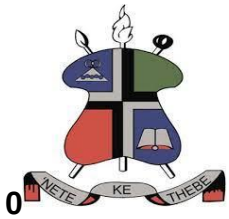

Intimate Partner Violence in Mokhotlong Lesotho:

Perceptions and experiences of young adult men who have perpetrated Intimate Partner Violence

By

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A research project submitted to the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work in partial fulfilment of the requirements for Master of Social Work

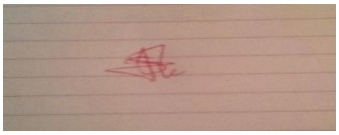
National University of Lesotho **June, 2023**

Roma

DECLARATION

I, ‘Matheo Philadel Ndaule (nee ‘Mannana Makubakube), declare that “Intimate Partner Violence in Mokhotlong Lesotho: Perceptions and experiences of young adult men who have perpetrated Intimate Partner Violence”, hereby submitted, is my own independent work with ideas duly acknowledged through citation and references. It is being submitted for a Master’s Degree in Social Work (Clinical) in the Faculty of Social Sciences under the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work at the National University of Lesotho. It was never submitted previously to any University.

Student signature



Date

28/06/2023

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ABSTRACT

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a global public health concern whose incidence escalates alarmingly, along with the related death toll of mostly women. Both men and women can be IPV perpetrators, but men are the largest category of perpetrators. Even so, men's perceptions of IPV (what it is, when or why it takes place) or, for that matter, their experiences, remain under-researched as more focus is placed on restoring affected women's health and finding them safe alternative housing during IPV-related crisis. As such, inadequate population-based empirical studies have examined men's IPV perceptions and/or experiences in the Sub-Sahara, including Lesotho.

On that background, this study had the following objectives: (a) To understudy perceptions of young adult men in Mokhotlong on Intimate Partner Violence, (b) To investigate childhood experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong on Intimate Partner Violence, and (c) To investigate adulthood experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong on Intimate Partner Violence. It adopted an explorative qualitative research design to collect and analyze primary data. Participants were young adult men from an Urban Settlement in Mokhotlong Lesotho, with self-reports of previous involvement in IPV who were willing to disclose such involvement. The data was collected from a snowball sample using face-to-face in-depth interviews.

Under perceptions of IPV, participants described IPV as any act of physical or emotional aggression towards one's intimate partner, adding that IPV could be justified under circumstances such as; when women were disrespectful towards men and when women were married. The participants further described their childhood IPV experiences as witnessing significant adults in their lives commit IPV without facing interpersonal or community consequence. Furthermore, participants said that in their adulthood, they had committed IPV when their intimate partners were disrespectful towards them and/or when participants were under the influence of intoxicating substances to mention but a few.

The study concludes by identifying the following strategies to prevent and control IPV incidents: establishment of easily accessible and affordable individual and couple counselling services in different community settings; problem-solving and communication skills training for couples; positive parenting skills training by Community-Based Social

Workers; development of male-oriented peer support programs and forums where men can receive and offer support to each other, equipping couples with conflict management skills; positive life choices; as well as establishing campaigns and community dialogues aimed at challenging cultural practices that foster violence against physically weaker others.

Keywords: Experiences, Intimate Partner Violence, Lesotho, perceptions, and young adult men.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CDC	United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention
CGPU	Child and Gender Protection Unit
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease of 2019
CPWA	Children and Welfare Protection Act (2011)
DCPT	Lesotho District Child Protection Team
Et al.	Et alia (meaning and others)
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICAP	International Centre for AIDS Care and Treatment Program (ICAP for Colombia University)
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
LCN	Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organizations
LMPS	The Lesotho Mounted Police Services
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PEPFAR	The US President's Emergencies Plan for Aids Relief Services
RSA	The Republic Of South Africa
SADC	The Southern African Development Community
UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNFPA	The United Nations Population Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

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CHAPTER ONE
GENERAL ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a form of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) which refers to violence affecting people in former or current intimate relationships, dating or married, homosexual or heterosexual (Ellsberg, Arango, Morton, Gennari, and Watts, et al, 2014). IPV globally affects men and women from all socioeconomic, religious, and cultural groups: "*ha e khethe nku ka pere"*, because it's a global issue (World Health Organization, WHO, 2010a). Lesotho is therefore not an exception as the prevalence of IPV is high (Gender Links, 2018; Matela, 2020). This chapter presents the background of the study, the problem statement, the research objectives, and the questions that the study set out to answer. The background information outlines global, regional, and international IPV figures that were accessible, while the statement of the problem gives an overview of how males interpret and perceive Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). The main terms used in the study are also defined for contextualization followed by the summary of the chapter.

1.1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE STUDY

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is understood to have affected one in three women and one in nine males worldwide (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2016; Commonwealth, 2020; UN Women Report, 2015). In 2019, China reported an IPV prevalence rate of 25.6%, while America reported 43.7% and Japan 42.5% (CDC, 2022; Fu et al., 2019; Matsumura et al., 2022). Additionally, IPV is widespread in sub-Saharan Africa, where a recently recorded prevalence rate for IPV was 45.6% (Ahinkora et al., 2018; CDC, 2016; Cools and Kotsadam, 2017). Examples of countries in sub-Saharan Africa with concerning levels of recorded IPV prevalence rates included Zimbabwe (42%), Namibia (36%), Eswatini (54%), South Africa (37.9%), and Botswana (67%) (CDC, 2016; 2019; Fielding-Miller et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2022).

In a similar vein, Lesotho reported an alarming 62% prevalence rate for IPV, including 86% of women and 40% of men (Gender Links, 2018). This prevalence rate placed

Lesotho at the 3rd highest rank among South African Development Community Countries (SADC) (Gender Links, 2018). In line with that, Lesotho media houses made disturbing reports of IPV-related assaults, rapes, and murders perpetrated between 2016 and 2022 (Gender Links, 2018; Moyo, 2022). Such cases were found to be predominant among young people aged between 18 and 35 years (Ministry of Social Development Lesotho, 2020). With specific reference to Mokhotlong, the study site, Adam and Nkuebe (2014), and Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) (2019) revealed that Mokhotlong was among the districts with high IPV prevalence of 63.6%, placing it among the top districts in the country as far as IPV was concerned.

Although IPV is a worldwide pandemic that affects all societies, cultures, and social classes, actual IPV experiences are unknown because of underreporting, among other factors, childhood events that shaped perceptions that IPV is a form of communication as well as societal expectations and practices surrounding it (Matlosa, 2020; UN Women Report, 2020). It was hence found worthwhile to undertake a study on perceptions and experiences among young adult men in Mokhotlong who have perpetrated Intimate Partner Violence. This will help to determine how these could influence IPV prevalence in the area and how emerging findings may be used in interventions against IPV in Mokhotlong.

Given that IPV is common among young people between the ages of 18 and 35 and rife in Mokhotlong, it was considered worthwhile to examine it from the perspective of the young adult men in order to comprehend its nature in Mokhotlong (Ministry of Social Development Lesotho, 2020). This study, therefore, sought to understand the perceptions and experiences of IPV among young adult men in Mokhotlong, Lesotho.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Experience is understood to shape perception while perception in turn influences behavior. The quoted IPV incidence of Lesotho is hence a call for Social Scientists to consider perceptions and childhood experiences which may promote the practice (Gender Links, 2018; Matela, 2020; Mokuane and Moeketsi, 2018; Sello, 2018; Pitikoe and Morojele, 2017). Noting the high incidence of IPV in the country, it may be reasonable

to posit that the pervasiveness of the practice may be creating a misperception of IPV as acceptable. It is observed that Basotho boys grow up witnessing and experiencing violence through games, corporal punishment, being bullied, taking part in abduction of young girls, and witnessing IPV between their parents and other significant adults. Often, such IPV is unreported to authorities by the adults and does not seem to carry any consequence for perpetrators while corporal punishment and bullying experienced by boys is understood to be rife in Lesotho (Makatsela, 2019; Matela, 2020; Matheolane and Makhura, 2020). Thus, there is a risk that childhood experiences of violence and abuse may develop into misperception that violence is an acceptable communication strategy in all relationships including intimate relationships (Matheolane and Makura, 2020; Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018; Pitikoe and Morojele, 2017; Sello, 2018).

A common children's game among Basotho called "*ho kalla"* is a prime example of violent boys' games designed to assert one's position in two-person relationships. *"Ho kalla",* which is a stick-fighting game thought to teach Basotho boys the basics of attack and defense, is played among Basotho boys while herding animals (Pitikoe and Morojele, 2017; United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 2018). Victors in *"ho kalla"* earn respect among their peers (Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018; Pitikoe and Morojele, 2017). Alongside *"ho kalla",* Basotho men and boys still wage territorial wars against each other through which victorious groups acquire the largest most fertile land, leaving the less attractive land to the losers. At the same time, traditionalist Basotho parents are still largely understood to condition their daughters to be subservient to their male counterparts (Mabetha and De Wet, 2018; Matela, 2020). Hence, it may be said that power and authority are still associated with violence by some Basotho men (Mabetha and De Wet, 2018).

Such perceptions are backed by some discriminatory laws and policies of Lesotho, which endorse IPV such as Section 18(4)(c) of the Constitution of Lesotho 1993, which authorizes discrimination against women on the basis of Customary Law stating that guardianship of women rest with their fathers, husbands, or sons, thus, interpretable as giving men authority to dominate women. Other practices, like "*bohali"* payment system, appear to have emboldened some Basotho men to commit IPV through forums where

women are instructed to submit to men without questioning while it is emphasized that men should be “heads of households”, leading with “courage and strength” (Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organizations (LCN), 2015; Matela, 2020; Mohatle, 2015). Thus, widespread familial, community and juvenile violence as well as attitudes of male superiority in Lesotho may ingrain and aggravate IPV among Basotho.

Notwithstanding the above, Lesotho has numerous anti-violence legislation and policies, such as the Sexual Offences Act Nō 3 of 2003 and Domestic Violence Act Nō 12 of 2022, yet despite their existence, attitudes and perceptions which promote IPV persist, making effective implementation of these laws and policies a difficulty (LCN, 2015; UNFPA, 2020). Consequently, IPV-related incidents continue to plague the country regardless of the frameworks and programs instituted. The study hence sought to understand young adult men’s perceptions and experiences of IPV in Mokhotlong, Lesotho, to ultimately inform strategies to discourage the practice.

1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study's objectives were as follows:

1.3.1. Main objective

- To explore perceptions and experiences of Intimate Partner Violence among young adult men in Mokhotlong, Lesotho.

1.3.2. Specific objectives

- To understudy perceptions of Intimate Partner Violence among young adult men in Mokhotlong, Lesotho.
- To investigate childhood experiences of Intimate Partner Violence among young adult men in Mokhotlong, Lesotho.
- To investigate adulthood experiences of Intimate Partner Violence among young adult men in Mokhotlong, Lesotho.

1.4. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Young adult couples in Lesotho, especially in Mokhotlong, frequently engage in IPV. The rise in IPV-related femicide reports puts Lesotho's growth and economy in jeopardy,

adding to the country's already serious mental health issues and suicide rates. Lesotho's rural communities, and notably Mokhotlong, have insufficient documentation on how young adult men's perceptions and experiences of IPV relate to one another. The researcher decided to conduct this study in order to close the gap in the literature, give other researchers data to use as the foundation for future research, and provide knowledge to aid policymakers and program developers in understanding men's perspectives to manage IPV-related issues. Interventions against IPV will be guided by the findings of this study.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions were being addressed by this study:

- What are the perceptions of young adult men in Mokhotlong on Intimate Partner Violence?
- What are the childhood experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong on Intimate Partner Violence?
- What are the adulthood experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong on Intimate Partner Violence?

1.6. DEFINITION AND MEASUREMENTS OF TERMS

The following are the key terms and how they were applied in this study:

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV): behaviour within an intimate relationship that harms the people involved, including physical, psychological, or sexual harm to those in the relationship, including physical harm such as hitting, kicking, and slapping; sexual acts including forced sexual intercourse and any form of sexual coercion; and psychological or emotional harm such as insults, intimidation, threats of harm, or access annihilation by a current or former intimate partner (CDC, 2016; Patra et al., 2018). This definition will act as the basis for this study.

Intimate Partner: Current and previous spouses, as well as dating partners (CDC, 2016). This definition will be used in this research.

Perception: Is a mode of apprehending reality and experience through the senses, the way one sees the world (CDC, 2018). In this study, perception describes subjective responses towards phenomena. It includes definition as well as determination of acceptability and non-acceptability of phenomena.

Experience: Participation and/or exposure of an event through consciously or unconsciously taking part, hearing or observing (Ntuli, 2020). The study adopted this definition.

Young adult men: young adulthood is the stage of life ranging from the late teens to the late thirties, a time of growth and development as one transitions from being a teenager to an independent adult (Bonnie et al., 2019). For this study, young adult men who will participate will be those aged between 18 and 35 years.

Lesotho: A country landlocked as an enclave in South Africa. It is situated in the Maloti Mountains and contains the highest mountains in Southern Africa and is known as the Kingdom of Lesotho (The World bank, 2023).

1.7. STUDY LIMITATIONS

The scope of the study was limited to exploring perceptions and experiences of IPV among young adult men in Mokhotlong, Lesotho. In addition, the sample was limited to men from Mokhotlong Urban Council. The primary data was collected from men aged between 18 and 35 years, thus excluding responses from lower and upper age groups. Young adult men (18–35 years old) were believed to have relevant experiences, which allowed them to contribute meaningfully to this study since they were within the age range making IPV headlines and having an 87% chance of justifying IPV (Matosa, 2020). Since IPV is sensitive by nature and often treated as a family matter, it was possible for participants to omit some facts from their answers, especially in cases where sexual IPV had been committed. In order to lessen this, the researcher probed just deeply enough to learn the real truths while still respecting the participants' right to privacy.

1.8. OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS IN THE STUDY

An overview of the study is covered in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, the idea of IPV was explained, along with the theoretical underpinnings of the investigation, with references to the literature at hand. This study's research technique was given in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4, the study's specific findings were reported. Chapter 5 incorporated the study's results with the theoretical framework and the literature review. It also included recommendations for further research and a summary of the overall research, highlighting its limitations.

1.9. CHAPTER SUMMARY

IPV is widespread and has turned into a socioeconomic danger in Lesotho. Notwithstanding its prevalence rate, IPV appears to be founded in cultural practices and childhood experiences. It is regarded as a form of power demonstration and a mode of communication, particularly for men. Against this background, it was therefore found necessary to establish and document the attitudes and experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong, Lesotho, regarding IPV to get to know IPV through their lens.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the nature of IPV, giving a picture of Lesotho's current IPV state. It is divided into two sections: the empirical literature and the theoretical framework. Under the empirical literature, the findings from previous studies which looked into IPV from male perspectives are discussed along with the legal framework and the programs available in Mokhotlong. The theoretical framework was drawn from the Socio-Ecological Model. The chapter concludes by discussing the gaps identified in the literature.

2.1 BACKGROUND OF IPV

2.1.1 Classification of IPV

IPV is an urgent public health issue as each year, millions of men and women worldwide experience IPV (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2016). IPV is all-encompassing, affecting people from many societies, cultures, and social strata (Adu et al., 2022). Both men and women perpetrate and experience IPV, even though women are more affected than men because of their biological makeup (Adu et al., 2022). Therefore, IPV is categorized as a significant global contribution to the burden of diseases, including mental illness and disability (CDC, 2016; Matela, 2020).

2.1.1.1 Subtypes of Intimate Partner Violence

According to WHO (2020), IPV can manifest in several forms. The most common forms of IPV include physical violence**,** sexual violence**,** stalking**,** and psychological aggression**.**

2.1.1.2 Physical IPV

In physical IPV, a partner is threatened or intentionally harmed through the use of physical force likely to inflict injuries, disability, or death (CDC, 2016). Physical IPV includes kicking, hitting, slapping, pushing, choking, punching, burning, aggressive pulling, or using any weapon to harm or threaten to harm a partner. According to CDC (2016), men were the most prolific perpetrators of physical IPV globally but still experienced greater degrees of physical injuries at the hands of their female partners. In

addition, it can also include driving recklessly, invading a partner's physical space, or making her feel physically unsafe in any other way (Muriithi et al., 2017).

2.1.1.3 Sexual IPV

According to CDC (2016), sexual violence is any attempt to obtain sex by forcing a sexual partner to engage in sexual activities without their consent. Sexual IPV can happen through intimidation or harassment, unwanted touching of private parts, coerced penetration, withholding sex, infecting one with STI, and using sexual objects (Muriithi et al., 2017). In sexual IPV, an abusive partner might also use sex as a means of judging or labelling his or her partner as not good enough sexually.

2.1.1.4 Stalking

According to CDC (2016), stalking is characterized by recurrent, unwanted surveillance behaviours used to harass or exert control over another individual. These actions cause distress, loss of control, fear, or harassment to the victim and occur more than once. Such acts also include being watched or followed from a distance, being spied on, receiving strange or potentially threatening items meant to scare the victim, and receiving repeated unwanted phone calls or hang-ups.

2.1.1.5 Psychological IPV

Psychological IPV, also called emotional IPV, is perpetrated through verbal aggression and behavioural acts aimed at lowering the partner's esteem and making him or her doubt his or her own sanity, either through intimidation or threats (CDC, 2016). Examples may include acts of calling names, humiliating, acting angry, limiting access to basic resources such as money, isolation from friends, and presenting false information to the victim with the intention of making them doubt their perception (CDC, 2016). Psychological IPV has the tendency to infringe on people's privacy (Muriithi et al., 2017). Psychological IPV mainly affects survivors' mental health and puts them at risk of experiencing anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorders, which may lead to engaging in risky behaviours (CDC, 2016). Emotional abuse is considered the most prevalent worldwide and correlates with physical abuse. Psychological IPV is often considered a precursor to physical abuse (Laskey et al., 2019).

2.1.2 The prevalence of IPV in Lesotho

IPV is prevalent in Lesotho, particularly among the young adults (18–35 years of age) and has been worsened by the current inflation rate (8.12%), unemployment rate (18.29%), and COVID-19 pandemic aftermaths, among others (Adam and Nkuebe, 2018; O'Neil, 2022). The national IPV prevalence ranged between 51% and 69%, with Mokhotlong among the top four districts at a 63.6% prevalence rate (LHDA, 2019). Lesotho's lifetime prevalence rate of IPV has remained above 60% for many years. For example, it was 69% in 2014, 86% in 2015, and 62% in 2020 (Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organizations (LCN), 2015; Commonwealth, 2020). Psychological IPV was found to be the most prevalent but mostly unreported, affecting men more than women (UN Women Report, 2020; WHO, 2020). Matlho (2015) stated that, global intimate femicide constituted 59.7% of women and 81.1% of men, where men were found to mostly die of poisoning and IPV-related suicide.

Even though IPV is reported to be widespread in Lesotho by Gender Links (2018), WHO (2020), and World Vision (2016), the actual measurements of IPV prevalence are difficult due to the low reporting rate. Gender Links (2018) discovered that the highest reporting rate to the police happens in cases where injuries or deaths occurred. Only six percent of IPV cases with minor injuries got reported to the police, while four percent sought medical help but lied about the causes of the injuries. Of those reported cases, only 4.8% percent were criminally charged in the courts of law (Mabale, 2020), thus discouraging the survivors to continue reporting the incidents. Lack of reporting, therefore, allowed perpetrators to keep up their violent acts and get away with them.

