

**WOMEN'S PERCEPTION OF ENDOGENOUS FACTORS
INFLUENCING THEM TO STAY IN
ABUSIVE SPOUSAL RELATIONSHIPS: A CASE OF WOMEN RIGHTS
AWARENESS PROGRAM IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA.**

ZIPPORAH KAILU LIMUKII-KAARIA

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**A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF
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DECLARATION

This Thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University or for any other award.

Signature _____ Date: _____

Zipporah Kailu Limukii-Kaaria

Department of Psychology

This Thesis has been submitted for review with our approval as University Supervisors.

Signature . _____ Date : _____

Dr. Merecia Sirera

Department of Psychology

Kenyatta University

. _____ Date: _____

Dr. Christine Wasanga

Department of Psychology

Kenyatta University

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to two important people in my life, my dear mother Maritha M.Limukii and my daughter Martha Kaimuri. I thank my mother who struggled to see me through my education. Her mentorship and hard work inspired me to excel. Her constant reminders that the sun should never cross ten rivers when I am still asleep and that one should be self-reliant are clearly etched in my mind to date. Dear mum, I salute you for you made me who I am.

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Endogenous: The term endogenous has been used in this study to refer to women's internal psychological factors that played a role in influencing them to stay in their abusive spousal relationships. The factors comprised of the nature of different forms of abuse, effects of abuse and the participants subjective beliefs, feelings/emotions and mechanisms of coping with abuse.

Beliefs: The term has been used in this study to refer to women's personal values that influenced their decisions to stay in abusive spousal relationships.

Feelings: This refers to women's emotions that influenced their decisions to stay in abusive marriages.

Spousal abuse: In this study, the term has been used interchangeably with wife abuse and intimate partner violence to refer to maltreatment of a woman by her husband which can manifest through physical, sexual, economic or psychological violations.

Coping mechanism: This term has been used in this study to refer to any strategy that an abused woman used to manage her abusive situation as she stayed in it.

Physical abuse: In this study, the term has been conceptually defined as any acts directed to a woman by her husband which cause physical injuries

Sexual abuse : In the context of the study, it refers to attempt by a husband to obtain a sexual act or unwanted comment, using coercion, threats of harm or physical force.

Psychological abuse: acts which cause emotional and mental anguish. Examples are ridicule, extreme jealousy, possessiveness, verbal insults and threats, isolating a woman from her social network and damage or destruction of the woman's personal property.

Economic abuse: In the study, it means refusal to give financial or material support to a woman or denying her access to finances and other family resources.

Spousal relationship: In this study, the term has been used interchangeably with "marriage" to refer to a relationship between a man and a woman who are living together or cohabitating.

Abusive spousal Relationship: This term has been used interchangeably with abusive marriage to refer to a relationship between a man and a woman living together or cohabiting whereby the woman is a victim of different forms of spousal abuse.

Gender : This has been defined as a socially or psychologically

determined identification as male or female especially in relation to roles taken in the spousal relationship.

Stay/Entrapment : In this study the two terms were used interchangeably to refer to maintenance of an abusive spousal relationship.

Catalyst /Turning point: The term has been used interchangeably with turning point. In the context of the study it refers to a situation or an event that prompts an abused woman to take action to resolve the abuse.

Femicide : This term refers murder of a woman by her husband.

Psychosomatic Effects: The term was used to refer to bodily manifestations that result from the chronic stress experienced in abusive relationships.

Resolve : Taking action that is intended to reduce and finally end spousal abuse so that a woman can live an abuse free life.

Revictimization : Occurrence of further abuse that a woman may encounter after the first episode has been experienced.

Polyvictimization : In this study, the term refers to different types of victimizations a woman may experience in adult life mainly as a result of being a victim of childhood abuse.

Intimate Partner Homicide: In this study the term has been used to refer to killing of a woman or a man by a spouse.

- Empowerment** : In this study, the term refers to the process of acquiring rational and emotional competencies that would enable a woman to resolve spousal abuse.
- Paper abuse** : It is used in the study to refer to legal manipulations by ex-husbands such as false reports of child abuse that are meant to exert control, force contact or financially overburden their wives after they have left the abusive relationship.
- Duration of stay** : It was used in this study to refer to the number of years a victim had stayed in a spousal relationship. It also referred to the number of years a survivor had stayed in an abusive spousal relationship before ending the abuse.
- Internal locus of control:** In this study, this was used to refer to adopting a personal view of evaluating decisions as appropriate or inappropriate in relation to stay in abusive marriages.
- External locus of control:** This was used to mean adopting societal views in evaluating personal decisions as appropriate in relation stay in abusive marriages.
- Effects of abuse** : This has been used to refer to consequences of spousal abuse. In this study the consequences were physical and psychological in nature.

Interventions: This term has been used in the study to refer to any measures or strategies that could be used to help abused women end abuse and ensure safety in their marriages.

Victim : The term victim has been used to refer to a woman currently involved in spousal abusive relationship.

Survivor : The term survivor has been used to refer to a woman who had experienced abuse by a spouse in the past but was free of abuse by the time the study was conducted.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ATV	:	Alternative to Violence
CHWs	:	Community Health Workers
CVT	:	Cycle of Violence Theory
FGDs	:	Focused Group Discussions
FIDA	:	International Federation of Women Lawyers
GBVRC	:	Gender Based Violence Recovery Center
IPA	:	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
IPV	:	Intimate Partner Violence
IPH	:	Intimate Partner Homicide
KDHS	:	Kenya Demographic Health Survey
KNBS	:	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
MI	:	Motivational Interviewing
NACOSTI	:	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NCADV	:	National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
NGO	:	Non Governmental Organization
NRC	:	National Research Council
PANA	:	Pan Africa News Agency
PET	:	Psychological Entrapment Theory
PTSD	:	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
REBT	:	Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy

RTS	:	Regular Treatment Services
SOC	:	Stages of Change
SVWM	:	Sexual Violence Within Marriage
SWED	:	Support for Women with Extreme Difficulties
TM	:	Transtheoretical Model
UNICEF	:	United Nations Children's Education Fund
UNIFEM	:	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UK	:	United Kingdom
US	:	United States
WHO	:	World Health Organization
WRAP	:	Women Rights Awareness Program

ABSTRACT

The decision whether to stay or end abuse in an intimate relationship is a complex one for victims. Most past studies have focused on socioeconomic factors influencing women to stay in abusive spousal relationships and the interventions addressing the factors. However, statistics indicate that a great number of women continue to stay in their abusive relations jeopardizing their wellbeing and that of their families. Few studies have been done to explore the internal psychological (endogenous) factors and how women could be helped to free themselves from such abusive marriages. Using the Cycle of Violence and Psychological Entrapment theories, this study explored the women's perception of endogenous factors that influence their stay decisions. The study used a Phenomenological research design. The target population was women who were in abusive spousal relationships and those that had resolved their abusive situations (survivors). The sample size was thirty (30) women; twenty were selected purposively from Women Rights Awareness Program (WRAP); a shelter for abused women in Nairobi County, and ten survivors of spousal abuse were selected through snowball sampling from Embakasi Subcounty. Data were collected by use of an in depth semi-structured interview schedule, focused group discussions, participant observation and field notes and triangulated to provide a thick description of the findings. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically by use of interpretative phenomenological analysis and presented in verbatim. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented by use of proportions, frequency tables and percentages. The findings revealed that women together with their children experienced multiple, severe and chronic physical, psychological, economic and sexual violations which had led to adverse psychological effects that rendered women helpless and contributed to their entrapment in abusive marriages. The study revealed that beliefs such as; need for identity, marriage is permanent, need for father figure, abuse is normal and feelings such as hope that the abuser would change and love for the abuser coupled with coping mechanisms characterized by denial, rationalization of abuse, avoidance and keeping oneself busy influenced women's stay decisions. Based on the findings from the survivors, the study revealed that women could be helped to reappraise the endogenous factors leading to new beliefs, thoughts and feelings appropriate for resolving spousal abuse. This could be achieved through conceptualizing resolutions to abusive relations from the Transtheoretical Model of behaviour change and addressed through Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy. The process of resolution of abuse needs to incorporate men for the stability of the family unit and the children for holistic healing and functioning of the society. The findings may provide empirical evidence useful in prioritizing interventions for helping abused women deal with their perception of endogenous factors that maintain abusive spousal relationships.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Extant literature portrays the family as a haven for personal safety, affectionate relationships and shared trust (Ogawa, 1995; Strong & Cohen, 2013). However, according to Dragiewicz & DeKeseredy (2012) and UNIFEM (2012) it can be a trap of restraint, injury and death.

Abuse of women by their spouses, commonly known as wife abuse, spousal abuse or intimate partner violence (IPV), is a form of domestic violence which has been in existence for many decades in various cultures of the world. Most literature on domestic violence is about men controlling their spouses in intimate relationships (Jackson, 2001; Seamans, Rubin & Stubb, 2007). In fact, battering of women by spouses has become an enormous health challenge where death is a common end result (Campbell, Glass, Sharps, Laughton & Bloom, 2007; Anderson, 2009; Weizmann-Henelius, Gronroos, Putkonen, Eronen, Lindberg & Hakkanen-Nyholm, 2012). As echoed by Durose, Harlow, Langan, Motivans, Rantala & Smith (2005) and Astion & O'Brian (2009) in reviews of family violence statistics, 85% of the intimate partner victims are women. Conversely, there are some cases when women turn out to be perpetrators; mainly in self defense against male violence (Dasgupta, 2002; Melbin, Sullivan & Cain, 2003; Graham-

Kevan & Archer, 2005; Williams, Ghandour & Kub, 2008; Ballan & Freyer, 2012; Roy, 2012). Nonetheless, when women attack their spouses, they are less likely to cause serious harm compared with men assaulting their female counterparts (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; O'Leary, Slep & O'Leary, 2007; Dasgupta, 2007; Bartholomew, Cobb & Dutton, 2015).

Available literature shows that there is no universally accepted definition of abuse because abuse is culturally sanctioned. However, spousal abuse broadly encompasses economic, sexual, social, emotional and mental torture as well as threat of such harm (Al-Badayneh, 2012; Azziz-Baumgartner, Homaira, Hamadani, Tofail, Dahlberg, Haque, Luby & Naved, 2014). Some of the manifestations of spousal abuse may be physical assault, rape and sexual harassment, verbal abuse, threats to kill or to harm and denial of access to resources (Hayward, 2000; McFarlane & Malecha, 2005; Garcia, Soria & Hurwitz, 2007; Basile & Smith, 2011). Moreover, a conference held in Rome in 2009, reported that these acts of spousal violence among women aged 15-44 years, are the main causes of disability and death (Gutierrez & Boselli, 2010).

Statistics show that spousal abuse is an enormous global phenomenon which afflicts up to 70% of women (Gutierrez & Boselli, 2010). Further, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention point that about 4.3 million women in the United States suffer physical attacks and 16.6 million experience psychological assaults

by their spouses annually(Black, Basile, Breiding, Smith, Walters, Merrick, Chen & Stevens,2011).However, these rates are even higher in some countries. For example, in Calcutta and Bangladesh, incidences are as high as 79 % and 87 % respectively (Pickup, Williams & Sweetman, 2001). In addition, LaViolette & Barnett (2014), reveal the annual rates of femicide in Russia to be as high as 16000; the highest wife murder rates worldwide. Moreover, Speizer & Pearson (2011) & Pandey (2014), echo that these rates are even higher among adolescent married women. Nonetheless, the known prevalence rates are still low as a result of massive underreporting due to shame and stigma and the privacy accorded to domestic issues among others.

Spousal abuse afflicts millions of women in Africa. In South Africa, a woman is killed by her husband every six hours (Gutierrez & Boselli, 2010). In Zimbabwe, 60% of the murder cases tried in the Harare High Court in 1998 were related to domestic violence (Gutierrez & Boselli, 2010). And among the West African communities, wife beating and marital rape are common practices (Itimi, Dienne & Gbeneol, 2014).

Wife abuse is an atrocity afflicting many families in Kenya though the Kenyan government enacted the Sexual Offences Act No.3 of 2006 to stop domestic violence (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, (KNBS), 2010). In fact Kenya has high prevalence rates of wife abuse and is rated among the highest in wife

battering in Africa (Oyekanmi, 2000). A study by Odongo (2012) in Turkana found that women were very vulnerable to domestic violence as they constituted 65% of the victims. In addition, other studies on domestic violence in Kenya have shown that between 47% and 60% of Kenyan women had experienced abuse by their husbands and 45% were in ongoing abuses (Johnson, 2002; Crichton & Musembi, 2010). Women in Western and Nyanza Provinces were at higher risks of spousal violence, with prevalence rates of 56% and 60% respectively.

A survey by International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) (2001) in Nairobi and Kajiado, found that more than 90% of the women in Nairobi, were abused by their husbands. Other studies on wife abuse in Nairobi by Ondicho (2000), Kiriimi (2005); Machera (2006) & Maina (2006) revealed high rates of abuse of women by their spouses. In addition, a report by Pan Africa News Agency (PANA) in Kenya Times (2002) indicated that one in every four women in Nairobi suffered economic, physical or emotional abuse, four in every five were battered or hit with an object and two in every five women were emotionally abused by their husbands. In addition, a factsheet by UNIFEM (2012) revealed that the Gender Based Violence and Recovery Centre (GBVRC) in Nairobi Hospital noted an increase in the number of abused women from 299 to 412 between 2006 and 2007. Further, in 2009, 60-70 women per month had been treated for gender based violence in Kenyatta National Hospital. This statistics

clearly indicates that despite underreporting, rates of spousal abuse are undisputedly high in Nairobi County and perhaps in Kenya as a whole.

Spousal abuse has profound effects on women's physical wellbeing (Joshi, Thomas & Sorensen,2012).As a result women may sustain injuries such as bruises, cuts, fractures, visual or audio impairments(NRC,1996;Odhiambo,2005) and serious psychological trauma (Cascardi & O'Leary, 1992; Dutton, Green, Kaltman, Roesch, Zeffiro& Krause,2006). In this regard, abused women may feel depressed, harbour suicidal thoughts, guilt, shame and low self-esteem which may intersperse with anxiety, excessive sense of failure and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Hinga,2006,Dutton,2007a;Lindgren & Renck,2008). In this state of psychological turmoil, the body's stress coping mechanism may adapt to prolonged hyperarousal which results in psychosomatic disorders such as headache, gastrointestinal problems or pain all over the body (Holahan, Moos, Holahan, Brennan & Schutte, 2005; Sarafino,2008;Renzetti, Endleson & Bergen,2011).The poor state of mental health often affects women's cognitive abilities, occupational achievement and economic success as well (Gutman, Diamond, Holness-Parchment, Brandofino, Pacheco, Jolly-Edouard and Jean-Charles, 2004; Al-Modallal *et al*,2012). For example, according to Helfrich, Aviles, Badiani, Wales & Sabol (2006); Strom & Kosciulek (2007),abused women may have problems in maintaining employment or diminished chances of promotion due to impaired mental alertness and concentration, poor problem

solving abilities, low self-esteem and aspirations. Usually, in comparison to physical suffering, the psychological impact has more grave consequences as it erodes a woman's sense of worth rendering her helpless (Jackson & Oates, 1998; Pico Alfonso, 2005; Hillary, 2007). Hence, it is important to find out how these devastating effects of abuse may contribute to women's decisions to stay in abusive marital relations.

The harmful effects of spousal abuse may extend to children and other members of the family as they witness violence at home (Pinsof & Lebow, 2005; Damant, Lapierre, Lebosse, Thibault, Lessard, Hamelin-Brabant, Lavergne & Fortin, 2009). They may develop significant emotional, behavioural and cognitive deficits and may also get hurt physically (Salber and Taliaferro, 1994; Damant *et al*, 2009). A vivid example is that of a certain high commissioner who assaulted his wife leaving the daughter injured as she attempted to stop the fight (Nation Correspondent, 2011). This kind of assault also hurts the children psychologically. According to Moe (2009) and Fanslow & Robinson (2010), these deleterious effects of abuse on children could act as turning points that would prompt women to consider leaving an abusive relationship. Indeed, according to Riger, Raja & Camacho (2002), aggravated spousal assault has negative psychological consequences on the extended family members, friends and the community at large. A case in point is that of a Nairobi lawyer, who was shot and killed by her

enraged husband in Buruburu Estate, Nairobi, which caused untold suffering to her family and left the entire community in disbelief (Ngeno, 2014).

Despite the debilitating effects of spousal abuse, women respond to their abusive situations in different ways. Some end up by staying and accepting their situation, others try to get some form of remedy, while others leave the abusive relationship (Barnett,2001;Davis,2002;Musson-Sedaat,2008).However a great number justify, normalize and tolerate spousal abuse and end up staying in their abusive situations (Kim & Gray,2008; Fanslow & Robison,2010; Estrellado & Loh, 2013).Studies by FIDA (2001); Johnson (2002); Kimosop(2005) & Kaluyu(2007,on spousal abuse in various parts of Kenya, revealed that up to 90 % of abused women were staying in their abusive spousal relationships. Though some of these women take refuge at the shelters like WRAP, Shurman & Rodriguez (2006) assert that majority return to their abusive situations after discharge.

Numerous studies on spousal abuse indicate that women stay in abusive relationships due to variety of psychological, economic and social factors (Levesque, 2001; Hunnicutt,2009; Edwards, Gidycz & Murphy,2010; Reisenhofer & Taft, 2013).Some of the factors influencing women's stay decisions are commitment to the relationship, lack of financial and housing resources, lack of child care, few relationship alternatives, fear of the batterer's retaliation, depression and social consequences of divorce among others. Sabina & Tindale

(2008); Lazenbatt, Devaney & Gildea (2013) assert that abuse characteristics such as frequency, severity and description and the coping mechanisms women engage in could influence their stay/leave decisions as well. For example, according to Lindhorst & Beadnell (2011); Estrellado & Loh (2013) women are likely to leave an abusive relationship if the children are also abused and when abuse becomes psychological.

Past studies also indicate that some demographic characteristic variables such as age, education level, type of marriage, the number of children, economic stability and duration of stay in a relationship as well as childhood victimization increase the likelihood of staying in an abusive relationship (Panchanadeswaran & McCloskey, 2007; Rahman, Hoque, Mostofa & Makinoda, 2011). For example, Coulton, Crampton, Irwin, Spilsbury & Korbin (2007); Estrellado & Loh (2013) point out that limited resources such as job skill, education, employment and income leaves abused women with fewer alternatives to economic independence which increases their likelihood of staying in abusive relationships.

From the aforementioned it is apparent that there are certain factors influencing women's stay in abusive marriages but most of the past studies have addressed the socioeconomic factors. Only a few studies have focused on the endogenous factors in relation to influencing women's stay decisions. For example, Musson-Sedaat (2008) found out that certain endogenous factors such as low self-esteem,

fear, lack of personal power, hope that the spouse will change and the woman's beliefs concerning gender roles maintained abusive spousal relationships. However, it is not clear if these are exhaustive endogenously in explaining why women stay in abusive relations. Barnett (2001); Hendy, Eggen, Gustins, Mcleod & Ng (2003); Baly (2010) acknowledge there are other internal factors that influence women's stay in abusive marriages such as guilt and self-blame, depression and feelings of helplessness.

From the foregoing, it is clear that many endogenous factors influence the stay of women in abusive relations. Given that there are individual differences in women and different contextual factors that shape the frame of orientation for women, this study endeavoured to explore the endogenous factors influencing women's stay decisions and how they could be empowered to resolve the abuses.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the debilitating effects of spousal abuse on women and their families, a great number of these women, continue to hold onto their abusive relationships. A plethora of studies show that women stay in abusive marriages due to economic, social and internal psychological factors (endogenous factors). However, most of the studies have focused on the socioeconomic factors and the interventions that address them. Yet women continue to hold and suffer in abusive marriages despite the attempts made to alleviate the socioeconomic factors. This has the implication that endogenous factors play a significant role in orienting women

towards their thoughts and action to end abuse. However, little attention has been directed to the endogenous factors. Notably, a study by Musson-Sedaat (2008), explored the endogenous factors influencing women's stay in abusive spousal relationships in South Africa using a sample of women who had already left their abusive situations making it retrospective. In addition the study did not explore the intervention mechanisms to help women deal with their endogenous factors. Other scholars for example Baly, (2010) acknowledge there are other internal factors that influence women's stay in abusive marriages such as guilt and self-blame, depression and feelings of helplessness. Given the individual differences in women and different contextual factors that shape their frame of orientation, there are bound to be varied endogenous factors that contribute to womens' stay in abusive relations. Therefore, the problem that underpinned this study is that although there could be endogenous factors holding women in abusive marriages in Kenya, few studies have been undertaken to establish the factors and how women could be assisted to overcome them. This study found it imperative to examine women's perception of endogenous factors that influence their stay in abusive marriages in Kenya with a sample of women who were in shelters and the respective interventions that could help them deal with their situations.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The study explored the endogenous factors which influence women to stay in abusive spousal relationships and determined the interventions that could be used to empower them to resolve their respective situations.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study was guided by the following objectives.

- i) To identify the forms and nature of spousal abuse experienced by women.
- ii) To investigate the effects of spousal abuse on women.
- iii) To explore the beliefs and feelings which influence women to stay in abusive spousal relationships.
- iv) To establish the coping mechanisms used by women to cope with spousal abuse
- v) To determine interventions that could empower abused women to deal with the endogenous factors influencing their stay in abusive spousal relationships.

1.5 Research Questions

This study attempted to answer the following questions:

- i) What are the forms and nature of spousal abuse experienced by women?
- ii) What are the effects of spousal abuse on women?
- iii) What are the beliefs and feelings/emotions that influence women to stay in abusive spousal relationships?
- iv) What coping mechanisms do women use to cope with spousal abuse?

- v) What interventions can be used to empower abused women to deal with the endogenous factors influencing their stay in abusive spousal relationships?

1.6 Justification and Significance of the Study

Women suffer a great deal in abusive spousal relationships, yet they endure and stay in these situations. The effects of abuse are debilitating to the individual women, their families and their communities. Moreover, the effects deter the women from realizing their full potential in all aspects of their life. Understanding the endogenous factors which influence women to maintain such painful relationships is important if they have to be emancipated from their abusive situations. Yet this can only be established from an empirical research, hence the justification of this study.

The findings of this study could make valuable contribution to various groups in the society:

- i. The findings may directly benefit the victims of abuse as they may aid the victims' general understanding of spousal abuse and the impact it has on their wellbeing and that of their families.
- ii. The findings could suggest interventions of empowering victims to emancipate themselves from abusive spousal relationships.

- iii. The study may be helpful to policy makers in the formulation and implementation of policies geared towards empowering women to be survivors rather than mere victims of abusive spousal relationships.
- iv. The findings on interventions to empower women to resolve spousal abuse could help practitioners such as family therapists, social workers, healthcare providers, the church and the Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other stakeholders to design and implement programmes such as psycho-educative seminars, counseling and rehabilitation strategies in support of abused women.
- v. The findings may help the public and the entire society to support abused women's search for an authentic expression of themselves as they struggle with decisions to free to free themselves from abusive marital relations.

1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study

Due to the purposive nature of the sample, the findings are specific to the participants' experience of endogenous factors that influenced their stay decisions and how the survivors dealt with their abusive situations as shared while at WRAP shelter and Embakasi Subcounty of Nairobi. The study findings as such cannot be generalized to the other shelters of abused women in Nairobi County or to abused women outside the shelter.

The study mainly utilized interviews for data collection which are highly subjective but the effect was mitigated through triangulation by use of FGDs and

participants' observation. As such the findings may not be generalized to all women experiencing spousal abuse.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

The study was carried with the following assumptions:

- i) That the participants gave truthful information regarding their abusive situations.
- ii) That there were abused women in the WRAP shelter and they had experienced different types and descriptions of spousal abuse.
- iii) That the abuse had affected the women in some ways.
- iv) That there were beliefs, feelings and coping mechanisms that influence women's stay in abusive spousal relationships.
- v) That women who had stayed in abusive marriages for at least two years had experienced more endogenous factors that influenced their stay decisions.
- vi) That there were interventions that could be used to help women deal with endogenous factors influencing their stay decisions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The study explored women's perception of endogenous factors which influence them to stay in abusive spousal relationships in WRAP with an aim of determining ways that could be used to empower women to resolve their abusive situations. This chapter discusses the theories that explain the endogenous factors which influence women's stay in abusive spousal relationships as well as empower them in terms of resolution of abuse. It also reviews related literature and presents a conceptual framework and the chapter summary.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study was be guided by three theories: cycle of violence and psychological entrapment and the transtheoretical model. The cycle of violence and Psychological Entrapment theories explained the endogenous factors influencing women's stay decisions while the transtheoretical model explained how women could be empowered to resolve spousal abuse.

2.2.1 Psychological Entrapment Theory

The Psychological Entrapment Theory (PET) suggests that the level of commitment in a relationship increases as the amount of investments into it increases (Barnett & LaViolette, 1993). For example, a married woman may spend a great deal of time, effort and psychological resources trying to make her

relationship work(Bell & Naugle,2005,Boonzaier,2008).According to this model, a woman's motivation to stay is often fuelled by the hope that if she recommits herself tirelessly, she could bring change in her spouse which would eventually end the abuse. These commitments are consistent with cultural norms and specific gender socializations which influence the ways women create and sustain interpersonal relationships (Woods, 1999; Boonzaier, 2008).The model also asserts that women often believe that it is their responsibility to make their marriages work which could be an extension of the female gender socialization (Bhuyan, Mell, Senturia, Sullivan & Shiu-Thornton, 2005). Based on this conviction, abused women may harbour feelings of self-blame as they think they are the cause of the abuse (Dutton, 2007b). This guilt may gradually lead to tolerance of abuse, lower likelihood of finding ways of resolving it and high chances of staying in it (Bell & Naugle, 2005).

Although the abused woman feels dissatisfied with her relationship, she continues to invest more in terms of her material and psychological resources. The more she invests, the harder it becomes to give up. Hence, the less likely she will quit the relationship. Even if she separates, she reconciles and continues to perform various purposeful, goal-oriented behaviours that are expected to be rewarded. For example, she may comply with her partner's requests in the hope that those behaviours will lead to reduction in violence and increased relationship satisfaction (Bell & Naugle, 2005; Towns & Adam, 2015).Despite her efforts,

goal attainment may remain low. These unwavering attempts to change the relationship by rationalizing commitment in terms of investment constitute psychological entrapment.

This theory implies that an abused woman thinks re-commitment to the relationship could be the cure. This alludes to her relentless effort to invest in terms of time, energy and emotions to keep the relationship aglow. For example, an abused woman may indulge in gender appropriate duties such as home making, nurturing her children and her spouse or hard work with the goal of saving the relationship. When these commitments result in little or no reward, abused women are likely to rationalize that good women are responsible for holding the family at all costs or that the batterer would eventually change. Furthermore, engaging in these responsibilities may be a way of softening their self-blame and enhancing their acceptance in the society (Boonzaier, 2008; Towns & Adams, 2015). This pattern of thinking apparently seems to drain a woman's psychic energy which she requires to deal with her situation and this leaves her helpless. The state of helplessness prevents her from rational decision making and she ends up stuck in her intimidating situation.

The theory provides important information on the important facet of psychological entrapment. For example, it emphasizes the intrapersonal dynamics of an abusive relationship whereby the woman seems to be enmeshed in a cocoon

of a dysfunctional relationship that she is constantly and tirelessly trying to salvage. However, it is limited in guiding the study in the process of entrapment. Hence there was need for another theory that could further explain the process of entrapment.

2.2.2 Cycle of Violence Theory

The Cycle of Violence Theory (CVT) was first described by Lenore Walker in 1979. It is one of the earliest and most popular explanations for the factors that influence women to stay in abusive spousal relationships. Though the theory makes reference to physical abuse, it is assumed that other forms of abuse such as psychological, verbal and sexual abuses, accompany the physical abuse (Walker, 1979; Roberts, 2002; Dutton, 2007a).

Through interviews with battered women, Walker conceptualized violence as a cycle comprising of three phases namely, the tension building, the acute battering and the honeymoon phases (Daigle, 2012). The first phase, the tension building phase, is characterized by positive interaction between the abuser and the victim which is then followed by tension and subsequent minor physical and psychological abuse. At this early stage, the woman tries to control the situation by trying to predict her partner's mood, staying out of his way, self-blame, declaring her subordination to him or suppressing her anger (Walker 1979; National Research Council (NRC), 1996); Daigle, 2012). However, her attempts to

evade trouble usually fail leading to onset of the acute battering phase. During this phase, the abuser's physical force and other forms such as verbal, sexual and economic abuses intensify. This extremely violent phase is gradually followed by the honeymoon phase, whereby the abuser becomes very remorseful to the victim, pledges not to hurt her again, shows a lot of love and care to the extent of buying her gifts and attending to her needs. The abuser may even recruit friends and relatives to persuade her to return, among other attempts at reconciliation (Walker, 2000; Dutton, 2007a). If not successful, the abuser may go to extremes of wanting to commit suicide. This intermittent reinforcement and need to rescue the abuser seems to maintain the woman's hopes that the abuser has changed. The victim may perceive this as a permanent change and may decide to stay in the relationship. However if the relationship continues, violence is likely to start again.

