The Causes and Effects of Domestic Violence in the East Mamprusi Traditional Area in Northern Region

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Abstract
The objective of this study was to investigate the prevalence, causes and effects of domestic violence in the East Mamprusi Traditional area of the Northern Region of Ghana. Five research questions were used to draw answers from respondents. A descriptive survey was used for the study. Men and women (192) respondents were included in the study. Systematic, purposive, lottery and snowball sampling were used to select the sample size of 25 respondents. Interview guide was used for focus group discussions for men and women. Focus group discussions were transcribed. The study revealed that, people in East Mamprusi Traditional area experience various kinds of domestic violence. From the findings it was concluded that some of the cultural practice in the area allow violent means to correct wrong doing. And the conclusions were that correction could be effective without the use of violence. It was recommended among others that, Government should expand counseling facilities in schools to meet the demands of the people.

Key words: Mamprusi, Violence, Domestic violence, Perpetrator, Victim, Partner:

Background to the Study

Domestic violence (DV) is a worldwide challenge that is increasingly attracting the attention of citizens, states, and the international community. Measures taken by the United Nations (UN) to address violence against women, including adoption of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW) are a clear evidence of the growing global understanding that the international community recognizes that domestic violence constitutes a violation of human rights (UN, Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, 1993). According to an opinion poll carried out in the United Kingdom in 2007, a quarter of the nation's population lives with domestic violence. The report indicated that almost one in four of those surveyed had been involved in acts of physical abuse within a relationship, either as assailant or victim. Of the more than a thousand persons interviewed, 27% of women and 21% of men said they had been involved in a domestic incident involving physical fighting, punching, kicking, or having sex against the will of one partner. Out of those who had been involved in incidents of domestic violence, 37%.of women went, to the police, compared with 19% of men. Yet many held that it remains a private matter, with almost half of those questioned believing that what happens behind closed doors is for the couple to sort out themselves (BBC News , 2007). Domestic violence is a hidden problem that causes victims to suffer in silence. It occurs in all cultures and socioeconomic groups as well as same sex relationships. Not ruling out the fact that men also do suffer the ordeal, research evidence indicated that children and women are affected most by the violence in the family.

The centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP) in Kenya conducted a national survey on domestic violence in 2005 and found out that approximately 1.5 million women are raped and/or physically abused by an intimate partner annually. Approximately 25% of women had been raped and/or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, cohabitating partner, or date at some time in their life. The findings also indicated that increased frequency of violence towards spouse was associated with increased risk of violent spouse also being abusive to the child (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, Kenya, 2005).

The story is not different in Zimbabwe. The Musasa Project researched into domestic violence in Zimbabwe and recorded that violence against women was mainly perpetrated by a woman's husband or partner. One in four women is kicked, beaten or hit every day. One in twelve women is assaulted with dangerous object or weapon. One in every four married women is forced by their partners to have sex with them. One in five women is threatened with physical violence. One in six women is prevented from getting a job or going to work (Musasa Project, 2005).

Namibia recorded, at least, has lf of her women and children falling prey to domestic violence annually. Violence against women and children ranks as Namibia's most severe human rights problem and it is an 'enormous' challenge because it is so often hidden (The Legal Assistance Centre, 2005). A human rights record in Nigeria shows that half of Nigeria's women experience domestic violence. While the level of violence against Nigerian women in the home was reported to remain poorly mapped, pilot studies concluded that it was "shockingly high". Up to two- thirds of women in certain communities in Nigeria's Lagos State were believed to have experienced physical, sexual or psychological violence in the family and in other areas, while around 50% of women claimed they were victims of domestic violence (African News, 2007). Ghana is no exception to the global phenomenon of widespread domestic violence. An in- depth nationwide study on violence against women and children in Ghana, dubbed "Nkyinkyim" Project, conducted by the Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre (GSHRDC) in 1998 revealed that, one in three Ghanaian women suffer physical violence in the hands of a past or current partner, three in ten Ghanaian women admitted to having been forced to have sex by their male partners, and 27% of Ghanaian women had experienced psychological abuse, including threats, insults, and destruction of property (Cusack, Prah, Appiah, Coker & Gadzekpo , 1999).

Attempts to address the issue in Ghana saw the establishment, in 1998, of a specialized unit called the Women and Juvenile Unit (WAJU) in the Ghana Police Service, now Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU), toward the control of domestic violence. Also a complete Ministry, known as Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs was established in 2001 to focus on the interest of women and children. Again the Government of Ghana, in its efforts to control domestic violence, tabled a Domestic Violence Bill in .Parliament in 2001 and several other pressures saw its passage in 2007. Many feminists deemed the objective of the Bill as providing a comprehensive set of provisions to govern and protect the rights of the vulnerable in the home. The then International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) Executive Director, Gloria Ofori-Boadu, in an interview with Ghana News Agency , 2001 said: Gloria Ofori-Boadu further explained that, what victims need is prompt, cost effective and less traumatic means for redress.(Ghana News Agency,2001). Further, women in Ghana in 2005 launched a campaign against domestic violence in support of the Bill addressing domestic violence when it was introduced in Parliament. Foundation of Female Photojournalists (FFP) developed a documentary addressing domestic and gender based violence in order to motivate viewers to support initiatives that would assist victims of gender violence to report the issue and the quest to build a society of equal rights to all (Ghana News Agency 2005).The documentary provides information, regarding gender and domestic violence as well as strategies to address these issues.   Again different kinds of advocacy activities were organized by various institutions, on television and radio stations in Ghana, involving, medical and legal practitioners, clinical psychologists, and victims of domestic violence, for prompt passage of the Bill. Those efforts finally saw the Domestic Violence Bill passed into an Act by Ghana's Legislature on the 23rd of February, 2007.(Ghana News Agency) It was reported by a Ghanaian media(Ghana news Agency) that even though the passing of the law is welcoming news to the Ghanaian populace, FIDA deems it fit for government to make resources available to all organizations concerned for effective redressing of domestic violence issues in Ghana.(Ghana News Agency 2007).

The relentless activities of the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), Social Welfare, as well as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), such as FIDA, WiLDAF, GSHRDC and The Ark Foundation, Ghana are examples of private and "governmental agencies" efforts to clamp down on domestic violence in Ghana.(Ghana News Agency). All these moves and the increased reportage on domestic violence in the Ghanaian media indicate a high level of awareness and willingness on the part of people to speak out and report domestic violence cases. In the past, as it is now in some societies, people either felt ashamed or embarrassed to mention or discuss or report cases of domestic violence. The changed

situation can be considered a significant progress made in the attempt to eliminate domestic violence in the country. However, in spite of whatever gains are being made, the rate at which the menace is increasing makes one wonder if the attempts have been of any positive effect.

It is against this background on the status of domestic violence that one may think there is a weakness with the current medium of curbing the menace. May be it will be in the right direction to deal with attitudinal change while vigorously pursuing the law. Something has to be done to change the behavioural patterns of both the perpetrators and the -victims of which "counselling will be useful. This position can be supported with an interviewee's verbal report in the UK that; "Let's not forget you don't become a serial abuser overnight. It's a pattern that develops over time. And what do you do when you cross the line the first time? To my everlasting regret I speak-as someone who has been violent to my partner on one occasion. It was a moment of madness and I will regret it to my grave. I was lucky the company I worked for had a confidential counselling service and the Counsellor understood, but I don't know what I'd have done otherwise. If one in four people are victims there are a lot of perpetrators out there and helping stop them from becoming serial abusers is just as important as helping the victims; "**Dave** Counselling, it is hoped, will address both preventive and remediation aspects of reducing the incidence of domestic violence. The techniques and strategies of counselling aim at helping individuals resolve interpersonal conflict, promote greater self-awareness and insight, and also to work to eliminate self-defeating attitudes of victims as expressed in self-blame and the aggressive behaviours of the perpetrators (Akinade, Sonka, & Osanreren; 2005). Counselling will hopefully bring about understanding of self and others which will promote calmness and peace in the home.

Objectives of the study:

1) Explore how people in East Mamprusi Traditional area perceive domestic violence
2) Find out the causes of domestic violence in East Mamprusi Traditional area
3) Find out the forms of domestic violence experienced by people in East Mamprusi Traditional area?
4) Find out the effects of domestic violence on victims and perpetrators in East Mamprusi Traditional area
5) Explore the role of counselling in managing domestic violence.

Research Questions
The study was guided by the following research questions:
1) How do people in East Mamprusi Traditional area perceive domestic violence?
2) What are the perceived causes of domestic violence in East Mamprusi Traditional area?

3) What are the forms of domestic violence experienced by people in East Mamprusi Tradition area?

4) What are the effects of domestic violence experienced by people in East Mamprusi Traditional area?

Significance of the study

The findings of the study reveal the prevalence causes and effects of domestic violence .It is expected that this study will be used to sensitize the entire populace to get involved (especially households, which form the societal block of the country) by reporting cases of domestic violence, seeking counselling and helping to eradicate this social menace from our society completely. The results of the study when made available may assist individuals to take personal initiatives in combating domestic violence through seeking counselling services at early . signs of domestic violence and find a lasting solution to it. The findings of the study will further serve as a working tool for Government, NGOs, agencies who are concerned with domestic violence issues, mediators and individuals who are trying to combat the menace.

