OSLOMET

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Domestic Violence: A study on the physical abuse of women and children in Teshie, Ghana.

Dedication

To all women and children across the world who are suffering from domestic violence and wish for voices to be heard.

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Women and children are mostly at the receiving end of abuse in homes and societies. Abuse against women and children has been documented for many decades and is very common in many countries, especially the developing countries. This study investigates the understanding and experiences of people in the Teshie district of Ghana on physical abuse of men and women. This study also seeks to know the motives and reasons of people on the physical abuse of women and children.

Using purposive sampling technique, the study recruited 20 informants; 10 men and 10 women. The informants were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. The data was analyzed using the thematic approach where data from interviews were transcribed into plain text and grouped into themes.

Results from the study indicates that all informants have experienced physical abuse when they were children. The majority of my female informants also reported that they have experienced physical abuse from their partners and the majority of male informants also reported that they have at times abused their wives, at least once in their marriage at the time of the interviews. All informants reported that they see the physical abuse of children as a normal and justifiable act that is a part of society. Some informants on the other hand also agreed that physical abuse of women is an act that should not be encouraged by society. However, other informants gave some motives and reasons for physical abuse of women under which they believe the abuse can be justified and understood.

One recommendation suggested in the study is that, the government should create more awareness through public education to make people understand the various physical and health effects that physical abuse has on its victims.

Key terms: domestic violence, physical abuse, women, children, Teshie, Greater Accra region, Ghana, impacts, culture, tradition, UN, social learning theory, motives, reasons, understanding.

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List of abbreviations

DCI	Defense for Children
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
KAIPC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Centre
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PTSD	Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
SLT	Social Learning Theory
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNR	United Nations Report
WHO	World Health Organization
WAJU	Women and Juvenile Unit of the Ghana Police Service

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

Domestic violence has been a problem that has plagued the world, especially the developing world, and has been in existence since the start of time. It has led to countless loss of lives and permanent damages of which the victims are usually women and children. The United Nations (UN 2018) defines violence against women as any gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering in women including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberties whether occurring in public or in private life. Violence against women is the most prevalent form of gender-based violence worldwide (Heise et al., 2002). Domestic violence is not an upcoming practice in our society but has been in existence for a long time to the extent that it is seen as a normal cultural practice in most African societies (Manfrin-Ledet and Porche, 2003). According to Kilpatrick (2004), even though anyone can be a victim, most commonly victims are children and women.

All over the globe, many women and children suffer several forms of abuse in silence because domestic violence is considered as a private issue since it happens domestically. This understanding has led to the increase in abuse against women and children since the victims do not mostly come out to report. Concerning that of children, it is considered a normal parenting measure by many. Violence against women is a severe deprivation of human rights. The silence surrounding domestic violence increases its prevalence and fear of further violence prevents some women from reporting cases of such abuse.

Domestic violence gives birth to many effects which is worrying and demands much attention. Research has documented physical problems such as injuries, miscarriages, permanent disabilities and economic consequences of domestic violence. According to Greaves, besides the human costs of domestic violence, Canada was spending over CDN$ 1 billion annually on domestic violence services, including police, criminal justice system, counselling and training as at 1995 (Greaves 1995).

Domestic violence has been identified as occurring across all religions, ethnicities, cultures, ages and economic status (Pyles and Postmus, 2004). However, the economic conditions of women have been documented as a factor which makes them susceptible to abuse by their partners. Gelles (1976) argues that women with little economic resources find it difficult to leave their partner and therefore are not in the position to negotiate change, which leads to a high endurance of violence. According to Walker (1999), social factors such as acceptance of domestic violence, low social status of women, oppressive political structures, oppressive fundamental religious beliefs that devalue women, civil conflicts, and the existence of states of war are contributing factors to the existing prevalence rates of domestic violence in many countries.

However, according to Martin et al. (1999), and Xingjuan (1999) stress related factors, such as poverty, lack of education, lack of financial resources, levels of jealousy, excessive drinking, substance abuse and living in a large family have been associated with increased risk of domestic violence. The same can be said about children living with such parents. It is known that children with victimized mothers also stand a risk of being abused themselves (Mumford, Liu et al. 2018).

According to Namy et al. (2017), one billion children have suffered some form of abuse be it physical, emotional or verbal. Some reasons given for this abuse includes disciplining of the victim for wrongs committed. In some homes, failure to prepare supper or adhere to instructions given by partner or a parent results in physical abuse and sometimes, this is the daily lifestyle that the women and children must adapt to.

Statistics shows that in every three women in Ghana, one has suffered physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner (Appiah and Cusack, 1999). Statistics in Ghana show that between January 1999 and December 2002, the Women and Juvenile Unit of the Ghana Police Service (WAJU) recorded 1,869 cases of assault and wife battering in the nation's capital, Accra (WAJU 2003 cited in Amoakohene 2004). In 2009, the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU), handled 5,709 cases in Ghana as against 4,904 cases in 2008, an increase of 805, which indicate that the problem of domestic violence against women keep increasing and therefore, needs much attention. WAJU also reported that the most common type of violence in Ghana is physical spousal abuse. I will look briefly at some forms of domestic violence in the literature review, but the main interest of the study is on physical abuse of women and children.

The Women and Juvenile Unit (WAJU) was established in 1998 which is now referred to as the Domestic Violence Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU). It serves as a specialized unit established by the government to handle crimes against women and children.

Some societies highly encourage the abuse of women and marriage is seen by many as an institution that serves as a catalyst of this social problem. Coker-Appiah and Foster (2002) report that among some ethnic groups in Ghana, the man is given a cane during the marriage ceremony as an indication that he can discipline his wife when she steps out of line.

Due to the efforts of some governmental institutions like DOVVSU, NGOs and others that have created public awareness, Ghana has seen the seriousness of domestic violence to some extent. Under the international human rights law, the Ghanaian government is obliged to prevent, investigate and punish the culprits of domestic violence. Nevertheless, Ghana still has a long way to go to fully address the issue of abuse against women and children.

According to Badoe (2017), abuse of women and children in Africa and globally is a public health concern and a human rights issue, but little published work exists in Africa on the problem. This study will therefore add to the existing body of knowledge that exists on domestic violence. It will also aid in creating more awareness and serve as a basis to which future work on domestic violence can be built on.

1.1 Research Objectives

This study shall focus on understanding how informants make meanings or sense of physical abuse of women and children. In other words, the study looks for what informants think about the practice of physical abuse of women and children, including their attitudes towards the practice. The study was undertaken at Teshie, a community in Accra, the capital of Ghana.

Issues to be explored include:

1. To assess the knowledge and experiences of informants on physical abuse of women and children.

2. To know some of the motives and reasonings of informants behind the physical abuse of women and children.

3. To know how victims deal with the issue of abuse, who they report it to, (if they do), barriers they face and informants knowledge on institutions, laws and government agencies that protects women and children from physical violence

4. To know how informants judge the impacts of physical abuse on women and children.
   5.

5. To know if there is a relationship between informants' motives for abusing women and children.

The above objectives shall help throw light on physical abuse of women and children and give insight into the understanding of informants on the abuse. This will be shaped through the experiences of informants, be it as a witness, victim or perpetrator and their ideas on various aspects of physical abuse.

1.2. Research Organization

The study is divided into six chapters. The first chapter has briefly introduced the research topic by giving background information to the study and the aims of the research explores. To better understand this research and explore other studies that have been made in this field, chapter two reviews the relevant literature. It defines key terminologies used in the physical abuse of women and children literature that are relevant for the study. Chapter three provides an additional conceptual framework on which the research is based and analyzed. Chapter four focuses on the research methodology. It discusses the research tools used in the data collection and analysis of data process. It also gives a description of the study area, the informants interviewed, including why and how they were recruited. The chapter further discusses challenges encountered during the research and how they were resolved. Chapter five focuses on presenting findings and giving an analysis of data obtained from the interviews. Chapter six provides a discussion where findings are compared to literature. The data is analyzed in relation to the literature review and other existing literature, the conceptual framework and the researchers' knowledge about the study area. Chapter six also provides a short discussion on the conclusion of the study, highlighting the main empirical findings and the possibility for further research based on the empirical findings.

1.3 Chapter summary

This chapter introduced the research work by giving a little background on domestic violence and physical abuse of women and children. The objectives on which the study will be based on have also been stated in this chapter. The organization of the study into various chapters have also been established in this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

The concept of domestic violence, specifically, the physical abuse of women and children has evolved over time. Many researchers have put forward their thoughts and works while making contributions to justify the need for there to be a stop to this social problem as well as trying to understand why this problem exists. This chapter provides insight into some of the many social debates that center around the physical abuse of women and children. It also defines certain key terms which are important to the study when exploring the physical abuse of women and children.

2.1. Definition of domestic violence

The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (UN, 1993), defines violence against women as "any gender based violence that ends or might end up with sexual and physical abuse, or harms one's mental functioning, or causes pain to the victim, in this case women. This includes threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private". The World Health Organization (WHO) also defines it as any deliberate act of violence using physical force or threats against ones will or a group of people, which might result in death, psychological harm, injury and deprivation (WHO, 2002). Holden (2003) describes domestic violence as any assaultive and coercive behavior by adults against their intimate partners. Healey, Smith and O'Sullivan (1998) further defines domestic violence as the acts of violence and abusive behaviours that are used by adults to control and dominate their intimate partners. Acts like kicking, hitting, biting, scalding, burning, suffocating, poisoning and shaking all fall under physical abuse. Domestic violence may come in the form of psychological, sexual, financial, emotional or physical abuse.

For the purpose of this study, domestic violence refers to the use of violence as a measure to resolve issues, mostly in homes or between sexual partners, in which the most common victims are women and children.

2.2. Forms/Types of abuse in women and children.

There are many forms of abuse that some women and children face on daily basis. These include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse and religious abuse. This section will look at the common types, though the study emphasizes on physical abuse.

2.2.1 Physical abuse

According to the WHO (2018), physical abuse of the child is defined as the intentional use of physical force against the child that results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity. The physical abuse of the child is also described in the UK Government guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (2006) as an abuse that may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or failing to protect a child from that harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or caregiver fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Physical abuse is mostly prevalent among all forms of abuse that happen domestically. It includes violent acts such as kicking, shaking, beating, pushing, choking, throwing things, biting and all forms of abuse that result in some forms of unlawful battery. According to some researches, this form of abuse is the most common that happen domestically, and it is easy to identify due to the temporal or permanent damage it leaves on the victim physically. A research by Ali et. al, (2014) to determine domestic violence among women in Eastern Sudan indicates that among 1009 women sampled for the survey, physical abuse was the most common form of abuse among women, with 33.5% of the victims experiencing physical abuse. Among these women, 53% and 47% experienced moderate and severe form of injuries respectively. To determine the prevalence and predictors of domestic violence among pregnant women in southeast Oromia; Ethiopia, it was found that physical abuse was the most prevalent among women sample for the study with 44.1% of women being abused physically (Yohannes et al., 2019).

Physical abuse can further be described as the situation where physical force is used against another person including forcible confinement or detention of a person and the deprivation of access to adequate food, water, clothing, shelter, rest, or subjecting someone, in this case a

woman, to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Domestic Violence Act of Ghana, 2007). According to Dutton (1992), physical abuse is any behavior that is intentionally used to force one against his or her body that poses risks, physical injury, harm, and/or pain. Action Aid Ghana (2007), in their study in the Northern Ghana reported that physical abuse was predominant. It was also reported that physical assault of wives by their husbands came up as the most common type of abuse. Kaur and Garg (2010) in their research in a rural community in India found that physical violence was a major cause of concern among women even during pregnancy. In addition, it is reported that one in every three women in Ghana have experienced physical violence through slaps or the use of belts, beating by their current or previous husbands (Gender Studies and Human Right Documentation Center, 1991). Coker-Appiah and Cusack (1999) reported in a study conducted in Ghana that 33% of the women interviewed admitted that they had either been beaten, slapped or physically punished by their current husbands.

2.2.2. Sexual abuse

Predominantly, research indicates sexual abuse as a form of domestic violence which comprises rape, incest, sexual harassment, forcing a partner to engage in different forms of sexual acts against their will and compelling a partner to view explicit sexual material. It is one of the most common forms of domestic violence reported among spouses with basically women being the common victims to this form of abuse. Al-Hawari and El-Banna (2017) in their research indicate that sexual abuse is the most common method of domestic violence in both genders.

Dutton (1994) defines sexual abuse as any unwanted sexual intimacy forced on one individual by another person. He further added that it may include oral, anal, or vaginal stimulation or penetration, forced nudity, forced exposure to sexually explicit material or activity. Coker-Appiah and Cusack (1999) reported that the most common form of rape is when the perpetrators know the victim. The authors concluded that 93% of women who have experienced sexual violence in Ghana knew the perpetrators. Culturally, women are not to deny their spouse of sex since it is assumed as the husband's right to demand for sex. Therefore, if the spouse forces her for sex it is regarded as being in the right direction. When the women were interviewed, 33% of them reported that they have experienced forced sex against their will at a point in their marriage.

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Sexual abuse of the child involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact including both penetrative or non-penetrative acts such as kissing, touching or fondling the child's genitals or breasts, vaginal or anal intercourse or oral sex. Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways (UK Government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2006).

2.2.3. Emotional or Psychological abuse

Emotional forms of domestic violence basically include verbal attack, threats, lack of respect, humiliation, lack of recognition, neglect, and all forms of psychological manipulation aimed at subduing rights and freedom of a person. Normally, this form of domestic abuse may be the most frequent form of abuse but the least reported. This is because it takes huge toll on victim's psychological capacities, making them lose self-respect and confidence which deters them from coming forward to report such cases. This contradicts with what has already been stated above concerning physical abuse. This may be because victims of physical abuse can sometimes be easily recognized due to the physical injuries the abuse leaves on them whereas victims of emotional abuse cannot be easily recognized because the abuse affects them mentally or psychologically. Also, many victims may find it difficult or needless to report an emotional abuse because some may not even regard it as an abuse. Emotional abuse may be worse among victims where culture, religion and societal stigmatization factors are dominant in their societies. A research conducted by Basar and Demirci (2018) to determine domestic violence against women in Turkey indicated that out of the women exposed to domestic violence, 67.9% were likely to be abused emotionally and in actual sense, women's low social status in Turkey, patriarchal system and low level of education of both spouses were all contributing factors to rising domestic violence.

Emotional abuse of the child is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Emotional abuse of the child may include interactions that

are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone (UK Government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2006).

2.3 Brief description of some studies that have been done in Ghana on domestic violence
Over the past years, some researches have been made in Ghana in various regions especially on domestic violence against women. There has however been little that has been published on the physical abuse of children in Ghana. This may be due to the understanding of some Ghanaians on physical abuse of children.

Ackah (2012), conducted a research on the causes and prevalence of domestic violence in the Yilo Krobo district, in the Eastern region of Ghana. It was a quantitative study that recruited 100 married women. Her study revealed that at least seven out of every ten women in the Yilo Krobo district have suffered one form of violent or other in their marriages. The common form of domestic violence experienced by the women in the district was physical violence. It was noted that instead of reporting cases of abuse to law enforcement agencies as anticipated, majority of the women rather chose to report such cases to family relatives whiles others reported them to friends, chiefs, elders and church leaders to seek redress. It was also noted that majority of the women studied were unaware of the existence and activities of the Domestic Violence Victim Support Unit, an agency that addresses domestic violence in Ghana, and even the small number who knew could hardly spell out the functions of the agency.

Dery (2014) conducted a research in the Upper West Region of Ghana on domestic violence against women in Ghana. He discovered that both men and women are victims of domestic violence however, women are at a much higher risk of being abused in their marriages. The study also showed that men who are not educated and are lower on the socio-economic ladder are more likely to perpetrate domestic violence than their educated and employed colleagues.

Owusu-Adjah and Agbemafle (2016) made a study on the determinants of domestic violence against women in Ghana. It was found that women married to men with a high level of education

stood a lesser risk and factors like alcohol abuse by husband, place of residence, a positive family history of violence in the husband contributed to domestic violence in Ghanaian households.

2.4. Global view of domestic abuse

Globally, issues concerning domestic violence have become great concern to many economies as it does not only infringe on human right but also impedes development. Research has proven that a person needs every capacity of his body and mind to be productive. Findings from a study conducted by Rand Europe (2015) on the health, wellbeing, and productivity in the workplace suggests that lack of sleep, financial concerns and giving unpaid care to family members or relatives are negatively associated with productivity. The World Health Organization (WHO 1948) defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. This definition of health by W.H.O and other supporting researches clearly point out why various economies should be concerned about violence that happen domestically. Domestic violence has resulted in many becoming handicapped, depressed, injured or even losing their lives.

Domestic violence has existed throughout history. Since the days of the Roman Empire and beyond, it is known that domestic violence existed. According to the Criminal Justice Institute (2016), in the early roman days, wives were a property of their husbands and husbands do as they pleased with them. They could beat, divorce, or even murder them for offences they committed that brought disgrace to the husbands' names. In the 15th century, the Catholic Church brought a rule that put men as judges of their wives and hence had the right to beat her with a stick when she committed a sin. That was done as a way of showing concern for her soul. The rule of thumb passed in the English common law also granted men the ability to discipline their wives with a stick no bigger than their thumbs. Generally, beating of a wife was a way to put her in check in the past and was never seen as a crime until the latter parts of the 20th century when it was outlawed though the social problem still exists.