In relation to this study, it means that at the tension building phase, the woman tries to prevent an escalation by turning to certain coping mechanisms. She could consciously or unconsciously engage in these behaviours due to the inaccurate perceptions of risk and susceptibility of her situation. The avoidance behaviours reinforce the stay in the relationship with hope that the violence will not escalate. Despite her efforts to avert violence, the severity increases culminating to the acute battering stage. The abused woman is engulfed by fear of being battered more or killed by her spouse if she attempts to leave. She may also fear that the

perpetrator could hurt or kill her children. Due to her subjective reality (helplessness), the victim perceives her abuser to be omnipotent and this blinds her from seeking any available help. Moreover, some women may blame themselves as the cause of the abuse turning to options like concealing it as they struggle with internal dialogues that exacerbate their fear and guilt (Thapar-Björkert & Morgan, 2010). This self-blame may ultimately reinforce the staying behaviour.

The honey moon stage is a period of relative calm when the abused woman sees another face of her abuser: a remorseful, caring and a loving partner. This somehow convinces the woman that the abuser loves her and that he would eventually change. It may probably explain why some abused women forsake plans of leaving or why those who had left return to their abusive spouses while others attempt to stop legal proceedings (Dutton, 2007b). Moreover, the resurfacing of the abuser's good traits, such as love and care, act as reinforcement towards the staying decision.

This theory helps inform this study on the process of entrapment by recognizing the role of the abuser and the victim in the genesis of the endogenous factors influencing the victim's stay decisions. For example, it recognizes that at the honeymoon phase the abuser becomes remorseful and his new behaviour though manipulative, gives hope to the victim that he has changed contributing to

entrapment of the victim in the relationship. However, it is limited in informing the study on intervention mechanisms, hence the need for the third theory

2.2.3 Transtheoretical Model

The Transtheoretical Model(TM) of behaviour change was proposed by Prochaska and DiClemente in 1982 and adopted for helping battered women by Brown in 1997. The model as adopted by Brown conceptualizes behaviour change (end of abuse) from the perspective of the abused woman. According to the model, end of abuse occurs progressively through five stages which involve: precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance of the new behaviour (Prochaska & DiClemente,1983; Chang,Dado,Ashton,Hawker,Cluss,Buranosky & Scholle,2006; Gielen, Sleet & DiClemente,2006).The model acknowledges behaviour change as cyclical and with probabilities of relapse. At the precontemplation stage, an individual is not aware of the problem and could be in denial which blocks awareness (Zucosky,2011).Movement from precontemplation to contemplation requires awareness creation which helps individuals to gain insight into the existence of a problem. However, individuals do not commit themselves to behaviour change at this point. The preparation stage is marked by desire for change in the near future where the individual takes small but unclear steps towards their goal. The realization of need for change propels them into action (Brown, 1997; Fawcett, Heise, Isita-Espejel & Pick, 1999).The action is supposed to result in end of abusive behaviour which progresses to maintenance

as the individual engages in concerted effort to sustain change and prevent relapse (Prochaska & Norcross, 2003; Shurman & Rodriguez, 2006)

In an abusive situation, the victim has to be helped either as an individual or through psycho-educational groups to realize that she is in an abusive situation and the endogenous factors contributing to maintenance of the situation. Once awareness has been raised, they can be helped through cognitive or emotive techniques to challenge the endogenous factors and come out with a new and appropriate cognitive appraisal (secondary appraisal) that would help them to move from contemplation to preparation stage of ending the abuse. The victims of abuse can then be helped through further cognitive disputes to engage in action/resolution. Taking such action would translate to end of abuse through the means that would be appropriate for individual women. Once action has been taken, behaviour change is expected after which the individual has to engage in certain strategies to maintain the abuse free situation (Bliss, Ogleby-Oliver, Jackson, Harp & Kaslow, 2008).

Summary of Theoretical Framework

The two theories (PET and CVT) and the TM were found useful in informing this study on endogenous factors that hold women in abusive marriages in Kenya and how they could be empowered to emancipate themselves from the abuses. Individually, PET informs this study on the important aspects of entrapment namely commitment and investment that provide hope for possible positive

change hence victims stay expectant for change of the abuser. The cycle of violence theory helps inform this study on how entrapment is maintained through three stages: tension building, acute battering and the honeymoon stage that helps to neutralize the tension and the pain of battering. Lastly, the TM helps inform the study on the process of empowering women to be able to take action against the abuses through five stages that build progressively. Collectively, the two theories and the model guide this study in the important areas of focus that facilitate comprehensive understanding of the women's perception of endogenous factors that hold them in abusive marital relations and how to deal with them so as to resolve abuse.

2.3 Review of Related Literature

The review of literature addresses the forms and nature in which spousal abuse manifests, the effects of spousal abuse on women, the beliefs and feelings associated with stay decisions, mechanisms that women use to cope with spousal abuse and the interventions that could empower women to resolve spousal abuse. The reviewed literature enabled the researcher to draw from other researchers' findings, their methods and recommendations for further investigation. Thus, it helped to identify the knowledge gap which justified the need to carry out the study.

2.3.1 Forms and Nature of Spousal Abuse

Most past studies have focused on the forms of abuse and the frequencies of occurrence but few studies have addressed the characteristics or patterns that the different forms of abuse take (Kimosop, 2005; Kaluyu, 2007; Odongo, 2012 & Al-Badayneh; 2012). The current study realized that examining such patterns in the experiences of spousal abuse could shed light on how the experiences create different vulnerabilities to the negative psychological sequel and subsequent entrapment in the relationships. Information about different experiences of abuse may also reveal emerging patterns of spousal abuse and this could help in the refinement of conceptualizations of spousal abuse.

Available literature shows that spousal abuse is usually a combination of numerous forms of violence involving psychological, physical, economic and sexual violations against women by their partners (KNBS, 2010; Odongo, 2012; Zeoli, Rivera, Sullivan & Kubiak, 2013). For example, Odongo (2012) examined the influence of drug abuse on domestic violence in Central Turkana with a sample of 92 respondents. The findings indicated that women experienced physical, emotional, economic and sexual violations from their spouses. Consequently, a report by Kenya Demographic Health Survey (KNBS, 2010) showed that 47% of ever married women had experienced spousal violence in the forms of physical violence (37%), sexual violence (17%) and emotional violence (30%). The survey adds that emotional abuse occurred through non-physical

behaviours that were meant to control, intimidate, demean, subjugate, punish or isolate a woman through degradation³², humiliation or fear. However the study by Odongo (2012) did not bring out the patterns that the various forms of abuse took which could be significant in womens' decisions to stay in their abusive marital relations.

A study by Sabina & Tindale (2008) examined abuse characteristics and coping resources as predictors of problem-focused coping strategies among battered women in a sample of four hundred and seventy eight abused women in the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study. The sample was recruited from Chicago health centers, clinics and hospitals. The results indicated that 90% of participants engaged in at least one of the problem-focused coping strategies; approximately 50% stayed away from the abuser, 81% sought help from at least one source and 13 % obtained an order of protection. In relation to help seeking, 80 % had sought help from friends, family, police, counselor or an agency staff. The study also realized that psychological abuse which was characterized by harassment, power and control acted as predictors of staying away from the abuser. Further, the study found that there was a relationship between characteristics of abuse such the description and problem focused coping. This means there are some characteristics of abuse that prompted women to engage in problem focused coping. Since the description and type of abuse is a predictor of leaving an abusive relationship, the current study did not attempt to find if abuse characteristics such as type, pattern

and frequency may have influenced womens' stay in their abusive marital relations.

Ghairabeh & Oweis (2009) conducted a qualitative study to explore why Jordanian women stay with abusive spouses on a sample of twenty eight women in Jordan. The findings revealed that spousal abuse consisted of physical, sexual, economical, psychological and social violations. Consistently, a study by Al-Badayneh (2012) on violence against women in Jordan on a sample of one thousand eight hundred and fifty four realized that women were aware of the behaviours that constituted spousal abuse. The women indicated they had suffered serious physical, psychological, sexual, economic and educational violations by their spouses. Despite womens' level of awareness of abusive behaviours, the study realized that abuse of women by spouses is culturally condoned in Jordan. These cultural norms of viewing abuse as normal and women only needed to tolerate contributed to entrapment of women in abusive marriages. Apart from the influence of cultural norms on women's entrapment, the study did not explore how the characteristic patterns of the various forms of abuse could have influenced womens' stay decisions.

Puri, Shah & Tamang (2010) reviewed a study conducted by Centre for Research on Environment Health and Population Activities between 2006-2007 under the title exploring the nature and reasons for sexual violence within marriage among

young women in Nepal. The study was conducted on a sample of 75 young men and women selected randomly from 387 households in two districts covering two ethnic groups in Nepal. The participants comprised of 39 married women aged 15-24 years and 36 married men aged 15-27 years and were interviewed through free listing. 30 community leaders who were knowledgeable in the topic of sexual violence were also included in the sample as secondary informants. The findings indicated that women with no or low level of education were more vulnerable to sexual violence within marriage (SVWM) and a higher percentage of women who married before the age of 20 years than after 20 years reported experiencing SVWM. Similarly, young women with one child were more prone to forced sex than those with two or more children, and women whose husbands had attained secondary education or above were more vulnerable to SVWM than those whose husbands were illiterate or had attained primary education. These findings imply that rates of SVWM were high among young women in Nepal but despite their pain of the sexual violations, the women remained within their marriages. The study however did not indicate how the sexual abuse characteristics could have influenced women's stay decisions. The current study endeavoured to find out how the abuse characteristics such as form, nature and frequency of abuse could influence stay decisions but among young and middle aged women (between 20 and 50 years).

A study by Zuckosky (2011) examined the stages of change and social support in a group of eighty current and former residents of battered womens' shelter. The women had experienced physical, psychological and sexual violations but it was not clear how their abuses had contributed to their entrapment in their situations.

In 2009, Damant *et al* conducted a qualitative study on women's experiences of mothering in the context of co-occurrence of domestic violence and child abuse in Canada. The findings revealed that the twenty seven women had experienced abuses that were physical, psychological, sexual and economic. Psychological abuse which was characterized by verbal insults and stalking ranked very high in prevalence. The study also found that children had been abused directly by their fathers. Though such abusive situations cause a lot of pain to the victims and their children, the study did not explore how these violations could have influenced the women's stay in their abusive situations.

Zeoli *et al* (2013), in a qualitative study with nineteen women who had separated from their abusive spouses examined the post separation abuse of women and their children. The study was conducted in a Midwestern County in the US through in depth interviews and findings indicated that the women had experienced various types of abuse from their husbands together with their children. The women experienced emotional abuses such as being threatened with loss of custody of their children if they left and isolating them from friends and family members, physical abuse such as being threatened with a gun, inflicting

injuries such as broken ribs and throwing objects to the victim. The children experienced pre and post separation emotional abuse which ranged from name calling to killing of family puppies, physical abuse such as beating which made them engage in self injurious behaviours such as inflicting pain and attempting suicide. Notably, this study did not investigate how the pre separation abuses of women and their children could have influenced their stay in their abusive situations.

A 2009 nationwide survey by Finkelhor, Turner, Ormrod, Hamby & Kracke further explored children's exposure to violence. The survey was conducted in America through telephone interviews with the children who were above seventeen years and with parents as respondents for minors. The findings showed that children experienced physical and sexual victimizations and revictimization from within their families. Though abuse of children could affect their mothers, the influence of the various abuses on their mothers stay decisions was not within the scope of the study.

In 2014, Azziz-Baumgartner *et al* examined the prevalence and impact of IPV on maternal distress in a community of low-income Bangladeshi and displaced ethnic Bihari mothers on a sample of two hundred and fifty respondents. The results revealed that the women had suffered multiple physical violations ranging from hitting, kicking, dragging, choking, burning and being injured with a knife or a

gun. The women had also experienced coerced sex and multiple psychological violations such as verbal insults, being belittled, being threatened and intimidated. These various types and descriptions of abuse had caused high levels of distress since the women were already a vulnerable group by virtue of being poor displaced mothers who were nursing new born babies. Despite the high prevalence and distress of various abuses, this study did not bring out how the abuses could have influenced women's stay decisions which the current study attempted to address.

Several other studies found that women experienced severe forms of spousal physical abuse such as fatal and non fatal strangulation. For example, in 2008, Glass, Laughon, Campbell, Block, Hanson, Sharps & Taliaferro, explored non-fatal strangulation as an important risk factor for homicide of women using a case control design on nine hundred and thirty three women. Of the five hundred and six women interviewed directly or by proxy, 10% of the abused controls had suffered non fatal strangulation while 45 % had attempted homicide and 43% had died through strangulation by their intimate partners. These findings indicate high prevalence implying that non fatal strangulation is a commonly used form of physical abuse that increases risk of homicide among women though they endure and stay in their abusive relations. As such, the study emphasized the need to screen for non-fatal strangulation when assessing abused women in emergency department settings. However, despite the imminent danger of femicide and

subsequent trauma through strangulation, the study did not highlight how such physical and psychological violations impacted on the participants' decisions to hold on to abusive marriages.

Previous studies have also shown that one form rarely goes singly; most cases of physical abuse go hand in hand with other forms of abuses such as psychological, sexual or economic abuses. In support of the assertion, Bonomi, Anderson, Rivara & Thompson (2007) examined the health outcomes in women experiencing physical and sexual IPV on a group of two thousand eight hundred and seventy six. The study found that physical violations were accompanied by sexual assault. However, the study did not point out how the sexual and physical violations were responsible for the women's stay decisions.

Block & DeKeseredy (2007) conducted a study in Chicago on forced sex after leaving intimate relationships. The study was conducted through interviews on seven hundred and five women. The findings indicated that the women had experienced forced sex from their spouses after they had informed them that they were leaving or after they had left their abusive relationships. This shows that victims are at risk of abuse even after leaving their abusive situations. The studies conducted by Ghairabeh & Oweis (2009) and by Al-Badayneh (2012) on Jordanian women revealed other forms of sexual violence such as extra marital

affairs by the husband, marrying another woman against the wife's wish or sexual abandonment.

In 2011, Miller & Smolter using in depth semi-structured interviews conducted a study on paper abuse in Delaware (America) to explore how ex-husbands continued to manipulate their ex-wives. Of the ten women interviewed, all reported psychological abuse in the form of frivolous lawsuits, false reports of child abuse, forced contact and being financially overburdened by their ex-partners. Though the current study addresses the forms of abuse in ongoing spousal relationships, the findings by Miller and Smolter imply that women experience abuse even after ending the abusive relationship which was not within the scope of the study.

In 2013, Estrellado and Loh used in-depth interviews on forty battered women in the Philippines to explore factors associated with their decisions to stay or leave their partners. The participants were selected using purposive sampling based on the recommendations of the social workers and community-based centres' representatives. Twenty of the participants were living with their abusive spouses and were recruited from a community based centre in Metro Manila while the other twenty had left their abusive spouses and were recruited from Women Crisis Center and from the Department of Social Welfare and Development. The study found that all the twenty women who left reported that the nature of abuse

triggered their decision to end the abusive relationship. Nineteen women felt they could no longer take the verbal harassment and degrading remarks of their partners. For example, one woman felt the need to leave her abusive partner because of the verbal abuses such as being told she was “worthless and just a trash”. Most of the women reported they had left after realizing their husbands were unfaithful, unable to provide for their families or gave financial assistance in a way that was equivalent to cursing the woman or escalation of physical abuse and substance abuse that exacerbated the abuses. So the current study attempted to explore if abuse characteristics such as form and description of abuse had influence on women’s stay decisions in the Kenyan context.

Another study by Edwards, Gidycz & Murphy (2010) examined stay/leave decisions in abusive dating relationships using a prospective design among three hundred and twenty three adolescents at a Midwestern public University in the US over a 10 week period. Of the three hundred and twenty three adolescents, 98 % had experienced psychological abuse, 19 % reported physical abuse and 32% reported sexual abuse. Though the rates were alarming, only 12 % of the abused women had left the relationship by end of the 10 week period. The findings indicated that greater satisfaction, greater investment, greater psychological distress, experience of childhood abuse and poor quality of alternatives predicted their stay decisions. Factors such as high self esteem predicted women’s ability to seek alternative relationships. The frequency of psychological abuse was

positively related to investment and negatively associated with relationship satisfaction. Women with higher psychological distress who relied on avoidance coping were more invested in their relationship. This observation could be because women with higher psychological distress may be optimistic that the abuser would stop being abusive and as such held on coping mechanisms to withstand the pain of the relationship. Since dating relationships are not permanent, the current study endeavoured to investigate if the type and nature of spousal abuse would influence women to stay in their abusive marriages.

From the foregoing, it seems women face both visible and invisible forms and descriptions of spousal abuse and there could be other emerging manifestations as abuse is dynamic. Moreover, some of the reviewed studies did not bring out elaborately how the the different descriptions of abuse could have influenced womens' stay in abusive marriages.

2.3.2 Effects of Spousal Abuse

Abuse of women by their spouses has severe deleterious consequences which are mainly physical and psychological in nature (Dutton *et al*, 2006; Afifi, MacMillan, Cox, Asmundson, Stein & Sareen, 2009; Azziz-Baumgartner *et al*, 2014). However, the most common indicators of spousal abuse are usually the physical manifestations as they are visible.

Quite a number of studies have examined the effects of abuse that women experience from their spouses. For example, Joshi, Thomas and Sorensen (2012), explored the experiences of strangulation on seventeen women who were in abusive marital relations. By utilizing in depth interviews and FGDs, all the women revealed that they had experienced non fatal strangulation that had caused a host of health physical consequences such as loss of consciousness, sore throat, neck pain and swelling, voice change, and difficulty in swallowing which escalated with time. The women also suffered psychological trauma characterized by intense anxiety, fear that had led to nightmares and hyper-vigilance about protecting the neck and insomnia. Further studies by Glass *et al* (2008) and Thomas, Joshi & Sorensen (2014) add that strangulation increased risks of femicide or led to death in some cases. The studies however did not bring out how such effects influenced women's stay decisions.

A study by Bonomi *et al* (2007) examined the health outcomes in women with exposure to physical and sexual IPV through telephone interviews. The study found that the women suffered depression, physical symptoms and lower social functioning scores as a result of spousal abuse. Further the study realized that women exposed to sexual IPV whether with or without physical IPV had higher depression rates compared to those exposed to physical IPV only. This implies that sexual IPV has more devastating consequences as compared to the physical IPV. Nevertheless, the findings did not point out how the devastating effects of

the sexual and/or physical violations could have influenced womens' stay in their abusive marriages.

Afifi, *et al* (2009) examined the mental health correlates of intimate partner violence in marital relationships on a sample of four thousand and thirty six men and women in the U.S. The study using a multistaged clustered design and face to face interviews found that abused women had experienced psychiatric disorders which manifested as depression, anxiety, disruptive behaviour disorders and substance use disorders as well as suicidal ideation. This past study however did not explore the influence of the various psychiatric disorders on the womens' stay decisions. Further, Azziz-Baumgartner *et al* (2014) in Bangladesh, on two hundred and fifty nursing mothers showed that abused women had developed severe psychological effects such as withdrawal, poor appetite, inattentiveness, depression, hopelessness and despair or despondency. These feelings often undermine a victim's self-esteem and may render a woman helpless which may increase dependence on the perpetrator. However, the study did not give any insights how the womens' state of mental distress could have contributed to entrapment in their abusive situations.

Campbell & Faan (2009) interviewed 97 battered women in the Us who had been recruited via newspaper advertisements and realized that 44.3% of the women were experiencing sexual abuse. The findings also indicated that sexual abuse was

inversely correlated with body image and self-esteem scores and positively related to danger of homicide. This means that sexual abuse paints a negative body image and lowers self esteem victims of spousal abuse. The study recommended need for assessment and interventions for sexual abuse of women. The study however did not explore how the outlined effects of sexual abuse could have influenced women's stay in their abusive relationships.

A study done in Botswana by Thupayagale-Tshweneagae & Seloilwe (2009) on a sample of ten women explored the lived experience of women who had experienced emotional abuse in intimate relationships by use of hermeneutic phenomenological approach. The study realized that depression and anxiety were common among the victims of abuse. However this study did not explore how the psychological effects of abuse influenced women's stay in abusive marriages.

Some studies carried out in Kenya also show spousal abuse has deleterious outcomes to the victims. For example, in 2007, Kaluyu studied gender domestic violence in Kitui Central on a sample of one hundred and six men and women. The findings indicated that all the victims had experienced mental stress while others reported declining education for their children, low family income, feelings of insecurity or fear, poor family health, physical disability, unplanned pregnancies and divorce. These findings show that, in addition to physical pain and disabilities, victims also experience stress and psychological or mental

suffering which seem to affect almost all their spheres of life. Despite the myriad physical and psychological effects of abuse brought out by the various studies, hardly any of them explored how the effects of abuse influenced the victims' stay decisions.

In addition to the short term effects, battered wives may suffer long term mental and emotional consequences. Spousal abuse has also been associated with severe mental disorders. For example, a study by Helfrich, Fujiura & Rutkowski-Kmitta (2008), on seventy four women in a domestic violence shelter in the Midwest of US, found that they had higher prevalence of psychological symptoms as compared to the US general population. The most notable symptoms were anxiety (77.0%) and major depression (51.4%). Other psychological effects related to their abusive situations were phobias and strong fears (35.1%), bipolar disorder and manic depression (23%), personality disorders (14%), PTSD (16.2%) and psychotic disorders (11%). The study recommended that validation and acceptance of the psychological impact of spousal abuse and subsequent treatment may empower women to seek interventions to free themselves from their abuses. The current study acknowledged this gap and brought out the interventions of empowering abused women to resolve their abuses. In relation to long term effects of abuse, Brown, Banford, Mansfield, Smith, Whiting & Ivey (2012), examined posttraumatic stress symptoms and perceived relationship safety in Texas (USA), on a group of three hundred and ninety women in committed

romantic relationships. The study found that the women had higher PTSD symptoms which were associated with decreased perceptions of safety and poor relationship adjustment. This means that the effects of spousal abuse could be a threat to marital stability. However, the study did not indicate how the effects of abuse influenced maintenance of abusive marriages.

A longitudinal study by Lindhorst & Beadnell (2011), examined the psychological effects of intimate partner violence across seventeen years on a normative sample of two hundred and twenty unmarried pregnant adolescents, aged twelve to seventeen years who planned to carry their babies to term. The sample was drawn from public and private hospital prenatal clinics, public school alternative programmes and social service agencies in three urban counties surrounding Seattle, Washington. Data were collected through personal and telephone interviews. The finding after four years of the study period revealed three patterns of IPV exposure which were low, medium and high level exposures. Almost all the women in the battered group (high exposure) reported that their partners had hit them with a fist or an object and three quarters reported having been beaten up and a knife or a gun had been used to harm them. The moderate exposure group reported high likelihoods of being threatened and experiencing the less extreme physical behaviours (such as being shoved or slapped), but much lower likelihoods of severe physical violence. The low exposure group had low likelihoods of experiencing physical IPV behaviours. The

findings of the remaining thirteen years of the study showed that the groups had mid-term and long term psychological consequences such as anxiety, depression and alcohol use depending on their exposure levels. The moderate exposure and the battered groups however showed improvement over time resulting in similar levels of psychosocial functioning at the end of the 13 years. This implies that the psychological sequel of abuse decreases with time. The findings also indicate that abuse can have far-fetched effects depending on the level of exposure and that can take time to address. The levels of exposure also explain some of the difficulties women have in ending abuse in relationships. The longitudinal nature of the study had an added advantage in that it offered additional information about the long-term effects of spousal abuse and how the effects changed with time. However, it was not clear how the effects influenced women's stay decisions.

The psychological effects of abuse can have far-fetched consequences that may interfere with a victim's other spheres of life. For example, Al-Modallal *et al* (2012) conducted a study on the psychological outcomes of intimate partner violence experienced by Jordanian working women on a sample of one hundred and one. Of the 101 women, 55% had suffered depression and 36% had moderate to extremely severe stress. These psychological outcomes had rendered the women less effective in their jobs and were manifested through reporting to work late, absenteeism and other work related problems. The findings by Helfrich, Fujiura & Rutkowski-Kmitta (2008) also realized that 45% of the abused women who had

suffered mental and emotional disorders had serious impairments in their daily functioning in their academic, work and social environments compared to 2.6 % of the overall women population. Despite the psychological impact of abuse on the women's occupational and social functioning, the two studies did not explore how these effects influenced women's entrapment in their abusive situations.

In another study, Ditcher (2013) explored women's experience of getting arrested in the context of domestic violence by use of interviews and questionnaires on one hundred and seventy three women in an East Coast City in the US. The women expressed that the arrest was unexpected, caused multiple losses including loss of safety and custody of their children, and served as a turning point in their relationships. Such turn of events can be very devastating as the police are supposed to help victims of abuse instead of revictimization. If the consequences of abuse can be so deleterious, then there is need to find out what makes women stay despite the experience of such painful consequences.

In a national longitudinal study, Dillon, Hussaain, Kibele, Rahman & Loxton (2016) explored the influence of intimate partner violence on domestic relocation in five thousand one hundred and seventy eight (5178) metropolitan and non-metropolitan young women in Australia. The study was carried out among cohorts during two time intervals. Findings revealed that the experience of IPV in the past 12 months was significantly associated with increased likelihood of domestic relocation. This association remained significant after controlling for age, level of

social support, area of residence, ability to manage on current income, number of children in the household, level of education, and housing situation. Change in relationship status was found to be a strong predictor of domestic relocation; women who had moved in or out of a relationship during the study period being at higher probability of domestic relocation than women with no change in relationship status. These findings indicate that spousal abuse affects many facets of a victim's life and could lead to economic and social disequilibrium with possibilities of increasing mental health problems and poverty levels. Hence there was need to explore the factors that contribute to womens' stay in abusive marital relations.

Spousal abuse may have negative consequences on other members of the family such as the children or the extended family members. For example, a qualitative study by Moe (2009), on twenty abused women realized that children who witnessed abused had emotional, behavioral and cognitive deficits. The observations resonate in Holt, Buckley & Whelan (2008) review on the impact of exposure to domestic violence on the health and developmental well-being of children and young people. Holt, Buckley & Whelan found that that children and adolescents living with domestic violence are at increased risk of experiencing emotional, physical and sexual abuses. They are also susceptible to emotional and behavioral problems and increased exposure to other life adversities. Zeoli *et al* (2013) echoes that children in abusive situations may also develop difficulties in

sleeping, eating disorders, depression, low self esteem, guilt, withdrawal, aggression and rage, learning difficulties, suicidal ideations and developmental problems. With such a heavy toll on their children, it is important to explore what makes abused women tolerate and maintain their abusive situations.

As a result of exposure to abuse by an intimate partner, previous studies have found that women may also turn out to be abusers of their own children. This is echoed by Damant *et al* (2009), who found that women may displace their frustrations to their children as a result of their victimization or in self defense. This ends up compromising their parenting ability and may lead to feelings of guilt and self blame which exacerbates their psychological turmoil.

With all these kinds of suffering, abused women may not be expected to achieve their optimal psychological functioning. However, few of the reviewed studies have investigated how the physical and psychological effects of spousal abuse could influence the women's stay in their abusive situations.

2.3.3 Beliefs and Feelings/Emotions Influencing Women's Stay Decisions

Several studies on spousal abuse have found that a great number of women endure and remain in their abusive situations (Ghairabeh & Oweis, 2009; Al-Badayneh, 2012; Ondicho, 2013). Ondicho (2013) examined the socio-legal perspective of battered women in Nairobi on a sample of one hundred and twelve

and found that 95.5% of the women were still in their abusive relationships. From these study findings, it is apparent that a majority of women remain in their abusive spousal relationships.

