional gender norms was evident in their sample of violent men, the opposite was also apparent where some men were receptive to changes in the traditional gender order. *Discourses of empowerment and resistance* were evident in men's talk through, for example, their willingness to do "housework, cooking or child-care" (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004, p. 459). Similarly, some men in the current study positioned themselves as taking on more traditionally feminine tasks of cooking or doing housework. More so, men were also found to commonly position themselves as ambassadors for women empowerment:

Keith: We just had that 16 days of activism, I even had a t-shirt of it...*(text missing)*...I was the one who went to the classes, I know what I've been through, what certain women go through.

Martin: It actually, it open your mind and you think, I don't know how to put it...it's a very good thing. I think if ANY man maybe once or twice a year can get classes like this, I think there will be less domestic violence.

Both these extracts were taken from the men's second interviews. Keith drew upon the *discourse of egalitarianism* to emphasise his support of *16 days of activism against woman and child abuse* celebrated by South Africans during the month of December. Keith uses his t-shirt as a discourse through which he performs his subjectivity as an egalitarian, non-abusive male.

Similarly to Keith, Martin draws upon the discourse of egalitarianism to position himself as having adapted to attitudes of gender equity. Their 'talk' of gender equality allows them to distribute the power equally between men and women. On the contrary, in both extracts, the men employ authoritative language in support of their arguments. Keith placed emphasis on his superior knowledge of domestic violence due to his programme attendance, while Martin emphasised the need to re-educate men on their beliefs of the traditional gender order as a vital deterrent against domestic violence. Statements of authority ultimately give them permission to argue how people should operate in the world. Therefore, the men appear to draw upon the discourse of hegemonic masculinity which allows that subjectivities of male authority emerge in their egalitarian 'talk'.

While the men in this study positioned themselves as supportive and favourable towards *the discourse of egalitarianism*, this only appeared to elicit instances of *programme talk*. This 'talk' helps them to achieve constructions of the egalitarian man as opposed to traditional masculine constructions of the woman-subordinating man. As Dobash et al. (2000) argued, this 'talk' should not be taken at face value and rather be examined more carefully for instances of subtle opposing perspectives. Consequently, it was found that while both men drew upon this discourse to show their support of women in general, in contrast, when they spoke about their personal lives they positioned themselves as victims of women empowerment.

For example, the two excerpts below emerge from Martin's first and second interviews, where he positions his own physical abuse towards his wife as unjustifiably punished:

Only thing that DID worry me, probably, I wouldn't say worried me. The thing that ANGERED the most is that she had me locked up and that's not an easy thing for me to forgive, 'cause at that specific time I didn't think it was a punishable enough offence for what I did. [Interview 2]

The interdict, it came first. It caused the whole thing of going to the courts. And you know, if you got that anger inside and "how could she treat me this way?" (mimicking his thoughts)...but this is me – "You're now gonna¹⁴ do that" (mimicking his thoughts), so I ended up lifting my hand, which I do admit, I done something wrong. [Interview 2]

In both extracts, Martin positions his violence as a minor, petty incident and he constructs the interdict as an unreasonable attack by his wife. Because Martin's 'talk' does not appear to differ between the time of his first interview (conducted nearing the end of the programme) and his second interview, it might be deduced that at the point of the four-month follow-up interview, he still minimised responsibility for his violence. More so, he constructs himself as an *object* where he blames his use of violence on his wife's alleged betrayal. In both these extracts, Martin positions his wife to be at fault by saying "that's not an easy thing for me to forgive" and "how could she treat me this way?".

Martin's powerlessness, however, is overshadowed by his use of omniscient statements. He draws upon the *discourse of male domination and superiority* when he employs omniscient statements such as, "I didn't think it was a punishable enough offence for what I did", to position his argument as the truth. He uses his assumed superiority to imply that it is him who needs to forgive his wife, without acknowledging whether he should be forgiven for his abuse.

¹⁴ A casual conversational term for "going to"

Wood (2004) found that men drew upon discourses of themselves as protectors of women. In Wood's study they represented themselves as chivalrous men who respect and protect women, not abuse them. The men were found to position violence and abuse against women as morally wrong; yet, they simultaneously constructed their abuse against intimate partners as somehow permissible. The men in the current study responded in a similar manner and in the process drew upon the discourse of *male domination and superiority*. Wood concluded that while the men in her study acknowledged the cultural appropriateness of respecting women and not abusing them, they dismissed this code when talking about their own violence with women partners.

Aligned with Wood's (2004) assertions, programme participants' compliance to the *discourse of egalitarianism* might be explained as attempts to appear more pro-social. Therefore, this makes it more likely that the programme participants use this as a way of framing their experiences. More so, the impact of the interviewer as a young female researcher might influence the social desirability of the men's responses in order to gain her approval (Willig, 2001).

In summary, the men in this study drew upon the *discourse of egalitarianism* to position themselves as supportive of the gender equal framework. However, through an analysis of men's *programme talk*, it was found that underlying speech of male-as-dominant-and-superior emerged when men talked about their own intimate relationships. This contradiction in men's speech of supporting gender equal attitudes against women in general yet challenging this discourse in their own intimate relationships, was argued to be the result of wanting to appear

more pro-social. To furthermore depict their arrests as unjustified, the large majority of men went further to position themselves as “victims of gender politics”, and to construct the legal system as biased against men in general and ‘for’ women (Anderson & Umberson, 2001, p. 371). This introduces the next discourse where men were found to position themselves as powerless victims of gender politics.

4.2.2 Men as victims of gender politics.

While few men drew upon the *discourse of egalitarianism*, all of the men were found to construct themselves as *victims of gender politics*. Anderson and Umberson (2001) found that amongst a sample of 33 violent heterosexual men one of the prominent themes drawn upon was *‘The law is for women’: claiming gender bias*. This theme represented a way for men to position the legal system as biased against men in general and ‘for’ women. With the South African theme of the empowerment of women taking the media by storm (e.g. 16 days of activism against domestic violence), the men in this study were found to attribute women empowerment and the legal system’s support of women’s rights as biased. More so, Anderson and Umberson suggested that by positioning the legal system as gender biased, it allowed the men to divert the focus from their own perpetration of abuse to claiming bias as an explanation for their arrest. This, in turn, allowed the men to dissociate from their ‘abuser’ identities to claim that their arrest was unjustified and that they did not deserve to be treated like criminals.

Anderson and Umberson’s (2001) findings also surfaced in the current study where men constructed themselves as victims of gender politics in their ‘talk’ around their arrests. The following extracts represent four similar depictions of men’s experiences of detention:

Robert: You come there (prison), people want to rob you whatever and smack you 'round...(text missing)...You lay on the filthy blankets and SHIT man. And every night, if you were sleeping, the police person will come, (*making sound effects of knocking on a door*) Bah, bah, bah, bah, bah! Whatever, wake you up...(text missing)...before I went into jail, the police beat me up, they beat me up! It's not right nê¹⁵? How can a police person beat you up, they sprayed that mace in my eyes and they kicked me.

Achmad: But I don't wanna end up there (prison) 'cause that's not MY place to be.

Martin: To be there in that environment (prison) is...that place is not for a human being, NOT.

Arnold: I mean, that's not a lekker¹⁶ place (prison), that is NOT a lekker place and I'm not used to a place like that. And I mean, you lay with a lot of deurmekaar¹⁷ people and whatever, you understand. I wasn't raised like that man, no ways.

The above extracts were taken from the men's first interviews where they were commonly found to employ strategies of positioning themselves as non-criminals. For example, by acknowledging this 'inhumane' environment, by name, as being 'prison', it might have depicted them as real criminals. Their language allows them to dissociate from their 'abuser' identities through positioning themselves as victims of the criminal justice system (i.e., "the police beat me up...they sprayed mace in my eyes and they kicked me"). Their victimising response to their arrest echoed previous research findings where violent men resisted the view

¹⁵ A South African slang term requesting agreement and approval from the other party.

¹⁶ English translation: 'nice'

¹⁷ An Afrikaans term meaning disorganised; however, in this context it refers to perplexed, troubled people.

of themselves as criminals and rather depicted themselves as law-abiding citizens (Smith's, 2007). Ultimately, these men aimed to achieve opposing representations of the 'perpetrator' who is often perceived of as the monster (Wood, 2004). Furthermore, with this sample of men, they were found to place more emphasis on their perceived victimisation, powerlessness and injustice, rather than on their violence (Smith, 2007).

To furthermore emphasise their positions of powerlessness, more than half the men went further to construct themselves as victims of their wives' alliances with the legal system.

Steve: They (police officials) say, "You violated the conditions of the interdict so we have to lock you up". Which is, I was not the cause of it, sometimes we try to resolve things involving with the cops; the cops are not there to resolve the problem...*(text missing)*...The moment I over step the line she goes to the cops. The moment I mention domestic matters, I get locked up. It was hectic. (Interview 1)

Robert: Ja, omdat hulle vat meeste die vroumense (se woord). Al maak ek niks nie, al se ek niks nie, die polisie kom. Hulle hoor nie wat ek se. Hulle gaan my net vat. So ek is bang sy sal my verniet opsluit. (Interview 2)

Robert: Yes, because they take the woman's word most of the time. Even though I do nothing, even though I say nothing, the police come. They don't hear what I say. They will just take me. So I'm scared they'll lock me up for nothing. (Author's translation)

Both Steve and Robert talk about the law as placing more emphasis and trust on the woman's word. Through this perception that the law favours women, the men argue that it provides women with more power and leaves men powerless. Not only is the legal system constructed as biased but some of the men position their wives as dishonest in their application for interdicts.

The men appear to be aware that discourses of women empowerment are available for women to construct their female subjectivities as powerful, confident and rights-protected. In response, they choose to resist this discourse and instead reclaim their assumed entitled male power by constructing women as vindictive. This shift resembles the way in which the men's subjectivities were deconstructed as powerful, macho men and reconstructed negatively as perpetrators and criminals. Therefore, the men achieve the stripping of women's power through the re-enactment of their male-as-victim constructions.

Two out of the 12 men aimed to achieve the stripping of women's power by using strategies of role reversal. In both of Arnold's interviews, he positioned himself as a powerless victim under his ex-wife's control. In the extract below from his second interview he illustrates this:

Arnold: No, if (ex-wife) get cross, say I make her cross, then she throw a vase on me; broken.

Taryn: (ex-wife) will do this to you?

Arnold: Yeeessss....no but you see I tease her, I tease her and then she soema¹⁸ take that thing (clap hands once). Then I say, "Okay, nee meneer moet nou af kom"¹⁹(mimicks himself calling the cops). Then she's worried now (laughs).

Through Arnold's tone and reaction (i.e., laughing) in this extract, it could be deduced that he took enjoyment in playing this manipulative game with his ex-wife. Additionally, his

¹⁸ The correct Afrikaans pronunciation for this word is 'sommer' meaning 'just' in the context of the extract.

¹⁹ English translation: "Okay, no mister must come now"

laughing response might also be interpreted as the way in which he perceives her violence to be harmless. This echoes previous research findings where men's violence was perceived differently to their woman partner's violence (Anderson & Umberson, 2001). Anderson and Umberson located this finding within the minimising discourse because men positioned their violence as rational and effective, while women's violence was minimised through positioning it as trivial and hysterical. It was argued that this strategy allowed men to ignore threats of women's violence and men were able to continue performing hegemonic masculinity to emphasise gender difference.

Arnold's need to regain his power might be the result of his frequent arrests preceding the programme and twice after the programme had ended. Therefore, he attempts to recapture his power by instilling fear in his ex-wife equivalent to the fear she created in him through her use of the legal system. For example, Arnold's fear is made evident in this extract:

She (ex-wife) makes my nerves finish...(text missing)...Sometimes I'm sleeping and I think, "Am I safe here to sleep in the house?" or whatever, "Is she gonna phone the police again to come pick me up, lock me up 2 o' clock at night, in the morning?" I'm waiting then I can't sleep 'cause I'm worried. What if I go to jail again? And that is not nice, it's not nice for me man.

In his second interview, however, he voices his need to produce this same fear in his ex-wife when he says: "*I said to her, it's not lekker there in that cells nê. They must make you skrik²⁰; also, make you see*". In both Arnold's interviews, he was found to position himself as powerless in relation to his wife who he positioned as a villain. This was not only true for

²⁰ English translation: 'scared'

Arnold's interviews but, similar findings emerged in Boonzaier and de la Rey's (2004) study. The men drew upon the discourse of resistance to position themselves as powerless, emasculated victims against their women partners who they positioned as merciless, powerful and manipulative with the use of their 'new found' rights (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004). Research has shown that men associated their women partners with 'masculinising' characteristics which constituted these women as taking on controlling and domineering roles (Anderson & Umberson, 2001). These controlling depictions allowed men to construct their partner's resistance to the traditional gender order as problematic.

Change has been understood to be a constant process of awareness and work on the sustenance of non-violent behaviours (Dobash et al., 2000). This implies that men acknowledge their violence and develop a changed empathic attitude towards the woman partner (Dobash et al., 2000). However, the mere contact with the criminal justice system seemed to have impeded on men's progress, due to their unresolved feelings of their partners' assumed betrayal.

Literature has indicated mixed results for the effectiveness of court-mandated perpetrator programmes (Babcock & Steiner, 1999; Bennett et al., 2007; Dobash et al., 2000; Edleson & Syers, 1990; Sherman & Berk, 1984). The way in which the criminal justice system operates to deter men's violence can be equated with *disciplinary power* where the system exerts control over the deviant individual. The disciplinary effect of the criminal justice system on court-mandated men is evident in research (Babcock & Steiner, 1999; Bennett et al., 2007; Sherman & Berk, 1984) as well as in this sample where all of the men showed a fearful

awareness that reoffending will result in a re-arrest. However, as Buttell and Carney (2004) alerted, while programme participants might be behaviourally conditioned to abstain from physical abuse, they have become skilled in their ability to talk 'change' rather than instigate an authentic change in behaviour. Additionally, research also indicates that although men supposedly abstain from physical abuse they might find other ways of dominating their partners through, for example, psychological and verbal abuse (Boonzaier & van Schalkwyk, in press; de la Harpe, 2009). Therefore, careful analysis of men's 'talk' regarding their change and relationships with their partners should be closely examined and not taken on face value.