In Brazil, according to the data by map of violence 2015, the expression of domestic violence against women (VDCM- in Portuguese) between 1980 and 2013, presented an upward trend both

in number and rates. It was observed that, a total of 106,093 women died victims of homicide in this period. The situation is worrying as the number increased from 1,253 women in 1980 to 4,762 in 2013, an increase of 252%. This means the rate of female victims of violence rose from 2.3 per 100,000 in 1980 to 4.8 per 100,000 in 2013 (an increase of 111.11%) (Map of violence, 2015 cited in Lucena et al., 2017). A national survey conducted in Indonesia (2016), found that the prevalence of married women aged 15-64years experiencing physical and sexual intimate partner violence during their lifetime was 12.3 and 10.6 percent respectively (Putra et al., 2019). Elsewhere in China, a survey for the All-China women in 2013 reported that a quarter of Chinese women are victims of domestic violence at some point in their lives (Lancet, 2016). Fageeh (2017), indicates in his research on domestic violence among women in Jeddah that out of the 203 women recruited for the study, the lifetime prevalence of domestic violence was at 34%. From the study, only 1% of Saudi victims of domestic abuse planned to seek help from social service

Other researches in this field includes a 1995 survey in the United States where parents were asked how they disciplined their children. An estimated rate of physical abuse of 49 per 1000 children was obtained from this survey when the following behaviours were included: hitting the child with an object, other than on the buttocks; kicking the child; beating the child; and threatening the child with a knife or gun.

2.5. Domestic violence, women and children as common victims (Prevalence)
In the United States, more than 1 in 4 women have experienced severe physical violence by intimate partner, example being hit, burned, chocked, or assaulted with a weapon (Websdale et al., 2019). In the Netherlands, approximately 45% of all persons experience at least one form of domestic violence and abuse during their lifetime and estimates suggest that approximately 200,000 Dutch persons per year are victimized by an intimate partner or a family member (Ruijne et al., 2017).

Research indicates that women and children do suffer the most from abuse. Adimeh et al. (2016) indicate that in Iran, the prevalence of violence against maiden women was estimated high, about 61.8%. They added that domestic violence is troubling women between the ages of 15- and 45-years old women much more than breast cancer, cervical cancer and accidents.

In ascertaining the prevalence of domestic violence and associated factors among pregnant women attending antenatal care in northwest Ethiopia, it was revealed that high proportion of pregnant women experience domestic violence during their pregnancy with about a total of 58.7% of pregnant women reporting to have experienced some kind of abuse with emotional abuse being the most common reported at 57.8% (Fekadu et al., 2018). Also, Shemagn and Mengisite (2015), noted that domestic violence against women in different parts of Ethiopia was relatively high with life time prevalence of domestic violence against women by husband or intimate partner among 10 studies ranged from 20% to 78%, life time prevalence of physical violence by husband or intimate partner against women ranged from 31% to 76.5%, as well, the life time prevalence of emotional violence ranged from 19.2% to 59%. Again, Rada (2014) observes that in Romania the use of violence as a form of discipline or instruction for children and women remains a significant problem with a higher rate of intimate partner violence than other developed countries. It was established that, 35% of the respondents witnessed parental abuse during childhood and 53.7% were victims of family violence whiles psychological violence against women was the most common form of violence (45.1%). To investigate whether domestic violence was a risk for children ending up on the street of post-war in South Sudan, it was found that domestic violence including physical aggression between parents and physical punishment of children as well as alcohol problems of parents were found to be associated with children working and sleeping in the streets of South Sudan (Ndoromo et al., 2017). In India, the National Coalition against Domestic Violence reports that 1.3million women in India are victims of domestic violence each year and overall one-third of women aged 15-49 have experienced physical violence and 1 in 10 have experienced sexual violence (Kadam and Chaudhari, 2011).

Measuring the incidence and reporting of violence against women and girls in Liberia, it was identified that, 56.1% of the entire sample population in Montserrado county and 58.7% of the sample population in Nimba county had experienced at least one act of violence in the previous 18 months. 75.5% of adult females in Montserrado and 76.8% in Nimba had experienced at least one act of domestic violence in the previous 18 months. Among adult females, 24.3% in Montserrado and 33.8% in Nimba had experienced rape or attempted rape outside of marriage. Among married, separated and divorced women, 72.3% in Montserrado and 73.8% in Nimba were reported as having experienced marital rape in the reporting period. Domestic violence had been experienced by 15.0% of girls in Montserrado County and 14.4% of girls in Nimba County.

13.5% of girls in Montserrado and 11.0% in Nimba had experienced an act of rape or attempted rape in the previous 18 months (Stark et al., 2013).

2.6. Causes and Contributing Factors That Influence Domestic Violence
The study is mainly about understanding the various motives of individuals on the physical abuse of women and children. The study does not have data to determine various causal factors and wide generalization of the abuse. However, it is important to have some literature on factors that contributes to domestic violence to help create a wider knowledge for readers to understand the concept of domestic violence and factors that leads to it.

According to Walker (1999), the factors that contribute to domestic violence differ from country to country and area to area. The author added that there are some social factors, which promote domestic violence in various countries. Domestic violence globally is committed across religions, ethnicities and all forms of social structures within the society with varying causes and factors responsible for these abuses. Commonly known among the causes and factors that influence domestic violence perpetration are religion, alcohol, drug usage, education, family patriarchal system, employment/income status, culture and history of experiencing or witnessing domestic abuse. The common reasons given for the abuse of women and children are summarized in the next discussion.

2.6.1 Bride price
Some researches indicate that bride price paid for women in marriage is mostly used as an excuse for violence. Martignoni (2002), in her research conducted in Zambia on violence against women reports that traditional beliefs which privilege men as the holders of authority within the family is a contributing factor to the high level of domestic violence experienced by the women in Zambia. She also reported that bride price in marriages in Zambia is also a contributing factor to domestic violence because payments of the pride price exposes the women to violence by their husbands since they are entitled to treat them as a virtual slave. Bride price, thus appears to involve bargaining and buying of a wife as a 'commoditized' item in the marriage market, which can result in domestic violence towards a woman if she does not fulfil her 'value for money' expectation (Kambarami, 2006).

2.6.2   Alcohol and Drug usage

There are conflicting claims as to whether there is a direct link between alcohol consumption and gender-based violence. For example, Gelles and Strauss (1979) argue that some men intentionally get drunk to hit their spouses and use the excuse of being drunk to violate their partners. The authors further argue that in this instance, alcohol is not a cause but a function of deviant behavior. However, despite these claims, other authors' research findings revealed that there is a direct link between alcohol consumption and gender-based violent because an alcohol abuser's sense of judgment is impaired because of it psycho-physiological consequences (Hamilton and Collins, 1981; Cervantes, 1992). Phorano et al. (2005), report that there is a positive correlation between alcohol and domestic violence. They report that alcohol abuse and related violence increase during weekends and month ends when working men receive their wages and salaries. It is argued that drug or alcohol usage is responsible for increasing aggression among partners and clouding judgment thereby, increasing one's susceptibility to domestic violence. Kantor and Straus (1989) hypothesized that alcohol use problems among one or both parties in marital relationships may lead to increased family conflict, which may bring about the physical abuse of the wife.

2.6.3 Education

Over the years, research has proven that the level of education of both the victim and perpetrator of domestic violence to some extent contributes to the incidence and prevalence of domestic violence among intimate partners. It has been established that the lower the level of education the more likely an individual is prone to be a victim of domestic violence. Women are empowered through education. It gives them the ability to gather and assimilate information, manipulate and control the modern world, secure and protect themselves from any form of violence (Malhotra 1997; Kishor and Johnson 2000, 2004). Kishor and Johnson (2000, 2004) hypothesized that women with more education have greater abilities to protect themselves in times of need, such as when dealing with a violent partner. It is also anticipated that women with higher levels of education experience less violence. According to Kishor and Johnson (2004), it can be hypothesized that the relationship between husband's education and violence is negative. However, this association is also subject to fluctuation and inconsistencies. For example, research conducted in Haiti revealed that there is a positive relationship between education and violence (Kishor and Johnson 2004). Men with higher educational status than women having

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both higher ascribed (based on gender) and achieved (based on higher educational attainment) status are more likely to assert unequal, and even violent power in the relationship (Hornung, 1981).

2.6.4 Income and employment status

Income and employment status contribute to domestic violence since one partner depends solely on the other to live and therefore such vulnerability is exploited as a means of control. When it comes to women empowerments, economic dependency is a contributing factor. According to Malhotra (1997) and Garcia (2000), the relationship between women's work status and their risk to experience domestic violence can be conceptualized to have a say over their financial and household's matters in their marriages when they are engaged in paid employment than women who are not active in the markets. Thus, women who are actively employed are at lower risk to experience domestic violence. However, due to the transition phase towards autonomy, the changing economic control from men to women could also lead to more incidents of violence for women.

2.6.5 Religion and Biblical symbolism

According to Gyekye (1996), religion enters all aspects of African life so fully that, it can hardly be isolated. The arrival of Christianity has contributed to the beliefs and rationale that women are subordinates to men due to the wrong interpretation of the bible. This certainly has influenced the traditions and norms of a society. Many religions condone male dominance over women. Till date, some Christian marriages may be based on a formal recognition that the husband is the head of the family or homes and hence, rules the household and the wife is submissive to him.

In the bible, there are quotations that seem to enhance men domineering women. Some bible quotations have been wrongly interpreted that women are inferior to men. In Ephesians 5:22-24, it is stated, "wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives to their own husbands in everything". The above quotations have been interpreted in a way that states the role of women and how they must always satisfy their husbands.

2.6.6 Age Difference between Spouses

A wide difference in spousal age, in which the husband is much older than the wife, is hypothesized to imply power imbalances in the relationship. Combination of seniority (achieved) and masculinity (ascribed) in many cultures puts wives younger than their husband at a comparative disadvantaged position (Kishor and Johnson 2004). However, there is little evidence in the empowerment literature regarding the effect of converse situations where the wife is older. Kishor and Johnson (2004), in their multi-country profiling of domestic violence was of the opinion that it may be more likely that because relationships in which women are older than their husbands are so contrary to the normative marital arrangement in most societies, they may be at greater risk for marital disharmony.

2.6.7 Stress and frustration

According to the United Nations Report (UNR (1989), when a man is faced with challenges such as bad economic conditions, low wages, poor working conditions and unemployment, it can lead to the man being desperate which is likely to lead to violence at home. He may attempt to relieve his stress and frustration on his wife and children.

2.7 Literature on the prevalence of the causes of domestic violence

Factors such as religion, culture, patriarchal system and experience of victims of domestic violence in the past all stems from how the society views and treats domestic violence. While in some societies violence against a partner is a grievous crime, to others it is a norm and sometimes treated with less seriousness. To determine domestic violence and its predictors among married women in northwestern Ethiopia, findings indicated predictors such as husband drug use, being pregnant, decision making power on household issues, age of husband and annual income were significantly associated with domestic violence against married women (Semahegn et al., 2013). Selic et al (2011) in an effort to examine the prevalence of exposure to domestic violence and the factors associated with the co-occurrence of psychological and physical violence exposure, reported that alcohol usage and unemployment were the most obvious factors associated with psychological and physical violence exposure.

Again, in investigating the determinants of domestic violence against women in Ghana, adjusted potentials risk factors for domestic violence among women indicated that, women who live in

urban areas were at 35% increased risk of ever experiencing domestic violence as opposed to women who lived in rural areas. Educational level provided a protective effect against domestic violence, as it was found out that the risk of experiencing domestic violence was 48% less for women whose husbands had higher than secondary education compared to women whose husbands had never attended school. Women whose husbands use alcohol were 2.5 times more likely to experience domestic violence than women whose partners did not use alcohol. The results of the study also reveal that prior family history of domestic violence was a strong predictor of ever experiencing domestic violence in one's life.

Field et al (2018) asserts that women who were unemployed were more likely to have reported experiencing domestic violence from partners. Food insecurity, women in stable but unmarried relationship and low-income levels were all risk factors that exposed women to the likelihood of domestic violence from their partners.

In a cross-sectional survey of children in Egypt (Youssef et al., 1998), 37% reported being beaten or tied up by their parents and 26% reported physical injuries such as fractures, loss of consciousness or permanent disability as a result of being beaten or tied up. In another study in the Republic of Korea in 2001, parents were questioned about their behavior towards their children. Two-thirds of the parents reported whipping their children and 45% confirmed that they had hit, kicked or beaten them (Hahm H. and Guterman N., 2001).

2.8 Motives and reasons behind domestic violence and child abuse perpetration
There are many motives behind domestic violence and child abuse. Perpetrators and non-perpetrators give varied reasons behind domestic violence and abuse of children this section will explore some of these motives.

According to the National Family and Health Survey done in India in 2005, total lifetime prevalence of domestic violence is 33.255% and 8.5% for sexual violence among women aged 15-49 years. 65% of Indian men do believe women should tolerate domestic violence in order to keep the family together and sometimes women deserve to be beaten. (Gayathri, 2017). A research by Fekadu et. al (2018) indicates that out of 450 participants used for a study in Ethiopia, one hundred and ten (24.4%) of the participants believed that women's role in life was to cook and take care of the home; 178(39.6%) said women should tolerate violence to keep their

family together, and 44 (9.8%) conceived that sometimes wives need to be beaten. Of the participants, 328 (72.9%) stated that a husband should own his wife, 354 (78.7%) said she should obey her husband or partner, and if not, 238(52.9%) stated a wife should be punished by her husband. Some, 146(32.4%) believed that final decisions at home should be made by the husband; 62 (13.8%) stated a man should use force to keep his reputation if he had to, and 81(18%) believed physical violence was a sign of love. Two hundred eighty-seven (63.8%) of the participants reported that a wife could not refuse to have sex in a marriage.

Antai and Antai (2009) in finding evidence to justify wife beating in Nigeria found out that, wife beating was widely accepted under several circumstances by the women in the sample. 47 percent of women in the Niger Delta would justify Intimate Partner Violence for at least one of the following reasons: going out without telling him (83%), neglecting the children (92%), arguing with him (89%), refusing to have sex with him (100%), and burning food (27%). The women in the rest of the country would justify Intimate Partner Violence for reasons such as, going out without telling him (78%), neglecting the children (61%), arguing with him (49%), refusing to have sex with him (40%), and burning food (19%).

The act of physically abusing children is seen as a justifiable and normal act by many countries and Ghana is no exception. According to a research by UNICEF Ghana (2013), Emmanuel Holortu, the head of the DOVVSU in Tamale reported that: "violence is thought to be normal here – it is believed that children need to be trained and controlled, and that they will learn from the pain they receive. We've had cases where children are punished for stealing 10 pesewas (5 cents) by having their fingers cut with a blade. Other children have been burnt with an iron or beaten with an electric cable whip. Sometimes, ground chili is put into the wounds. The correcting goes overboard."

The reason behind the abuse is disciplining of the victim for wrongs committed. In some Ghanaian homes, failure to prepare supper or adhere to instructions given by partner or a parent results in physical abuse and sometimes, this is the daily lifestyle that some women and children must adapt to. Children are usually abused in the name of raising them in the right way. It is worth mentioning that this reason may be subjective due to cultural differences across countries. Most tools used to punish these children include the use of canes, belts and some do use wires. In extreme cases slaps, kicks and punches are used as the punitive measures.

2.9 Effects and Impacts of abuse on women and children

There are several effects and impacts of abuse on the victims. These may include absenteeism from work, injuries to post traumatic stress disorder to even death. The effects are sometimes long lasting and mentally damaging. According to Lundy and Grossman (2005), empirical evidence shows that children can grow up to become violent adults as they have been socialized with violence. They also stand a higher risk of drug and alcohol abuse, anxiety and depression, suicide attempts, poor social skills and getting into abusive relationships themselves. The issue of domestic violence has immense health related problems associated with victims which may sometimes manifest in their health at a later age. Heise et al. (1994) describes domestic violence as a significant social and public health problem in many countries. Maddoux et al. (2014) says that women that are abused are at risk of many conditions like depression and in pregnant women, they stand a higher risk of maternal mortality and morbidity. The worst-case scenario of this is the death of the woman when it comes to physical abuse.

To know Intimate partner violence (IPV) against women in Iraq, it was discovered that the consequences of domestic violence reported that around 43% of physically abused women experienced at least one type of physical injuries during their life. Nearly all of the injured women reported minor injuries (cuts, bruises or aches). More than one tenth of physically abused women experienced serious injuries like eye injuries, sprain, dislocation or burns during their life. Over 11% of physically abused women experienced more serious injuries like stab wounds, broken bones or broken teeth (Al-Atrushi et al., 2013). Fageeh (2017) reports that women exposed to abuse during pregnancy had an increased risk of miscarriage, abortion, and stillbirth.