The concept of violence

Violence takes many forms and is understood differently in different countries and among different cultures. While there is no universally accepted definition of violence, the World Health Organization (WHO) has proposed the following as a working definition of violence: Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, under development, or deprivation (Microsoft 2007). According to WHO,(1993) there are three main

categories of violence; self-inflicted violence, Interpersonal violence and organized violence. Each category has its target.

Self-inflicted violence

Self-inflicted violence refers to intentional and harmful behaviours directed at oneself, for which suicide represents the fatal outcome. Other types include attempts to commit suicide "and behaviours where the intent is self-destructive, but not lethal (e.g. self-dilation, hunger strike and subjecting one- self to unfair weather,(WHO 1993).

Interpersonal violence

Interpersonal violence is violent behaviour between individuals and can best be classified by the victim-offender relationship, either among acquaintances or among persons who are not acquainted. Interpersonal violence may also be specified according to the age or sex of the victim. Violence against women is an example and is occurring worldwide, often unrecognized. Such violence may occur in the family or within the general community, and may be perpetrated or condoned by an individual. Other types of interpersonal violence 'include child abuse, bullying, harassment and criminally-linked violence such as assault and homicide.

Organized violence

Organized violence is violent behaviour of social or political groups motivated by specific political, economic or social objectives. Armed conflict and war may be considered the most highly organized types of violence. Other examples include racial or religious conflicts occurring among groups and gang or mob violence. According to Women in Law in Development in Africa (WiLDAF), the UN General Assembly in 1993 referred to violence as:Any act of gender based violence that is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering, including threats of such acts, coercion, or deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life (WiLDAF, 1999, p. 13). Perhaps, the UN General Assembly's explanation of violence is best expressed by what Cusack, Prah, Gadzkepo, Aniwa and Coker-Appiah,(1999) postulated; that, generally violent behaviour falls into two broad but related categories. According to them, an act is considered to be violent when the perpetrator uses force and or coercion. Such acts are perceived to be associated with the absence of consent, brutality, aggression; acts aimed to humiliate or denigrate the person, inhumane treatment, pain and harm or injury inflicted upon the body.

Cusack et al.(1999) further posit that the second category comprises acts that do not directly lead to the use of force but constitute behaviour that is controlling and dominating. While dominating and controlling behaviour may also be present when force is used, they are distinguished as separate in this categorization. This is because the actions are rendered without the person directly resorting to force, for instance, placing impediments in the way of a person and preventing him or her from achieving his or her objective.

Domestic Violence

According to FIDA, domestic violence is an assault, usually involving adults in an intimate and usually cohabiting relationship. It can also involve children within the household, house help and even infants. Domestic violence represents a pattern of behaviour rather than a single isolated episode. It can involve pushing, punching, slapping, forcing sexual activity or using a threat, of violence to control another's behaviour. It can lead to serious injury or death (FIDA, 2005). A domestic relationship could be defined as an association among a group of people at the same place permanently. Examples of people in a domestic relationship are people who are or were married, engaged, living together, have had or are expecting a child together, (including a foster child), and people who are related to one another including parents, grandparents and the extended family as a whole. 'House helps' and people who provide refuge or shelter for others could also be within the scope "of domestic relationships. Violence that normally occurs among these groups of people is termed as domestic violence. Domestic violence, a major human rights violation in Ghana," is said to be prevalent and cuts across all sectors of society, all age groups and sexes (Public Agenda, 2005)

Amnesty International, 2006 contends that violence against women as well as domestic violence encompass physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual

abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation (Amnesty International, *2005).*The evidence of FIDA's description or positions on domestic violence abounds jn what we read and hear as daily media report. The "The Spectator", (a Ghanaian weekly, issue of Saturday, July 22, 2006.*)* reported an incident of a bar attendant who got hold of his wife, and hit her head against a metal container several times, when he suspected her of flirting with another man. He subjected her to severe beatings until she collapsed and died. Another newspaper reported that a farmer in the Eastern Region was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment for cutting off his wife's hand, and causing injury to her head and jaw. It was reported that prior to the incident there had been frequent accusations of each other and a quarrel due to a maltreatment meted out to their son by his father (The Mirror, Saturday, August 26, 2006 No. 2697; pp. 1, 3).

The foregoing instances do not rule out the fact that men also suffer domestic violence. The Member of Parliament for Ho West Constituency, Hon. Francis Aggrey Agbotse was reported to have said "Domestic violence is not only male perpetrated crime". According to him, there are a lot of men who are beaten by their wives but who do not run to the Police for help. He, therefore, appealed for the campaign against domestic violence to be tailored to the extent that men will have the courage to send their wives to the Police for assault and other domestic violence issues (The Heritage, Friday July 14, 2006, p.4). It is worthy to say that despite the remediation efforts of the law enforcement agencies such as DOVVSU, CHRAJ, NGOs, Ministry of Women and Children's. Affairs and Social Welfare on domestic violence, the occurrence of the menace has neither abated significantly nor been completely eradicated in Ghana. Hence the needs for a second look at the control measures.

The cycle of domestic violence
Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive behaviour of the perpetrator intended to dominate the victim. The recurrence of such behaviours, usually escalate in frequency and severity. WiLDAF, (1999) states that, the cycle of domestic violence is a general pattern that most abusive relationships follow, it passes through three phases: tension building, explosion and honeymoon (gifts and apologies period). The cycle is dangerous and can lead to serious injury or death. For some people, the cycle is unnoticeable until it results in death.

Phase one: It is characterized by tension, fear, anxiety and dominance by the perpetrator. This phase comes with increasing stress and tension. The victim may feel as if he or she is walking on eggshells, waiting for the violence to begin. The victim may also try to stand up for himself or herself or attempt to provoke violence in order to get over with the tension. It appears that the moment tension starts to mount there is nothing the victim can do to prevent the violence from occurring.

Phase two: Aggression, explosion, loss of control by the perpetrator humiliation and sadness of the victim are characteristics of this phase. Here, the perpetrator explodes and attacks the victim verbally, emotionally and or physically. This phase can last for a few minutes to several days. Research evidence shows that, when the explosion is over, the victim may deny the seriousness 'of the injuries (Dwamena-Aboagye & Fiamanya, 2005)

Phase three: It is referred to as honeymoon period, and characterized by remorse on the part of the abuser, seeking for forgiveness from the victim, and promises that the violence will not happen again. Also, gifts are given and apology is rendered with a caution against violence. The victim yearns for this phase and hopes the loving behaviour of the abuser will end the cycle, but surprisingly the period is short- lived, and then the cycle begins again. The above description finds expression in Kenny's (son) verbal account that; "My father abused my mother all my life, verbally and physically, usually when drunk. While he was usually, (but not always), apologetic the next day, the ultimate problem was that I don't believe he ever accepted this was unacceptable behaviour and so there was never or any chance that he would seek help to deal with this. The only time I saw a reduction in the abuse was one day when I was old enough and brave enough to stand up to him. I suspect though that since I've left home he has drifted into old habits. Certainly his drinking is back up. My mother never ever pressed charges when the police showed up and the worst he

got was a night in a cell which usually made him much angrier. Kenny's experience was not different, because a lot of children are witnesses to such violence each day.

Prevalence of domestic violence worldwide

The real magnitude of the domestic violence problem has remained unclear as available data on violence against women varies depending on the sampling procedures, the research methods applied and the parameters used to define the term 'domestic violence' itself (Gazmararian, Lazorick, Spitz, Ballard, Salzman & Mark, 1996). Another major obstacle in identifying the extent of this issue is the unreported cases of domestic violence (Newton, 2001). Hence, statistics on violence in families are still a matter of some dispute. "Some experts believe domestic violence is increasing. Others believe that there has been a slight decrease, but that more women are reporting abuse, either way, the numbers prove that it still happens far, far too often" (Berry, 2000: 6). Krug *et al.* (2002) revealed that between 10 and 69 per cent of women in their survey had reported intimate partner violence at some point in their lives. Studies are beginning to estimate domestic violence occurrences within marital relationships but, as the understanding has evolved, the research scope has been extended to include non-marital relationships. The prevalence rates for abuse among cohabiting and dating relationships have been found to be as significant as between married couples (Deal & Wampler, 1986; Makepeace, 1983).

Domestic violence is often seen as a gender issue. According to Walby and Allen (2004), women are more prone to be the victims of assaults compared to men, especially in regards to sexual violence. In a study conducted by Tjaden and Thoennes (2000), twenty two per cent of women had reported being assaulted by their male partner or ex-partner compared to a figure of only 7.4 per cent regarding male victims. In the UK, statistics show that one in every four women has experienced episodes of domestic violence at some point in their lives (Women's Aid, 2009) whereas, in the United States, approximately two million women are subject to violence by their intimate partners every year (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Table 1.1 indicates the prevalence of domestic violence against women in 22 countries (UNICEF, 2000: 5).