In summary, the men were found to position themselves as victims of gender politics to place more emphasis on their perceived victimisation rather than on their own violence. Feelings of injustice and victimisation were commonly expressed when the men talked about their arrests and experiences of detention. In order to gain an authoritative standing on their opinions regarding the legal system, explanations of their arrest positioned the men as rational and non-violent people. On the contrary, their wives were depicted as untruthful, emotional women who used their rights as a means to be vindictive towards their partners. Consequently, the involvement of the criminal justice system, as a deterrent for men's abuse, was rarely acknowledged by the men as being justified in its punishment or successful in instigating a non-violent change. Feelings of powerlessness and victimisation continued to form a strong positioning for the programme participants when they drew upon the discourse of *the perpetrator as stigmatised and powerless*.

4.3 The perpetrator as stigmatised and powerless

Smith (2007) found that amongst a sample of 14 men the theme of *humiliation and shame* emerged from the men's experiences of having to attend a particular domestic violence programme. It was argued that feelings of embarrassment might have evolved due to men's perceptions that their attendance at the programme was unjustified (Smith, 2007). More so, Boonzaier (2008b) found that because programme participants were court-mandated to attend a particular domestic violence programme, experiences of being labelled as 'perpetrators' might have been particularly pertinent. Therefore, there might be limited ways in which programme participants are able to secure "positive identities" (Boonzaier, 2008b, p. 190). Boonzaier and Smith's findings are echoed in this study where adapting to new subjectivities of being 'perpetrators' allowed men to position themselves as powerless. At the same time, the men also responded by dissociating from these stigmatising labels.

Subject positionings of the stigmatised 'perpetrator' surfaced more strongly with some men. Two out of twelve men constructed themselves in relation to *the perpetrator as stigmatised and powerless* when talking about their experiences with the women facilitators at the programme:

Achmad: That's why I was very happy also (that wife did not attend the women's programme). I didn't want to start the argument again 'cause maybe facilitator 2 or facilitator 1 could've said to her, "I spoke to Achmad about that" and I come out of work and I don't want to hear this crap again. 'Cause I'm very happy to tell her the truth. (Extract 1)

Keith: I need that support. If I got a problem I won't be able to phone someone and say, "Look...". I know she (wife) can phone facilitator 1 anytime.

Taryn: Why can't you phone facilitator 1?

Keith: Well I phoned my one...(text missing)...to speak (to her) and there was no answer. It was actually during the course of the day so the office was supposed to get her to phone me back but they didn't. So I thought, "Now here we go, here's my answer". As far as I'm concerned, we the perpetrators so they (women) getting the protection, I'm not. (Extract 2)

The above extracts are Keith and Achmad's reflections of the perpetrator as shamed and disgraced. Achmad drew upon this discourse to position himself as distrusting of women, such as his facilitators and wife. More so, he constructed women as being each other's allies. He talks about his experiences with the facilitators and his wife as being dependent on trust. He constructs the perpetrator as untrustworthy when he says, "I'm very happy to tell her the truth". Through this statement, he dissociates from his label as perpetrator through reassurance that he is in fact trustworthy. However, he simultaneously 'stigmatises' the women facilitators and locates 'perpetrator' qualities of untrustworthiness within women.

Keith talked about his experiences at the programme in two contradicting ways: as we saw earlier, in his first interview he constructed himself as a *subject* and man-as-changed. On the contrary, he digressed to constructing himself as an *object* when talking about his experiences after the programme had ended. He drew upon this discourse to position himself as an *object* and powerless against women who he constructed as having all the power and protection. He also constructs himself as dependent on the facilitator's guidance due to his

increased fear that he would re-offend. Additionally, Keith's self-pity in this extract allows him to position himself as the helpless, stigmatised 'perpetrator', while positioning women as cold and heartless.

Research has focused on the negative effects of the stigmatisation of the 'perpetrator' (Boonzaier, 2008b; Corvo & Johnson, 2003; Smith, 2007). Boonzaier found that the violent men in her study resisted associations with being labelled as the 'stigmatised perpetrator' and responded by emphasising their non-abusive change. In this way, they achieved a way of preserving a positive identity. However, the men in the current study attempted to maintain a non-perpetrator identity by placing these negative, stigmatised qualities onto women. Through positioning women as siding with fellow women, they portrayed the women facilitators as being favourable towards women partners and biased and judgmental towards male 'perpetrators'.

In summary, men in this study were found, on the one hand, to construct *the perpetrator as stigmatised and powerless* in their experiences with the facilitators. On the other hand, other men drew upon *explanatory discourses of male violence and power*. The next section will show the ways in which *explanatory discourses of male violence and power* allowed men to find various ways of diverting attention from their 'perpetrator' subjectivities to include other dimensions of their background and lives. Consequently, this discourse will illustrate how men's subject positionings achieved opposing representations of the 'perpetrator' who is often perceived of as the monster (Wood, 2004).

4.3.1 Explanatory discourses of male violence and power

In Shefer, Strebel and Foster's (2000) study which evaluated students' constructions of power and violence in heterosexual relationships; it was found that they presented explanations for men's sexual behaviours and power. Within the same vein, the current study also found that programme participants wanted to explain their violence and power over women. Through these explanations and justifications, they achieved resistance to narrow constructions of perpetrators as stigmatised and powerless. All of the participants drew upon this discourse in their first interviews. Due to the unstructured design of this interview, it allowed them free reign to talk about experiences that they considered significant. Furthermore, in accordance with previous research findings, the men were mainly found to employ socialisation and social and cultural norms in support of their explanations (O'Neill, 1998; Shefer et al., 2000).

In the following extract, Tauriq drew upon an *explanatory discourse of male violence and power* to explain his history of experiencing abuse as a child and to position this as a reason for eventually becoming violent:

But because of what happened (referring to abuse), my situation I found myself starting (to become violent) from a young age and it grew within me and not being able to handle situations – that basically made me retaliate.

In this extract, Tauriq positioned himself as being a victim of intergenerational violence. Through this, he constructs himself as an *object* where he is a passive recipient of his history of experiencing violence. By constructing himself as an *object* of his life events and powerless in

becoming violent, he is able to avoid responsibility for his violence. This is made evident in his language when he says, “Because of what happened...it grew within me...basically made me retaliate”. His construction of being powerless allows him in some ways to displace responsibility for his violence on his father (the abuser).

At this point, it should be noted that research has investigated the damaging effects of witnessing abuse in childhood. Witnessing or experiencing abuse at an early age has been associated with becoming violent later in life (Abrahams & Jewkes, 2005; Abrahams et al., 2006; Kurian et al., 2009; Lisak & Beszterczey, 2007). At the same time, the ways in which violent men draw upon intergenerational explanations for their abuse have also been critically examined (O’Neill, 1998; Walker, 2005). Similarly to O’Neill’s (1998) findings, intergenerational abuse in this study is constructed as if it were a pathology and illness that the men carried by no choice of their own. In this regard, the pathology is often talked about as if it needs treatment or therapy (O’Neill, 1998).

Likewise in this study, the men positioned their violence as pathological due to their history of experiencing and witnessing familial abuse. O’Neill (1998) deduced that this faulty thinking pattern might impede efforts to get men to accept responsibility for their violence, because their blame is fixated on the ‘original’ abuser. In an attempt to resist constructions of the perpetrator as stigmatised (Corvo & Johnson, 2003), the men position themselves as victims and *objects* of their abusive pasts. Additionally, socialisation was talked about as though it were a fixed, unchangeable, and unstoppable process (Shefer et al., 2000). As Shefer and colleagues (2000) suggested, this implies an opposition to changes in the traditional gender order.

While socialisation explanations for men's violence and power emerge in some men's talk, cultural and social explanations appear to surface more strongly in other men's talk. The use of cultural norms to justify and explain unequal gender power relations were found in other studies too (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Ramphele, 1989; Smith, 2007). Martin and Steve draw upon *explanatory discourses of male power and violence* to explain their use of violence from a social and cultural perspective:

Martin: Um, I'm coming from a black family who are very strict in their tradition whereby if you're a woman, you must know your place. So I marry her, she's a Coloured (woman) but she doesn't have that basic (knowledge) of black people. (Interview 2)

Steve: She make(s) me tea, whatever, "But at the end of the day you don't think back to who's the provider of this. These people (wife's family) come with everyday in my house...(text missing)...I HATE it. I don't like to come and my house must be crowded - I hate it. I like my house to be spotless. Imagine (I am) telling you the same thing over and over - you take me like a fool. "You just don't care man, you expect me to blow up" (mimicking thoughts). (Interview 1)

In the above extracts, Martin and Steve talk about their social and cultural norms as a set of prescribed rules that their wives should obey. Martin creates a subjectivity of the patriarchy-driven black man and positions the traditional gender order as natural and fixed. He uses his assumed male superiority to assert that his wife's disobedience to his cultural traditions is based on her lack of knowledge about his culture, without acknowledging that she might be exercising her agency to resist cultural norms.

Similarly, Steve's extract is built upon ideas of gender role norms and the roles he expects his wife to fulfil. He draws upon the gendered discourse of masculinity where he

positions himself as masculine due to his ability to provide. Research has found that thriving masculinities are often associated with the ability to provide financially for families (Boonzaier, 2005; Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004). However, while this contributes successfully towards the formation of masculinity, the authority and power that Steve derives from being the provider allows him to govern and dominate his wife and household. He prescribes various rules, such as, his wife making tea for him, abstaining from having a crowded home, and keeping the house spotless. However, when these traditional gender role norms are challenged, he speaks as though it offends his masculinity (i.e., “you take me like a fool”), which results in a violent response (i.e., “expect me to blow up”). This passage is riddled with discourses of assumed masculine power and domination over women. Steve’s talk indicates that cultural and social norms have become so entrenched that resistance to these norms appear unnatural.

Violent men have been found to argue that cultural influences operate to produce men’s domination, power and control over women (Smith, 2007). Similarly to Smith’s findings, the men in this study explained their violence and subordination of women to be a “patriarchal right” (p. 199). Despite potential differences in culture where Smith’s sample consisted of white American men, the men in this study construct explanations for their violence in similar ways. Furthermore, Smith’s programme participants were interviewed prior to their attendance at the domestic violence programme, whereas Steve and Martin’s interviews were during and after the programme. Therefore, attempts to escape responsibility for their violence were still evident despite having undergone an intervention.

As Shefer and colleagues (2000) noted, a discourse of culture is expected to emerge within men's talk of their violence considering that South African masculinities have been forged in a society of profound social inequalities. Indigenous South African cultures can be traced through history to have been subordinated by dominant Western and white cultures (i.e., Afrikaners and Europeans) through the effects of apartheid (Hook, 2004c; Shefer et al., 2000). The legacy of apartheid (i.e. economic and social inequality) still exists where impoverished communities are predominantly African and Coloured/Indian groups and white groups still possess most of the wealth (Epstein, 1998). In this study, this issue of marginalisation through poverty has filtered into the programme participant's explanations for male violence and power. Because dominant masculine norms (i.e., violence, aggression, the subordination of women) are associated with Westernized ideals of hegemonic masculinity (Levant & Richmond, 2007), it is argued that some marginalized or oppressed men might position themselves more strongly in relation to violent attributes of the hegemonic norm (Morrell, 2001). This strong association with violent attributes is argued to compensate for men's lack of dominance in other arenas (Morrell, 2001). For example, violence is a way in which men can ensure various forms of control over women (Dunkle et al., 2004; Hoosen & Collins, 2004) and through this, the attainment of masculinity.

In this study, through programme participants' explanations of male violence they often positioned themselves as marginalised against hegemonic discourses of masculinity. In this way, violence was explained to be a necessary element to the formation of masculinity and

survival in their communities. In the extract below, Adam draws attention to two mutually exclusive masculinity subjectivities both performed during his time at the programme:

I always used to look at how...(text missing)...men getting ROBBED, um, people walk all over them. People look at them and go, "Look at these softies. Wat soorte mans is julle?"²¹. And NOW, I've become one of them (laugh), um, ja. And it's actually nice.(text missing).... No-one's gonna blame me, no-ones gonna say, "Nah, but jy kan gehelp het of..."²² You know? I can just be Adam. If they take my money, they gonna take it. No-one's gonna blame me. I don't need to be superman.

This extract was taken from Adam's first interview, where he spoke particularly about how the programme helped him to become non-violent and his distinct choice to allow this change to occur. His experiences of change were closely associated with his change in subjectivity: His performance of man-as-"superman" subjectivity was resisted and instead, he talked about re-enacting a more sensitive masculinity construction of man-as-"softie".

He also positions explanations for men's violence and aggression to be a natural role and response for a man living in his community. Twice in the above extract, he uses examples explaining violence as a response to crime (i.e., "men getting ROBBED", "if they take my money, they gonna take it"). Through his language, he constructs violence as being permissible because it is a route to survival in crime-ridden communities. Other men described the use of violence in crime-ridden communities as being "street-smart"; therefore, the explanation of violence as a survival strategy depicts the violent man as smart, knowledgeable and quick in his use of

²¹ English translation: "what kind of men are you?"

²² English translation: "No, but you could've helped"

violence. Consequently, the construction of man-as-“superman” and as protector allowed Adam to position this explanation for violence as necessary.

Adam’s extract indicates the powerful influence of community norms in the violent man’s life. In this way, resistance to community norms of violence appear to be greeted strongly by various systems within the man’s life. For example, this is seen in another one of Adam’s extracts:

I was seen as the guy where if there’s trouble, if someone messes with you, just pick up the phone call Adam...(text missing)... And now, it’s like, “what’s wrong with him?”...(text missing)...My baby sister, she said, “He’s getting old mommy, he’s getting old, he can’t fight anymore”.

While Foucault’s (1977, as cited in Hook, 2004b) notion of *disciplinary power* has been used to explain the disciplining effect of the domestic violence intervention over programme participants, it could also explain the power that community norms hold over individuals. Through the surveillance of community members to shape them into docile *objects*, individuals are made obedient to norms of the community. Consequently, Adam and other men who drew upon *explanatory discourses of male violence and power* were found to position themselves as powerless in their choice to use violence in their communities.

From the beginning of the 1990s, crime statistics indicated an increase in homicide rates amongst Coloured people alone (Adhikari, 2005). It has been argued that the increase in violence, gangsterism and crime, unemployment, and substance abuse within Coloured working-class communities represent the on-going effects of Apartheid’s segregation.

Apartheid has been a defining factor in hierarchically positioning citizens of the country according to their 'race'. More so, rights were allocated to each racial group according to their position on the 'hierarchy', which resulted in the marginalisation of certain racial groups, namely, Coloured, Asian, and Black groups (Epstein, 1998). However, although Coloured people experienced oppression under the Apartheid laws, some members of this group are argued to still remain marginalised under the new constitution (Adhikari, 2005).