Heise et al. (1999) reports that women who are violated are likely to have problems with their health and future lives. The authors added that low self-esteem, depression, phobias, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), alcohol and drug abuse, anxiety, and sometimes-high rate of suicide attempts are common characteristics of women who are abused. Richardson and her research team (2002) found that based on responses from 1040 women in London, twenty-one percent of the women had suffered injuries, including bruises or more serious harm from IPV.

Kitzmann et al. (2003), revealed that children who are affected by domestic violence experiences are likely to demonstrate negative attitude problems, academic impairment and problems with temperament. Jarvis et al. (2005) on the other hand concluded that children's

PTSD symptoms were found to be associated with the frequency of physical violence incidents whilst the behavioral problems were related to maternal psychological functioning factors (that is, depression, anxiety and anger).

2.10 Chapter summary

This chapter reviewed available literature on domestic violence, physical abuse of women and children and the impacts it has on victims. It also looked at some types of abuse in women and children some reasons and contributing factors of domestic violence. The above literature review serves as a good background to which the findings of this research can be compared to.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

Theories are important in order to explain phenomena such as violence against women and children. Domestic violence has been approached within various frameworks and viewpoints. Some of these theories include the feminist theory, the patriarchal theory, the cyclic theory or culture of violence theory, social learning theory (SLT) among others. These frameworks provide knowledge as well as understanding regarding family violence problems. This study analyzes the theory of social learning in understanding why the issue of the physical abuse of women and children continue to exist despite the many awareness and public education given by the government. The study seeks to explain the relationship between people who were physically abused while they were children and their understanding on the act now, based on their experiences. The theoretical framework that this study relies on is the social learning theory.

This chapter will however first look at the broad perspectives that inform people's understanding, reasoning and rationale on physical abuse of women and children. It looks at the traditional perspective associated with traditions and customs of the people and the modern perspective of violence as proposed by the UN and the research community and politics. Physical abuse is considered by the UN as an infringement of human rights and should therefore, not be compromised with.

3.1 The traditional and modern perspectives

The physical abuse of women and children will be looked at from two lenses. This is because the lenses are the main attributes that play a part in the understanding of individuals on physical abuse of women and children. The lenses are the traditional and modern perspectives and they will be discussed in the following sections.

3.1.1 The Traditional Perspective

Cultural and social norms are highly influential in shaping individual behavior, including the use of violence. Domestic violence also largely depends on how the society sees it. Some of these cultural and social norms support violence whiles others do not. Some people's knowledge on physical abuse is informed by traditions and experiences. For this study, traditions will be

defined as the traits, norms and cultures that are handed down from the older generations to the new ones. Cultural and social norms are rules or expectations of behavior within a specific cultural or social group. Often unspoken, these norms offer social standards of appropriate and inappropriate behavior, governing what is (and is not) acceptable and coordinating our interactions with others (Durlauf and Blume, 2008). Traditions include the way of doing things and understandings on certain social practices, including how people should be treated, the roles of men, women and children. For instance, traditional beliefs that men have a right to control or discipline women through physical means makes women vulnerable to violence by intimate partners (Mitra and Singh, 2007) and (Ilika, 2005). Some of the traditions also encourages children to be given corporal punishment (physically hitting them) when they go wrong. With this, not only are the parents allowed to, but also, any older person in the society. There is an adage in the Ghanaian society that says that "it is the whole society that trains the child in his or her upbringing". So, some people see the physical abuse of women and children through the lenses of their forefathers or what they grew up learning.

Some researchers in psychology say if you are physically abused as a child, it affects your psychology and you do it later or in the future because it becomes a part of you just like a culture or norm. Violence is generally considered as harmful regardless of who is at the receiving end, whether women or children. The traditional model however views physical abuse as something that has become subconsciously a part of people due to the society or culture they grew up in and what the abusers were taught or saw happen around them. Due to this, it becomes difficult for some people to desist from physical abuse of women and children.

3.1.2 The Modern Perspective

This model gives light to the knowledge that has been gained as a result of modernization, hence, the claim that treating women and children with violence is obsolete and the society should frown on it. The modern model entails ideas on how the physical abuse of women and children are seen from the lenses of the United Nations (UN), the research community and politics. Knowledge from these institutions frowns upon the physical abuse of women and children and leaves no room or circumstance under which physical abuse should be tolerated. This knowledge mostly affirms that there is no justifiable reason why a man should physical abuse a woman or why children should be physically abused.

It is worth mentioning that some people have the conflict of dual perspective. That is, they see and understand the physical abuse of women and children from two angles: the traditional and the modern models. Some people believe in one for some reasons and believe in the other for other reasons also. These are normally people with high level of education. They believe in the traditional model because that is what they were born into and that is what has been passed on to them by their parents. However, they also believe in the modern model because of their exposure and education, which has influenced their understanding on handling women and children with violence. These people believe that both models have their strengths and weaknesses.

The above can be illustrated below:
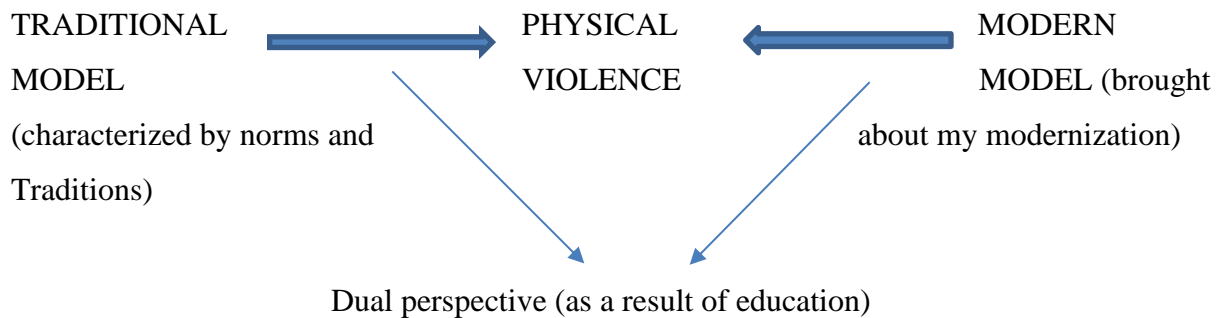
TRADITIONAL MODEL (characterized by norms and Traditions) ⟶ PHYSICAL VIOLENCE ⟵ MODERN MODEL (brought about my modernization)

Dual perspective (as a result of education)

Illustration 1: Perspectives that inform people's knowledge on physical abuse of women and children.

3.2 The concept of social learning

The study will rely on the SLT. SLT provides a behavioral approach to explain domestic violence. Social learning is one of the most popular explanatory theory in the domestic violence literature. Bandura (1973) suggests that violence is learned through role models provided by the family, either directly or indirectly, is reinforced in childhood, and continues in adulthood as a coping response to stress or as a method of conflict resolution. According to this theory, aggression behavior can be learnt by observing and imitating the aggressive behavior of other people. It was proposed by Albert Bandura, who used the term 'modelling' to explain how humans can very quickly learn specific acts of aggression and incorporate them into their behaviors.

This theory asserts that people model behavior that they have been exposed to as children or by the society. SLT posits that people learn social behavior by observing other's behavior and the

consequences of that behavior, forming ideas about what behaviors are appropriate, trying those behaviors, and continuing them if the results are positive. This theory does not view aggression as inevitable, but rather, as a social behavior that is learned and shaped by its consequences, continuing if it is reinforced. From the SLT perspective, male violence against women endures in human societies when it is modelled both in individual families and in society and has positive results, that is, it releases the tension, leaves the perpetrator feeling better, often achieves its ends by cutting off arguments, and is rarely associated with serious punishment for the perpetrator.

Central to SLT is the idea that children who are direct victims of violence or witnesses of violence between their parents are more likely to use violence when they are adults. Additionally, SLT lays down that children learn from their family members how to socially and morally justify the use of violence and the belief that, violence is an effective way of controlling family members. If children are abused by their parents, they may internalize belief and patterns of behavior that may lead them to abuse their own children. If children observe that parents hit each other, they may develop a greater propensity towards abusing their spouse. Transmission of violent behavior occurs through processes of modelling, failure to learn appropriate ways to manage conflict, and reinforcement for violent behavior. Mihalic and Elliot (1977) suggest that if the family of origin handled stresses and frustrations with anger and aggression, the child who has grown up in such an environment is at a greater risk of exhibiting those same behaviors witnessed or experienced, as an adult.

3.2.1 Key factors in the social learning process
SLT proposes that violent experiences are initiated from behavior processes that are captured by learning, instead of putting the blame on various external associations for abusive behavior. The theory of social learning according to Bandura can be summarized and grouped under four basic processes of social learning;

i.   Attention
Attention has to do with looking at the model or the person in power. In this case, if children see their parents, teachers or someone similar in age, sex, power or position act aggressively to gain a desired result, they are likely to imitate this person when they are found in similar situations. The person being observed (the model) is an important factor in social learning. An individual is

more likely to be influenced by a person with status and power. Parents are powerful role models and they are the first contact a child has to role models, hence, their actions affect them greatly in their upbringing. According to Baron and Richardson (1994), children subjected to physical punishment in childhood often use violence themselves in later lives. Children infer rules or principles through repeated exposure to a style of parenting. Gelles (1972) suggests that not only does the family expose individuals to violence and techniques of violence, but the family also teaches approval for the use of violence. Jasinki et. al (1998) also propose that the observation of aggressive role models and exposure to violence at home can result in similar learned behavior.

ii.   Retention

The ability to store information is also an important part of the learning process. Retention can be affected by several factors, but the ability to pull up information later and act on it is vital to observational learning. Retention looks at remembering the behavior of the model. When people were abused as children or witnessed their mothers being abused by their fathers, they are likely to repeat the same act or otherwise, once they are in the position of being able to do the same act. Retention has to do with remembering past experiences in one's life.

iii.   Reproduction

Once you have paid attention to the model and retained the information, the next is to perform the behavior you observed. Further practice of the learned behavior leads to improvement and skill advancement. Reproduction is repeating the behavior the observer has learned. It is referred by Bandura as self-efficacy. Reproduction is an important aspect of social learning. If a person believes that they can carry out the behavior which they have observed and that they are likely to achieve the desired results, then the aggressive act is more likely to be imitated.

iv.   Motivation

Finally, for observational learning to be successful, you must be motivated to imitate the behavior that has been modelled. Reinforcement and punishment play an important role in motivation. For example, if you see another student rewarded with extra credit for being to class on time, you might start to show up a few minutes early each day. Motivation looks at having a good reason for imitating a behavior. Hence, when an individual find himself in a situation where he feels the only resort is to be abusive to get his desired results, he therefore becomes motivated to be aggressive. According to O'Leary and Maiuro (2001), people who commit

violence may have association with witnessing abusive behavior in their lives. An example is, when a man is provoked by a wife, he may be motivated to hit her in order to keep her quiet.
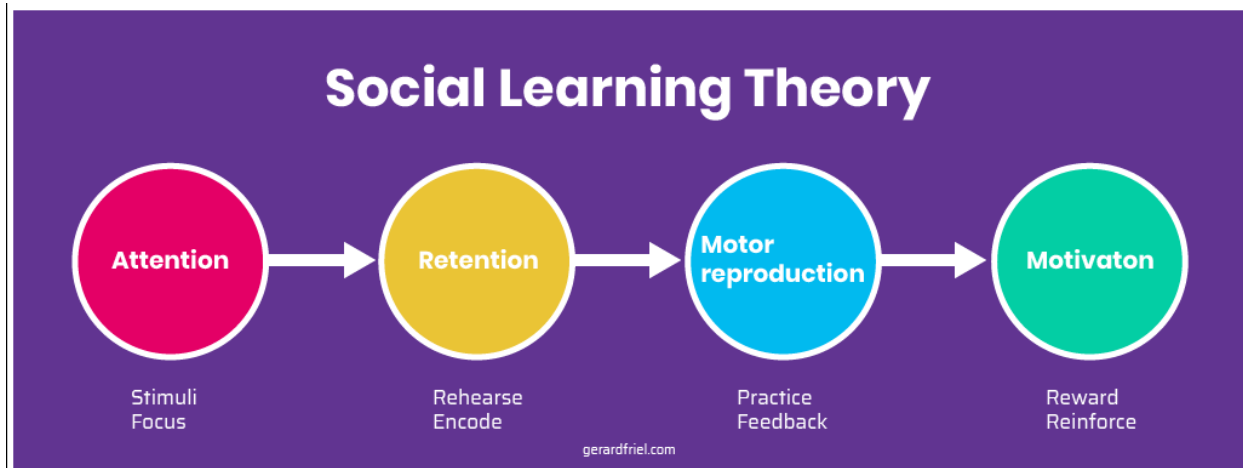
Figure 1: the process of social learning[1].

3.3 Linking this theory to the study

The aim of this study is to understand the perspectives and experiences of people on the physical abuse of women and children. An objective of this study is to know the experiences of informants with physical abuse when they were children and the environment in which they grew up. This study also seeks to understand whether informants are likely to physically abuse their children due to their experiences as children. The study seeks to understand whether men are likely to resort to physically abusing women when they engage in an argument due to the environment they grew up in. There is the rationale that women who are physically abused in their marriages continue to stay in the marriage because of what they grew up witnessing in their homes and so they see this act as a normal occurrence in every marriage.

This study considers the argument that when issues and misunderstandings occur in homes and violence is used to resolve it, children may learn the aggressive behavior if it is able to get the desired outcome (resolving an issue). This study will employ the social learning theory because it seeks to know whether physical abuse of women and children continue to exist due to learned behaviors of perpetrators when they were children.

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[1] http://www.gerardfriel.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/social-learning-theory.png

3.4 Chapter summary

The first section of this chapter looked at the two perspectives that influences the knowledge of people on physical abuse of women and children. The other section explored the SLT and its relationship with the physical abuse of women and children. It identifies how the environment in which an individual grows plays a role in their understanding and actions.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter gives detailed information concerning the methodology used to carry out the research. It covers the research design, the research process, processes of data collection, interview and power relations, interview questions and sequencing, language, influence of the researcher, limitation of study and ethical consideration.

4.1 Aims of the research

The aim of this resaerch is to investigate the understanding and experiences of people on the physical abuse of women and children in Ghana. The study expects to be useful in terms of forming part of the emerging literature on physical abuse of women and children and to add to the growing body of knowledge. The outcome of this study endeavour to contribute to knowledge enhancement, raising awareness and understanding the motives, reasons judgements connected with physical abuse of women and children. The question the study expects to answer is;

> *How do people in the Teshie area experience and understand physical abuse of women and children in their immediate surroundings?*

4.2 Study Approach and Design

I adapted the qualitative approach to research for the study. Qualitative approach to research provides a rich and detailed picture to be built up about a subject matter interpreting the feelings, ideas and reasons behind the action of the people involved. According to Cameron (in Hay 2010), qualitative methods concentrate on interpreting human environments and experiences within a variety of frameworks, the environment being the social structures which affect the behaviour of the individual and vice versa. By interacting directly with participants, the researcher can have a complex and detailed understanding of the issue, how participants in the study address the issue and the subsequent outcome (Creswell 2007). Since the study aims to investigate the understanding and experiences of people on physical abuse of women and children, the qualitative approach is best for this study.

The strength of the qualitative approach over other approaches is to gain an in-depth understanding of physical abuse of women and children. This may contribute to understand why a phenomenon such as physical abuse continues to remain a social problem despite efforts being put in place by the government of Ghana to curb it. Since abuse are intentional acts, knowledge about motives and meanings may be decisive to changing such practices. Positive results can be achieved by having a profound interaction with the informants as they reflect on their thoughts and experiences, which the qualitative approach provides. Furthermore, informants' understanding of their experiences may have been hindered if a quantitative approach was adopted as quantitative methods have their own limitation in providing insights into those experiences (Griffin and Phoenix, 1994).

This study is exploratory and interpretivist in nature. This design is appropriate for the reasons stated above, but also because in Ghana, the issue of physical abuse of women and children is under-researched and under reported, so, we need to know how people think about these issues. An exploratory study is undertaken when little is known about and issue or situation (Marican, 2006). Also, Polit and Hunger (1999) suggest an exploratory study approach for investigating new topic areas. Hence, since there has been little research and discussions regarding the understandings and experiences of men and women on the physical abuse of women and children in Ghana, an explorative and descriptive design is appropriate for the research.

4.3 The research process
4.3.1 The area of the study
Under this section, a brief description of Ghana, Greater Accra Region and Teshie will be given to help further understanding of the reader.

I: Overview of Ghana
The research was conducted in the Ga district of the Greater Accra region of Ghana. Ghana, a lower-middle income country on the west coast of Africa, is divided into 10 administrative regions and 216 decentralized districts. The 2010 Population and Housing Census report estimates Ghana's population at 24,658,823 with 50.9% of the population living in urban areas. The census further estimates that females constitute 51.2% of the population and males 48.8%,

resulting in sex ratio of 95 males to 100 females. Regarding literacy, the 2010 census indicates that roughly 74% of the population aged 11 years and above is literate. The literacy rate for males is 80.2%, whereas that for females is 68.5%. The difference in the literacy rate between men and women may be because the Ghanaian society puts more emphasis on educating men than women. In the past, women were not educated with the reason that, they will end up in a man's 'kitchen' and so, it was men who were mostly educated. However, due to civilization and public awareness, the society has seen much changes and women are also educated and being encouraged to occupy high positions in Ghana. In urban areas, literacy rate is 84.1% while the rate is 62.8% in rural areas.