Those outside the relationship may easily blame women for staying as they think it is easy for them to leave (Wuest & Merritt-Gay, 1999; Thapar-Björkert & Morgan, 2010). Hence they may be unsympathetic to the victims as they believe they have solutions to their problem: leaving the abusive relationship. But according to Merritt-Gay (1995); Davis (2002); Stroshine & Robinson (2003), the leaving and staying process is not as simple as it sounds. Abused women leave and return several times before the final decision. Kirkwood (1993) describes the process of staying as being entrapped in a web and the attempt to leave as a spiral of escape. Thus the leaving is a complex process as the perpetrators try to use a wide range of control and manipulative tactics such as threats or renewed commitment to the relationship to entrap their partners. Just like spiralling on a stair-case, the leaving process involves gradual steps where the victim has to gather some psychological and/or social reinforcement to propel her closer to the exit (Merritt-Gay & Wuest, 1995; Johnson and Ferraro, 2000). This is no wonder that some women repeatedly leave and return to the batterer until they eventually end the relationship while others get stuck in the abuse (Kim & Gray, 2008; Helfrich, Davis & Lyon, 2014). After all, leaving an abusive relationship does not

give assurance that abuse will stop (Anderson, Saunders, Yoshihama, Bybee Sullivan, 2003). In any case it may increase the risk for escalation of violence.

The struggle to deal with abusive situations implies that there are factors that influence the victims to maintain abusive relations. Numerous studies conducted on spousal abuse indicate that the factors which influence women's stay are social, economical and psychological (Musson-Sedaat, 2008; Baly, 2010; Edwards, Gidycz & Murphy, 2010; Reisenhofer & Taft, 2013). For example, most cultures hold marital relations as very important and permanent especially for women (Woods, 1999; Ting and Panchanadeswaran, 2009). This is because women and children derive identity and worth through the marriage and deep kinship system (Dasgupta, 2007). Hence women who are unmarried may be regarded as social misfits since they lack social identity that is revered by the society. Further, Mbiti (1969) asserts that marriage is important as it is the focal point between the living and the dead through the birth of children. These societal factors, coupled with economic and psychological ones contribute to entrapping women in abusive marriages. But emphasis in the current study, the emphasis was on the internal psychological factors which form the endogenous factors and were the focus of this study.

A phenomenological study by Ting & Panchanadeswaran (2009) on barriers to help-seeking among fifteen immigrant African women survivors of partner abuse

from Northeast suburban agency, found that the culture of gender inequality and acceptance of violence perpetuated spousal abuse and stay in abusive marriages. This culture promotes self-blame, loyalty to their husbands that made them rationalize their husband's abusive behaviours, and lack of recognition of abuse among abused women. However this study did not find out how women could be helped to deal with the culture of accepting blame and responsibility and rationalization of abuse so as to reach a turning point to resolution of their abusive situations.

The findings of another phenomenological study by Musson-Sedaat (2008) that explored women's experience of endogenous factors maintaining abusive spousal relationships in South Africa indicated low self-esteem, shame and self-blame, lack of personal power, hope that the abuser would change and the women's beliefs concerning gender roles influenced the stay decisions. Notably, the participants had left their abusive relationships making the study retrospective in nature since it explored women's past experiences of spousal abuse. Moreover, the study was carried out on a small sample of three abused women and therefore did not bring out most of the endogenous maintaining factors.

Other study findings have brought out other endogenous factors influencing stay decisions as: fear of loss of family emotional support, fear of batterer retaliation, love for the spouse and strong commitment to the relationship (Kim & Gray, 2008; Baly, 2010; Towns & Adams, 2015). Kim & Gray (2008) explored leave/

stay decisions on battered women in Omaha, Nebraska in the US with four hundred and fifty two women. The study found that there was a relationship between financial independence, witness of parental violence and psychological factors and the womens' leave/stay decisions. The psychological factors assessed were level of depression, fear, self esteem and locus of control. Accordingly, the findings indicated that factors such as financial independence, lower levels of fear, high self esteem and high internal locus of control had contributed to the women's leave decisions. From the foregoing, it appears high levels of fear; low self esteem and low internal locus of control could be some of the endogenous factors influencing women's stay decisions. However, the study did not elaborate how these factors influenced the stay decisions.

Thapar-Björkert & Morgan (2010) explored how institutional discourses nurture a culture of blame and responsibility on women victims using interviews on a group of fifteen volunteers who provide support to abused women in the United Kingdom. The study found there was a culture that normalized abuse of women and therefore blame and responsibility of abuse was wholly attributed to the victims. Due to the normalization of culture, abused women were seen as deserving abuse and resigned to their fate, hence entrapment in their abusive situations. The study proposed that if institutional practices are embedded in a feminist tradition, they could provide a more sustainable framework for challenging sexual and domestic violence. This apparent gap informed the current

study as one of the objectives addressed ways of empowering victims to resolve spousal abuse. A related study by Towns & Adams (2015) through semi-structured interviews with twenty abused women in New Zealand realized that abuse of women by spouses is influenced by social constructions of femininity. According to these gendered constructions, abused women will take responsibility of their abusive situations as male authority is unquestionable and therefore acceptable. This acceptance of responsibility and ambiguity surrounding abuse could entrap abused women in abusive marriages. However, the study concentrated on the social factors and did not explore the endogenous factors influencing women's entrapment in such circumstances.

Boonzaier (2008) examined how women and men made meaning of their abusive relationships by use of in-depth interviews. The study, done in South Africa on fifteen heterosexual couples, suggested that the cultural discourse of femininity which scripts women as loving, caring and nurturing had an effect on how they viewed abusive marital relations. Further, Boonzaier (2008) suggested that due to the gender socializations, women would accept blame, take responsibility for dealing with the abuser's problems and deny or minimize the partner's abusive behaviour. The same is echoed by Baly (2010), who through semi-structured interviews with five women who had left their abusive marriages found that their view of their abusive situations and their stay had been influenced by their cultural discourses. However, Baly (2010) realized that despite the dominant

feminist discourse, some women constructed themselves in ways that were empowering which enabled them to leave their abusive relationships. So it was important to examine through further research the triggers that would empower women to take action towards resolution their abusive relationships.

Using individual and telephone interviews, Enander (2011) explored women's emotions in the process of leaving an abusive relationship in a sample of twenty two in Sweden. The findings indicated that the women had experienced a lot of emotions such as love and commitment as well as hatred that they equated to leaving Jekyll and Hyde. The positive or negative emotions were associated with the views that the women held about their abuser and abusive situations at particular times in the relationship. Though the study brought out significant emotions in relation to stay decisions, it dealt with women who had left their abusive situations and was therefore retrospective. The current study aimed to explore women's perception of endogenous factors with women who were in ongoing abusive relationships.

Lacey, Saunders & Zhang (2011) compared women of color and non-Hispanic white women regarding the influence of socioeconomic status, family investment and psychological abuse on leaving a violent relationship. The study found that the factors associated with leaving for both groups were threat with a weapon, psychological abuse, being single, and having fewer adults in the household. The

current study investigated whether the form and nature of abuse influence womens' stay decisions.

In a study with twenty four women who had left their abusive domestic relationships in Lebanon, Khoury & Wehbi (2014) sought to understand the process of making the decision to leave within the particularities of their sociocultural context. Findings elucidated a three-step process by which women make and carry out their decision to leave. The steps involved focusing on saving the marriage and saving face, facing a moment of truth that helped them re-evaluate their experiences within the marriage and leaving without 'losing face'. These findings indicate that before the women reached their turning points, their view of a marriage as a permanent institution had contributed to their martyrdom and subsequent entrapment in their abusive situations.

In 2010, Fanslow & Robinson examined the help-seeking behaviours and reasons for help-seeking in a community sample of nine hundred and fifty six women abused by spouses who were randomly recruited from the city of Auckland and Waikato in New Zealand. Findings indicated that the women's reasons for seeking support included inability to endure more abuse, being badly injured, fear or threat of death and concern for children. The women's reasons for staying in the abusive relationships were perception of the violence as normal or not serious, emotional investment in the relationship or staying for the sake of the children.

In another study Amanor-Boadu, Messing, Stith, Anderson, O'Sullivan & Campbell (2012) investigated the factors that predict leaving an abusive relationship among four hundred and ninety seven immigrants and eight hundred and eight non immigrant women in New York City and Los Angeles County through face to face or telephone interviews. Findings indicated that immigrant women reported higher perceived risks and barriers to leaving an abusive relationship in comparison to nonimmigrant women. The risks were in the areas of personal physical harm, social and legal risks and financial risk. In addition, immigrant women faced higher barriers to leaving a violent relationship in terms of being more likely to be married, reporting higher levels of fear and feeling controlled by an abuser, were older, had less education and were more likely to be socially isolated and dependent on their abusive partners. These findings resonate in Ting and Panchanadeswaran (2009), Sabina, Cuevas & Schally (2011), Rana (2012), Khoury & Wehbi (2014) who realized that cultural based beliefs such as the permanency of marriage influence the help-seeking behaviours of abused women. Apart from beliefs on the permanency of marriage as realized by Amanor-Boadu et al (2012) , the beliefs associated with immigration status could also have influenced women's stay decisions. Hence interventions to help abused women deal with abusive situations need to be culturally relevant in addressing the plight of culturally diverse groups.

Other researchers such as Estrellado & Loh (2013) examined the factors associated with leave/stay decisions with Filipino women who were in abusive spousal relationships and those who had left their abusive relationships. Findings revealed that battered women's decision to stay was associated with interpersonal factors such as dependency on their spouses in areas such as decision making, strong attachment to their spouses whom they found loving, thoughtful and attentive and martyr-like traits of being submissive, passive and self-sacrificing that made them remain silent and tolerate abuse for the marriages to work. Of the 20 women who were in abusive marriages, 16 indicated they had stayed due to lack of personal resources such as lack of a job. Some of the intrapersonal factors that contributed to their stay were social support, characteristics of the abuse such as the length of the relationship and nature of abuse, presence of children and sociocultural factors. However, there was need for more exploration on how the outlined endogenous factors worked to influence women's stay.

2.3.4 Mechanisms used by Women to Cope with Spousal Abuse

A number of studies have shown the kind of coping women engage in while in abusive relationships influences their leave/stay decisions. For example, a study by Panaghi, Ahmadabadi, Ghahari & Mohammadi (2012) examined the role of social support, coping mechanisms and mental health of women suffering spouse abuse on a group of one hundred and ninety two selected through random sampling in 13 and 18 Municipality Districts in Tehran in Iran. Using path analysis, the findings showed that spouse abuse had a negative effect on mental health of the

women. The findings further indicated that social support and active coping had mediating effect on the psychological well being of the victims. This implies that lack of social support and passive coping mechanisms could increase women's likelihood of staying in abusive marriages. The study recommended that future studies need to focus on psychological interventions of dealing with spousal abuse. The current study sought to fill these apparent gaps by investigating how coping mechanisms influence women's stay decisions and how women could be empowered to resolve spousal abuse.

Another study by Calvete, Corral & Estévez (2008) examined the role of coping as a mediator and moderator between intimate partner violence and women's mental health on a sample of two hundred and ninety eight purposively selected from the Northern Bizkaia Province of Spain. Out of the 298, 113 women were experiencing severe partner violence while the other 185 were drawn from diverse women's associations and centers. The study realized both disengagement coping which is maladaptive and secondary control coping which is adaptive, were directly associated with distress. Noticeably, the victims who mainly used disengagement coping exhibited high levels of depression and anxiety while those who used secondary control coping, reported less psychological consequences of partner violence. The study also revealed that disengagement coping that is characterized by negation, avoidance and distraction was significantly linked to distress and helped to mediate between abuse and its psychological sequel. In

short, the findings imply that avoidance coping tends to generate more stress in an abusive relationship but suppresses the psychological symptoms which could increase likelihood of staying in an abusive situation. The current study endeavoured to investigate the type of coping mechanisms women used and how they could have influenced their entrapment in their abusive situations.

Lazenbatt, Devaney & Gildea (2013) conducted a study on a group of eighteen older women who were victims and survivors of domestic violence in UK, examining the effects of such victimization and the coping mechanisms that they used. Through semi-structured interviews, the participants indicated that they had experienced very poor mental and physical health as a result of their abusive situations and had used maladaptive coping mechanisms such as excessive and long-term use of alcohol, prescription and non-prescription drugs and cigarettes. The excessive use of drugs and alcohol further increased their vulnerability to addiction and jeopardized their psychological and physical wellbeing in the long run. The current study attempted to address and fill the gaps on effects of spousal abuse on women and the mechanisms that they used to deal with their situations so as to establish if they contributed to the victims stay decisions.

In an earlier study, Parker & Lee (2007) examined relationships between abuse characteristics, coping and women's psychological health using a group of one

hundred and forty three adult women in abusive relationships. The participants aged 49-53 years were selected through stratified sampling as part of a national-wide longitudinal study in Australia. The findings depicted that there was a partial relationship between experience of abuse and the victims' psychological health. The results also revealed that sense of coherence which parallels meaning focused coping had direct effects on the women's psychological well being. Though meaning focused coping seems to be a strategy that could influence women's stay decisions, the study did not explore or attempt to establish that specific coping contributed to women's entrapment in their situations.

In a longitudinal study, Taft, Panuzio, Vogt & Mechanic (2010) examined associations between relationship abuse, coping mechanisms and psychological health among sixty one battered women obtained from shelter and nonresidential community services. The participants were exposed to a baseline assessment and a 6-month follow-up. Results indicated that the participants experienced an estimated average of 63 physically assaultive behaviours and 8 acts of sexual aggression at baseline, indicating considerable abuse victimization. The composite coping measures ranged from 49 to 55, with higher engagement coping and slightly lower disengagement coping. The mean scores on the mental health variables at baseline and follow-up were generally high which was suggestive of the presence of abuse-related symptomatology. The study also noted that sexual abuse was significantly positively associated with problem-focused

disengagement coping. In addition, problem-focused engagement coping was significantly positively associated with both problem-focused disengagement coping and emotion-focused disengagement coping. Further, emotion-focused engagement coping was significantly positively associated with problem-focused disengagement coping, with a medium to large effect found. Both the problem focused and emotion focused engagement coping had marginally significant negative associations with mental health outcomes suggesting that these forms of coping lead to improvements in mental health. However, the study did not explore how disengagement and engagement coping strategies could have influenced women's decisions to stay in the abusive relationships.

A study done by Itimi, Dienye & Gbeneol (2014) in Nigeria examined intimate partner violence and associated coping strategies among women in a clinical setting in Port Harcourt .The participants were a group of three hundred and eighty four women aged 18 to 59 years.According to the findings,religion scored highest among the problem focused coping mechanisms that was characterized by actions such as prayers,reading the bible and visiting pastors for counseling and prayers.Other coping strategies included acceptance of abuse and use of instrumental and emotional support.Emotional focused strategies included self distraction,carthasis and substance abuse that was the least popular in this category.These findings show that women used both adaptive and maladaptive methods to cope with spousal abuse but did not explore how the coping

mechanisms could have influenced women's stay decisions. The current study explored the coping mechanisms the abused women used and how they had influenced their stay decisions.

Kaluyu (2007) examined the causes, consequences and management of gender domestic violence in Central Division of Kitui District (Kenya) on a sample of 106 men and women who were experiencing abuse by their partners. The study showed that victims responded to violence by mainly persevering, seeking medical treatment, discussing with friends, contacting relatives or sharing with a priest/pastor while a few left their spouses or sought help from community leaders and witchdoctors. However the study did not explore the role the victims coping mechanisms may have played towards their entrapment which the current study addressed. Another study done in Turkana Central in Kenya by Odongo in 2012 found that women responded to spousal abuse by seeking help from friends, church, hospital, relatives, chiefs while a few reported to police and others kept the abuse to themselves. However, the study did not establish the influence of the used coping mechanisms on the stay decisions.

From the reviews, it appears no study has been done in Kenya to explore how the coping mechanisms used by abused women act as endogenous factors influencing the women's stay decisions. Hence the current study endeavoured to fill the gap by conducting such a study from a Kenyan perspective.

2.3.5 Interventions to Empower Women to Resolve Spousal Abuse

There are a number of interventions that have been used in traditional societies to resolve spousal conflicts such as mediation through kin groups and community leaders (Mbiti, 1969; Merry, 2009). However, urbanization and modernization has weakened these institutions.

Sullivan (2011), emphasizes that domestic violence programmes aim to enhance justice, autonomy, restoration and safety of the victims. This means services offered aim to promote legal, economic and social justice, re-establish survivors' rights to self-determination, restore their emotional well being and enhance their physical and psychological safety. To understand the role of shelter services, Zosky (2011) conducted a qualitative study exploring what women survivors of domestic violence currently in a shelter would do if their shelter services were no longer available. The study sample comprised of one hundred and sixty one survivors from Midwestern state in the US. The themes spanned a continuum of resilience; from continuing to look for a way to escape the abuse, to uncertainty, to hopelessness and fear and to resignation by staying in the abusive relationship. It was realized that majority of women were categorical that if domestic violence services were not available, they would remain with their abusers despite the negative consequences. These findings underscore the need for shelter services towards womens' healing and maintenance of their abuse free situations.

Merry (2009) affirms that social movements that focused on gender violence in America developed three approaches: punishment, safety and reform. The reform approach which seems to resonate with the endogenous factors that influence women's stay decisions engages the perpetrator and encourages the victims to recognize the violence as abuse. The reform programmes also endeavour to change batterers and their victims by reshaping the way men and women enact their gendered identities. These reform programmes led to the emergence of a women's centre in Hawaii (America) which developed women's support groups and batterer training programmes called Alternative to Violence (ATV). The programme psycho-educates men by helping them change their beliefs and values which seem to favour male privilege and violence against women. It also empowers women to view violence as an unacceptable behaviour and a violation of their rights. Safety is ensured by keeping them away from the abuser and maximized by providing temporary accommodation through shelters or refuge centres that offer protection to survivors of violence. Today, the shelters have extended their services to offer assistance with jobs, housing, legal aid as well as group and individual counselling. Further, LaViolette and Barnett (2014) echoes that shelters also help battered women to get socially connected to other battered women and support staff which increases their ability to resolve abuse.

Available literature reveals that most of the interventions used to help abused women such as shelters, transitional housing programmes, advocacy and creation

of resource centers have been geared towards minimizing the external factors that influence women's stay decisions, yet women continue to stay in abusive marriages (Pape & Arias, 2000). Consequently, there was need to determine interventions that could address the endogenous factors. The study sought interventions tailored to an individual's internal psychological needs as they are more likely to be helpful than those that address only their external factors.

Several studies have shown that the interventions to end spousal abuse can be conducted by use of the TM or Stages of Change (Kim & Gray, 2008; Alexander *et al* 2009; Chang, Dado, Hawker, Cluss, Buranosky, Slagel, McNeil & Scholle, 2010). In this regard, Panchanadeswaran and McCloskey (2007) in their ten-year longitudinal study of hundred women who had left their abusive relationship investigated the forces that affect the timing of women's exit from abusive spousal relationships. The participants were drawn from a city in the Southeastern US and from domestic violence shelters in Arizona and data were collected through in-depth interviews. The findings revealed that women who received shelter services endured shorter periods of violence than women who did not access such services while those who never used shelter services were more likely to endure severe abuse and more likely to stay in their abusive situations. This means that availability of the right support to abused women, can act as a turning point in ending their abusive situations. Indeed availability of support and other turning points are echoed by Alexander, Tracy, Radek & Koverola (2009) in their

study on the stages of change in abused women on a group of seven hundred and fifty four women. The women were drawn from domestic violence agencies in Washington DC and Philadelphia while others were drawn from court-ordered abuser intervention programme in Washington DC. The study realized that the stages of change (SOC) were related to ethnicity, economic and emotional dependence, preoccupied attachment, satisfaction with social supports, and women's use of aggression. From these two studies it appears certain turning points are associated with resolution of spousal abuse. The current study explored the survivors' turning points which could help victims of abuse find direction as they attempt to free themselves from abusive situations.

Though availability of social support was found to be a catalyst of change in abused women by Panchanadeswaran & McCloskey (2007) and Alexander *et al* (2009) a quantitative study by Bliss *et al* (2008) did not find any correlation between social support and a woman's readiness to change. Bliss *et al* (2008) examined African American women's readiness to change abusive relationships on a group of one hundred and seventy eight victims and survivors who had sought medical or psychiatric care from a large, public, urban, university-affiliated hospital in the Southeastern US serving a poor and minority population. The study which was based on the TM found that the victims were primarily at the contemplation stage of change while the survivors were at different stages which fell in a continuum. Though the study hypothesized social support to be a

correlate of readiness to change, the findings realized only recognition of abuse, anxiety and PTSD, substance abuse and spirituality were positively correlated with readiness to change. Conversely, factors such as children in the home and self-esteem were negatively correlated with readiness to change. Further, multiple regression analysis revealed that PTSD and spiritual wellbeing were positive predictors of readiness to change. The findings by Bliss et al (2008) imply that social support may not be relevant as a turning point towards resolution of abuse. This contradiction with other studies by Panchanadeswaran & McCloskey (2007), Alexander *et al* (2009) could be because Bliss *et al* (2008) used a sample of African American women who are acknowledged as a poor and a minority group who may not have received appropriate social support by virtue of being a marginalized group. This points that another study could be done with a non marginalized sample so as to establish whether social support could one of the catalysts for women contemplating to resolve spousal abuse. The current study addressed the gap and findings supported social support to be a catalyst for end of abuse. The findings by Bliss *et al* imply that for any intervention with abused women who are already being helped (for example in a shelter or in advocacy or counseling centers), therapists need to begin from the contemplation stage of change since the women have acknowledged they are abused and have made some efforts to address their situations.

Moe (2009) examined the influence of abuse of children in prompting battered women's decision to leave abusive relationships on a group of twenty women residing in a domestic violence shelter in the Southwest US. The study utilized a feminist standpoint to collect data through semi-structured in-depth interviews and the analysis used a phenomenological approach. The findings indicated that 90 % of the women were mothers residing with their children at the shelter. The participants expressed that the need to protect their children from their abusive fathers had prompted their decisions to leave their partners. It is a great concern to realize that women in the current study did not consider abuse of their children by their fathers as a turning point for ending their abuses. Therefore this study attempted to find out other turning points that may empower women to deal with abusive situations.

The study by Fanslow & Robinson (2010) indicated that more than 75% of the respondents had sought help from informal sources such as family members and friends, and formal sources such as police and health care providers but more than 40 % indicated they received no support. The study further realized the women's turning points included inability to endure more abuse, being badly injured, fear or threat of death and concern for children. The study recommended that there is need for broader formal and informal support of abused women as they seek help to deal with abusive situations. However, women also need the right support from the formal and informal sources which could be accorded if the beliefs associated

with tolerance of spousal abuse are addressed which the current study sought to address through the interventions.

Chang *et al* (2010), examined the various factors and situations associated with turning points in North Carolina in a group of sixty one battered women. Through interviews and FGDs, the study indentified five specific turning points. These were, protecting others from the abuse, humiliation with abuse; increased awareness of options, recognition that the abuser was not going to change and partner betrayal or infidelity. Thus understanding the womens' specific turning points can be useful in helping them to move forward in their process of changing their abusive situations.

A related study by Zuckosky (2011) examined the stages of change and social support in a group of eighty current and former residents of battered womens' shelter. The study realized that turning points correlate with particular stages of the TM. For example, social support correlated with the contemplation stage of change. Conversely, high self esteem correlated with the final stage which is consistent with findings by Kim & Gray (2008) whereby women with high levels of self esteem were more likely to leave abusive relationships. Hence, it is important to provide social support to abused women at the initial stages to motivate them to behaviour change. In addition, the findings show that women need to be helped to boost their self esteem towards the final stage for

maintenance of their abuse free situations. Thus, it's important to find interventions that would suit women's stage of change in their journey towards freedom from abuse.

To investigate other factors related to stages of change, Shorey, Tirone, Nathanson, Handsel & Rhatigan (2012), conducted a study on the influence of subjective norms and relationship commitment on stages of change in eighty four abused women. According to the study, increased subjective norms and relationship commitment were associated with increased precontemplation and decreases in the other stages. Though this study focused on endogenous factors, the findings imply that social support and relationship commitment could be useful guides when helping women to resolve spousal abuse.

The findings by Khoury & Wehbi (2014) on womens' experiences of leaving violent domestic relationships indicate that despite the socially held norms of retaining a marriage at all costs, twenty two of the women were able to confront and challenge the sociocultural perceptions of their roles as wives. This helped them to overcome their personal thoughts and feelings associated with maintaining an abusive marriage and were finally able to exercise their autonomy in leaving their abusive marriages. The other two women did not redefine the value of their abusive marriages but had left out fear and wished to go back. This finding underscores the importance of helping abused women to reach a turning

point in their abusive situations which could help them to re-evaluate their situations autonomously and rationally.

Ability to make to autonomous decision making is important in helping women to make personal decisions on resolution of abuse. To investigate the role of autonomy, Buchbinder & Barakat (2014), examined self-determination in intervention with battered Arab women who sought help of social workers in community health clinics in Israel on a group of twelve. Through interviews, the women indicated that they wished to maintain self-determination in setting boundaries of the interventions used. This implies that battered women's autonomy is crucial in helping them to resolve abuse. The same is reiterated by Rodriguez (2011) in a study that examined the psychological well-being of twenty two battered women and the coping mechanisms that they used. The study realized that the women were engaging in adaptive coping due to their psychological well being as a result of receiving shelter services. However, the findings indicated that the women had problems with making independent judgements as a result of their affected psychological functioning. Consequently, Rodriguez (2011) recommended that abused women need to be helped to restore their psychological well-being so as to be able to make autonomous decisions that are crucial to resolution of spousal abuse. This underscores the need for therapeutic interventions with abused women in their journey of ending spousal abuse which the current study addressed.

The need for counseling in abused women is echoed by Crabtree-Nelson (2010) in her exploration of therapeutic interventions used in counseling survivors of domestic violence in agencies in the Chicago metropolitan area. Data were collected quantitatively through surveys and through in-depth interviews on seven survivors and thirty counselors. The study realized that there are some specific and important aspects of the counseling experience between the counselor and survivor that were perceived as mutually helpful. These aspects were broadly categorized as counselor-survivor relationship, knowledge of domestic violence and utilization of specific interventions. The relational factors such as mutually agreed upon goals, sense of comfort and the non-judgmental attitude of the counselor fostered a positive transference to the counselor and the agency, thus strengthening the therapeutic alliance between the counselor and the survivor. The counselors' knowledge of domestic violence in the counseling process emerged an important aspect especially in areas such as available community resources, safety planning, cycle of violence, definition of domestic violence and psychoeducation. Lastly, the study underscored that specific intervention techniques such as ability to offer emotional support, concrete suggestions, psychoeducation, challenging questions, normalizing the situation and being culturally competent in therapy were important. A closely related study by Rasmussen Hughes & Murray (2008) examined the use of motivational interviewing (MI) with twenty women receiving services at a domestic violence shelter located in Orange County, California in the US by use of experimental

method. The experimental group consisting of ten women received regular treatment services (RTS) from counselors who were trained in MI while the other ten women in the control group received RTS only. The findings indicated that participants who received MI-enhanced RTS were significantly more motivated for change than those who received RTS only. These findings suggest that counselors dealing with abused women need MI skills as they can be helpful in increasing women's readiness for change; to end abuse in marital relations. Apart from counseling, the current study attempted to find out other turning points that could inform interventions for empowering women to deal with spousal abuses.

The present study thus is an attempt to build on earlier literature and empirically identify those endogenous factors that influence women's decisions to maintain abusive spousal relationships and how the women can be helped to deal with the endogenous factors so as to free themselves from the abusive situations.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Two theories have been used to explain the endogenous factors that entrap women in abusive spousal relationships. These are the Cycle of Violence Theory (PET) and Psychological Entrapment Theory (PET). A third theory known as the transtheoretical model (TM) or stages of change (SOC) has been used to explain how women could be helped to resolve spousal abuse.

The PET asserts that a woman attempts to salvage her marriage by recommitting herself through investing time, energy and other resources in the relationship. This investment is goal-oriented as it is done with the hope that it will stop the abuse. However much the recommitment may not pay, the woman continues to recommit herself further and gradually ends up stuck to her abusive relationship.

The CVT has been used to explain the intrapersonal and interpersonal factors related to women's stay in abusive spousal relationships. It clearly brings out some endogenous factors such as the woman's fear of the abuser causing harm to her or her children and hope or belief that the abuser would change. It also encompasses the role of the abuser in influencing the stay decisions such as becoming remorseful, kind and loving which somehow convinces the victim that he has changed and this contributes to entrapment. These two theories complement each other as they capture the interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics of the abuser and the victim in relation to the endogenous factors and how the factors interweave and contribute to entrapment of women in their abusive situations

The third theory, which is the TM or SOC, has been used to explain the process of behaviour change that is conceptualized in five stages namely the precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance of the new adaptive behaviour. Cognitive and emotive techniques could be used to create

awareness or to challenge an abused woman to move progressively through the stages until behaviour change is achieved and maintained.