Adhikari (2005) argued that amongst the Coloured working classes it is commonly perceived that they are more disadvantaged under the new constitution of South Africa than under the Apartheid ruling. Therefore it has been argued that post-1994, some Coloured people might still experience much oppression (Adhikari, 2005, p. 180). More so, in the 'new' South Africa, employment opportunities have declined for this group. Some authors have argued that due to the new emphasis on "Africanness", Affirmative Action has been more beneficial for Black groups than for Coloured groups (Adhikari, 2005; Erasmus, 2001, p. 17).

This lack of employment opportunities has also been argued to influence the formation of working-class Coloured masculinities. South Africa has been described as a capitalist society where paid work has become of utmost importance. However, as a result of widespread poverty and high unemployment, it has been argued that the construction of a positive masculinity has been problematic (Epstein, 1998). The hegemonic masculinity of a "white, middle-class, heterosexual, family man" has seemed unachievable for the working-class Coloured man who might struggle financially to support a family (Adhikari, 2005; Epstein, 1998, p. 53). Kinnes (2000) asserted that this poverty and powerlessness has resulted in criminality.

Consequently, amongst this sample of 12 men two talked about their experiences of gang culture and criminality. Experiences of gang culture operating through community norms and disciplinary power allowed the men to construct themselves as helpless in their choices to use violence. Bradley, a Coloured participant, was one of the younger men in the sample and he talked about his experiences of gangsterism in his community:

Of is ek daar by die meisies 'n bietjie dan voel dit alright; vir my voel dit lekker maar as ek so in die huis kom en som plekke waar ek gaan, soos violence plekke en plekke waar hulle skel, dis soos ek behoort nie daar nie. Verstaan? As ek daar gaan kry ek verkeerde gedagte. So ek moet nie eintlik hier wees nie omdat ek gaan so raak.

Or if I'm there by the ladies a little then I feel alright; for me, it feels nice but if I go into my home and other places where I go, like violence places and places where they argue, it's like I don't belong there. Understand? If I go there I get the wrong thoughts. So I mustn't really be here because I'm going to become like that. (Author's translation)

In both Bradley's first and second interviews he diverted from the topic of the interview to focus on his encounters of living in his disadvantaged community and his experiences of being in a gang. He talked about the extreme forms of violence he witnessed and about his separation from the gang when he realised the fatalistic nature of belonging to one. The above extract was taken from Bradley's second interview where he describes his issue of constantly having violent thoughts as the product of his past involvement with violence and due to his prior drug dependency. His language in the above extract allows him to construct himself as an *object* and victim of his circumstances.

He communicates that he has conditions for maintaining his non-violence which involves avoiding “violence places” because he gets “the wrong thoughts”. He constructs his community as a platform where violence is frequently practiced and experienced and constructs violence as a tangible and contagious illness where the sickness can be caught. Because Bradley positions his non-violent change as wholly dependent on his environment, this allows him to appear powerless if he relapses. Ultimately, he draws upon *explanatory discourses of male violence and power* to position violence as a necessary addiction from a marginalised masculinity perspective.

In summary, men in this study were found to draw upon *explanatory discourses of male violence and power* in the quest to dissociate from their identities as abusers and practice subjectivities that illustrate their ‘human’ element. Some men highlighted intergenerational abuse as an explanation for their violence. These issues of abuse witnessed or experienced during these men’s childhoods should not be disregarded as obvious manipulative techniques to gain sympathy. However, O’Neill (1998) has argued that through men’s presentations of violence as a form of pathology it positions abusers as being victims of their uncontrollable tempers and aggression. This furthermore permits them to avoid responsibility for their violence.

More so, other men positioned their explanations for violence and power in relation to social and cultural discourses. Cultural and social norms that reproduce male dominance and patriarchal standards were employed as ways for programme participants to explain why they became violent. Explanations of this sort allowed men to claim that cultural roles of dominance

cannot be resisted. Finally, the men positioned violence not only as a means to achieving control or as a form of protection but also as a form of survival in their communities. Without the option of violence, masculinity needed to form a different identity and shape; which these men struggled to create because their environments and surroundings did not change. Through men's explanations of their violence they were able to position themselves as *objects* being acted upon by their pasts of experiencing or witnessing abuse and through external factors, such as their communities, family and friends.

4.4. Summary of the chapter

This chapter captured the discourses of masculinity and change that men drew upon in their talk about their experiences of attending a domestic violence programmes. This chapter was divided into three sections which highlighted the *discourses of male control, discourses of male domination and superiority* as well as *explanatory discourses of male violence and power* that programme participants were found to draw upon. Related discourses of *resistance to male vulnerability, the discourse of agency, the discourse of egalitarianism, depictions of men as victims of gender politics, and explanatory discourses of male violence and power* were critically analysed within the three larger sections. Each discourse contained summaries outlining the findings.

It was commonly found that programme participants, at the point of their second interviews, positioned themselves as powerless and as *objects* of external events. Participants rarely positioned themselves as *subjects* and active agents in taking responsibility for their perpetration of abuse. Furthermore, men were found to draw frequently upon *programme talk*

in their quest to position themselves as egalitarian, non-violent and changed men. However, it was revealed that this 'talk' was a mere cover for their ever-present adherence to the hegemonic notions of masculinity and gender difference. It appeared as if the men wanted to keep partners and women in general subordinated. In addition, empathic attitudes towards women partners did not easily emerge from men's talk; therefore, some men might not have genuinely progressed towards genuine changed attitudes. The next chapter places a greater emphasis on the rhetorical devices that men employed to disguise their adherence to traditional gender role norms.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

CHAPTER FIVE: THE RHETORIC OF DOMINANCE AND POWERLESSNESS

This chapter analyses subtle uses of language that allow men to position themselves as changed and non-violent. Rhetorical analysis is a form of discourse analysis that serves to locate subtle features in the speaker's talk and elicits the full "expressive potential of a text" (Adams et al., 1995, p. 391). It is argued that speakers employ rhetoric as a support for their discursive positionings and their constructed rules in an argument (Harris et al., 1995).

In this study, rhetorical devices were referenced as techniques by the men to portray their arguments and statements as persuasive and convincing (Adams et al., 1995). In particular, rhetorical strategies were found to operate in union with the discourses outlined in the previous chapter. These are: the *discourses of male control, discourse of resistance to vulnerability, discourse of agency, discourses of male domination and superiority, discourse of egalitarianism, constructions of men as victims of gender politics, constructions of the perpetrator as stigmatised and powerless and explanatory discourses of male violence and power*. In this way, programme participants would promote and persuade their arguments for their particular subject positionings.

Because discourses were rarely conveyed in purely obvious, straight-forward ways in men's speech, Adams and colleagues (1995) highlighted a selection of rhetorical devices that were drawn upon as persuasion techniques in their study. These were: *reference ambiguity, axiom markers, synecdoche, metonymy, and metaphor* (Adams et al., 1995). These five rhetorical strategies have been used as a guideline for the rhetorical analysis of programme

participants' speech in this study. These devices have been argued to differ according to language and socio-cultural customs (Adams et al., 1995), which has been attended to in the current analysis.

5.1 Reference ambiguity

Ambiguity in speech has been argued to be caused by either a lack of clarity or it might be employed for intentional, strategic purposes (Adams et al., 1995). Adams and colleagues provided another perspective of ways in which violent men might employ ambiguity in their speech. It has been argued that ambiguous 'talk' allows a violent man to rhetorically position himself in consensual agreement with his woman partner. This particular rhetorical device was termed *reference ambiguity* (Adams et al., 1995). For example, this is illustrated in Tauriq's extract below, taken from his second interview:

Taryn: Okay, your relationship is going very well at the moment?

Tauriq: Ja, you could say so because it's basically what we do about it. So...how can I say? It's basically up to us. Whatever happens.

Tauriq employs reference ambiguity twice in this extract – by using the words, “we” and “us”. This extract aims to give the impression that both Tauriq and his wife are in consensual agreement with each other regarding their progress and change toward becoming a non-violent couple. From an external view of the relationship, Adams and colleagues (1995) have argued this rhetorical device to be a “camouflaging” (p. 392) technique. Here, the communicated message is that both individuals are determined to make their relationship operate on a non-

violent, healthy level. However, the aim of this rhetorical device is to create the illusion that both parties accept and agree with these objectives (Adams et al., 1995).

When confronted by his progress as a changed man, Tauriq often employed reference ambiguity to reflect team-work so as to not accentuate the divides and problems in their marriage that later became evident in his second interview. Therefore, he drew upon the *discourse of agency* and the *discourse of egalitarianism* to position himself as a *subject* who is in control of his change and to construct his marriage as an example of egalitarianism.

The following extracts demonstrate the ways in which Steve employed reference ambiguity in his speech:

We supposed to help one another when it comes to the push and all that but now sometimes you feel that you speaking to the empty walls. It's like you (wife) don't take an interest man. But that bothers me A LOT 'cause I want to achieve my goals man, what I'm working for. (Interview 1)

It doesn't build a strong relationship that we have now. You can't run to the cops all the time, not if you're the cause of it. (Interview 2)

These extracts were taken from Steve's first and second interviews where he appears to use the strategy of reference ambiguity. He employs language of "we" (i.e., signifying a first-person plural form of ambiguity) and "it" (i.e., referencing a generalised pronoun). Through his language he attempts to create consensus between him and his wife. However, this only appears to be an illusion to disguise the statements of male authority and superiority subtly

evident in the text. In both these extracts, he elicits dominant views of how his wife should perceive and react to various issues.

For example, in the first extract, he talks about his wife's lack of support by asserting his ideals of how a relationship should be (i.e., "We supposed to help one another"). He subordinates his wife through creating flaws within her, by blaming her for problems in their relationship, and for disobeying his 'rules'. However, at the end of this extract, he makes a transition towards "I" language where he highlights what he wants. Therefore, his "we" language only serves to veil authoritative and superior messages in his talk. This emerges more clearly at the end of the extract where he mentions that his true intention of dominating his wife is to achieve his own "goals".

Almost half the sample of men were found to utilise the strategy of reference ambiguity in their interviews to create the illusion of harmony and agreement in their relationships. However, latent statements of superiority and domination over women were built upon a belief that their education experienced in the programme entitled them to continue practices of power over women. This resembles Foucault's (1977, Hook, 2004b, p. 215) notion of *power-knowledge* – this is to say that knowledge and power are always found operating with each other.

Smith's (2007) findings illustrated one of the reasons why men found it important to reclaim their power to subordinate their partners. Smith interviewed 14 violent men prior to attending a domestic violence programme to explore their experiences; the majority were court-ordered to attend the particular programme. She found that a common theme of *Victim's*

problem versus shared problem emerged from men's talk. This theme emphasised men's discontent surrounding the lack of punishment for women's roles in the perpetration of abuse. Almost all the men from the current study similarly positioned their partners as at fault and equally responsible for their perpetration of abuse.

In summary, through ambiguous referencing men were able to deceive the 'outsider' of the supposed consent and unity in their relationships. However, after closer scrutiny, buried statements of superiority and domination were revealed in men's talk. Adams and colleagues (1995) argued that reference ambiguity operates to conceal superior statements and arguments about violent men's intimate relationships. In the current study, both voluntary and court-mandated programme participants employed reference ambiguity for this exact purpose. Although court-referred and voluntary programme members might differ according to their reasons for attending the programme, similar subjectivities of men-as-superior and men-as-dominators are performed amongst the men even after the programme had ended. This draws attention to the strength of a second follow-up interview post-programme completion to evaluate both the progress of the men as well as the potential differences in progress between them. Furthermore, statements of authority emerged more strongly when men referenced synecdoche and axiom markers.

5.2. Synecdoche and Axiom markers

Axiom markers and *synecdoche* have been categorised as two separate rhetorical devices; however, they serve a similar purpose in depicting the ways in which men argue for their positions against discourses of minimisation and the normalisation of violence. The

rhetorical device of *synecdoche* has been argued to substitute a part for a whole or whole for a part; therefore, allowing men to camouflage statements of authority (Adams et al., 1995). *Axiom markers* furthermore highlight this authoritative speech. Axiom marking allowed the men in this study to decree omniscience and to make universal statements regarding the nature of reality. In this way, *synecdoche* and axiom marking complement each other and work together in the formation of arguments and successful persuasion. On the one hand, *axiom marking* was referenced to support constructions of the *normalisation of violence*. On the other hand, *synecdoche* unveiled statements in support of *minimisations* of their abuse.

In the passage below, Alan explained the ‘violent’ incident that led him to be arrested and mandated into the programme:

Um, (*long pause*) I assaulted my father...I assaulted my father very very badly (*whispering*)...(text missing)...I’ve...(exhale) on a couple of occasions I have abused my wife as well ...(text missing)...sometimes we get into arguments. It would end up with me SLAPPING her....(text missing)...I think I’m the only one in this specific class that isn’t here for, for, for SLAPPING or whatever, beating my wife.

While Alan was court-referred to the programme for violently attacking his father, he did report cases of physical abuse against his wife during his first interview, yet he did not think that this warranted his entry into the programme. Alan employs *synecdoche* and uses the word “assault” to describe the way in which he became violent with his father. However, the listener would have to understand that “assault” is part of the larger category of physical abuse (Adams et al., 1995). As Willig (2001) warned, when speakers avoid making reference to the discursive object with the exact word (in this case, “physical violence”), the meaning of this should be

examined. Through this examination it was found that Alan's exploitation of the categorical links between "assault" and "physical violence" allowed him to avoid the label of 'perpetrator.' Furthermore, the use of the vague term of "assault" allows Alan to formalise and generalise his abuse; therefore constructing it as a lesser form of domestic violence.

Keith was also found to employ *synecdoche* as a strategy to portray his perpetration of abuse as a lesser form of abuse:

To me it was actually STUPID. It wasn't something where I hit my wife around but actually my son and myself, WE had an argument ...(text missing)...and I just head-butted, that's all I did to him.

From the above extracts, it is evident that *synecdoche* was also referenced to assist Keith and Alan in dissociating from their 'abuser' identities. Wood (2004) highlighted various themes in men's accounts of their violence where one of those categories was *dissociation*. *Dissociation* was commonly drawn upon by the men to differentiate themselves from what they label as "real abusers" (Wood, 2004, p. 561). The men in this study would often highlight differences between themselves and other group members in a supposed quest to make themselves not seem as bad as the 'other' who may be described as the 'abuser'. Wood (2004) argued that this is a method of dissociating from their violence and from their 'abuser' identities.