 Major ethnic groups in Ghana include Akan, Dagbani, Ewe, Ga-Adangbe, Gurma, Guan, Gurunsi and Bissa. Common languages in Ghana include Asante, Ewe, Fante, Boron (Brong), Dagomba, Dangme, Dagarte (Dagaba), Kokomba, Akyem and Ga. The English language functions as the official language in Ghana. That is what is used in the learning process of the educational system in Ghana. Although English is the official language in the country, the population is ethnically heterogeneous with multilingualism. In terms of religions among the population of Ghana, 71% of Ghanaians are Christians and 17% are Muslims (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013). Ghana's fertility rate is 3.94 children born to every woman in rural areas and 2.78 to every woman in urban areas. Ghana's population is currently growing at a rate of 2% per year.

II: Overview of the study region, Greater Accra Region

Greater Accra is one of the 10 administrative regions in Ghana. The Greater Accra Region is located in the south-central part of the country and shares borders with the Central Region to the west, Volta Region to the east, Eastern Region to the north, and the Gulf of Guinea to the south. It is the smallest of the 10 regions, occupying an area of 3,245 square kilometres or 1.4 percent of the total land area of Ghana. It has a coastline of approximately 225 kilometres, stretching from Kokrobite in the west to Ada in the east. Greater Accra recorded a population of 4,010,054 in 2010. This is an increase from 491,817 in 1960, 851,614 in 1970, 1,431,099 in 1984, and 2,905,726 in 2000 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013).

Accra has the largest share (46.1%) of the regional population due to immigration from other regions and natural increase. The Greater Accra Region contains the national capital city of Accra and as a result, a lot of social infrastructure and amenities along with a few tourist attractions can be found in the region. They include: Kotoka International Airport, Accra Sports Stadium, Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum, DuBois Memorial Centre, Manet Beach Paradise and Kokrobite Cultural Centre in the Accra Metropolis, and Dodowa Forest in the Dangme West District.

The majority (83.3%) of the population in Greater Accra in 2010 reported an affiliation with Christianity. Christians are followed by Muslims (11.8%) and traditionalists (0.5%). However, 3.4% of the population indicated they had no affiliation to any religion (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013). Greater Accra had a sex ratio of 93.6 in 2010, which means there are about 94 males to every 100 females in the region. This situation is consistent with the national sex ratio of 95.2 and could be attributed to male emigration and higher life expectancy at birth for females (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013).

Culture plays an important role in shaping a people's way of life in terms of attitudes, beliefs and behaviour. Even though there are several ethnic groups in this region, the Ga-Dangme is the indigenous ethnic group of the region. It is a patriarchal, patrilineal and patrilocal society by birth.

A sizeable number of the economically active persons in the region are self-employed without employees. There is evidence in Ghana that children as young as 7 years work in family enterprises (Ghana Statistical Service, 2003). Even though the Children's Act of 1998 prohibits children under 13 years old from doing any work for pay or profit, many of such children who do any work for pay or profit (described as working children) are found in the region, especially in the Accra Metropolis. The only mining activity in this region is salt mining. Oil and gold mining industries can be found in other regions.

III: Overview of the study area, Teshie

The study area for this study is the Teshie area. Teshie is located on the southern coast of Ghana in the Ledzokuku-Krowor Municipal District of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Due to its closeness to Nungua, many call Teshie town in association with Nungua, Teshie-Nungua. Teshie and Nungua, on the coast 18-22 km southwest of the city centre, are inhabited by the indigenous Ga people of Accra. It is the ninth most populous town in Accra with over 171, 875 people. It is believed that the Teshie community was about 300 years in 2011.

Most of the houses in this area are family owned, they have been handed down through the generations and are usually not for rent. The community has a mixed-income population which comprises fishermen and fishmongers, traders, drivers and office workers. It is worth mentioning that, the town is rich in diversity when it comes to economic activities as a result of the country's current democracy and development program. Housing is in a mix of old in some cases, pre-dating the colonial era and more modern buildings and most is of the compound house type.

The areas are poorly planned and crowded and become muddy during the rainy season (April-July and September-November) due to poor drainage. However, there are basic services such as water and electricity and supplies are reliable. Teshie and Nungua have post offices, internet cafes, schools (creche, nursery, primary, junior secondary and senior secondary) including the Teshie Orphanage, shops, bookshops, banks, police stations and the Teshie and Nungua markets respectively. Notable government schools such as Teshie Methodist School, Teshie Anglican School, Teshie Presbyterian School, Teshie Roman Catholic School provides the educational needs of the people. Other private schools also exist in the community providing outstanding education to the community children. Notable among them is the Lincoln International Community School, dwelling in the Teshie-Nungua Township is Fort Augustaborg, built in 1787 by the Danish Forces who came to the Gold Coast. It was later occupied by the British during the colonial era of administration from 1850-1957.

Very important security institutions such as the National Cadet Training Centre and the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Centre (KAIPTC) can be found in Teshie. These two institutions are notable for the massive contribution to peace and security related issues to Ghana and other Africa countries. Teshie is home to the Ghana Military Academy, which is within

walking distance from the famous Next-Door Beach Resort, one of Accra's most popular entertainment spots, located on the Beach Road. There are also churches and mosques in these areas and there is a lively nightlife.

The Ga people are known for their funeral celebration and processions. They believe that when someone dies, they move to another life, therefore, special coffins are often crafted by highly skilled carpenters, since this tradition spread in the 50's. Teshie, a Ga clan, is also renowned for the coffins produced by Ga carpenters in the shape of canoes, fish, leopards, cars, houses, Bibles and a host of other motifs. The colourful and fanciful coffins unambiguously celebrate life's work and achievements (for example, a fisherman would be buried in a fish-shaped coffin) while at the same time proclaiming the family's prominence and wealth.

Between Teshie and Nungua are the Teshie-Nungua Estates, dating from the early 1970s, containing houses and apartments but here there are rampant water shortages and residents need tanks for storing water. 'Trotros' and taxis connect these areas to most parts of the city. However, traffic is extremely heavy, particularly in the run up to, and during festive seasons such as Christmas and Easter. Over the years, Teshie has become one of the classic residential towns in Ghana due to its serenities, collection of colonial archives of Ghana, estate buildings and cool environment that takes you away from the hassles and bustles of city life. The estate building which stretches from the east to the west of Teshie is one of the biggest residential dwelling in Accra. The estate provides accommodation for many accomplished citizens and foreigners in Accra.

The Ga people celebrate the Homowo festival, which means "hooting at hunger". This festival originated several centuries ago. It is celebrated in remembrance of a great famine that hit the Ga people in the sixteenth century. It is mainly a food festival which celebrates the passing of the terrible period in Ga history. It takes place in August every year and is celebrated by all the Ga clans. Being a town in the Ga-Ethnic Land, Teshie hosts the yearly Homowo Festival of the Ga people of Ghana every August. The Homowo festival of the Gas attracts tourists, foreigners and people from all over the country to Teshie. This promotes the town and ensures the popularity and development of the town.

I chose the Teshie area because it has a mixed income population and so getting the criteria of people I needed for my study would be easier in this community. Also, this area is a good representation of most settlements in Accra.

A picture showing the fishermen, fishmongers as well as some tourists at a sea in the Teshie area can be seen below;

Figure 2[2]: Fishermen, fishmongers and some tourists at a sea in the Teshie area.
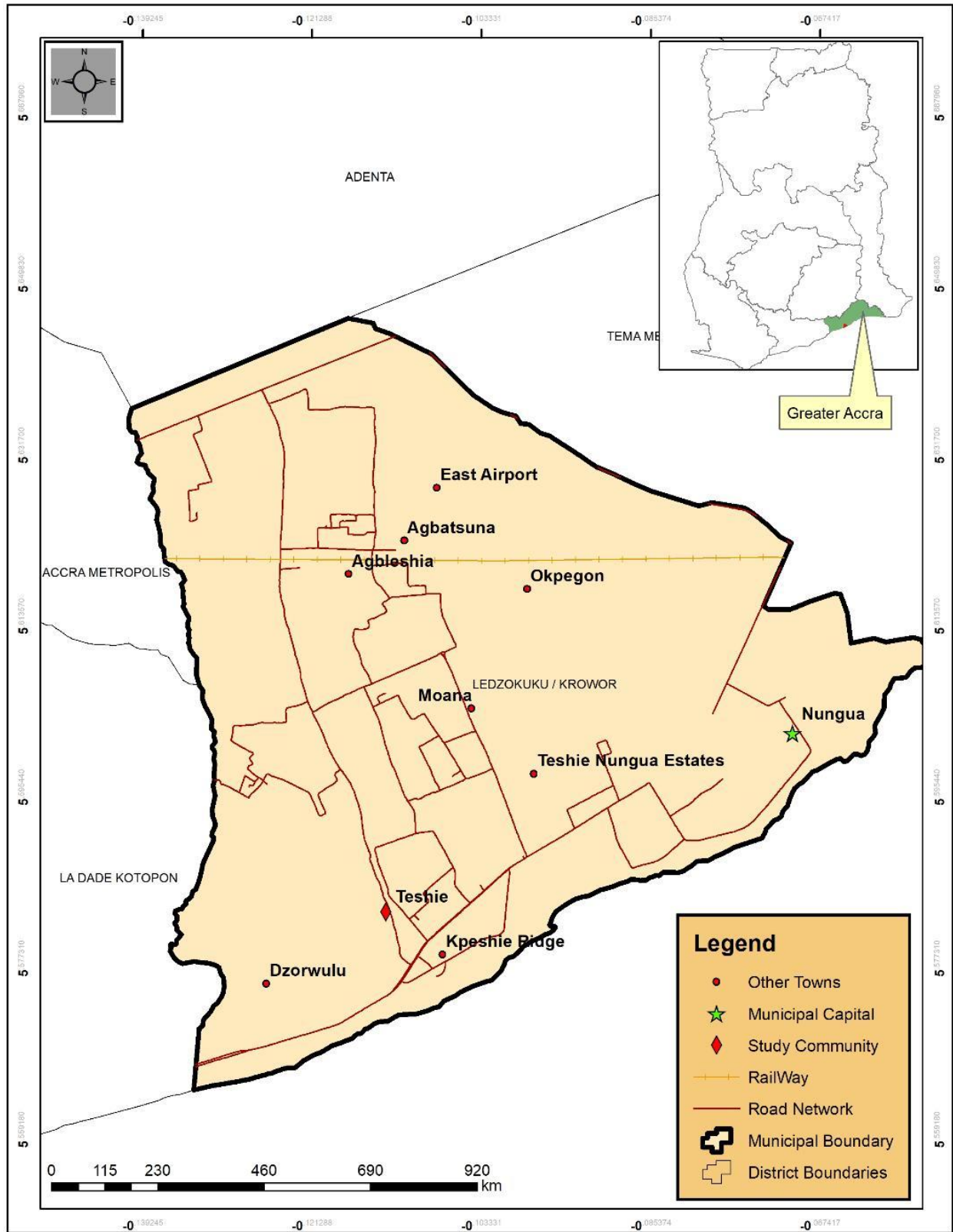
Figure 3: Map of Teshie Municipality of Ghana.

Source: Remote Sensing and Geographic Information System Lab, University of Ghana, 2019.

4.4 Process of data collection

Given that this research employed the qualitative approach to research, semi-structured interviews were used as the method of data collection. Semi structured interviews were used as it provides opportunity to gain deeper knowledge from the research participants on physical abuse (Henn et al, 2006). That is, to access the level of meanings, motives and judgments, semi-structured interviews is the appropriate tool to capture the informant's thinking about a topic or domain, where the answers given by the informant may induce the interviewer to move forward for in-depth questioning. It follows a guideline; however, it allows both parties to stray away from the subject in question as and when required which grants the researcher some flexibility to conjure questions that may be required along the line. Semi-structured interviews help direct the interviewer from not straying too much away from the topic of study and it also gives the interviewee the freedom to express him or herself. Questions were structured in a way that helped me to get insight into the experiences in the past and understandings of the informants to understand what is happening now and to possibly predict what will happen in the future based on the information that was given. There was also the review of literature that were of relevance to the purpose of the study to enhance the quality of the study, including books, journals, published articles.

4.4.1 Gaining access into the community

Gaining access into the community where you will be conducting your research is a very important aspect of a research. This is because getting people to interview is challenging especially in communities or areas you are new to. Crewswell (2007) indicates that such challenges involve persuading individuals to take part in the research, building trust and credibility and securing people to respond. The researcher will therefore have to make use of various resources to enable him to get access into the community as this will influence how the researcher will be received by informants. Trust is an important element when conducting interviews, hence, the main resource I made use of in getting my informants was the gatekeeper. A gatekeeper is the person or institution who serves as a link between the researcher and the community or the research area and can regulate access to informants. These people consider themselves and others consider them to have the authority to refuse or grant access to the research setting and, or informants (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007)**.** Contact with the

gatekeeper was made based on pre-existing relationship and ahead of time. The gatekeeper is someone I met during one of my internships in Ghana. We became acquainted and kept in contact since then. Since I had already established a relationship with him, getting access into my research community through him was not difficult.

Prior to my visit into the community, I made some enquiries about the community from my gatekeeper with my selection criteria in mind. I wanted to interview both men and women who were willing to participate. My gatekeeper was the assembly man of the community I chose for my research. The assembly man is the spokesperson of the community and this person is normally elected by the community by elections (the one with majority polls) which are conducted in the various municipalities every four years. This is a person who is has been a native of the community for a considerable long period of time and is familiar and has good knowledge about the people in the community. Since the people in the community elect their assembly men themselves in Ghana, this is the appropriate person to serve as my gatekeeper since he has the trust and influence over the people in the community. So, getting to the informants through this person will also determine how I am received by the community.

On my first entry into the community, I visited the assembly man at his residence. He knew about my coming over since I had spoken to him earlier on phone. I again discussed the purpose of the visit and my research topic and aims with him upon entry into the community. Everything went well since the assembly man (also my gatekeeper) was highly educated (university level), knowledgeable and understood the gravity of the issue I wanted to research. He was therefore very helpful. I informed him about the time I had to conduct the interviews, which was a maximum of six weeks. He took me round the community and showed me some households I could interview and introduced me to a couple of people. The assembly man provided me with information on when the people in the community were mostly home and the time period that was most convenient for me to talk to them. This helped me to go ahead and prepare adequately for the interviews.

On my next visit into the community, I conducted a pilot study in the community based on the information given to me by the assembly man. I visited the people the assembly man had introduced to me on my first entry into the community, whom I had an informal conversation with. We talked about general things like the community itself, the daily activities that goes on

there and issues of physical abuse of women and children and how often they see it happen in the community. As an outsider, it was important for me to familiarize myself with the community and some of its members so that I can build a cordial relationship with them which will help them to feel more comfortable when they are interviewed so, I did not rely much on the assembly man once I got full access into the community. I went from one house to the other talking to the people who were willing to talk, relying on the information given to me by the assembly man, with accordance to the people I was looking for, to interview. I was tactful with the kind of questions I asked them and the things we talked about to prevent me from repeating the same questions should I decide to interview those same people.

I made some important and interesting discoveries from my pilot study which helped me to make some adjustments to my research questions and interview guide. Since I anticipated these new discoveries, I drafted my research to be flexible, so it was not difficult making these adjustments to increase the quality of my research. From my pilot study, I realised that some of the people in the community were not indigenes of the Ga community, so I had to be careful in selecting the people I interviewed since I only wanted people who were indigenes of the Ga community. I also discovered that some of the people did not want to talk about their personal experiences, so I had to adjust some of my questions to cover other people's experiences that were witnessed by them (my informants). The informal conversation I had with the people was also useful in knowing which areas I needed to probe more to get much information and possibly avoid the questions informants were feeling uncomfortable to talk about. It helped to establish a good relationship with them and so during the main interviews, I was able to get much information from them, some even went into issues I thought they would be unwilling to talk about.

After my pilot study in the community, I was convinced it was the appropriate community for my research since I got the people that fitted into the selection criteria of the research. I had also built a rapport with some of the people in the community so there was no need wasting time to go and look for another community. I decided on the people I wanted to interview after my pilot study and so it was not much difficult finding the people when I went into the community to do the formal interviews. Also, during the pilot study, I had more information from the people concerning the time and place that would be appropriate for them to give the interviews. It is worth mentioning that some of the people did not want me interviewing them in their homes

because their partners and children were around, so I scheduled for another place that they preferred (a peaceful children's playground).