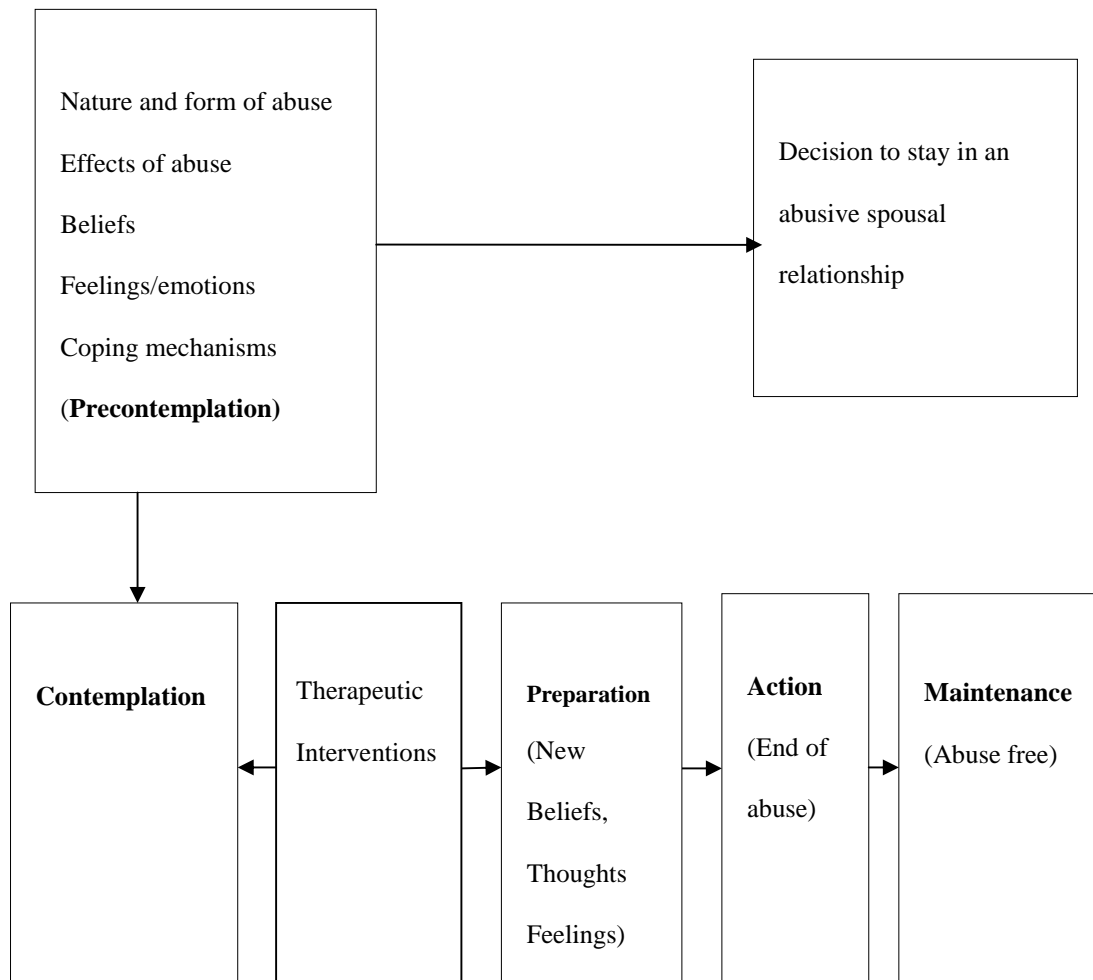
Available literature reveals that women experience various endogenous factors such as forms and descriptions of spousal abuse which are psychological, sexual, physical and economic. The various types and characteristics of abuse often lead to debilitating physical and psychological consequences. Despite the consequences, past studies have shown that a great number of the victims engage in certain perceptions of their abusive situations and they end up getting entrapped in their abusive relationships. The beliefs, thoughts and feelings that the women hold about their abusive situations and the mechanisms they use to cope also contribute to their entrapment. The study also explored the interventions that could empower women to end their marital violations.

The reviewed literature showed that the various forms and descriptions of spousal abuse caused adverse physical and psychological effects that had the potential to influence the women's stay decisions. However there are few previous studies that addressed the apparent gap but the current study did. It was realized that a lot of the past studies concentrated mainly on the socio-economic factors influencing women's stay decisions and few studies among them Musson-Sedaat(2008) conducted in South Africa addressed the endogenous factors but was done retrospectively and with three women survivors of abuse. Review of past studies

also revealed an apparent gap on how women could be helped to deal with the endogenous factors so as to resolve spousal abuse. The reviewed studies had addressed socio-economic ways of empowering abused women though a 90% of women got entrapped and stayed. This created a need to address ways of empowering abused women to deal with the endogenous factors influencing stay decisions and subsequently free themselves from abuse. Thus, the information gathered from the three theories and the literature reviewed provided a backdrop upon which the conceptual framework to guide the current study was anchored as diagrammatically captured:

2.5 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1: Endogenous Factors Influencing Women to Stay in Abusive Spousal Relationships



Source: Adapted from the ABC model of personality of REBT and the transtheoretical model of behaviour change by Prochaska and DiClemente (1982).

Figure 2.1 shows the independent variables which are the forms and nature of spousal abuse, effects of spousal abuse, beliefs, feelings and coping mechanisms that are believed to influence women's decision to stay (dependent variable) in abusive spousal relationships. These independent variables form the primary appraisal of an abusive relationship. Through therapeutic interventions (disputes) which are both cognitive and emotive, abused women could be helped to challenge the endogenous factors and are eventually expected to develop insight (cognitive restructuring) characterized by new beliefs, thoughts and subsequently new feelings (secondary appraisal) that would enable them to move from contemplation to preparation (determination stage) where they could evaluate their abusive situations rationally and objectively. This is hoped to empower and motivate them to take actions to resolve their abuses.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The study explored women's perception of endogenous factors which they experience as they struggle with their abusive spousal relationships and which consequently influence them to stay. This chapter discusses the research design used for the study, the study variables, site of the study, target population, sampling techniques and sample size, research instruments, validity and reliability, pilot study, data collection procedures, data analysis and presentation and finally data management and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

The study used a phenomenological research design which is experiential and qualitative in nature. Phenomenology originates from the work of Edmund Husserl's phenomenological philosophy (Moran, 2001, Groenewald, 2004) whose tenets have permeated research in psychology and sociology. Phenomenology differs from the quantitative methods of inquiry which are based on the measurable variables and provable prepositions.

Phenomenological inquiry focuses on the experience as lived by a person in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for a reflective structural analysis that portrays the essence of the experience (Patton,2002;

Groenewald, 2004).By penetrating deeper and deeper into the reality, the researcher uncovers and interpretes the inner essence of the subject's cognitive processing of the experience thus getting into contact with the true meaning of the phenomenon.However,to arrive at the true meaning of the phenomenon,the researcher has to bracket the outer world and the personal biases in order to successfully achieve an objective view of the essences(Laverty, 2003).Bracketing involves identifying one's presuppositions about the nature of the phenomenon and then attempting to set them aside so as to see the experience as it really is.

In the current study, the researcher engaged the women in active face to face interactions so that they could explore and describe the endogenous factors which influenced their stay in their abusive situations and the meanings they had attached to the experiences from their own perspectives. This led to identification of descriptions of various forms of abuse, effects of abuse, beliefs and feelings related to stay decisions,the mechanisms that women used to cope with their abusive situations and the interventions that women could use to resolve spousal abuses.Phenomenology was therefore found to be a suitable design as it endeavoured to explore how abused women constructed meaning and understanding of their experience of being abused and how that could have contributed to their entrapment.

3.3 Study Variables

The independent variable consisted of the forms and nature of spousal abuse, the effects of abuse and the beliefs and feelings/emotions and mechanisms of coping with abuse which influenced women's stay decisions. These endogenous factors are psychological in nature. Conversely, the dependent variable was the decision to stay in the abusive spousal relationship. By helping women challenge endogenous factors (independent variables) which shape their stay in abusive spousal relationships, the women are expected to gain insights that would enable them to reappraise their situations and be empowered to resolve their abuses.

3.4 Site of the Study

The study was carried out in Women Rights Awareness Program (WRAP) in Nairobi County as the other two shelters; Good Shepherd and SWED did not participate in the study. WRAP is situated between Mathare Hospital and Pangani along the Thika Super Highway in Nairobi County, Kenya. The shelter provides immediate and temporary refuge and emotional support for abused women as they seek solutions to their situations. The choice of the shelter was due to availability of the participants any time the researcher required them for data collection. Also the concealed and protected nature of the shelter provided a favourable environment for the study whose subject was considered private and sensitive in nature. This enabled the respondents to participate without fear of stigma since they identified with one another in their experiences of abuse.

The other site was Embakasi Subcounty of Nairobi County, Kenya, where the women who had experienced and resolved spousal abuses were drawn from. The Subcounty comprises of low class estates such as Soweto, Mukuru, Kayole and middle class estates such as Komarock, Mihango, Umoja, Donholm, Pipeline, Fedha, Avenue Park, Utawala and Nyayo. It was chosen for this study due to the diversity of its residents in terms of their cultural, socioeconomic and education backgrounds which were expected to provide a relatively representative sample of the survivors of abuse.

3.5 Target Population

The target population consisted of women who were in abusive spousal relationships within WRAP shelter in Nairobi County, Kenya. From the group of women in abusive relationships, it was possible to identify the forms and nature of abuse that the women were experiencing, the effects of abuse and the endogenous factors which had influenced their stay decisions.

The other target population was women who had resolved their spousal abuses. The group informed the study what had enabled them to resolve their abusive situations. This helped to give insight into the interventions that could help women to deal with endogenous factors that influence their stay in abusive situations and be able to free themselves from their abusive relationships.

3.6 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

The sample interviewed comprised of thirty women, twenty were in abusive spousal relationships while ten had already resolved their abusive situations. The sample size was assumed to be large enough as phenomenological design deals with small convenient samples. Howitt (2010) argues that the sample size depends on the purpose of the inquiry, time and available resources. Moreover, in an in-depth interview, a small sample provides depth by interviewing a limited number of information rich participants (Patton, 2002, Creswell, 2009).

The eligible participants were those that had experienced spousal abuse for at least two years. The participants in abusive relationships were selected through purposive sampling while those who had resolved their abuses were selected through snowball sampling. Snowballing was used to identify a few women who had resolved spousal abuses through their community Health Workers (CHWs) and the few identified were able to bring others. The interviews were conducted away from the participants' homes as that is where they felt free to express themselves.

3.7 Research Instruments

Since the study was qualitative and descriptive in nature, data were collected using an in-depth semi-structured interview schedule which was supplemented by focused group discussions (FGDs) and field notes. The one-on-one in-depth interview helped to gather a deeper understanding of the participant's experiences

and the meanings that they attached to them as they shared in their own words without limitation or direction. Thus the study adopted a relativist social construction approach which acknowledges that all knowledge is socially constructed (Moran, 2001; Willig, 2008, Leedy & Omron, 2015). Moreover, qualitative research involves an interaction of the researcher and the participants. Hence, the methods used to collect data are filtered through their lens of knowledge, language, values and world-views (Heppner, Wampold & Kivlighan, 2008). As such, subjective experiences of women and meaning of the endogenous factors which influenced their stay in abusive marriages were explored through questions that focused on their intentions, culture, morals, values and religion. Towards this direction, the respondents were exposed to a standard list of open ended questions followed by probes as it was deemed necessary. The semi-structured aspect of the interview enabled the interviewer more interactions with the participants as it allowed clarification of questions which the participants had not understood. According to Reissman (1994); Goodwin (1995); Mitchell & Jolley (2007), this helps to elicit more responses. Furthermore, the use of open-ended questions gives the participants an opportunity to explain their answers and to express ambivalent or contradictory feelings (Barker, Pistrang & Elliot, 1994; Leedy, 1997).

The interview schedule had three parts, A, B and C. Part A was used to gather information about the demographic variables such as age, marital status, type and

duration of stay in the abusive marriage, occupation, education level and social economic status of the women in abusive marriages.

Part B, had specific open-ended questions for women who were in abusive spousal relationships. The questions captured the study objectives: to identify the forms and nature of abuse experienced by women, the effects of spousal abuse on women, the beliefs and feelings that influence their stay in abusive relationships and the mechanisms which they use to cope with spousal abuse.

Part C had open ended interview questions for women who had managed to resolve their spousal abuses. It was intended to capture the objective on the interventions that could be used to empower women to resolve their spousal abuses. The interviews used open-ended questions that allowed the researcher to explore the turning points that had influenced the survivors to resolve their abusive situations. According to Hayes (2000), open-ended questions allow the participants freedom to express their opinions and are less open to the researcher's personal biases. This method helped to enhance validity as the interviewer was able to capture even the implicit messages by carefully observing the non-verbal cues of the participants.

The FGDs comprised of general questions on a case scenario of a woman who had been abused by her husband. The responses were used to supplement the data

that had been collected during the in-depth interviews. There were four groups in total; two groups comprised of four participants each while two other groups had six participants each, making a total of twenty participants. The discussions addressed women's general understanding of what constitutes abusive behaviours, effects of spousal abuse on women, beliefs and feelings influencing women to stay, the coping mechanisms used by abused women and the strategies that the women could utilize to resolve spousal abuses. This method helped to generate more information which had not come out in the in-depth interviews as the participants felt more relaxed.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Validity refers to the question of whether a procedure is actually measuring what it claims to measure (Gravetter & Forzano, 2009). This study ensured content validity by deriving relevant representative questions to cover the study objectives. The questions addressed the forms of spousal abuse experienced by women, the effects of abuse on women, the beliefs and feelings influencing their stay decisions, the women's coping mechanisms and the interventions that could be used help the women to resolve spousal abuse. Thus the semi-structured in-depth interview schedule helped to generate the required data as the questions covered the objectives of the study exhaustively. The respondents were exposed to a standard list of questions derived from the objectives followed by a few other questions depending on the participants' responses or sidetracks. This allowed the

interviewer more interactions with the participants and clarification of questions that the participants may not have understood.

The use of FGDs and participant observation ensured triangulation of the method of data collection and this boosted validity by generating more information on the study objectives. Findings were also validated through triangulation of data from the FGDs, in-depth interviews and the field notes. Validity was enhanced further as the researcher worked with experts to translate the transcripts from Kiswahili into English.

In qualitative approach, validity also means the researcher checks for credibility of the findings from the participants (Coolican, 2004; Cresswell, 2009). In this respect, the researcher ensured testimonial validity through feedback from the interviews with five of the victims and two survivors after analysis. This gave them an opportunity to comment on the final themes and helped to enrich the analysis and to boost accuracy of the findings and discussions.

The term reliability refers to the degree or extent to which a test or procedure or a study will yield the same results if done repeatedly under the same circumstances (Gravetter & Forzano, 2009, Forrester, 2010). The first step taken towards reliability was pilot testing the research instruments. The pre-test enabled the

researcher to check the participants' reactions to the questions after which some alterations were done.

During the pilot test and the actual data collection period, the researcher established a good rapport with the respondents, explained the purpose of the study and assured them of confidentiality and privacy. This helped to demystify the entire exercise, making the participants feel safe to self-disclose.

To remain objective during data collection, the researcher utilized the process of bracketing. According to Miller & Crabtree (1992); Moustakus (1994), Boyd (2001), bracketing means the researcher suspends his/her own preconceptions on the phenomenon under investigation. In this case, the researcher applied the concept of bracketing by consciously suspending all her previously held assumptions concerning abuse of women by their spouses during the data collection and transcription stages. This helped the researcher to guard against any biases and to capture the authentic experiences of women regarding their perception of endogenous factors which influenced their stay decisions.

Reliability was further enhanced as the researcher with the help of peers listened to the audiotapes and read the transcripts several times to ensure there were no mistakes made during transcribing. The researcher also worked in consultation

with the academic supervisors and peers to cross-check the codes for intercoder agreement.

3.9 Pilot Study

A pilot study involves trying out a research instrument to a small number of respondents from the intended sample (Hayes, 2000). In this study, the instruments were pre-tested by administering them to a group of ten women survivors from Buruburu estate in Nairobi County, Kenya. Buruburu estate was considered suitable for piloting as it is not in Embakasi Subcounty. This helped to avoid any spill-over effects of piloting during the actual data collection in Embakasi Subcounty. Of the ten women, five were in abusive marriages and five were survivors of abuse. The aim of the pilot study was to ascertain that the questions were clear and to establish the general attitude of the participants. Any items in the interview schedule and FGDs that were ambiguous were modified to suit the study. Pilot testing also helped the researcher to estimate how long the actual data collection process would take.

3.10 Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected from the beginning of November 2013 up to February 2014 covering a span of three months. The researcher visited the WRAP and Good Shepherd shelters and introduced herself to the chief administrators and explained the nature of the study she was conducting. She also handed over the research permit to the shelters. However, the Good Shepherd shelter declined to participate in the study and Support for Women with extreme Difficulties was not accessible.

During the time of data collection, the researcher went back to WRAP and was introduced to the women by the chief administrator. The researcher introduced herself more elaborately so as to establish a rapport with women and this made them relax and feel at ease with her. The researcher then introduced the purpose of the study she was intending to conduct detailing its nature. In the process of interaction with the participants, the researcher realized that the participants were more fluent in Kiswahili and therefore with the help of experts translated the instruments, the introduction letter and the informed consent into Kiswahili to suit them. The researcher accessed the group of survivors at Embakasi through their CHWs who contacted them and they met her at a certain designated place where the interviews and FGDs were conducted. Before embarking on data collection, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and the mode of data collection to the participants after which they consented to participate in the study.

The researcher engaged the participants in interviews using the Kiswahili semi-structured interview schedule by interacting with one participant at a time. This enabled the participants to respond more comprehensively to the interview questions as the researcher asked them other follow up questions where there was need for clarity. Reinharz (1992) & Renzetti, Endleson & Bergen (2011), assert that interviews and surveys are the most common approaches of collecting data relating to violence against women since they give them an opportunity to share their experiences from their subjective world. However, Ritchie & Lewis (2003)

note that the interviewer has to note the issues that need clarity and explore them later without interrupting the participants. The interviewer was, therefore, careful to avoid such interruptions. The interview method was supplemented by engaging the twenty women in abusive marriages in FGDs. With consent from participants the responses were audio-recorded and stored for reference during transcribing and analysis.

During the interviews and the FGDs, the researcher keenly observed the participants' non verbal cues and noted any implicit messages. In addition, the researcher captured any relevant data the participants disclosed after the interviews in the form of field notes. These diverse methods allowed for triangulation and richer data.

3.11 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data of the clients' interviews and FGDs were transcribed verbatim. Quantitative data of the demographic variables were coded item by item while qualitative data were coded and analyzed using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). IPA is a methodology used to understand participants' subjective realities through personal interpretations of their lived experiences and the meanings that they attach to the experiences(Callary,Rathwell & Young, 2015).The method of analysis involves identifying the initial themes from the descriptive summaries and initial interpretations of the verbatim, which are then used to establish the subthemes and the final or master themes (Willig, 2008).In the

process, the researcher also notes any thoughts, observations and reflections that occur while reading the transcript. Such notes are likely to include any recurring phrases, the researcher's questions, their own emotions, and descriptions of the language used (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008). The notes are useful in documenting points that the researcher observes while engaging with the transcript.

The findings of the demographics were analyzed by use of descriptive statistics and presented by use of frequency tables and percentages while the findings of the study objectives were mainly presented thematically through textual and structural descriptions with excerpts serving as illustrations.

3.12 Data Management and Ethical Considerations

The researcher obtained authorization to carry out the research from the University Graduate School and a permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI).

During the pilot test and actual data collection, a number of ethical concerns were addressed. For example, the researcher ensured that she provided all available information about the study and the roles of participants before the exercise. The researcher read out the informed consent to the individual participants prior to data collection and asked them to voluntarily and rationally make informed decision on participating in the study. Further, the researcher requested each

participant to consent verbally to the use of an audio-recorder as a device for data collection and storage. Last but not least, the researcher further informed the participants that they were free to decline participation with no negative consequences.

During the interviews and FGDs, the researcher asked the participants to choose pseudo names which were later used in their verbatim and discussions. The use of pseudo names helped to conceal their identity and thus ensured confidentiality and privacy. The names of places or individuals mentioned in the transcripts were also changed. Further, the researcher assured the participants that the information they had given would be used for the purpose of the study only. The researcher ensured that the procedures conducted caused no harm to the participants by debriefing them after each interview session. After hearing about women's experiences of abuse over time, the researcher realized she had developed emotional trauma. To counter this effect, the researcher attended regular debriefing sessions with a peer supervisor and this minimized burnout.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study on women's perception of endogenous factors influencing them to stay in abusive spousal relationships. The first section presents the demographic data of the participants while the rest of the sections are presented according to the study objectives. The objectives of the study are:

- i) To identify the forms and nature of spousal abuse experienced by abused women.
- ii) To investigate the effects of spousal abuse on abused women.
- iii) To explore the beliefs and feelings that influence women to stay in abusive spousal relationships.
- iv) To establish the coping mechanisms used by women to cope with spousal abuse
- v) To determine interventions that could empower abused women to deal with the endogenous factors influencing their stay in abusive spousal relationships.

4.2. Demographic Data of Participants

Though the initial targeted sample was 40 women, only 30 were interviewed during the actual data collection. Out of the 30 respondents, 20 were in abusive spousal relationships and were obtained from WRAP as Support for Women With Extreme Difficulties (SWED) was not accessible and the Good Shepherd shelter declined to participate in the study. The other 10 women were those who had survived abusive situations and were obtained from Embakasi Subcounty of Nairobi County.

The demographic data were analyzed in terms of variables such as age, type of marriage, duration of stay in the abusive marriage, education level, occupation and monthly income of the participants. The findings of the analysis were as presented:

4.2.1 Age of Participants

The age of the abused women was important in the study since this could be a variable that could contribute to entrapment in a marriage. Schewe (2002) asserts that young women are more likely to experience and to stay in abusive relationships as compared to older women.

The age of women is indicated in Table 4.1:

Table 4.1: Age of the Participants

Age in years	<u>Victims</u>		<u>Survivors</u>	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Below 25	2	10	0	0
25-35	8	40	1	10
35-40	7	35	4	40
40-50	3	15	5	50
Total	20	100	10	100

The responses indicate that 17(85%) out of the 20 respondents were in the age bracket of 20 to 40 years while those between 40 and 50 years were 3(15%).It is also evident that there were no respondents in abusive marriages who were above 50 years. The age distribution of the survivors shows that 9 out of the 10 were above 35 years of age.

The finding on victims implies that younger women were more vulnerable to spousal abuse. The finding concurs with Rahman, Hoque, Mostofa & Makinoda (2011) & Le, Tran, Nguyen & Fisher (2013), whose studies revealed that younger women are at a higher risk of spousal abuse than older women. In the current study, older women seemed the least vulnerable to entrapment in abusive marriages. However, the finding is inconsistent with that by Amanor-Boadu *et al* (2012) which indicated that older women perceived a higher risk of leaving an

abusive spousal relationship and this implies that older women are more likely to get entrapped in abusive intimate relationships. However, LaViolette & Barnett (2014), point out that older women who are abused rarely seek refuge at the shelters. This could explain the absence of abused women who were above 50 years in the current study as it was conducted in a shelter. It is also worth noting that women between 20 and 40 years are the most vulnerable to abuse which interferes with their overall psychological functioning and hinders them from realizing their potential. This observation is consistent with Helfrich *et al* (2006) & Al-Modallal *et al* (2012) that spousal abuse decreases mental agility and concentration and gradually lowers women's economic productivity and advancement.

Consequently, findings on the age of survivors indicate that the older a woman is, the higher the likelihood of ending spousal abuse. However, this finding is inconsistent with a previous study by Amanor-Boadu *et al* (2012) which indicated that older women perceive a higher risk of leaving an abusive spousal relationship. The survivors in the current study could have had other personal attributes such as psychological resources, that may have enabled them to end their abusive relationships despite the age variable.

4.2.2 Education Attainment Level

The level of education attainment was thought to be a factor that would influence women to stay in abusive marriages. It was also thought that education liberates and empowers women to resolve spousal abuse.

The distribution of the highest education qualification of the women who were in abusive marriages was as shown in Table 4.2:

Table 4. 2: Education Attainment Level

Education level	<u>Victims</u>		<u>Survivors</u>	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
KCPE/CPE	8	40	3	30
Secondary	8	40	3	30
College/Polytechnic	3	15	2	20
University	1	5	2	20
Total	20	100	10	100

The respondents varied in terms of education qualifications, the minimum qualification being completion of primary school while the highest was completion of Bachelors' Degree. The bulk of the women in abusive marriages, 80%, had attained secondary education and below while 15 % had college education and a mere 5% had university education. The table shows that 60% of

the survivors had college and university education while the other 40% had attained secondary education and below. The finding seems to suggest that most of the women in abusive marriages were the ones with low levels of education. In addition, the findings indicate that a higher level of education could increase a victim's likelihood of ending spousal abuse. Indeed, the findings concur with Rahman *et al* (2011); Parvin, Sultana & Naved (2012) & Le, Tran, Nguyen & Fisher (2013) who noted low education achievement to be one of the correlates of wife abuse. Further, Amanor-Boadu *et al* (2012), Estrellado & Loh (2013) point out that, victims with low education also perceive a higher risk of leaving an abusive relationship. Higher education attainment is associated with job skills, higher chances of employment and a relative degree of financial stability which decreases dependence on the abuser. This increases likelihood of taking action to end abuse as observed in the current study.

4.2.3 Type of Marriage

It was important to find out the type of marriage the women were in so as to establish whether this contributed to entrapment or end of abuse among the survivors. The women in abusive marriages indicated the type of marriages they were in as shown in Table 4.3:

Table 4.3: Type of marriage

Type of Marriage	<u>Victims</u>		<u>Survivors</u>	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Church	3	15	3	30
Customary	9	45	5	50
Cohabiting	8	40	0	0
Civil	0	0	2	20
Total	20	100	10	100

The results indicate that 9(45%) of the victims of abuse were in customary marriages and 8(40%) were cohabiting. The results also indicate that all the survivors were in marital relationships (Customary, church and civil marriages).

Daigle (2012) reiterates that cohabiting couples experience more and severe spousal violence compared to couples living in marital relationships. This may be attributed to a perception of less stability, hence less commitment in cohabiting relationships. Consequently, women in the come we stay marital relations may have perceived their marriages as less secure, hence the need to cling on. This may have contributed to entrapment in their abusive situations. Notably, no survivor was in a cohabiting relationship as was observed with women who were in abusive marriages. This finding implies women in marital relations have a higher likelihood of resolving abuse as compared to those in cohabiting relationships.

4.2.4 Duration of Stay

It was thought that the duration a woman had stayed in a marriage would determine the likelihood of entrapment in the abusive situation. The duration of stay is as shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Duration of Stay/Abuse

Duration of stay	<u>Victims</u>		<u>Survivors</u>	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1-5	7	35	5	50
5-10	4	20	2	20
10-15	6	30	2	20
15-20	3	15	1	10
Total	20	100	10	100

The responses indicate that 35% of the victims had stayed for a maximum period of five years in their marriages while 15 % had stayed for a maximum of twenty years. This trend implies that women who have stayed shorter periods in the marriages are likely to stay while those who have stayed longer periods are more likely to take action to resolve abuse. This finding contradicts findings by Estrellado & Loh (2013) who found that the older a woman is in a marriage the more she perceives the risk of leaving due to the perceived amount of investment in it. However, LaViolette & Barnett (2014) point out that older women rarely

seek shelter services. Since the current study was done in a shelter, there is a possibility of more women who had stayed longer in abusive marriages in the general population.

The responses also indicate that 5(50 %) the survivors had stayed for a maximum period of 5 years, a tie of 20% had stayed for a maximum of 10 years and 15 years respectively and 10% had stayed for a maximum of 20 years. This implies that the women who had stayed for shorter periods in abusive marriages were more likely to take action to resolve their abuses as compared to the ones who had stayed longer. This finding is echoed by past studies by Kim & Gray (2008); Panchanadeswaran & McCloskey (2007) who attested the more battered women stayed in their abusive situations, the higher the likelihood of not taking action to address their situation. Engel (2002) reiterates that the longer a woman stays in an abusive marriage, the more the abuse undermines her self- esteem and diminishes her capacity to take action. Also Shurman & Rodriguez (2006) acknowledge that the longer a woman stays in an abusive marriage, the greater the investment in terms of time and the higher the likelihood of staying.