Keith and Alan position domestic violence as wholeheartedly being wife-abuse. Therefore, through the *synecdoche*-driven statements of "it wasn't something where I hit my wife around but actually my son and myself, WE had an argument" and "I think I'm the only one

in this specific class that isn't here for, for, for SLAPPING or whatever, beating my wife" it allows them to dissociate their abuse from the category of domestic violence.

Similarly to Keith and Alan, Steve also exploited a category of physical violence. In the extract below, taken out of Steve's first interview, he explained his violence towards his son as being a form of discipline:

My son was getting involved in *oka*²³, whatever they call that thing. So I said, "Listen boy, you're going to school. You're messing with the wrong friends" – I hate that. Okay, how did I handle that? I shout him, scolded him, I say they getting out of hand because the parents allow this. So what happened, the *laitie*²⁴ come in the house there, (imitates son shouting). "You don't back chat me, who the hell are you?" (imitates himself reprimanding the son), so I just burst out, I just give him a smack. So they send me to the cops. They say abuse. So I was locked up...(text missing)...Don't you think I'm doing the right thing to train the *laitie*? That's not abuse, I training him to be a decent person. But you (referring to wife) tell them, "Ja it's abuse".

The above extract allows Steve to justify his act of "smacking" as a form of discipline. Here, he disciplines his son by "training" him. Steve positions himself as an authoritarian parent and also as possessing the qualities of a caring parent. This allows him to dismiss his violence toward his son as an act of caring. However, his response to his son's "backchat" revealed underlying messages of having to submit to the authoritative and powerful male adult.

Similarly to Adams and colleagues (1995) findings, listeners who lack familiarity with the speaker might perceive authoritarian parenting and discipline as a route to teaching respect in

²³ Also known as *hubbly bubbly*. Emerging from Eastern trends, this tobacco is smoked in a contraption shaped like a bottle filled with water and a pipe.

²⁴ 'laitie' is a term referring to young child(ren)

a child. However, for a child or partner that endures repeated actions and verbal warnings that “smacking” is a form of obedience to male authority, men’s reference to *synecdoche* serve to operate as danger signals for abuse (Adams et al., 1995).

Therefore, *synecdoche* is employed to substitute a part for a whole or whole for a part; therefore, allowing men to camouflage statements of authority (Adams et al., 1995). *Axiom markers* furthermore highlight this authoritative speech. In this study, the men created and practiced subjectivities that reflected them as omniscient, which in turn allowed their opinions to achieve some kind of authority and power. For example, as a strategy to achieve omniscience, axiom marking was most pertinently employed in support of normalising discourses of violence. This allowed men to position themselves as omniscient individuals who were able to declare the way in which violence should be perceived and when it should be granted permissible. This is shown in a selection of extracts below:

Adam: “Obviously it’s (anger) in my BLOOD”. If they should just come THREATEN my family, my wife or whatever; someone would pull a gun and I will see, “Here we gonna DIE”, I’d let go of that anger (he clicks a finger). (Interview 1)

Steve: I had to defend myself because I was mad with her and her family. Ja, ‘cause I have some terrible scars on my back. The only solution there is to fight man, in some ways you cannot fight fire with fire but I was forced to...(text missing)...I have to retaliate now. (Interview 1)

Bradley: Nou vanoggend, dan skel my meisie oor dai’. Sy se dis up to me. Ek se “dis nie up to-“, verstaan? As iemand jou terg en terg dan gaan jy tog dit doen (become violent). ...(text missing)...Somtyds praat ek maar dis amper soos-, mense gaan jou so kyk as jy te nice is met hulle. (Interview 2)

Now this morning, my girlfriend argued about that. She says it's up to me. I say, "It's not up to-", understand? If someone provokes and provokes you then you will do it (become violent)...(*text missing*)... Sometimes I talk but it's almost like-, people are going to look at you like this if you are too nice with them. (Author's translation)

In the above extracts, each man presented ways in which physical abuse could be normalised and thus permitted. In order to normalise their abuse, they would create various 'laws of violence' where they craft universal rules regarding when and how the use of violence can be permitted. For example, Adam's authoritative statement, "If they should just come THREATEN my family, I'd let go of that anger" allowed him to argue that in certain conditions, violence is permissible. He makes it appear natural that anger and violence are fixed, unchangeable characteristics through his omniscient statement, "obviously, it's (anger) in my BLOOD". Steve and Bradley assert that violence is the only alternative and "solution" to solving conflict and earning other's respect. This was seen when they said, "I had to defend myself", and "If someone provokes and provokes you then you will do it". Through their persuasive use of language, their violence is permitted. Therefore, the men's *power-knowledge* gives the illusion that their statements are in fact, the truth and the nature of reality.

Additionally, Steve and Bradley position themselves as *objects* and victims of their situations where other people (e.g., women partners, family members) are to blame for their violence. This was a similar finding in Smith's (2007) study where violent men were found to normalise their abuse by blaming it on external influences. Therefore, the strategy of axiom marking aided the men in this study in camouflaging *justifications* for their violence.

Programme participants were also found to minimise the effects of verbal/psychological abuse on their partners through referencing *axiom markers*. Theorists have located themes of *minimisation* in violent men's talk (Anderson & Umberson, 2001; Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Smith, 2007; Stamp & Sabourin, 1995; Wood, 2004). According to Stamp and Sabourin, men's attempts to minimise their violence might involve minimising the level and the types of abuse they perpetrate. Therefore, the *axiom marker* assisted men in minimising their violence through asserting statements of authority, omniscience and making universal statements regarding the nature of reality.

The referencing of *axiom markers* in conjunction with *minimisations* differed between the men's first and second interviews. On the one hand, in the men's first round of interviews *axiom markers* were employed to veil minimisations of their *level* of abuse. Men were even found to normalise their violence, which was evident in Adam, Steve and Bradley's interviews. On the other hand, the second round of interviews elicited minimisations of the *types* of abuse the men perpetrated. Therefore *axiom markers* of authority allowed the men to dismiss verbal abuse as a lesser form of abuse. More so, omniscient statements allowed men to construct verbal/psychological abuse as more acceptable or less damaging than physical abuse. For example, this is seen in Waleed's extract below:

Taryn: So you don't think it (verbal abuse) should be a punishable offence?

Waleed: Verbal abuse?! No ways! You driving in your car with this bloody asshole driving shit on the road, "Aah flipping!" – it's verbal abuse. In (a) relationship people argue. Don't take it as verbal abuse; it's a heated argument...(text missing)...but if you hitting your wife then you must go to court.

Of all the men, Waleed frequently employed this rhetorical device, particularly in his second interview. As part of the follow-up interview the men were questioned regarding their maintenance of non-abusive behaviours over the post-programme period. While Waleed was sent to the programme for his physical and verbal abuse towards his wife, he consistently asserted, in both his interviews, that he did not belong in the programme. In his second interview, he even went as far as to deny his perpetration of physical abuse; yet, he clearly provided evidence to the contrary in his first interview (i.e., “I actually snapped. I had my hands around her neck. I told her, “I’ll choke you, listen here no nonsense”). He also aimed to minimise the severity of verbal abuse to convince the interviewer and himself that his abuse was not serious enough to be punished.

Waleed makes statements regarding the nature of verbal abuse and how it should be perceived. Earlier in his interview, he states, “It’s common”, which assists him in normalising verbal abuse and therefore he makes it more acceptable. Waleed’s statements also allow him to designate which types of abuse should be punishable in a court of law. These statements were asserted as if they held much conviction, which in turn, allowed him to position himself as being entitled to making such powerful statements. This is the role of the *axiom marker*; to legitimate men’s omniscient statements as universal social and gender laws.

Research has found that, for men who are receiving an intervention for their violence, physical abuse might stop, yet other forms of abuse might emerge more strongly (Boonzaier & van Schalkwyk, in press; Buttell & Carney, 2004; de la Harpe, 2009; Edleson & Tolman, 1992). Research on abuse against women indicates that women victims of abuse perceive physical and

verbal, emotional, and psychological abuse to be closely intertwined (Boonzaier & van Schalkwyk, in press). Violent men's use of abusive language was depicted by women partners to be equivalent to physical forms of abuse; women testified to feeling the impact of verbal abuse in a physical manner (Boonzaier & van Schalkwyk, in press; Stamp & Sabourin, 1995). More so, because verbal or psychological abuse leaves emotional scarring as opposed to physical evidence of abuse, court-mandated men have been found to increase these types of abuse. Therefore, they achieve the goals of avoiding further legal charges but they still manage to generate fear and to control their partners, equivalent to that of using physical violence (Boonzaier & van Schalkwyk, in press).

In the current study, the programme participants were found to use *axiom marking* to categorise verbal abuse as an imaginary form of abuse. Additionally, the larger portion of the sample (i.e., 83 percent) indicated awareness that in one way or another, reoffending would lead to arrest and to more severe charges. Given this evidence, the possibility of increased incidents of verbal abuse (as opposed to physical forms of violence) after the programme had ended, might have been a strong likelihood.

In conjunction with men's *minimisations, justifications* (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004) and *gendering blame* (Anderson & Umberson, 2001) were used to identify instances when men admit to perpetrating abuse but they do not accept responsibility for their abuse. Additionally, men in the current study would draw upon these discourses to position their partners as responsible for their perpetration of violence against them. Waleed was one of the men who

constructed himself as a *victim of gender politics* while using *axiom markers* to position women as blameworthy of abuse against them. This is seen in the passage below:

Everybody has rights, you must respect her with dignity and love and blah blah blah but a man also need it. The women want to be in charge and have the power...(text missing)...They (women) have more power now.

Waleed makes general authoritative statements regarding women and the way in which they use their rights. His statement also positions women as conniving and vindictive with the use of their 'new-found' rights. Through referencing the *axiom marker* to assert his beliefs, he is able to argue this as being the state of reality. In order to be more persuasive, Waleed later includes a 'real-life' example of his male friend's experience with women's rights:

Waleed: For example, the same thing is happening to a buddy of mine now. His wife is becoming more rebellious against him and this is a soft guy, a real gentleman and he's a hard working guy. And he told me what happened to him this weekend. He gave his wife a smack. I couldn't believe him; married for 19 years. It's the first time in his marriage that he hit a woman and he's still nervous about it. And his wife knows his weak points and she had him by that level where he had to give her a klap²⁵.

Taryn: Okay so you think she wanted him to hit her?

Waleed: Yes, (to) charge him.

His depiction of the friend's wife as "rebellious" allows him to compare her 'behaviour' to that of a rebellious adolescent or child. In this way, he constructs a parent-child relationship between his friend and the wife. This is similar to Dobash and Dobash's (1979) depiction of the

²⁵ Afrikaans term meaning 'hit'

abusive husband-wife relationship; here, the unequal gender positions between the couple are highlighted through the disciplinary parent-child relationship. Through this depiction, the husband (i.e., the 'parent') dominates his wife (i.e., the 'child') through violence (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). Therefore, in this extract, Waleed argues that because of the wife's "rebellious" behaviour, the husband was forced to 'discipline' her.

In contrast, Waleed portrays his friend as a "soft guy" – in the extract, this is one of the various positive attributes he claims his friend possesses. Through these depictions, he attains a way of presenting his friend's violence against his wife as being 'out of character'. Consequently, Waleed achieves a way of placing the blame for the violent incident on the wife, not on the friend. Anderson and Umberson (2001) argued that the men in their study employed the theme of *gendering blame* to blame their partners through finding imperfections and shortcomings in her "parenting styles, interaction styles and choices" (p. 367). In this way, the wife's "rebellion" was depicted as an imperfection; therefore allowing him to blame and make her responsible for the abuse.

With regard to the same extract, while Waleed makes authoritative statements intended to be viewed as universal laws, he too contradicts himself. While in his earlier extract he asserts that physical abuse should be punishable in the court of law, he now makes exceptions for physical violence because it is his friend. Therefore these *axiom markers* need not be rational arguments. Because power and authority are buried beneath these statements, this is sufficient in creating supposedly sound arguments.

Because Waleed's statements were made in the presence of a female interviewer, the possible influence of the man/woman dynamic in this extract should be briefly examined. In Adams and colleagues (1995) study, both men and women researchers contributed analyses for the texts. When analysing texts for axiom markers, the men found this rhetorical device to add weight to men's genuine beliefs. On the contrary, the women researchers, who had experienced controlling or violent relationships, found that in the environment of a non-egalitarian relationship, axiom markers were used to strongly relay male authority and power. Therefore, the use of axiom markers would be to silence the woman. Similarly, in the current study, Waleed's employment of axiom markers might be perceived as a technique to 'silence' me, as a woman who is interviewing a man about his violence. In addition, Waleed's need to 'silence' me might have been amplified by his construction of myself as being racially similar to his ex-wife. In his first interview he enquired, "Are you a white person by the way?". I responded with, "Coloured" and he proceeded to compare me to his Coloured ex-wife who he reported also looks like a "whitey"²⁶ and "started to think like a whitey" too. He constructed the "whitey" as a naïve person oblivious to issues of drugs and crime in underprivileged communities. My supposed racial similarities to his ex-wife might have resulted in a similar perception of myself as a "whitey"; therefore giving him the opportunity to assert his knowledge of the 'realities' of life from a Coloured male perspective.

In summary, *synecdoche* and *axiom marking* were found to be employed simultaneously as strategies to position arguments of minimisation and the normalisation of violence in favour

²⁶ A slang term that racially describes a person as 'white'

of the men. In both men's *minimisations* and the *normalisation of violence* they construct themselves as possessing authority and the final word in how and when violence can be perpetrated. More so, traces of minimisations were evident in programme participant's talk even in their second interviews, three to four months after the programme had ended. Adams and colleagues (1995) found that both *synecdoche* and *axiom marker* 'talk' imply conformity to the unequal gender order by the men. Therefore, this was argued to indicate that a change towards more egalitarian attitudes in relationships was strongly unlikely (Adams et al., 1995). It has been argued that if violent men do not develop empathic attitudes towards their partners they might not find it necessary to accept responsibility for their violence (Dobash et al., 2000). In addition to the above strategies, programme participants were also found to continue positioning themselves as supportive of the traditional gender order through their employment of *metonymy*.