2.2 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.1 Lesotho's IPV Legal and Policy Framework

This section discusses the available laws/policies and programs regarding IPV in Lesotho.

2.2.1.1 Sexual Offences Act, Nō 3 of 2003

The Sexual Offence Act 2003 provides the means of combating sexual violence by setting strict sentences for perpetrators of violence (Section 3 of Part II; Section 8(3); Section 15 of Part III; Section 32 of Part VIII). Sexual violence committed in marriage is included in

the Act to deal with people who use marriage or any relationship in defense against perpetrating violence. Sexual violence is still an issue, especially between married couples, as a result of the cultural justification of the paid bride price. Even though the Act considers marital rape an offence, the state's obligation is not clearly stated to legislate against rape in marriage, thus leaving a gap for perpetrators to mostly walk scot-free. This Act up to this point has not been effective in combating sexual violence, as the rape cases keep escalating.

2.2.1.2 Penal Code Act, Nō 6 of 2012

According to this Act, a spouse applying unlawful force to the other intentionally is regarded to have committed an offense. In section 34(1) of the Act, a person who communicates to another or others to a risk of injury or death commits an offense. Section 40(1) of the Act also states that, any person performing any unlawful act or omission intending to cause the death of any other person commits the offense of murder. The Penal Code Act came as a reinforcement for the sexual offense Act and it provides regulation for all assault cases (Section 52). As stated above under the sexual offence Act of 2003, women are being raped day in and day out under the existence of both the Sexual Offence Act of 2003 and Penal Code Act of 2012.

2.2.1.3 Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act, Nō 9 of 2006

This Act places married women at par with their husbands by repealing and abolishing the culturally vested marital power of the husband over his spouse and the property (sections 2 and 3). The Act ensures that women have equal property entitlement by protecting them from the annihilation of property as both partners now have equal say, and since its existence, women have experienced the luxury of property ownership. Before formulation of this Act, women were regarded as children who had to be taken care of by their male counterparts, either their fathers, husbands, or older sons, and that exposed them to violence. This still applies to some women as a result of lack of proper implementation.

2.2.1.4 Counter Domestic Violence Act, Nō 14 of 2022

The Counter Domestic Violence Act is meant to protect the rights of Domestic Violence survivors as it outlines and describes all forms of violence and the legal action to be taken against perpetrators, including those found to be involved in child marriage and forced marriage (Part II). The Act also mentions technological abuse: an abusive act where a person uses technology to share, display, or expose nude or semi-nude materials, photos, videos, and suggestive messages (Part I, 2). The Act further provides for the establishment of Restorative Justice Councils where IPV-related proceedings are conducted in the communities presided over by the Area Chiefs (Part IV, 19). Even though the Act has favourable prospects for mitigating the situation of increased IPV cases, the challenge of a lack of awareness remains for proper and effective implementation. The Act states that; there shall also be the establishment of shelters, rehabilitation centres, and programs for domestic violence shelter survivors and perpetrators.

2.2.2 IPV intervention programs available in Mokhotlong

2.2.2.1 National Police, Department of Child and Gender Protection Unit (CGPU)

CGPU is a law enforcement agency and a community referral point unit in the Lesotho Mounted Police Services (LMPS) responsible for investigating Gender-Based Violence (GBV) cases and bringing perpetrators to court (United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 2021). It engages in awareness-raising on GBV-related issues, provides restorative justice programs for survivors, as well as providing further services to protect them (Alber et al., 2018; UNFPA, 2020). IPV as a form of Domestic Violence is handled by the same unit with the intent to isolate the victim from long queues in the general police services, devoting the victim the special attention they deserve. Since the police are not well equipped, short-staffed, and lack enough private space, managing IPV at CGPU still has some shortfalls as survivors incur adverse effects.

2.2.2.2 Karabo ea Bophelo (KB) OVC Project

Karabo ea Bophelo is the Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) project specifically meant for ending violence against children and has deployed paralegals within Mokhotlong communities. Among the project programs, there is one named ‘Singing to

the Lion' (Molapo, 2020). This is a curative program for violence survivors that equips them with post-trauma coping skills and also offers them counselling sessions free of charge (Molapo, 2020). This program is mainly aimed at sensitizing community members about violence as well as linking the children survivors to relevant services. Since KB is a child-oriented project, meaning the benefits of the program are not earned by people aged above 18 years, there is still a gap for the provision of similar services to young adults aged between 18 and 35 years, as the cases of IPV are reported to be high at these ages.

2.2.2.3 Safe and Ethical Index Testing Services

The Ministry of Health, under the Safe and Ethical Index Services program, provides IPV survivors with first-line support services in all health facilities countrywide (The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) manual, 2020). The program highly targets people living with HIV (PLWHA) and capacitates them with IPV information as well as screening them for possible IPV experiences (PEPFAR, 2020). The first-line support and counselling services received by PLWHA enrolled under the program are also needed by people not living with HIV, as IPV is not HIV-oriented but all-encompassing. There is therefore a need for first-line support services across the board.

2.2.2.4 World Vision Youth Leadership Capacitation

World Vision has a youth program which offers youths the training on human rights and abuse as well as equipping them with resilience skills for peer-to-peer management of abuse. The program's development was highly influenced by the Polihali Dam construction, which exposed Mokhotlong youth, especially those in close proximity to the construction, to sexual exploitation and abuse by the contractors who pretended to date them while exposing them to different forms of violence, including human trafficking (World Vision, 2021). Through this program, many Mokhotlong youths get capacitated on how to minimize all forms of violence, but a challenge still remains for Community Councils away from the dam construction. More efforts are therefore needed to make to capacitate young people with resilience widespread.

2.2.2.5 Mokhotlong District Child Protection Team (DCPT)

This team has a community sensitization program where community members receive sensitization on child protection issues such as child marriage, violence against children, and child neglect, and community dialogues aimed at challenging the cultural practices contributing to child abuse as well as educating the community about the Child Protection Welfare Act 2011. Through the focus group discussions, the community members are equipped with skills and strategies to challenge cultural practices that infringe on human rights, specifically the rights of children. Since the focus is mainly on children, there is still a huge gap and a need for adult-focused community sensitization on violence.

Even though the above programs and many others not listed do exist in the Mokhotlong district, they are not that effective due to the district's geographical background. Many villages are hard to reach, and it gets difficult for services to be taken to the people living in such villages. As a result, the rate of violent incidents, especially IPV, keeps rising. Additionally, adolescent marriage statistics are on the rise, and in most cases, the perpetrators are older men, meaning that these adolescents are at increased risk of experiencing IPV at the hands of their old husbands.

2.3 EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

According to Nakano and Muniz (2018), the empirical literature highlights the main concepts of the research problem by examining past empirical studies in order to answer the research question.

2.3.1 Empirical studies in Southern Africa

2.3.1.1 Experiences of young adult men on violence

In Sub-Saharan countries, children grow up witnessing parental fights (Donenberg et al., 2020; Maguele et al., 2020; Scorgie et al., 2017). For instance, a study conducted by Ongudipe (2018) found that two-thirds of Botswana men who admitted perpetrating IPV were abused as children and a quarter of them witnessed their parents engaging in IPV. As a result, they were unable to relate well with others due to perceiving violence as normal. A corresponding trend prevails in Eswatini where male violence against women has become commonplace (Maliackal and Maliackal, 2021). This dominance is

understood to be created and reinforced by patriarchal beliefs and practices (Maliackal and Maliackal, 2021).

In South Africa, males were found to have experienced violence as they commonly witnessed and had direct experience of many forms of violence in their homes and communities when growing up (Scorgie et al., 2017). Scorgie et al. (2017) further mentioned that adolescents growing up in poor urban South African settings, experienced violence almost daily as South Africa is one of the most violent countries in the world. South Africa is said to have high rates of gang violence, domestic violence, community violence and socio-economic inequality. As a result, children growing in South Africa get exposed to the acts of violence and are likely to become violent as adults.

2.3.1.2 Factors which promote IPV

In South Africa, the key factors which were found to promote IPV included but were not limited to having multiple sexual partners, heavy drinking, history of childhood abuse, excessive male dominance and health inequalities (Maguele et al., 2020). Heavier alcohol use was associated with higher risk of emotional IPV. This is so because in South Africa there exists the complex interplay of patriarchy, culture, and the negative masculine construct. The patriarchal cultural beliefs and traditions that emphasize on male assertiveness and domination of women influence the constructions of masculinity and reinforce IPV (Maguele et al., 2020). Partner alcohol use, economic disadvantage, poor mental health, family factors, and poverty were among the key factors contributing to IPV in Eswatini (Fielding-Miller et al., 2022). The key factors found to drive IPV in Botswana included gender attitude, substance abuse, and relationship conflicts.

2.3.1.3 Perceptions of young adult men on IPV

Young adult men from sub-Saharan countries were found by many researchers to have accepted and normalized violence (Scorgie et al., 2017; Maliackal and Maliackal, 2021; Ongudipe, 2018). Ongudipe (2018) highlighted that, Batswana men were always under pressure to prove that they were the ones who wear the pants, making the line of demarcation between proving to be in control and being abusive thin. This gender attitude is promoted from childhood where the male child is accepted to be more aggressive and dominant while the girl child is encouraged to be more domestic, subservient and tolerant

(Ongudipe, 2018). In South Africa, men occupy senior positions in their families and communities. Women are socialized to accept the seniority of their male partners and are required to comply, thus normalizing IPV (Maguele et al., 2020). Additionally, Donenberg et al. (2020) mentioned that violence was a widely accepted means of resolving conflict in South African society.

2.3.2 Empirical studies in Lesotho

2.3.2.1 Experiences of young adult men in Lesotho on violence

As indicated under the statement of the problem, violence among Basotho men can be associated with their childhood experiences (Makatsela, 2019). When growing up, Basotho boys, especially those living in the highlands, reportedly learned violent behaviour through territorial fights and '*ho kalla'*, a stick fighting game aimed at teaching Basotho boys fundamentals of attack and defense; feuds over grazing lands; and bullying (Matela, 2020; Pitikoe and Morojele 2017). During "*ho kalla"*, boys engaged in real stick fights meant for recreation, and equipping them with skills such as precision and speed (Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018). In fights for grazing lands, also known as territorial fights, boys fought over fertile grazing lands (Pitikoe, 2016). In these acts, the winner or the powerful person received admiration and the power to delegate any boy to run his errands, as well as the privilege of choosing fine girls or receiving the best meal during feasts (Mabale, 2020; Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the game is concerned with acquisition of combat precision, speed, and skill and is played by boys as young as 6 years old in Lesotho (Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018; Pitikoe and Morojele, 2017). *"Ho kalla" is a* game which is mostly dominant in the highlands of Lesotho such as Mokhotlong. According to Pitikoe and Morojele (2017) this game is instigated by older boys, tipping younger ones against each other through intimidation while animal herding.

The "game" continues into adolescence where winners, known as *"mpuli"*, earn respect from their peers and receive benefits such as liberty to assign losers to herd their livestock as well as run their errands, while the *"mpuli"* lounges and continues bullying others (Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018; Pitikoe and Morojele, 2017). Thus, "*ho kalla"* creates

power-hierarchies among herd boys. The bullying happening during animal herding may not be reported to adults or discussed beyond the herding sphere except in cases of injuries. Anyone who reports herding events is considered a snitch and is liable to more bullying and relegation in the herding power-hierarchies. The snitch acquires shaming names and can be banned from engaging in manly activities as he is regarded as less of a man (Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018). As a result, aggression towards weaker targets became a means of communication and power demonstration among Basotho boys (Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018; UNFPA, 2018).

Apart from "*ho kalla"*, Basotho men and boys engaged in territorial fights, where they strived to get the largest and most fertile grazing lands (Sello, 2021). Territorial fights were influenced by historical territorial conflicts between Basotho and the British (the Boers) in the 18th century (Sello, 2021). The winners of territorial fights took over the most fertile grazing lands, allowing their animals to blossom and become reproductive. These territorial fights happened among men and boys from different villages, and the losing village was forced to take the poor grazing land (Pitikoe, 2016). At times, the territorial fights would be so serious that serious injuries or deaths occurred. Even so, they were still practiced and culturally acceptable.

Apart from that, boys were bullied by "*mpuli"* (the bully) in the fields. The "*mpuli"* acted as a boss, inciting younger boys to fight each other to prove who is the toughest, that is, "*ho nts'ana bothaka"* (Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018; Sello, 2021). Those engaging in the fights and winning acquired the label of "*mpuli"* too and were entitled to making demands to those who lost the battle though they had to abide by the older "*mpuli's"* rules too. It was shameful to refuse to take part in such fights, and those who refused carried stigma everywhere they went (Sello, 2021). What happened in the fields remained confidential and was kept from the parents or relatives. Those who reported received mockery from both their peers and the adults they reported to. It was only in cases of major injuries that reporting happened and was allowed. No action was taken against bullies, normalizing violence (LCN, 2015; Makafane, 2019).

In the same manner, Basotho boys received corporal punishment at home and school under the concept of toughening them up. For example, "*ho jesa mabele"*, an act where

straying animals destroyed the crops, led to herders being severely beaten either by crop field owners or the Chief's delegates before being beaten again by their parents (Matheolane and Makura, 2022). This was done to ensure accountability and responsibility among boys from a young age, as well as protect crops for harvest to eliminate starvation. Corporal punishment was happening in the homes and within community spheres under the notion of correcting wrong behaviour before it got out of hand. The schools, on the other hand, replicated home-practiced corporal punishment as a way of standardizing punishment. The scale of punishment doubled when directed at boys (Makatsela, 2019; Malemphane, 2022).

Basotho boys also engaged in "*chobeliso"*, a practice of abducting young girls for marriage against their will (Sibanyoni et al., 2022). During the abduction process, the marrying boy and his peers physically and sexually abused the girl being abducted. The abuse was meant to prevent the girl from running back home in fear of re-perpetration and the stigma associated with probable pregnancy. The families of abducted girls rarely reported them missing to the Police or Village Chiefs, as abduction was considered a cultural way of marrying. There was no age limit for boys who participated in "*chobeliso"* but in most cases, boys would be older than girls.

In addition to extensive, unabated bullying perpetrated among Basotho boys, IPV is understood to be widespread. Apart from witnessing "*chobeliso",* Basotho boys are understood to grow up witnessing the feuds between their parents, where they would see their mothers being beaten by their fathers or vice versa. Comparatively, they would see nothing much being done by the community at large against the abuse that they witnessed or experienced (Makatsela, 2019).

2.3.3 Perceptions of young adult men regarding IPV

People's experiences and behaviours are dependent on the way they perceive the world (Stevenson et al., 2016). Basotho men's perceptions on IPV are found to be rooted in childhood experiences of violence as well as being dependent on their upbringing. For instance, experiences such as being bullied, being punished severely, seeing parents fighting, and witnessing or engaging in territorial fights, as discussed under experiences of violence above, continue to inform men's views on social interaction, particularly male-

female interaction. Additionally, Basotho men are nurtured in such a way that they perceive women as passive objects and perpetual minors, as a result, they are likely to behave in accordance with their perceptions (Gender Links, 2018).

A study conducted by Matheolane and Makura (2022) in Lesotho among rural and urban high school principals, parents, and learners to determine the influence of Basotho culture on the use of corporal punishment in Lesotho high schools revealed that, corporal punishment was regarded as Basotho culture. All participants (parents, high school principals, and learners) agreed that school was a secondary home and that the form of punishment used should be similar to avoid confusing children. The study also revealed that these perceptions were influenced by Sesotho proverbs such as "*thupa e otloloa e sale metsi', thupa ke moriana, mmele ke mosesetso', 'motho ha a sa utloe ka litsebe o utloa ka letlalo*" which meant that undisciplined children become difficult to handle in adulthood. These proverbs and many others not mentioned portray violence as culturally supported and normalized (Matheolane and Makura, 2022). Culture and perceptions are inextricably linked and people view themselves and their worlds through the lens of their culture (Tran et al., 2016).

A population-based survey conducted by Shields et al. (2019) in Canada to examine the association between three types of child maltreatment and subsequent IPV in adulthood revealed that, childhood physical abuse, sexual abuse, and exposure to IPV were associated with IPV perpetration in adulthood. Lastly, Molise (2021) conducted a study in Roma, Lesotho, among young adults where he explored the effects of parental substance abuse on young adults' social interactions. His study revealed that, young adults raised by substance-abusing parents suffered tremendous consequences because of parental substance abuse and were most likely to become abusive at the adulthood stage.

The experience of violence permeates almost all spheres of life, extending to women and even animals. An example of a brazen display of violence among Basotho boys is hurling profanities at animals (Mabale, 2020; Matlosa, 2020). This practice is often evident while the boys are herding, milking, shearing, or ploughing with the animals. Profane phrases are hurled at the animals, apparently to bring the animals to corporate with the tasks at hand. The animals may even be brutally beaten with sticks to cause them to submit

(Mabale, 2020; Matlosa, 2020). It is pertinent that farm animals are highly respected by Basotho as they are their main source and indicator of wealth. Thus, violating the animals is inconsistent with the value placed on animals and may be interpreted as a perceived form of acceptable communication with animals by the boys. It may be plausible, therefore, to contend that the extent of violence experienced and learned by Basotho boys led to the notion that, violence is not only acceptable but also a measure of masculinity, power, and prowess (Matlosa, 2020).

At the same time, traditional gender roles that placed authority and power in the hands of men created a conducive environment for IPV (Kazemi et al., 2019; LCN, 2015; Mtaita et al., 2021). The traditional roles may have adversely influenced men's perception that women ought to either submit to men or be caused to submit through strategies including violence (LCN, 2015). In line with the fore stated, "*bohali"*, the bride price, appears to have been used as another instrument for perpetuating women's submission (Ministry of Social Development, 2020). Thus, women's subjugation has been ingrained through longstanding practices such as "*chobeliso"* and "*bohali"*, creating a perception on the acceptability of male domination over women through violence (Mabale, 2020; Sibanyoni et al., 2021).

Another childhood experience that might have contributed to the poor perception of social interaction among Basotho men was substance abuse by adults, which preceded most IPV incidents. For a long time, alcohol has been used by Basotho in cultural festivities and mass campaigns where the community orchestrates efforts to accomplish tasks, especially agricultural activities known as "*matsema"* (Mofokeng, 2013). "*Matsema"* aided with increased productivity as community action groups came together when ploughing, removing weeds, and harvesting the fields. It is a cooperation that premised itself on "*Botho"*, meaning the spirit of oneness. "*Matsema"* also allowed people without fields a chance to work and qualify for crop production during harvest. Since workers were not paid while working, the field owners offered food and beverages. The beverages were mostly in the form of alcohol, as it was believed to energize people.

In many IPV episodes witnessed in childhood, alcohol was discovered to have been a major trigger of violent behaviour. This is in line with Wilson et al. (2014), who indicated

that the use of alcohol clouded users' perceptions, facilitating the continuous perpetration of violence. People under the influence of alcohol lack the ability to exercise self-control and misperceive the behaviour of others. The misperception in most cases leads to increased possibilities of harm and fatalities. People also blamed their violent acts on being under the influence, while others intentionally used alcohol prior to engaging in violent acts, knowing that their violent acts were to be blamed on alcohol. As a result, Basotho boys developed the perception that alcohol abuse was a passport to perpetrating IPV.