4.2.5 Occupation

Establishing what the participants did for livelihood was important in exploring the factors contributing to entrapment in abusive marriages. Table 4.5 shows the participants' occupation:

Table 4.5: Women's occupation

Occupation	<u>Victims</u>		<u>Survivors</u>	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Small Scale Business	10	50	2	20
Casual Workers	5	25	4	40
Community Health Worker	2	10	1	10
Volunteer Worker	1	5	0	0
Housewife	1	5	0	0
Teacher(Nursery)	1	5	0	0
Teacher(Secondary)	0	0	1	10
Civil servant	0	0	1	10
Beautician	0	0	1	10
Total	20	100	10	100

From the findings, it is apparent that 10(50%) of the victims of abuse were engaged in small scale businesses as their source of income. This is suggestive of low income and low economic status. Kim & Gray (2008) and Amanor-Boadu *et al* (2012), assert that women who are economically unstable are likely to remain in abusive marriages due to dependence on their husbands. Hence in this study, economic instability could have been a factor which contributed to entrapment of women in their abusive marriages. It appears the survivors of abuse were in

relatively stable well paying jobs that could sustain them even after leaving their marriages.

4.2.6 Income Level

The monthly income that a woman earned was perceived as a measure of economic stability. It was thought that financial capacity had an influence on whether women were to be entrapped in abusive marriages or not. This observation was supported by Barnett & LaViolette (1993); Daigle (2012); Estrellado & Loh (2013) who argue that women with limited resources such as job or finances were the most likely to remain in abusive marriages. The monthly income for women who were in abusive marriages was as shown in Table 4.6:

Table 4. 6. Income Level

Income in Ksh	<u>Victims</u>		<u>Survivors</u>	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Below 10,000	16	80	6	60
10,000-20,000	2	10	1	10
20,000-30,000	2	10	0	0
30,000-40,000	0	0	0	0
40,000-50,000	0	0	1	10
Above 50,000	0	0	2	20
Total	20	100	10	100

The findings show that, 80% of women in abusive marriages earned below Ksh10, 000 per month which was a strong indication of their economic instability. The monthly income distribution indicates that 60 % of the survivors earned below ten thousand while 20 % earned between ten and fifty thousand and the other 20 % earned above fifty thousand.

Findings by past studies by Coulton *et al*, (2007) & Doerner & Lab (2012) echo that women who are economically unstable are likely to stay in abusive marriages due to dependence on their husbands. In the current study, low economic status could have been a contributing factor towards their entrapment in their abusive relationships as most of the victims earned below ten thousand per month. The findings on monthly income for the survivors showed most of them were low income earners though 40 % earned above ten thousand. Previous studies by Kim & Gray (2008) point out those women with a higher economic ability are likely to leave an abusive marriage. However, such a conclusion cannot be made from the findings of the current study as the sampling was purposive and the sample size was small.

4.3 Forms and Nature of Spousal Abuse Experienced by Women.

The study endeavoured to identify the various forms and nature of spousal abuse experienced by women. This was necessitated by the fact that the views women hold towards some forms and descriptions of spousal abuse could influence their stay in the abusive relationships.

The women were asked personalized questions on spousal abuse, such as describing the forms and nature of the abuses they had experienced from their husbands within the last twelve months. The findings revealed that 16 (80%) of the women had experienced economic abuse, 10 (50 %) physical abuse and 13(65%) psychological abuses while 8(40%) had been sexually assaulted. This implies that most women were experiencing more than one form of abuse which could be reflective of a high gravity of the consequences. The findings also revealed that the most prevalent forms of spousal abuse were economic and psychological abuses respectively.

4.3.1 Physical Abuse

Of the twenty women in abusive relationships, 13 reported they had experienced physical abuse which was reported through acts such as being slapped, punched, pushed or strangled. Some of the manifestations were as follows:

...he slaps me, punches me, pushes me and sometimes strangles my neck telling me I can finish you...

(Velma, 28yrs)

The above violations especially strangulation is a serious threat to a woman's life.

Despite the risk women held to their abusive relationships.

Other unique and serious but less frequent forms of physical abuse were described as follows:

... I have been stabbed with a knife two times; I have some marks here on the head, the hand and legs...he has abused me in many ways like plucking hair from my head, that's why I even started cutting it short as you can see. He would pull the hair until it comes out; he has actually done many things to me.

(Janet, 22yrs)

Another physical violation reported by few respondents was being bitten until conspicuous marks were evident on the body as reported:

... he beats me and has bitten me; I even have teeth marks on my arm as you can see(she points to the upper arm).

(Scola, 30 yrs)

Physical abuse was also reported in other forms as in the case that follows:

...Beatings, thorough beatings, thorough beatings for nothing. He can come to the house and find me just there in the house. And if he asks me a question, I keep quiet sometimes and then he feels annoyed. So when I ask him for money for food, he starts becoming wild and tells me he doesn't have. Then I ask him how comes you are not giving money for food? He starts being violent and starts beating and beating me up or throws something at me maybe a thermos or a cup.

(Nyambura, 47yrs)

4.3.2 Economic Abuse

Economic abuse was reported as a prevalent form of spousal abuse by most of the women. This consisted of husbands failing to provide basic needs such as food, children's education, clothes or house rent as captured:

...Sometimes he just stays in the house, he doesn't want to go to work. When I ask him, what the children will eat, he tells me he has no children, so it's like the money he has brought home is enough for his food. He mistreats me like that because I am not able to pay house rent; sometimes the landlord comes and locks the house.

(Mwende, 30yrs)

Mwende was a respondent who had been married with three children from another marriage. Her husband was frustrated that Mwende had not born him a child he would identify with. So he did not want to provide for the children sired by other men. This could explain why he had projected his anger to the children by depriving them of some basic needs. In spite of this apparent negligence by her husband, Mwende had held on to the marriage.

Another form of economic abuse reported by most of the women was being overburdened by their husbands with family responsibilities till their upcoming businesses ended up collapsing. One participant had this to say:

...I had to close; every cent I made it had to go to the provisions in the house for food, breakfast, lunch, supper and the kids snacks for school. At times the kids could become sick, I am the one who does that, so when it comes to the business also it's still new, it needs things, I cannot buy things, there the rent also is waiting for you, so those two months, I really struggled. So the third month I could not pay rent, I had to sit on the deposit, so I had no choice but to close, to shut down.

(Alice, 38yrs)

The family responsibilities weighed heavily on Alice after her husband disappeared from home for two months. As a result, she drained her business and eventually it collapsed.

Other forms of economic abuse reported by one participant each were: husbands misusing business capital, being manipulated to stop working with the promise of being helped to start a business or selling a woman's property whenever she temporarily left the abusive marriage.

From the excerpts, there appear to be many forms of economic abuse that have the capacity to trigger psychological disequilibrium that could make an individual unable to take charge of their lives.

4.3.3 Psychological Abuse

Another form of abuse that was reported by majority of the women was psychological, which encompassed both emotional and mental torture. Some women reported psychological abuse in the form of verbal insults or name calling as recalled:

...he starts throwing abuses, I can even show you some text messages that he sends to me, even at times when I get a casual job and someone calls me and I work until late, he starts calling me, a woman, a call girl, you are a prostitute, things of that sort.

(Alice, 38 yrs)

Some other woman reported psychological abuse in the form of threats of being killed:

...my husband abuses me in front of the children, he calls me names telling me, "one day I will kill you, one day you will find yourself dead". I feel that is embarrassing in front of my child. Sometimes my son looks at me not knowing what to do and that time tears are already rolling down my cheeks.

(Agnes, 39yrs)

Psychological abuse was also reported through humiliating acts such as stripping a woman naked, threatening to kill her and confining her indoors:

...he strips me naked and then beats me. Then before he leaves he threatens me, "if you leave the house, you will know who I am ", he threatens me even with a *panga*. He welds it and tells me, "if you leave this house, you will face it today, I will chop off your head" Other times he threatens me until I feel if I dare leave the house, he will know and he will kill me. So I just stay.

(Janet, 22 yrs)

A few women reported that they were being accused of infidelity by their husbands:

. a woman is not in the mood of sex all the time .So when your husband wants sex and you tell him you are not feeling well or you are not in the mood, he starts beating you accusing you that you have another man.

(Velma, 28yrs)

Psychological abuse can also manifest as failing to involve a woman in decision making at home:

...there is part of my dowry which had not been paid. So what he did, instead of us sitting together to discuss and agree with him, we want to do this and this, he went and decided with his people without involving me. When we finally went to my parents, I just went blindly without knowing what exactly we were going to do. While at my parents home, I just saw his people arrive. That's when he told me it's my dowry they were coming to pay. And then he said, "we have reduced what we are paying", so I wondered why it had been reduced...right now this man we have stayed for nineteen years, we would have sat together and he would have told me "mama" Nafula, I intend to do this because of this and this, he would have explained to me that the money was not enough ...

(Flavian, 37yrs)

One woman reported a different form of psychological abuse such as destruction of household property she had bought after a slight disagreement:

...As a woman you may struggle to get money and then you buy something like a thermos to bring a change in the house. The time he will get annoyed, that will be the first thing he will break .He will say that is what is making you big headed. It hurts because you want to progress in the house but you fear because what you buy will be destroyed, mmh.

(Velma, 28yrs)

Psychological abuse was also reported in other cruel and controlling behaviours such as tying a woman with a rope and locking her up in the house:

...he even does some things to me like tying my hands. He ties your hands like this(demonstrates)then he leaves the house and remarks," I want to find you like that when I come back, nobody should attempt to untie you" .Even my neighbours used to warn me ,"you, what is remaining is just to be killed"...

(Janet, 22yrs)

Janet's abuses were very severe to the extent of attracting her neighbours' attention though she appears to be passive. Moreover she could not engage in any economic activity as her freedom was also curtailed.

Psychological abuse was also reported through other controlling behaviors such as, confining a woman indoors or controlling a woman's interactions with neighbours or friends as in the case:

...if you talk to anyone like a man on the floor where you stay, just to say hey, it's a problem. He does not want anyone to greet me. When a man greets me, he calls me a prostitute..He says I should not talk with them and they are just casual friends. He says they are teaching me bad manners. You can also ask for water or salt as a neighbour and we chat a bit. My husband does not want that, he asks," how come when I am in the house they don't come to ask for anything?" He becomes furious and can beat me just because of that...

(Mwende, 30 yrs)

This is a form of psychological abuse that could be triggered by irrational sexual jealous. According to Dutton (2007b) men frequently have irrational sexual jealousy about their wives. They are suspicious of other men's interest in their wives, hence the need to curtail their social interactions.

A less prevalent manifestation of psychological abuse was where husbands confiscated their wives' mobile phones so that they could not communicate with their friends or business customers. This is illustrated as:

... Other times, he can pick my phone and go with it, so I am not able to talk to my clients. When they call they find I am not available or he can pick the phone and abuse them, so I end up losing the job for that day. That is already a problem because he has made it a habit. Like there is a day he said," this phone is the one that brings misunderstanding between me and you". He said he will bang it several times and then he took it away...

(Damaris, 37yrs)

The above case brings out social isolation which could lead to psychological and economic abuses in turn. When her husband abused her clients she may have felt embarrassed to face them. It may also have led to poor relationship with her clients or loss of job.

Another form of psychological abuse was reported as follows:

... my husband has never ever allowed me to visit my people since he married me, its now going to four years .When I request him to allow me to go, he says he has no money, then he retorts, "what are you going to do upcountry?". So I have stayed unhappy for four years because of being confined here. My people normally ask me," what happened to you when you got married?, did you forget us?".But when I want to go to his parents, money will always be available, he will give me mm.

(Velma, 28 yrs)

4.3.4 Sexual Abuse

Another category of reported form of abuse was sexual which ranked as second last in the prevalence rates. Women reported experiencing forced sex as brought out by Velma:

.....I have said that because it has happened to me. My husband sometimes forces me into sex even when I am not willing. He beats me telling me," this is your responsibility", it's like any time he wants sex I should also be ready.

(Velma, 28 yrs)

Most of the women reported that their husbands were keeping mistresses outside their marriages. A case in point is reported:

...another thing that annoys me very much is that I am on drugs, so I don't know what other infection he will bring to me because he still moves with women...He says moving out with women is in his blood; I found him moving with women and he will continue. So I shouldn't bother myself.

(Mueni, 30 yrs)

Mueni was aware that her husband had mistresses and he had made it clear he could not do without them. This explicit form of sexual abuse can be degrading to a woman.

Sexual abuse was also reported in a case whereby a husband had refused to use a condom. This is captured in the words of Alice:

...you don't even know his health status and he is refusing even to go for check up, he wants to sleep with you and make sure you get pregnant because he has done that on several occasions and I had a miscarriage because of his weird behaviour towards me...now you say, since you have refused to reveal your status to me now, the best thing even if I have to sleep with you, you have to use a condom for my protection. If someone doesn't care about your health and then he tricks you, it reaches a point he even tears a condom, you only realize later that this man has torn the condom, he is not using a condom, now you wonder...

(Alice, 38 yrs)

One participant had experienced a very cruel sexual violation as indicated:

like there is a day he took a razor blade and started cutting my private parts...he took a razor blade and told me to remove clothes .I removed and I asked him, why are you telling me to remove clothes with anger like that? He told me," today, you will know who I am", and he started cutting my private part. I wondered what was happening, when I tried to put my legs together, he would hit me hard and continue cutting. I then stayed for one month before getting well...

(Janet, 22 yrs)

Though the above violation appears physical it has sexual connotation, hence it is also a type of sexual abuse.

The study also revealed that spousal abuse is directed not only the women but to their children as well. The participants reported that their spouses were even abusive to the children:

...sometimes he tells the children not to call him their father, he shouts at them whenever he is annoyed... other times if he finds there is no food because I have got no money that day, he beats the children thoroughly.

(Mwende, 30 yrs)

According to Mwende, her husband's brutality had been projected to the children.

The excerpt below brings out another form of abuse on children by their father:

...for example I came with a child from another marriage and sometimes my husband is not happy with this child. He does not pay his school fees; I am the one who struggles to pay through the little that I save from the kitchen budget...

(Ruth, 29yrs)

Another participant narrated the sufferings of her children from the father:

...when he comes he starts beating children, it really pains me a lot because he can start beating the first child for no reason...there are times he chases us away, locks the door and we end up sleeping out.

(Damaris, 37 yrs)

Damaris and her children were hurting due to abuse by their loved one. Her husband's cruelty could have affected the children psychologically.

In addition to the aforementioned, the abuses were chronic in nature and had occurred frequently as shown:

...in a week it happens like three times, he goes to drink and when he comes back he starts beating me even without talking, even without talking to me, he just starts right from the entrance ...

(Janet, 22yrs)

The physical abuse, coupled with several other abuses that Janet had experienced concurrently, was too severe.

Other women reported high frequencies of spousal abuse as captured:

... In a week sexual abuse occurs like three times. Other times it happens on daily basis, it goes with his moods, so it can happen on daily basis and when he is not in the mood, it can happen twice or three times in a week. So it's not anything about to end; it's there and you are living with it.

(Purity, 36 yrs)

The severity of abuse could be felt through Purity's diminishing tone which signaled some form of helplessness. Her words "it's there and you are living with it" signified that she had lost hope of changing her situation and had resigned to fate.

In the following verbatim, one participant described the frequency of her abuses:

... You will just find over the weekend, he is away, which means he stays away the whole of Friday evening, the whole of Saturday, you don't know where he is, the whole of Sunday, then he comes back on Monday, yeah. And don't dare to ask where he has come from... he does it every weekend, in a month four weekends I have got no husband...

(Flavian, 38 yrs)

Flavian was a very aggrieved woman by her husband's disappearance every weekend. This could be inferred through her detailed description and words, "*in a month, four weekends, I have got no husband*" and "*don't dare ask where he has come from*" which shows she was very emotionally and mentally tormented but could not raise her voice to ask what was happening.

In some cases, reported frequencies were relatively low but the gravity was very high:

...In a week it happens once, he insults me calling me names in front of my child. This hurts me like for two weeks or for a month. The abuse is even becoming more with time eeh.

(Agnes, 39 yrs)

Though Agnes was insulted once in a week, which may appear not very frequent, the aftermath of the abuse was too heavy on her. She would take two weeks or one month to recover from a single episode.

Another respondent expressed a high magnitude of effect of abuse after her husband's disappearance from home:

...first and foremost, my husband has once disappeared from home for two good weeks. He left me alone with the children and never left us with any food. I had just given birth through caesarean and I couldn't do any work in the house. When you try to call him, he does not answer...this went on for almost three good months...

(Ruth, 29 yrs)

Ruth considered her situation serious as she had been neglected when she was weak and helpless and when she needed her husband's support most. She had been left to suffer with no helper and with no food. That may have caused her psychological harm as well.

In some cases the gravity of the abusive situations could be felt in the emphasis of the respondents' words:

...please God, help me though it is very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very, difficult, it is one of the most difficult things in my life at the moment...

(Nyambura, 47 yrs)

Nyambura's emphasis of the word "very" comes out clearly as it appears eleven times in the verbatim. This showed her abuses were severe and highly deleterious.

It appears that spousal abuse could have been ranked as number one in her list of challenges.

Though the women in this study had high levels of awareness of abuse, it is important to note that before the awareness creation, ignorance could have contributed to entrapment in their abusive situations as expressed:

...I didn't know what I was going through, I was abused seriously until the time I called that number and they started explaining to me different kinds of abuse.

(Alice, 38 yrs)

Before going to the shelter Alice did not know what constituted abuse as confessed in her own words. This implies that at some point abused women may not be aware that they are being abused.

From the participants' expressions and descriptions of abuse, it was clear that they had experienced multiple, severe and chronic physical, psychological, sexual and economic abuses together with their children. The findings of the current study are consistent with past studies by Edwards, Gridycz & Murphy (2010) which indicated that the adolescent women had experienced serious and chronic physical, psychological and sexual abuses by their daters but at the end of the 10 week study period, 88 % of the victims were still in their abusive relationships. The study findings also resonate in past studies by Strauchler, McCloskey,

Malloy, Sitaker, Grigsby & Gillig, (2004), Block & DeKeseredy (2007); Thomas, Joshi & Sorenson (2014) which revealed various manifestations of spousal abuse such as pushing, slapping, strangulation, denying a woman access to family resources, forced sex and engaging in extra marital affairs among others, but did not indicate how the violations influenced womens' stay decisions.

However, past studies by Kim & Gray (2008); Sabina & Tindale (2008); Lacey (2010); Estrellado & Loh (2013) have demonstrated a relationship between the type, description and severity of abuse and the womens' stay decisions. Lacey (2010); Lacey, Saunders & Zhang (2011); Estrellado & Loh (2013) further realized that women were likely to leave abusive relationships when they realized they were psychologically abused. For example, some women in the study by Estrellado & Loh (2013) who left reported that they could tolerate the physical abuse but not the verbal abuse as their partners' humiliating words slowly ate away their dignity as human beings. Further, studies by Kim & Gray (2008) and Estrellado & Loh (2013) point out that women who are less dependent on their spouses economically are likely to leave an abusive relationship. Contrary to the past studies that realized a relationship between abuse characteristics and leave decisions, women in the current study experienced severe physical, psychological and economic abuses together with their children but they stayed in their abusive situations. For example, as seen in the case of Janet (See page 102, 105, 106, 110), she experienced severe and cruel abuses such as being stabbed with a knife

three times, female genital mutilation and her hands being tied and left locked in the house the whole day, being beaten while stripped naked, being threatened with a panga and her hair being plucked out which may have been very tormenting emotionally but she stayed in her abusive situation.

The women also suffered a lot of economic abuse as their husbands were not providing which according to Lowe & Prout (2011) could lead to economic disequilibrium. Moreover, the multiple responsibilities that the women had to undertake could lead to role strains that could interfere with a woman's psychological well-being but the women did not engage in any adaptive measure to end their abuses. Further, some women reported that their spouses were unfaithful as they had extra marital affairs with other women (See Mueni, page 109) while others experienced humiliating verbal insults such as being called a useless woman, a call girl, a prostitute (Alice page 104). As reported by Agnes (See page 105), the humiliations were so tormenting as she was being insulted and threatened with death in front of her children, but the participants remained in their situations though dissatisfied. This could imply that apart from form and descriptions of abuse, there could be other endogenous factors influencing stay decisions which strongly outweigh the decisions to resolve abuse or to leave the relationship.

The findings also demonstrate there is a correlation between intimate partner violence and intra-familial child abuse. It appears that a violent act directed towards either a woman or her children may be at the same time intended to affect the other. This includes abusing the woman in front of her children or abusing the children in front of their mother with a motive of controlling both. Though child abuse can be very detrimental to young children and could propel women to take action to resolve spousal abuse, the women in the current study stayed in their abusive situations and failed to protect their children. This observation could be driven by cultural factors related to stay decisions. The finding is inconsistent with past studies by Moe (2009) and Estrellado & Loh (2013), who found that the need to protect children from their abusive spouses acted as the women's turning points to ending their abusive relationships. It is apparent that characteristics of abuse such as frequency of occurrence, abuse of children or descriptions of abuse that were very tormenting psychologically did not seem to influence women towards change of their abusive situations in the current study. This indicates that the other factors influencing the stay decisions could have outweighed the decisions to end spousal abuse. Hence there was need to examine these other factors which could inform intervention programmes on ways of empowering women to deal with their perceived reasons for staying in abusive marriages.

4.4 Effects of Spousal Abuse on Women

It was deemed necessary to establish the participants' awareness of the effects of spousal abuse and how the effects could have influenced their stay decisions. As

revealed by their narrations, the women had been affected both physically and psychologically:

4.4.1 Physical Effects

The women in abusive marriages reported various physical effects such as injuries, permanent scars and loss of pregnancy.

One participant demonstrated conspicuous marks resulting from being bitten by her husband as depicted:

...on my body I have several marks, if you look at my head you can see, I have a mark which he inflicted after hitting me with the ring on, I have some other marks on my upper arm which he inflicted by biting me. These days, I cannot wear anything sleeveless because I have to hide the marks mm...

(Scola, 30 yrs)

Scola had suffered physical violations resulting in marks which were very conspicuous on her body. The physical marks had affected her to an extent of developing a negative body image, hence the conscious effort to conceal them.

Some women had experienced physical losses that resulted directly from spousal violations such as loss of pregnancy as illustrated:

.... he has done that on several occasions and I had a miscarriage because of his weird behaviour towards me...

(Alice, 38 yrs)

Alice had constantly experienced forced sex to a point of losing a pregnancy.

The findings of this current study resonate with the results of a study by Glass, *et al* (2008); Ghairabeh & Oweis (2009); Joshi Thomas & Sorensen(2012) which indicated that abused women suffer physical effects such as miscarriages, visual and audio impairments and physical injuries, loss of consciousness and stroke due to strangulation and increased risks of death. The physical sufferings that women had experienced had farfetched psychological effects. For example according to Joshi, Thomas & Sorensen(2012);Thomas, Joshi & Sorensen (2014), survivors of strangulation experience physical effects that they equate to drowning due to loss of consciousness and imminent death that may evoke psychological consequences such as intense anxiety and fear, nightmares and hyper-vigilance about protecting their neck and insomnia.

The physical effects of abuse could also be very devastating as they are visible and could even distort a woman's self-image. For example, Scola would never wear short sleeved tops due to the conspicuous marks inflicted on her upper arm in an abusive episode (See Scola 118). This means that she could have perceived herself as ugly and this could have lowered her sense of worth. Therefore the physical effects of abuse could end up causing emotional and mental anguish to the victims because of long lasting invisible scars. In comparison to physical harm, the covert psychological harm is usually very devastating (Sackett &

Saunders, 1999; Hilary, 2007) and can contribute to entrapment in an abusive marriage. Despite these experiences women who were abused stayed on.

4.4.2 Psychological Effects

The second category of effects of spousal abuse that emerged was psychological. Women reported various psychological symptoms which depend to a large extent on the way an individual woman appraises her abusive situation. The psychological consequences of abuse comprise of both the cognitive and emotional aspects that are characteristic of stressful and or traumatic situations.

The most prevalent manifestations were:

4.4.2.1 Low Self- Esteem

Most participants reported suffering low self-esteem as result of their abusive situations. This is exemplified in the quote as follows:

...so it makes me feel I am useless, it's like I am not a woman like others. I hate myself, I don't see myself as any other woman, sometimes I wonder whether there is something I lack, "Is it beauty or is it body shape?"...

(Blessing, 46 yrs)

From the excerpt above it appears that Blessing had self doubt which may be suggestive of poor self concept. She appeared to suffer from low self-esteem. When a woman experiences constant abuse, she is likely to perceive herself as a lesser being; worthless. Poor self concept and low self esteem are aspects that

could lead to other major psychological conditions that may negatively affect the wellbeing of individuals.

4.4.2.2 Depression

Depressive mood was found to be prevalent among most of the women as explained:

.... it has affected me so much because uuum, you know when basically, when your husband physically, physically beats you, you end up just sitting in the house and sleeping like a fool. You don't even think, you just end up going to the bed and just sleeping and you sleep in the house for about two days, three days, you wake up the third day and ask "have I been a fool here?" .Because you feel so down, you feel so nothing you feel so...

(Nyambura, 46 yrs)

Nyambura was expressing feelings of a depressive mood which was not explicit but came out clearly when she explained how she would sit in the house and sleep for three days. Her words 'feel so down' are indicative of a depressive mood which may lead to feelings of worthlessness as indicated in her words, "you feel so nothing".

As a result of being low spirited and feeling worthless, some of the women experienced suicidal and homicidal ideations:

...I remember this one day I woke up at night holding this baby and I wanted to kill him, kill the other one, myself and then we die all of us. Then my husband all of a sudden woke up and found me in the act...

(Ruth, 29yrs)

For a woman like Ruth to think of killing herself and her children, it could mean her intensity of abuse was very high.

4.4.2.3. Worry and Anxiety

Spousal abuse can go to some extremes where a woman gets worried and anxious thinking that her husband is not normal as expressed:

...at times I could wonder now, is it that someone has thrown a spell on this man, it's like he has been bewitched not to provide for his family because this man can easily spend money outside, very fast, without even thinking twice, but when he comes, he can't even catch a cent, and the kids he can give the children money, but for food...could it be this man is not in his normal state of mind because the kind of behaviour he has is not, a behaviour for ...

(Alice, 38 yrs)

Alice was disturbed by her husband's weird behaviours and somehow got convinced that he had been bewitched, that is 'under spell'. Her constant worry was prompted by denial and rationalization thereby attributing the abusive behaviour to forces beyond her partner's control. When an individual engages in these coping mechanisms she may start sympathizing with the abuser, exonerating him from taking responsibility of his abusive behaviours. This obscures her contemplation of the problem and drifts her focus hindering her from taking action to resolve the situation.

4.4.2.4 Memory Lapse and Confusion

Some women had experienced memory lapses and confusion as a result of abuse:

...When I am selling the fish, I sometimes start thinking of my abusive situation and then I realize I have given wrong change to a customer. There are times I misplace my things as I get lost in deep thoughts...

(Milka, 42 yrs)

As a result of constant abuse, Milka would get confused and forgetful to the extent of giving wrong change in her business. This kind of confusion and memory lapse is characteristic of trauma of abuse.

4.4.2.5 Hatred

As a result of frustrations from their abusive marriages, a number of women hated children:

...you can even find you have started hating your children, you feel if you had not given birth to these children, this man would not have despised you. So when you are annoyed with him, you beat all the children or chase them away. Sometimes even that love for children is never there...

(Blessing, 46 yrs)

Blessing had developed a lot of anger with her spouse due to constant abuse. When anger is not dealt with positively, it may be displaced to significant others like children or significant others.

4.4.2.6 Embarrassment

One participant had opted for extra marital affairs and indulgence in debts as a way of coping with her abusive relationship. That had robbed her respect that she was accorded by others:

... Many men approach me for relationship, they can first come in for you at any time; they don't know that you cannot move with any man, ha-ha, you are doing this out of anger. To me I have just chosen one man...then this financial strain, what has happened, has made me borrow many loans from people which I am not able to pay. I have even lost respect because people have gotten used to hearing me complain about money. They keep wondering how, 'mami', I can keep calling them asking for five thousand shillings, yet I have rental houses that should be boosting me financially, yea

(Flavian, 38 yrs)

Flavian had suffered embarrassment due to excessive borrowing of loans and her explicit extra marital affairs which she attributed to negligence by her husband.