4.4.2 Challenges with the gatekeeper

The gatekeeper is someone who has influence on the community a research takes place and commands a lot of respect. Due to the influence of the gatekeeper on the community, I realised some of the people the gatekeeper introduced to me were only willing to participate because the gatekeeper asked them to. Since that will influence the quality of data I got from the informants, I talked to him to allow me to build my own rapport with the people so that I could get them to talk to me willingly. This is one of the reasons I decided to do a pilot study on my second entry into the community. Another challenge was, I realised the gatekeeper only introduced me to people who he had good relations with and this was not good for me as a researcher since I may not get the quality of data I wanted because these were people who all had similar characteristics and I needed the diversity to make my research rich. This challenge was also resolved during my pilot study. I got to talk and observe the people and hence, chose the people I wanted. The last challenge I encountered was getting women to interview through the gatekeeper. The people whom I had access to through the gatekeeper were more men and I realised it was because of the rapport he had with the people of the same gender in the community. So, I discussed with him the importance of getting women to also interview since their participation was vital to my study.

4.4.3 Recruiting informants

In recruiting informants for a research study, it is important that the researcher can identify the right informants who would provide relevant information to the study. Depth of knowledge, right attributes and experience are part of the main reasons behind the right recruitment when it comes to qualitative studies hence in this study, purposive selection of informants was employed. Purposive sampling is a non-probability technique of selecting informants. The procedure for the selection of informants is based on the research question which is intended to achieve the objectives of the study. Purposive sampling is basically the selection of informants based on stated criteria. In the beginning, I did not have in mind any limited number of people I wanted to interview. This is because the number or how many people to interview is not the focus of interest in qualitative studies but rather the question of who is it that has the experiences,

perspectives, behaviours, occupations, identities, personalities, and so on, that the research questions will require to investigate (Dunn in Hay 2010). According to Dunn, a small number of the right people who are willing to share their experiences are enough to providing useful insights into a study. Due to this, I was not worried about getting so many people to interview from the community. However, I wanted people who are married or were once married and had appreciable knowledge and experience with physical abuse of women and children. I wanted some categories of informants in my study to enhance more diversity and the quality of my research. So, I included informants with various educational levels and occupations and having informants from both genders also increased the contrast in opinions.

4.4.4 Interviews

One of the main and common ways of gathering data which a researcher cannot provide is by conducting interviews. Qualitative interview approach provides the opportunity for people to express themselves and talk about their experiences, understandings and situations in their own words. According to Patton (2002), the purpose of qualitative interview is to capture how those being interviewed view their world, to learn their terminology and judgement, and capture the complexities of their individual understandings and experiences. The strategy for interviewing in this study aims to capture the deep meaning and understanding of physical violence in the informants' own words. Gathering of good and quality data from informants is also dependent on the type of interview techniques the researcher employs.

For this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with men and women in Teshie. Semi-structured interviews were used since they are neither highly structured nor unstructured; hence, helps create a comfortable conversation between the researcher and informants. Semi-structured interviews follow a guideline. However, it allows both parties to stray away from the subject in question as and when required, which allows the researcher some flexibility to conjure questions that may be required along the line. Merriam (1998) buttresses the flexibility and usefulness of semi-structured interviews by arguing that in this interviewing format, either all the questions are more flexibly worded, or the interview is a mix of more and less structured question. I also prepared an interview guide which served as a reminder of things I need to cover during the interview. The pilot study I conducted before the main interviews helped me to modify some of questions in the interview guide.

Semi structured interviews were conducted with ten women and ten men *(as shown in appendix 1).* Each interview conducted lasted for at most 40 minutes. All informants were asked the same set of questions, intermittently probing for details and clarifications when necessary. This was motivated by the rationale of giving each informant the opportunity of answering the same set of questions in order to enable triangulation and an accurate comparison of responses. In semi-structured interviews, researchers must develop, adapt and generate questions and follow-up probes appropriate to the central purpose of the study (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). With the permission of all informants, interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed verbatim in order to minimise distortion and the possibility of misunderstanding. I scheduled my interview times and dates with my informants in a way that I conducted at most, 2 interviews a day. Morse and Field (1995), suggest that no more than two interviews per day should be conducted because data collection can be an intense experience, especially if it involves sensitive topics or any stressful human experiences. I listened to the audio recordings at the end of each day's interviews and because either one or two interviews were conducted on each day, this was not too stressful and time consuming to do. I did this to make sure that everything was clear and there were no missing or unclear recordings. This was also to enable me to know if any mistakes were made on my side and if little or no probing was made at instances where they were needed. I did this through the entire days of conducting the interviews.   Recording interviews electronically is quite convenient and obviates the necessity of writing during the interview which may be stressful and time consuming to both the interviewer and interviewee and may even serve as a means of distraction. It is important to note that audio-recorded interviews can be played, listened to later as many times as necessary to gain complete, unbiased and objective analysis. I started each interview by reading the consent form to the informant. Ethical considerations were observed before, during and after the interviews. Informants were told they could stop the interview anytime they want or choose not to answer any of the questions if they were uncomfortable, before the interview started.

4.4.5 Interview schedule
Informants were interviewed individually. Clark (2000, p. 84) points out that:

"the power dynamics of the interview situation is critical...The generation of an environment in which respondents feel relaxed and able to speak at length is therefore of fundamental importance to the qualitative interview".

Interviews were conducted at a location convenient to both the informant and the researcher. Most of the interviews were conducted at the residents of the informants. The time for my interviews varied. Some took place in the day and others in the evening around 6:00pm. This is because some of my informants were workers while others were not. So, the interviews in the evenings had to be scheduled at a time they had returned from work. Others did not feel comfortable being interviewed in their homes, hence, I scheduled a time with them to meet at a nearby playground for children. These interviews took place in the evenings at 6:00pm because that was the time some of the informants had finished with their activities for the day. Also, the playground was almost empty at that time with no children on it and few passers-by. It is worth mentioning that some of the interviews were re-scheduled for other days since some of the informants were too tired when they returned from work, got home too late due to traffic situations, were forgetful about the interview schedule or had an impromptu issue they had to attend to, so the interviews could not take place at the scheduled time. Each informant was exceptionally cooperative and informative during the interview process.

To sum up the research procedure, below is a flow chart I designed to describe the steps that were undertaken in this study:

Step 1: Initial visit into the community for the purpose of self-introduction and meeting my gatekeeper (the assembly man), gaining information about the community and build rapport with the gatekeeper. Also, to familiarise myself with the community

⬇

Step 2: Second entry into the community, conducted a pilot study and had informal conversations with some informants and members of the community. This was to build some rapport with informants and to familiarise myself with them. Also, to make some adjustments to my research guide where necessary.

⬇

Step 3: At the beginning of the interview, the informants were given about 5 minutes to read and understand the consent form. Those who could not read had it read to them and translated by me. There was written or verbal consent in each of the interviews conducted.

Step 4: The semi structured interviews with informants lasted for a maximum of 40 minutes. Permission for the informant's interview to be audio recorded was asked during the informed consent procedure. I listened to the recordings at the end of each day's interviews so that I could make sure that everything was recorded well and that I made enough probing where there was the need, if not, I learnt from my mistakes so I could do better in the next interviews.

Step 5: I went back to the gatekeeper at the end of my interviews over the weeks and thanked him and informed him I had finished taking all the interviews I needed for my study.

Illustration 2: A flow chart showing a summary of steps in the research procedure

4.4.6 Language

During an interview, it is important the researcher knows the language they should use to communicate with their informants. Hence, a common language which enables the researcher and informants to feel comfortable and relaxed is needed. This helps the informant to understand fully what the questions mean and give the appropriate answers. It also helps the researcher to be able to understand clearly what the informants mean, to avoid interpreting any information wrongly. This helps to build rapport, clarify questions and terms and facilitate understanding. According to Patton (2002), clarity can be sharpened by understanding what language informants use among themselves in talking about a setting, activities or other aspects. The interviews were conducted both in English and a local Ghanaian language called *'Twi'*. This is because some of my informants were educated whiles others were not. So, both languages were used when necessary. However, there were instances during the interviews in English where *twi* was also

used. This was to clarify terms or further explain statements that participants made or did not understand. Grewal and Ritchie, (2006) argues that, a shared dialect could facilitate communication between researchers and informants. Devereux (1993), adds that the ability of a researcher to conduct interviews in a shared language with informants adds texture and depth to the data collected and foster rapport and smooth social conversation with the local people. The informants and I were comfortable with both English and *twi*. The shared dialect coupled with the fact that I also hail from the study region facilitated the communication between the informants and I as there was no need for a translator.

4.4.7 Interview questions and sequencing

Questions asked during interviews are aimed at probing into how people feel or think about the issue, their experiences and their stand with the issue. For the researcher to get more, right, truthful and quality information from the informant with the question asked, it is essential that the researcher moulds the question in a manner that allows the informant to understand exactly what is expected of him. Cloke et al. (2004), indicates that choosing an appropriate practice for asking questions should therefore be considered as part of a much wider research strategy, fully interconnected, both with careful formulation of research questions and with a clear idea of how the data are to be interpreted. Patton (2002) also differentiates between questions that an interviewer can ask during an interview and specifes that the clarity of the questions determines how the informant is able to understand and respond appropriately. It is therefore important for the researcher to pay attention to the nature of questions asked and the way they are asked in order to get the right feedback from the informant.

This study employed an approach to questioning that aimed at getting in-depth knowledge on the experiences and perspectives of the informants. I was very careful with the questions I asked so that it did not seem I was probing more than necessary into the personal lives of informants. The interview started by asking some background information of the informants. This was to know and establish the different characteristics among my informants. Questions asked also required informants to have a reflection on their past, experiences, the present and future.

4.4.8 The double vision of the researcher

I was born in Ghana and I lived and schooled in Accra to the university level before traveling to Norway to pursue my master's education. Due to this, I am very familiar with the way of life and languages of the people living in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. I have knowledge about the culture and traditions of the people in this region and I have also gained outside or foreign knowledge through education in Ghana and in Norway. I can translate the local language (twi) to the English language and vice versa with ease and without any external help or interpreter. I can therefore consider myself as someone who has an insider and outsider knowledge with double vision. This double vision is the ability to see the world both through categories of the social scientist and through the experiences of the marginalised group (Cartwright and Monstuschi, 2014.). Due to this, I believe I am in a position where I can better understand the perspectives and experiences of informants from the roots and from modern knowledge that I am exposed to.

4.5 Data Analysis

A thematic approach was be used to understand the physical abuse of women and children. Thematic analysis is used for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (usually known as themes) within qualitative data (Lyons and Coyle, 2008). Braun and Clarke (2006) argues that thematic analysis provides a 132 flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data. The data analysis for the study was guided by the identification of key themes that emerged from the interview responses. The primary data from informants during the semi-structured interviews were transcribed into plain texts and coded based on the themes and issues that emerged. The list of codes was organised using structural approach. By structural approach, the data was coded under main and similar categories and further sub-categorized using the conceptual framework as a guideline, as suggested by Skambraks (2014). Data obtained were presented by directly quoting informants throughout the analysis to give a better reflection of real-life issues from the informants' perspective. Verifying perspectives from various informants' have also been presented in the analysis to reflect the varying opinions of different categories of people on the issue. Though the process of transcribing data from interviews was time consuming and hard, it helped me to familiarize myself with the data gotten from findings. For the purpose of clarity and anonymity, informants have been given pseudonyms to aid in the analysis.

4.6 Limitation of study

This study also covers children but due to so many ethical considerations and the fact that children may not be allowed to separately be given an interview without the parent or an adult around (which may influence the information from children), the perspectives of children were not sought in this interview. However, informants were asked about their childhood experiences with regards to physical abuse and the information gotten was good enough to fill the gap created by the lack of information from children on the theme of the study.

Also, some of the people I wanted to interview thought it was a private investigation I was conducting for the authorities, so they did not want to participate. However, I assured them about my ethics as a researcher to use whatever information I got only for my study. Some were still not convinced and turned away, but I was still able to get others to partake in the interviews, which made up for those who refused to be interviewed.

4.7 Ethical consideration

Qualitative interview approaches entail that the researcher delves into the lives of people to know what they think and how they felt about issues. It may sometimes require that the individual reflects on past incidence, confidential, sensitive or painful issues to give an account of a relevant experience. Although there is no identifiable risk for participating in this study, some ethical considerations were kept in mind in dealing with issues of sensitive nature.

Ethical considerations prescribe what is acceptable and what is not in the conduct of research. Informants were reminded that they could take a break if the need be. Importantly, informants were informed that as a measure of protecting their identities, pseudonyms were used. Verbal consent was obtained from the informants. I also made available detailed informed consent forms on the study for persons who so wished to sign as evidence against any unforeseen circumstances. Informants who did not give their consent opted out from participating in the study. Every participant was told they could withdraw from the study at any point as far as he or she felt like doing so without any associated sanction or questioning.

During the interview, it was necessary I paid attention to the gender differences because I needed both genders for my study. Thus, I had to interview both genders separately so that they,

especially the women, could feel relaxed and comfortable to express themselves without hesitation.

After the interviews, some of the informants were worried that the information gotten from them would be used for other purposes, but I assured them that, the information would be used solely for my research work and that their names will not even be mentioned in my study. I handled every information received from the interviews with strict confidentiality.

The interviews were transferred from the tape recorder to a password protected file on my laptop which automatically backs up regularly. I also saved it as an encrypted file on my external hard drive which I keep with me all the time. I also transferred a copy to the university's network as it is reliable and backed up.

4.8. Chapter Summary
This chapter discussed the various methods used in collecting data for the research. These were semi-structured interviews. Although the interview was adequately prepared for, realities on the ground proved to be very challenging and this affected the data both negatively and positively. However, the outcome of information gathered for this research is reliable.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

5.0 Introduction

The common understanding of domestic violence is often limited to physical harm perpetrated on adult women within a marital relationship, and this research was limited to physical abuse as a type of domestic violence. For the purpose of the study, physical abuse is the intentional use of physical force on another person.

5.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Informants

i.   *The women*

10 women volunteered to discuss their understanding and experiences and understandings on the physical abuse of women and children. The sample age was between 25 and 55 years. The women in the study were people who had all been married for more than five years at the time of the interview, the highest being 26 years of marriage. Majority of the women had four to six children. The data relating to the educational level of respondents were collected to assess the association, if any, between the level of one's education and the quality of inter-personal relations in relation to domestic violence, and also to explore the diverse nature of understandings and experiences among people in the different educational levels. All the women I interviewed had at least the basic level of education (that is, the junior high school level as it is referred to in Ghana now), though two people dropped out of school before the final year of their basic education. Two women were junior high school dropouts, five women were secondary school graduates and 3 women were tertiary education graduates. Five fishmongers, two self-employed, and three office workers were interviewed. All the women in the study were Christians and are of the Ga tribe.

ii.   *The Men*

10 men were also recruited for the study. The sample age was between 30 and 57 years. All the men in this study were married for at least 7 years at the time of the interview except for one man who was a widower. The majority of the men had one to three children. In terms of education, all but one of the men interviewed had at least their basic level of education. Four had secondary level education and five had tertiary level education. The religious and occupational background of male informants were also captured in the study. Nine of the

men were Christians while one was a traditional believer. All the men were from the Ga tribe. Four men were government employees, two owned private businesses, one was unemployed and four were self-employed who were in fishing and trading.

5.2 Descriptive Results
5.2.1 Knowledge and understanding on Physical Abuse
The research found that all informants had knowledge on physical abuse and had their own share of experiences. All the informants said they had a cordial relationship with their partners and children at home and they live together. Informants reported that in their opinions, women and children should be treated with care and much patience because women and children are 'weak'. It is worth mentioning that all informants understand physical abuse of children as a necessary measure that helps to nurture children to become responsible and upright and rids the society off deviants.

On the other hand, most informants condemned physical abuse of women and urge that the society frowns upon it. However, few informants (both men and women), shared varied opinions in addition to this and said though physical abuse of women should be frowned on, it is sometimes justifiable.

i.   Informants' understanding of physical abuse of women
Majority of informants believed domestic violence may not be justified in some circumstances, however, the opinions of few informants is of enormous concern to women. Informants noted the following as grounds under which physical abuse might be justified: arguing with the husband, disrespecting the husband, the wife refusing to have sex, the wife neglecting the children, and the wife going out without telling the husband.

Both male and female informants shared the view that quarrels take place in all families irrespective of their socio-economic status and educational attainment. This was summarized by a female informant who said: *"The teeth and tongue in our mouth sometimes disagree, but they will re-unite later to chew food together, so it is usual of we human beings too to quarrel"*.

However, when quarrels between the husband and wife take place on a frequent basis and, when physical force is used on the woman, they are perceived as physical abuse, as was agreed by all the informants. Informants were asked what their opinions were on men who physically abuse

their wives and all my informants said beating a woman for no reason was not reasonable. However, few men said they have justifiable reasons why they think there is nothing wrong with beating or using force on a woman. One male informant said: *"some women are too loud, talk back at their husbands and quarrelsome, the only way to keep them quiet during those episodes is to beat them"*. Other male informants who believed there are justifiable reasons for hitting a woman said they are sometimes provoked too much by their partners that before they know what is going on, they had already hit them, therefore explaining that the action is spontaneous. A follow-up question was asked on this if they regret their actions once the deed is done and they all answered *yes*, but their emotions mostly have the better part of them. A 40-year-old male informant made an interesting revelation saying: *"Some women like it when we beat them. They feel it is a way of showing our love to them"*. He added: *"I was once in a relationship with a woman who always questioned my love for her because she said nothing negative she did provoked me to even slap her"*.