Table 1: Global statistics on domestic violence against women

Country	The prevalence of domestic violence episodes
Cambodia	16% of women (a nationally representative sample of women) reported being physically abused by a spouse; 8% report being injured.
Canada	29% of women (a nationally representative sample of 12,300 women) reported being physically assaulted by a current or former partner since the age of 16.
Chile	26% of women (representative sample of women from Santiago) reported at least one episode of violence by a partner, 11% reported at least one episode of severe violence and 15% of women reported at least one episode of less severe violence.
Colombia	19% of 6,097 women surveyed had been physically assaulted by their partner in their lifetime.
Egypt	35% of women (a nationally representative sample of women) reported being beaten by their husband at some point in their marriage.
Estonia	29% of women aged 18-24 fear domestic violence, and the proportion rises with age, affecting 52% of women 65 or older, according to a 1994 survey of 2,315 women.
India	Up to 45% of married men acknowledged physically abusing their wives, according to a 1996 survey of 6,902 men in the state of Uttar Pradesh.
Israel	32% of women reported at least one episode of physical abuse by their partner and 30% reported sexual coercion by their husbands in the previous year, according to a 1997 survey of 1,826 Arab women.
Japan	59% of 796 women surveyed in 1993 reported being physically abused by their partner.
Kenya	42% of 612 women surveyed in one district reported having been beaten by a partner; of those 58% reported that they were beaten often or sometimes.
Korea	38% of wives reported being physically abused by their spouse, based on a

	survey of a random sample of women.
Mexico	30% of 650 women surveyed in Guadalajara reported at least one episode of physical violence by a partner; 13% reported physical violence within the previous year, according to a 1997 report.
Nicaragua	52% of women (representative sample of women in Leon) reported being physically abused by a partner at least once; 27% reported physical abuse in the previous year, according to a 1996 report.
New Zealand	20% of 314 women surveyed reported being hit or physically abused by a male partner.
Poland	60% of divorced women surveyed in 1993 by the Centre for the Examination of Public Opinion reported having been hit at least once by their ex-husbands; an additional 25% reported repeated violence.
Russia	(St. Petersburg) 25% of girls (and 11% of boys) reported unwanted sexual contact, according to a survey of 174 boys and 172 girls in grade 10 (aged 14-17).
Russia	(St. Petersburg) 25% of girls (and 11% of boys) reported unwanted sexual contact, according to a survey of 174 boys and 172 girls in grade 10 (aged 14-17).

Source: Field study, 2018.

As can be seen from the table, the figures show that domestic violence episodes occurred in nearly all parts of the world, from the industrialized countries such as Japan, the United Kingdom and New Zealand to European countries and the countries of Continental Africa. Most of the countries surveyed reported the prevalence rates of domestic violence as being 15 to 35 per cent. The highest percentage was Poland (60%) while the lowest was Cambodia (16%). Asian and Pacific countries such as India and Japan recorded among the highest prevalence rates with 45 per cent and 59 per cent respectively. The data available from violence against women surveys confirms that the prevalence of violence does include various forms of abuse such as physical abuse, psychological and emotional abuse as well as sexual abuse. Even though many countries still do not consider forced sex in marriage as rape, in recent years some countries have begun to legislate against marital rape and view it as a crime. These countries include Australia, Austria, Barbados, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Mexico, Namibia, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Trinidad & Tobago, the United Kingdom and the United States of America (UNICEF, 2000). Similarly, regarding the researched country, Ghana, the magnitude of this social issue is huge and it has been put forward as part of the national agenda.

Physical violence

Dwamena-Aboagye and Fiamanya (2005) postulate the following: physical, psychological, socio-economic, some traditional practices .considered as abuse, and sexual abuse among various categories of domestic violence. Physical violence varies in degree of physical damage. According to Cusack, *et al* (1999), physical violence can be perceived from five themes; cruel punishment, forced labour, beatings, assault with weapon, and death. Many a time, children and women are the targets of these acts. Cruel punishment comes in such forms as starving children, pouring dirty and or hot water on children and putting children's fingers into hot oil. Children under age are forced into child labour by selling or doing manual work under harsh weather instead of being in school. Here the form of violence has to do with power and control.Cusack ,et al (1999). Among physical violence are acts of slapping, punching, hitting, kicking, shoving, scratching, biting, throwing objects threatening or attacking one with a weapon, locking in or out of the house, abandoning in a dangerous place, refusing to help when one is injured, sick or pregnant, deprivation of food, choking, pushing, trying up murder and also disfiguration. In performing the acts mentioned, the perpetrators feel they have the right to inflict pain on their victims because some abusers will blame the victim for the abuse or use jealousy as an excuse as to why the abuse happened. All these types of

violence are ways the perpetrator controls the victims' body and mind (Dwamena-Aboagye & Fiamanya, 2005).

Maltreatment meted on children by either members of their household or outsiders mostly take physical form. In Ghana, the media report about how children are abused. In 1998, for instance, it was reported that a stepmother dipped her stepson's fingers into hot oil, because he was stealing. The "The Spectator", a Ghanaian weekly issue of Saturday, July 22, 2006 (p.3) reported that a 55-year-old woman collected a quarter bottle of local gin (akpeteshie) from a farmer in compensation for a 14-year-old girl who was allegedly defiled by the farmer. Another form of abuse of children is child trafficking. At a point in time Ghana Television station (GTV) reported on children from northern part of Ghana loaded in a ship bound for Cameroun to be sold into slavery. Again in many homes the girl-child is overburdened with household chores, all in the name of commercial status known as housemaid or house help, now modified as domestic helpers. This comes in as a cushioning for the impoverished status of their parents.(Gahana News Agency).

Psychological or emotional violence

Generally, psychological violence is a behaviour that is directed at an emotional level or has emotional impact on the victim, such as inability to sleep or eat. Regardless of the intent or result of behaviour, the abuse is used to force someone's compliance or obedience, and or to control him or her. This type of abuse includes insulting or ignoring partner, making partner feel stupid or worthless; name calling, constant criticism, ridiculing partner's beliefs, humiliating partner in public or private and intimidating or harassing partner. The perpetrator also monitors partner's movements, becomes overly jealous or possessive, isolates partner from family and friends, prevents partner from going to work or school, attacks partner's children or pets and threatens to kill, or leave or throw partner out of the house. In emotional violence, perpetrators sometimes direct the violent acts towards themselves (self- inflicted violence) threatening to kill oneself or go mad if the other leaves or does not do what one wants. Also, deceit, breaking promises, destroying trust, false accusations and blaming and playing mind game with victim or causing victim to suffer severe psychological trauma underlined activities of perpetrators.

In this type of violence, the wounds inflicted upon the mind take much longer time to heal though the body may mend soon afterwards. Each time the victims re-live these moments, they start bleeding all over again. The broken spirit takes the longest time to mend; the damage to the personality may be the most difficult to overcome (Adjetey & Boadu, 1997). The emotional stress of exposure to domestic violence can harm the development of the brain and impair cognitive and sensory growth in infants and toddlers. Children exposed to domestic violence have more health problems, poorer school performance and more behavioural disturbances than children not exposed to domestic violence. "Babies have a harder time developing a bond with mothers who are abused than with mothers who are not abused.

Socio-economic violence

The common situation that connotes violence socio-economically is when heads of families (breadwinners) hold or withhold resources or neglect their responsibilities to provide essential materials, such as money for, food, school fees, clothing and other household materials, regardless of the economic situation (Cusack *et al,* 1999). In many instances, the act of economic violence is geared towards punishing the dependents or to reinforce the status of the head of the household. For example, a husband who is pestered for home-keeping money by his wife can be violent as a means to register his position of denial. On the other hand, those who are denied these socio-economic needs also can become violent as a result of frustration. Economic violence also occurs in the circumstances when perpetrators prevent victims from earning income and seizing their assets. The acts of preventing partner from earning income or seizing his or her asset seems to render the victim powerless to be left at the mercy of the perpetrator (Cusack *et al,* 1999). Some perpetrators dare to restrict their victims' access to financial information and resources and also destroy their victims' possessions and more often than not the target is to mismanage the victims' finances (Dwamena-Aboagye & Fiamanya, 2005).

Sexual violence

According to the Crises Response Centre of The Ark Foundation, Ghana (2003), sexual abuse involves forced attempt to have sex or perform sexual acts against a partner's will. The activities of sexual

violence includes, attacking the sexual parts of a partner's body, making humiliating sexual comments or jokes, threatening physical violence should a partner not comply with sexual demands and defilement (having sex with a minor, under 14 years with or without her consent). Forced prostitution and knowingly infecting a partner with sexually transmitted disease or the HIV/AIDS virus are also regarded as sexual violence. Though it seems that society thinks if you love your partner you should not deny him or her of sex, sex in itself does not equal to love. Research evidence shows that many of the acts mentioned in the Ark Foundation's report leave the victims traumatized. Some perpetrators go the extra mile and force their victims to have sex with other people or wear clothes and perform sexual activities that make them uncomfortable. Marital rape form part of sexual violence. In some countries rape in marriage is not recognized by law, and in countries where there is legal sanction against rape, many women do not define forced sex as rape if they are living with their attacker, but research evidence shows that forced sex in marriage leave the victims traumatized for days (FIDA, 2005).