According to Gender Links Lesotho (2018), rural definitions of rape also contributed to increased IPV perpetration as they clouded and underestimated the actual occurrence of sexual violence, misleading people about the actual violence. Rape was rurally defined as sexual assault by strangers on virgins, while sexual assault upon sexually experienced women was not considered rape at all. For example, men who paid lobola were culturally regarded as having legal access to perpetrate forced sex (Gender Links, 2018). The misperception resulting from such definitions further inspired the development of the perception that married women sexually belonged to men who paid their "*bohali"* (Leburu-Masigo and Kgadima, 2020).

2.3.4 Factors influencing adulthood perpetration of IPV among Basotho

The majority of the factors which promoted IPV perpetration were linked to childhood experiences. Basotho Men were reported to engage in different forms of IPV such as physical and sexual IPV. Psychological IPV however was found to be mostly perpetrated when under the influence of alcohol or drugs (Gender Links, 2018). Factors contributing to IPV perpetration include: childhood experience of violence, feeling disrespected, substance abuse and infidelity.

2.3.4.1 Childhood experience of violence

Basotho boys witnessed and experienced abuse while growing up. They were nurtured in such a way that they became "tough nuts", courageous, strong, controlling, and good decision-makers. This is in line with the notion that "*monna ke hlooho*" meaning that a

man is powerful and calls the shots (Pitikoe and Morojele, 2017). The experiences included engaging in violent activities such as "*ho kalla*" (Sick fighting game), participating in territorial, corporal punishment, and bullying among others.

Engaging in stick fighting games were meant for attaining, defense and precision skills that were to be used during territorial fights known as fighting over the grazing lands (Tsoamotse, 2017). This was the case due to the pressure from peers and societal expectations for men to herd well-fed animals (Matela, 2020; Rampai, 2017). The feuds over grazing lands between neighbouring communities happened mostly because of competition over the limited resources. Since they were the real fights, those engaging in needed to be good at fighting or else, suffer severe injuries (Pitikoe and Morojele, 2017).

Even though the government has put in place laws and policies against corporal punishment, it is still being practices particularly in the remote areas of Lesotho (Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018). Basotho boys receive severe punishments for any wrongdoing which is in most cases twice as heavy as compared to that of their female counterparts. Basotho boys received severe punishment in different areas of the community. The corporal punishment they experienced had translated into justifiable exercise of power (Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018; Azam et al., 2019).

The experiences led to acceptance and normalizing violence which later translated into IPV (Gender Links, 2018). Childhood experiences of abuse led to survivors developing mixed feelings and misperceptions such as associating violence with love, form of punishment or means of communication. According to UNFPA (2018), most IPV acts were the imitation of childhood experiences of violence. The normalization of violence in modern culture resulted in the inability to recognize behaviour as violent or controlling, and therefore, perpetrators saw nothing wrong with violence (Matlosa, 2020).

Basotho men were badly abused by peers and older boys when growing up. Due to the culture of normalizing violence, it was unacceptable for a bullied boy to report to the elders (Matlho, 2015). This was a case as boys were expected to toughen up and stand for themselves. As a result, Basotho men had to develop the fighting skill when growing up to avoid becoming every boys' playground. Since other bullying was from the seniors,

revenge would be directed to someone less powerful, thus translating to IPV (Matlho, 2015).

Additionally, as childhood abuse steals power from the survivors, young adult men abused women as their way of regaining the power taken away from them by their abusers (Tran, Nguyen, and, Fisher, 2016; Matheolane and Makura; 2022). The study conducted by Gender Links (2018) found that, adulthood aggression was influenced by witnessing parental violence or experiencing it in childhood. As a result, children who witnessed IPV perpetration internalized and perceive it as normal, justifiable, acceptable and an appropriate way of dealing with wrongful behaviour (Tran, Nguyen, and, Fisher, 2016).

2.3.4.2 Feeling disrespected

Basotho men are culturally awarded authority and control by virtue of being men. Basotho culture contributed to development of perceptions of accepting and condoning violence (Mabale, 2020). As a result, they demand respect even where it is duly given. They therefore, perpetrate IPV as their way of demonstrating authority (Matheolane and Makura, 2022). Lesotho is a deeply rooted patriarchal country with power vested on men and abuse of power is covered and justified with women's disrespect (Mabale, 2020; Mtaita et al., 2021).

The culture of paying the bride price when marrying contributed to men demanding a lot of respect from women. This is because the bride price gives men full ownership over women, making them treat women however they please such as punishing them for any wrongdoing (Matheolane and Makura, 2022). This is also given weight by the Sesotho proverbs and cultural practices which force women to submit and find ways to cope with violence respectfully. A woman is culturally not expected to desert marriage on account of abuse or infidelity lest she faces discrimination and stigma of not being raised well by her parents (Gender Links, 2018).

Since Basotho men live under the societal expectation of having to provide for their families, the pressure often overwhelms men. Where they fail to achieve markers of the society, they take out their frustrations on women through violence (Matheolane and

Makura, 2022). Low socio-economic status was found by Matlosa (2020) to co-exist with IPV in Lesotho as well as in other parts of the world. In many cases, men blame women's disrespect when men are not able to provide and thus respond to women's intimidation through violence.

2.3.4.3 Substance abuse

Alcohol and other drug use were the prevalent and well-established risk factors for IPV since they impair cognitive and behavioural functioning of users (Mukulu, 2019). Heavy alcohol consumption by men (and often women) was associated with IPV as it played a contributive role in aggression (Mukulu, 2019). Some researchers like Letsie (2020), Ransoomar et al., 2021 and Leonard and Quigley (2017) noted that alcohol acted as a cultural "time out" for antisocial behaviour because men were more likely to become violent when drunk. This was because alcohol would be blamed for the violent behaviour leading to the perpetrators not being held accountable for their behaviour.

Additionally, substance abuse was found to make users misperceive behaviour of other people and less able to resolve situations without aggression because alcohol directly affected their cognitive functioning as well as reduce self-control, thus worsening severity of IPV (Ransoomar et al., 2021; Wilson et al., 2014). For example, in a case where there is a misunderstanding or a quarrel over a minor issue, a sober person may think critically about the consequences of his acts while the one under the influence may act aggressively even in avoidable situations. Regardless of the effects of drugs/alcohol use, some users intoxicate themselves with the intentions of engaging in IPV because they know that they shall be excused on the basis that they were drunk or under the influence of drugs (Fielding-Miller et al., 2021; Leonard and Quigley, 2017; Ransoomar et al., 2021).

The study conducted by Gender Links (2018) Lesotho found that, substance abuse was associated with IPV perpetration. Significantly higher proportion of male participants who were alcohol drinkers were found to have perpetrated IPV compared to nondrinkers. In some settings, men were found to have used alcohol in a premeditated manner to enable them to beat their partners because they felt that this behaviour was socially expected of them (Gender Links, 2015).

2.3.4.4 Infidelity

Infidelity and partner control were also found to have contributed in fueling IPV (Matela, 2020). Pichon et al. (2013) found that, controlling men created delusions of partner infidelity, creating an environment for IPV where such men had the leverage to resort to IPV. Fong et al. (2016) and Pichon et al. (2013) similarly asserted that, cheating men were extremely abusive and masked their infidelity with violence, distracting and preventing the partners from inquiring about their other relationships. A corresponding trend prevails among young adults in Lesotho, where infidelity is as widespread as IPV and the two are often found to coexist (Matela, 2020).

Additionally, Matheolane and Makura (2022) indicated that, low-status men are highly denied sexual relations, thus promoting promiscuity as well, as exacerbating violence. This was so because such men would be forced to search for sexual pleasure elsewhere. To deflect from taking responsibility for their promiscuous actions, the men would use violence against their partners (Ahinkora et al., 2018). Men who are denied conjugal rights become abusive and jealous in suspicion of being cheated on Pichon et al. (2013).

2.3.5 Recent IPV Incidents

Against the above backdrop, it is not surprising that IPV cases among young adult Basotho have escalated to up to eighty-seven percent among people in the age range of 18–35 years old (Malemphane, 2022). A few incidents relating to IPV have been highlighted in the ensuing discussion. According to the Lesotho Times newspaper dated March 24, 2023, a young Mosotho man admitted to killing his 30-year-old wife in September 2021. This woman of Ha Mabote suffered a brutal death with raptured veins, broken ribs, and internal bleeding after her husband allegedly battered and strangled her to death (Phakela, 2021). The killing happened after the deceased allegedly refused to give her mother-in-law money amounting to 20 Maloti.

In another violent case reported in the Lesotho Times dated August 4th, 2021, a man allegedly murdered and cut into pieces his girlfriend, aged between 25 and 30 years, in Maputsoe, discarding the pieces of the corpse in the bushes near the Mohokare River. Reportedly, the fury was triggered by the girlfriend’s request to end their intimate relationship. Her partner felt disrespected because he reported to have invested so much

in that relationship. Lesotho Times newspaper, dated January 26th, 2023, reported that a Mokhotlong businessman aged 35 appeared before a High Court judge over the charge that he murdered his wife. In the case, the perpetrator allegedly killed his wife and fabricated events by saying the wife slipped, fell, and rolled while running away from him, though the police were convinced by the nature of the crime scene that the wife was murdered.

2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study aligned itself with the Socio-Ecological Model by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) to satisfy its objectives and inform its methodology. The theoretical explanations helped the researcher understand how the environment influences one's behavior including shaping perceptions and experiences of IPV (Person in Environment).

2.4.1 Socio-Ecological Model (Bronfenbrenner, 1977 adapted by Heisi, 1998)

The Socio-Ecological Model was developed by Bronfenbrenner around the 1970s (Wilson and Webb, 2018). It is based on the premise that behaviour such as violence results from people's four levels of interaction with their environment. These include the individual level, the relationship level, the community level, and the societal level (Hawkins et al., 2021). Based on the socio-ecological model, it can be established that IPV results from reciprocal interactions and influences between individuals and their families, the community, and societal factors which act as determinants of IPV (Wilson and Webb, 2018). Socio-Ecological Model can therefore be used to explain people's perceptions and experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong regarding IPV.

2.4.1.1 Linking the theory to the study

This study adopted a Socio-Ecological Model to guide the study. Table 1 and Figure 1 below demonstrate the application of the Socio-Ecological Model in this study while understanding the interplay between various personal and environmental factors which may promote IPV in Lesotho (Matela, 2020; Makafane, 2019; Misso et al., 2019; Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018; Pitikoe and Morojele 2017; Pitikoe, 2016; Sello, 2021). The model shows that there are four levels of interaction between a person and the

environment: the personal level, the relationship level, the community level, and the societal level. This model was found relevant in this study because, according to the literature, IPV is a behaviour rooted in childhood experiences of violence and the cultural norms justifying violence among boys (CDC, 2022; Maguele et al., 2020; Maliackal and Maliackal, 2021; Pittenga, 2016; Sibanyoni et al., 2022).

2.4.1.1.1 Individual level

This level demonstrates that individuals' behaviour determinants are person-specific (Hawkins et al., 2021). Theorists also suggest that behaviour is learned through observing and/or experiencing. For instance, personal history or childhood experiences contribute negatively or positively to culminant adulthood behaviour. On the strength of the foregoing, it may be added that behaviour, more so in adulthood, is a choice which may be associated with one's self-concept. According to the model therefore, having witnessed or experienced violence in childhood is a predictive factor for adulthood decisions pertaining to IPV (Hawkins et al., 2021). This study recognized that IPV was both an individual choice which resulted in part from experiential and observational learning as well as individual self-concept. Thus, it was considered worthwhile to consider men's standpoint on the matter, specifically the standpoint of men who had ever committed IPV. The study also recognized that an understanding of perpetrators and/or position on IPV would be informative for future interventions.

2.4.1.1.2 Relationship

This level holds that individuals' closest social circles can influence their perceptions as well as experiences regarding IPV. Furthermore, the most impactful experiences are considered those which take place within the context of important relationships. Important relationships include those with significant adults, friends, peers and teachers. This implied is that, association with aggressive peers or growing up within violent families and communities, increases the risk of being violent and channels perceptions regarding IPV (Misso et al., 2019).

2.4.1.1.3 Community

Similarly, communities within which individuals exist influence their perceptions and experiences. Additionally, communities hold values and practices which can be imposed in individuals. In Lesotho and many Southern African Countries as discussed above, general impunity and lack of consequence which surround IPV specifically and male violence against weaker beings generally, can easily be adopted and/or perceived by individuals as the norm (Hawkins et al., 2021; Maguele et al,, 2020; Maliackal and Maliackal, 2021; Matela, 2020; Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018; Pitikoe and Morojele 2017).

2.4.1.1.4 Societal

This level looked at the broad societal factors which promoted IPV by condoning it (Lankester and Grills, 2019). These include cultural norms and believes which embrace masculinity. Basotho culturally condone wife beating and justify it with proverbs which force women into submitting to men's leadership such as "*monna ke hlooho*" meaning a man is in power. Likewise, the practices such as payment of "*bohali*" the bride price create an environment conducive for men to abuse women under the perception that they have bought them (Mabale, 2020; Matheolane and Makura, 2020; Sello, 2018).

***Figure 1**: Simulated interplay of factors associated with IPV according to Socio-Ecological Model*

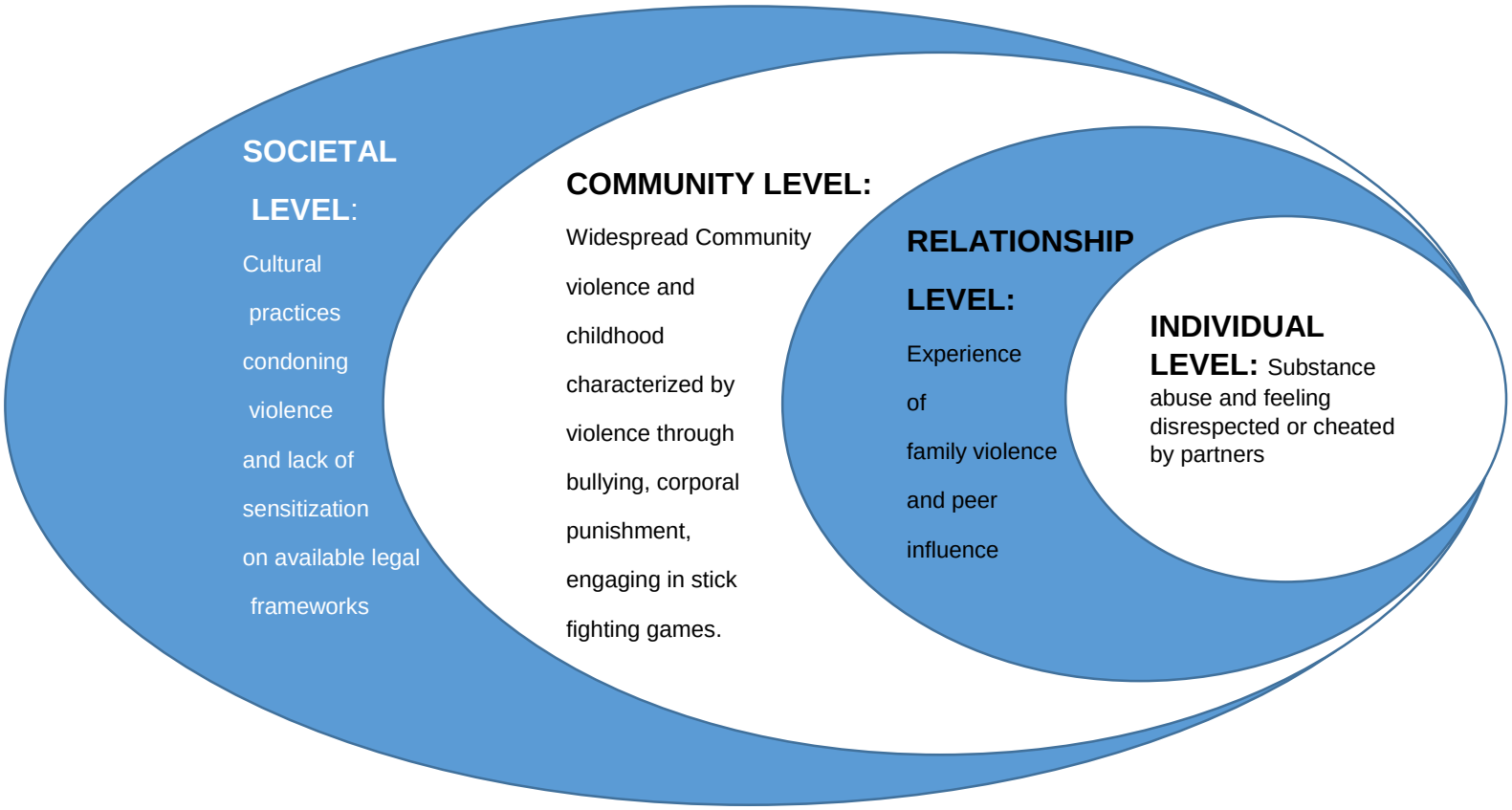


***Table 1:** Socio-Ecological model on Mokhotlong young adult men's perceptions and experiences regarding IPV*

Theoretical levels of performance	Principle of Theory	Relevance to the Study	Application to the study
Individual	Behavior is determined by biological factors and childhood family dynamics.	Individuals and their experiences are unique and are uniquely interpreted by concerned individuals. Thus, perceptions are a result of individual experiences. In turn, people's responses to their experiences are	**Objective:** To understudy perceptions of young adult men in Mokhotlong on IPV. **Methodology:** Data was collected through face-to-face in-depth interviews with young adult men in Mokhotlong to identify their perception of behaviour which may be classified as

		dependent on their perception of such experiences (Napoli et al., 2019).	IPV as well as whether IPV could be justified. **Motivation:** This study sought to understudy individual-specific factors associated with IPV such as perceptions and experiences.
Relationship	People's closest social circle influenced their perceptions and behaviour (Hunnicut et al., 2017).	The study investigates how childhood experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong contributed to their IPV perpetration.	**Objectives**: (i) To investigate childhood experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong on IPV. (ii) To investigate adulthood experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong on IPV. **Methodology:** Young adult men in Mokhotlong were asked about their childhood experiences of IPV within their families and communities along with their adulthood experiences. **Motivation:** The study considered relationship factors which could promote and/or be factored into interventions against IPV. Thus, key relationships such as relationships with parents and were considered. Relationships with intimate partners were also taken into consideration.
Community and Society	Practices and settings where people have social relationships contribute to how they behave (CDC, 2016). The roots of violence reach deep into society, tapping into complex conditions such as a lack of effective discipline (Lankester and Grills, 2019).	The study investigated how adulthood experiences influenced IPV among young adult men in Mokhotlong.	**Objective:** (i) To investigate childhood experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong on IPV. (ii) To investigate adulthood experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong on IPV. **Methodology**: In face-to-face in-depth interviews, participants were prompted to narrate how growing up in their communities exposed them to IPV. Many of them added that little was done by extended families or community

			members to protect victims or put perpetrators to order. Participants' accounts also revealed how peers influenced them into committing IPV. **Motivation**: It was found informative to understudy a possible nexus between childhood and adulthood experiences of IPV.