All female informants reported that they think there is no justifiable reason why a man should physically abuse a woman. However, few women shared other opinions too. These few female informants said though it is not justifiable for a man to beat a woman, they believe physical abuse is sometimes brought upon some women by themselves. A 55 year old female informant shared a similar opinion with one of the male informants saying: *"some of us are disrespectful towards our husbands and for them to show us who the head of the family is, the husbands beat us to put us in our place"*. Two other female informants also shared same opinions with one of the male informants saying they believe men sometimes beat women to show an act of love. They justified this with an adage in the Ghanaian culture that says: *"you are only reactive when it has to do with someone you love"*. These few female informants interpreted this adage to mean that, if they go wrong, they believe their husbands beating them is only an act of showing love and concern so that they do not repeat the wrong again. The few female informants who believed being beaten by the husband is an act of love compared the act to discipling of their children. They said, they sometimes beat their children when they go wrong because they love them, and they want them to grow up and do right.

Some women also said the reason why they think men abuse women is because the men are insecure and not confident enough so the only way, they feel they can exert control on women is to physically abuse them.

Another female informant said: *"An abusive home is better than no home".* This would be a reason why some women continue to stay in abusive homes and relationships. They believe it is better to have a marriage and a home even if it is an abusive one than to move away from such a home and have nowhere to go.

Majority of the female informants said they saw men who physically abuse women as people who are weak, insecure and abusers while few female informant defended abusive men by saying that the abusive men are also humans and they are sometimes pushed to the wall and that they only react in an abusive way to save themselves from the frustrations of women.

Majority male informants also considered men who physically abuse their wives as not being *"real men",* as they directly said while the others also defended the actions of the abusive men.

ii.   *Informants' understanding of physical abuse of children*

It is worth mentioning that all informants did not refer to physical abuse as an abuse. They used the word 'discipline' instead of 'abuse' because they do not believe the act to be an abuse and that the term abuse is too strong for the act. Informants believed discipline is a measure that should be included when bringing up children and that it is a very necessary component in the upbringing of children.   Informants said they only beat their children when they did wrong and it helped them put a stop to a wrong behavior and so they do not consider the act as an abuse but rather, an act of discipline just like scolding and other measures that did not require physical force. Informants further added that, they do not resort to using physical force on their children all the time. They also practiced other measures of disciplining children such as scolding, grounding, reward for good behavior and taking away privileges when they do wrong, not giving the child who did wrong meat or fish during supper when the rest of the family has meat and fish on their foods, throwing things at them and not allowing them to watch the television for a specified period of time. Some even said they sometimes used their eyes and strong facial expressions to communicate with their children to stop whatever they are doing, or the next thing will be beating. One informant said: *"when my child is doing something and I open my eyes wide and look at her intently, she knows it means she has to stop whatever she is doing or she will get a slap when I get close to her".* She added that it is when the child refuses to stop whatever he or she is doing that she resorts to using physical force on him.

Informants reported that acts that would motivate them to use physical force on their children is mainly when they warn their children to desist from an act and they refuse to adhere. They added that, they are motivated to use physical force on them because they believe the physical pain they inflict on the children will remind the children not to do that again because of the pain they will experience. Other informants shared the opinion that they beat their children when they disrespect an elder or refuse to perform a household chore that was given to them. Informants added they beat their children when they steal from them, scatter things around the home or when they catch them in a lie. It is worth mentioning that informants shared that children from the age five years old are children they will beat because from this age, they believe children are old enough to be able to have cognitive thinking to differentiate between right and wrong. A female informant reported that: *"At the age of five, my children were able to mention their full names correctly and when they did wrong and they saw me coming, they run, because they know I will beat them".* She added that the children run away when they saw her coming because they know what they did was wrong, and they expected to be beaten.

Informants shared the opinion that the age of the child will determine the kind of beating that they will receive from their parents. Some informants specified that, a child of about five to seven years will only receive a pat on their buttocks when they misbehave while children from the age of ten will receive beatings with canes or belts on their bodies when they did wrong. An informant said: *"When my male children are in their teenage years, I beat them massively when they misbehave because during these years of their lives, they are exuberant and if you are not harsh on them as a parent, they will go wayward".*

Most of the informants quoted the bible verse in Proverbs 13:24 that says: '*spare the rod and spoil the child'* to justify the reason why they believe every child should be handled physically when they go wrong. The informants explained this scripture verse to mean: if you allow the child to get away with anything, then they will go wayward and if you do not punish the child when they do something wrong, they will not learn from their wrongs.

Few informants reported that they sometimes use physical force on their due to the frustration their other partners gave them. One male informant said: *"I sometimes get so frustrated and angry at my wife that when I see our children, I see their mother and so the least thing they do, I*

am provoked to hit them so that they do not grow to become like their mother". However, many informants reported the main motive for using physical force on their children was because physical force was used on them by their parents when they were children. Informants added they believe this physical abuse on them helped them to grow up right and so, if they do the same to their children, the children will also grow up right.

Informants also mentioned that they know their limit and when to stop when using physical force on their children so that they do not go overboard.

5.2.1.1 Categories of motives
I will now attempt to categorize the motives given by informants on the physical abuse of women and children to make things clearer and more understanding.

i.   *Rational and acceptable violence*
This category looks at the reasons given by informants on why women and children may be physically abused. Informants believe that under these circumstances, when physical force is used on women and children, the perpetrator has a rational and acceptable motive. Motives given by informants under this category include:

- Informants believe they experienced physical abuse when they were children and it helped in their positive upbringing so when same is done to their children, no harm will be caused to them but rather, it will impact on them positively.
- Some informants believe when you pay for the dowry of a woman during the marriage process, they become some sort of property to them and so, they have the right to discipline them when they disobey them (the men).
- When the woman refuses her husband sex or food at home, they have the right to beat them, so they do not repeat the same again.
- When children go wrong or disrespect an elder, they should be disciplined because the society frowns on disrespectful and wayward children.

ii.   Unacceptable but understandable

Unacceptable but understandable motives given by informants for physical abuse are motives that are unacceptable by the international laws and institutions (example is the UN) but are regarded as understandable motives by informants. Motives that informants gave include;

- When a man is provoked by a 'nagging' wife to the extent that he loses his temper and hits her. Informants say the motive of the man losing his temper may be considered as unacceptable by law, but the motive is understandable by them because anger is something that can hardly be controlled.

- The motive of using physical force on women and children as a disciplinary measure unacceptable by law but according to informants, this helps them to maintain peace and order at home and therefore, informants consider it as an acceptable motive.

iii.   Clearly unacceptable

Some informants believe the act of physically abusing women and children is clearly unacceptable and no motive can make it justifiable. Some reasons given under this are;

- Women and children are fragile and there is no reason why a man should hit them. No reason is justifiable enough for hitting a woman or a child.

- There are other disciplinary measures such as scolding, grounding and others that do not involve using violence which can be used in nurturing the child to grow up the right way and so, the motive of using physical force on children as a way of nurturing them in a right way is unacceptable.

5.2.2 Experience/History

Experiences of informants with physical abuse of women and children will be presented in this section.

i.   Experiences of informants on physical abuse of children

The research found that all informants had first-hand experience with physical abuse when they were children. Informants reported that physical force was used on them by their parents as a disciplinary measure to put them at their right place and to help give them a proper upbringing. One informant said:

"I remember stealing meat from the soup that was prepared for supper by my mum when I was a child. My mum caught me and when my dad returned from work, she told him. In his military uniform, he hit me with a belt, and I had injuries on my body. Some got healed but I am still left with some scars now. Till today, anytime I see the scar or a man in the military uniform, I am reminded of that incidence when I was young and back then, it stopped me from stealing because I did not want to be hit by my dad anymore and true to that, that was the only time my dad ever hit me. So, I believe that being hit helped me to grow up to become an upright man who stays out of trouble".

Another informant also disclosed that she was sent on an errand at the age of 12 and she refused to go and resulted in her being beaten by her mother. Another experience was that of a woman who said:

"At the age of 10, I was sent on an errand and I lost the money. I was afraid to return home because I knew I was going to be beaten. When I finally got home, I was severely beaten by my dad with a stick and since then, I paid more attention to the money I was given on an errand and this has even helped me now that I am old. I hardly lose or misplace my money. I always remember to keep them safe and I am training my children in same manner".

Informants reported other experiences of where they were severely beaten because they disrespected their parents, or an elderly person to deter them from repeating such disrespect and it mostly worked on them.

Majority of the informants I interviewed said they grew up in a home where there was a lot of quarrelling between their parents and their mothers were being physically abused by their fathers regularly. Informants also said they saw much of this abuse in their neighborhoods and surroundings when they were growing up.

ii. Experiences of informants on physical abuse of women

The majority of the female informants had experienced physical abuse from their partners. These informants reported being slapped, hit, kicked and punched by their husbands when they were involved in an argument with them. Some informants had physical injuries from this abuse, and some had items thrown at them during the argument. Few women reported to have not experience any form of physical abuse from their partners. However, all female informants had either experienced or witnessed physical abuse in their homes or surroundings.

Most of the male informants interviewed disclosed they had slapped their wives at least once in their marriage when they were involved in an argument. Some male informants reported that they went further than just slapping their wives to hitting and kicking them because their anger was too high, and they lost control. A female informant agreed with this saying:

> *"My husband returned very late at night from work one day and I confronted him with a cheating allegation. I insulted and shouted at him and when the accusation and insults got intense, he slapped and beat me and afterwards, he called my mum to report to her what had happened, and my mum begged him for forgiveness on my behalf and warned me to respect my husband".*

An experience of another informant with regard to physical abuse is when she asked her husband to pay for the fees for their child who had been sacked from school and that resulted in she being beaten. She reported: *"All I did was to ask my husband for school fees for our son who had been sacked from school for three days consecutively and my husband slapped me and asked if I was blind to see he was resting".*

One male informant said he always saw his wife chatting with other men and these men were people who looked better off than him financially. Anytime he confronted her, she acted very disrespectfully, and he had other neighbors complaining to him about his wife's interactions with other men. So, he decided to severely beat his wife to draw her attention to who the man of the house is and that was the first time he ever physically abused his wife. When asked if he regretted his actions afterwards, he answered yes, but on some occasions, he feels that was the

best thing he could do in that situation and that made his wife scared of him and he is now given the needed respect as the man of the house. Another female informant reported:

> *"My husband once returned from work drunk and found that I had not cooked any food. He asked why there was no food for him, and I said it was because he did not leave any money behind for food. He slapped and kicked me with his feet and the following morning, when he realized what he had done the previous night, he apologized. However, this act repeats itself occasionally till date".*

Female informants reported that some women continue to stay in an abusive relationship because they stayed for their children and, every home had its own problems, so they only pray, and hope things get better.

There are many experiences of both men and women with regards to the physical abuse of women and this mostly comes down to men feeling they have the control over the woman or wife and their homes and from the interviews, some female informants continue to find excuses for their husband's physical abuse.

5.2.3. Weapons used

The next important subject related to the physical abuse of women and children is the use of a weapon in the abuse. The presence of weapons in physical abuse events may result in serious injuries and may require immediate police intervention and medical assistance. The use of weapons in physical abuse shows how severe and harsh the act is. Experiences of informants on the use of weapons will be looked at in this section.

i.   Weapons used in the case of physical abuse against women

Female informants who disclosed they have experienced physical abuse from their husbands said these men used physical force such as bare hands, fists and feet to harm them. Some informants said they experienced violent incidents involving weapons too.

Some male informants reported they had been perpetrators of physical abuse against women where they used weapons such as belts, sticks or canes, irons, furniture such as chairs and tables

and shoes/slippers to commit the act. Few male informants said they only used their body parts as weapons by kicking, slapping and punching their wives in the abuse.

One female informant said: *"During an argument I had with my husband, he threw an iron at me and it hit my right eye. I had to cover it up and lie to people who asked about it that I slipped and fell".*

ii.   Weapons used in the physical abuse against children

As stated earlier, all my informants disclosed they had first-hand experience with physical abuse when they were children. Informants said their parents normally used their body parts such as hands and feet and the frequent abuse experienced was slapping and extreme hitting with a cane or stick. Some informants said they were sometimes kicked, and some said other weapons were used such as sweeping brooms, slippers/shoes or anything their parents could lay hands on during the moment of the abuse. Most of the informants reported it was their mothers who normally abused them with any object they could lay hands on and that their fathers abuse was normally calculated and so it was normally the body parts that their fathers used to discipline them.

Some informants reported to have experienced some body injuries during the physical abuse. Some informants said they had scars on them till the day of the interview and it reminded them of what they went through when they were children.

5.2.4 Reasons for the physical abuse of women and children

Some of the reasons given by informants for the physical abuse of women and children will be looked at in this section.

From the interviews, few female informants disclosed that, they caught their husbands having an affair with another woman and they realized that, during the period of the affairs, their husbands came home angry and moody and so the least thing resulted in them being beaten by their husbands. Some male informants said women had a part to play in the abuse as well because they provoke the men with their "loud voice and insults" as the perpetrators directly said. Some female informants also blamed themselves (self-blame and guilt) for the abuse and

believe they deserved the abuse. One female informant reported she initiated the abuse by insulting and slapping her husband who in return retaliated by beating her heavily.

Informants also revealed that religion and culture play a role in the existence of physical abuse against women and children. The dominant religion is my study area is Christianity and informants believe the bible encourages women to be submissive to their husbands who are their heads. Due to this, some informants believe if women go wrong against their husbands, they should be disciplined by them. An informant said: *"People's misinterpretation of religious and cultural practices has a lot to do with how women and children are treated in Ghana"*. However, a female informant argued that:

> *"Due to the unequal power relation between men and women, women's views are often disregarded. But I want to believe that it takes the views of both the man and woman to make a good home and family".*

Some informants justified the physical abuse of women and children by quoting these bible verses; Informants justified the act of physical abuse of children by quoting some bible verses including the following:

"He that spares the rod hates his son: but he that loves his son chastise him" (Proverbs 13:24).

"Withhold not correction from the child: for if you beat him with the rod, he shall not die" (Proverbs 23:13-14).

Informants believe the bible gives the rights to the man as the heads, hence, they can discipline the wives when they go wrong. Some bible verses informants gave that support this include the following:

"Wives be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything" (Ephesians 5:22-24).

"Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored" (Titus 2:3-5).

"In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word" (1 Peter 3:1).

"To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you" (Genesis 3:16).

"Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord" (Colossians 3:18).

It is the culture of the Ghanaian society for every man to pay for the bride price[3] of a woman before the marriage is recognized by the families and society. The dowry payment was stressed by majority of informants as a key reason or motive for physical abuse. A male informant said: *"When you pay a lot of money for the dowry of a woman as if you're purchasing her as your property, and she disobeys you, it is alright to discipline her because she is a bought property".* Another male informant also said: *"When your wife refuses you sex or anytime you come home, there is no food on the table and you remember how much you paid as her dowry, you feel like squeezing or even killing her".*

Men are considered heads of the home and breadwinners and this sometimes make some of them think they have the due right and authority to physically abuse the woman when things go wrong at home.

With regards to the reasons why children were physically abused, one reason that played a major role was discipline. Informants said they physically abuse their children because it is the main measure, they believe, is effective in disciplining their children most of the time.

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[3] Bride price is often referred to as dowry, in Ghana.

5.2.5. Relationship between the physical abuse of women and children

From the study, one major reason given by informants for both abuse of women and children is discipline. Informants said one reason why a woman will be abused is because they disrespected or talked back to their husbands and this is also a reason given by all my informants regarding why children will be beaten or 'disciplined' by their parents or an elder.

Few informants said they took out their frustrations and stress from their partners on their children, as stated already in this chapter. One female informant also said: *"I beat my son because of what his father does to me so that he does not grow up to become like him in future"*.

Few informants said there is a likelihood that a woman who is abused by her husband to also abuse her children while other informants said they do not see the relationship between the physical abuse of women and children. This is because, informants consider the physical abuse of children as a normal act in the society but not that of women. Some informants said they believe in a house where the man mostly abuses his wife, there is a high likelihood that he will extend that abuse to the children. One informant agreed she has experienced that with her husband at home. Some informants also said they grew up in homes where their father abused them and their mothers periodically.

One male informant said: *"As for my wife, even if I beat her, I do not feel any pain because I did not father her, however, though I sometimes beat my child to correct her, I feel the pain emotionally during and after the act because she is my blood"*.

The data collected during the interviews indicates that there may be a relationship between the physical abuse of women and children living in the same household. This may be referred to as family violence. The violence is normally moved from the women to involve the children even when they are innocent and had done nothing wrong.

5.2.6. Impacts of Physical abuse on women and children as experiences by victims
i.   Impact on children

Battered women are not the only persons who suffer the damage wrought by physical abuse. In most cases, children are found to be very vulnerable to the long-term effects of family violence, just like the mothers themselves. Though most of the informants said that the physical abuse

they experienced while they were young had helped to shape them right, they also disclosed that, it left them with some physical injuries and scars. Some of these scars remains on their bodies as at the time of the interviews and they are scars they are not proud of because it only reminded them of a painful experience in their childhood. Some informants said they experienced some sort of psychological trauma from the abuse.