Some Traditional Practices Considered as Violence

A study conducted on domestic violence in Ghana by Georgetown University Law Centre (GULC. USA) in 2008 asserted that it is also due to some peculiar cultural practices that the occurrence of domestic violence is still rampant in our society. Traditional leaders have played a large role in resolving private disputes within the community, not least among these private matters, are cases of domestic violence. Ghanaian Chiefs and Queen Mothers handle cases by 'listening to both sides of the story, 'determining who is at fault and fining the guilty one or both. The research evidence of GULC shows that, although the traditional process is meant to be one of fair private adjudication, some (both male and female) traditional leaders have a firm belief in the need for women to be subservient to men, and endure even abusive conduct, and the need for women to refrain from 'provoking' the men to violence. It is further asserted by a Queen Mother that educated and economically- independent wives bring domestic violence upon themselves (GULC, 2008).

Female circumcision

Two hundred contends that there are many traditional practices that are violent in nature of which female circumcision is one. Female circumcision is one form of such traditional practices, which many women underwent mostly in the northern sector of Ghana as teenagers, or even as infants. According to Dolphyne, this practice sometimes result's in the women suffering serious, and life- threatening injuries throughout their adult lives. Female circumcision causes loss of lives. Research indicates that unfortunate children who underwent the ordeal sometimes bleed to death.

Widowhood rites

Widowhood rites are another form of traditional practice, which sometimes have an element of violence in their administration in some cultures in Ghana. For instance, a woman mourning her husband is deprived of such social activities as speaking in public to a group of people or freely moving about to do her normal duties. She cannot eat during certain times of the day, will have to be in a particular posture while eating or more often than not, being isolated to signify her grief for the loss of her husband (Cusack *et al.* 1999)

Trokosi

"Trokosi" has been practiced for generations in south-eastern Ghana. The practice is a tradition by which virgin girls are given to fetish priests for offenses committed by their family members as atonement to a particular deity which has been offended. These girls become the priest's slaves and property and serve the priest sexually had domestically, working on his farm until she dies (Cusack *et aL*, 1999). In 1998, the government of Ghana passed a law prohibiting trokosi and criminalizing it as a form of slavery. As a result, nearly 2,800 girls were released from their servitude. A non-governmental organization, International Needs helped the girls to return to their families and provided them with housing, food, counselling, and schooling. Survivors of trokosi also formed a human rights organization to advocate for enforcing the law against it. ((Daily Guide). The passage of the laws abolishing 'trokosi' by the government has not wiped out 'trokosi' completely, as the practice still exists in parts of the Volta and Greater Accra Regions. The unfortunate part of the issue is that those virgins are given out to shrines and become automatic spouse of the priest without their consent. (Daily Guide)

Causes of Domestic Violence

Social value

Family system theorist Kurz (1999) contends that, the structure of the family is subject to social stressors that cause family members to be violent with one another. Families accept violence as a means to resolve conflict. Kurz suggests that abusive behaviour is modeled for the individual in his or her family of origin. Thus, violence is used by 'most powerful family members to maintain their dominant position. In such a situation, the dynamics of abuse within the family and the role of family becomes the original model for violent behaviour. Research shows that in most cases, the issue of domestic violence is normally generated by men. This may be so because; women and children are regarded as either minors or people with unequal status to, and powerless before, men in the society. Kurz (1999)

Further, women are often caught in a vicious cycle for example, of economic dependence on men, fear for their children's lives as well as their own, repeated pregnancies, shame, ignorance of their own rights before the law, lack of confidence in themselves and other pressures and these make the men take undue advantage of them. (Women Aid International, 1998) For instance, the fear of harming a father or husband's career and apprehension about the attitude of the police prevent women and children from reporting crimes of domestic violence. Inability of victims to report violent acts against them in turn encourages the perpetrator in his or her act. These factors leave victims to a life of recurrent mistreatment from which they often do not have any means of escape (Women Aid International, 1998)

Power and control

Martin-Baro (1998) posited that inherent in domestic violence is the act of power. Power, according to him, is the condition that makes it possible for one actor to make his or her will or goals prevail. It is based on the resources available to each actor in a particular relationship. Although resources are not power, they are the basis of power. The more varied the resources, the greater the power one may have in social relations. For example, a father of a family may have resources for power prevailing in his own family but not over his boss at work. This lack of social power at work may lead him to become very authoritarian in his relationship with his partner at home. This means that exercise of power in relationships can be found to be closely related to aggression (Martin-Baro, 1998). National Coalition of Domestic Violence (NCDV) in Ghana also noted that the state's response to fighting violence at home had not been effective because there are no clear efforts to protect the home. To NCDV, domestic violence is a manifestation of unequal power in relationships and called for a legislative framework to help deal with the problem. A member of NCDV commented that: I cannot believe in this day and age that people still think that one person can beat or mentally abuse another and it is OK as they live together or are married. If you walked down the street and someone shouted abuse or beat you they would be arrested - why should it be any different because the offender is known to the victim? Don't forget there are often children involved in these relationships and they will take the scars into their adulthood. It needs to be dealt with and not ignored.

Gender inequality

In international discourse, domestic violence has clearly been placed in the realm of women's human right. Prior to the 1993 UN choosing Woman's Rights as its theme for Human Rights for that year, most governments regarded domestic violence largely as a private matter between individuals (United Nations General Assembly, 1995). However, domestic violence has increasingly been recognized by UN General Assembly (1995) as an obstacle to equality, and an intolerable offence to human dignity. International research has demonstrated that domestic violence is a world-wide phenomenon affecting an estimated 20 to 50% of all women. It was also asserted as a matter of fact that most of the violence against women take place within families, and the perpetrators are almost exclusively men, usually partners, ex-partners, or other men known to the woman (WHO, 1998). The Beijing Platform of Action states that: Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to a domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of women's full advancement (United Nation, 1995).

Bunch, Carrillo and Shaw (1998) cited in UNICEF, (1998), posit that gender violence is not random violence in which victims happen to be women and girls; rather, the risk factor is being females who have unequal power as men. http://www.unicef.ora/crc/crc.htm (Retrieved: 15th September, 2017). Dobash & Dobash (1978) state that due to the strict and rigid gender expectations still at work in many traditional

societies, the home is still seen as the woman's place and the man is seen as a primary breadwinner, even in cases in which both partners work outside the home. This societal prescribed division of labour and responsibility may enhance the gender inequality in the male-female relationship and pave the way for domestic violence to occur (Dobash & Dobash, 1978). Research found 38 per cent of domestic violence perpetrators were drunk, whereas another 11 per cent were under the influence of drugs during the violence incidents (Povey *et al.*, 2009). Similarly,

Lee (2007) found that drinking habits significantly impacted the type and level of abuse perpetrated by the domestic violence offenders. The Lee study also reported that almost 70 per cent of the male partners in his study were alcoholics. This quantitative study was conducted using 136 Korean immigrant women who live in Texas, USA. Another interesting finding was that the women concurred about their partner's affair with other women including polygamy (as legally practised among Muslim men) as a reason for domestic violence. It was evident that many of the present samples had reported to be abused in several forms of violence due to arguments, disputes and disapproval over their husband's extra marital affairs. This result is in agreement with preliminary findings from the Sister in Islam (SIS) research project which suggested that stress, quarrels and neglect are 'normal' occurrences within the polygamous family in Malaysia. Furthermore, the study found that 53 per cent of the first wives reported that their multi-marriage circumstances had increased the incidents of domestic violence (Boo, 2010). The main objective of the above study was to investigate the impact of polygamy on Muslim women and children in the country. The research considered participants from across all 12 states of Peninsular Malaysia. A possible explanation for the result might be related to religious factors which are interconnected with the idea of male privilege in a polygamous community (Shurtleff & Goddard, 2005).

In relation to male partner attitudes, negative personality traits such as exaggerated jealousy, bad temper and aggressive behaviour were linked to psychological and physical abuse. The results of this study did not show that conflicts with in-laws were the common cause of violence among the Malaysian married couples as was reported in the National Report on Violence and Health, Malaysia (2006). This result may be explained by the fact that no violence had been perpetrated by the family in-laws in the study. Although a number of women had been staying with their husband's family for quite some time, only their male partners were reported to be responsible for the abuse. However, the findings of the current study do not support the previous research. The qualitative study conducted by Keenan, El-Hadad and Balian (1998) found that abused women in Lebanon had described conflicts with their husband's relatives (i.e. in-laws and other family members) as one of the factors associated with domestic violence. This cultural perspective study also identified three variables of stressors which played a significant role within Middle Eastern families, namely work, emotional and financial stress. Likewise, Tse (2007) who conducted qualitative interviews with 56 participants (i.e. China, South Asia and South East Asia migrants), found that a number of issues were reported in relation to abusive in-laws, for instance absolute control over financial matters, domestic slavery and isolation from social networking by the victims. On the other hand, findings from the current study support the view that a family's economy instability is also major risk factor contributing to abusive relationships in which a poor financial situation may create interpersonal conflict within the couple themselves. This present finding seems to be consistent with previous work elsewhere by, White and Postl (2010), Morgan and Chadwick (2009) as well as Bell and Kober (2008).