2.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Empirical studies indicated that childhood experiences influenced adulthood violent behaviour and the perceptions toward violence. Those experiences, due to being regarded as normal and accepted by society, influenced young adult men's perceptions that violence, particularly IPV, demonstrates power and is a form of communication. The available legal frameworks and programs put in place to deal with violence are not effective in addressing IPV issues with specificity. There was therefore a need to understand Mokhotlong young adult men's perceptions and experiences with regard to IPV, in order to effectively address it. The theoretical framework, on the other hand, highlighted that interaction between a person and the environment plays an influential role in his or her behaviour. The theoretical framework therefore proposes that when addressing IPV, all four levels of interaction have to be considered together.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the research methodology which was used for data collection and analysis in exploring Intimate Partner Violence in Mokhotlong Lesotho: Perceptions and experiences of young adult men who have perpetrated Intimate Partner Violence. The chapter discusses research paradigms, research design, data collection approaches and techniques, population, sample, and study site. The chapter concludes by outlining the ethical considerations with which the study aligned itself in order to protect human subjects while serving the purpose of the study.

3.1 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A research paradigm is a philosophical framework offering a pattern of beliefs and understandings from which the theories and practices of a research project operate (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020). Research paradigms are a set of assumptions on reality's meanings, knowledge development, and what is valuable to learn (Davies and Fisher, 2018). Ontology, epistemology, and research methodology are major branches of philosophy which guide researchers' justifications regarding chosen methodologies. They inform researchers' choices and arguments on data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation (Bonache and Festing, 2020).

This study adopted the interpretivist research paradigm. Interpretivists indicate that reality can be fully understood only through the subjective interpretations of reality, that is, through the lenses of the participants (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020). Interpretive ontology shows that the social world is understood according to people's experiences, meanings, and interpretations (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020). Interpretive epistemology shows that the existence of the real world depends on humans' engagement with reality within their social world (Davies and Fisher, 2018). Interpretive research methodology, on the other hand, shows that social phenomena are understood through participants' perspectives (Bonache and Festing, 2020).

These research paradigms were found relevant for this study because of their subjective nature, considering people's perspectives on the phenomenon being studied. Since this study explored the perceptions and experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong Lesotho, on IPV, it was necessary to unpack IPV in depth from the young adult men's point of view. This enabled the researcher to gain further depth by seeking their perceptions and experiences. This is because individuals develop different meanings toward a phenomenon due to their varying experiences, leading the researcher to have to explore the complexity of their varying views. The adoption of interpretivism led to the generation of high-level validity in data due to their being based on personal contributions (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020).

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

A research approach is a procedure of data collection, analysis, and interpretation selected by the researcher (Eyisi, 2016). A qualitative research approach was adopted in this study. Qualitative research is an approach concerned with the collection and analysis of non-numerical data with the interest of understanding the meanings of life within people's social worlds attached to actions, decisions, beliefs, and values (Haradham, 2018). Qualitative research is explorative in nature since the researcher comes with no preconceived and imaginative ideas of what the study will deliver, allowing the researcher to understand views of the world from the participants' perspective (Haradham, 2018). Additionally, human behaviours in qualitative research are studied holistically due to their in-depth examination of phenomena (Eyisi, 2016).

According to Braun and Clark (2013), qualitative research is inductive, able to seek local understanding, interpretation, and meanings, producing knowledge that will contribute to a more general understanding. Additionally, participants' selection in qualitative research is based on the fact that they have experienced the phenomena being explored (Sawatsky et al., 2019). Qualitative research was found relevant in this study because it involves a mutual relationship between the researcher and the participants that allows them the freedom to express their views and thoughts with no pre-set constraints (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020).

3.2.1 Research design

Research design is the study master plan that guides data collection and analysis (Creswell and Poth, 2018). It specifies the processes of data collection, instrument development, sampling, and analysis (Bonache and Festing, 2020). It also links the research problem, research questions, the data collected, and data analysis strategies in order to answer the research questions through study findings (Creswell and Poth, 2018). The research design that was adopted in this study is the phenomenological research design. In qualitative research, phenomenology aims to understand phenomena in depth from participants' natural settings by focusing on their subjective experiences and attempting to understand how they make sense of such experiences (Tomaszewski et al., 2020). It guides the researcher into describing lived participants' experiences about a phenomenon per their description (Creswell and Poth, 2018). This research design was deemed relevant as the study is subjective and recognizes that, people have different experiences and meanings attached to their realities. This enabled the researcher to delve into an in-depth understanding of the perceptions and experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong with regard to IPV through their lens.

3.3 THE STUDY SITE

A study site is defined as a place where research can be conducted (Johnson et al., 2018). This study was conducted in Mokhotlong, within the Urban Council. The selection of the study area was based on the fact that statistical data shows that Mokhotlong has high IPV prevalence (LHDA, 2019). Additionally, there have been no previous studies conducted in this community council on the topic of the perceptions and experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong Lesotho, on IPV. The proximity and accessibility to the researcher also afforded convenience for the researcher to conduct face-to-face in-depth interviews.

3.4 RESEARCH POPULATION

Pooja (2019) defines the research population as all units to which the research findings can be applied. In other words, a group of people that researchers identify and wish to draw conclusions from (Shukla, 2020). Creswell and Poth (2018) further define a

population as a parent group which possesses variable characteristics under study and out of which a sample is formed. The target population in this study was comprised of Mokhotlong young adult men (18–35 years of age) living in Mokhotlong Urban Council, engaging (or engaged) in IPV and willing to share their experiences.

3.5 SAMPLE METHOD AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

A sample is a group of people who actually participated in the research, since not every individual participates due to time and resource availability (Pooja, 2019). Sampling is defined by Campbell et al. (2020) as the process of selecting a sample from a larger population with the aim of making inferences or generalizations about the characteristics of the population. Sampling in this study was based on the objectives of the study and characteristics of the target population, including involvement in IPV, and willingness to share their IPV experiences. This study recruited participants through snowball sampling. The sample size for this study constituted ten participants. Braun and Clarke (2013) purported that qualitative research uses a small sample size, between five and twenty-five participants.

3.5.1 Sample inclusion and exclusion criteria for participants

According to Hornberger and Rangu (2020), inclusion and exclusion criteria are used to set the stage for who can participate in the study by ruling in or out the target population for the study. Table 2 below depicts the inclusion and exclusion criteria used in this study.

Table 2: *Sample inclusion and exclusion criteria for participants*

Inclusion criteria	- Young adult men aged between 18 and 35 years of age, - Men who ever perpetrated IPV and were willing to share their experiences on IPV, - Men residing within Mokhotlong Urban Council.
Exclusion criteria	- Females, - Men below the ages of 18 years and above the age of 35 years, - Men aged between 18 and 35 years of age who ever perpetrated IPV but were not willing to share their experiences on IPV or those with no history of IPV perpetration, - Men residing outside Mokhotlong Urban Council.

3.5.2 Sampling procedure

The sampling procedure refers to the process of selecting a subset of individuals from a larger population to participate in a research study (Campbell et al., 2020). A non-probability sampling procedure was used in this study, which is often used when it is difficult or impossible to obtain a complete sampling frame of the population (Campbell et al., 2020). The non-probability sampling technique used in this study is snowball sampling.

3.5.2.1 Snowball sampling

Snowball sampling is a sampling technique used to locate information-rich key participants through elicitation (Musarrat et al., 2019). It is a sampling technique where existing participants recruit future subjects knowledgeable about the phenomenon being researched until the sample size or data saturation is reached (Musarrat et al., 2019; Zickar and Keith, 2023).

The researcher followed the following steps under snowball sampling when recruiting the participants:

Step 1

The researcher described the purpose of the study and the data collection process to the Village Chiefs. Emphasis was placed on the fact that the study was solely academic and had no financial gain. It was further explained that the study was for the purpose of gaining insight into a societal practice understood to be harmful to all concerned, with a view to learning from participants possible strategies that could be adopted to control the practice. The researcher further described the target study population (Zickar and Keith, 2023), requesting the Chiefs to mobilize such a target population and request their participation in the study (Vincent and Thompson, 2022).

Step 2

After hearing the study's purpose and objectives, the Chiefs then identified and contacted the index participants, young adult men who had perpetrated IPV. The purpose and objective of the study were explained, and an inquiry was made on the willingness to participate in the study. For those who showed willingness, the Chiefs sought their

permission to pass on their contact details to the researcher. According to Zickar and Keith (2023), snowball sampling relies on the referral of participants likely to meet the sample inclusion criteria. The referring participants share study information with these potential participants (Zickar and Keith, 2023).

Step 3

The researcher received three index participants' contacts from Ntlholohetsane and Sekeketeng. Upon reaching them and re-emphasizing the purpose and objective of the study and the interview process, only two of the referred index participants agreed to participate. The researcher thereafter solicited them to refer other known members of the target population to the researcher. All participants were cautioned to only convey other prospective participants' contact details with the consent of such prospective participants.

Step 4

After obtaining consent, index participants were told that participation was voluntary and that they were free to stop participating if they felt like it. Emphasis was made on the fact that the interviews were neither part of a criminal investigation nor had any financial reward for participating but were solely for academic achievement. Lastly, all participants were informed that their identity details, such as names, workplaces, and addresses, would not be disclosed in the study report. Then the researcher requested written consent to participate from the index participants, and consent forms written in Sesotho were filled out.

Step 5

Index participants agreed to repeat step 2 above with their peers known to be involved in IPV. Individual participants helped increase the sample size by linking other potential participants to the study (Zickar and Keith, 2023).

Step 6

Steps 3 to 5 were repeated by the researcher with prospective participants. Since participation was voluntary, not all participants identified through peer elicitation agreed to participate. Those who agreed continued eliciting other peers until data saturation was reached.

The snowball sampling strategy was used and found relevant in this study because the researcher alone, without the help of community members and community gatekeepers (Village Chiefs), would not have easily known or accessed the participants as IPV is a sensitive issue. The researcher had to be referred to the participants by people they knew and trusted, who would convince them that there was no harm in participating, eliminating the risk of violence caused by participants feeling cornered or suspecting that they were under legal investigation. While IPV typically takes place behind closed doors, traditional mechanisms of protection usually involve family meetings and Chiefs' councils; hence, some IPV perpetrators are known in the communities. As indicated in the statement of the problem, IPV in some remote areas of Lesotho is not heavily frowned upon as it is considered an acceptable communication strategy between couples. Additionally, men brag about IPV to receive validation from their peers. Moreover, women share their stories with other women, who in turn gossip, making women and men living in situations of IPV known to community members.

3.6 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

There are various data collection methods in qualitative research, but interviews and focus group discussions are the most common ones. Interviews were used in this study to explore the experiences of individual participants. The primary data was collected using face-to-face in-depth interviews coupled with audio recordings for reference during data analysis. A face-to-face in-depth interview is described by Saarijärvi and Bratt (2021) as a data collection method where the researcher gathers highly personalized information in direct communication with the participants in accordance with the prepared interview guide. The face-to-face in-depth interviews were used because they helped the researcher uncover the stories behind participants' experiences and pursue in-depth information about the topic.

The interviews were semi-structured, with no predetermined answers. Open-ended questions were used to allow participants' free expression. Semi-structured interviews took between 30 and 50 minutes. Face-to-face in-depth interviews with semi-structured questions were found applicable in the study because their direct interaction between the researcher and the participant enabled the researcher to probe more and observe body

language, facial expressions, and other non-verbal social signals that added more meaning to the verbal communication. The researcher was guided by the themed interview guide when conducting the interviews.

3.6.1 Face-to-face in-depth interviews with participants

The interviews took place in the participants' natural environments, such as their homes and offices. They were conducted in Sesotho, the common vernacular for Basotho, to ease participants' understanding and expression. Semi-structured and generally open-ended questions were used with the aim of getting in-depth opinions from the participants. In-depth face-to-face interviews were found relevant for this study because they allowed the researcher to build rapport, probe, and pick up on visual cues and gestures for more meaning.

3.6.2 Research instrument for data collection

3.6.2.1 Interview guide

The researcher designed a data collection instrument called a themed interview guide which was consistent with the research objectives. An interview guide is a document that helps researchers know which questions to ask during the interview process. The benefits of using an interview guide included the optimization of interview time as well as keeping the interview focused on the desired line of action (Taherdoost, 2022). The aim was to collect as much information as possible from participants with the purpose of getting the fullest understanding of their perspectives with regard to IPV.

3.6.2.1 Audio recording

Photographs, audio recordings, and video recordings are the most common tools used in social and behavioural science research (YanJu et al., 2017). With handwritten notes during the interview, researchers are not able to capture all the key points. Therefore, it was necessary to couple note-taking with audio recording, allowing the researcher time to focus on and note other non-verbal communication content to help add more meaning during transcription to generate verbatim transcripts (YanJu et al., 2017). Consent from the participants was sought prior to the audio recordings. The recordings were then destroyed after data analysis to maintain the promised confidentiality.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

Data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing of codes (Creswell and Poth, 2018). This study used an inductive data analysis approach called thematic analysis. The main themes were developed out of objectives, while minor themes and subthemes emerged during the data analysis process (Braun and Clarke, 2013 cited in Braun et al., 2019). Below are the thematic analysis steps which were followed in this research during the data analysis, as per Braun and Clarke (2013).

Step 1: Coding

After the data was collected, it was transcribed and translated from Sesotho to English. Then the researcher familiarized herself with the data by going through the audio recordings to get the meaning of what Mokhotlong young adult men were saying. During data familiarization, important data features were identified, such as words, phrases, and themes relevant to answering the research question, and were noted as codes.

Step 2: Generating initial themes

At this step, the researcher searched for patterns or themes in the codes across different questions. The codes were listed and collated, and their association with the data extracts was identified. The study objectives were used as themes and preliminary sub-themes were identified. The collation of the codes into broader themes was done to form a map which showed the relationship between the themes and codes.

Step 3: Reviewing themes

The themes that were identified in the above step were then deeply reviewed and refined. The data was read through to see if there was any missing information and to confirm whether the themes were really in the data set and whether they were adequately representative of the interesting themes that were developed. Going through the data set over and over helped the researcher keep identifying new themes, and when there were no more new themes identified, the researcher moved on to the next step.

Step 4: Defining and naming themes

At this step, the themes identified were named and described. Their description included what was really interesting and why it was interesting. The story which the theme told was identified, along with how it related to the other themes and the overall research question. A detailed analysis of each theme was developed to determine the story of each, and then an informative name for each theme was decided. The validity of the data was checked by going through the interview guide again.

Step 5: Writing Up

After defining and naming themes for analysis, primary data was integrated into a coherent report consistent with the identified study objectives. Subsequently, conclusions on the results were drawn to inform relevant policy, research, and intervention recommendations.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The ethical integrity of the researcher is a critically essential aspect of ensuring that the research process and the researcher's findings are trustworthy and valid (Fleming and Zegwaard, 2018). It was therefore very fundamental for this study to observe ethical standards in order to protect the dignity, rights, and welfare of the participants, such as obtaining informed consent, minimizing the risk of harming them, protecting their anonymity through confidentiality, avoiding the use of deceptive practices, as well as giving them the right to withdraw from the research whenever the need arises (Cilliers and Viljoen, 2021). This study aligned itself with the following ethical principles:

3.8.1 Informed consent

Informed consent ensures that individuals are voluntarily participating in the research with full knowledge of relevant risks and benefits (Fleming and Zegwaard, 2018). According to Fleming and Zegwaard (2018) research, participants deserve to be given as much information as possible, including the potential risks, in order to make informed decisions. The participants in this study were told about the study's objectives, their roles in the study along with the benefits as well as the potential risks of participating in the study to allow them an opportunity to make informed decisions. They also consented verbally as well as

by signing the consent forms. The purpose of the study and the objectives were clearly spelled out to the participants before they could consent and participate.

3.8.2 Voluntary participation

According to Cilliers and Viljoen (2021), some of the ethical issues in social research involve the voluntary participation of the participants. The participants of this study were informed that the purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions and experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong Lesotho, regarding IPV. They were told that the researcher is interested in understanding their views regarding IPV perpetration since it has become a daunting challenge in communities in Lesotho. The researcher stressed that participation was voluntary and that participants were free to withdraw from participation at any point should they change their minds.

3.8.3 Confidentiality

The researcher assured participants of their anonymity for participating in the study. Unique identifiers such as ‘respondent 001’ were used in place of participants’ names to guarantee confidentiality and anonymity (Fleming and Zegwaard, 2018). This was done to minimize the chances of readers matching participants’ identities to the participants' stories. The audios and notes taken during the interview were destroyed immediately after data analysis so as to avoid accidental disclosure. The interviews were conducted in safe and confidential places, such as under a tree at participants’ homes or alone in their respective offices. The choices of where to conduct the interview were specifically made with regard to confidentiality, away from distractions, and minimizing the chances of being overheard.

3.8.4 Protection from exploitation

Participants were not exploited by the researcher either directly or indirectly. The researcher did not receive any financial gain from the participants and likewise the participants did not receive any financial gain for participating (Fleming and Zegwaard, 2018). It was strengthened that the research was solely for academic purposes and that participation would not be rewarded financially for prticipating.

3.8.5 Respect for personal dignity and worth

The questions were asked in a manner that did not violate the participants' dignity (Cilliers and Viljoen, 2021). The researcher avoided invading participants' personal space by not asking sensitive and intrusive questions. The researcher was cautious not to ask questions related to IPV perpetration in an intrusive manner, as IPV is a sensitive topic. The participants were also assured that the researcher had no interest in bringing their IPV incidents before the authorities but was rather interested in knowing their childhood and adulthood experiences, which might have contributed to their perceptions on IPV.

Due to the in-depth nature of the inquiry, ethical considerations are particularly relevant in qualitative research and were addressed consistently throughout the study to reduce harm to research participants (Arifin and Roshaidai, 2018). It was therefore essential to safeguard human participants by following the correct ethical norms, which is, adhering to the code of conduct when collecting data from human subjects in order to protect their rights, enhance research validity, and maintain research integrity (Arifin and Roshaidai, 2018).

3.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The study followed a qualitative methodology using face-to-face in-depth interviews to collect data with the help of a themed interview guide. The participants of the study were young adult men in Mokhotlong with a history of IPV perpetration and willingness to participate in the study. Snowball sampling was used to select Mokhotlong young adult men who had ever engaged in IPV. The total sample size of the study amounted to ten. The study was conducted in Mokhotlong Urban Council. Prior to the collection of data, the participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality and that their participation was voluntary and devoid of any financial or material rewards. Their willingness to participate was sealed by signing of a consent form. The collected data was analyzed thematically through the process of coding.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings from the study which explored Intimate Partner Violence in Mokhotlong Lesotho: Perceptions and experiences of young adult men who have perpetrated Intimate Partner Violence. The primary data was collected qualitatively within Mokhotlong Urban Council from young adult men aged between 18 and 35 years. Themed, audio-recorded face-to-face in-depth interviews were conducted for data collection. To be eligible for the study, participants had to have ever engaged in IPV during either adolescence or adulthood and willing to share both childhood and adulthood experiences of IPVs.