Though most of my informants said being beaten while they were children helped in they growing up to be responsible people, a few also said it got to a point in their lives where they became tolerant to the abuse so they did not care anymore what might get them beaten. They just did what they wanted and did not care about the outcome, so, they cannot say for a fact whether the abuse made them who they are today or not. However, they do believe that despite the impact of the abuse on children, they still believe it a needed measure in the upbringing of children.

Some informants who admitted to being victims of physical abuse revealed that this abuse at home had effects on the children. Some of these effects included delinquency, truancy at school, behavioral problems and temperamental problems. This was summarized by an informant who said:

> *"Due to the abuse at home, my husband does not pay much attention on our children. The children have started behaving delinquent. They refuse to go to school sometimes with the excuse that the feeding money they are given is too small. On some days, when they leave home for school, they go and join bad company somewhere under a tree and refuse to go to school. I try to discipline them but since they are teenagers, there is little I can do. I sometimes want to report it to their father but due to how brutal his discipline is, I am afraid for the health of my children".*

Informants also reported that the abuse at home has a sort of strain relationship on the family. Informants further added that the quality of time that the family is supposed to share together and create good memories are sometimes distorted when the man is constantly abusing the woman. Informants said it sometimes leads to children forming some strange feelings and hate towards their father because of what they see their father do to their mother. Some informants reported

that they used to live in fear when they were children because they did not know when the next abuse will be extended to them. Some experiences informants shared included:

"When I was young, due to the abuse on my mother by our father, I did not have that natural fatherly love for him. My siblings and I only feared him and so we did not have any cordial bond with him. It has remained that way till now".

Another informant said:

"My children neither bothered to ask about their father nor complained about wanting to see him. They don't have that feeling of love towards their father although I have never talked bad about him. Anyway, they are all grown up now and they know how to judge him for themselves".

ii. Impact on women

The effects of physical abuse on women are sometimes massive. The effects range from the physical health problems to psychological and emotional problems. From the study, it was discovered that, some of the effects of physical abuse on women were psychological, physical and emotional effects. Few female informants admitted to facing a great deal of stress and frustration in their homes. The informants said they lived in fear sometimes especially when their husbands looked moody and angry because they do not know what their husbands' action may be. Few informants blamed themselves as the cause of the abuse (by nagging too much, talking back or disrespecting their husbands). Some informants said they developed headaches and migraines which was as a result of the abuse. These informants said they took some medication for it, so it had stopped as at the time of the interview whiles one informant said she still has occasional headaches. Some informants reported to have developed low self-esteem because of the constant abuse from their partners. Other informants said they had physical injuries and scars from the abuse. Spiritually, one female informant said she has accepted her fate in the abused marriage and she believes all she can do is to pray to God and hope her husband gets better. The female informant supported this with the bible verse in Proverbs 21 versus 1 that says: *"the heart of the king is in the hands of the Lord and He does with it what He*

pleases". With this, the informant said she believes God knows best and with time and prayers, her husband's heart will be turned in her favor.

5.2.7 Disclosing the abuse and seeking help
i.   Children

As it has been stated earlier in the study, perpetrators of physical abuse of children do not consider it as an abuse. They consider it as a normal and justifiable act in the society which is a part of the upbringing of a child. However, informants also said that some abuse sometimes exceeds its limits when it involves the use of sharp objects like knives and even hot water and burns. In such abuses, they believe the incidence should be reported to the police and the institution responsible for the welfare of children (Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit, DOVVSU). One informant recounted a very sad incidence that happened in his neighborhood some years ago and he said:

> *"A woman boiled water and poured it on a girl who was about the age of 15 and was living with her as a help because she believed the girl had stolen from her. The girl had burns all over her body and the woman made her wear a big dress covering all her body and sent her to go out and fetch water a few miles away. People noticed the girl was crying and was in pain and realized what had been done to her. They quickly reported the case to the nearest police station and the woman was arrested and the girl sent to the hospital for proper care".*

ii.   Women

Disclosing physical abuse and seeking help outside are the major steps in changing the situation of abusive relationships. It takes a great deal of courage for female victims to disclose the abuse and seek help from a third party. Physical abuse is a major cause of physical injuries and mental health problems, yet incidents of such occurrences have been reported to be under reported.

Informants believe that some women keep the abuse to themselves and do not report the abuse. The informants who had acknowledged that they had been abused by their partners said they had reported the case to the police yet at the time of the interviews and when they were asked if they were ever going to report it to the police if the incidence should occur again, they answered

"I do not know". From the interviews, it was obtained that some of the reasons why they do not report the cases are because of stigmatization and shame, unwillingness to disclose 'private household matters', fear of their husbands being arrested, which will cause them to cater for their children on their own without their husbands' support. Some informants said they do not believe in the police to handle the case of the abuse with the law and so decide not to 'bother' themselves about reporting the abuse to the police.

Informants said they mostly report the incidence of abuse to their families and their pastors. One female informant said when she reported the case of the abuse to her mother, the informant's mother told her that the abuse is in every home and so the informant should just endure the abuse because of her children and treat her husband with the necessary respect.
The informant who experience a black eye from her husband throwing an iron at her added:

> *"When I was hit with an iron by my husband during the argument, I lied to people who asked me about it that I fell down and it resulted in the injury around my eye. This is because I was ashamed to tell people the truth because of what they will say and how they will look at my husband. So, to protect my husband and I from the shame and scrutiny of the society, I withheld the truth from everyone including my family".*

Some informants said because of their children, they keep quiet about the abuse and stay so their children will have both parents in their lives and have someone to look after them.
Few male informants reported that when their wives reported the incident of abuse to their families, they called for a family meeting to investigate the matter and solve it within the family. The informants said they gave the reasons for the abuse and the abuse was sometimes justified. The informants said in the family meeting, they were only advised to treat their wives better and their wives were also advised to do better and that is all they got, and the issue was solved. I stated above the experience of the woman who slapped and talked back at her husband and was beaten. In this case, it was the man who called the woman's mother to report the case and he was rather begged for forgiveness and the woman was condemned for her actions. This goes to show how issues of physical abuse are taken lightly by some families.

However, this is not the case all the time. Some informants also disclosed that when cases of abuse are reported to the families of the victim, some families take it as a serious problem and put measures in place to bring the man, the perpetrator, to book. Informants said, some families sometimes go as far as threatening to report the case to the authorities for the man to be arrested and dealt with by the institutions and agencies responsible for domestic violence in Ghana. They further said: *"This goes a long way to help resolve the situations at home and cause the man to act right"*.

Some informants said victims report the cases of abuse to their pastors. Some informants said they see the pastor as a spiritual father that they turn to in their crisis. These pastors call the perpetrators and talk to them and advise them in accordance with the bible and lead the family in prayers for peace to reign. One female informant said this worked for her and in time, things with her husband became better.

5.2.8 Barriers to disclosing abuse
As it has been stated above, some of the reasons why people do not disclose the issue of abuse is because of the shame and stigma that is associated with the act. One informant said:

> *"I love my husband so much and I know that he only does what he does because he loves me too much and so he is easily reactive to what I do and because of that, I cannot report the incident of abuse to the police or my family. This is because, I may forgive him for the abuse, but the police and my family may not, and my family may look down on him with hatred in the future"*.

Another barrier given by informants was that women want a 'fatherly-figure' for their children and so when they report a case of abuse to the police or family and the husband is taken away or they are separated, then their children may go wayward.

One informant also said: *"Having an abusive husband is better than being single at my age and having people point fingers at me"*. From the interviews, it could be inferred that some women lack the confidence in them to do good on their own without the help of the man they are married to. So, they will prefer to stay in an abusive home and relationships than to report it to the police or agencies responsible for their welfare. It is worth mentioning that informants said

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most of these agencies do not provide financial support for the abused women because of the general hardship in the economy of Ghana. This is also a barrier to disclosing the abuse. Women would prefer a marriage and a home than '*to be sent packing'*, as they called it.

An informant said: *"at least we are sure of getting something to eat and things getting better with our husbands than to leave the house and have no solid financial support for us and our children from the government agencies"*.

In the Ghanaian society, the family unit is essential. In most circumstances, women will always be blamed for the break-up of the family (regardless of the reason), causing the children to have no male parent. The pressure of being labelled as problematic women in society has caused many of them to endure the consequences of living in the violent relationships.

Some informants believe the bible also encourages women to continue to live with their husbands and does not mention that women should leave when they are being abused by the partners. Some of the verses that support this are:

"For I hate divorce," says the LORD, the God of Israel, "and him who covers his garment with wrong," says the LORD of hosts. "So, take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously" (Malachi 2:16).

"But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery" (Matthew 5:32).

"Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. And if she divorces her "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her" (Mark 10:12).

Few informants also reported they did not tell anyone about the abuse mainly because they thought they should honor the men's pride as the head of the family and give the husband another opportunity to change.

To sum up this section, women normally turn to their families, friends and pastors for support during the times of abuse. As has been stated earlier, informants did not see the physical abuse

of children as an abuse and so they were no information about the barriers with regards to children. However, it is worth mentioning that informants said when they think their children were being beaten too much by one of the spouses, the other, normally the women, jump into it to defend their children. One female informant recounted an incident where the husband was always beating their male child at the least provocation. She said she had to step into it and talk to the husband in defense of their child. The informant said the man blamed her to be the reason the child was becoming a deviant, but she believes stepping into the situation was best. She added that *"things are better now though"*.

5.2.9 Informants knowledge on domestic abuse services

Knowing the variety of services available and how accessible they are can make a great deal of difference for the abused women and children.

From the interviews conducted, many informants had no idea about the agencies that fight for the welfare of women and children who are abused. The informants did not know the Domestic Violence Act 732 (2007) and the Children's Act 560 (1998) and Act 701 (2006), which protects the rights and welfare of women and children in Ghana. Informants associated the reason for their lack of knowledge about these Acts and agencies to their ignorance and inability to read and write and others said, they do not get enough time to read about such things from newspapers. Informants said:

> *"I have no access to television or radio at home"*, *"My life is around my kids and family 24/7"*, *"I have no time because I am so busy with the household chores"*. *"I can't afford to buy newspapers just to read about the laws and agencies of the country"* and *"I don't do much reading"*.

Few informants with little knowledge about the agencies and Acts said they hear some of the agencies being mentioned in news on televisions and radios, but they the informants do not really know much about what they are about. Only few informants had very good knowledge about the agencies and institutions responsible for the wellbeing of women and children (one had even worked with them) and they were the ones with high level of education.

5.2.10 Comparing findings to the theoretical framework of the study

As has been said in chapter three, the theoretical framework which the study is based on is the social learning theory. As stated in chapter three, the SLT suggests the environment in which one in exposed to in their childhood, influences their actions when they are old or as they grow up. According to this theory, aggressive behavior can be learnt by observing and imitating the aggressive behavior of other people.

From the interviews, the study can rely on the SLT because informants reported that they learned to use physical force on women and children due to their experiences and exposure to physical abuse when they were growing up. One main reason informants gave as a motive why they will physically abuse their children is because they experienced it themselves and they believe it helped to shape them into the 'responsible' adults that they are today.

An element of the social learning theory process is retention. Retention is being able to recount the experience observed. All my informants were able to recount instances in their childhood where they were physically abused by their parents for something they did wrong. Some informants shared some experiences of these encounters which have already been stated above.

The third contributing factor of the SLT process is reproduction. Reproduction is when an individual who has observed a role model act in a certain way and they feel confident they can imitate the role model in a similar manner (role model here refers to parents or anyone who can influence the child). From the study, informants stated they are reproducing what their parents did to them when they were children. Informants believe they are now in the position of their parents and they are confident beating their children will make the children act or behave in a desirable manner.

The last contributing factor in the SLT process is motivation. Once an action can achieve a desired outcome, then individuals are motivated to use the same action. Informants disclosed that the physical abuse of their parents and elders as a measure to make them disciplined and responsible was achieved. Hence, they also believe, from their own personal experiences that if something of that sort is done by them to their children, they will also receive their desired outcome with their children. Hence, they are motivated to also use physical force on their children.

Also, some informants said they grew up in a home where they watched their mothers being hit, slapped, beaten among others and watched the society and family do nothing. Some informants said they continued to stay in such abuse because of their children and it is the same thing that the informants' mothers did for them. Hence, the cycle is being passed on from parents to their children. Some male informants said they watched their mothers being physically abused and according to them, the abuse 'shut' them up and caused them to respect and so, when provoked by their partners to the extreme, they are motivated to do exactly what their fathers did without meaning to. It can be inferred from this that, informants learnt their actions from the abuse they witnessed and experienced.

5.3 Chapter summary

This chapter focused on presenting details of findings from the interviews conducted. The chapter investigated the understandings of informants on the physical abuse of women and children, the experiences of informants on the subject matter, motives of informants for physical abuse of women and children, knowledge on awareness as well as barriers for seeking help, the impact of the abuse, the relationship between the two forms of abuse and how the study supports the social learning theory. It was obtained that informants see the physical abuse of children as being a normal act that is a part of the society and a necessary tool that is required on the upbringing of children but not physical abuse of women. It was also found that, informants do not call the act as an abuse but rather a disciplinary measure just like the ones that do not require using physical force. All informants said they had experienced some form of physical abuse when they were children.

Examples of such abuse include being slapped, beaten with belts and canes, among others. Informants reported that some common motives for the abuse is the influence of alcohol and women nagging or talking back at their husbands. The study also revealed that the family and religious heads are the main people that victims of the abuse turn to for help and support during times of abuse. From the study, it was also made known that the act of physical abuse has some psychological, mental and physical impacts on the victims such as fear, low self-esteem and confidence, headaches and migraines, physical injuries and scars among others. Many informants had little or no knowledge about the agencies and institutions and Acts responsible for the protection of the welfare of children and women.

Data from the interviews taken for the study indicates that the study can rely on the theoretical framework on which the study was based on, that is, the social learning theory.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.0. Introduction

This is the final chapter of the study. This chapter discusses findings in relation to the most relevant literature.

6.1. Detailed discussion

Informants shared various knowledge and experiences on physical abuse of women and children. It is evident that physical abuse of women and children exists in the Teshie municipality. Studies from Action Aid Ghana 2007, Gender Studies and Human Right Documentation Centre (1991), Coker-Appiah and Cusack (1999), Hahm and Guterman (2001) and Yohannes et al. (2019), confirm the existence of physical abuse. Informants shared their experiences of physical abuse to prove the existence of the abuse. The most common forms of physical abuse identified included beating, slapping, punching, using body parts and kicking. All informants admitted having experienced physical abuse when they were children and believe that it shaped their upbringing positively. Due to this, they are encouraged to also do same to their children who may also do the same in the future. This shows how serious the issue of physical abuse is and how far it may go if proper efforts are not made to put an end to it. This is because it is something that has formed part of the mindset of the people interviewed and may be considered as a transgenerational problem. For the people interviewed, physical abuse of children is part of the culture and normal procedure involved in the upbringing of children and this agrees to findings of UNICEF Ghana (2013), as discussed in the literature review. Informants were abused physically by their parents and they in turn physically abuse their children because that is the way children should be nurtured. Looking at the learning aspect of the social learning theory (SLT), the motives and views of informants can be understood. Information gathered from informants agrees with the SLT of Albert Bandura (1977) which suggests that children learn from behaviors that they are exposed to when they are growing up. Informants who had been perpetrators of physical abuse of women also shared that they saw their fathers treat their mothers that way and learned it without meaning to. This finding also agrees with the study of Mihalic and Elliot (1977), who argued that if the family of a person's origin handled stresses and frustrations with anger and aggression, the child who has grown up in such an environment is at a greater risk of exhibiting those same behaviors witnessed or experienced, as an adult.

From the modern perspective, a lens through which the UN mainly operates, which has been discussed in chapter three, due to modernization and education, the habit of using physical force on women and children is outdated and should not be encouraged. However, from the traditional perspective, which is constituted by traditions, culture and norms, people still believe that women and children should be treated with physical force to cause them to act right. From my interviews, I can infer that most of my informants saw how women and children should be treated from the traditional perspective. Informants believed the act of using physical force on women and especially children, is a norm that has always been present in society and it worked for them as a disciplinary tool. Although informants admitted to using other methods of disciplinary measures, using physical force was the commonest because they believed it worked more effectively. Informants even admitted to using weapons like canes, belts, brooms, slippers or anything they could lay hands on when caught in the heat of the moment, on women and children. The use of such weapons in the physical abuse of women and children shows how severe and harsh the act is and how much importance should be placed on the problem.