The impact of this problem has ranged from the physical to the psychological and emotional dimensions of someone's life. From the study, it was found that most women admitted that they have faced a great many stressful experiences, suffered depression and felt greatly traumatized by living in these kinds of relationships. Additionally, the women also reported suffering long-term effects on their physical health due to domestic. Previous studies suggest that sexual violence and non-sexual abuse such as financial deprivation, threats, physical force, stalking and intimidation precipitate comparable damage to the victims (Povey *et al.*, 2009; Kershaw *et al.*, 2008; Walby & Allen, 2004). On the same subject, Povey *et al.* (2009) reported that more than a quarter of women victims (27%) had experienced two types of intimate violence (any two combinations of non-sexual family abuse, non-sexual partner abuse or sexual assault). According to the 2007/2008 British Crime Survey [BCS], the classification in regards to types of violence is based on the relationship between the victim and the offender (Kershaw *et al.,* 2008). The result of the present study also indicates that a majority of the violence incidents reported by the respondents were subject to weaponry. There were several household items as well as sport equipment that had been used in those

incidents including a knife, hockey stick, and chair and table fan. Amongst all, many cases in fact involved motorcycle helmets. It seems possible that this result is due to high rates of motorcycle use in Malaysia. As an affordable and convenient mode of transport motorcycles are widely used among low-and middle-income earners. Therefore, the possibility of the perpetrator using a motorcycle helmet as a domestic violence weapon in many abuse cases cannot be ruled out. However, more research on this topic needs to be undertaken before the association between motorcycle helmet as an opportunistic weapon and the occurrence of domestic violence incidents is more clearly understood.

The findings from the present study showed that 16 out of 25 women reported experiencing sexual violence in the relationships. Hence, this result revealed that sexual abuse was in reality experienced by the majority of abused women in Malaysia. The prevalence of sexual violence found in the present study is rather interesting. Relatively few women cautiously discussed their sexual relationships and mostly the topic was down to marital rape. Nonetheless, not much information was gathered around this issue because these women appeared to be uncomfortable for a lengthy talk regarding this matter. One possible explanation may relate to the shortcoming in the Domestic Violence Act 521 (1994) where marital rape is not recognized as a crime by Malaysian Law. Therefore, no legal provisions for such an offence are allocated, leaving the women in a helpless situation. On top of that, the misuse of a key tenet in Islamic *Sharia* (i.e. Islam forbids wives to refuse sex) also has worsened the problem. Examples of the Qur'an verses which mention sexual relations in marriage are presented as the following:

"If a husband calls his wife to his bed (i.e. to have sexual relations) and she refuses and causes him to sleep in anger, the angels will curse her till morning". (Muslim)
"When a man calls his wife to satisfy his desire, she must go to him even if she
is occupied at the oven". (Ibn Ma'jah)
"...Your wives are your garments, and you are their garments." (Qur'an 2:187)
"Your wives are as a tilth unto you; so approach your tilth when or how you
will; but do some good act for your souls beforehand; and fear God. And know that you are to meet Him (in the Hereafter), and give (these) good tidings to those who believe. (Qur'an 2:223)

When referring to the above statements, although the *Qu'ran* has given the right for Muslim men to engage in sexual intercourse with their wives whenever they please, mutual agreement as well as understanding must be established between the men and their female partners (as illustrated in the *Qur'an* verses 2:187 and 2:223). Conversely, in many circumstances, Muslim women have been manipulated with such verses (as narrated in the *hadith* by Muslims and Ibn Ma'jah) to make them believe that sexual relations is a compulsory duty for a wife and women are forced to accept the unwanted or coercive sexual acts without protest. The present finding seems to be consistent with other research which found the prevalence of sexual violence in Australia was recorded as one to five women (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2006) meanwhile in the UK statistics, there were over a million incidents of sexual assault against women that had been reported through self-completion module of the 2001 British Crime Survey [BCS] (Walby & Allen, 2004).

Effects of domestic violence
There are several effects that are associated with domestic violence. Health issue which includes anything from minor injuries to chronic problems is deemed major effects of abuse.

Violence breed violence
One may think that the surest way to correct is to punish, but Fieldman (1996), asserts that, physical punishment may convey to the recipient the idea that physical aggression is permissible and perhaps even desirable, and that a father who yells at his son for misbehaving teaches his son that aggression is an appropriate adult response. At the end of the day, the child will copy his father's behaviour by acting aggressively toward others. Hurley and Jaffe (1990) posit that, victims of domestic violence or child abuse suffer irreparable psychological damage as a result. Negative feelings, such as withdrawal, depression, abnormal fears and regression are some related experiences with domestic violence.

Victims in educational institution are faced with learning problems, decline in school performance, truancy, bullying and tendency to become a victim. Victims also have difficulty in building and maintaining relationships. Hurley and Jaffe's contention finds expression in Melanie's experience, stated in' "Awake'

September 8, 2001 that: I cry and hurt inside a lot. When I'm not hurting, I just feel dead. I don't enjoy anything. I don't like being with my friends anymore. I sleep a lot. Most days I can't get up to go to school and my grades have gone way down (Melanie, Awake, 2001).Witnessing violence in the home can be as traumatic for children. Younger children are more likely to suffer post-traumatic stress disorders, particularly when the violence they witness is frequent and is perpetrated in close proximity to them. Hurley and jaffe (1990). They experience significant psychological and behavioural problems that interfere with their ability to function in school, at home and with peers. Children who grow up in violent homes are more likely to be aggressive with peers, and as adults are more likely to become perpetrators or victims. Hurley and Jaffe (1990) Beyond the immediate injury, broken limbs, scars, lacerations, cuts, bruises, internal organ damage and brain damage result out of domestic violent. Violence often leads to serious long-term health problems, including chronic pain, physical disability and suicide attempts as well as unwanted pregnancies and 'Sexually Infectious Diseases' (WHO, 2005).

The numerous behavioural patterns and health problems developed and experienced as effects of domestic violence on victims cannot be overestimated; life after the experience is not the same almost every aspect of the victim's life is affected. According to Krug (1999), injury is the leading cause of death around the world. The current study showed that the cumulative effect of domestic abuse can be manifested in short term as well as long term damage. This study produced results which corroborate the findings of a great deal of the previous studies in this field. Research by Richardson and her research teams (2002) found that based on responses from 1040 women in London, twenty-one per cent of the women had suffered injuries, including bruises or more serious harm from intimate partner violence. Another study has found that victims of interpersonal violence usually suffered poor general health and specific health problems due to repeated victimization. This included gynecologic symptoms such as chronic pelvic pain, premenstrual disturbance and other symptoms such as headaches (Golding, 1996).
There are similarities between poor physical health outcomes expressed by the respondents in this study and those described by Campbell *et al.,* (2002) as well as Oker, Sanderson, Fadden and Pirisi (2000). Both studies had compared health impacts between non-abused women and abused women who experienced physical and sexual abuse within their intimate relationships. Campbell *et al.,* (2002) found that the impacts of violence on women's health manifested in three areas, namely chronic stress-related problems (i.e. appetite loss, gastrointestinal disorders), central nervous system problems (i.e. back pain, headaches) as well as gynecological problems (i.e. pelvic pain, vaginal bleeding). According to Krug (1999), injury is the leading cause of death around the world. The current study showed that the cumulative effect of domestic abuse can be manifested in short term as well as long term damage. This study produced results which corroborate the findings of a great deal of the previous studies in this field. Research by Richardson and her research teams (2002) found that based on responses from 1040 women in London, twenty-one per cent of the women had suffered injuries, including bruises or more serious harm from intimate partner violence. Another study has found that victims of interpersonal violence usually suffered poor general health and specific health problems due to repeated victimization. This included gynecologic symptoms such as chronic pelvic pain, premenstrual disturbance and other symptoms such as headaches (Golding, 1996). There are similarities between poor physical health outcomes expressed by the respondents in this study and those described by Campbell *et al.,* (2002) as well as Oker, Sanderson, Fadden and Pirisi (2000). Both studies had compared health impacts between non-abused women and abused women who experienced physical and sexual abuse within their intimate relationships. Campbell *et al.,* (2002) found that the impacts of violence on women's health manifested in three areas, namely chronic stress-related problems (i.e. appetite loss, gastrointestinal disorders), central nervous system problems (i.e. back pain, headaches) as well as gynecological problems (i.e. pelvic pain, vaginal bleeding). Likewise, an exploratory study by Coker *et al.,* (2000) found that long term abusive relationships may have increased the risk of developing cervical neoplastic (cervical epithelium abnormalities) among abused women.

Depression
Some victims of domestic violence suffer psychological effects, such as depression, as a result of being abused. This common effect of domestic violence can cause serious emotional problems. According to the United States National Institute of Mental Health (USNIMH) as many as seven percent of severely depressed people take their life. Depression is characterized by a combination of symptoms that interfere

with a person's ability to work, sleep, study, eat, and enjoy once-pleasurable activities. Major depression is disabling and* prevents a person from functioning normally. An episode of major depression may occur only once in a person's lifetime, but more often, it recurs throughout a person's life (Awake, 2001).

Low self-esteem

Low self-esteem is also associated with the experience of domestic violence. According to Dwamena-Aboagye & Fiamanya (2005) the end result of repeated abuse and victimization is a battered self-esteem. To them, the more severe the abuse is and the longer it has gone on, the poorer self-image the victim will have. His or her shame and embarrassment over the beatings keep him or her at arm's length from others.

Internalized oppression

Internalized oppression is another form of effect of domestic violence. Dwamena-Aboagye & Fiamanya, explain it as, when anyone believes he or she is inferior and deserves to be treated badly, it goes to confirm the suspicion that 'something is wrong with him or her. The self-blame position makes it easier for the bad treatment to continue. Internalized blame is the belief of self-blame, because the victim thinks he might have provoked the violence. This feeling as a result encourages the perpetrators' frequent degradation, humiliation and criticism of victims for the brutality (Dwamena-Aboagye & Fiamanya, 2005).