The data for the study was analyzed thematically through coding. During data familiarization and analysis, themes and subthemes were developed. Main themes were derived from research objectives (Braun and Clarke, 2019). The chapter commences with presentation of the participants' Demographic Information, followed by the discussion of findings. The presentation of findings was coupled with participants' direct quotations to strengthen the meanings behind the findings. The findings were presented thematically and chronologically in alignment with the research objectives and the theoretical framework adopted. The study chapter concludes with the application of the theory to the study followed by a summary of the chapter.

4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The first part of the section consists of a summary of the Demographic Information of participants.

4.1.1 Summary of Participants' Demographic Information

Table 3 presents the Demographic Information of the participants. All the participants for this study were males who had engaged in IPV and were willing to discuss their experiences of committing IPV. In total, ten face-to-face in-depth interviews were conducted. As stated in Chapter there, while the identified study population was men,

there was no requirement to whether intimate partners should be men or women. However, all men in the study revealed that their past and current intimate partners were women.

According to table 3 below, half of the participants were aged between 24 and 29. Out of ten young adult men interviewed, five were single and five were married with no widowed or divorced among participants. With regard to the place of residence, three participants resided at Sekeketeng while seven participants were residents of Ntlholohetsane. Majority had reached tertiary level of education while only one attained secondary education. With regard to history of violence, all participants had a childhood history.

Table 3: *Participants' Demographic Information*

Socio-demographic information		**Frequency**
Age	18-23	2
	24-29	5
	30-35	3
Marital status	Married	5
	Single	5
Place of residence	Ntlholohetsane	7
	Sekeketeng	3
Level of education	Secondary level	1
	High school level	2
	Tertiary level	7
History of IPV	Yes	10
	No	0

4.1.2 Detailed participants Demographic Information

4.1.2.1 Participants' Age Categories

Table 4 below represents the age categories of the participants. Half of participants was aged between 24-29 years, three were aged between 30-35 years, while two were aged between 18-23 years.

Table 4: *Participants' age categories*

Age Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-23	2	20
24-29	5	50
30-35	3	30

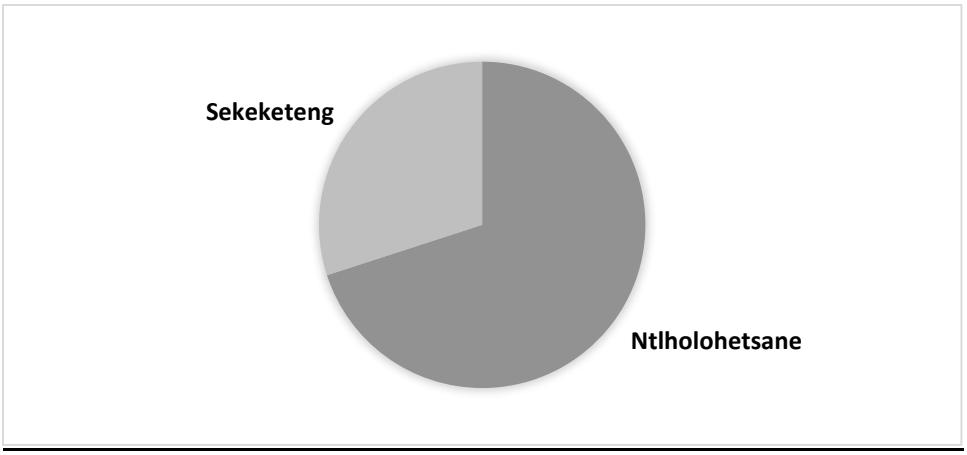
4.1.2.2 Participants' Marital Status

Half of the participants were in intimate relationships but not married while the other half were married.

4.1.2.3 Participants' Place of Residence

The participants' place of residence as shown on figure 2 below is as follows: three participants were residing at Sekeketeng while the majority (seven out of ten) resided at Ntlholohetsane. The participants were reached through snow ball sampling and most of the people who were elicited but were not interested in participating were the residents of Sekeketeng.

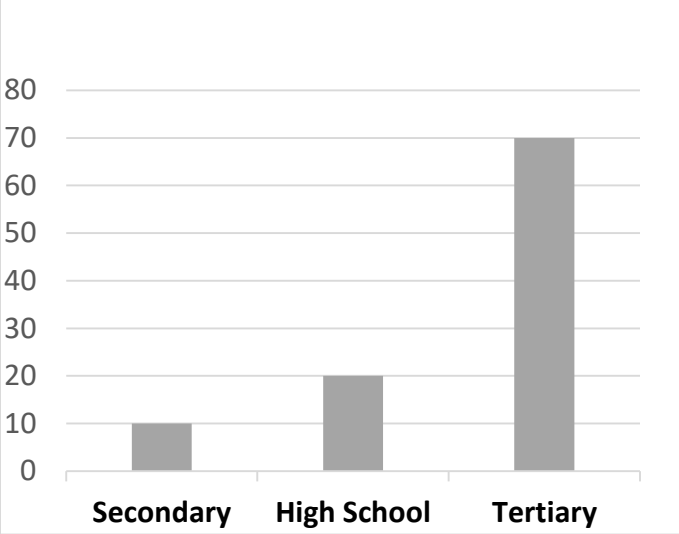
Figure 2*: Participants' Place of Residence*



4.1.2.4 Participants' Educational Level

The participants' educational level as shown on figure 3 below is as follows: only 1 respondent had attained secondary education while 2 participants had obtained high school education. The majority (70%) had attained the highest level of education (tertiary level).

***Figure 3**: Participants' Educational Level*



4.2 FINDINGS

In this section, the following themes which were derived from research objectives and the subthemes which emerged during data analysis are discussed. The themes discussed include: perceptions of young adult men in Mokhotlong on IPV; Participants' perceptions on IPV; participants' childhood experiences of IPV; and participants' adulthood experiences on IPV. The themes and subthemes sequence is demonstrated in table 5 table below. The section also discusses the mitigation strategies suggested by participants.

***Table 5**: Findings: Themes and subthemes which emerged in analysis*

Objective	Findings		
	Main Theme	**Main Sub-theme**	**Secondary Subtheme**
To understudy perceptions of young adult men in Mokhotlong on Intimate Partner Violence.	Participants' perceptions on Intimate Partner Violence.	Participants' descriptions of behaviours that can be classified as Intimate Partner Violence.	-
		Participants' perception on when IPV is justifiable	When women are disrespectful
			When women are married
			When either partner is suspected of or found to be an infidel
		Participants' perception on factors contributing to IPV.	Peer influence
			Use of intoxicating substances
			Learned Violence (i) Learned language of intimidation (ii) Learned violence through being bullied (iii) Learned violence through witnessing and engaging in stick fighting
To investigate childhood experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong on IPV.	Participants' childhood experiences of IPV.	Childhood experience of IPV within families	-
		Childhood experience of IPV within communities.	-

To investigate adulthood experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong on IPV.	Participants' adulthood experiences on Intimate Partner Violence	Experience of physical IPV in adulthood.	-
		Experience of psychological IPV in adulthood.	-
		Experience of sexual IPV in adulthood.	-
		Experience of IPV and infidelity in adulthood	-

4.2.1 Theme 1: Participants' perceptions of IPV

Under this theme, the researcher explored participants' perceptions regarding IPV. In addition to descriptive explanations of behaviour which can be classified as IPV, participants detailed their perceptions on whether and when, in their view, IPV was justifiable. Thus, the main sub-themes which emerged and are presented below are: participants' explanations of behaviours that can be classified as IPV, participants' perception on whether or when IPV can be justified and participants' perception on factors contributing to IPV.

4.2.1.1 Participants' description of behaviour that can be classified as IPV

In finding out which behaviours participants classified as IPV, they mentioned physical, sexual, and psychological behaviours. Few participants indicated that behaviour devoid of self-respect and respect for one's partner as well as infidelity also formed part of IPV. Other participants were of the view that, behaviours such as lying, possessive behaviour, stealing from sexual partners and stalking formed IPV. These were some of their responses:

> *"Behaviours which I know to be forming part of IPV include derogatory, condemning, or degrading language, forced sexual activity and withholding financial support from partners. For example, if a partner can say anything bad if*

her partner has cooked some nice food, that is like beating your wife[1]." (Participant 001).

"IPV can be conflicts between partners such as fighting each other, forced sex, partners insulting each other, saying intimidating or vulgar words towards a partner, making comments or gestures which make the other partner feel small or useless, and using family's resources without consent of the other spouse" (Participant 003).

"IPV behaviour includes communicating with insults, lying about pregnancy, hiding important information such as illness from the other partner, silence and cheating. It is also the act of going physical to the other partner such as manhandling a partner or raping a partner" (Participant 008).

"IPV is a broad word for abusing a partner. It involves many acts such as date rape, beating, infidelity, stalking, women using pregnancy to lure men into marrying them, nasty shouting at the partner and stealing partner's money or other belongings" (Participant 009).

4.2.1.2 Perceptions of when IPV is justifiable

In addition to elaborate description of behaviour that can be classified as IPV, some participants were adamant that there are circumstances under which IPV was justified, that is to say, "when women called IPV on themselves" such as when they were being disrespectful. Other circumstances under which IPV could be justified, according to participants were: when women were married, and/or when they were suspected of infidelity.

4.2.1.2.1 When women are disrespectful

According to participants, IPV was a justifiable means of reminding women to behave appropriately, suggesting that, men's compromised economic circumstances caused women to disrespect men. They further mentioned that, the societal expectation for men

[1] In their vernacular, the participant said: *"Tlhekefetso ea batho ba ratanang kapa ba nyalaneng e kaba liketso tse kang, ho hobosa kapa ho nyenyetfatsa molekane, ho etsa thobalano ntle le litumellano, kapa ho se ise chelete hae. Mohlala ha molekane a ka bua ntho e sa thabiseng ha molekane a phehile lijo tse monate, ho ts'oana le ho shapa molekane ea joalo".*

to provide financially for families made it necessary for men to remind women of their place from time to time. Some of their views on men's compromised economic circumstances and how IPV could guide women in such circumstances to act appropriately were:

> "*Being a provider in this era of high unemployment is challenging. Unemployment in itself is stressful, so, societal pressure and family expectations make matters worse. Failure [on our part] to provide causes women to cheat and disrespect us because they are so fond of money. Beating and threatening to beat them is the only way to make them behave and be respectful" (Participant 003).*
>
> *"Women in relationships with poor men are disrespectful and mostly verbally aggressive. They are therefore at risk of being beaten. Women are capable of acting funny when their men fail to provide and take good care of them. They can go as far as singing mocking songs, making disrespectful gestures towards men just to provoke men. This reminds me of one incident where my girlfriend asked me to give her my trouser to wear as I was not able to provide for her needs then. I felt so intimidated and disrespected to a point that I started abusing her" (Participant 004).*
>
> *"Inability to put bread on a table as a man is like an insult as we are culturally assigned the role of providers. We end up being abusive when unable to provide because of being overwhelmed with roles and woman's disrespect" (Participants 007).*

4.2.1.2.2 When women are married

Married participants mentioned that they were culturally entitled to get sexual intercourse as well as disciplining their wives. According to them, payment of "*bohali*", (the bide price), granted them sexual right and power. Their remarks included:

> "*It is culturally a right of a man who paid "bohali" to demand sex whenever he desires. Payment of "bohali" equals buying of women and offers full access to sexual needs. That is why it is referred to as 'conjugal rights', a man has a right to access it whenever the need arises" (Participant 003).*

"But it is obvious. She agreed to be married [to me]. She said she wanted to be married. When we are married I am the head [of the family]. When I ask her to do something she must listen. Otherwise, as you are aware, I will just go outside [the family to have sex]" (Participant 007).

"Our culture justifies wife-beating and marital rape. A married woman is expected to deliver man's demands and endure the pain silently, "mosali o ngalla mots'eo". We "buy" our wives, so, they have to fulfil our demands whether they like it or not, or else we take it by force. Even without paying "bohali", we still buy them everything and even give them money on top of that" (Participant 008).

4.2.1.2.3 When either partner is found or suspected of infidelity

Infidelity of either partner was a common factor used to justify IPV among the participants. In addition to admitting that they had beaten their women for suspicion of or infidelity, they indicated that men who engaged in infidelity were compelled to resort to violence upon being confronted by their partners. A common perception among participants was that, Basotho culture had a strong (otherwise acceptable) tradition of infidelity. Some even went further to say that the founder of Basotho led by having an ample number of wives and concubines. They said in their comments:

"Poverty exposes a man to disrespect by other men. A poor man's girlfriend is easily taken by wealthier men in a scornful manner. Once a man is broke and is cheated on, he feels useless and this causes him to be in constant violence with his partner" (Participant 002).

"Basotho and multiple sexual partners are inseparable. They inherited the practice from Moshoeshoe. Many incidents of Intimate Partner Violence result from cheating. Regardless of causing tensions and conflicts between sexual partners, dating many women is manly… (Laughing loud). But women talk a lot and pretend that it is an abnormal thing for men to have several sexual partners. So…., when they talk "nonsense", they may get a beating" (Participant 004).

Participant 006 described two scenarios under which infidelity could beget IPV: when men are the infidels and when men find their partners to be infidels. He started with a situation where men were infidels:

> "*When unfaithful, it is not easy to live freely around your intimate partner because you are in constant fear that she knows your secrets. It is better to act angry whenever the conversation is brought up, just to be on the safe side. Sometimes the fake anger develops and becomes real because the wife or girlfriend may retaliate, causing havoc within the intimate relationship" (Participant 006).*

Then a scenario where women were the infidels:

> *"I have seen a lot of retrenched men lose their wives and girlfriends because other rich men took advantage of their situation and pampered their women with gifts. Women are also chameleons, when you can provide for their needs, they stick with you but run away when you lose your job or become broke. Because we invest a lot in them, we can't afford to lose them in the hands of other men just like that, we fight back, beating them into staying in the relationship with us" (Participant 006).*

> *"Women dating contractors subject themselves to beatings. We get jealous because these contractors pamper them, making it hard for us to control and own our women. This increases chances of us men acting out of proportion, resulting in fatal violence" (Participant 007).*

4.2.1.3 Participants' perception of factors contributing to IPV

Substance use, peer influence and learned behaviour were identified by participants as factors contributing to IPV.

4.2.1.3.1 Peer influence

Intimate Partner Violence according to participants, was a strategy used by men to prove to their peers that they had the upper hand in intimate relationships. The participants said:

> *"Befriending people who practice wife-beating is contaminating. It is easy to copycat them and develop their abusive life style. For example, if my wife misbehaves in the presence of my friends, I must discipline her right away. I cannot*

afford to be undermined by my friends. I have to always appear tough and manly in the presence of my friends" (Participant 010).

"I started being violent after I was introduced to marijuana by my friends. Their friendship puts me in trouble but it is not easy to leave them as I will appear weak. As a matter of fact I become violent for no particular reason because I have to score points or else I'll not have buddies to hang with" (Participant 004).

4.2.1.3.2 Use of intoxicating substances

Participants mentioned alcohol as a strong aggravator for IPV among Basotho men. They said while alcohol was culturally meant for mutual relationship building, celebration and as an antidepressant. Some people used it as a motivation to perpetrate violence as well as to cover up their aggressive acts. They went on to say that it was appropriate therefore, to purposefully drink when they wished to abuse their partners knowing that the blame would be on the substance used.

Other participants believed that substance abuse affected men's perceptions on aggression and judgment of others' behavior, thus, resulting in inability to resolve problems without resorting to violence. Those in support said that this was a case because of the impaired cognitive functioning, which triggered IPV.

"Most of the conflicts between intimate partners arise when alcohol is involved" (Participant 002).

"People who smoke marijuana hallucinate when high. This makes them behave dangerously and in ways that subject other people including their families to risk of being harmed" (Participant 004).

"Some men purposely get drunk to hit their women. This is the case because they know for sure that, when drunk, the blame will be directed on the substance used. Since alcohol is culturally a recreational beverage that is easily accessible, its use is acceptable. It is very unfortunate to misuse it because it is a token that brings Basotho together" (Participant 005).

4.2.1.3.3 Learned violence

The participants mentioned that, their violent behaviour was learned through observing and experiencing violence when growing up. They indicated that most lessons were acquired when tending to livestock where they would engage in fighting games (*ho kalla*), communicated with animals using vulgar language, and being bullied.

4.2.1.3.3 (i) Learned language of intimidation

Learned humiliating and/or intimidating language during childhood was mentioned as another aggravating factor for IPV. Participants made a mention that poor communication between them and their intimate partners resulted from obscene language that they learned and used while tending to the flock. They highlighted that the language had translated into IPV. For instance, they indicated that, the offensive language that was used to rebuke the animals influenced their communication patterns, especially communication within intimate relationships. They said:

> *"Due to growing up tending to livestock, I have learned to use vulgar language and this sometimes translates into IPV as I insult my wife and girlfriends." (Participant 001).*

> *"Since practice make perfect, having to grow up using obscene language to animals has become a norm and we now regularly use it towards people, especially our intimate partners. It is imprinted in us and it is not easy to do away with it" (Participants 003).*

> *"Men's poor communication is deeply rooted in boyish way of communicating with both animals and other boys while tending to animals during childhood. We mostly used vulgar language and it was acceptable and stylish then, but unacceptable now when we are adults. It is the only language we master and it is not easy to just detach from it overnight" (Participants 009).*

4.2.1.3.3 (ii) Learned violence through being bullied

Participants mentioned having been bullied in different community spheres when growing up. They said they were bullied in the fields when herding, at school by senior students, and within the community compound while playing. They highlighted that, at one point,

they had to learn to defend themselves from the bullies, as it was uncommon to report bullying for fear of being labelled as sell-outs (snitches). They had this to say:

> *"I grew up an orphan with no brothers to defend me from bullies. I had to learn to be the best fighter to survive" (Participant 007).*
>
> *"The older boys in high school bullied us severely at entry level. We were called 'dogs', and punished during break and lunch time. It was a traumatic experience having to go to the toilets during lunch hour or break because of the bullying that happened in the boys' toilets. We endured so much pain, and that made us learn that life is a survival of the fittest struggle. It was either we learned defending ourselves or being subjected to acts such as licking senior students' shoes, touching poop with our hands, or showing genitalia to them" (Participant 004).*
>
> *"During school holidays, I would visit "meraka", the animal post in the mountains, to help the herd boys and also to acquire skills in herding. Those herd boys would do demeaning things to us younger ones. We literally became their wives. They bullied us badly and raped us at times. I was bullied and abused to the point that I became abusive to claim my power back" (Participant 009).*

4.2.1.3.3 (iii) Learned violence through witnessing and engaging in stick fighting (*ho kalla)*

Participants indicated that during their childhood, they engaged in stick fights to prove their manhood and stamina as well as to gain fighting tactics. This was meant to toughen them up as well as equip them with war skills to be used when other communities attacked them over grazing lands. In support of this assertion, they mentioned that when herding, there would be regular fights. They highlighted that the winners also received honour and admiration which forced every boy to strive to be the best game player which translated into IPV.

> *"I learned to fight while engaging in stick fighting games. In such games, anger or dissatisfaction was shown through violence. My father was having intimate relationships with my peers' mother and he would frequently make my mother sad. As a result, I and my siblings suffered as my mother would be abusive when sad.*

The herding grounds were the conducive place to express my anger" (Participant 001).