Some informants justified the physical abuse of women with various reasons and this may be worrying to the United Nation (UN) and other agencies responsible for the wellbeing of women because, it shows that these informants have a reason and cultural background which justifies the act of abuse and these justifications are quite different from the basis of the UN. The UN recognizes violence against women as an obstacle to the achievement of equality and a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women and a violation of fundamental freedom (UN, 1993). Though my study cannot be generalized, I believe there are more women out there who are suffering in silence due to the level of justification and acceptability that some people give to the act of physical abuse against women. The study has an objective of investigating the motives, experiences, rationale and understandings of informants behind the physical abuse of women and children. Some informants agreed that love was a motive why a man will physically abuse his wife. From the modern perspective, this may be interesting or shocking to know, however, that was not the case for some of the informants. Some people will wonder why inflicting pain on another person demonstrates love, by according to few of my informants, just as parents hit their children to correct them out of love, that is how a husband may hit his wife to show love. A female informant even attributed the physical abuse from her husband to love. This finding from my study agrees with the finding of a study by

Fekadu et. Al (2018). The authors found in their study that 18% of their formants believed physical abuse was a sign of love.

High bride prices paid by some men when marrying a woman was also given as a motive for physical abuse against men. The practice of bride price is central to marriage rites and is deeply embedded as a valued cultural norm in Ghana (Hughes, 1985). Informants believed that the tradition where a man has to pay a high bride price just to marry a woman gave them the right to treat the women anyhow they wanted. Informants likened this tradition to buying an item. Informants said since they paid for the bride just like they pay for a property, they believe they are given the liberty to handle women as they wished. This finding agrees with findings from Kambarami (2006) and Chireshe and Chireshe (2010). The authors suggest that bride price appears to involve bargaining and buying of a wife as a 'commoditized' item in the marriage market, which can result in physical abuse towards a woman if she does not fulfil her 'value for money' expectation.

Another motive given by informants for physical abuse of women and children is disrespect. Informants reported that when children disrespect an elder or their parents, this warranted physical abuse to deter them from repeating act of disrespect. Informants reported that men are generally the breadwinners of the home and the heads of the family according to tradition. Hence, when women disrespect their husbands, informants believe men have the permission to handle them with physical force. This finding confirms the findings of Fekadu et al (2018) which says that men are the heads of women, they own their wives, men can punish their wives when they disrespect them for the men to keep their reputation at home. Findings from my interviews indicate that some people use stress and frustration from their partners as a motive of indulging in physical abuse. However, a study Hoffman et al. (1994), failed to confirm the stress and frustration motive given by informants. This contradiction in the findings of this study to other study is assumed to be because of the small size of the sample used in this study. On the other hand, studies from Martin et al. (1999), UNR 1989 and Xingjuan (1999) agrees with the stress and frustration motive.

Informants also explained religion as a motive of physical abuse of women and children. I observed from the interviews that, informants interpreted several bible verses to support physical abuse of women and children. This interpretation cannot be generalized to have the same

meaning to everyone. The bible is interpreted differently by different people and I believe there are other people who can also find other bible scriptures they may interpret as scriptures that discourage physical abuse of women and children. Also, there are other people who do not share the same belief as Christians and hence, do not believe in the bible. However, the Teshie municipality is dominated by Christians and all my informants were Christians, which explains the heavy reliance and interpretation on the bible to support physical abuse of women and children.

It was observed that, informants had experienced some impacts of physical abuse. Some informants reported they obtained some injuries and scars from being physically abused. Some informants complained of delinquency in children, emotional detachment from fathers who abused informants and or their mothers, fear, headaches and migraines, physical injuries and pain as some of the impacts of physical abuse informants and their children experienced. Some informants even reported to have developed tolerance to the abuse, and this may be alarming to policy makers. Research shows that once someone becomes tolerant to something, the person is now in a state where they do not care anymore what happens. Some studies also suggest that physical abuse sometimes has lasting impacts on victims and this abuse may also cause them to act violent later in life. The above are some of the negative impacts of physical abuse on women and children which manifested in the study and these have already been discussed in the literature review (Heise et al. 1994, Lundy and Grossman 2005, Al-Atrushi et al. 2013, Fageeh 2017, Kitzmann et al. 2003, Richardson et al. 2002 and Jarvis et al. 2005).

Informants believed the right people to report an issue of physical abuse to are family and friends and heads of the church. Some informants reported that they would prefer to keep the abuse to themselves and that they will only go out to seek help from the family as a last resort. Informants backed this with some Ghanaian proverb that says: *'you do not have to wash your dirty laundry outside for everyone to* see' and *'honor the pride of your husband because he is the head of the family'*. This finding agrees with studies conducted by Sricamsuk (2006) and Izzidien (2008). According to Sricamsuk (2006), the domestic violence problem is perceived as a private family matter among the people in Thailand. The study found that instead of reporting the violent incidents, many abused women are keeping the problem to themselves. In fact, they attempted to endure the violence if they could, just for the sake of the family. The Izzidien (2008) study

demonstrated that there was a lack of support from the extended family when abused women sought assistance. Thus, these negative responses from the family may hamper disclosing physical abuse to a third party in order to seek help. A study conducted using the Tiv-speaking people of Benue State in Nigeria also indicated that women accepted domestic violence as part of marriage in their society. They also considered such abuse as a sign of love in the couple's relationship and therefore they decided to adapt to the situation (Odimegwu, 2001). As a result, disclosing abuse together with seeking outside assistance was considered as a last resort for the women in solving abusive relationship problems.

Informants reported that the reason many abused women do not report the case of physical abuse to the police and other authorities responsible for the wellbeing of women and children is because they do not have confidence in the police to take charge. This finding agrees with findings from Dunlop et al. (2005) and Senturia et al. (2000). Dunlop et al. (2005) in their study on older women's understanding toward domestic violence issues concluded that informants described negative feelings regarding police responses, explicitly regarding insensitivity displayed by officers as well as an ignorance of effectively dealing with the victims. Senturia et al. (2000) found out some informants recruited in their study reported being dissatisfied with the police treatment during the help seeking process as the women's pleas for help were often ignored. However, the study of Lanthier (2008) obtained from the community research project in Toronto which investigated women's experiences of the police response to domestic violence incidents, had different findings. Informants from Lanthier's study reported positive comments were received from the women informants. The police officers in this survey were described as helpful in most of the domestic abuse cases and cared to provide information, resources, as well as making appropriate referrals for the women to obtain further assistance. It was observed that informants had little or no knowledge about the domestic violence laws and Acts, and governmental and non-governmental agencies responsible for protecting the rights welfare of women and children. Some informants attributed this to inadequate awareness created by the government and these agencies. Some informants also said they do not see the usefulness of the agencies and hence, are not encouraged to learn about them. This finding may contribute to why physical abuse is still seen by some informants as a normal and justifiable act

As it has already been established, physical abuse against women and children is considered as a justifiable act and many believed that the society encourages it and so informants reported they do not see the reason why help will be sought by many. They reported that, the only time help should be sought from the police or other agencies is when things go too extreme and much physical harm is done to the child and woman.

A connection between the physical abuse of women and children was established by some informants, though little. Many informants believed there is no relationship between the physical abuse of women and children. However, informants believe there is the possibility of household abuse where the wife and children are all abused. Husbands may abuse both the wives and children whiles wives may be the only abusers of children due to the abuse she experiences from her husband. Informants reported that there is sometimes the displacement of frustration and anger from their spouse on their children. In addition, informants gave some common motives for the abuse of women and children. These motives include abusing women and children as a measure of discipline, for lack of respect and to cause them to perform in a manner acceptable by the perpetrator.

6.2. Conclusion and Recommendation

Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) reported in 2014 that, 15,404 males were suspected to have indulged in domestic violence as against 2,841 females. In 2015, however, the number dropped to 13,692 males as against 2,484 females. The statistics indicated that more men continue to be generally perpetrators of domestic violence while more women continue to be victims even though the figures reduced. Although DOVVSU through its sensitisation programmes educated the public about the problem, more needs to be done.

The in-depth nature of the interviews enabled me to explore the perspectives of both men and women on the physical abuse of children. The study was mainly about understanding the motives and reasonings of informants on the physical abuse of women and children. I was not after causal factors that contribute to physical abuse since this will require the recruitment of a wider number of informants and approach. The findings indicate that majority of informants believe that the act of abusing women is not justifiable and should be frowned upon though a handful think that physically abusing women is justifiable under certain circumstances and given certain motives.

On the other hand, informants did not recognize the act of beating, kicking, slapping and punching children as an abuse. Informants refer to such abuse as an act of discipline and said it is a justifiable act. However, they also revealed that, there is a limit where this discipline should go. They added that, the discipline should not go to the extent where a child suffers severe physical injuries. Yet, from the study, it was also revealed that some of this discipline results in physical harm where victims are left with bruises and scars. It can be inferred from the study that religion also plays a part in the act of physical abuse of women and children in Ghana.

The study was based on the SLT which provides a perspective on family interaction patterns that foster violence and abuse. It contends that behavior is learned in large part through observation, imitation, reinforcement and motivation. Prior to engaging in an observed behavior, an individual generates ideas about probable rewards and punishments. Reactions from others are used to develop implicit rules that are applied to future in similar situation. As a result, learning often occurs through direct experience, with individuals learning guidelines for many behavior forms that are more complex than the specific action observed (Hoffman et al, 2004). The study does not center on SLT entirely but applies the aspect of the SLT which states that aggressive behavior is learned. Findings from my study supports the SLT since informants reported that they learned the abuse from their parents and the society they grew up in.

The physical abuse of women and children has much impact on the health and wellbeing of victims in several ways and this has been established in the study. Various barriers that prevent people from reporting cases of abuse include lack of confidence in the police and other governmental institutions, religion, the need for the presence of fatherly love for children.

The study also revealed that the majority of informants do not have much knowledge about the governmental and other institutions that are responsible for the welfare of women and children. I recommend that more public education should be made to create awareness and more of these units should be established in the various localities. The presence of these units alone is not enough, much education should be made to inform the public about the duties of the units and the help they render to victims of physical abuse. The government should make more policies that allocate substantial resources to victims of such abuse.

Findings from this study hint that in order to understand comprehensively physical abuse against women and children in Ghana's Greater Accra Region, we should explore some socio-demographic variables such as: unemployment of couples, alcohol use, Islam, Christianity or traditional religious affiliation, living in an urban setting, as well as lack of appreciation of a woman by her husband due to the embedded internalization of gender roles differentiation.

Findings from this study is only limited to the Teshie area in Greater Accra Region, hence, cannot be generalized to all men and women in Ghana as it only focused on the understandings, experiences and motives of women and men on physical abuse in an urban part of Ghana. More nuanced and further research could use more representative sample from all the ten regions of Ghana, employ more feminist ethnographic methodologies, and incorporate longitudinal designs in order to gain more in-depth information and rich perspectives in order to understand the complex dynamics of domestic violence. A more nuanced study could be carried out to investigate the relationship between domestic violence and education. Also, this study could not look much into the abuse of children and women differently since it wanted to look at the understandings, reasons, rationale and motives of informants on the physical abuse of women and children. There are also other forms of abuse including sexual and emotional abuse which more research can be done into.

This study proves that physical violence does exist among women and children in Teshie, Ghana. Therefore, additional research that focuses on the socio-cultural variables such as ethnic groupings, religious beliefs as well as other crucial information related to the unique characteristics of the community needs to be taken into account in order to provide helpful insights into the country's profile of abuse of women and children.

It is worth mentioning that any global approach to physical abuse of children must consider the differing standards and expectations for parenting behavior in the range of cultures around the world. Culture is a society's common fund of beliefs and behaviors, and its concepts of how people should conduct themselves. Hence, the culture of a country also determines how they will see and define physical abuse of children. Every country has its own traditions and when looking at physical abuse of women and children, one cannot expect every country to adhere to the same standards of treating women and children. However, efforts must be put in place so that a country that accepts physical abuse of children and women as a disciplinary measure is

made to see the various health effects such abuse has on women and children. Although it is a real challenge, the culture of considering physical abuse as a mere family matter demands change because partner violence is a serious crime. The accomplishment of educating the public on such matters is also a key component of such efforts. The culture of the society seeing the physical abuse of children as a mere act of discipline which needs no attention should also be changed and more effort should be put into public education and offenders brought to book to serve as deterrents for others. Agencies and institutions that are responsible for the welfare and protection of women and children include DOVVSU, Ghana Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Ghana NGOs coalition on the rights of the child and Defense for Children (DCI).

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: List of informants

Informants	Gender	Age	Type of interview	Marital status
Informant1	M	30	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 2	M	35	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 3	M	57	Semi-structured	Widower
Informant 4	M	45	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 5	M	40	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 6	M	33	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 7	M	51	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 8	M	46	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 9	M	49	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 10	M	33	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 11	F	55	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 12	F	26	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 13	F	42	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 14	F	25	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 15	F	30	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 16	F	41	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 17	F	49	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 18	F	37	Semi-structured	Married
Informant 19	F	41	Semi-structured	Married

| Informant 20 | F | 33 | Semi-structured | Married |

Appendix 2:

<div align="center">

Interview Guide

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Part A: Community entry

- Go through traditional community formalities
- Introduce myself
- State ethical guidelines
- Negotiate terms for the interview such as the place and time appropriate for informants.

Part B: Consent form and Interview guide for informants

<div align="center">

CONSENT FORM

TOPIC: A perspective study on the physical abuse of women and children in the Teshie district of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana.

Researcher: Mercy Asare

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I have been given information about the research topic and discussed the project with the researcher who is conducting this research.

I have been informed of the potential risks and burdens of this interview which may include sharing of sensitive and private information as well as experiences about me or people I know.

I have read and understood this consent form and what it entails.

I understand that I was not forced in any manner and my participation is voluntary. I also understand that I can withdraw from this interview anytime I feel uncomfortable to continue, without any further questions being asked.

I understand that all information given in the interview will be used purposefully for this research and information will be handled with strict confidentiality. I also understand that my identity will be held anonymous.

I understand that all necessary ethical consideration needed for this research has been duly met.

I understand that I can ask questions if I do not understand anything at any time during the interview.

By signing below, I consent to conducting the interview.

…………………………..

Signature

………………………….

Initials

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview with men and women

Opening statement of researcher: "Thank you for accepting to participate and share your understanding and experiences about the physical abuse of women and children. Your experiences and views on physical abuse issues are very important in order to understand and address this social problem. This whole session will take approximately forty to sixty minutes and will be audio recorded. Our conversation is strictly confidential, and you can stop the conversation at any time if you have the need to without any question being asked. You may also indicate if you do not want to answer any of these questions".

Section One: Building rapport

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself? (tribe, marital status, occupation, age, number of children if any and level of education)
2. What is the relationship between you and your partner and children, if any?
3. In your own opinion, how do you think women and children should be treated?

4. What do you think should be entailed in the upbringing of children?

5. Is disciplining children necessary in their upbringing?

6. What are some of the disciplinary measure you use or think are needed in the upbringing of children?

7. What do you think about using force in the upbringing of a child? Is necessary and rational? Why? When will you resort to using physical force on the child?

8. How often do you use other methods of discipline? Can you give me some examples of these methods?

9. What are some of the circumstances in your opinion that will require using physical force on a woman and a child?

10. Do you think the above-mentioned circumstances are acceptable, unacceptable, justifiable or not? Can you categorize them based on your thoughts?

11. What is your understanding on men who beat or use any act of force against women?

12. What do you think about children who are beaten, kicked etc. by their parents or guardians?

13. In your opinion, how does the society you love in see the use of physical force on women and children?

Section Two: History

1. Have you ever experienced any form of physical abuse either as a victim, perpetrator or a witness?

2. How severe was this abuse?

3. Were any weapons used in the abuse?

4. Can you share some of your experiences? Especially if you can give specific instances and reasons behind the abuse.

Section Three: Motives, reasons and rationale for abuse

1. What do you think are some of the reasons and motives for the physical abuse of women and children?

2. Do you think the upbringing of an individual influence the probability of him abusing his partner or their children? Why do you think so?

Section Four: Barriers, Awareness and Seeking help

1. Do you think there are barriers that prevent women and children from seeking help when they are physically abused?
2. What are some of them and how do they oppose the fight against physical abuse?
3. What do you know about the domestic violence act in Ghana?
4. What do you know about services rendered to victims?
5. If you are a victim of physical abuse, either as a child or a woman, who would you report it to? Why?

6. What other measures would you take if found in such a situation?

Section Six: Impact

1. Were you beaten by your parents or guardian when you were growing up?
2. Was this physical abuse warranted, deserved or necessary?
3. Do you think this played a part in your life in any way? How?
4. Has that influenced your understanding about the use of physical force on children as a disciplinary measure? Why?
5. Did you grow up seeing your mother or other women being physically abused by their partners?
6. Has it influenced your understanding about why women should or should not be handled with force?

Section seven: Relationship

1. Do you think women who are physically abused by their partners or have been victims in the past are likely to beat their children? Why?
2. Do you think men who beat or kick their partners or women are likely to bear their children too? Why?
3. Do you think any relationship exists between childhood victims of physical abuse and "now adult perpetrator" of physical abuse? Why?
4. Do you think their experiences influence their understandings and actions?

Researcher's closing statement: "Thank you for your time and information given during this interview. I am very glad for your participation in this study. Your contribution is much appreciated|".

Note: further or follow-up questions may be asked based on the responses the respondents may give.

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