5.3 Metonymy

Metonymy is when the speaker replaces the intended object with something that is related to it. While this may appear similar to *synecdoche*, on the one hand, *synecdoche's* conceptual association is categorical. *Metonymy*, on the other hand, employs historical conceptualisations that have been linked to the intended object (Adams et al., 1995). For example, a man says to his friend in a bar: "You'll have to show her who wears the pants in the relationship" (Adams et al., 1995, p. 399). The meaning conveyed by this declaration is: "You'll have to show her who is in charge in this relationship" (Adams et al., 1995, p. 399). The man draws upon the socio-cultural discourse of what it means to be a man and links it to an item of

clothing. Ultimately, a discourse of male authority and domination is operating here; however, the text is communicated in a richer manner through the employment of this indirect reference (Adams et al., 1995).

In the current study, Steve illustrates another way in which metonymy can be employed. The extract below was formed in response to the interviewer's questions concerning Steve's wife's support for his non-violent change:

Support from her side is always telling me about the bible. "The description in the bible it says this, it says that" – I thought to myself, "you can't mix that with the bible point". That's my thinking. Don't link the bible of what you're accusing me of...*(text missing)*....It feels like you wanna gun me, you're hitting me back.

Steve draws on a strong association between a 'gun' and 'hitting' him; therefore, depicting his wife's judgmental approach as a form of physical abuse. The literal act of gunning someone down is an extreme and fatal form of violence. Steve compares his wife's biblical responses to being a form of revenge. He indicates this when he says, "you're hitting me back". This metonymical association of her hurtful words as being an extreme form of violence allows Steve to position himself as a victim of her abuse. Therefore, this allows him to position his wife as a perpetrator.

Steve also draws upon a discourse of male domination and superiority where he says, "Don't link the bible of what you're accusing me of" and places his wife's opinion as subordinate to his own. He positions himself as flawless and places disagreement or friction between him and his wife as a flaw on the wife's part. Therefore, he uses his assumed male

power as weight to position his wife as wrong and himself as right. He also uses his constructions as a powerful male and victim of his wife's abuse interchangeably in this extract. By using metonymical links it allows him to exploit the associations in the text and camouflage the underlying effects of male power.

The camouflaging effects of metonymy were also evident in men's 'talk' regarding their constructions of the 'perpetrator':

Taryn: What was your motivation to stay non-violent?

Robert: It's mainly for myself - I don't want to be a monster. (Extract 1)

Adam: I thought it was part of being the MAN in the house – you SUPPOSED to know where you WIFE'S going. Meanwhile it's called ABUSE; CONTROLLING your wife. (Extract 2)

The men's responses were derived from questions regarding their change to non-violence. Robert and Adam metonymically construct the perpetrator as a "monster" and as "controlling". Their explanations for their motivation to actively change their behaviours appear to be a strong association between male perpetrators as being a monster, abusive and controlling. It has been argued that over time, the term 'man' had come to be closely associated with superiority and authority; therefore, allowing for a metonymical switch between these terms (Adams et al., 1995). For example, Adam's depiction of man-as-head-of-household allows him to attach symbolic power to men.

In the above extracts, however, the men were found to switch between depictions of power and powerlessness. This materialised with their depictions of man-as-abusive, controlling and as monster. While these depictions, especially that of “monster”, might position the men as powerful, in this extract, the men metonymically employed these terms to position the ‘perpetrator’ in a negative light. Therefore, through their stigmatisation of the ‘perpetrator’ they attempt to divulge themselves of some power. Through stripping themselves of power, they aim to convince the listener of their opposition to hegemonic masculine norms, which emphasises their non-violent change. Therefore, the men appear more socially desirable, which allows them to gain approval and praise from the listener. Ultimately, this praise might result in some male power being reinstated.

In summary, *metonymy* was found to operate subtly when programme participants drew upon deeply embedded cultural notions of masculinity and the symbols of power attached to being a man. On the one hand, Steve referenced *metonymy* to enforce his position of superiority and authority in his relationship with his wife. On the other hand, Robert and Adam metonymically constructed their change as a progression towards male powerlessness. However, a deeper examination of men’s metonymical constructions allowed that messages of male power, control and superiority surfaced.

5.4 Metaphor

Although literature points to various metaphors that violent men might employ (Adams et al., 1995), this section focuses primarily on metaphors that were consistent in participants’ programme talk in this study. These were *anger metaphors* such as anger-is-heat, emotions-

build-up-pressure and people-snap. These metaphors have been argued to produce an imaginative display of men getting “hotter, snapping and exploding” into violent behaviours (Adams et al., 1995, p. 395). Additionally, men were also found to reference *metaphors of war*.

Programme participants were commonly found to employ *anger metaphors* to construct their violence as uncontrollable. In Robert’s second interview, he positioned himself as a changed, non-violent man capable of controlling his temper. However, in the extract below, he uses metaphors to indicate his lack of control over his anger:

I just walk away. Ek control my temper, control my mond. Dai’ anger wil opkom maar dink ek net, hoe meer ek aan die geskelery aan luister hoe meer kwaader en kwaader-, gaan ek net explode.

I just walk away. I control my temper, control my mouth. That anger wants to rise but I just think, the more I listen to this arguing the angrier and angrier-, I will just explode.
(Author’s translation)

Robert talks about walking away from an argument with his wife as a way of “controlling” his “exploding” temper. He employs the metaphor of anger-is-heat when he talks about his anger as rising. At the same time he draws upon the metaphor of emotions-build-up-pressure and signifies this when he says, “Angrier and angrier-, I will just explode”.

The metaphors of ‘anger-is-heat’ and ‘emotions-build-up-pressure’ are consistent with O’Neill’s (1998) discourse of *violence as an expression of inner tension*. This discourse represents one of the ways in which men might construct their violence. O’Neill found that men who drew upon this discourse aimed to position their violence as a consequence of stress and

tension that gradually built-up to a point of inevitable explosion. Robert reported that his wife was pregnant and he talked about their arguments as resulting from petty issues that were worsened by her pregnancy hormones. He achieves two things through his constructions of himself and his wife in this way. Firstly, his constructions of his wife as 'emotional' due to her pregnancy hormones allow him to dismiss her feelings and views. In this way, he patronises his wife's form of communication. More so, literature has shown that men use women's 'nagging' as a justification for their violence (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004). Secondly, while he positioned her pregnancy and the arguments as stress-inducing, Adams and others (1995) highlighted that metaphors of anger imply that there is a limit to which a man should be expected to endure pressure or stress. This ultimately allows them to avoid responsibility for their violent eruptions. This also allows the men to position themselves as *objects* where other external factors beyond their control, such as women partners, are to blame for their violent reactions (Dobash et al., 2000). The violent 'explosion' is also constructed as inevitable.

Men in this study were also found to draw on a number of rhetorical strategies simultaneously. This was made evident in the above extract. Robert also seems to indicate not only a fear of reacting violently but also of becoming verbally abusive. Earlier in the extract, he speaks about controlling his "temper" and controlling his "mouth" as if they are mutually exclusive. He draws on the rhetorical device of *synecdoche* where he expresses his mouth as being as being an expression of the manner in which he talks when he is angry. Therefore, Robert appears to also express the need to curb a temptation to say something abusive or to curse when getting into heated arguments with his wife.

Dobash and colleagues (2000) assert that an attempt to end all arguments between the violent couple is an unrealistic goal. Instead, the aim should be to decrease the frequency and intensity of arguments to achieve arguments where neither party runs any safety risks (Dobash et al., 2000). However, Robert still appears to show insecurities in using his ability to progress with healthy conflict management skills and consequently avoids dealing with conflict at all costs.

On the contrary, some men did not depict their *anger metaphors* as a problem or in a negative light:

If it comes to a point, say you and me marry and someone wants to kill you or me or both of us; BIGGEST mistake of his life. 'Cause this CALM, DECENT man can turn around and be a KILLING lion or something, just like that. Split second.

In this extract, Adam depicts his violence in a positive light through positioning it as a heroic act. By metaphorically presenting his violent self as a “killing lion” he constructs his violence as an act of protection; not as a criminal act. On the one hand, Adam draws upon the *people-snap metaphor* because he depicts his change between the “calm, decent man” to the “killing lion” as sudden (i.e., “Spilt second”). However, this is generally the switch that violent men might experience before they relapse into violence. Violent men have used the anger-driven metaphors to depict their sudden change in character and behaviour as being unconscious and uncontrollable. This allows them to alleviate some responsibility for the violent act (Adams et al., 1995). On the other hand, Adam explains his use of violence to be a conscious decision on his part. Therefore, he draws upon O’Neill’s (1998) *discourse of violence*

as an instrumental power strategy as he positions his violence as instrumental. He depicts himself as a rational agent and his violence is used strategically to protect himself and his loved ones. In this regard, he makes this conscious decision to become violent more acceptable through constructing it as a heroic act.

In order to personalise Adam's argument even more, he creates a form of persuasion where he says "Say you and me marry and someone wants to kill you or me". He appeared to have positioned me, a young female researcher, as the 'damsel in distress' in need of rescuing and protection. In this way, he reinforces the traditional gender ideology through his depictions of man-as-protector and woman-as-requiring-protection. In addition, Adam attempts to create a form of rhetoric to persuade me, as the interviewer, to approve of his argument of violence. This not only indicates his need to believe his violence can be used positively but it also indicates that he wants approval for it. Therefore, there still seems to be an underlying need to use violence to prove and regain his masculinity.

In addition to metaphors of anger, men were also found to draw upon *war metaphors* to describe challenges to maintaining their non-violent change. One of the most frequent words that men used in their interviews was "fight". While some men used the term literally, others employed figurative depictions of war or conflict to describe their situations. These latter figurative depictions will be employed as *war-metaphor* examples.

It was frequently reported by the men that simply attending the programme was not helpful to their situations. Alternatively, they argued that a parallel change system would have worked better, such as the organisation's programme for abused women. However, most of the

men claimed that their partners did not attend the programme and if they did attend the programme, it was not consistently. In Martin's second interview he reported that his wife did not attend the women's programme and consequently, he reported feeling a lack of 'parallel-change' between them:

I think if she did attend it, it would be much better than it is now. You know my dear, it feels to me like I'm pulling alone or she's pulling to the left and I'm pulling to the right because if she did attend then we could meet half-way. I try to meet half-way but she's pulling away. A session for them would be much better.

Martin uses a tug-of-war metaphor to express his efforts to work on their relationship and his wife's stubbornness to "meet halfway". He employs negative feminine stereotypes by highlighting negative qualities of his wife, such as stubbornness, in comparison to his positive qualities, such as compromising in their marriage. Martin's final statement also involved the strategy of *axiom marking*. Here, he makes an authoritative statement arguing that the 'victims' of abuse also need to attend programmes to make it easier for the 'perpetrator' to change. Once again, the discourse of blame emerges where Martin blames his wife for his challenges in maintaining his change.

Within the vein of reflexivity, Martin refers to me as "my dear" indicating his perception of me as much younger in relation to him. This term could also be perceived of as patronising when referring to a woman, particularly given the age difference between us. More so, the fact that I am a woman also appeared to influence his 'talk'; his constructions of frustration and helplessness evident in the extract could have indicated his desire to obtain sympathy from me.

As Adams and others (1995) assert, the rhetorical devices of metaphor and axiom marking might serve to camouflage underlying 'talk' of male domination and superiority over women for the listener and this motive may have been made explicit in his language, "my dear".

Consequently, it might be deduced that Martin draws upon these rhetorical devices to convince me of his argument by positioning himself as helpless and constructing his wife as incompetent and stubborn in relation to himself.

In a related manner, Keith used a *war metaphor* in his second interview to depict his current situation with his wife:

This interdicts thing has sort of been thrown in my face 90 percent of the time...(text missing)...She (wife) phoned the police once before and I did absolutely nothing...(text missing)...She's still using that (the interdict) like a weapon now all of a sudden.

In this extract, Keith mentions that conflict is experienced between him and his wife due to her threatening use of the interdict. In this way, he employs a *war metaphor* and he highlights this conflict as making him more powerless in relation to his powerfully-constructed wife. He makes it seem as though his wife is holding him prisoner with the interdict, which is depicted as a "weapon". Therefore, this allows him to metaphorically construct a symbol of legal power as having the equivalent effect to a dangerous, life-threatening tool, which furthermore allows him to position himself as a victim.

The interdict is a symbol of the legal power and the rights that women hold in relation to their male counterparts. Therefore, as a strategy to regain their power, men were found to

construct their partners with negative qualities, such as being conniving. Men's tendencies to construct their partners as having negative qualities might be understood as men's opposition to the disturbance to the traditional gender framework. In response to this, men were found to silence their women partners through depicting them in particular negative ways.

In summary, programme participants in the current study were found to consistently draw upon anger and war metaphors. On the one hand, anger metaphors were employed to illustrate the uncontrollable nature of men's violence. Here, metaphors of anger-as-heat and emotions-build-up-pressure were used to illustrate this. On the other hand, metaphors of anger were also employed to position men's violence in a positive, more heroic light. Violence was constructed as purposeful and conscious with the ultimate aim of making it appear more acceptable. Additionally, war metaphors were employed for men to highlight conflict in their relationships with their partners. Men were found to use this as an opportunity to explain this conflict as a result of their partners' flaws, such as being stubborn, selfish or threatening. Through labelling their partners with these negative qualities, men achieved the goal of silencing them.

5.5 Summary of chapter

This chapter highlighted the rhetorical devices men employed when giving account of their violence and their experiences of attending the intervention programme. This chapter discussed five rhetorical devices, namely, reference ambiguity, synecdoche and axiom markers, metonymy, and metaphor.

A closer examination of the rhetorical devices that men employed identified the way in which they camouflaged their statements of authority, domination and superiority. On the one hand, the clouding effects of *reference ambiguity* allowed men to disguise their controlling behaviours in their marriages. On the other hand, *synecdoche* and *axiom marking* provided more apparent examples of the ways in which men minimised their types and severity of abuse. The employment of *metonymy* and *metaphor* allowed the men to position themselves as powerless *objects*. Through this, men achieved a way of evading responsibility for their violence and they depicted their women partners as conniving and malicious. Similarly to the findings of the previous chapter, men's rhetorical strategies assisted them in resisting disturbances to the traditional gender framework. Treatment implications and recommendations for South African domestic violence programmes will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The primary objective of this study was to explore the discourses that men drew upon in their talk surrounding their attendance at a domestic violence programme in Cape Town, South Africa. The key findings of this study illustrate that the men appeared to indicate bitterness and antipathy towards the disappearance of the traditional gender framework that allows men the patriarchal position of dominating women while women are positioned as subordinate (Anderson & Umberson's, 2001). While Duluth-type interventions stress the importance of fostering egalitarian attitudes and behaviours (Shrock & Padavic, 2007), it appears as though men's constructions of powerlessness resulted in a stronger attachment and dependency on traditional gender role norms. This was done in the quest to regain and prove their male power.