"I grew up highly engaging in stick fighting games. It was a form of entertainment for us but the skills attained were useful when there were territorial fights. I became the best fighter and was respected" (Participant 004).

"During "ho kalla", winners were normally admired not only by boys but by girls too. I realized then that I had to learn to fight to also receive the privileges and respect" (Participant 005).

4.2.2 Theme 2: Participants' childhood experiences on IPV

Participants revealed having childhood history of abuse in the family and community spheres.

4.2.2.1 Childhood experiences of IPV within families (households of residence)

Participants mentioned that they witnessed parental fights while growing up. They reported to have observed their parents having constant fights with no action taken against such fights as people were minding their businesses. They said rather, they witnessed their abusive fathers being awarded with respect by family members and the entire community. They concluded by indicating that observing regular fights between their parents was internalized and accepted as part of being romantic.

Participants said they witnessed both their mothers and fathers engaging in behaviour which they classified as IPV and had this to say:

"My mother was very violent. Whenever she faced challenges, she would be frustrated. We felt her frustrations, as she would be irritable. She would beat us, shout at us, and insult my dad. One good old day, she snapped and threw a pot of food on my father's face, and the fighting got out of hand as my dad had to fight back" (Participant 003).

"*As a child, I witnessed the regular fights between my parents. My father would beat up my mother, but she did not divorce him, rather she gave him more respect" (Participant 004).*

"*I witnessed shouting and tantrums between my parents when growing up. My mother was very good at shouting and using intimidating words when demanding attention. My father on the other hand, was easily angered by communication which he perceived as insubordinate and devoid of civility. He believed that such communication undermined his authority as head of the family and reclaimed his authority via violence" (Participant 005).*

"Due to growing up with a label of a "sekhaupane", a child born out of wedlock, I was abused by my stepfather and stepsiblings time and again. I would even be punished for the wrongs of my stepsiblings. When my mother attempted to protect me against the violence, she too, would be called names and beaten by my stepfather. This happed in my stepbrothers' presence and eventually they too, did not respect my mother" (Participant 007).

4.2.2.2 Childhood experience of IPV within communities of residence

Participants mentioned that they also witnessed IPV outside their homes (in their communities) when growing up. They mentioned that when neighbours were fighting, they would listen to the commotions and cries as well as watch disturbing incidents. Other participants went further to say that they witnessed couples insulting each other when growing up.

"I used to eavesdrop on the conversation between my mother and her friend as a child. She confided in my mother whenever her husband abused her. One day, when my father was out of town, she slept over at my home. At about midnight, her husband came and caused a scene. He broke in and dragged her out like a dog. My mother tried her best to rescue her while we watched in terror" (Participant 006).

"When I was around 13 years old, I witnessed one couple get into a horrific fight. The man was accusing his wife of having a "sekhaupane" (a child conceived out of wedlock). The woman was heavily pregnant by then. She was punched, kicked right in public and ended up having a miscarriage. That encounter was so terrifying that I find it difficult to forget" (Participant 010).

"My neighbour would regularly beat his wife when we were kids, and the cry would be so intense that we had to freeze in shock. Since the neighbour was a well-respected man, no one meddled in his affair, and his wife never left him. They played a happy family, and I even made him my role model because he was a man of status" (Participant 009).

4.2.3 Theme 3: Participants' adulthood experiences of IPV

When asked about their adulthood IPV experiences, the participants revealed that, they engaged in physical and sexual IPV more than other types of IPV. Emotional IPV was mentioned as one of the least common forms of IPV perpetrated by men, although they received more of it from their female counterparts. The sub-themes discussed were preceded by nature of relations within IPV.

4.2.3.1 Nature of relationships between participants and their intimate partner(s) including ex-partner(s)

With regard to the nature of their intimate relationships, participants answered that they had challenging but normal relationships. They claimed that IPV incidents played a substantial role in the challenges they encountered in their intimate relationships. They further stated that their childhood experiences and personalities were to blame. Some participants mentioned having somewhat affectionate intimate relations while others mentioned regular fights.

"I treat my partner very well until I am drunk. I am easily irritable when drunk and this leads to us having constant fights, but on average, our relationship is good" (Participant 001).

"Even though I am abusive when drunk, I relate well with my sexual partners. We disagree now and then but eventually we resolve our issues. I however live in constant fear of my partners getting to know that I am dating them all at once. The anxiety causes me to be mostly irritable" (Participant 005).

"Our relationship with my intimate partner has been rocky because I cheated on her with many women. I currently have trust issues and therefore constantly suspects her of cheating. Whenever she is out of sight, I assume she is with her

boyfriends and she thinks the same of me. I've hurt her in many occasions out of jealousy." (Participant 007).

4.2.3.2 Experience of Physical IPV in adulthood

The participants admitted to have experienced physical IPV. They highlighted that, the majority of men's problems with IPV perpetration stemmed from an inability to communicate amicably with their intimate partners. They indicated that, men's communication styles exacerbated their involvement in abusive behaviour. In such cases, even simple misunderstandings could lead to physical violence.

"My wife believes beating signifies love. She intentionally pushes me to the edge and I end up whipping her" (Participant 001).

"My girlfriend is a habitual liar and I have to beat her to get the truth out of her. She understands physical communication better" (Participant 002).

"I used to beat my wife for raising her voice over when talking to me. She intimidated me when I was unemployed and destitute. I am the head and demand respect, so I reminded her who I was with a whip in case she forgot" (Participant 003).

"I occasionally beat my partner. Being aggressive is in my blood. I get easily provoked. I don't want to be like my father but his hatred is deeply imprinted in me" (Participant 004).

4.2.3.3 Experience of psychological IPV in adulthood

The participants admitted that they had experienced the psychological IPV as well as perpetrating it to some extent. Their responses on psychological IPV indicated that, they were more likely to be victims than perpetrators. This they said was the case because, women were gifted in gaslighting men, making them feel worthless and useless. This manipulation was referenced as the source of most fatal physical fights. They indicated that to be insulted and belittled by a woman lowered their self-esteem.

"My girlfriend is verbally abusive towards me. That makes me resort to drinking which worsens the abuse, since I retaliate easily when drunk" (Participant 002).

"Most of our disputes result from my partner's quarrels and inconsiderate words. Whenever we are in conflict she raises her voice and insults me" (Participant 007).

Those who reported having ever perpetrated psychological IPV mentioned that their childhood experiences contributed to their behaviour. They mentioned that aggressive communication styles acquired while herding influenced the way they communicate with their intimate Partners.

"I used to threaten to physically harm my partner because of her verbal aggression. I made such threats and insults to silence her and to claim respect … that woman is skilled in cursing in an attempt to intimidate me" (Participant 005).

"My partner mostly complains about my harsh and inconsiderate words. When I get upset with her, I become vulgar. Since I grew up a herder, using vulgar words is normal for me" (Participant 001).

4.2.3.4 Experience of Sexual IPV in adulthood

Participants mentioned forced sex as an experience they engaged in mostly while drunk, with other participants adding that substance use elevated their sexual drives. Furthermore, participants referenced their childhood experience of sexual violence to have influenced their adulthood sexual IPV engagement. They mentioned that the older boys would also take advantage of them (as young boys) by sodomizing them while herding in childhood.

"The manner I was groomed made me view sex as not a reflection of intimacy but rather something I engage in for my gratification. Sex is a tool by which I demonstrate my masculine dominance" (Participant 001).

"I am sexually aggressive when drunk. I have tried to stop drinking but I find myself relapsing timeously" (Participants 003).

"I am constantly sexually violent towards my sexual partners. I want to believe that this has to do with the sexual molestation I experienced as a boy. For me sex has to be rough to be enjoyable and I hurt my partners in the process" (Participant 004).

Those who alluded to forced sex further justified that, they felt entitled as they had paid "*bohali*" (the bride price). Other participants stated that sex for them was a bargaining tool for making amends after hostility. Furthermore, the participants also mentioned to have engaged in "*chobeliso*", the abduction process whereby they would help their peers abduct women they wanted to marry. They indicated that for them, "***chobeliso***" was a culturally acceptable way of marrying. They highlighted that, rape that co-occurred in the abduction process was also normal and embedded in Basotho cultural practices. They further mentioned that, the rape was a form of rewarding the male acquaintances who had helped in the abduction process as well as preventing the girl from running back home out of shame. They added that, this practice still prevails in the remote areas of Mokhotlong.

> *"Whenever I'm in trouble and my sexual partners are angry with me, I force them into having sex with me because after sexual encounter, their anger goes away" (Participant 002).*
>
> *"I force my wife to have sex with me if she refuse, this is because I have my family gave away many cows to her family for her to sexually entertain me" (Participant 003).*
>
> *"My wife is full of acting whenever she is sexually uninterested. She can pretend to have severe headaches just to deny me my conjugal rights. I don't tolerate nonsense, I take it by force. I can't afford to be sexually hungry, after all, my parents gave away the "bohali" money for me to have sex whenever a need arises" (Participant 006).*
>
> *"Before I got married (already an adult), I would assist my peers abduct girls they wanted to marry. In the process, we would rape those girls being married. Rape was a payment for assisting in the abduction as is called "maoto a lipere in Sesotho" meaning transportation fee in a form of raping the bride to be" (Participant 008).*
>
> *"When getting married, I and my peers had to rape my then wife to be. She was very stubborn and made marrying her complicated. She tried escaping several*

times. We raped her to force her to comply with the process and stop trying to escape. This practice is normal and still prevails in the rural communities" (Participant 010).

4.2.3.5 Experience of infidelity and IPV in adulthood

It will be recalled that participants associated and even justified IPV when they found or suspected their intimate partners of infidelity. Thus, participants went on to explain that, since the commencement of the Polihali Dam Project in Mokhotlong, they saw an increase in infidelity and an escalation in IPV. They stated that the individuals working in construction known as "constructors" enticed women and girls with money and gifts to have sexual relations with them. They stated that this angered men and sparked incidents of IPV in families. The participants also claimed that, development of hostile traits resulted from having several sexual partners. As a result, they said, the person engaging in infidelity must pretend to be upset to hide their actions. They went on to argue that, by seeming upset, they could reduce the likelihood of being questioned about their whereabouts or other questionable behaviour. Their words follow:

"When I am cheating on my wife, I suffer from guilt and try by all means to avoid conversation about an affair or any other question in relation to my whereabouts. To avoid this, I pretend to be angry when questioned about anything that may expose me" (Participant 003).

"Cheating men are soft outside their relationship but hostile to their intimate partners. This is just their way of coping with their guilt. Though I personally never experienced that, I have seen it done by my friend" (participant 005).

"I have seen a married woman's house being torched by her other concubine because she was cheating him with "a constructor". That woman nearly died because she was torched along with her house, but villagers rescued her" (Participant 008).

4.2.4 Theme 4: Proposed mitigation strategies regarding IPV

In addition to the themes which emerged from objectives of the study, participants also raised ideas on effective mitigation strategies against IPV. On the question about what

participants thought could be done to address the issue of IPV, majority of the participants highlighted the significance of good communication skills. In support of their assertion, they postulated that communication skills lead to warm interpersonal relationships including intimate relationships. Additionally, they indicated that harmonious relations lead to peaceful and prosperous communities characterised by mutual respect. Conflict reduction is surely bound to lead to stability in most intimate relationships.

> *"If women could learn how to communicate well, they could escape the beatings. Their disrespectful way of communicating puts them in danger, always. Good communication and respect produce warm relationships" (Participant 004).*

> *"We need to be taught how to communicate peacefully with other people, more especially our intimate partners. Communicating with them the same way we used to communicate with the animals while growing up offends them. I think this is the root cause of most conflicts between intimate partners" (Participant 009).*

Some participants highlighted a need for development of men's suitable programs aimed at handling issues related to men perpetrating IPV. Such a platform would afford them the opportunity to share their experiences without being judged, harassed, or discriminated against. Additionally, they indicated that there is a need for community dialogues aimed at challenging the cultural practices infringing on human rights as well as men's patriarchal way of thinking despite the paradigm shift and modernization. Some of participants emphasized a need for availability of counselling at most community institutions such as police stations, courts of law, local clinics at low and affordable costs. The main emphasis was that such counsellors can be able to follow up on perpetrators and victims and offer them and their immediate family members the ongoing counselling sessions necessary.

> *There is lack of counselling and it would be best if there were many counsellors displaced at different areas of life such as the police stations, courts, clinics and schools. We may act tough but we are overwhelmed with life, we need counselling as men. We have been strong for a long time, it is high time we feel and express pain as normal human beings*" *(Participant 001).*

"I think we need something like a support group for men. A forum where we can talk about our struggles with other men, gain insight from them, and encourage one another. We are overwhelmed by this notion that men are the heads as well as by a number of other challenges in life. The support group will help us have a safe place to offload and learn from others" (Participant 002).

"*Counselling services should be easily accessible and affordable within the confines of the community. Life is challenging and we are going through a lot. Men should also be helped to create the systems like the old "khotla" system where they advise each other and share their challenges without fear of being judged or criticized*" *(Participant 006).*

4.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the findings on perceptions and experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong, Lesotho regarding IPV, preceded by the participants' Demographic Information. This was followed by the thematic presentation of findings, supported with direct quotes originating from the responses in the themed face-to-face in-depth interviews. Theme one identified participants' perceptions of IPV. Young adult men classified actions such as demeaning language, forced sexual intercourse and withholding financial support as characteristic of IPV. Findings established that young adult men perceived IPV justifiable under certain circumstances. Their justifications included women's disrespect, when women are married, and suspicion or being found to be an infidel.

Theme two revealed participants' childhood experiences of IPV. Under this theme, it was discovered that IPV was a learned behavior which men embraced at adulthood. Behavior of IPV perpetration originated from culture of Basotho of not making IPV perpetrators account for their violent acts but rather, significantly embracing it with proverbs. They were found to have grown up in families and communities where they witnessed and experienced violence. That experience shaped them to exhibit masculinity, but translated into IPV incidents. Furthermore, the study revealed that, men believed their engagement in IPV was influenced by peers, use of intoxicating substance, and learned behavior.

Theme three on the other hand revealed that participants were engaging in different forms of IPV in adulthood but were the most recipients of psychological form of IPV. Lastly on theme four, the participants made the following suggestions for control and prevention of IPV: development of programs and platforms for men to express their pain and receive support without having to be judged or questioned, availability of subsidized counselling services for men to easily access, and equipping men with communication skills.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the findings that emanated from the study, the conclusions drawn out of the study, and presents the recommendations as well as suggestions for future research and prevention of IPV. This study followed a qualitative approach to answer the research question, thereby accomplishing the objectives of the study. The purpose of the study was to explore Intimate Partner Violence in Mokhotlong Lesotho: Perceptions and experiences of young adult men who have perpetrated Intimate Partner Violence. The primary data for the study was collected from ten young adult men in Mokhotlong selected using snowball sampling. All participants participated in interviews using a themed interview guide (Sileyew, 2020). The primary data collected was then analyzed thematically, where main themes emerged out of the study objectives and subthemes emerged out of the data. To contextualize the findings, the data was compared with the problem of the study, the reviewed literature, and the theoretical framework used to guide the study.

The chapter commences with discussions of findings and concludes with recommendations affecting the four levels of human interaction specified in the Socio-Ecological Model. The research suggestions pertaining to IPV are also stated. Many studies have been conducted on factors influencing IPV, female experiences of IPV, as well as female perceptions of IPV. However, the perceptions and experiences of young adult men have been notably missing. In an effort to fill this gap, a qualitative study was conducted through in-depth face-to-face in-depth interviews to explore the perspectives of young adult men in Mokhotlong toward IPV. The results were interpreted according to how they answered the main research questions, which were:

1. What are the perceptions of young adult men in Mokhotlong on IPV?
2. What are the childhood experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong on IPV?
3. What are the adulthood experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong on IPV?

5.1 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

This section presents discussions and interpretations of findings with reference to the following themes which emerged during data analysis: participants' perceptions on Intimate Partner Violence; participants' childhood experiences of Intimate Partner Violence; and participants' adulthood experiences of Intimate Partner Violence. The subthemes that emerged under the themes are also discussed and interpreted.

5.1.1 Theme 1: Participants' Perceptions on Intimate Partner Violence

According to the CDC (2016) and WHO (2021) IPV is behaviour within an intimate relationship that is likely to cause harm that is either physical, psychological, or sexual to those in the relationship. In addition to correctly describing behaviour which could be classified as IPV in line with the literature, study participants revealed that, there were circumstances under which IPV was justifiable. In the study, IPV was found to be a common problem-solving strategy within intimate relationships. This theme had the following main sub-themes under it: participants' description of behaviour classified as IPV, perceptions on whether IPV was justifiable and participants' perceptions on factors contributing to IPV. These are discussed in turn subsequently.

5.1.1.1 Participants' description of behaviour that can be classified as Intimate Partner Violence

As stated by CDC (2016) the key forms of IPV are sexual, physical, and psychological violence. All three of these key types forming the basis for IPV were listed by the participants in their description of IPV, also citing practical examples of behaviours which they classified as IPV such as assault, threats of harm, insults, and marital rape. In this context, participants used words such as derogatory *(ho hobosa)*, degrading *(ho nyenyefatsa)*, sex without partners' consent as well as abuse of power among others. Thus, the participants' descriptions and classifications were in line with the subtypes of IPV mentioned in the literature by WHO (2021) and CDC (2016). According to WHO (2021), IPV is any behaviour that is violent, spiteful, or prejudicial occurring between two people in recent or current intimate relationships, whether married, unmarried, homosexual, or heterosexual and can come in the form of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse as well as stalking.

5.1.1.2 Perceptions on when IPV can be justifiable

People's experiences and behaviours are, according to Stevenson et al. (2016) dependent on the way they perceive the world. With regard to this sub-theme, the study's finding was that, participants perceived IPV as sometimes justifiable. Most of the participants were of the perception that IPV was justified when women were disrespectful to their sexual partners, when they were married and when they were suspected of infidelity. Their justifications are discussed below:

5.1.1.3 When women are disrespectful

All intimate partners referred to in this study were women. The study revealed that men considered IPV as justifiable in incidences of disrespect from their intimate partners. This perception can be linked to men's childhood experiences of observing pervasive and unpunished IPV acts. Thus, the men in the study appeared to regard IPV as a justifiable problem-solving and communication strategy in intimate relationships and they insinuated that bringing disrespectful women to order was their responsibility. This could be the case because, according to the literature review, African men including Basotho men were raised to lead, conquer, and control through violence as demonstrated in the literature review chapter. In that regard, Matela (2020) and Mtaita et al. (2021) highlighted that Southern African men were culturally groomed to be violent and controlling while physical chastening of women was considered a husband's prerogative. Thus, men's perceived power and control over women seemed to give them a perception that they could punish women for wrongdoing (Mtaita et al., 2021). The foregoing is one premise from which participants' perception of IPV justifiability can be regarded.