Isolation

Isolation comes about for the sake of the safety of loved ones. Some are afraid to leave their homes. For example, children and mothers will not like to mingle with others for the fear that they might have said something that may expose the perpetrator (father or husband). Hence victims of violence may find it difficult to sustain trust in relationships over the long term. Development of isolation brings about, nervous breakdowns, suicidal attempts or thoughts, nightmares, sleep disorders, substance abuse, development of sexual phobias and others (Dwamena-Aboagye & Fiamanya, 2005).

What counselling is

Oladele (2000) sees counselling as a process in which the counsellor assists the client to make interpretations of facts relating to a choice, plan or adjustment. This assistance may be educational, vocational, social, personal, emotional or moral. George and Christiani (1995) posited that several elements are common to the many definitions of counselling. One is the notion that counselling is aimed at helping people to make choices and act on them. Another element is the notion of learning and unlearning. Yet another element is that of personality development. Burks and Stefflre (1979), postulate that, counselling is a professional relationship between a trained Counsellor and a client. This relationship is usually person-to-person, although it may sometimes involve more than two people. It is designed to help clients to understand and clarify their self-determined goals through meaningful, well-informed choices and also through resolution of challenges of an emotional or interpersonal nature. Counselling then can be referred to as a number of procedures used in assisting an individual or a group of people in overcoming challenges which arise in various aspects of life. Counselling helps the individual to be more effective, satisfied and more useful to him or herself and the society in which he or she lives.

Behavioural counselling

Behavioural counselling is credited with plethora of techniques which include, cognitive restructuring, covert sensitization, modeling, flooding, extinction, thought stopping, self-recording, self-regulation, contracting, assertiveness training and reward and punishment (Coon, 1997). These techniques are versatile and have common procedures that are used in both formal and informal settings, and are at the same time applicable to many cultural settings. For example, modeling and learning by observation, are dictates of Ghanaian culture. Ghanaian culture can be linked to Bandura's assumptions of social-cognitive approach which is behavioural in nature. Bandura's assumption is based on the belief that, behaviour occurs as a result of a complex interplay between inner processes and environmental influences (Bandura, 1971, cited in Coon, 1997). According to Bandura, we typically represent external events symbolically and later use both verbal representation and imaginary representation to guide our behaviour. In the sense used by Bandura, we can solve problems symbolically without having to resort to actual overt trial-and-error

behaviour; we have to foresee the probable consequences of our behaviour and modify our actions accordingly (Bandura, 1977).

Again, behavioural procedures are geared towards the uniqueness of each client. The therapy is based on the motivator or notion that enhances behavioural or attitudinal, change. As part of the therapeutic process, there is collaboration between the client and the Counsellor and the quantity of materials learnt can be measured by the responses of the clients. These processes create the opportunity for the domestic violence client to make progress as the therapeutic process evolve (Baron, 1998).

The Role of Counselling in Controlling Domestic Violence

Counselling as a helping relation is rich with characteristics that are geared towards ameliorating human predicament. Counselling creates the forum to communicate deeply. In counselling a platform of understanding is availed to the counselee to understand his or her thought and feeling through the cautious use of reflective phrases by the Counsellor. The objective of counselling is to create conditions for expression and communication of views void of generally viewing counselee's case from judgmental point of view (Akinade *et al* 2005). The communication characteristic of counselling enables a domestic violence client to freely express his or her views about his or her actions under a counselling condition. The domestic violence client expresses his or her feelings to the Counsellor which the Counsellor reflectively conveys with sincerity and consistency back to the client as an assurance of acceptance and respect. This process gingers the client to cooperate during the session.

Another essential role of counselling is that, the process allows techniques to be practiced by counselee in assisting him or her to solve his or her own problem. Techniques used during the process fore-arm the counselee in the absence of the Counsellor to take the final responsibility for solving his own problems. According to Tyler (1965), cited in Akinade *et al* (2005), the central purpose of counselling is to facilitate wise choices and decisions; its central purpose is to promote adjustment or mental health. The facilitating role of counselling in the control of domestic violence cannot be overestimated. Dustin and George (1977), cited in Coon, (1997) suggest that; the Counsellor must establish specific counselling goals. The specific counselling goals designed for domestic violence counselee enable both the counselee and the Counsellor to understand precisely the specific change that is desired. Specific behavioural goals have an additional value which helps, the counselee to be able to see any change that occurs.

Counselling helps individuals to obtain information to clarify and sort out personal characteristics and emotional concerns that may interfere with or be related to the decisions involved (Kankam and Onivehu, 2000). Domestic violence counselees are helped to acquire an understanding through counselling not only of their abilities, interests, and opportunities but also of the emotions and attitudes that can influence their choice and decisions for a change in behaviour. As a helping relation, counselling seeks to promote the growth and development of clients by giving them the opportunity to learn ways to use their abilities and interests to the maximum. The domestic violence counselee can be viewed in this sense as one improving his or her personal effectiveness. Also, counselling would maximize the domestic violence counselee's effectiveness by giving him or her control over his or her environment and the responses within, which are evoked by the environment.

The principles underlying the practice of counselling recognizes the right and capability of an individual to make decisions and plans; it also recognizes the worth and dignity of an individual and therefore respects his or her right to choose his or her lifestyle and self-determination. The practice as well recognizes the uniqueness of an individual and the individual's right to that uniqueness (Akinade *et al, 2005).* The issue of domestic violence is a sensitive one which needs to be handled in a non- threatening, relaxed and friendly atmosphere. The Counsellor with his or her knowledge of the underlying principles of counselling creates an atmosphere of warmth, confidentiality and acceptance for greater experience of intimacy between him or her (Counsellor) and the domestic violent client for better gains. The more intimate and personal relationship between the counselee and the Counsellor is, the more it gives time and space to the counselee to explore his or her feelings and to take responsibility by deciding on what to do next.

Theoretical framework

The study of human nature has scientific bases. In general terms, science is an enterprise concerned with the description, explanation, "prediction and control of events. The outcome of all the efforts by countless investigations, are the accumulation of systematized knowledge based on observation of phenomena or events. The phenomenon when eventually grounded with proof becomes theory. Thus a theory is a conceptual system constructed by an investigator to help make sense out of existing information and also to aid in prediction of as yet unobserved relationships between events (Rykman, l997). Hochbaum (1992) cited in (Rykmanl997) contends that any effective work or programme must be grounded in a theory. Hochbaum further claims that there is a major reason why theory is important in investigation. One of the major reasons is that theory explains human behaviour and suggests ways to achieve behavioural change. He also says that theory is applicable across a wide variety of populations and settings and, if carefully selected and applied, can help predict what consequences various programmes and interventions are likely to have, even in situations never before encountered (Rykman, 1997).

Theories are often specific to certain target population of practice. For instance some theories focus on individual change and some on group. By clarifying the study goals of this study, social cognitive theory is relevant to the matters raised in the statement of the problem, the purpose and the significance of the study. Social cognitive theory is relevant to solving attitudinal challenges. The theory deals with cognitive, emotional aspects and aspects of behaviour for understanding behavioural change. The concepts of social cognitive theory provide ways for new behavioural research; and explain how people acquire and maintain certain behavioural patterns; while also providing the basis for intervention strategies (Bandura, 1997). Evaluating behavioural change depends on such factors as environment, people and behaviour. Social cognitive theory provides a framework for designing, implementing and evaluating programmes for effective change in behaviour.

Environment refers to the factors that can affect a person's behaviour. There are social and physical environments. Social environment include family members, friends and colleagues Physical environment is the size of a room, the ambient temperature or the availability of certain foods. The interaction between the person and the environment involves human beliefs and cognitive competencies that are developed and modified by social influences and structures within the environment which the person lives (Parraga, 1990). Environment and situation provide the framework for understanding behaviour. According to Jones (1989) the fact that behaviour varies from situation to situation, may not necessarily mean that behaviour is controlled by situations but rather that the person is construing the situations differently and thus the same set of stimuli may provoke different responses from different people or from the same person at different times. The situation refers to the cognitive or mental representations of the environment that may affect a person's behaviour. The situation is a person's perception of the time, physical features and activity (Glanz, Rimer & Lewis, 2002). Environment, people and behaviour are constantly influencing each other. Behaviour is not simply the result of the environment and the person, just as the environment is not simply the result of the person and behaviour; the environment provides models for behaviour (Glanz et al, 2002).

Again Glanz et al, (2002) contend that the concept of social cognitive theory guides the individual to effect change in behaviour. The environment provides the factors physically external to the person and provides opportunities and social support for learning. Situation provides the perception of the environment by the person and helps to correct misperceptions and promote healthful learning. Behavioural capability is the knowledge and skill to perform a given behaviour and this promotes mastery learning through skills training. Expectations are anticipatory outcomes of behaviour which is positive outcomes of healthful behaviour. Expectancies are the values that the person places on a given outcome and incentives which present outcomes of change that have functional meaning. Self-control creates the opportunity for the person to adopt a personal regulation of goal-directed behaviour or performance which provides opportunities for self-monitoring, goal setting, problem solving, and self-reward. Observational learning is behavioural acquisition that occurs by the person watching the actions and outcomes of others' behaviour. Reinforcements are responses to a person's behaviour that increase or decrease the likelihood of reoccurrence and promote self-initiated rewards and incentives. Self-efficacy is the person's confidence in performing a particular behaviour.(Glanz et al.2002).