This state of affairs is likely to lower a woman's esteem and isolate her socially as her bad reputation may diminish her social network.

Some other women reported that being abused in front of their children had caused them a lot of shame as explained:

...its embarrassing when he abuses me in front of the children, he beats and insults me in front of the children mm. For example I have a three year old child, sometimes if I try to correct him when he is wrong, he gets annoyed and tells me," I will tell my dad to beat you like the way he beat you the other day"...

(Scola, 30 yrs)

Scola was aware that the abuse in her life had caused her shame and disrespect. She had lost the mother figure that she could not instill discipline in her young child.

4.4.2.7 Loss of Trust

One participant reported that she had lost trust in her husband and this had affected her spirituality as expressed:

...it has affected me spiritually because my husband is a believer, a strong believer. When he abuses me, I keep wondering if a believer can do this to me, the things the bible tells us not to do is what he is doing, then it's better if I got married to a non believer because I will not be shocked if he abused me. There are times I find I have no faith in God, I am not sure of my Christianity, I am not sure of my stand mm...

(Velma, 28 yrs)

Velma expressed she had lost trust in her husband and his faith in God as he acted contrary to it. That had caused decline in her spirituality which could cause psychological disturbance with time.

4.4.2.8 Loss of Interpersonal Relationships

The effects of some forms of abuse were very devastating to an extent of affecting womens' relationships with others. The following excerpt illustrates this point:

...Very very much, very very much, 99% of it mmmh, because now as it is now in fact you know when you are living with someone like that, the guy is so hostile to people, he is a loner, now even when he sees people you even see that hostility showing. Now even I am not close to my family members, actually we have lost ties with family members completely, like my sisters and brothers we are not close at all, and things that they didn't understand because me naturally I am a very social person and I used to be very close with my family members and very open...I have no people even friends, friends, they have separated from me, I don't have friends and those people I used to call friends I don't have, actually I am very lonely when it comes even to ehhe, talking to people I don't have them now, mmmh

(Alice, 38 yrs)

It is very clear that Alice had been affected a lot by her husband's hostility to people. The emphasis of the words, "very" and "99%" shows clearly how her

husband's hostility had immensely strained her interpersonal relations which are important for social connectedness. She suffered rejection and subsequently isolation by her family members and friends.

4.4.2.9 Psychosomatic Effects

The participants had also experienced a lot of physiological problems that are characteristic of stress and PTSD due to the long standing trauma associated with abuse. Some of the psychosomatic effects reported are as expressed:

...right now I have very high blood pressure. So far I have lost three babies as a result of blood pressure and I cannot tell what is causing it; this abuse has hurt me a lot...

(Purity, 36 yrs)

Purity had been hurt very much by her abusive situation which she attributed to the development of hypertension. The hypertensive condition had regrettably caused loss of three pregnancies which she referred to as "babies", meaning it was a great loss to her. This is indicative of disenfranchised grief.

Some women had lost substantial body weight due to abuse as explained:

.... it has affected me a lot when he calls me names, I can eat food and I will not get satisfied. Sometimes I have just placed food on the table and maybe I forget to bring some items, he will start calling me names, "in this house you just think like a chicken". So you see, he is equating you to a chicken. When he calls me such names, my appetite disappears completely. This is affecting my body because, I will just sleep hungry and disturbed and I will not sleep till morning. The following day, I will not eat, I will stay hungry and in tears ...so this affects my body, I have lost a lot of weight...

(Agnes, 39 yrs)

The verbal insults would disturb Agnes psychologically leading to insomnia and prolonged loss of appetite, which had eventually led to loss of body weight.

One woman reported that her abusive situation had made her older than her age mates:

...I think these beatings, beatings that he keeps on beating, beating me; it's made my body go down. Now I look a little bit older, I look a little bit stressed and when I look at my friends, my age mates, they don't look as bad as I do.

(Nyambura, 47 yrs)

Nyambura was very aware that the beatings had made her look older than her age mates. She further explained that her body had gone down which could have implied loss of weight. She attributed the two effects to stress that she had experienced as a result of her abusive marriage. Clearly, it emerged that Nyambura was suffering from a poor body image as she perceived herself looking worse than her age mates.

4.4.2.10 Poor Self Care

Another effect of abuse reported was poor self-care as described:

...I can get into deep thoughts till my mind gets distracted from work completely. That time, I cannot settle down to do anything, I cannot bathe or clean the utensils or even tidy up the house...

(Apondi, 32yrs)

From her non verbal cues, Apondi didn't seem as if she had been affected much by the abuse in her life. But by carefully listening to her, one would realize that she had suffered a great deal of psychological torture. Much as most women value their body image, Apondi seemed like she had no energy left for self-care or her house.

The findings on the psychological effects of abuse buttress those of prior research by Seedat, Stein & Forde (2005), Shortt, Calpadi, Kim & Owen (2006); Basil & Smith(2011); Al-Modallal *et al* (2012).According to these past findings, victims may suffer serious emotional trauma leading to feelings of loss of trust and safety, shock, anger, denial, disbelief, fear, withdrawal and confusion. The current study has shown that the women harboured suicidal/homicidal ideations, felt helpless and lost trust with their spouses. Indeed according to Koss *et al* (1994), LaViolette & Barnet (2014), loss of trust and betrayal by one who is supposed to be loving and caring are among the first psychological symptoms which women experience while feelings of shock and denial may follow as they try to come to terms with their situations.

As reported in the current study, some of the participants suffered mid and long term mental and emotional traumatic consequences such as low self-esteem, depressive mood and suicidal/homicidal ideations and attempts. These observations are consistent with previous studies by Helfrich, Fujiura & Rutkowski-Kmitta (2008); Damant *et al* (2009); Brown *et al* (2012) and Al-Modallal *et al* (2012) who found that women suffered mental disorders such as intense anxiety, phobia, PTSD, psychosis, major depressive disorder, bipolar and personality disorders, harboured suicidal thoughts, helplessness, low self-esteem and diminished parenting ability due to exposure to chronic spousal abuse. For example, low self esteem could be inferred in Blessing's words, 'I am useless', "I am not a woman like others" (see Blessing page 120). According to Cascardi & O'Leary (1992), as the severity of abuse increases, a woman's esteem decreases as it creates a perception of defectiveness. Peterson & Seligman (1984) and Eagly & Johnson (1990), echo that when a woman sinks into this psychological upheaval, she is likely to develop learned helplessness that may lead to passivity, intellectual deficit and emotional trauma that heightens incompetence and frustration. This is likely to narrow a woman's problem solving skills and diminish her options of resolving abuse. The findings of this study further corroborate with previous studies as the participants demonstrated frustrations and incompetence in many aspects. For example, they were not able to question their abusive husbands' behaviours or take any action to resolve their abuses, and many employed poor coping mechanisms that entrapped them further in this marriages.

The findings of the current study on psychological effects also are reflected by Lindhorst & Beadnell (2011) through findings of a seventeen year longitudinal study that examined psychological effects of spousal abuse on pregnant adolescents. The study findings reflected low, medium and high levels of exposure that was associated with short and mid-term psychological effects of abuse which however improved over time within the medium and battered groups. This suggests that abused women could be helped to deal with their abusive situations.

The participants in the current study also reported experiencing a myriad of psychosomatic disorders such as stomach ulcers, excessive loss of body weight, growing older than their age mates and hypertension. These findings resonate in Dohrenwend (1998); Sarafino (2008) and Renzetti, Edleson & Bergen (2011) who assert that though frequent activation of the body's stress response is essential for managing acute situations, it can physically damage the body if the hyperarousal becomes chronic. Accordingly, stress and trauma can compromise the physiological functioning of victims and that may lead to the suppression of the immune system and the reported psychosomatic disorders. The psychosomatic effects also have the potential to influence stay decisions as they could interfere with a woman's self concept as in the case of Nyambura who perceived herself older than her age mates (See page 127).

Moreover, the current study has found that the poor state of psychological functioning affected participants' other spheres of life such as getting confused, losing concentration and giving wrong change while attending to their businesses. This finding is reflected by studies by Helfrich, Fujiura & Rutkowski-Kmitta (2008) and Al-Modallal *et al* (2012) who found that the psychological sequel of abuse impacted negatively on the womens' academic, occupational and social functioning. In addition, the current study realized that the women had challenges with parenting their children and some could not command respect from their children. This observation is echoed by Damant *et al* (2009) that the frustrations of abuse and the failure of meeting the demands of parenting as well as acting in self defense could make women displace aggression to their children. Damant *et al* (2009), further point out that the abusers demeaning behaviours could influence the way children would perceive their mothers as authority figures. Moreover, Levendosky, Lynch & Graham-Bermann (2000); Levendosky & Graham-Bermann (2001); Rossman & Rea (2005), point out that abuse of women by their spouses compromises their parenting skills and abilities and further renders women inconsistent with regard to disciplining their children. In line with this view, Krane & Davies (2007), argue that in the context of domestic violence the mothers' behaviours towards their children should be viewed with more caution as they could be indirect effects of spousal abuse.

Further, women in the study reported that their children had suffered a lot due to exposure to abuse. The effects manifested through poor academic performance and anxiety or children fearing their father. The observations buttress previous findings by Finkelhor, Turner, Ormrod, Hamby & Kracke (2009), who found that children living in abusive environments could exhibit high levels of fear, behavioural inhibition, depression and anxiety as well as tendencies such as being antisocial or aggressive. Further, Polusny & Follete (2008) point out that victims of childhood abuse are likely to develop cumulative trauma which increases risks of re-victimization and poly-victimization by males in their adult relationships. Moreover, as reported by Afifi, MacMillan, Cox, Asmundson, Stein & Sareen (2009), Russel, Springer & Greenfield (2010), children from abusive families are likely to become spousal abusers or victims of abuse in their marital relations. Hence occurrence of abuse in a family could be transmitted to future generations.

From the aforementioned, it is clear that spousal abuse is a very serious problem which places women at risk of physical and psychological harm together with their children and significant others that they may wish to turn to for support. The narratives of the affected women as evidenced by the excerpts above appear to demonstrate they were in contemplation stage, thus aware of their conditions. It was therefore expected that they would move to preparation stage which would gradually enable them to take action towards addressing their situations. However they appeared to have stayed on despite the devastating effects. Arguably, the

spousal abuse had de-capacitated them in many ways that served endogenously to entrap them in abusive marital relations. The internal psychological effects had long term effects on other cognitive and affective aspects that have a strong effect on the functionality of individuals. These are explored in the next section.

4.5 Beliefs and Feelings/Emotions Influencing Women's Stay Decisions

The endogenous factors were also characterized by the women's subjective beliefs, thoughts and feelings/emotions that they experienced and which contributed to their stay in abusive relationships. Exploring the beliefs and emotions/feelings influencing the stay decisions from the women's perspective was important as it could provide insight that could serve in determining ways of empowering them to resolve their abuses.

4.5.1 Beliefs Influencing Stay Decisions

Some of the beliefs that the women brought out were: marriages are permanent, need for identity, need for father figure, rigid gender roles, modeling of abuse and revenging spirits. These are brought out in the women's expressions as hereby presented:

4.5.1.1 Marriage is Permanent

Participants believed that marriages were permanent and should never be broken at all costs. The excerpt below captures this:

...first and foremost, I love my marriage, I really care, I want to be in a stable marriage, I want to become a grandmother in my marriage, I want to see my grandchildren. I want to stay in my marriage because my grandmother told me staying in a marriage requires perseverance and when you keep a marriage you are respected as a woman. I love my marriage I want to stay there, I want my husband to be a good man, I love my children. So what keeps me there is my children because I cannot go with them to another marriage to get them another father, it is hard. I want these children to have one father and I want to be buried where the first man I married is, that is where I want to be buried, even the bible says that. It's hard but when I imagine leaving I wonder where I can go at my age and I am already old. If I would get something to do, I would stay and see how my life will be, in case he decides to change then he can come to me I will still welcome him.

(Purity, 36 yrs)

Purity had an intimate emotional attachment to her husband and her marriage because she believed a marriage is a permanent union. This belief made her focus on thoughts such as, growing old in her marriage, her children needed to grow with their father, she needed to be respected as a married woman and to be buried in her first marriage despite the abuses she experienced.

The permanency of marriage was also expressed by another respondent as follows:

According to my culture if you are married and you have a child, especially a boy child, you cannot leave your marriage, nobody will allow it.

(Agnes, 39 yrs)

Agnes treasured and stayed in her abusive marriage as she had a son. To her, the birth of a child particularly a boy child cements a marriage and makes it a permanent union.

4.5.1.2 Need for Identity

Most other women believed that if they left their marriages they would be treated as social misfits and the children would lose their inheritance from their father.

Some of these beliefs are evident in the verbatim:

...if you leave your marriage you will be regarded as a prostitute, people will wonder how come you want to leave when you are now old. If I leave and go to rent a house to stay, people will think I want to get involved in extra marital affairs. So people will talk a lot of things and I don't want that. I would rather stick to my marriage and wait upon God, he can change my situation...If I leave this marriage with the children, especially if they are boys, they will not get their inheritance. So you are just forced to stay because we believe when you leave your marriage your children will lose their inheritance from the father's family .So you have to persevere for the sake of the children.

(Blessing, 47 yrs)

Blessing had stayed in her abusive marriage so as to maintain her social status. Leaving her abusive marriage meant loss of respect accorded to a married woman by the society. The children would also lose their identity and inheritance from their father.

As reflected in the description of the abuses, women were mistreated to the extent that they lost their own identity as they got entrapped in their marriages. So serious was the entrapment that some other women felt a strong sense of attachment to the marriage and would rather keep it at all costs since that was where they belonged:

... what, I am there, now that sense of belonging, the sense of belonging that I feel, this place I have all the rights to be there, my children have the rights to be there, so there is no way I am going to get out of here, yeah!

(Alice, 38 yrs)

Alice felt that she and her children were the rightful occupants of the home and therefore she had to stay in the marriage to safeguard it irrespective of the pain of abuse in her life.

According to Muthoni, once a woman gets married, she acquires permanent identity through her husband and therefore has to stay with him whatever the situation:

...we African women, we think when we get married we become our husbands' property. So even if it comes to the worst you are sticking there because nobody wants to go back to where you were born...

(Muthoni, 32 yrs)

This could imply that African women do not have their own identity except through their husbands. The need to be recognized and respected as a married woman could instill fear of public opinion or guilt if a woman opts to leave an abusive marriage.

4.5.1.3 Need for a Father Figure

A number of women held a belief that the children needed a father figure:

...Some of my beliefs that made me continue staying is just the father figure of these children, father figure of these children aah especially for my boy, you know my boy is quite a naughty boy, so I think sometimes, I say Edwin, my son is called Edwin, he needs a father figure because to tame him, because he tries, he tries sometimes to tame Edwin, he is quite naughty. And basically, that is it.

(Nyambura, 47 yrs)

Nyambura strongly believed that staying in her abusive marriage would ensure her son had a father figure and a mentor without considering the effect that abuse had on him. That perceived benefit had apparently outweighed its adverse effects and consequently influenced Nyambura's stay in the relationship.

4.5.1.4 Rigid Gender Roles

Some other women believed that if they left their marriages, there would be no one to take care of their husbands. This is portrayed in the extract:

...so if I leave this man and I was taking care of him, what will happen? But because I feel for him, one time he used to call me darling and sweetheart and I used to feel good, so let me stay...

(Muthoni, 32 yrs)

According to the traditional gender roles, a woman is supposed to take care of her husband as well as children. This gender role had influenced Muthoni's stay in her abusive marriage.

4.5.1.5 Abuse is Normal

Some women held onto other beliefs that normalized abuse as their own mothers were abused and yet they tolerated. For others, there had been no history of leaving a marriage within their families. One of these beliefs is as follows:

... when I was growing up, my father left my mother and disappeared to Nairobi for a long time, we did not see him when we were growing, So my mum worked very hard to bring us to where we are right now. When I remember how my mother worked very hard to bring us up, I don't see why I should leave my children. It makes me believe that one day it will come to an end because right now my mum is in her marriage and she is very much healthy, she is ok, she has enough to sustain her. I normally say, if my own mum made it, why not me? I get that picture now from my parents because now my father has gone back home after retirement, yeah...So I get encouraged, I have realized whatever comes, whichever way, I will stick to it to the end because to me there is no other solution.

(Flavian, 38 yrs)

Flavian had a childhood experience of abuse in her family which made abuse appear alright for her.

Due to some gender specific socialization, some other participants held strong beliefs that abuse was a normal occurrence. One participant had this to say:

.....if I go to my mother's home and report to her that I want to leave my marriage because I am being abused, she will tell me to stay because it is normal for a woman to be abused.

(Agnes, 39 yrs)

Agnes believe that abuse was normal seemed to have been controlled by external locus of control which ultimately influenced her decision to maintain her abusive marriage.

One participant believed that all marriages were abusive as shown in the verbatim:

...I believe this man will change... I thought even if I leave this marriage and go into another one, there is no better marriage, so I hope he will change.

(Janet, 22yrs)

According to Janet all marriages are abusive in some way since men were inherently abusive. So leaving her abusive husband does not guarantee her an abuse free marriage elsewhere.

4.5.1.6 Revenging Spirits

Some respondents held beliefs that were very unique. For example, one respondent believed that there was a spirit of death that tormented family members who had left their marriages:

... Another one is like in our family we have this, we have this problem, and that almost all our aunts are at home. They get married and then they come back, when they come back home, because of anger, they commit suicide. So I have decided and I know if I leave my husband and go back home out of anger, that spirit that is moving can also follow me and I will also die and leave my children alone. But my main goal in life is to bring up my children till I see my grand children and that is what has kept me in my marriage.

(Ruth, 29 yrs)

Ruth believed that the spirit of suicide was revenging on the relatives who had left their marriages.

From the foregoing, it is evident that the beliefs that the women held about their abusive situations contributed to their entrapment. These beliefs are a reflection of societal attitudes towards abuse or the institution of marriage. The women had thus internalized their societal beliefs and constructed their world view from the lenses of the society. Therefore, their thoughts were shrouded by societal beliefs and attitudes that appeared to make them normalize the abusive conditions. For example, some participants uncritically and strongly believed in the importance and permanency of marriage. This gave rise to other related beliefs such as, a woman must be buried where she is married, need to identify with the husband, children must get their paternal inheritance, the wish to grow old in a marriage and fear of revenging spirits if a woman left her marriage.

This view of marriage as permanent is reflected by studies by Khoury and Wehbi (2014) who found that abused women focused on saving the marriage and saving their face as leaving is not socially approved. The implication was that women in abusive marriages were more concerned with living by the societal expectations of society rather than their own. Towards this end, they struggled for their self image rather than the self. This according to Gestalt Psychology is pathological as one foregoes their own psychological needs in favour of the society (Kohut, 2011).

Further, findings by Ting & Panchanadeswaran (2009); Fanslow & Robinson (2010) and Rana (2012) underscore the importance of a marital relation in that women's perception of marriage as a permanent union prevents them from

seeking help from available resources. The premium placed on marriage in African communities has also been emphasized by Mbiti (1969) who points out that once a marriage contract was executed it was extremely difficult to break it because it ensured the continuity of life through childbearing. However Mbiti acknowledges that certain circumstances such as, continued cruelty from the husband, unfaithfulness by either partner or desertion of one partner by another, could lead to dissolution of a marriage. Further, Magesa (1997) argues that a marriage had other obligations to fulfill such as providing love, care and sense of security to its members and if it failed to meet some of these functions it could be broken up. Yet, these are some of the painful situations that most of the women have to bear with in abusive marriages, hence an inevitable need to help them resolve spousal abuse. All in all, the women's perception of marriage as a permanent union affects their decisions to resolve abuse and solidifies their stay in their abusive situations.

The findings on the need for identity with the husband has been brought out by Taylor & Stewart (1991); Wamue & Getui (1996) and Dasgupta (2007) who emphasize that the deep sense of kinship in African and Asian communities is reckoned either through birth or marriage. Therefore a married woman who leaves her marriage is likely to lose her sense of identity which she derives from her husband and his kinship. Further, a boy child derives identity and security from the father. According to Bhuyan *et al* (2005) the need to remain connected to their

partners as attempts to comply with the societal expectations is crucial in shaping women's stay decisions. For example, as can be seen in Blessing's emphasis (See Blessing page 135), a woman who leaves her marriage is likely to be regarded as a prostitute and therefore the need to avoid such labels was highly sought. Indeed according to Kim & Gray (2008), women with such external loci of control are likely to harbour self blame and low self esteem and are likely to stay in abusive marital relations. Towards this end, rather than confront the problem of abuse, the abused women invest heavily and recommit themselves to saving their marriage institution, but in maladaptive ways that end up enhancing entrapment

As reflected by the findings, the need for children to have a father figure was a key factor that contributed to women's stay decisions. The same is resonated in a previous study by Estrellado & Loh (2013). Notably, Blankenhorn (1995) & Lamb(2003) acknowledges that paternal investment is important in the children's development as an involved father provides father's affection, paternal identity, physical protection, financial and other material resources, character and competence. However, Salisbury, Henning & Holdfold (2009), argue that paternal involvement is higher when parenting relationships are less conflicting. In the same vein, the women in this study were categorical that most of their husbands were absent and irresponsible fathers. So they could hardly contribute meaningfully to the development of their children. This has the implication that the perceived father figure in the lives of their children could be seen as a

psychological fallacy that endogenously entraps the women in abusive relations. Furthermore, Bair-Merrit, Feudtner, Localio, Feinstein, Rubin & Holme (2008); Salisbury *et al* (2009); Graham-Bermann & Howel (2010) observe that children who experience or witness family violence are likely to develop psychological and behavioural deficits and become abusers. This underscores the finding that modeling of abuse can have significant impact on ones view of spousal abuse. For example, as seen in the case of Flavian (see page 138) abandonment of her mother by the father and subsequent stay may have led to the formation of deeply ingrained beliefs that it is alright for husbands to disappear from the family. This may have informed her stay in her abusive marriage. Studies by Raghavan, Swan, Snow & Mazur (2005); Finkelhor, Ormond & Turner (2007); Tusher & Cook (2010), Edwards, Gidycz & Murphy (2010) further affirm that there is a correlation between childhood abuse and tolerance of abuse in future relationships. Accordingly, there is a possibility of normalizing the abuse and making it appear as if that is the way things should be. This makes the victims of abuse inactive and stagnant in contemplation stage which serves to lubricate the wheels of circles of abuse. Moreover, Engel (2002) reiterates that growing up in an abusive family has negative impact on an individual's self-esteem, thus increasing dependence on the abuser and the likelihood of entrapment in the relationship.

Women in the current study also expressed that the need to care for their husbands was a factor of influence in their stay decisions. According to the traditional gender roles women were socialized to be caretakers of their families while men were supposed to provide for and protect them (Branon, 2002). The role of gender specific beliefs in influencing women's stay decisions is echoed by Musson-Sedaat (2008); Estrellado & Loh (2013) who found that women felt a strong sense of taking care of their husbands and keeping their families intact. Based on this perspective, some women like Muthoni (See page 137) could have been caught up in the guilt of neglecting her role as a wife if she attempted to leave. Staying in abusive marriages due to gender roles is also echoed by Boonzaier (2008) who affirms the existence of dominant feminist discourse that scripts passive, loving, caring and nurturing roles for women. From the feminist theories, relationship and especially those of significant others are important for psychological health of women. This is a factor though protective of psychological wellbeing of women could also render them vulnerable to exploitation by abusive spouses. For example, the societal dictates often make abused women accept blame, take responsibility for dealing with the abuser's problems or conceal his abusive behaviour and this influences their stay decisions just to fulfill their role of caring.

Some of the participants viewed abuse as normal. The belief that abuse is normal for women is consistent with previous studies by Boonzaier (2008); Ting & Panchanadesaran (2009); Thapar-Björkert & Morgan (2010); Fanslow & Robinson

(2010); Towns & Adams (2015). For example, Baly (2010); Towns & Adams (2015) argue that women's construction of their abusive situations is influenced by the wider social and cultural discourses which tend to normalize spousal abuse. The common feminist discourse requires women to be passive, deny or minimize a partner's violence and accept blame and responsibility for his behaviours. Therefore, it was not surprising that some participants in the current study had accepted abuse as normal and as a result ended up in their abusive marriages. Moreover, it has come out that the societal regard of abuse as normal is entrenched even in government institutions such as chiefs' offices or children's departments where women seek support (See Damaris and Alice page 158). Although there is no policy towards this, and that these institutions are governed by rules that prohibit abuse of women in the society, they seem to be tolerant of men who commit such crimes. For instance these institutions fail to challenge the dominant culture of blame and responsibility in relation to abuse of women by their spouses. Their failure to challenge seems to perpetuate these acts though deviously. For example, Jaffe, Crooks & Bala (2009) observe that victims of domestic violence may face a biased justice system in family courts than in criminal courts. Moreover studies by Krugman, Witting, Furuno, Hirshon, Limcangco, Perisse & Rasch (2004); Lindhorst, Meyers & Casey (2008), Dichter (2013), reiterate that service personnel may be unhelpful and judgmental, making the aggrieved women more helpless in their situations. These societal attitudes however need to be addressed as they often render women helpless and

passive in their situations. Indeed, according to Morrison, Luchok, Richter & Parra-Medina (2006); DeKeseredy, Schwartz, Fagen & Hall (2006); Sabina, Cuevas & Schally(2011) and Chmura-Rutkowska (2014), stigma related beliefs such as abused women are blameworthy and abuse is shameful often silence women in their situations and have act as barriers to seeking help towards resolution of abuse.

The concept of spirits causing death among women who leave abusive marriages was expressed by one participant. Mbiti (1969) asserts that the living dead (in spirit form) could cause death if they were offended or dissatisfied with a family member. This kind of belief and subsequent thinking creates fear and leads to helplessness that could make a woman cling to a painful marriage, preferring to live for her children rather than to die. However, such beliefs stand to be challenged rather than be assimilated wholly as there is no scientific evidence to show how spirits could cause death.

4.5.2 Feelings/Emotions Influencing Womens' Stay Decisions

The beliefs that the participants held concerning their abusive situations influenced their feelings or emotions regarding their stay. Women experienced some emotions as captured and explained:

4.5.2.1 Love for Husband

It was realized that most of the women referred to their love and desire for their partner as a crucial factor for staying with them:

...its love, I love him just the way he is and I cannot force myself to love another man even if I were to get out of this marriage yeah...I still love him, I love him though he abuses me and that's why I have continued to stay with him.

(Janet, 22yrs)

Despite the negative emotions such as fear or hatred which are associated with abuse, it is evident that a woman can hold on to an abusive marriage due to strong feelings of love towards her husband.

4.5.2.2 Hope for Change

Most women had feelings of hope that their husbands would stop abusing them:

.... one thing I believe, God does not put you in a situation for nothing. Me I believe that in all things, God has been aware and he has a reason he placed me there because in my Biblical belief, for everyone who has been in a situation in the Bible, there is always something good that has come out of it and that is one of the beliefs that I have. I always believe there is something good that will come out of me staying there. That is why I have still continued staying there...Sometimes I think may be this man has gone through a lot of trauma in his life and so I always think that, maybe if he gets assistance, he might turn around. May be he will turn around for the good, I always think that he might change...and things will just turn out for good mm.

(Alice, 38 yrs)

Alice had hoped that, through God's intervention, her abusive husband would change. She also felt her husband may have experienced a lot of trauma which she

attributed to his abusive behaviour though that might have been partly the denial or rationalization of abuse. If assisted, he would perhaps change and that hope kept her hanging on.

Some other women stayed as their husbands kept apologizing whenever they abused them and this rekindled their hope that the situation would change. This is illustrated in the extract:

....now that is what has encouraged me to stay. He comes and tells me “if I have wronged you and I ask for forgiveness, you need to let go, what happened yesterday and the previous day, just forgive me and forget it. Stop revisiting what happened yesterday, the other day, and some years back, forget it, it’s over, it’s over and just wait and see if I will do that again, now it’s over with me, it’s over completely” .Now that is what makes me stay. But now as I stay, I am realizing years have passed and I am growing old without a sense of direction...

(Mwende, 30 yrs)

The current study has shown that love for their spouses and hope that the batterer would stop abusing were two of the emotions that featured in the participants’ responses. These emotions echo the honeymoon stage of the cycle where an abuser becomes kind, loving and apologetic for his abusive behaviour following an abusive episode. The sense of hope that an abuser would change also seems to be the driving force evidenced in the Psychological Entrapment Theory whereby a victim engages in relentless commitments to end abuse.