To further illustrate violence enculturation of Basotho men, it was noted that, Basotho boys typically beat animals and each other into submission, hence they possibly expected the same from women (Makatsela, 2019; Matela, 2020). The boys also engaged in territorial fights and fighting games where they strived to get the largest and most fertile grazing lands as well as the label of "*mpuli"* (Sello, 2021; Rampai, 2017; Pitikoe and Morojele, 2017). Furthermore, Basotho men seemed to be able to fight their battles and never paid much attention to the opponents' competitive advantage as they were culturally awarded power and control. This could be the reason for which any behaviour

perceived by men as challenging their authority would be punishable by them (Pitikoe, 2016). It would seem therefore that, the men in this study embraced the philosophy of exerting authority and gaining power through violence including violence against their intimate partners.

Participants' childhood experiences of corporal punishment may also account for their perception of violence against weaker members as justifiable. For example, it is known that Basotho boys are severely punished for letting straying animals destroy field crops as well as at school for breaking rules (Makatsela, 2019; Malemphane, 2022; Matheolane and Makura, 2022). Though the punishment is considered a way of ensuring accountability and responsibility, it may have translated those subjected to it as justifiable exercise of power by those who commanded power in a given situation (Makatsela, 2019; Malemphane, 2022; Matheolane and Makura, 2022). There was a noticeable trend among the participants that a culture of violence among boys during childhood may translate into a perception of violence as an acceptable communication and problem-solving tool in intimate relationships (Mtaita et al., 2021).

In addition, the study found that, men were of the perception that their traditional role of providers also gave them the authority to exert force and control over their intimate partners. The men reported that they applied such authority when they failed to fulfil their culturally assigned role as providers and thought the best way to regain their leadership positions in intimate relationships was through IPV. In support Mabale (2020), Matlosa (2020) and Pitikoe and Morojele (2017) indicated that this perception is a result of the principle of *"monna ke hlooho"* which translates to "a man is a household head", which is widely embraced by Basotho men.

The study further revealed that, participants had the perception that men's failure to provide deprived them of the social privileges and respect, thus exposing them to women's disrespect. The perceived inadequacy therefore, led to men feeling powerless and ashamed. As a result, they sought to regain power through abusing their female counterparts. A similar trend was noted in other studies where men who were unable to actively participate in their socially assigned roles became aggressive as a strategy to conceal their insecurities regarding their manhood. The study conducted by Matlosa

(2020) found that women's disrespect was rooted in men's failure to provide, consequently, invoking men to respond to such disrespect using violence. In a study conducted by Matheolane and Makura (2022), it was revealed that where men failed to achieve the societal standards, they responded to situations out of their frustrations and women were often at the receiving end of their violent behaviour.

5.1.1.4 When women are married

The study discovered that Basotho's traditional practice of payment of "*bohali*" may have played a role in influencing men to perceive violence against their intimate partners as justifiable. The literature review revealed that *"bohali"* which refers to Basotho tradition of exchange of gifts between families of grooms and brides-to-be, is considered a seal that gives a groom unlimited access over a bride, paving way for unjustifiable use of power Kazemi et al. (2019). In support of the findings, Mabale (2020) and Sibanyoni et al. (2021) aver that women's subjugation has been ingrained through longstanding practice of "*bohali*", creating a perception on the acceptability of male domination of married women through violence.

Additionally among Basotho, the principle of *"monna ke hlooho"* which translates to a man is a head, is widely embraced (Mabale, 2020; Matlosa, 2020; Pitikoe and Morojele, 2017). It was hence discovered by the study that, *"bohali"* and *"monna ke hlooho"* principles were interpretable as giving men "ownership" over women to the point where they felt they could punish or rape their women whenever they felt like it. To reflect this perception, participants used phrases such as "we buy our wives" and "*[mosali] a ngalle mots'eo"*[2]*.*

Thus, "*bohali"* according to participants gave men full ownership over women as well as the right to demand sex, permitting them to treat women as they pleased such as punishing them for any wrongdoing and raping them. Cultures and language appeared to have promoted the reported participants' misperceptions on IPV as brought up in literature sources elucidated in Chapter II (*cf* Kazemi et al., 2019; Makatsela, 2019; Maliackal and Maliackal, 2021; Matlosa, 2020).

[2] This is a Sesotho axiom which means women should silently bear the difficulties of marriage. Also implied by the axiom is that rather than complain or seek any protective or mediatory intervention, married women should redirect their anger and/or discomfort into house chores.

The study further found that participants used violence to force girls into marrying them through a practice known as *"chobeliso"*, marriage through the abduction process. The girls being forcefully married would even be raped to force them to remain married in fear of public shame and stigma (Mabale, 2020; Sibanyoni et al., 2022). Sibanyoni et al. (2022) further mentioned that during "*chobeliso*", the marrying boys and their peers would physically and sexually abuse the girls being abducted. The abuse according to Sibanyoni et al. (2022) was meant to prevent the girl from running back home in fear of re-perpetration and the stigma associated with probable pregnancy. This was the case because pregnancy out of the wedlock was culturally unacceptable.Thus, the justifiability of IPV against married women emerged in this study as linked to practices such as "*chobeliso"* and "*bohali"*, creating a perception on the acceptability of male domination of women through violence (Mabale, 2020).

5.1.1.5 When either partner is found or suspected of infidelity

The study discovered that infidelity was perceived by participants as influencing IPV, as discovery or suspicion of infidelity justified IPV. As discussed under "when women are disrespectful", Basotho men misused their power and authority and appeared to expect women to submit and respect them lest they are forced to submit through the use of violence. Participants admitted that they acted violently when their intimate partners were the ones found or suspected of infidelity but were open to infidelity themselves. The participants were however, understood to suggest that their intimate partners should accept the act of infidelity on the men's part. For instance, one participant boldly stated: "Basotho and multiple sexual partners are inseparable". The afore-quoted participant continued to report that when women spoke "*nonsense*" against such multiple sexual partners "they may get a beating". The foregoing extracts from a participant's responses possibly explains why several participants said they acted angry when confronted with their infidelities. This finding is in line with the literature review as it indicated that, cheating men were extremely abusive and masked their infidelity with violence, distracting and preventing the partners from inquiring about their other relationships (Fong et al., 2016; Pichon et al., 2020).

Pichon et al. (2020) further supported the findings by stating that infidelity and romantic jealousy were two of the most frequently mentioned relational-level factors of IPV. Infidelity was also identified by Pichon et al. (2020) as a method employed by perpetrators to control IPV survivors as well as a red flag for homicidal conduct. The findings substantially expanded on this idea by demonstrating that infidelity concerns were the immediate triggers for both the acute violent episodes and the resulting injuries to survivors.

It was concerning to hear young adult men in Lesotho speaking unabashedly about having multiple sexual partners in a country weighed down by HIV infection. At the same time, it was surprising to learn that the men considered IPV a justifiable strategy against their intimate partners when such partners were suspected of or found to be committing infidelity. One would argue that the cultural right of men being in power leads to men developing lack of psychological intelligence. The existence of Polihali Dam construction has increased competition over women as men from different parts of Lesotho and outside have clustered in Mokhotlong. This therefore contributes to elevated infidelity suspicion among young intimate partners in Mokhotlong, thus, worsening IPV.

5.1.1.6 Participants' perceptions on factors contributing to IPV

5.1.1.6.1 Peer influence

The study discovered that peer influence was a factor that participants perceived to have played an essential role in influencing violent behaviour. The study found that, participants behaved violently in some instances to gain peer validation. They used IPV as a strategy to prove to their peers that they have the upper hand in their relationships. The peers' network was thus found by the study to have influenced men to adopt certain norms and behaviours. Participants attributed their wife-beating behaviour in part to peer association. Thus, the study found that the pursuit for peer recognition and validation contributed largely to partner abuse by men in order to maintain their reputations within their social groups. Peer pressure was therefore found by the study to be a powerful force which compelled young adult men to conform to behaviour and expectations of their social groups for fear of rejection. The foregoing was a valuable finding which is worth factoring into intervention programs in Lesotho. As the literature has demonstrated, there are

numerous well established male peer interaction activities in Lesotho such as while herding animals, at *"lebollo",* the initiation school and when deliberating community resources management (Mabale, 2022; Makatsela, 2019; Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018; Pitikoe, 2021). Misso et al. (2019) further indicated that association with aggressive peers increased the risk of being violent and channelled perceptions regarding IPV. Interestingly, none of the participants in the study assumed responsibility for IPV which can be attributed to poor judgment on their part.

5.1.1.6.2 Use of intoxicating substances

Continuing the narrative of attributing IPV to external factors, some of the participants pointed out that while they were generally "good" to their intimate partners, when under the influence, they tended to be argumentative with and even went as far as violating their partners physically. Mukulu (2019) earlier stipulated that, men who engaged in IPV when drunk or under the influence of drugs were mostly survivors of IPV and found the courage to retaliate when intoxicated. This pronouncement by Mukulu (2019) is linkable to a revelation made by men in this study that they were subjected to verbal aggression from their partners. Thus, it may lead to a conclusion that such patterns of violence in some couples may lead members of the couples to resort to intoxicating substances to generate the courage to confront their abusive partners (Fielding-Miller et al., 2022; Letsie, 2020; Ransoomar et al., 2021). For partners with generally poor problem-solving skills, confronting partners under the influence of intoxicating substances may culminate into physical altercation (Leonard and Quigley, 2017; Letsie, 2020; Ransoomar et al., 2021). It should be emphasized therefore that intoxication may not necessarily account for IPV in such instances, but the challenge may be that of poor problem-solving skills. In support, Ransoomar et al. (2021) mentioned that some substance users deliberately intoxicated themselves with the intentions of engaging in IPV in order to be deflected from taking responsibility for the act.

On the contrary, the study also found that in some instances, participants resorted to alcohol to help them cope with problems. The study, however, found that by becoming intoxicated, participants were becoming more violent and reckless, thus worsening their problems. Gender Links (2018) and Ransoomar et al. (2021) corroborated the findings by

stating that, misuse of drugs or alcohol fuelled IPV perpetration and were found to co-occur in most IPV incidents. A need to equip young adult men (including IPV perpetrators) with problem-solving skills was thus indicated. Positive lifestyle choices, such as behaviour change, can also help to reduce the chances of aggressive behaviour caused by substance abuse. Substance abuse affects people's conflict management skills as it clouds cognitive functioning. Positive lifestyle choices should also encompass sober-mindedness and pro-social behaviours among others.

5.1.1.6.3 Learned violence

In addition to suspicion of infidelity, peer influence and use of intoxicating substances, the study revealed that, men's violent behaviour was learned in childhood. The learning was found to have happened through observing and experiencing violence when growing up. The study further discovered that, most lessons were acquired when tending to livestock through games such as "*ho kalla*" when communicating vulgarly to animals tended and when being bullied. The fore-mentioned findings were consistent with literature on Learned violence among Basotho boys which showed that there were benefits to being a bully as well as to being an able opponent in *"ho kalla"* (Matela, 2020; Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018; Pitikoe and Morojele, 2017). The participants detailed their experiences of learning violence through use of intimidating language and other forms of bullying.

5.1.1.6.3 (i) Learned language of intimidation

The study found that, poor communication between intimate partners was a behaviour Learned in childhood contributing significantly to IPV. The study discovered that, poor communication in the form of derogatory language which was acquired in childhood especially when tending to animals had translated into IPV in adulthood. The often obscene language men used was found to have developed during their childhood experience of herding, where they would insult the livestock to foster compliance (Pitikoe and Morojele, 2017). They therefore, possibly expected the same compliance from women when hurling derogatory language at such women. Where there was no compliance, the hostility would translate to physical violence. This possible series also resonates with the argument that there may be a general lack of problem-solving skills among Basotho men. Pitikoe and Morojele (2017) further asserted that Basotho men's

habitual use of vulgar language in intimate relationships led to misunderstandings which possibly escalated to unnecessary conflicts and potentially, physical violence.

The study further discovered that, participants learned to communicate derogatively due to witnessing couples (including their parents) communicating disrespectfully with each other when growing up. It was discovered that, due to witnessing constant insults and disrespect between such couples, they misperceived derogative communication as a way couples should communicate with one another. Donenberg et al. (2020), Maguele (2020) and Scorgie et al. (2017) mentioned that in Sub-Saharan countries, children grow up witnessing their parents engaging in IPV and as a result, they perceived violence as normal. Donenberg et al. (2020), Maguele (2020) and Scorgie et al. (2017) also mentioned that men who witnessed couples' violence, especially parental fights were more likely to engage in IPV as adults. Mokuoane and Moeketsi (2018) further supported the findings by mentioning that witnessing Intimate Partner Violence has been linked to later perpetration.

5.1.1.6.3 (ii) Leaned violence through being bullied

It was disturbing to learn that, young adult men were badly bullied during their childhood to an extent that they strived to reclaim their power by becoming violent. The participants were found by the study to have experienced bullying in different community spheres with no proper action taken against the bullies when growing up. Those bullied therefore had to strive for toughening up and being able to retaliate, though, retaliation mostly happened to their intimate partners at adulthood stage. Pitikoe and Morojele (2017) corroborate the findings by mentioning that older Basotho boys bullied young ones during animal herding as well as tipping younger ones against each other through intimidation while herding animals.

Furthermore, Mokuoane and Moeketsi (2018) mentioned that the bullying which happened during animal herding would not be reported to adults or discussed beyond the herding sphere except in cases of injuries. Anyone who reported the bullying to adults was considered a snitch and was liable to more bullying and relegation in the herding power-hierarchies. The snitches also acquired shaming names and were banned from engaging in manly activities (Mabale, 2020; Makatsela, 2019; Mokuoane and Moeketsi,

2018; Tsoamotse, 2017). It therefore may be reasonable to contend that Basotho boys Learned to fight in order to survive lest they suffer bullying for the rest of their lives (Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018; Pitikoe and Morojele, 2017; Sello, 2021).

5.1.1.3.3 (iii) Witnessing and engaging in stick fighting

"Ho kalla" depicted in a figure below, also known as a stick fighting game, is traditionally played by Basotho boys as they grow up in their respective villages across all Lesotho districts (Mokuoane and Moeketsi, 2018; Tsoamotse, 2017). Boys as young as 6 years old and young adult men engage in this game to learn defence and fighting tactics as well as entertaining themselves since this is a "game". According to the study, growing up witnessing and engaging in "*ho kalla"* contributed to young adult men developing subsequent antisocial and criminal behaviour which translated into IPV. This was the case because, they grew up believing that violence was normal and acceptable behaviour to engage in, thus seeing nothing wrong with engaging in it.

***Figure 4**: Picture of Basotho boys playing stick fighting game by Tsoamotse (2017)*

The study also discovered that the community rewarded and honoured fight champions with respect. This behaviour was therefore found to have forced young adult men to have deeply engaged in learning to become best fighters, striving to become heroes, but that

behaviour became translated into IPV in adulthood. The findings from the study conducted by Ongudipe (2018) revealed that exposure to community violence was associated with an increased risk of developing longstanding psychological distress and antisocial behaviour.

5.1.2 Theme 2: Participants' childhood experiences of IPV

5.1.2.1 Childhood experiences of IPV within families

The family is a major social institution that socializes children, and many researchers, like Donenberg et al. (2020), Maguele (2020) and Scorgie et al. (2017) revealed that, childhood experiences of men witnessing IPV within their families when growing up, contributed to development of abusive behaviour in adulthood. The study discovered that young adult men witnessed parental fights while growing up. Having to grow up witnessing constant fights between parents with no action taken against such fights may have led to misperception of IPV being inevitable in marriage.

This was the case because participants had to witness constant fights in their childhood, particularly between the people they looked up to - their parents. They had to adapt and normalize abuse by considering it as a way intimate partners had to behave and relate. In addition, having to grow up seeing their abusive fathers awarded respect by family members and the entire community also compelled participants to abuse their sexual partners to attain the same respect. Ongudipe (2018) supported the findings by stating that majority of men who admitted to have perpetrated IPV were those abused as children and those who witnessed their parents engaging in IPV. As a result of growing up in homes exposing them to violence at young age, participants were likely to become violent as adults (Maliackal and Maliackal, 2021; Scorgie et al., 2017).

In the present study, and as the literature has shown, abusive behaviour by parents was found to be strongly associated with abusive behaviour in adults (Maliackal and Maliackal, 2021; Ongudipe, 2018; Scorgie et al., 2017). Similarly, there was an association between increased IPV perpetration and exposure to parental violence or history of personal experiences on violence, as was pointed out in literature survey (Matheolane and Makura, 2022). It may be postulated therefore that, among Basotho there are barely

consequences for IPV which leads to young adult men perceiving violence as an instrument of expression rather than an anomaly.

It is therefore important for parents to understand the effects that violent behavior and maltreatment have on their children. Better strategies for conflict management need to be adopted and practiced by parents to protect the children from experiencing the trauma and reliving at a later stage. Couples need to be offered sessions on conflict management and positive parenting skills to nurture children to perceive violence as bad and dismantle it. The homes should be safer environments for children to live with minimized violent tact since children learn mostly from copying the role modelled behaviour.

5.1.2.2 Childhood experience of IPV within communities

In addition to experiencing IPV within the families, the study discovered that participants grew up witnessing IPV committed within their communities of residence. The young adult men said they had witnessed fights between couples within their neighborhoods when growing up. The study found that witnessing IPV incidents among community members was a common childhood experience among young adult men. These findings resonated with those of previous authors who showed that IPV was widespread in the Sub-Sahara (Kazemi et al., 2019; Laskey et al., 2019; Mtaita et al., 2021; Pitikoe and Morojele, 2017; Tran et al., 2016). The findings from the present study were also consistent with those of previous authors such as Makatsela (2019); Matela (2020); Matlosa (2020); Maliackal and Maliackal (2021); Mtaita et al., (2021), among others. The fore-listed authors unanimously explained that exposure to community violence was associated with an increased risk of developing longstanding psychological distress and antisocial behaviour in affected populations. This implies that some of the community practices have to be challenged in an effort to create a safe environment conducive for children. Since children internalize and reproduce their childhood experiences, communities have to embrace practices that promote pro-social behaviors. The literature by Matheolane and Makura (2022) further argued against widespread violence, stating that the administration of corporal punishment against Basotho boys had not been found to add value to the boys' psychosocial functioning at a later stage in life.

5.1.3 Theme 3: Participants' Adulthood Experiences on IPV

Under adulthood IPV experiences, the study revealed that young adult men were engaging in physical and sexual violence more than other types of IPV. Previously, a study conducted by Shields et al. (2020) discovered that physical and sexual IPV were the most common forms perpetrated by men. CDC (2022) also reported that more than half of women aged 15 years and older had experienced physical and sexual violence perpetrated by an intimate partner in their lifetime. It can therefore be deduced that a finding of intimate partner physical and sexual violence among young adult men in Lesotho, while concerning, was not surprising. Furthermore, the literature by Gender Links (2018); (LHDA, 2019); WHO (2020) and World Vision (2016) showed that IPV was widespread in Lesotho, particularly in Mokhotlong. As reported in the statement of the problem, IPV in Lesotho has escalated to the point that women have died in the hands of their intimate partners (Gender Links, 2018; Moyo, 2022; LHDA, 2019). While this presented little comfort, it was still reassuring to the researcher that none of the participants in the study had killed an intimate partner. The experiences are expanded below.