Emotional coping responses are strategies or tactics that are used by a person to deal with emotional stimuli and this provides training in problem solving and stress management. Reciprocal determinism is the dynamic interaction of the person and the behaviour as well as the environment in which the behaviour is performed. In doing so the person has to consider multiple avenues to behavioural change, including environmental, skill, and personal changes.

The practice of the above concept will support a domestic violent victim and perpetrator alike to overcome their predicament. The approach to behavioural change has to be in small steps to ensure success. The social cognitive theory is helpful for understanding and predicting both individual and group behaviour and identifying methods in which behaviour can be effectively modified or changed.

Research Design

The study was basically a fact-finding exercise and the design used was a descriptive survey. According to Saranrakos (1998), descriptive surveys are versatile and practical, especially in administration. Descriptive survey offers the researcher accurate descriptions of what people in some target population do and think. Best and Kahn (1998) contend that descriptive survey is the predominant research method used in the behavioural sciences. It lends itself to the use of questionnaires and interview schedules for the study to seek information from a wide section of respondents to make generalization. Descriptive survey was consider appropriate for the study because it will allow the use of questions and interview schedule which were appropriate for data collection(Best and Kahn, 1998).Qualitative paradigms was chosen for the study. Qualitative research looks out for illumination. However information, provide in qualitative data may be too general for direct application to specific situations. The researcher chose qualitative paradigm as part of the process in order to cater for the generalization aspect of the study result.

Baumgartner, Strong and Hensley (2002), states that most qualitative researchers agree that research designs which fall under qualitative approach relied heavily upon extensive observation and in-depth interviews that results in non-numerical data for analysis. In quantitative research the data collection consists of using general emerging questions to permit the participants responses and to gather word or image data. Robson, (1993) explains that, qualitative and quantitative paradigms are complementary to each other and the distinction is primarily technical. Hence the researcher's decision to adopt the mixed method approach does not suggest that it is the only suitable or appropriate design for the study. It is rather a desirable approach to achieve the objective of the study.

Population

The study area was East Mamprusi Traditional area of the Northern region of Ghana and all males and females there constituted the population. The total population of the area was 121009 according to 2010 population census. The accessible population comprised all men and women in the East Mamprusi Traditional Area. The rational for the choice of these categories of respondents was that, men and women constitute the married population and will be in better position to experience domestic violence. Male and female in Nalerigu Town -ship will be the target population to share their experience about domestic violence.

Sample and sampling procedure

A sample is a subset containing the characteristics of a larger population sample is used in statistical testing when population size are too large for the test to include all possible members or observation. A sample should represent the whole population and not reflect bias towards a specific attribute. www.investopedia.com/…./sa. A sample is a finite part about the whole, when dealing with people it can be defined as a set of respondents (people) selected from a large population for the purpose of research (Fridah,2002). Sampling procedure is a process or technique of choosing a sub-group from a population to participate in the study; it is the process of selecting a number of individuals selected represent the large group from which they were selected (Ogula,2005). Since the researcher will use the mixed research method, for the qualitative study, the selection of respondent for the study was governed by non- probability sampling procedure. Five married men and five married women with domestic violence records will be selected through snowballing method of sampling. It is a networking technique used when the population of

interest is very difficult to get hold of, but it is likely that one member of the population of interest will know other members of the population, who can be introduced to the researcher.

Cohen, Manion & Marrison (2000) notes that; snowball sampling, a respondent that fits into the characteristics required of respondents in this case one who had engaged in domestic violence before, was identified. The respondent asked to name one person who is also known to have been involved in domestic violence at one time or another. The second male respondent mentioned the third man and then third gave the name of the fourth to the fifth. The same was done to identify the five women. All men and women with population of 192 were involved in the study. Twenty Five men and women were randomly selected to represent the study. The researcher sampled 25 married men and women because of the sensitive nature of the topic which can make people reluctant to participate in the study.

Out of a total population of 25 in the study, 12 were male whiles 13 were female. Systematic sampling was chosen to select the married men and women in order to obtain equal number of male and female and a more detailed, accurate and unbiased information from the married people. The method ensured that each individual will be chosen entirely by chance and each member of the population will have an equal chance of being included in the sample. Avoke (2005) states that, in simple random sampling, each member of the population will have same opportunity of being selected and this would usually be done through random selection while in the systematic sampling the sample size will be selected in a systematic manner rather than randomly. The focus group members were selected randomly by the researcher and systematically. The researcher wrote all names of schools in the Nalerigu township on individual cards. All the cards were mixed up and placed in a bowl and picked one at a time after which another reshuffle and another picked was done. This procedure was repeated until 10 schools were picked. In each of the selection schools the staff list (including Mentees) were collected in the numerical strength of both sexes were taken into consideration before the selection. Systematic sampling, like random sampling, requires a list of all of the members of the population. To take a systematic sample, you list all of the names of people in the population, and then decide upon a size of sample you would like. The researcher systematically selected the third respondent in every three counts of male and female population in each school. This was done in order to have three male and three female from every school in the sample size.

Research Instruments
The instrument used for the study was interview schedule. Interview guide was developed for the focus group discussion for men and women. The interview questions contained in the guide were shaped based on the specified themes of the literature review. Specifically, open –ended question approach to be interviewed.

Validity and Reliability
Validity is an important part of research and according to Cohen, Manion and Marrion (2003),it is based on the view that a particular instrument measures what it purports to measure. Cohen et al also comment that with the increasing adoption of qualitative studies, however, the focus of measuring validity in no longer in terms of figures since qualitative data emphasize trustworthiness, honesty and scope of the data. The content validity of the instruments was established by giving out the prepared questionnaires and interview guide to the supervisor of the researcher and the researchers' course mates for their cements and suggestions. Items that seemed to be ambiguous will be modified. Cohen et al.(2003), reliability means scores from instruments are stable and consistent. The scores should nearly be the same when the researcher administer the instrument a multiple times and at different times. This study's reliability will be ensured by pilot testing the questionnaires and the interview guide. To establish the reliability coefficient, Crobach alpha was calculated with the help of SPSS version 16.0 to reach the Cronbach alpha of o.78.

Pilot study
The term pilot study is used in two different ways in social science research-: It can refer to so-called feasibility studies which are small scale version, or trial run, done in preparation for the major study (Polit, Beck, & Hungler, 2001). Gall, Bory, & Gall, (1996), posit that a pilot study involves small-scale testing of the procedure that is planned for the main study. Pilot study is recommended for many quantitative and qualitative research studies and two or more participants may be sufficient. Pilot study of the questionnaire for teachers was pilot-tested, with seven teachers at Nalerigu D/A primary B. Two men and two women

were used for the pilot study for the focus group discussion interview as that group of people was outside the sample area but have similar characteristics with the sampled group. The pilot study enabled the researcher to get rid of any ambiguities that were embedded in the instrument beforehand and enhanced the reliability of the results. The pilot study also offered the researcher the opportunity to practice social interactive skills required in the conduct of a field work in a desirable manner, thus ensuring credibility.

Data collection procedure

The data collection exercise was done in three phases and was spread between August and September, 2017. A letter of introduction was obtained from the Head of the Department of Psychology and Education, of the University of Education, Winneba; and shown to sampled teachers before embarking on the data collection exercise. The letter also ensured smooth and healthy interaction with the respondents. A research assistant who could speak Mamprulli and English was engaged to help record and take notes in the focus group discussion with the sampled groups. Focus group discussions on men and women was considered as group interviews, often utilizing a semi- structured approach to questioning and relying on the responses participants themselves give to move the interview or the conversation along. This opens up pathways to new topics during the discussion, where the researcher is free to probe and explore some of the responses made by the participants (Morgan, 1998).

In this study focus group discussion was used where individuals (men and women) were brought together to discuss common or similar experiences in order to better understand what is involved in domestic violence and find solution to the menace. For example, women and men who had experienced domestic violence before were brought together to discuss on their experiences or situations that led to the violent episodes, in order to identify, some of the precursors to domestic violence. The focus group, discussion was organized in two heterogeneous groups made up of five males and five females. In the thirds week of august 2017, the researcher visited the location and, through the assistance of the "Assemblyman" (a political opinion leader of the community), located one - married woman and one married man who had been involved in domestic violence. The researcher then had initial interaction with the two people by introducing herself, what she does for living and why she was undertaking the study. The interaction was done separately with each respondent and that resulted in the establishment of rapport between them and the researcher.