The emotions of love and hope as influencers to women's stay decisions echoed by Musson-Sedaat (2008); Enander (2011) and Estrellado & Loh (2013) who indicated that women stayed in abusive marriages due to guilt, self-blame, fear, hope that abuse would stop and love for the batterer. Enander (2011) asserts that battered women form attachment and become emotionally dependent on their spouse just like other women. Enander realized that women struggled with emotions trying to align them with what was good about the marriage despite the abuse. For example, whenever women focused on the good traits of the abuser, their emotions oscillated from bad to good, hence love and re-commitment to their relationships. This state of oscillating emotions may keep women in a state of helplessness and indecisiveness concerning their resolution of abuse. As a result of the strong feelings of attachment, Allison, Bartholomew, Mayseless & Dutton (2008) point out that abused women grieve loss of their abusive spouses as they struggle with leave decisions. Indeed according to Griffing, Ragin, Sage, Madry, Bingham & Primm (2002); Fangundes (2012); Thomas, Goodman & Putnins (2015), these feelings of attachment may cause a lot of emotional disturbance even after a woman has managed to leave the relationship while others may return. These intermittent feelings of love and sense of loss of the relationship often act as reinforcers which entrap abused women in their situations.

Hope also seems to be a prevalent emotion in most women suffering from abuse. As the victim focuses on the positive aspect of the abuser, she hopes that abuse will stop. Though the abuse keeps recurring, it appears the victim gradually develops learned hopefulness (optimism) and forgives her abuser continuously thinking that he would change his personality and stop being abusive. However, Pansera & La Guardia (2011); Strelan, McKee, Calic, Cook & Shaw(2012) point out that optimism and forgiveness may have a healing effect to the victim if she perceives her abuser as genuinely remorseful.

Fromm as cited by Ewen (1993) points out that human beings have non-organic drives that have no innate programme to ensure their fulfillment. Therefore humans often find themselves opting for goals that are more alluring but that ultimately could result in unhappiness or even psychopathology. Among the non-organic needs that could lure individuals is need for others which leads to love. Women in abusive relations seem to be lured and perceive the need for love but without much reflection on what love should be like in comparison to the unhappiness that it causes them. Therefore they appear to harbour irrational thoughts about love. Towards this end, their insistence on perceived love for their spouses appears to be pathological. Fromm as cited by Ewen (1993) observes that genuine love involves genuine care for and giving to others, an objective and accurate knowledge to their true feelings and wishes, respect for their right to develop in their own particular way and responsibility towards all humanity.

However, as evidenced by the excerpts from the women in abusive marriages, all the components of genuine love appear not to feature in their relationships. In relation to this view Ellis as cited by Nelson-Jones (2013) observes that thinking and emoting are closely related and they often accompany each other in shaping behaviour. Accordingly, Ellis observes that unhealthy emotions interfere with achieving a sensible balance between short range and long range hedonism. Therefore, though love is viewed as a positive emotion, unreflective approach towards it can lead to what may be termed as ‘social enslavement’ which mirrors a mechanism of escape referred to as authoritarianism; a symbiotic attachment that is characterized by admiration for authority and desire to submit to powerful others (Ewe 1993). This could be said to be unproductive frame of orientation that leads to irrational beliefs that serve to entrench psychological entrapment.

4.6 Coping Mechanisms Influencing Stay Decisions

The study attempted to establish the mechanisms that women used to cope with their abusive situations so as to ascertain whether they had contributed to the stay decision in some way or not. Women reported that they coped by using a number of mechanisms such as keeping busy by engaging in some form of income generating activity, divine interventions, sharing with significant others, smoking and drinking, avoidance, rationalization and acceptance of abuse and seeking help from higher authorities like the chief, children’s officers or the police among others. The coping mechanisms were as in the excerpts:

4.6.1 Rationalization

Some women coped with their abusive situations by attributing their husbands' abusive behaviours to some external circumstances:

...Another thing that I know is that my husband is not bad but there is something that has moved him, something is moving him, he is under some influence. He is under some influence of some sort and I don't seem to understand what it is. And that influence is related to his work place because since he got that job, he becomes wild whenever he gets some money. So I don't know what is happening but I know he is a good man...so I have decided to give him time to change.

(Ruth, 29 yrs)

Ruth's emphasis that her husband was a good man who had turned abusive because of workplace peer influence is typical rationalization.

So serious was the rationalization that some participants thought that they had invested too much in their relationship and could therefore not think of quitting:

...I have invested a lot in this relationship and I believe if I get out, I will lose yeah... my time, emotionally, most of my life, part of my life I have invested there, so if I just come out of it like that, me that is what I believe, it would be in vain mm.

(Alice, 38 yrs)

Alice's clinging onto her investment outweighed her suffering in the marriage and that influenced her stay.

4.6.2 Denial of Abuse

Some women engaged in denial when abuse started and this kept them holding onto the abusive situation:

The first, first, days he started abusing me, you know, I looked, I looked at it like I hope, I thought this man will change you know. You know when a man slaps you and hits you, you think, what's wrong with this man, is he normal? What's happening to his head is he going nuts? So you forgive him and the next time again, he does it, you end up again forgiving him...

(Nyambura, 47 yrs)

When abuse started Nyambura was taken aback and thought something was wrong with her husband. Women are willing to see the first violent incidents as a normal occurrence. They are willing to forgive though that may actually reinforce the violent behaviour as in the case of Nyambura.

In some situations denial could influence an abused woman not to recognize abuse. This is highlighted in the case that follows:

... initially I didn't even realize it was abuse, because when you are trying to learn someone and someone gives excuse, he promises this and that and then he can't do it...

(Alice, 38 yrs)

The fact that Alice was not aware that she was being abused may be attributed to denial of her abusive situation so as to soften the blow or being in a culture that does not recognize abuse as a problem.

4.6.3 Avoidance/Withdrawal

Fifteen out of the twenty women used avoidance mechanisms such as keeping quiet, getting out of their husbands way:

...we used to prepare food early we eat, once we have eaten, we could lock ourselves in the bedroom, so, he could come knock, knock throw abuses and all that but us we are inside there, so that is one of the most convenient way I have found at least to even lock my children from experiencing those abuses...

(Alice, 38 yrs)

4.6.4 Keeping Oneslf Busy

Most women had engaged in some means of income generation so that they could provide for their families:

...I usually keep myself busy by trying to do something so that I can get money to buy the children food and to pay rent...

(Schola, 30 yrs)

A participant like Tepesi kept herself busy as a way of dealing with her abusive situation:

... But when you start moving in and out of your marriage, you will not be able to accomplish anything because you start doing something and before you even establish yourself, there you are, you have left, you will never do anything. So I chose to stay so that I can work with no interruptions and accomplish my life goals.

(Tepesi, 47 yrs)

Keeping oneself busy as Tepesi did is socially acceptable but could be a way of avoiding rational decision making to deal with her abusive situation.

4.6.5 Divine Intervention

As a result of staying in their abusive situations, ten out of the twenty participants engaged in some divine intervention so as to endure the painful situations as follows:

...I have been praying God to help cos I myself I am not able
.I am trying to tell God to change him to the way he was
initially...

(Ruth, 29 yrs)

Ruth tried to cope with her abusive situation by praying and trusting God to change her husband.

Another participant, Mwende trusted God in her situation as follows:

...Now I don't know what to do. When I look at the situation, I
normally tell God to do his part... I used to go for prayers eeh,
just to see if he could change even a little bit,,

(Mwende, 30vrs)

Mwende and Ruth like many other women coped by praying and trusting God to change their husbands. Prayer can be helpful as it allows catharsis but it can be a form of escapism that may lead to entrapment in an abusive marriage.

4.6.6 Alcohol and Substance Abuse

One participant reported that she coped with the abuse through alcohol and substance abuse:

...The first thing I do is to take a cigarette to cool down my horses. I just dash to the kiosk and get a sportsman and I sit down and relax, I find myself relaxing a bit. It relaxes me for about an hour ... that same day in the evening I try to get some money, I get a drink and have a small drink...

(Nyambura, 47 yrs)

4.6.7 Engaging in Alternative Relationships

One of the unique coping mechanisms used by one respondent was turning to another relationship:

... Maybe you wanted this man; he is not there for you. So what I have decided now is, to look for a man outside my marriage. This man is the one who gives me some money for personal use... what happens is, when I need this man(husband) sexually, he is not there, so because he is not there, I make sure I have used my weekend properly. I look for a young lady to take care of my business and I go out, yeah.

(Flavian, 38 yrs)

4.6.8 Sharing with Significant Others

Two participants coped through sharing with friends, relatives or the clergy as indicated:

...And other times I go to my women friends and I share with them what I am experiencing and I realize I am not the only one who is abused...

(Blessing, 47 yrs,)

Blessing would share with other women which would lead to catharsis. In addition, she engaged in rationalization of abuse as implied in her words, "I am

not the only one who is abused”, which would minimize the effects of abuse and encourage her to stay.

4.6.9 Mediation

Most women had engaged their abusive spouses through significant others:

..... the first time it happened eh, I tried to talk to his best friend and told him, this and this is happening; just see if you can talk to him. The friend came and talked to him indirectly but I felt as if it did not help. So I talked to the church elders and told them to talk to him but indirectly, to look for indirect way of talking to him. He changed for about two to three months and then it started happening again. I still went back to the church elders but he somehow realized I had been reporting him to the elders and he warned me, if I will ever say it to the church, that day he will kill me. From then, I just keep quiet as there is nothing I can do.

(Purity, 36 yrs,)

Purity had tried mediation through friends and church elders to resolve her abusive situation but it did not work well as it did not involve the concerned parties (her and her husband)

4.6.10 Seeking Help from Higher Authorities

Four out of the twenty participants tried to cope by reporting their cases to higher authorities but did not get help as depicted:

...I decided to go and report him, so when I went and reported him to the chief, they wrote a letter and they said they are going to come in the house and serve him and ask him to come there, so they did that .In fact they came very early in the morning one day and they gave him the letter. Surprisingly when that day came and I went I sat there and waited, I waited for more than five hours. Now the chief was like he is calling this man and this man is not picking up and when he is picking up they talk, they talk, they talk, and then they say, he has said he is coming. But finally he did not come...I went to the children's office. And when I went there they just dismissed me, they told me, the man has abandoned you... they told me just go home, the man will change

(Alice, 38 yrs)

.... The next time he tried to beat me, I went and reported to the police that he had beaten me and ran away. When he came back... he requested to be given the last chance to change his behaviour. In fact he didn't change at all. The next thing I did was to report to the chief but they took me round and round as he had bribed them and I gave up. Fourthly, I went to the children's department and reported because he had even started beating the children and I had felt that was now too much....now, I don't know what to do.

(Damaris, 37 yrs,)

Damaris and Alice had tried to cope by seeking help from higher authorities such as the police, chief and children officers' but all in vain. These strategies did not work even though they were positive and eventually the two resigned to fate and stayed in their abusive relationships.

The current study has shown that most women engaged in a lot of avoidance coping such as keeping out of the way of the abuser by all means. This finding is echoed by previous studies by Holahan *et al* (2005), Calvete, Corral & Estevez (2008) who reiterate that battered women often turn to avoidance coping which may normalize an abusive situation but ends up generating stress that is likely to

increase helplessness in the victim. Excessive use of avoidance coping is however inconsistent with a past study by Taft *et al* (2010) who realized that battered women used more of engagement coping and less disengagement coping strategies. This difference could be attributed to contextual issues such as social and institutional support of abused women in the Western culture where the study was carried out.

In relation to social support, the narratives have revealed that participants turned to seeking help from relatives, the clergy and higher authorities like the chiefs, children officers and the police though they did not get any help. This particular finding supports lack of institutional support in the context of the current study which is echoed by studies by Kaluyu (2007) and Odongo (2012). Participants in these two studies sought help from community resources such as the chiefs, police, pastors and the witchdoctors but were not able to get appropriate help to address their abusive situations.

The findings of the current study have further shown that women turned to substance and alcohol abuse to alleviate the pain of their abusive situations. This finding resonates previous findings by Lazenbatt, Devaney & Gildea (2013); Itimi, Dienne & Gbeneol (2014) which realized that victims of abuse often turn to substance abuse as a coping strategy that ends up worsening their psychological and physical health which in turn increases chances of entrapment in their

situations. Moreover, avoidance coping mechanisms could divert victims to focus on factors such as investments in the relationship, lack of social support or even fail to recognize abusive behaviours and end up entrapped.

The findings of the current study realized that religion and spirituality are frequently used coping mechanisms. This finding is consistent with studies by Fowler & Hill (2004); Watlington & Murphy (2006); Itimi, Dienye & Gbeneol (2014) and Street (2015) who found that spirituality and religion as coping mechanisms have a mitigating effect in the severity of the psychological consequences of abuse. However, the buffering effect of divine intervention could have been outweighed by severe, repetitive and chronic abuse as experienced by the women in the current study.

According to Calvete, Corral & Estévez (2008); Panaghi, Ahmadabadi, Ghahari & Mohammadi (2012); Foster, Becho, Burge, Talamantes, Ferrer, Wood & Katerndahl (2015), the psychological effects of abuse, relationship context, circumstances and resource availability could influence victims to engage in certain coping mechanisms which may influence their stay decisions. The beliefs that women hold regarding abuse could also influence them to accept the blame and take responsibility of abuse and often rationalize, minimize and deny abuse or normalize it (Boonzaier, 2008, Thapar-Björkert & Morgan, 2010; Towns and Adams, 2015). For example, when Nyambura's first episode occurred, she thought

that her husband was not normal and was very fast at forging him as she waited for him to change (see page 153).

The women's coping mechanisms are synonymous to defense mechanisms that the ego utilizes to deal with fear and anxiety which are prevalent in abusive relationships. Defense mechanisms are infantilisms that operate unconsciously to impede realistic behaviour long after they have outlived their usefulness (Corey, 2009; Nelson-Jones, 2013). However, while they achieve some measures of protection to the ego, prolonged use of defense mechanisms prevents the ego from fulfilling its main functions which are perceiving and dealing with reality (Ewen, 1993). Nelson-Jones (2013) further affirms this view when he observes that defense mechanisms restrict the functioning of the ego and expends its psychic energy that could better be applied productively. For example, instead of the abused women working towards change of their situations, they remain fixated at contemplation stage and do not progress towards taking action to bring about positive change. They appear to have no power to deal with their pathological relationships but instead expend a lot of their psychic energy in wading off the pain of chronic abuse. Arguably, defense mechanisms lead to self deception which is beyond one's conscious control, hence making it possible for individuals to use them excessively and in a defeatist way (Ewen, 1993). The fact that they are unconsciously employed and are an endogenous way of dealing with threatening psychological situations such as spousal abuse may lead to affixed way of

thinking which serves to concretize the psychological entrapment of women in abusive marriages.

Apart from use of defense mechanisms, Gutman *et al* (2004), Strom & Kosciumlek (2007); Lindgren & Renck (2008), reiterate that brain injury and mental disorders which are possible consequences of abuse may also contribute to problem solving deficits in victims of spousal abuse. Hence, women may lack the rationality to resolve spousal abuse due to its deleterious effects and may require help to be able to deal rationally with their abusive situations.

4.7 Interventions to Empower Abused Women to Deal with the Endogenous Factors

From the findings, certain endogenous factors influence women to stay in abusive spousal relationships, where they suffer a lot of physical and psychological torture. The goal of empowerment is to change a woman's meaning of her abusive situation so that she could appraise it appropriately. This would lead to a secondary cognitive appraisal which could help to free them and their children from their painful situations.

To determine how abused women could be empowered, it was important to find out the actions the survivors had taken to deal with their abuses and what had enabled them to do so:

4.7.1 Actions Taken to Resolve Spousal Abuse

The actions that the women had taken to resolve their abuses were as shown in Table 4.7:

Table 4.7. Actions taken by Survivors to Resolve Spousal Abuse

Action taken	Frequency	%
Separation	5	50
Divorce	4	40
Mediation	1	10
Total	10	100

Out of the 10 women who had resolved their abusive situations, 9 (90%) had left their abusive marriages: 5(50%) had separated and 4(40%) had divorced. Only one woman, (10%), had resolved by use of mediation and retained her marriage. From the foregoing, it is clear that leaving the abuser was a popular strategy most women had used to resolve their abuses.

4.7.2 Catalysts for Resolution of Spousal Abuse

According to Brown (1997); Moss, Pitula, Campbell and Halstead (1997), abused women have to realize the need for safety and end of abuse in their lives. From this study's findings, there are several factors that had influenced the ten women to take action to resolve spousal abuse. These acted as catalysts for change and thus acted as their turning points. For example:

4.7.2.1 Awareness of Abuse

Some women realized the meaning of their abuses as a result of their own evaluation of their situation as hereby recalled:

Kawira decided to quit her abusive marriage when she realized that there was no trust, respect or love and yet this is what she highly treasured.

Awareness of meaning of abuse or its effects can come through seminars or psycho-educational groups as expressed by one participant:

...so I think both the empowerment of women and men so that they can both work in partnership would be better because most of the time we empower women and forget the men and the men never get to hear some of these things because, even the Bible says how will they know if there is no one to tell them? The men need to be told that women need to be respected; women need to be treated this way. So the men even don't have enough places to go and seek this support, yeah, so they need to have somebody.

(Knifa, 43 yrs)

Involvement of men and women through psycho-education raises their awareness and gives them an opportunity to work as co-partners in ending spousal abuse.

One participant had separated from her abusive husband after realizing she had potential to manage her life out of the relationship:

...The threat and eeh the issue of being told to move out of the house. So one day I moved out of the house, I was told to go and I am given the deadline to go eh. I faced reality and said, ' *haiya* ', so I can even survive on my own? So, that one statement that I don't want to see you here by 6pm, though it was meant to suppress me , I found myself marshalling some strength, I didn't know I have some strength inside, so I found myself marshalling that strength and I realized that if I can survive one day, even these other days I can survive. And because I had gotten used to paying school fees, for my children, I just needed to do a few adjustments, but I found that I have a lot of strength in me to continue though the first few stages were a bit challenging.

(Njeri, 48 yrs)

Njeri had made her final decision to separate from her husband after she discovered that she had a lot of psychological resources to manage her life out of the relationship.

4.7.2.2 Severity of Abuse

One respondent had resolved her abuse after realizing that the levels of abuse had escalated and, moreover, her life had stagnated due to her abusive situation. Her verbatim depicts the scenario:

...finally he brought his relatives to come, his sisters to come and verbally abuse me and they, they went to levels that I thought were too insulting and maybe we needed another intervention, maybe from the parents or somebody else so that we can also get to understand their perspective in terms of the relationship. Because once you involve your sisters to come and insult and abuse your wife then it becomes, it's too much yeah... sometimes, you know , it escalates, the levels escalate and that's why you say enough is enough , I cannot deal with this anymore...

(Knifa, 43 yrs)

When abuse escalated to levels she could not bear, Knifa decided to involve her parents in addressing her situation. Finally, she ended up quitting the marriage.

Another respondent realized her situation was worsening and left her abusive relationship as expressed:

...I used to sell food to the hawkers in Kangemi. One day my husband came and urinated on all the food after I had cooked. When I asked him why he had done that, he started beating me. My landlord heard about it and told me to call the headman so that we could be helped to sort out. The headman came and told us that we should go to his office with our parents by Monday. My husband told the headman he could not bring his parents. When my husband said he could not do that, I sensed danger; I told the headman that the abuse was not over and I was intending to leave because there is even a time he poured paraffin on me wanting to burn me...

(Njoki, 45 yrs)

When her husband refused to engage in abuse resolution, Njoki realize that her situation was worsening and could lead to severe consequences if she continued to stay.

4.7.2.3 Counselling

After attending counseling, one participant realized that she needed to end abuse in her life:

...I had been beaten and insulted for long by my husband, in fact for five years I have not had peace in my house. So I used to cry and cry, sometimes even the whole night and then stay even for some days without talking to him. Some days when I am in the house alone I would pray telling God to change my husband and praying used to help me feel better...Now, I realized my crying and keeping quiet made him very happy. He would even try to get opportunities so that he could insult me or call me a useless woman...So I decided I have to change my way of dealing with the issue. I consulted a counselor who helped me to realize I could use dialogue. But now my husband has been brought up in a very dysfunctional family, he has no room for dialogue because he beliefs in fighting and insults when I try to talk to him...So I called my pastor and he spoke to both of us. The pastor told him it is wrong to beat me and he actually looked very remorseful. From then he has at least stopped beating me but he still insults me...

(Maria, 38 yrs)

After realizing that mechanisms such as crying, praying and keeping quiet were not working, Maria decided to go for counselling which empowered her to confront her situation through a mediator. It is therefore in order for a woman who is not able to confront her abusive husband directly to seek external support as Maria did.

4.7.2.4 Sense of Autonomy

Another respondent added that women can be empowered as follows:

....separate yourself with the children, because eeh, you find that eeh even the children when you are in the abusive marriage you are not helping these children because you are also oppressing them emotionally and psychologically, so if somebody would separate themselves from the children and from the spouse and from the community and from the family, you start realizing that you are a unique individual

(Njeri, 48 yrs)

Njeri was emphasizing that a woman should be able to cut off from external forces or social pressures that may influence her to hold to an unhealthy relationship. She felt a woman needs to stand out and ensure she has her own identity.

4.7.2.5 Economic Empowerment

A method that was suggested by all the women as a means of helping women to resolving spousal abuse was financial independence as expressed:

...if I was not having my own salary, where could I get money to sustain myself during the time I have been separated? I believe even to get bread for my children, it would have been very difficult, even to get fee for my children for education; it would have been very difficult...get empowered, not necessarily with any other thing even you get empowered with money, your financial strains even if you are having so many but at least you have something at the end of the month you know you are getting something for yourself, you are not going to ask from somebody's pocket...

(Kawira, 42 yrs)

Some other women decided to get means of financial empowerment and then realized they could manage on their own:

....I decided to engage in some casual jobs like washing clothes for people in the estate so that I could get something to take care of my children. Gradually I realized I could manage on my own and that's when I thought of leaving...so it is the casual jobs I do that sustain me and I am able to take care of the children peacefully. That is what made me think of leaving my husband; after all being beaten in front of the children and the verbal insults was too stressful for us to bear.

(Dorcas, 37 yrs)

Dorcas believed in herself as she realized that she could provide for her family alone. That awareness was the one that motivated her to leave her marriage.

4.7.2.6 Social Support

Most of the women reported that they were supported by family or friends in their struggle towards resolution of abuse as shown:

...So I felt no, I think enough is enough, then I shared with my brothers... So I told my brothers I want to move on with my own life, they told me, its ok, it's you now to make your own decision... and that's when I decided to move on, through a separation.

(Kawira, 42 yrs)

After Kawira had decided to leave, she sought support from her family who encouraged her to move on.

A lot of past studies have prescribed leaving as the only way of ending spousal abuse ignoring the impact that leaving would have on the family stability (Shurman & Rodriguez, 2006; Moe, 2009; Zuckosky, 2011; Reisenhofer & Taft, 2013). Furthermore, Panchanadeswaran and McCloskey (2007) argue that leaving an abusive relationship should not be perceived as an end to the abuse and other relationship struggles. Contrary to other past studies, the findings of the current study have also revealed that apart from leaving the abusive relationship, resolution of spousal abuse can be achieved through processes such as mediation which would lead to preservation of the family unit as seen in Maria's case (See

page 167). In addition, the narratives presented suggest that battered women exhibited the need for maintenance of the relationship and end of victimization as they engaged in other abuse resolution strategies such as dialogue and seeking help from available community resources (See Njoki page 166). Further, resolution of abuse through other alternative options questions the validity of the transtheoretical model, which candidly prescribes attainment of an abuse free situation as leaving the abusive relationship. Moreover, the participants indicated that men should be involved in the process of resolution of abuse while the TM lays a lot of emphasis on the involvement of the victims only. This means the process of resolution of abuse should not be viewed within the narrow range of the TM as it can encompass actions such as dialogue among the partners, mediation and counseling that may end abuse without necessarily ending the marital relationship.

Based on the findings, it is evident that certain events or circumstances acted as turning points in the women's decision to end spousal abuse. These were severity of abuse, sense of autonomy, social support, economic empowerment and awareness of abuse among others. These finding buttress those of past studies by Alexander *et al* (2009), Fanslow & Robinson (2010); Chang *et al* (2010); Murray, Crowe & Flasch (2015) who indicate that certain triggers such as social support, escalation of abuse, fear or threat of death, awareness creation and economic empowerment had acted as women's catalysts for resolution of abuse.

Though the current study identifies social support as a turning point, a past study by Bliss et al (2008) found there was no correlation between social support and womens' readiness to change their abusive situations. The discrepancy may be attributed to the characteristics of the study samples used in the two studies. While Bliss *et al* (2008) utilized a sample of marginalized African American women who may not have received appropriate social support by virtue of being a marginalized group, the current study used a sub-sample of women survivors who had received appropriate support from significant others like their family members. Nonetheless, as expressed by participants in the current study, social support is very important for a woman intending to take action to resolve spousal abuse.

Availability of an emotionally supportive and encouraging person in the battered woman's life could help to promote an enabling environment that could make her realize that she was important. These results are echoed by Zuckosky (2011); Shorey *et al* 2012); Zapor, Wolford-Clevenger & Johnson(2015) whose findings indicated that social support was important for women especially at the initial stages of attempting to resolve abuse. Further, Crabtree-Nelson (2010) emphasizes that emotional support, ability to normalize abuse, offering concrete suggestions and a non-judgemental attitude towards survivors of abuse helps to foster a positive therapeutic alliance and increases chances of healing. Moreover, Rodriguez(2011);Kennedy,Adams, Bybee, Campbell, Kubiak and Sullivan (2012)

underscore the importance of social support as it can aid in positive coping and mitigate the negative effects of abuse which can increase likelihood of resolution of abuse. In addition, Kocot & Goodman (2003); Stenius & Veysey (2005) argue that battered women who lack social support during abusive episodes may be more likely to stay in their abusive relationships.

According to Goodman, Gillum, Bybee & Sullivan (2003); Latta & Goodman (2011); Ondicho (2013); Sylaska & Edwards (2014), rejection by significant others may lead to self-blame, low self-esteem, hopelessness and depression which may gradually entrap women in abusive marriages. Hence there is need to help abused women establish satisfying social relationships so as to be able to navigate to the final stages of abuse resolution. However, as noted by Alexander *et al* (2009), it would be useful to differentiate those social supports that are useful in aiding women's resolution of abuse from those which act as barriers.

Past studies by Moe (2009); Fanslow & Robinson (2010) and Estrellado & Loh (2013) identified abuse of children as a factor that prompted womens' decision to end abusive relationships. This is unlike the current study where women maintained their abusive relationships despite the severity of abuse of their children by their fathers. This could imply that the perceived benefits of remaining in the relationship may have outweighed the risks of losing it which would mean absence of a father figure for the children.

Noticeably, the current study has added a unique dimension in resolution of abuse such as involvement of men in the change process which is not acknowledged by the transtheoretical model of behaviour change and most previous studies. The suggestion of engaging men in abuse resolution is affirmed by Merry (2009). Merry (2009) points out that collaborative involvement of men and women in trainings could help men demystify beliefs associated with abuse and replace them with alternative to violence (ATV) behaviours. Further, Cobia, Robinson & Edwards (2008) reiterate that perpetrators need to be helped to modify the personal beliefs that support the use of aggression toward their partners. In this way, interventions could help both women and men in changing their perceptions of abuse in support of and implementation of safety enhancing behaviours.

Chang *et al* (2010), acknowledges that abused women need to identify their turning points. This would lead to dramatic shifts in their beliefs and perceptions of themselves, their partners, or their situations (Reisenhofer & Taft, 2013; Murray, Crowe & Flasch, 2015). Moss *et al* (1997), echo that battered women have to deal with their strongly held beliefs which could give insights that the relationship is unhealthy. Further According to Freeman & Dewolf (1990); Miltenberger (2004) an individual's cognitive processes are central to behaviour change and the clients' recognition of their cognitive behaviours/irrational thoughts is a prerequisite. Hence, helping women to recognize the thoughts, images or self-statements that they engage in and influence their stay in abusive

marriages is a requirement to restructuring their cognitions. Citing Emery (1981), Ellis (1985), Ellis & Yeager (1989); Sonkin (1994), what a person thinks influences their feelings and this ultimately determines their actions like staying in an abusive marriage. For example, some participants in the study realized that their abuse was escalating and decided to quit the relationship (See Knifa Page 165). Some other women realized they had some inner potential and believing in themselves acted as a turning point to end their abuses. The realization of one's potential is supported by Davis (2002) and Estrellado & Loh (2013) who argue that women's psychological and financial resources can help to attenuate their psychological effects of abuse and sustain their monetary needs. In addition, maintaining one's sense of identity is crucial for women to deal with abuse as supported by Estrellado & Loh (2013) though Ting & Panchanadeswaran (2009) argue that the need to conform to family or societal pressures may compromise their autonomy.