5.1.3.1 Nature of relationships between participants and their intimate partner(s) (ex or current)

The study discovered that most intimate relationships among young people were rocky and clouded by different forms of violence, though participants regarded their relationships as somewhat normal. This was the case because the cycle of violence continued with periods of calm followed by periods of intensive abuse. Childhood experiences on abuse were found to have impacted young adult men's ability to form and maintain intimate relationships. In addition, people with childhood experiences on violence were found by Ongudipe (2018) to have a challenge of maintaining positive relationships with other people. The effects of abuse impacted survivors negatively, leading to conflicting feelings of insecurity and a breach of trust in other people. Oftentimes, such people become hostile and violent.

5.1.3.2 Experience of Physical IPV in adulthood

Physical violence was found by this study to be mostly perpetrated by participants. Though the participants did not explain in-depth their engagement in physical IPV, they admitted having perpetrated physical IPV. Such incidences of IPV appeared to stem from inability to communicate amicably with intimate partners. For instance, a participant reported that he committed IPV after his partner asked him to “to hand her the trousers”. This saying among Basotho is a condescending phrase by women to men, often during arguments, which suggests that men are not fit to be men. Thus, poor interpersonal communication was found to have played a role in IPV incidence in the present study. The finding may be consistent with previous ones which showed that both boys’ and girls’ socialization could be lacking when it came to problem-solving and communicating within intimate relationships (Matheolane and Makura, 2022; Matela, 2020; Mtaita et al., 2021). The literature further showed that men were socialized to dominate while women were socialized to submit to men (Matela, 2020; Mtaita et al., 2021). It is not known whether such socialization has a positive impact as the outbreak of violence among families, more so young families, suggests that more needs to be done to train couples on positive parenting and conflict management (Maguele, 2020, Makatsela, 2019; Maliackal and Maliackal, 2021; Mtaita et al., 2021; Ongudipe, 2018). In light of this, the study found that young adult men threatened to physically harm their female counterparts during arguments, further suggesting a need to modify communication styles among intimate partners.

5.1.3.3 Experience of Psychological IPV in adulthood

The study revealed that young adult men were experiencing psychological IPV more than they perpetrated it. The literature by UN Women Report (2020) and WHO (2020) reported similar findings, stating that psychological IPV was found to be the most prevalent form of IPV affecting men more than women. The present study found that, most young adult men, especially those who were unemployed, received verbal aggression from their intimate partners. Being verbally undermined was found by the study to have caused men to feel belittled, thus provoking them to resort to violence. Muriithi et al. (2017) and CDC (2016) mentioned that psychological IPV was the cause of extensive mental health consequences such as assaults and suicides which left survivors with deep hidden

psychological scars particularly Basotho men who consider disrespect as a form of challenge to their manhood and status.

Matlosa (2020) supported that women's intimidation of men co-existed with IPV. This could be the case because Basotho men misperceive women's intimidation as a threat to their leadership role which they consider as birth right. The foregoing finding could hence explain the strong association noted between IPV and use of intoxicating substances in the study. Laskey et al. (2019) supports that, since women are typically physically weaker than men, they use words to attack men which reflects a pattern of poor communication and problem-solving skills. In cases where young adult men were the perpetrators of IPV, the study revealed that it would mostly be in cases where they were under the influence of substance use. As mentioned earlier, the use of intoxicating substances clouded perceptions and led to increased acts of IPV (Gender Links, 2018; Leonard and Quigley, 2017; Letsie, 2020; Wilson et al., 2014).

The study also discovered that young adult men blamed engaging in psychological IPV on communication styles they acquired during childhood when tending to animals. They mentioned having insulted and beaten animals for straying; that behaviour was normalized and later translated to IPV. In line with the study findings, Mabale (2020), Makatsela (2019) and Matlosa (2020) mentioned that boys hurled profane phrases at the animals while herding, milking, shearing, or ploughing to bring the animals to order. The animals may even be brutally beaten to foster compliance. Such childhood experiences may account for poor communication in adulthood and elicit violent behaviour.

Participants are, to a large extent, limited by their counterproductive childhood experiences. It is therefore crucial that parenting and nurturing of children are done in a manner that promotes positive interpersonal relationships, creative problem-solving, and respect of others. Challenging of cultural practices that promote violence, substituting violent boy games with creative ones, and eliminating gender inequalities can lower the rate at which IPV is being perpetrated. For those who have already learned violent behaviour, equipping them with skills to relate well with others as well as creating

platforms and programs that keep men busy in their spare times will also minimise IPV incidences. By so doing, the use of intoxicating substances will also be minimized.

5.1.3.3.1 Experience of Sexual IPV in adulthood

The participants in this study acknowledged engagement in sexual IPV like they did under adulthood physical experiences of IPV. The study found that, men engaged in forced sex when under the influence of intoxicating substances. As argued earlier, this could be because their perceptions were clouded while others intentionally abused the substances to cover up their unacceptable acts. (Fielding-Miller et al., 2022; Leonard and Quigley, 2017). Additionally, Gender Links (2018) revealed that intoxication elevated men's sexual drives and as a result, they engaged in forced sex mostly when under the influence of intoxicating substances. The study also discovered that young adult men were engaging in sexual IPV as much as they did with physical IPV as in most incidents, sexual violence co-occurred with physical violence.

The study further revealed that, alongside patriarchal dominance and justified wife-beating was the issue of "*bohali".* The study discovered that, payment of "*bohali*" contributed to young adult men's elevated entitlement and possessiveness over women. It brought about the perception of ownership over women. The issue of "*bohali*" was therefore found to have been taken out of context and used in favour of men to advance selfish interests, which included sexual abuse.The findings came as no surprise considering previous reports by authors such as Leburu-Masigo and Khadima (2020); Mabale (2020); Malemphane (2022) as well as Ministry of Social Development (2020) who stated that "*bohali"* appeared to have been used as another instrument for perpetuating women's submission as well as creating a perception on the acceptability of male dominance over women through violence. Leburu-Masigo and Kgadima (2020) also mentioned that the misperception resulting from "*bohali*" definitions further inspired the development of the perception that married women sexually belonged to men who paid their "*bohali*".

With regard to the legal and policy frameworks such as the Sexual Offence Act Nō 3 of 2003 mentioned in the literature review, it was disturbing to learn that men still engaged in sexual IPV at an elevated rate regardless of the existing legislation. More interventions

are needed regarding sensitization and implementation of the laws and policies to achieve the intended target to protect the individual rights and freedoms of Basotho from IPV with particular reference to women. Lack of proper implementation of the legal frameworks relegates such protection tools as a futile exercise.

5.1.3.3.2 Experience of infidelity in adulthood

An earlier study by Matela (2020) reported that infidelity and IPV were co-existent while Mabale (2020) added that men sometimes justified their use of physical violence in intimate relationships by claiming that it is prompted by women's disrespect. Additionally, Fong et al. (2016) and Pichon et al. (2013) stated that, cheating men were extremely abusive and masked their infidelity with violence. The present study uncovered that the use of violence among cheating men was often used as a strategy to avoid accountability. The study further found that participants boasted about having multiple sexual partners as discussed under factors which promote IPV. The study also revealed that in addition to having multiple sexual partners, participants were ready to resort to IPV when confronted about their misdemeanours. For instance, two of the participants mentioned that they felt "guilty" when involved with sexual partners other than their main intimate partners. One of them even revealed that, he pretended to be angry when confronted about his acts of infidelity by his wife.

In line with the above findings, IPV was found to be used as a measure to control women suspected of infidelity or found to be the infidel. This could be the case due to the competition against women among men stemming from the presence of Polihali Dam construction. The violent control of intimate partners has been documented in other literature sources such as Kazemi et al. (2019) and Mtaita et al. (2021) and requires close consideration in equipping men with trust and self-control skills to discouraging IPV.

5.2 CONCLUSION OF FINDINGS

In conclusion, the study made the following findings based on the objectives of the study:

- In addition to citing examples of behaviours they perceived as IPV, participants cited the following as justifying IPV: women's disrespect, when women are married and suspicion of infidelity.
- From the men's accounts, their perceptions appeared to be strongly influenced by their childhood experience of IPV and other forms of violence within communities and families. Such experiences as stated by the participants included: witnessing parental fights and fights between other couples in their neighbourhoods, engaging in and witnessing stick fighting games, being bullied, and corporal punishment.
- Participants reported committing physical and sexual IPV and being subjected to psychological abuse from their intimate partners. Majority of participants justified theirs or other known perpetrators' acts of IPV.

5.3 APPLICATION OF THEORY

The Socio-Ecological Model highlights that the development of strategies to reduce IPV depends on understanding the complex interplay between the person and his environment (Hunnicut et al., 2017). This model helped the researcher to understand how the reciprocal interconnectedness between young adult men in Mokhotlong and their environment contributed to how they perceived and experienced IPV. The model's four levels of interaction being the individual, relationship, community, and societal level, helped the researcher in determining the factors influencing perceptions that IPV perpetration was normal and justifiable. For example, it helped determine those closest relationships that increased their risk of IPV perpetration, their settings associated with violence, the social and cultural norms and policies that created a climate for IPV to occur (Napoli et al., 2019). The elaboration of how the theory was applicable to this study is depicted in table 6 below.

Table 6 shows that at individual level, people's childhood history contributed to knowing and normalising violence as well as perceiving it as justifiable. The relationship level shows how interactions with violent friends, family and close community members

influenced young adult men's violent behaviours. The community and societal levels helped determine that, broad societal factors created an environment conducive for violence.

***Table 6**: Application of Socio-Ecological Model to the findings of the study*

Theory level	**Principle of theory**	**Objective**	**Related Finding**
Individual	Factors such as childhood experiences play influential role in behaviour (Napoli et al., 2019).	To understudy perceptions of young adult men in Mokhotlong on IPV.	Participants found IPV justifiable.
Relationship	People's closest social circle influenced their perceptions and behaviour (Hunnicut et al., 2017).	To investigate childhood experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong on IPV.	Participants reported that they witnessed IPV in their families and communities when growing up. Participants had committed sexual and physical IPV while being subjected to psychological IPV. None of the participants took responsibility for committing IPV. Most of them blamed their childhood experiences of violence.
Community and Societal	Practices and settings where people have social relationships contribute to how they behave (CDC, 2016). The roots of violence reach deep into society, tapping into complex conditions such as a lack of	To investigate adulthood experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong on IPV.	Participants said they grew up in communities with practices and cultures promoting violence seeing no measures taken against perpetrators. None of the participants seemed to consider IPV a misdemeanour.

	effective discipline (Lankester and Grills, 2019).		None of the participants took responsibility for committing IPV. Instead, some blamed intoxicating substances while others blamed their peers and their partners for committing IPV.

Violence is viewed through the socio-ecological model as a complex occurrence influenced by a variety of human, environmental, and social factors. In this study, the model aided the researcher's comprehension of how each level of interaction influenced young adult men's opinions and perceptions on IPV. It became apparent that personal histories of violence rendered young adult men prone to indulging in IPV. The model demonstrated that those who experienced or witnessed violent behaviour as children were more likely to behave violently as adults.

Additionally, the model revealed that participants' violent behaviour was influenced by the behaviour of those with whom they had close relationships, such as partners, family members, and peers. In the same vein, the community level of the model helped to examine how settings like fields, animal posts, and schools influenced perpetration of IPV among young adult men. Finally, the researcher was able to discover that the broad societal factors such as social and cultural norms fostered an environment that was conducive for IPV perpetration. It was found that certain Lesotho's legal frameworks, together with cultural practices, normalized and condoned violence. Furthermore, presence of many legal frameworks with no proper implementation and sensitization served no purpose as violence was still perpetrated in their midst.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study and can help guide Social Work practice:

- **Provision of Behaviour Change Communication (BCC)**

The study recommends the adoption of Behaviour Change and Communication strategies to equip men with better communication skills and positive behaviour. There should be men's conferences, posters, and social media posts aimed at modelling good communication skills to promote warm interpersonal relationships, including intimate relationships, and harmonious communities characterized by mutual respect.

- **Family and community counselling services**

There is a need for the availability and ease of access to family and community counselling services offered by Community Social Workers in the communities, on social media platforms, and on different media platforms to help families and communities change their perceptions on violence as a way of generating a safe environment for children. Since people get overwhelmed by life challenges with time, counselling services should be available at different places at a subsidized price for ease of access and to minimise violence resulting from failure to cope with day-to-day challenges. Pre-marital and marriage counselling services should also be easily accessible to equip couples with strategies to build and maintain warm intimate relationships.

- **Peer support programs**

As mentioned earlier, young adult men are experiencing psychological abuse from their female counterparts. As it is, some remain silent about their experiences in fear of being judged, discriminated against, or labelled due to lack of male-centred psychological support services. The study therefore, recommends the development of support programs specific to men, to help them use their power and energy productively instead of being violent. For example, men can be assisted in forming support groups to equip them with life skills and conflict management or problem-solving skills. Support groups can be developed in different spheres of the community such as workplaces, churches, and social media platforms, to help avail a safe space for men to freely discuss their experiences, success stories, weaknesses, and fears.

- **Changing the societal perceptions on factors which promote IPV**

As discovered, young adult men hold perceptions that violent behaviour is normal and acceptable. Such perceptions need to be challenged, especially those that suggest that a married man has a right over his wife to engage even in sex without the wife's consent. Different media platforms, social media, and other community sensitization interventions such as focus group discussions are recommended to highly discourage IPV, whether or not people are married. Additionally, there should be TV programs and radio shows where exemplary men can have a platform to model behaviour that discourages IPV.

- **Community dialogues and campaigns aimed at challenging the traditional gender stereotypes**

The study recommends more community dialogues and campaigns challenging gender stereotypes with men of integrity at the forefront to motivate other men who are still clinging to traditional norms to change their perceptions toward IPV. This is because the study found that men's beliefs about gender stereotypes promote their engagement in IPV acts.

- **Challenging childhood exposure to trauma**

As mentioned in the study, young adult men held the perception that some forms of IPV resulted from their childhood experiences, such as witnessing violence in the families and communities. The study recommends social media, media platforms, churches, and community gatherings to educate people about IPV and discourage all forms of violence. This will help create safe, nurturing, and healthy environments and relationships that prevent the modelling of violence. Also, there is a need for couples to undergo premarital and ongoing counselling to attain positive parenting skills offered by Community Social Workers. This will help parents learn how to express and regulate their emotions and to be selective about the behaviours they portray in their children's presence.

- **Promoting positive choices**

As the study highlighted the influence of interaction, it is vital for young adult men to be engaged in forums which influence positive life choices. Such forums should strengthen more on self-awareness and self-acceptance. This will generate men with confidence and

self-esteem, who are not easily influenced by their peers to engage in risky behaviour. This will help promote breaking of the cycle of inter-generational IPV perpetration and substance abuse.

- **Conflict management skills**

The study recommends that young adult men be equipped with conflict management skills so as to minimise use of violence in resolving conflicts and misunderstandings. There is a need to promote good interpersonal skills among men for harmonious relationships with partners and the community at large. Good interpersonal relationships between partners can discourage infidelity as partners will be able to work together harmoniously to find solutions to their problems.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The present study did not include formal and traditional institutions aimed at addressing problems related to IPV. There is a need for more rigorous studies to focus on traditional institutions as they were excluded in the study. Other institutions such as the Police service and the role they play in enforcing the law were not dealt with by the present study. Their competencies in handling IPV cases would offer valuable insights with regard to dynamics relating to IPV. The research has already laid a careful foundation on which future researchers can draw from.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Data collection tool: **Consent form**

Hello, I am 'Matheo Philadel Ndaule, a student from the National University of Lesotho studying towards completion of a Master's degree in Clinical Social Work. I am conducting research titled "Intimate Partner Violence in Mokhotlong Lesotho: Perceptions and experiences of young adult men who have perpetrated Intimate Partner Violence". The study is solely for academic purposes but, the findings might be used as a baseline study toward behavioural modification with the aim to reduce the all-time high rate of incidences of violence amongst intimate partners. The findings of this study will be presented to the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work at the National University of Lesotho.

Please note that, participation is voluntary and that, you have a right to withdraw from the study at any time should a need arise. If you participate, you will be part of an interview (face-to-face) where you will be asked questions about your childhood and adulthood experiences along with your perceptions on IPV related issues. Take a note that there are no financial gains for participating in this study. Your anonymity is guaranteed and the codes will be used in place of your real names. Also, the voice recordings and notes generated during the interview will be deleted and destroyed after the completion of the study. The audio recording will only be taken if you permit.

Kindly fill out the consent form handed to you as an indication that you have agreed to participate in this study. Please note that there the information given in this study will not be used legally against you as the study is for academic purpose only.

Participant declaration:

I have been informed about the information concerning the research study. I agree to participate in the interview and for the results to be published for educational purposes.

(***Please tick the in the box before signing the consent***): **Agree** [ ] **Disagree** [ ]

Signature or thump print _____ Date_____ Time _____
(The participant)

Research site_____

Signature _____ Date _____ Time _____
(The researcher)

Appendix 2: Data collection tool: **Interview guide for participants**

TOPIC: Intimate Partner Violence in Mokhotlong Lesotho: Perceptions and experiences of young adult men who have perpetrated Intimate Partner Violence.

Data Collection Tool: The face to face in-depth individual interviews were conducted using an interview guide to help gather information on the study objectives. The researcher probed with the participants to gain in-depth understanding on perceptions and experiences of young adult men in Mokhotlong on IPV.

Demographic information

1. Age
2. Sex
3. Place of residence
4. Level of education
5. Marital status
6. History of IPV

1. Discussion on characteristic of IPV. Examples of probes as necessary:
    i. Description definition of IPV.
    ii. Types, circumstances under which IPV may takes place.
    iii. Why IPV may take place?
    iv. Who may be perpetrators of IPV?

2. Childhood experiences of IPV. Examples of probes as necessary:
    i. Within participants' families,
    ii. Within participants' childhood communities,
    iii. Was experience through observing IPV or hearing about IPV?

3. Adulthood experiences of IPV. Examples of probes as necessary:
    i. The nature of relationships between participants and their intimate partner(s) (ex or current, multiple partners or monogamous relationship, short term relationship or more serious, long term relationship);
    ii. Events/factors which may have caused IPV,
    iii. Description of IPV incidences.

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY

Appendix 3: Letter of approval to conduct research from the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work

THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LESOTHO
Faculty of Social Sciences
Department of Sociology and Social Work
P.O. Roma 180
Lesotho.

Telephone: (+266) 22340601/22213668
Fax: (+266) 22340000
Website: http//www.nul.ls

February 2023

Ms. 'Matheo Ndaule

(NUL Student Number: 201102321)

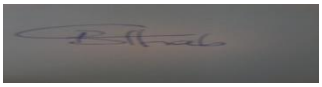
Acceptance of Proposal for Master of Social Work Dissertation Research

This serves to inform you that the Department of Sociology and Social Work accepts your proposal to conduct Dissertation Research on a study titled **"Intimate Partner Violence in Mokhotlong Lesotho: Perceptions and experiences of young adult men who have perpetrated Intimate Partner Violence".**

The Department notes your undertaking to recruit a sample of young adult males between the ages of 18 and 35 years old using Snowballing within the Urban Council of Mokhotlong, subsequent to acquiring all necessary Gate Keeper permission. According to your proposal, you will only contact prospective participants who gave permission to be contacted. You also undertook to, and are duly expected to, uphold Research Ethics specified in your proposal, in particular the liberty of participants to withdraw from the study at any point of the study.

On behalf of the Department of Sociology and Social Work,

I am,



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