The last week saw the organization and meeting with the female and male groups separately. Introduction of members was revisited; discussion of themes on domestic violence and setting of ground rules took place. The participants were also assured of confidentiality and anonymity with the understanding that the exercise was for academic purpose only, and that no other person would gain access to any information given in the interview. The last week was also used for the actual interview. Focus group members were encouraged to express their views and share experiences as objectively as possible on any of the interview item as they applied to them. As stated earlier, the semi-structured interview approach with open-ended items centred around five themes were explored. In this, each question was asked the whole group (the five-members of the group) in same sequence with spontaneous responses from members. The discussions were facilitated by the researcher and the help of an assistant. The series of open-ended items" motivated participants to share ideas, experiences, and differences in opinions on domestic violence. The discussions were tape-recorded and notes also were taken by the research assistant. Later the researcher transcribed what were recorded. The teachers were also interviewed according to their schools, in the last and first weeks of august and September. The discussions were recorded tape recorded and notes were taken and were transcribed what were recorded later.

Data analysis

The qualitative data responses from the interview (focus group discussion) were transcribed. The researcher listened to recordings of the focus group discussions and take notes of recurring themes which addressed the research questions. Some of these responses were presented in the data presentation verbatim. Significant presentations in the data were singled out and commented on. The results from the interviews were organized under the research questions which were put together to discuss the findings.

Summary of findings

The results from the study show that: Sixty percent of the respondents attested to the prevalence of domestic violence in the area. The respondents were aware of the various activities that constituted domestic violence. The results also showed that, present in domestic violence was the exhibition of power and control over the victim; this was confirmed by 94% of the focus group accepting parents caning their wards as a means of correcting them as well as 95% of the focus group again accepting teachers caning their pupils for wrong doing. However, 6% of the teachers did not accept partners slapping each other. The focus group interview indicated that 4% of the focus group do not experience physical violence with their partners. Evident in these results is that, most of the focus group partners had low education and were academically and economically not empowered like their partners. Their status probably enhanced mutual understanding amongst them whenever there was conflict between the two.

It was evident that cultural violence was dominant among partners in East Mamprusi Traditional area. The cultural dictates of extended family system structure which made it possible for members of partners' family to be welcomed in the matrimonial assisted in resolving conflict among partners. Sometimes an unhealthy suggestion in connection with taking a second wife on the part of the men made by the man's family always created tension among partners. Though the findings indicated that, only majority of focus group members experienced psychological and economic violence almost all the focus group members rated extramarital affair and refusal to sexual demand as the major causes of domestic violence among partners. The focus group also agreed that, another major cause of domestic violence was mismanagement of partners' financial resources. The focus group respondents were aware of the various sources from which they could get help if domestic violence occurred. The help might come from elders, the law enforcement agencies, counselling centres and interpersonal redress. Although, only 26% of focus group called for counselling when they experienced domestic violence, the findings revealed that 96% of focus group chose counselling as a medium to control domestic violence issues effectively.

Conclusions

After several efforts by Governmental and Non-Governmental agencies to tackle the scourge of domestic violence, targeting its control and vehemently working towards eliminating it completely, the social canker is commonly encountered on daily basis in our society.

The findings of this study show that domestic violence is a complex process influenced by multiple factors. The severity and frequency of violence is difficult to measure as violence can take many forms and be of varying intensities. However, it is clear that wield of power and control underlay many of the factors that lead to domestic violence.

The results show that, the individual who wields power has control over the affairs of the home. Inherent in the 'power and control' is the ability to coerce. The coercion can be direct or indirect and it also constitutes violence. The results of the study also show that, men use economic violence to have control over their wives. With the focus group responses, some members indicated that men refuse their households 'home keeping' money due to conflict between them. Furthermore, most of the abuses experienced by respondents indicated that, the abuser has upper hand in decision making over the victim. For example in the cases of teachers and pupils, parents and children, elders and children and husbands and wives; the former in each case controls the latter. This situation causes the absent of mutual understanding in resolving conflicts in the home, which further graduate into domestic violence.

According to the results, people suffer various forms of domestic violence. In the light of the submissions of the respondents, the population under study was well informed about the causes of domestic violence. Nevertheless these causes are seen as normal way of living. Both men and women hold our traditional values in (one which is 'the man is right') high esteem, a consequence of which men use to subject their household to violent control measures. These values are accepted by the latter with the idea of peaceful conformity to socially prescribed roles which they feel help them to fulfill these roles better. Though responses to the interview questions on causes of violence seemed like respondent experience of domestic violence was low, most of the focus group discussion responses show that domestic violence is experienced on daily basis but has been accepted as normal in our culture.

Again it was revealed that, the menace has devastating effect on the populace. Responses show that economic activities suffer due to violence in the home. Children suffer irreparable experiences which hamper their academic progress and further make them aggressive in some cases. Marriages are broken because of domestic violence making children experience single parental care and the unfortunate ones will end up being wayward. People become physically deformed as a result of domestic violence. These deformations can render some of them emotionally imbalanced and economically unproductive the rest of their lives. It was captured in the studies that, majority of the respondents are aware of alternative ways in combating the menace. The main areas they explored to control domestic violence was advice. But according to the findings these means of solving the problem do not yield satisfactory results. The focus group respondents accounted that, men are favoured when it comes to family advice. The woman seems to be always at fault when it comes to conflicts between husbands and wives. Counselling though not utilized by majority of the respondents, has been indicated as the fruitful way of combating domestic violence.

Counselling is from cradle to grave affair. It is mostly self-motivated. For every individual, there are constant dynamics of life which pose a lot of challenges to him or her. The principles of counselling recognizes the dignity, worth and uniqueness of the individual. The concept is accredited with variety of techniques which makes the process flexible and creates the opportunity for every individual to gain from. In counselling needs are addressed with the right technique to enable the client make maximum gains. The results of the findings indicated almost 25 opted for counselling to combat domestic violence.

The assertion of the study, based on its findings is that, the phenomenon understudy is widespread in East Mamprusi Traditional area. The evidence prove that domestic violence is prevalent, has negative effects on the populace, cultural believes do encourage the practice, and finally counselling method will yield best results in addressing the issues of domestic violence.

Recommendations

In spite of its widespread occurrences, domestic violence is still deemed a private issue and accepted norm for many people. Raising awareness of the problem among the general public is critical. The greatest challenge is that abuse remains hidden. In many cases few of the focus group(teachers and mentees) for this study do not report violence against them. Despite the health consequences, very few respondents reported seeking help from formal services like health and police, or from individuals in positions of authority, preferring instead to solve the problem themselves.

1. An effective approach should be adopted to expose the evil in domestic violence to the people. Policy makers should put in place programmes targeted at individuals to imbibe in them the culture of frowning on domestic violence without compromise. Active campaigns through the mass media, awareness drives through community based activities such as meetings, target group discussions and distributions of leaflets and brochures detailing all about the menace and the drive to combat it should be intensified.
2. It is clear from the results that the populace combines discipline and abuse as one method for correcting wrong doing. Hence, they find it difficult to access the law or any measure to clamp down on the menace. A programme of mass awareness creation on the domestic violence act has to be embarked upon at the community bases. The District and Municipal Assemblies should organize awareness raising campaigns on the 'Human Rights' issues of every citizen at community and family" bases. The campaign should clearly define abuse and discipline and stress on devastating effects of domestic violence on the populace.
3. The findings also show how some aspects of our culture encourage domestic violence. Workshops and seminars should be organized for the custodians of our culture at the community level to enlighten them on the best parts of our culture and bring to the fore those that have devastating effects on our dignity and personal worth; hence to embrace the idea of upholding the good ones and frown upon the bad ones.
4. Although the populace is aware of the agencies and organizations which help to combat activities of domestic violence, just a few of the respondents seem to find.it expedient to access these facilities to combat the menace. Hence domestic violence is on the ascendancy. As the results of the study have shown, almost all respondents deemed counselling as the perfect method to combat the menace. Unfortunately, professional counselling services are not currently available in our communities. The

counselling services that are available are only that of DOVSSU which is sparsely distributed in the country.

5. Government should expand counselling facilities to meet the demand .of the people. It should be made compulsory for every electoral area; thus the jurisdiction of every Assemblyman and Assemblywoman to have a well-resourced Counselling Centre run by professional Counsellors.

6. DOVVSU needs an active marketing programme in order to make their "counselling activities widely known and accessible to the vulnerable. Government to initiate conflict resolution training for family units and opinion leaders as well as establishment of special programmes to train more Counsellors to make the profession popular and also make its accessibility easy for all. Families should be encouraged to engage in family counselling with professional Counsellors whereby the former can be aware of the warning signs and prevent it from developing into domestic violence.

7. People are not born, as abusers. Abuse is a learned behaviour. There is reason to hope that abusers can learn acceptable ways of dealing with conflict within relationships. Unfortunately, most standard interventions for behaviour modification do not work well with domestic violence perpetrators. Individual counselling and anger management' must be frequently visited and be adopted by individuals to overcome violent tendencies.

8. Batterers' intervention programmes must be designed to focus on behavioural change and the safety of victims. Success requires a strong motivation to change. The programme should encourage families to engage in hus coexisting discussions outlining their strength and weaknesses for a better management of the menace.

9. There is the optimism that combating the menace will be welcome news to the populace. However, the populace needs more education on the indicators, such as the warning signs which include extreme jealousy, possessiveness, bad temper, unpredictability and verbal abusiveness.

Suggestions for Further research

The researcher would visit East Mamprusi District Chief Executive to consider sponsoring a project for the topic **"The need for counselling centre in every community"** and also a project on **"Awareness of activities that connote child abuse".** Perhaps if society raises children in peaceful environment, the children will grow to be peaceful.

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