This chapter will address the implications of these research findings for South African domestic violence programmes. A summary of the findings will be presented, followed by the theoretical and methodological implications of the treatment approach. Next, recommendations for South African programmes for violent men and for future research will be addressed. Finally, limitations of the current study and final conclusions will end the chapter.

6.1 Summary of findings

This section will summarise the discourses and rhetorical devices that the programme participants drew upon. This will be achieved through outlining the findings of three main sections: *discourses of male control, discourses of male domination and superiority*, and constructions of *the perpetrator as stigmatised and powerless*. Within these three main

headings, related discourses *of resistance to male vulnerability, the discourse of agency, the discourse of egalitarianism, constructions of men as victims of gender politics, explanatory discourses of male violence and power*, as well as rhetorical devices will be highlighted.

6.1.1 Discourses of male control.

In response to the shaming process of the programme, the discourses of male control illustrated the strategies that the men employed to regain some control and power. For example, *the discourse of resistance to male vulnerability* was employed as a strategy for men to resist disturbances to hegemonic masculine norms. In this way, men were found to draw upon hegemonic masculine discourses in an attempt to resist emotional vulnerability that the group process might have unearthed. Furthermore, an examination of the *discourse of agency* demonstrated the ways in which men's talk could appear contradictory and incoherent. Although the men achieved some control through positioning themselves as rational active agents in their non-violent change, they also constructed themselves as 'objects' and powerless in becoming changed men. This latter subjectivity of man-as-object allowed them to avoid responsibility for their violence and escape their role in maintaining a non-violent change. Through constructing the programme as flawless the men are too constructed as rehabilitated and changed men. On the contrary, when the programme is constructed as flawed, it allowed the men to avoid responsibility for their relapse. Dobash and colleagues (2000) reiterate that the transformation process towards becoming 'a changed man' involves the admission that a wrong has been perpetrated and ownership over the consequences of their actions should be

taken. However, in this study, men's authoritative statements allowed them to position themselves as devoid of any blame for their violent behaviour.

Men's use of authoritative and omniscient statements was also demonstrated with the rhetorical devices of *synecdoche* and *axiom marking*. They were found to employ these kinds of statements to substantiate arguments of minimisation and the normalisation of violence. In this way, the men were found to proclaim their assumed male omniscience and rationality when minimising and normalising their violence. Programme participants' claim to male power was further illustrated with the *discourse of male domination and superiority*.

6.1.2 Discourses of male domination and superiority.

This could be considered one of the most prominent discourses drawn upon by programme participants in this study. The latent implication of this discourse is that men are more powerful and superior to women. Through drawing upon this discourse men achieved a way of keeping women subordinated. Paradoxically, the *discourse of egalitarianism* was also used to position themselves as supportive of the non-traditional, egalitarian gender order. However, subjectivities of men-as-superior, in relation to their women counterparts, emerged more strongly in their 'talk'. Constructions of male-as-superior were found to surface when the men positioned themselves as more knowledgeable because of their education at the programme.

The rhetorical analysis of *reference ambiguity* was also employed to demonstrate men's egalitarian talk. Through men's choice of consensual language, such as "we" and "our", it

allowed them to position themselves as equals to their women partners. However, subtle talk of male domination and superiority was revealed when men depicted themselves as more rational, emotionally stable and superior to their partners.

Through an awareness of the men's *programme talk* (i.e., egalitarian 'talk', messages of accepting responsibility for their abuse) opposing constructions of *men as victims of gender politics* were found to emerge. This discourse allowed the men to position the legal system as biased against men in general and supportive of women. In this way, men constructed their arrest and detention as an unjustified attack by the criminal justice system and as a form of betrayal by their partners. This allowed the men to position their partners as conniving villains while they constructed themselves as powerless in relation to their partners. Therefore, they achieved a position as the 'victim'; a passive recipient of the injustices of a biased legal system and objects of their women partners' control. More importantly, it allowed the men to escape accountability for their abuse. These depictions of powerlessness are further amplified when the men constructed *the perpetrator as stigmatised and powerless*.

6.1.3 The perpetrator as stigmatised and powerless.

The men in this study were found to construct themselves as stigmatised and powerless. Some men depicted their experiences with the facilitators as demoralising and shaming. On the one hand, facilitators were portrayed as judgmental and biased towards programme participants, who were constructed as 'perpetrators'. On the other hand, facilitators were positioned as being in an alliance with the men's partners. Therefore, men achieved a way of depicting women as being against men, which furthermore emphasised their powerlessness.

The men also referenced rhetorical devices to reinforce their subject positionings as powerless. For example, *metonymy* was employed to make their non-violent change appear as though it was a progression towards powerlessness. On the contrary, both *metonymy* and *war metaphors* were referenced to construct men as victims in their relationships with women partners. The men argued that conflict between the couple was the result of their partners' flaws (e.g. domineering, stubborn). Through programme participants' constructions of themselves as powerless in relation to controlling women, the men achieved a way of silencing women and regaining some power.

Programme participants also drew upon other strategies to position themselves as powerless 'perpetrators' and as objects. *Explanatory discourses of male violence and power* allowed men to dissociate from their 'perpetrator' identities and to highlight a more person-centred dimension to their backgrounds and lives. However, through drawing upon this discourse, it also allowed men to depict themselves as helpless in their choices to become violent. This strategy of avoiding responsibility for their violence was reiterated in men's use of *anger metaphors*. Men were found to either depict their eruption of violence as uncontrollable or they attempted to position their violence as necessary and, therefore, acceptable in certain situations.

In summary, an array of findings was presented that draw attention to a number of problematic issues with regard to the treatment of violent men in South Africa. Therefore, an outline of the theoretical and methodological implications for South African domestic violence programmes will be discussed in the next section.

6.2 Theoretical and methodological implications

This section will address the theoretical and methodological treatment implications and problems that emerged from the above findings. These treatment implications for South African violent men will be categorised according to two headings, namely, *The Duluth model: the problem of creating a genuine 'change'*, and *The group format: the problem of ignoring difference*.

6.2.1 The Duluth model: the problem of creating a genuine 'change'.

The findings in this study were found to question the effectiveness of the Duluth model in treating violent men, similarly to the ways in which previous research had critiqued this model. The Duluth approach has been blamed for having a negative impact on programme participants and for producing unsatisfactory treatment outcomes for men (Dutton & Corvo, 2006; Dutton & Sonkin, 2003; Shrock & Padavic, 2007). For example, it was found that men failed to account for their violence and to embrace a “pro-feminist masculinity” at the end of the programme (Shrock & Padavic, p. 643). Consequently, it was deduced that programme participants who attended a Duluth-type intervention were still likely to perpetrate violence even after programme completion (Shrock & Padavic, 2007).

Programme participants' lack of change was investigated more closely by Shrock and Padavic (2007). Similar to the current study's findings, it was found that Duluth intervention programme participants perfected their egalitarian 'talk' in the quest to present themselves as 'subjects' who had taken responsibility for their past violent acts. Additionally, the men in this

study as well as Shrock and Padavic's work positioned themselves as being dedicated to non-violence and the management of their anger. These findings highlight that Duluth programme participants become skilled in talking as changed, egalitarian men; yet, they leave the programme with ideas about traditional gender norms remaining intact (Shrock & Padavic, 2007). As Buttell and Carney (2004) argued, programmes might have the effect of behaviourally restraining men from the use of physical violence; however, more "savvy" (p.8) abusers are created. In this way, the men become adept in communicating with programme and change 'talk' without the genuine desire to change (Buttell & Carney, 2004).

This 'talk' was equivalently evident in this study where, through subtly positioning themselves as shy people, the men disguised their ever-present adherence to discourses of male control. Given the prominence of this discourse still emerging in the follow-up interviews, it indicates that despite having undergone an intervention the men employed various strategies of resisting a genuine non-violent change towards more egalitarian attitudes.

The veneer of change and the deployment of egalitarian talk also have important implications for the woman partner in the relationship. Shrock and Padavic (2007) went further to evaluate the implications of this egalitarian talk by assessing the effects on the partner and her likelihood to report subsequent incidents of abuse. On the one hand, research has shown that there might be economic advantages which prohibit a woman from reporting her partner's re-offences (Sherman & Berk, 1984). On the other hand, Shrock and Padavic suggested that egalitarian presentations by the man might equally affect the likelihood that the victim would not press charges if abused again. Men's 'talk' of taking responsibility for past abuse and being

committed to non-violence might confuse the partner and at the same time convince her that, despite subsequent incidents of abuse, he is a 'changed' man (Shrock & Padavic, 2007). In this regard, egalitarian presentations by the man coupled with violent attacks against the partner might even result in the woman blaming herself for his abuse against her. Therefore, it was argued that the problem of Duluth models was not on their lack of emphasis on egalitarian attitudes but rather in its deficiency to create genuine egalitarian attitudes in men (Shrock & Padavic, 2007).

Findings of this study suggest that treatment implications for employing the Duluth approach appear to be problematic. Through the employment of this psycho-educational model, programme participants appear to persuade facilitators with their *programme talk* that they are changed. However, given the low success rate for the Duluth model (Buttell & Carney, 2002), it indicates that a genuine change is not necessarily achieved. The next section will highlight another aspect of treatment for violent men that might impede on their willingness to change.

6.2.2 The group format: the problem of ignoring difference.

Men's motivation to adopt more egalitarian attitudes and a non-violent change might be affected by the group format. Duluth-type interventions employ a group setting (Babcock et al., 2004); however, the group format has been noted for its potential negative effects on group members. Although it has been argued that the group format provides an opportunity for men to learn from each other and confront the denial of their violence (Babcock et al., 2004), the disadvantages of this format appear to be more apparent in this study. It has been argued that

violent men are often grouped together in intervention programmes under the assumption of their similarities as 'abusers' (Boonzaier, 2009). Consequently, individual differences have been ignored. Based on findings from the current study, four problems surrounding this assumption of similarity have been isolated.

Firstly, in this study, the men appeared to rebel against this 'unification of abusers' by dissociating from other group members. Men were found to dissociate on the basis of differences between themselves and other programme participants. For example, men were found to construct difference according to the different types of abuse that each man perpetrated. Similarly to Wood's (2004) findings, men's dissociation from other programme members allowed them also to distance themselves from an identity of 'an abuser or perpetrator.' Therefore, the implications of grouping men, despite distinct differences between them and their types of abuse (e.g. verbal abuse, physical abuse), allows them to derive permission to minimise their own types of abuse.

Secondly, it should be acknowledged that all programme participants might not be at the same stage of change. According to the Stages of Change Model, violent men are not uniform and may be at different stages of the change process. This is particularly important in this study where the court-referred men, as opposed to voluntary members, did not all indicate a readiness to change in their first interviews. According to the Stages of Change model (Begun et al., 2001; Daniel & Murphy, 1997; Eckhardt et al., 2004), the court-referred men would only have been at the first stage of '*precontemplation*' (i.e. where the man is not considering behaviour change) whereas the voluntary participants were more likely to have been at stage

two of '*contemplation*' (i.e. where behaviour change is being critically considered) or stage three of '*preparation*' (i.e. a commitment to- and preparation to change is made). More so, this variation in stages of change might impact negatively on the group process. Because it has been argued that some group members might reinforce denial, sexist and violent attitudes in ways that group leaders might not necessarily notice (Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Hearn, 1998; Saunders, 2001), the negative influence of particular members might impact on the progress of other group members. Researchers have suggested that this could have detrimental effects after the session where the man might feel justified in further abusing his partner and maintaining his sexist attitudes toward women (Edleson & Tolman, 1992). Therefore, the implication of grouping men at various levels of change appears to impede the progress of more 'advanced' programme members.

Thirdly, the same treatment model might not be equally effective for each group member. Because studies have found that violent men resemble particular personality subtypes, it may be necessary that treatment models address men's violence on this level (Bowen et al., 2005). Consequently, this might increase the likelihood towards change. For example, Bowen and colleagues' study examined the effect of completing a community-based intervention programme. It was found that the domestic violence offenders resembled a particular subtype; they displayed anti-social and borderline characteristics. Consequently, the pro-feminist, psycho-educational programme that was evaluated in Bowen and colleague's study was argued to have been inappropriate for this particular subtype of abusive men. Instead, it was argued that the focus needed to be placed upon tackling deeper

psychopathological tendencies, which psycho-educational models do not address (Bowen et al., 2005). Therefore, the implications of assuming that all violent men respond equally to the same treatment appears to be problematic for the man's non-violent change.

Fourth, treatment models might also neglect to address violent men's cultural differences. It was argued that westernised theories of masculinity and explanations for male violence do not do justice to the diversity evident in South African masculinities (Morrell, 2001). Similar to previous research, the men in this study were found to emphasise differences in their personalities, relationships, cultures and backgrounds (Anderson & Umberson, 2001; Boonzaier, 2009). Therefore, by grouping violent men together based on the assumption of their shared South African experiences, men's unique experiences are neglected. More so, in the north American context, Babcock and Steiner (1999) found that a large proportion of programme dropouts were ethnic minorities. Consequently, treatment implications for neglecting to address the cultural diversity of South African masculinities might also result in increased attrition rates.

In summary, a selection of problems and treatment implications for perpetrator programmes has been highlighted. In response to these issues, recommendations for South African programmes and future domestic violence research will be offered in the next section.