Contrary to conforming to external pressure, Engel (2002) maintains that women in marital relations need to establish firmer boundaries in the relationship so as to retain their own identities. The concept of maintaining self identity can be equated to differentiation of self in the trans-generational approach to family therapy. Differentiation refers to the extent to which individuals are able to separate their emotional and intellectual spheres (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2013; Titleman, 2014). High differentiation allows both the intellectual and emotional systems to

function appropriately. Thus, differentiated individuals are able to make autonomous decisions without undue influence by external agents such as the family members or the society. Indeed, Panchanadeswaran & McCloskey (2007) and Buchbinder & Barakat (2014) point out that autonomy and sense of separate self is a key requirement for a survivor especially at the maintenance stage of behaviour change. However, Rodriguez (2011) notes that women in abusive situations have difficulties in resisting social pressures as the sense of autonomy is eroded by the effects of their abusive situations. Hence women need interventions that can empower them to attain self determination as an essential component of resolving spousal abuse.

One participant brought out the importance of counseling as a turning point that helped her to resolve her abuse through mediation. This finding is supported by past studies by Rasmussen, Hughes & Murray (2008) and Crabtree-Nelson (2010) which brought out the importance of counseling with survivors of domestic violence. For example, Crabtree-Nelson (2010) realized that counselor-survivor relationship, knowledge of domestic violence and utilization of specific interventions were perceived as mutually helpful by the survivors and their counselors. This underscores the importance of a therapeutic relationship as argued by Palmer (2000); Corey (2009) that use of the core conditions of empathy, genuineness and unconditional positive regard are important therapist's attributes that help to establish an enabling therapeutic atmosphere. Also of

importance is the knowledge of domestic violence and use of appropriate interventions by the counselors. In this regard, Rasmussen, Hughes & Murray (2008) point out that if survivors receive interventions such as motivational interviewing, they could get more motivated for change of their abusive situations. According to Miller & Rollnick (2002), MI is both client-centered and problem focused as it psychoeducates clients to identify differences between their stated goals and current behaviour, increase their self-efficacy and take the necessary steps to make and maintain behavioural changes.

As noted by most of the participants, economic empowerment such as through employment, business or by doing some casual jobs helped women to support themselves and their children which decreased dependence on their abusive spouses. These findings echo those by Sabina & Tindale (2008); Estrellado & Loh (2013) and LaViolette & Barnett (2014), who found that employment helps female victims to improve their financial stability, increase their self-esteem, enhance social connections and provide cognitive relief and purpose in life. In addition, working away from home decreases the victim's emotional dependence on her abuser and minimizes possibility of entrapment in the relationship. The findings also buttress those by Perez, Johnson & Wright (2012), who suggested that resource acquisition has a buffering effect on the severity of spousal abuse and its psychological consequences especially when abuse is not severe. However, above and beyond resource acquisition, women need to engage in

interventions to empower them with rational competencies to end their abusive situations.

During the interviews, it was observed that though most of the survivors had managed to resolve their abuses by leaving their spouses, they were still struggling to cope with the state of separation. As revealed by the field notes, a participant known as Knifa had financial difficulties due to child care and housing responsibilities but her father had assisted her by giving her a house in which to stay. Another participant by the name Amina had expressed that it had been difficult for her son to cope staying without the father and therefore she allowed him to stay with either him or the paternal grandmother during the school holidays.

The two observations by Amina and Knifa imply that economic stability, housing, social support and child welfare were of paramount concern to the survivors after breaking free from their abusive partners. The finding is supported by Belknap (2007); Bostock, Plumpton & Pratt (2009); Goodman, Smyth, Borges & Singer (2009), Varicoe, Hankivsky, Ford-Gilboe, Wuest, Wilk, Hammerton & Campbell (2011); Logan, Walker & Hoyt (2012) who realized that though some women manage to end their violent relationships, they may continue to struggle in terms of obtaining housing, employment, re-building self confidence, reconnecting with family and developing social network. Consistently, Anderson *et al*

(2003); Thomas, Goodman & Putnins (2015) echo that after separation from abusive spouses, women had experienced, loss of emotional and physical safety, long term depression, loss of control over parenting and loss of freedom. In the same vein, Fleury, Sullivan & Bybee (2000); Logan & Walker (2004) pointed out women who left their abusive marriages experienced continued harassment, manipulations, stalking and sometimes forced sex by their abusers. Further, Miller & Smolter (2011), reiterate that other survivors experience psychological torture through frivolous lawsuits and false reports of child abuse by their ex-partners. Furthermore, Turner & Helms (1995), point out that after leaving, women have to deal with other issues such as community divorce and role realignment. In other words, resolution of abuse is a process and not a onetime event; at some point the survivors are likely to experience some challenges especially when they leave their abusive situations.

From the foregoing, it appears survivors could require additional maintenance strategies such as creation of safe havens, to share their experiences after ending their abuses. This idea is echoed by Crabtree-Nelson (2010) that survivors of spousal abuse would benefit from counseling especially when there is a good relationship with their therapists and if they perceive their interventions as useful. The experiences could help them address how they were keeping themselves safe, how leaving the abuser had affected them emotionally and what they were doing

to cope with their new way of life. These steps would gradually help women to come to terms and sustain their separation from their abusive partners.

Wuest & Merritt-Gay (1999) argue that after breaking free, a survivor has to go through the process of reclaiming the self which gradually enables her to disengage from the spouse and to move on. Therefore it would appear that a woman has to reach acceptance and reconstruct her new identity in order for maintenance to be fully accomplished. Moreover, interventions such as occupational therapy have been found to be beneficial in increasing survivors independence and reducing relapse. To this end, Gutman *et al* (2004); Helfrich *et al* (2006), have demonstrated that occupational therapy can be used to increase survivors' life skills and ability to adapt to end of an abusive relationship. In addition, survivors could utilize their past experience of abuse as an opportunity for resilience building. In this respect, Murray, King, Crowe & Flasch (2015) assert that survivors can draw upon their experiences and act as change agents through advocacy. This would have therapeutic gains to themselves and others who may be survivors or struggling in abusive relations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents the findings of this study on womens' perception of endogenous factors influencing them to stay in abusive spousal relationships in WRAP in Nairobi County, Kenya. It covers the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the findings.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The summary covers the findings of the demographics and the study objectives which were forms of spousal abuse experienced by women, its effects on women, beliefs, emotions and coping mechanisms which influenced women to stay in abusive spousal relationships and the interventions that could be used to empower them to deal with the endogenous factors so as to resolve spousal abuses.

5.2.1 Demographic Findings

The findings revealed that young age, an unstable marriage, low education achievement and economic instability of the abused women were some of the demographic factors which increase the likelihood of entrapment in abusive marriages. Conversely, a higher level of education, a shorter duration of abuse and economic stability were some of the predictive factors influencing women to end spousal abuse.

5.2.2 Forms and Nature of Spousal Abuse

The findings revealed that individual women had experienced multiple and frequent forms and descriptions of spousal abuse which were physical, psychological, economic and sexual violations. The abuses were also meted out on the children and were very severe as they occurred frequently and were chronic. The most prevalent forms of spousal abuse were economic, psychological and physical abuses respectively. Though the women were aware of these various forms and descriptions which were very humiliating and psychologically tormenting, they had not taken appropriate actions to end the abuses hence stayed.

5.2.3 Effects of Spousal Abuse on Women

The various forms and descriptions of abuse had caused women physical and psychological harm together with their children. More importantly, the psychological consequences of abuse characterized by trauma and post trauma had rendered women helpless and affected their rational decision-making needed for resolution of abuse. This contributed to a large extent to their entrapment in the abusive relationships. The women however appeared unaware of how the psychological effects of this had contributed to their powerlessness and entrapment in their abusive marriages.

5.2.4 Beliefs and Feelings/Emotions Influencing Women's Stay Decisions

The women in abusive marriages had stayed in their situations for reasons which were characterized by their beliefs, thoughts and emotions/feelings. Some of the beliefs that influenced the stay decisions were, need for identify, marriage is permanent, rigid gender roles, abuse is normal and revenging spirits causing death to a woman if she leaves the marriage. The most common thoughts associated with stay were, spouses would stop being abusive and a woman would be disrespected by the society if she walked out of her marriage. Some of the outstanding emotions/feelings that women associated with their stay decisions were, hope that abuse would stop, fear of losing what they had invested in the marriage, love and attachment to their husbands and family in general, helplessness and sympathy for their husbands if left alone.

The study found out that the beliefs, thoughts and feelings that women held about their abusive situations emanated from the women's cultural mores and the debilitating psychological effects of abuse such as trauma and learned helplessness. These rendered women powerless for the kind of rational thinking that was required to end spousal abuse.

5.2.5 Coping Mechanisms Influencing Women's Stay Decisions

As a result of living in chronic spousal abuse, the women had turned to excessive use of maladaptive and less use of adaptive coping mechanisms. Some of the

maladaptive mechanisms were acceptance and rationalization of abuse, denial of abuse, seeking alternative relationship, perseverance, avoidance, sharing with significant others and crying. The adaptive mechanisms brought out were financial empowerment, mediation, seeking help from higher authorities like the chiefs, police and children's department.

The maladaptive coping mechanisms had not worked as they were based on distortion of reality of abuse, thus avoiding confrontation of the abusive behaviours. Though some women had tried adaptive coping mechanisms which had somehow alleviated their sufferings, they did not help to resolve abuse as they were not used appropriately. This study therefore concluded that use of either maladaptive or adaptive coping mechanisms increased the likelihood of staying in abusive spousal relationships.

5.2.6 Interventions of Empowering Women to Resolve Spousal Abuse

It was found that out of the 10 women, 9 had left their abusive marriages and only one woman had succeeded by effective use of mediation. Contrary to extant literature that equates resolution of abuse to leaving the abuser, these findings acknowledge that there are strategies that might leave a woman abuse free but do not entail separation. Hence, the choice of a strategy/action that a woman may want to take to resolve spousal abuse should be respected as their self determination is important in the implementation process. Generally, the catalysts

that could be used to help women resolve their abusive situations were psychosocial in nature.

The study found out that through cognitive behavioural techniques, the catalysts for change/turning points could be used to help women challenge/dispute the endogenous factors which formed the primary appraisal of their stay decisions. By so doing the women could develop new insights (secondary appraisal) which could help them to replace their irrational endogenous factors with rational and appropriate ones for purposes of resolving spousal abuse. The process of disputing /reappraising the endogenous factors could be carried out systematically by use of the transtheoretical model that could help women in shelters move through the process of behaviour change encompassing the contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance stages.

It was also found out that, even after resolving abuse, women may experience challenges such as coming to terms with the loss of relationship, economic strain, housing and child custody. Hence at the maintenance stage, survivors of abuse ought to be helped to overcome these challenges so as to minimize relapse rates.

5.3 Conclusions

From the study findings, it has emerged that certain demographic variables are predictive factors which increase likelihood of women's entrapment in abusive

situations. These are young age, an unstable marriage, low education achievement and economic instability.

The findings of this study have shown that the endogenous factors influencing the stay in abusive marriages are many and varied but they mainly emanate from the women's cultural mores and the debilitating psychological effects of spousal abuse. More significantly, evidence from this study shows that the depleted psychological resources that are crucial to rational thought and action appear to be eroded in the process of abuse. This renders abused women helpless. In addition, abused women seem to operate through defense mechanisms which deny the development of their ego resource. This weakens their internal loci of control and renders them vulnerable to control by external forces. Unfortunately, the society from which abused women could draw their support from still holds some beliefs that serve to solidify the endogenous factors which entrap women in abusive marriages. As a result, women continue to hold on in abusive marriages due to perceived fear of rejection from the larger society.

There is therefore, need to empower women especially with psychological resources that not only help them to identify these factors which entrap them in abusive relations, but, more importantly, which enable them challenge societal and gender specific socialization that make some believe that they are powerless and without identity of their own. This could be achieved through psycho-

education which targets their belief system in models such as REBT anchored on the transtheoretical model of behaviour change. Further, resolution of spousal abuse should be a culturally-bound process to help in challenging gender based biasness that serves to encourage tolerance for the abusers. This way, women may feel more supported and feel confident to challenge the abuses which would benefit the entire society. Further, use of the external support systems would also be important in helping women to emancipate themselves from abusive marriages.

However, noticeably, the society depends on the stability of the family system. Therefore, an intervention programme that would be effective would be that which targets the entire family system. As evidenced from reviewed literature, men are expected to treat their spouses with respect and love and provide security. But, men in abusive relations violate these virtues and have therefore gone against principles of an ideal family. To ensure the stability of the society, any intervention programmes put in place ought to incorporate women, men and their children for holistic healing and to minimize chances of transmitting violence to other generations.

5.4 Recommendations

In the context of the findings and discussion, the study has generated the following recommendations for researchers, stakeholders and practitioners and policy makers in the relevant Ministry.

5.4.1 Recommendations for Policy Makers

- i. The findings of this study indicate that spousal abuse is a threat to women and their children's psychological wellbeing because it has debilitating effects on all their areas of life. The Government could engage professional counsellors to provide affordable counselling services for the abused women and their children.
- ii. The study found out that the women in abusive marriages experienced difficulties in getting assistance from higher authorities such as the chiefs, the police and the children's departments. There is therefore need for the national government to provide specialized service trainings to officers dealing with issues of domestic violence so as to demystify their perceptions of spousal abuse.
- iii. The study realized that a lot of the endogenous factors influencing women to maintain abusive marriages emanated from the cultural mores. There is need for extensive psychoeducation progattitudes towards spousal abuse making it socirammes to challenge the socital norms that sustain spousal abuse. In addition, psycho-education could bring out the dangers of spousal abuse to the communities via the county governments.
- iv. Also the low levels of education and economic instability were some of the factors which contributed to entrapment of women in abusive marriages. Hence, the government could scale up the existing provisions for women's higher education and economic empowerment so as to boost

their economic status and self-efficacy. This would assist them in resolving spousal abuse.

5.4.2 Recommendations for Practitioners and Stakeholders

- i. The study realized that women at the shelter were aware of abusive behaviours. However, in the general population of abused women, the endogenous factors that maintain abusive spousal relationships may hinder them from recognizing abusive behaviours. This means there is need for awareness creation through psychoeducation.
- ii. Since spousal abuse affects women and their children, the intervention programmes should emphasize a holistic approach aimed at enlightening the victims, the perpetrators and their children so as to minimize the tendency to transmit abusive behaviours to the next generations.
- iii. The fact that 90 % of the women had resolved abuse by leaving their marriages appears to be a threat to the survival of the family. Effective utilization of other conflict resolution methods such as mediation and counselling which had been found to help could be explored exhaustively. Nonetheless, the women should be empowered on the importance of realizing that their personal safety should come above preservation of the family.
- iv. Resolution of abuse through leaving the abusive relationship does not guarantee immediate healing. Therapists and organizations dealing with

abused women need to provide support services such as counselling for further coping with the aftermaths of separation or divorce.

- vii) Interventions to help women resolve abuse should be tailored to the stage of change where the woman is in her attempts to end abuse.

5.4.3 Recommendations for Further Research

- i. There is need for a similar study to be carried out with three shelters of abused women; WRAP, SWED and Good Shepherd shelters, in Nairobi County to enable generalization of the findings to the entire county.
- ii. Since the women in the WRAP shelter were mainly of the lower socio economic status, a similar study with women of a higher economic status needs to be done. This would help to control the effects of economic instability as a factor which increases women's vulnerability to stay in abusive marriages.
- iii. Correlational studies to investigate the relationship between variables such as forms and nature of spousal abuse, effects of spousal abuse, beliefs and feelings regarding spousal abuse, the mechanisms of coping with spousal abuse, and their stay decisions need to be carried out.
- iv. A longitudinal research should be carried out to explore the impact on women whenever they leave an abusive relationship.
- v. Finally, further research could focus on men as perpetrators so as to inform the intervention programmes on the kind of help they may require.

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APPENDICES

AI: Interview Schedule

This tool has four parts, A, B and C. Part A is on Participants demographic Information and parts B and C are interview schedules for women who were in abusive spousal relationships and those who had resolved spousal abuses respectively. The tool was used to collect data for an academic research whose aim was to find out the Women's Perception of Endogenous Factors Influencing them to Stay in Abusive Spousal Relationships in Women Rights Awareness Program, Nairobi County. The information that the participants gave was treated with strict confidentiality and used for the purpose of the study only.

Part A: Demographic Information for Women in Abusive Spousal Relationships.

Place a tick () on the response that applies to you. The more honest you will be in responding to the questions, the more valid the results will be.

1. What is your age in years?

A. Below 25years

B. 25-35 years

C.35-40 years

D. 40-50 years

E. Over 50 years

2. What type of marriage are you in?

- A. Civil
- B. Church
- C. Customary
- D. Other

3. For how long had you stayed with your spouse, before you succeeded to end the abuse?

- A. 2- 5years
- B. 5-10 years
- C. 10-15 years
- D. 15-20 years
- E. Over 20years

4. What is the highest level of your education?

- A.KCPE/CPE
- B. Secondary school
- C. College/polytechnic
- D. University

Other (specify)-----

5. a. What do you do for a living (occupation)?-----

b. How much do you earn per month?

- A. Below ksh10, 000
- B. Ksh 10,000 - 20,000
- C. Ksh 20,000 -30,000

D.ksh30.000 - 40,000 []

E.Ksh40,000 - 50,000 []

F. Over ksh 50,000 []

Part B: Interview Schedule for Women who were in Abusive Spousal Relationships

6.a. Describe the kinds of abuses you have experienced from your husband/partner in the last twelve months.

b. How many times has he abused you within the last twelve months?

7. How have you been coping with these abuses?

8. Describe how the above forms of abuse have affected you in the following areas of your life

i. Your body (physical)

ii. Your thoughts

iii. Your emotions/feelings

iv. Your social life

v. Your job/career

vi. Your life goals

vii. Which other areas of your life has the abuse affected?

9. If your partner has been abusive to you more than once, what action did you take after the first episode?

10. If your response to (9) above is that you decided to stay, describe the factors that influenced your stay in terms of:
 - i. Beliefs
 - ii. Thoughts
 - iii. Feelings/Emotions
11. What other factors have contributed to your decision to stay in your abusive relationship?
12. Suggest ways in which women can be helped to deal with abuse by husbands.

Part C: Interview Schedule for Women Survivors

1. For how long had you stayed in the abusive relationship?
- 2.a. What action did you take to deal with your abusive situation?
 - b. Describe what finally enabled you to take that action.
3. Suggest ways in which women could be helped to deal with abuse by their husbands.

**A II: Focused Group Discussion (FGD) for Women who were in Abusive
Spousal Relationships**

A woman comes to you and confides that she is being abused by her husband.

1. Explain some of the abusive behaviours she may be experiencing from her husband.
2. In what ways might abuse by her husband be affecting her?
3. Explain some of the ways she may be using to cope with abuse by her husband.
4. Explain some of the factors that may be influencing her to stay in the abusive marriage in terms of,
 - a. Beliefs
 - b. Thoughts
 - c. Feelings
5. How can such a woman be helped to deal with abuse by her husband?

AIII: Introduction Letter

Zipporah Kailu Limukii-Kaaria

P.O Box 19215-00501

Nairobi

30th October, 2013

Dear Participant,

RE: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCH

I am the above named PhD student at Kenyatta University, currently conducting a research on “Womens’ perceptions of endogenous factors influencing them to stay in abusive spousal relationships in WRAP, Nairobi County”. The purpose of this letter is to request you to kindly help me by giving information necessary for the success of the study. The information will strictly be used for the purpose of the study and will remain confidential.

Thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully,

_____Signature of Researcher

Zipporah Kailu Limukii-kaaria

AIV: Participants' Informed Consent

I (pseudonym)_____state that I am over 18 years of age and I voluntarily agree to participate in a research conducted by Zipporah Kaaria of Kenyatta University. The research is being conducted on “Womens’ perceptions of endogenous factors influencing women to stay in abusive spousal relationships in Women Rights Awareness Program, Nairobi County”. I acknowledge that the task involved has been explained to me and that I have accepted the use of an audio-recorder in data collection and storage. I have also been informed that I can withdraw from participating at any time and with no adverse consequences.

_____Signature of Participant

VIAMBATISHO

AV: Mpangilio wa kuhoji

Kifaa hiki kina sehemu tatu: A, B na C. Sehemu ya “A” ina habari inayohusu demografia au hali ya washiriki na sehemu za “B” na “C” zina mpangilio wa kuhoji wanawake waliokuwa katika uhusiano wa ndoa za kudhulumu na wale ambao walikuwa wametatua na kupata suluhisho la huku kudhulumiwa katika ndoa.

Hiki kifaa kilitumika kukusanya habari za utafiti wa kitaaluma ambao lengo lake lilikuwa kutambua sababu za ndani za mambo ambayo yanawafanya wanawake wa kaunti ya Nairobi kukaa katika ndoa za dhuluma. Habari iliyotolewa na washiriki ilichukuliwa kwa siri ya hali ya juu na kutumika katika utafiti wa kimasomo peke yake.

Sehemu ya A: Habari ya demografia au hali ya wanawake walio katika uhusiano wa ndoa za dhuluma.

Tia alama ya vyema [] kwa jibu ambalo linakufaa. Uaminifu wako katika kutoa majibu sahihi, utaleta matokeo halali ya utafiti.

1. Umri wako ni upi kwa kuzingatia miaka?

A. Chini ya miaka 25 []

B. Miaka 25 – 35 []

C. Miaka 35 – 40 []

D. Miaka 40 – 50 []

- E. Zaidi ya miaka 50 []
2. Uko katika ndoa ya aina gani?
- A. Kiserekali []
- B. Kanisa []
- C. Kimila []
- D. Nyingineyo [] (Taja)
3. Ulikuwa umekaa kwa muda gani na mumeo kabla ya kufaulu kukomesha dhuluma?
- A. Miaka 2 – 5 []
- B. Miaka 5 – 10 []
- C. Miaka 10 – 15 []
- D. Miaka 15 – 20 []
- E. Zaidi ya miaka 20 []
4. Kiwango chako cha elimu cha juu zaidi ni kipi?
- A. KCPE/ CPE []
- B. Shule ya upili []
- C. Chuo/ Ufundi anuwai []
- D. Chuo Kikuu []
- E. Kinginecho [] (Taja)
5. a) Unafanya nini ili kujikimu kimaisha (kazi)?
- b) Unapata pesa ngapi kwa mwezi?
- A. Chini ya shilingi elfu 10,000 []

- B. Shilingi elfu 10,000 []
- C. Shilingi elfu 20,000 []
- D. Shilingi elfu 30,000 []
- E. Shilingi elfu 40,000 []
- F. Zaidi ya shilingi elfu 50,000 []

Sehemu ya B: Mpangilio wa kuhoji wanawake waliokuwa katika uhusiano wa ndoa za dhuluma

1)a) Eleza aina za dhuluma ulizopitia kutoka kwa mumeo/mshiriki wa ndoa kwa miezi kumi na miwili iliyopita.

b) Amekudhulumu mara ngapi kwa miezi kumi na miwili iliyopita?

2)Umewezaje kuvumilia hizi dhuluma zote?

3)Eleza vile maisha yako yameathiriwa na dhuluma ulizozitaja hapo juu katika sehemu zifuatazo:

i) Mwili wako (kimwili)

ii) Mawazo yako

iii) Mhemko wako/hisia

iv) Maisha yako katika jamii

v) Kazi yako

vi) Malengo ya maisha yako

vii)Ni sehemu zipi zingine za maisha yako ambazo zimeathiriwa na dhuluma?

- 4) Kama mshiriki wako wa ndoa amekudhulumu zaidi ya mara moja, ulichukua hatua gani baada ya tukio la kwanza?
- 5) Kama jibu lako la nambari 9 ni kuwa uliamua kukaa, eleza mambo yaliyokufanya ukae kulingana na :
- i) Imani
 - ii) Mawazo/Fikira
 - iii) Hisia/Mhemko
6. Ni mambo gani mengine ambayo yamechangia kwa uamuzi wako wa kukaa katika uhusiano wa dhuluma?
7. Pendekeza mbinu ambazo zaweza kutumika kuwasaidia wanawake ili waweze kupambana na dhuluma zinatoka kwa waume zao.

Sehemu ya C: Mpangilio wa kuhoji wanawake walionusurika kutokana na dhuluma za waume zao

1. Ulikuwa umekaa kwa muda gani katika uhusiano wa kidhuluma?
2. a) Ulichukua hatua gani kutatua hali yako ya dhuluma?
b) Eleza kilichokuwezesha kuchukua hatua hiyo.
3. Pendekeza mbinu ambazo wanawake wanaweza kusaidiwa nazo ili waweze kupambana au kutatua hali ya dhuluma kutoka kwa waume zao.

AVI: Kikundi Kilicholengwa Katika Mjadala (KKM) ni cha Wanawake waliokuwa katika Uhusiano wa Ndoa za Dhuluma

Mwanamke anakuja kwako kukufichulia kwa siri kuwa anadhulumiwa na mumewe.

1. Eleza baadhi ya tabia za kudhulumiwa anawezakuwa akizipitia kutoka kwa mumewe.
2. Hizi dhuluma kutoka kwa mumewe zinamwathiri kwa njia zipi?
3. Eleza baadi ya mbinu ambazo anaweza kuwa akizitumia kuvumilia dhuluma kutoka kwa mumewe.
4. Eleza baadhi ya mambo ambayo yanaweza kuwa yanamshawishi kukaa katika ndoa iliyo na dhuluma kulingana na:
 - i) Imani
 - ii) Mawazo
 - iii) Hisia
5. Mwanamke kama huyo anawezaje kusaidiwa ili aweze kupambana na dhuluma kutoka kwa mumewe?

AVII: Barua ya Utambulisho

Zipporah Kailu Limukii-Kaaria,
S.L.P 19215 (00501),
Nairobi
30 Oktoba 2013

Kwa Mshiriki,

KUH: OMBI LA KUPATA HABARI YA UTAFITI WA KITAALUMA

Mimi ni mwanafunzi wa Uzamifu katika Chuo Kikuu cha Kenyatta. Kwa wakati huu ninafanya utafiti wa kitaaluma kuhusu sababu za ndani za mambo ambayo yanawafanya wanawake wakae katika uhusiano wa ndoa za dhuluma katika Uzinduzi wa Haki za Wanawake (WRAP), Kaunti ya Nairobi. Kusudi la barua hii ni kukuomba kwa wema wako unisaidie kwa kupeana habari inayohitajika katika kufanikisha utafiti huu wa kimasomo. Habari hii itatumika tu kwa kusudi la kusoma na itabaki kuwa siri.

Shukurani.

Wako Mwaminifu,

_____ (Sahihi ya Mtafiti)

Zipporah Kailu Limukii-Kaaria

AVIII: Ufahamu na Idhini ya Mshiriki

Mimi (Jina Bandia) _____ nathibitisha kwamba nina zaidi ya miaka 18 na kwa hiari yangu ninakubali kushiriki katika utafiti unaofanywa na Zipporah Kailu Limukii-Kaaria wa Chuo Kikuu cha Kenyatta. Utafiti unaofanywa unahusu sababu za ndani za mambo ambayo yanawafanya wanawake kukaa katika Ndoa za Dhuluma kulingana na Mpango wa Uzinduzi wa Haki za Wanawake (WRAP) na Kaunti ndogo ya Embakasi katika Kaunti ya Nairobi. Nadhibitisha kwamba nimeelezwa kuhusu kazi husika na nimekubali utumizi wa kinasa sauti katika ukusanyaji wa data/habari na uhifadhi. Pia nimefahamishwa kwamba ninaweza kujiondoa kutoka kushiriki huku wakati wowote bila shida yo yote.

_____ (Sahihi ya Mshiriki)

AIX: Research Permit

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THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
Prof/Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Institution
Zipporah Kariuki Karira
of (Address) Kenyatta University
P.O. Box 43844-00100, Nairobi,
has been permitted to conduct research in:

Location:
District:
County:
Nairobi

On the topic: Endogenous factors influencing
Women to stay in abusive spousal relationships
in Nairobi County-Kenya

for a period ending: 31st December, 2014.

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Research Permit No. NACOSTI/PCD/14/613/1731
Date of issue: 15th October, 2013
Fee received: KSH. 2600



Applicant's Signature *Zipporah Kariuki Karira*
For, Secretary *[Signature]*
National Commission for Science
Technology & Innovation