6.3 Recommendations for research and practice

Recommendations for South African perpetrator programmes for men and suggestions for future South African domestic violence research will follow in this section. Ways of attaining

a non-violent change in programme participants will form the over-arching focus of these recommendations. The recommendations will be addressed according to the following areas: *facilitator training, towards 'stages of change' awareness, programme duration, evaluating programme effectiveness and men's change, and programme development.*

6.3.1 Facilitator training.

In response to the Duluth model's lack of ability to create a genuine 'change' with regard to gender stereotypical attitudes and violent behaviour, programmes that adhere to the Duluth model should acknowledge the "savvy" perpetrator (Buttell & Carney, 2004, p. 8). In this way, awareness should be created around programme participants' strategies of resistance. Therefore, it is recommended that South African programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence train facilitators to be acutely aware of programme participants' constructions of hegemonic masculinity; particularly those that have been associated with violence against women. However, as Shrock and Padavic (2007) suggest, alerting participants to this violent 'talk' need not encompass shaming or humiliating techniques. Rather, it would be more effective if facilitators encourage men to evaluate these practices through questions such as:

- 1) Why do you value such qualities?
- 2) Where do these ideas come from?
- 3) Who do they benefit?
- 4) How does acting on these masculine qualities harm yourself, your partner and child(ren)? (Shrock & Padavic, 2007, p. 644)

It is also suggested that future South African research should place a greater emphasis on the experiences of facilitators of perpetrator groups. This has been a particularly inactive area in domestic violence research and it might have consequences for the effectiveness of such programmes. Because Shrock and Padavic (2007) highlight that it is the implementation of the Duluth model that is the problem, it follows that a focus should be placed upon facilitators and their experiences of co-ordinating psycho-educational perpetrator groups and implementing models such as the Duluth approach. This will contribute to improving the ways in which South African programmes are developed and administered.

6.3.2 Towards a 'Stages of change' awareness.

Literature has drawn attention to the importance of achieving effective treatment modes that stimulate change (Babcock et al., 2004; Babcock & Steiner, 1999; Begun et al., 2001; Bennett et al., 2007; Daniels & Murphy, 1997; Eckhardt et al., 2004; Taft & Murphy, 2007). Therefore, it has been asserted that intervention programmes would be more effective if they catered to men on the individual level through acknowledging their particular stage of change (Begun et al., 2001). Individual-based treatment methods might also be considered beneficial to guard against making assumptions of fundamental similarity and grouping men who may be at different stages of the change process. This might also eradicate the possibility of potentially endangering the progress of more 'advanced' men, in terms of their stages of change (Edleson & Tolman, 1992).

While the individual-based format might be more effective in some situations, this does not imply that group formats should be eradicated completely. Through assessing violent men before they begin perpetrator programmes, men might be able to be grouped based on their assessed similarities. For example, violent men who have certain personality subtype characteristics might be grouped together and treated according to the appropriate intervention model. Within the same strand, implications of the Stages of Change model assert that interventions should be developed according to the violent man's readiness to change (Begun et al. 2001; Bennett et al., 2007; Daniel & Murphy, 1997; Eckhardt et al., 2004). Because voluntary and court-mandated programme participants might be at different stages of the change process interventions might be designed according to both groups of men.

6.3.2.1 Court-mandated and voluntary programme participants.

Given this awareness of programme participants' varying stages of change, future research might furthermore examine and compare voluntary and court-mandated men according to their motivation to create non-violent change. In Eckhardt et al.'s (2004) study, it was found that court-mandated men are more likely to stay in the programme because they are compelled to do so. Court-mandated intervention programmes have been critiqued for producing this "superficial compliance" (Dutton & Corvo, 2007, p. 663). This critique is especially supported considering the Duluth intervention's little effect on reducing high recidivism rates post-programme completion (Dutton & Corvo, 2007). More so, in this study, the rhetorical device of *axiom marking* illustrated the way in which voluntary members similarly minimised their violence to court-mandated members without fearing the same legal

consequences. Therefore, future research might unpack the notion of what men's 'voluntary' attendance at a programme means. For example, the men might have been on the verge of the end of a relationship and been given the ultimatum by women partners to attend a programme and get 'help'. Therefore, while voluntary men might not fear legal consequences if the programme is not attended, they might instead fear the consequences of their intimate relationship being terminated. In this regard, both court-mandated and voluntary members might equally experience an obligation to attend the programme, which might have implications for their willingness to initiate a genuine change in non-violent behaviour and attitudes.

Future research might also evaluate the impact of a court-mandated intervention programme on court-referred men. International literature has indicated mixed results for the effectiveness of court-mandated perpetrator programmes (Babcock & Steiner, 1999; Bennett et al., 2007; Dobash et al., 2000; Edleson & Syers, 1990; Sherman & Berk, 1984). The South African men in this study placed a fair amount of emphasis on the effect of including the criminal justice system in their relationships with their partners and in obscuring their rehabilitation process. By including the criminal justice system in the equation of their punishment, the men used this as a platform for constructing themselves as powerless victims of a gender biased system. This allowed them to rarely acknowledge arrest as a justified form of punishment; therefore, evading responsibility for their violent acts. Consequently, these investigations, in the South African context, might contribute in two ways: (a) it will add to the slowly emerging

formal evaluation research of domestic violence programmes in South Africa and, (b) it will improve our knowledge of what works best within the South African context.

6.3.3 Programme duration.

Similarly to Buttell and Carney's (2004) findings, it was noted that programme duration might have contributed to a lack of significant change within men. In their evaluation of an intervention programme, Babcock et al. (2004) found that the suggested duration of the programmes ranged from 12 to 52 weeks. Because the Stages of Change model highlights five stages of behaviour change that violent men possibly need to work through (Begun et al., 2001; Daniel & Murphy, 1997; Eckhardt et al., 2004), a 20-session programme, such as the one in this study, might not provide sufficient time for adequately working through these stages. This study's findings suggest the need for longer intervention programmes for violent men.

Domestic violence is a complex issue that has been argued to worsen over time (Buttell & Carney, 2004). Because the men in this sample reported an average of 15 years of marriage where abuse might have worsened and become chronic, it appears unlikely that a 16-week rehabilitation programme would sufficiently address the complexities of domestic violence.

Future research might seek to clarify the impact of a programme that is longer in duration. While this study's findings indicated that a lack of noteworthy change by men might have been related to programme duration, research has also suggested longer programmes might not necessarily have very different and positive consequences. Literature has demonstrated that because motivation has been considered an important factor in maintaining men's interest in attending the programme (Eckhardt et al., 2004; Taft & Murphy, 2007), a

longer programme might result in the men losing interest; therefore, resulting in increased attrition rates. Consequently, further research on programme duration might shed light on the issue of whether longer programmes produce significant change within men or whether dropout rates increase. In this research however, attention would also need to be paid to the other issues that might affect programme efficacy, such as men's stage of change (i.e., regarding court-mandated and voluntary participants), the type of programme and suitability of the participants (i.e., regarding personality types), and the group versus the individual format.

6.3.4 Evaluating programme effectiveness and men's change.

It is recommended that future evaluation research on South African intervention programmes employ multi-dimensional assessments to achieve a realistic perception of men's willingness to change and maintain their change (Buttell & Carney, 2004). Buttell and Carney argued that particular methods of evaluation are limiting due to their one-dimensional approach of simply asking men who have completed intervention programmes whether they are still violent towards their partners. Due to men's resistance towards further treatment and the effect of social desirability on their responses, this method does not reflect a thorough measure of non-violent change or current levels of abuse.

In comparison to the low success rates of domestic violence perpetrator programmes, ill-structured evaluation designs cause the success rates for programmes to be unrealistically high (Buttell & Carney, 2004; Dunford, 2000). Buttell and Carney provided a guideline to achieving a multi-dimensional assessment, through emphasising a broader definition of abuse. In this way, physical, emotional and controlling behaviours can be assessed; bearing in mind

that although men might have contained their physical abuse, other forms of abuse might have worsened (Boonzaier & van Schalkwyk, in press). Ultimately, a broader definition of abuse also decreases the likelihood that programme effectiveness will be unrealistically evaluated (Buttell & Carney, 2004).

Aligned with evaluating programme participants' non-violent change, future research might also develop longitudinal studies that assess the maintenance of non-violent change. Studies that have evaluated men's change maintenance through an assessment of victims or abusers' experiences have limited their follow-up assessments to one year or less (Austin & Dankwort, 1999; Bowen et al., 2005). Therefore, future research might improve these findings through developing an extended follow-up period of a year or more and reports from both victims and perpetrators should be collected.

Finally, future research on evaluating programmes and men's change might involve integrating both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Qualitative research might compliment quantitative findings through exploring how race, class and ethnicity affect men's experiences of attending programmes and whether the programme instigated a non-violent change (Goldman & Du Mont, 2001). This will aid in creating a more comprehensive view of South African interventions. As Yllö (1990) suggested, a pure quantitative versus qualitative binary "creates divisions and silences rather than dialogue" (p. 34).

6.3.5 Programme development.

This section goes beyond a focus on practical and methodological recommendations for South African domestic violence research and intervention programmes to address a focus on the development of local programme models. Recommendations for the development of three types of programmes that might address the problem of domestic violence perpetration will be outlined: community-based prevention programmes, culturally-appropriate programmes, as well as the Integrative Feminist Model.

6.3.5.1 Community-based prevention programmes.

Both international and local research continue to show that witnessing or experiencing abuse in childhood is a fundamental risk factor for the later perpetration of violence by men (Abrahams & Jewkes, 2005; Abrahams et al., 2006; Kurian et al., 2009; Lisak & Beszterczey, 2007). In this research too, some men spoke about witnessing or experiencing abuse in their childhoods. A South African study by Abrahams and Jewkes found that nearly a quarter of the men (23.5%) had witnessed parental violence. This was a strong predictor for both domestic violence (27%) and violent crime (30% of men were arrested for possession of an illegal firearm). Therefore, in the current study, the men's narratives of experiencing or witnessing abuse during their childhood could be understood as potentially having contributed to the perpetration of domestic violence in their adult years. One way of responding to this problem of witnessing or experiencing abuse in childhood, might involve the development of interventions for children at risk.

Abrahams and Jewkes (2005) argued that children who have been exposed to violence should be re-educated on their social and emotional functioning as well as alerting them to the unacceptability of the use of violence. These dangerous coping mechanisms of violence and aggression should be substituted for more effective conflict management skills. Furthermore, existing and future parents should be educated through community interventions on the awareness of childhood experiences and the emotional and social functioning in adolescent and adult years. It is argued that such interventions will allow for more positive parent-child behaviour and positive child development (Abrahams & Jewkes, 2005).

6.3.5.2 Culturally-appropriate interventions.

Researchers have argued that the adjustment of treatments to be more culturally-sensitive and to serve particular groups should be considered (Babcock & Steiner, 1999). Culturally-appropriate interventions are those designed specifically for a target population. This type of intervention for South African violent men might be considered valuable in effectively addressing the problem of domestic violence. Morrell (2001) asserted that South African masculinities are so diverse that it is particularly important that attention is paid to the various ways in which men forge their masculinities in relation to race, class and ethnicity. More so, literature indicates the powerful influence of cultural norms in shaping men's beliefs regarding patriarchy and the subordination of women that might result in normalising and permitting violence (Abu-Ras, 2007; Ahmed-Ghosh, 2004; Aphane, Hlanze, Dlamini, Mkatshwa & Shongwe, 2001; Armstrong, 2000; Miller, 1992). This is especially important in the South African context where masculinities have been shaped by a long history of violence (Morrell, 2001). Therefore,

there is a need for South African interventions for domestically violent men to be adapted to the cultural diversity of South African masculinities. Additionally, culturally-appropriate interventions also aim to address the man's unique cultural experiences and traditions and to challenge oppressive notions through re-education (Dawes & Donald, 2000; Douglas et al., 2008; Gillum, 2008; Kiyoshk, 2003).

Culturally-appropriate interventions are also considered to be important because mainstream interventions lack the cultural sensitivity needed to produce effective intervention programmes (Gillum, 2008). In the United States, for example, mainstream interventions have had minimal effect on the racial or ethnic minority groups because of language barriers and isolation of minority groups from mainstream groups due to prejudice and racism (Gillum, 2008). For example, it is a common misconception to stereotype and homogenise ethnic minority groups; whereas it is more challenging to gain an understanding and appreciation of different cultures (Oates, 1998). It is argued that cultures should be respected for their particular practices, traditions, beliefs and values that do not necessarily encompass oppression (Almeida & Durkin, 1999; Cousineau & Rondeau, 2004; Oates, 1998). Consequently, it is important for therapists or intervention programme staff to be educated on the relevant cultural beliefs and to be culturally sensitive towards interpretations of violent men's behaviours (Oates, 1998), while at the same time challenging men's use of violence toward intimate partners.

The benefits of culturally-appropriate interventions have also been reiterated by survivors of domestic violence. Gillum (2008) found that a sample of African American survivors

spoke highly of the fact that the agency hired mainly African American staff to work there. This allowed the women to speak more openly about their experiences because they could relate to the staff. Similar language use was also considered helpful (Gillum, 2008). On the contrary, Eastman, Bunch, Williams and Carawan (2007) investigated the effectiveness of a domestic violence programme in the rural regions of North Carolina and Virginia. It was found that the consequences of a confined and geographically isolated community programme resulted in a lack of public knowledge, agency and community resources and professional development through training. Furthermore, access to the programme's services was one of the barriers that clients faced because of the distance and lack of transport available to them. Similarly, in the current study, lack of transport and other responsibilities (i.e., employment, looking after children) were perceived as barriers to attending the weekly sessions.

Edleson and Tolman (1992) described ways in which domestic violence programmes can be expanded in other cultures through designing interventions that combine the educational, employment, religious and mass media systems. Research has suggested that religion serves as a protective factor in certain cultures. Kiyoshk (2003) also provided a reflection of the *Change of Seasons* psycho-educational treatment model, which was developed in North America. Spiritual rituals and ceremonies evident in Aboriginal culture were integrated into the model. Three particular ceremonies were conducted: the *smudge*, the *talking circle* and the *sweatlodge purification* ceremony. These rituals involve the burning of herbs as an offering and as each person uses the smoke to symbolically cleanse them, a silent prayer is offered. Furthermore, a sharing circle is constructed where men share their thoughts and feelings (similar to group

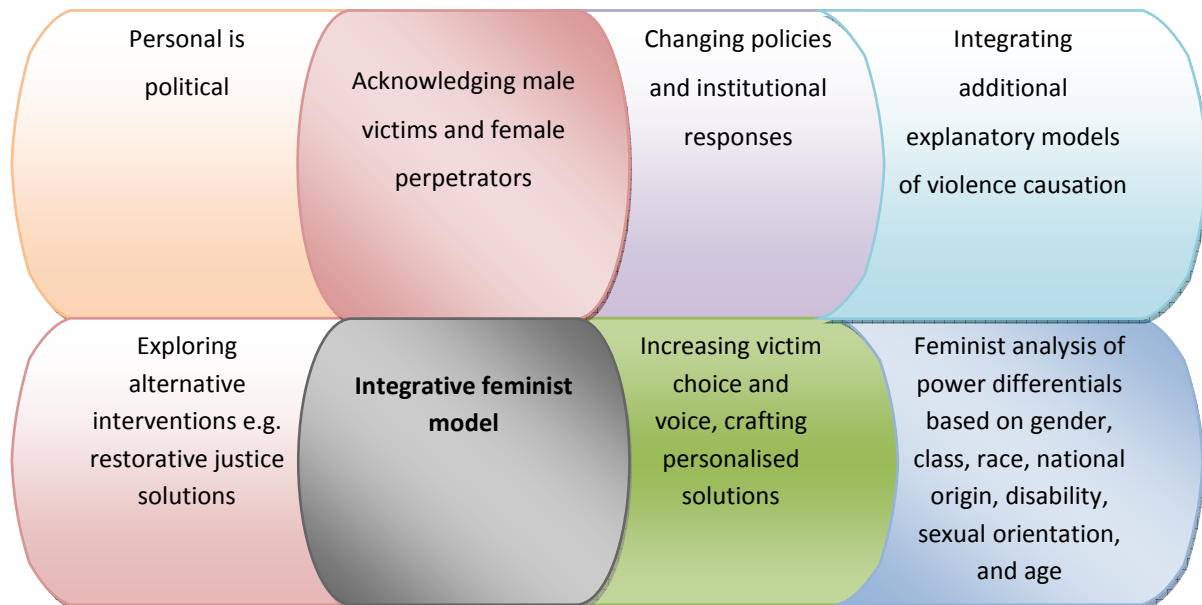
interventions). During this sharing process, an object bearing spiritual value (e.g., eagle feather, rock) is held by the speaker. In Ellison, Trinitapoli, Anderson and Johnson (2007) it was also found that in a sample of ethnically diverse American men and women, religious involvement was associated with reduced levels of domestic violence; however, this protective factor was stronger for African American men and women and for Hispanic men than for white groups.

Due to this increased awareness of the value of culturally-appropriate interventions, other intervention treatment models, such as pro-feminist models, were found to adapt to this trend of developing more culturally-sensitive forms of treatment for violent men. It has been argued that pro-feminist approaches, such as the Duluth model, have been critiqued for their narrow explanations of men's violence as being primarily rooted in patriarchy and men's control and power over women. The narrow explanations of pro-feminist approaches does not operate effectively in varying contexts and cultures where masculinity might be expressed differently and multiple causes of male violence might be evident. Consequently, pro-feminist programmes might not be well-adapted and effective in certain communities and cultures. As Babcock and colleagues (2004) argue, agencies are likely to improve their services by adjusting their domestic violence programmes to a particular clientele rather than by strictly adhering to one treatment method that might not even be supported with empirical evidence. In response to limitations of pro-feminist domestic violence programmes, an improved feminist model, that takes some of the weaknesses of its predecessor into account, has been developed (McPhail, Busch, Kulkarni & Rice, 2007).

6.3.5.3 An Integrative Feminist Model for domestic violence.

Given the critiques of narrowly defined feminist perspectives in the field of domestic violence, McPhail and colleagues (2007) conducted research on critiques of the feminist model through engaging with leaders in the domestic violence movement. This led to the development of the Integrative Feminist Model (IFM) which builds upon feminist perspectives by addressing current critiques, while incorporating new research and theoretical perspectives and also still preserving the core themes of the feminist approach (McPhail et al., 2007). The central tenet of the IFM is its dedication to emphasising the etiology of male violence within gender and other forms of oppression (See Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1: Integrative Feminist Model for Domestic Violence ²⁷



It was asserted that the development of this model allowed for:

1. Different ways of thinking without disturbing core feminist ideals
2. Multiple causes of violence are acknowledged: IFM moves outside the feminist explanations for men's violence as being exercised through men's power and control over women. Instead, other theories of violence are also acknowledged within the

²⁷ The structure of the model resembles a puzzle where theories are metaphorically positioned as "fitting together" (McPhail et al., 2007, p. 825). This puzzle metaphor also indicates that not all theories can be included in this approach where it was argued, "you cannot fit a square peg into a round hole" (McPhail et al., 2007, p. 825). Feminist perspectives form the fundamental piece of the puzzle, while the rest of the pieces provide context and more information about the many forms of violence (McPhail et al., 2007).

model, such as, physiological and neurological factors, evolutionary psychology, substance abuse, childhood experiences of violence, intergenerational abuse, attachment disorders, and violence as a tool for constructing masculinity in domestic violence, among others.

3. The women's role in violence: Acknowledging women as perpetrators has been argued to place feminists in a compromising situation because female aggression, including self-defence, has been used as a means by male abusers to minimise their violence and blame the victim (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Cavanagh et al., 2001). A lack of focus on the female 'perpetrator' has led to deficient understandings of violence perpetrated by women. Therefore, a more detailed focus on women's aggression is also a target of IFM.
4. Acknowledging institutional failures: an overreliance on the criminal justice system is acknowledged as a weakness of the feminist approach. The criminal justice system's lack of consistency in reacting to domestic violence cases (and occasionally underreporting such incidences), has been argued to have negative consequences for victims of domestic violence.

This integration of approaches resembles the ecological approach. McPhail and colleagues (2007) argued that instead of the feminist model representing one strand of the ecological model it could occupy multiple theories and interventions within its perspective. IFM's suggested intervention works against the one-size-fits-all intervention approach. Instead

it emphasises that individualised assessments and solutions for both the man in the programme and women in support groups should be offered. These individualised assessments will aid in highlighting the couple's dynamics, motivations and treatment options. This allows for more focus to be placed upon what the individual wants as opposed to prescribing interventions based on one-dimensional feminist ideas of domestic violence (McPhail et al., 2007).

Regarding policy and institutional responses, it is argued that both under-responsive and over-responsive criminal justice systems are unhelpful. In this regard, participants from McPhail et al.'s (2007) study recognised that there are some alternatives to the criminal justice system, such as community involvement and accountability. However, the participants, who were leaders in working with victims, perpetrators and children of domestic violence on a daily basis, argued that communities might be too unmotivated and ill-equipped to properly implement specific ways of dealing with domestic violence. Therefore, the alternatives that were offered by participants regarding the involvement of the criminal justice system appear to be weak. Because the IFM still remains a model, further detailing of specific practices and interventions that fit within the framework are suggested as the next step in elaborating IFM (McPhail et al., 2007).

6.4 Study limitations and conclusions

It should be noted that a strength of this study is its longitudinal approach which served to produce more valid and credible findings. Therefore, the opportunity to generate research over an extended period of time and to pay attention to how men's discourses may have changed or remained static, has strengthened this study.

One particular limitation was evident in this study. Limitations of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis include its: (a) assumptions of theorising subjectivity on the basis of discourse alone, as well as (b) assertions made about the relationship of discourse and material reality (Willig, 2001). The first critique of the Foucauldian version of discourse analysis asserts that discourse might not be all that is necessary for an awareness of personal identity to be produced. It is argued that considering sheer subject positions against discourses cannot account for the emotional investments and attachments to these multiple discursive positions. Furthermore, the second critique argues that although it is assumed that discourses construct reality, alternatively, the ways in which discourses can be constrained through 'reality' should be investigated. In this way, the limitations of discourses are illuminated (Willig, 2001).

In conclusion, this study has drawn attention to the various subjectivities men produce in challenging or supporting dominant discourses of hegemonic masculinity and change. This exploration ultimately provided insight into the social worlds of violent men to understand the various ways in which they account for their change. Through an exploration of violent men's talk, their resistance to the disruption of the traditional gender order was revealed. While the aim of research and interventions over the decades have aimed to address ways of 'unsilencing' women and gaining accounts of their abuse (Ahmed-Ghosh, 2004; Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Cavanagh et al., 2001; Santana et al., 2006), it seemed to be the quest of the men to 're-silence' women through their 'talk' about 'change'.

It has been asserted that it is in everyday life that men perform patriarchal practices. However, it is also within these everyday arenas of families, schools, work, peer groups, or

organisations that change is achievable. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) reiterated this goal of gender equality through their petition that individuals should “establish as hegemonic men...a version of masculinity open to equality with women” (p. 853). As Almeida and Durkin (2001) alerted, while violence and abusive behaviours might cease with the help of programmes, men’s non-violent change can only be maintained if they continue to be involved in community and social systems that encourage non-violence. Similarly, as feminist perspectives have asserted, change requires assistance from the outer channels of the system (Shrock & Padavic, 2007).

Without oversimplifying the evident complexities of domestic violence, the benefits of understanding the violent man in context allows that more effective community-based interventions, that directly serve to address the problem of domestic violence, are developed. The time has come to critically evaluate South African programmes for violent men to avoid the harmful consequences of employing potentially ineffective treatment approaches.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Participant demographic information

Participant	Age	Marital status	Years of marriage	Employment status/occupation	Highest level of education
1	34	Separated and in the process of divorce	2	Employed: Security	Grade 12
2	36	Married	8	Employed	Grade 9
3	47	Married	24	Employed: painting jobs and building maintenance (part-time)	Grade 10
4	45	Married	25	Employed: seat belt factory	Grade 4
5	41	Married	10	Employed: car mechanic	Grade 11
6	36	Divorced	12	Employed: car mechanic	Grade 10
7	27	Married	2	Unemployed	Grade 11
8	25	Separated (at time1) and married (at time 2)	3	Unemployed	Passed grade 12.
9	50	Divorced since 2007 but residing with ex-wife	30 (includes the 3-year period of divorce)	Unemployed (used to be a driver)	Grade 7
10	20	Single	N/A	Unemployed	Grade 10. Then continued at the college level doing carpentry for 3 years.
11	55	Married	35	Employed	Grade 10
12	22	Single (at time 1); Partner (at time 2)	N/A	Unemployed	Grade 7

Appendix B: Interview schedule for the second interviews

1. How have you been since your programme ended?
2. Maintenance of lessons learnt in programme:
 - 2.1. How has your relationship with your wife/partner/relevant family member been over these past few months?
 - 2.2. How does a typical argument start with your partner nowadays?
 - 2.3. How do you deal with a potential disagreement between you and your wife/children/father?
 - 2.4. In what ways does your wife/children/father/partner deal with arguments?
3. After the programme:
 - 3.1. Have you attended any other programme/support groups since the completion of the programme?
 - 3.2. If so, please tell me more about your experience there.
4. Maintenance of change:
 - 4.1. How did you feel once the programme ended?
 - 4.2. Having support and encouragement was an important factor that came out in some of the first interviews that I did with the men. Now that your weekly support

groups are finished, do you still feel that it is necessary to have that support in order to maintain your change?

4.3. If so, who provides you with that support?

4.4. We spoke about why you want to maintain your change as a non-violent man in the first interview. What acts as a motivation for you to stay a changed man now, three/four months after the programme has ended?

5. Finally, I would like you to think back to your experiences of being part of the programme:

5.1. In what ways do you think the programme can be improved?

5.2. Seeing that you were able to reach the end of the programme, would you like to give advice to any other men who attend the programme? And maybe some advice to the women partners of the men)?

Appendix C: Information sheet

INFORMATION SHEET

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



Department of Psychology

South African batterer intervention programmes (BIP): Exploring men's experiences

You are invited to take part in a research study about men's experiences of attending a particular men's programme. I am a researcher from the Department of Psychology at University of Cape Town.

If you decide to take part in this study, I will ask you to do 2 different interviews with me:

The first interview will take place during the programme and it will be focused on how you have been experiencing the programme so far. This interview should take no longer than 90 minutes.

The second interview will take place 3 months after the end of the programme. It will explore whether your views of the programme might have changed or are the same. This interview will also take no longer than 90 minutes.

The interviews will be conducted at the agency you attend. The most convenient time for you and the researcher will be arranged. You will not be paid for taking part in the study but you will receive R50 to help cover the travel costs.

A tape-recorder will be used to record the interviews. As a result, your interview information and your identity will be kept confidential at all times. This study will give you an opportunity to share your views and experiences and your information will contribute to the larger purpose of understanding how these programmes help men.

Thanks for your time!

If you have questions, concerns or complaints about the study, please contact Taryn van Niekerk on 072 186 3085 or at Taryn.vanniekerk@uct.ac.za

Appendix D: Consent form

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



Department of Psychology

South African batterer intervention programmes (BIP): Exploring men's experiences

1. Invitation and purpose

You are invited to take part in a research study about men's experiences of attending a particular men's programme. I am a researcher from the Department of Psychology at University of Cape Town.

2. Procedures

If you decide to take part in this study, I will ask you to do 2 different interviews with me.

The first interview will take place during the programme and it will be focused on how you have been experiencing the programme so far. This interview should take a maximum of 90 minutes.

The second interview will take place three months after the end of the programme. It will explore whether your perceptions of the programme might have changed or are the same. This interview will also take a maximum of 90 minutes.

3. Inconveniences

You may talk about experiences that are distressing for you, but in this case, you are allowed to stop the interview at any point without any negative consequences.

The interviews will be conducted at the agency you attend and you might have to do the interview on a separate day to when you attend the agency for a session. However, the most convenient time for you and the researcher will be arranged.

4. Benefits

You are given an opportunity to share your views and experiences and your information will contribute to the larger purpose of understanding how perpetrator programmes help men.

5. Privacy and confidentiality

The interviews will be tape-recorded. Therefore, the researcher will take strict precautions to safeguard your personal information throughout the study. Your information will be kept in a locked file cabinet without your name and or other personal identifiers.

While this research will be used for educational purposes, there is a chance that this work might be published in an academic journal. In this case, your identity will still be kept confidential.

Interviews will be conducted in a private room at the agency you attend.

6. Money matters

You will not be paid for taking part in the study but you will receive R50 to help cover the costs of transportation.

7. Contact details

If you have questions, concerns or complaints about the study, please contact the researcher, Taryn van Niekerk on 072 186 3085 or at Taryn.vanniekerk@uct.ac.za

If you have any questions about your rights as a study participant, or concerns about the research, you may talk to Dr Floretta Boonzaier at the Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town (UCT), South Africa, 021 – 650 3429.

8. Signatures

(Participant's name) _____ has been informed of the nature and purpose of the procedures described above including any risks involved in its performance. He has been given time to ask any questions and these questions and these questions have been answered to the best of the researcher's ability.

Researcher's Signature

Date

I have been informed about this research study and understand its purpose, possible benefits, risks, and inconveniences. I agree to take part in this research as a participant. I know that I am free to withdraw this consent and quit this project at any time, and that doing so will not cause me any penalty.

Participant's Signature

Date